

**ISLAMIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAURITIUS: A FUNCTIONALIST ANALYSIS**

**BY**

**MAAIDAH AMMAARA UD-DEEN MANIACARA**

**Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the**

**degree of**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**with Specialization in**

**ISLAMIC STUDIES**

**At the**

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**SUPERVISOR: DR. MOHAMMED AUWAIS RAFUDEEN**

**JUNE 2019**

## DECLARATION

Name: MAAIDAH AMMAARA UDDEEN MANIACARA

Student number: 3498591-3

Degree: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The title of the thesis:

ISLAMIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAURITIUS – A FUNCTIONALIST ANALYSIS

I declare that the above thesis is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

Signature:

M. Maniacara

Date: 11th June 2019

This letter is to confirm that I, Keegan Bruce Schmidt, freelance copy-editor, have edited and proofread the dissertation "ISLAMIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAURITIUS: A FUNCTIONALIST ANALYSIS" by MAAIDAH AMMAARA UD-DEEN MANIACARA for grammar and spelling. I have not changed any of the ideas presented in this paper and only the grammar and spelling has been altered for the purposes of clarity. This is to confirm that I have edited the document to a level I deem satisfactory.

Should you have any questions feel free to contact me at keeganschmidt@yahoo.com or phone at 074 118 8359.

Keegan Schmidt

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Schmidt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

### **Details:**

Address: 1225 Ben Swart Street, Moregloed, 0186

Qualifications:

- Hons. Publishing majoring in editing from the University of Pretoria
- Eight years of freelance editing experience

## CURRICULUM VITAE

First names: Maaidah Ammaara Uddeen

Family name: Maniacara

Country: Mauritius

### QUALIFICATIONS:

2006 - BA Islamic Studies / Communication Science

2008-2009 - Islamic Studies BA Honours

2012-2014 - Islamic Studies Masters [cum laude]

I am presently a student of PHD in Religious Studies. I have been with Unisa since 2006 and have been completing all my degrees within the same university. In 2015, I obtained my Masters with the mention *cum laude*.

With my degree in Islamic Studies, I was able to fulfill one of my dreams which was to become a teacher. Since 2006, I have been appointed as an Islamic teacher at a secondary school for pre-university students. Since last year, I have been promoted as Section leader in order to help students with discipline and value education.

I am interested in travelling, meeting new people and learning languages. I am fluent in my mother tongue, Creole; French and English. I am also fluent in reading Arabic with an average understanding. Right now, I am learning Turkish language.

Although I am a cultured lady with many interests, I must say that Islamic culture and its history is one of my best interests. I have had the opportunity to work as an international editor and translator in the fields of Islam. I had also done voice-over for various Islamic videos. I also lend my voice for some motivational school videos. Moreover, I organise school events such as seminars, Independence Day and a whole month of Ramadan activity and visits to orphanage.

I have recently completed an international seminar on Intercultural Education with Arigatou, Belgium. The objective was to help Mauritian students learn to live together as one nation. I am presently writing a book on values education for adolescents so that they may develop into healthy and all rounded adults.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study was designed to research five Islamic Secondary schools in Mauritius. The study focuses on two main areas: the Islamic education curriculum and the school culture propounded by each school; the aim being to analyse whether Islamic Secondary schools prepare students for their holistic development.

In general, Islamic Secondary Schools seek to propose an alternative religious background or a cultural environment that can ignite changes and promote either religious beliefs through education or Islamic values which would later develop students into better Muslims and give them a sense of “Muslimness” in view to develop social citizenship. This dissertation deals with the challenges that Islamic Secondary schools face in educating contemporary Mauritian Muslim youth and examines their functionality at the micro, meso and macro levels. The context is placed in a multi-cultural multi-religious society.

Using the functionalist theory to examine Islamic Secondary schools in Mauritius, the study shows that they are characterised by dysfunction at various levels. The paper also examines some international difficulties met by different Islamic schools in order to contextualise global trends of education in Islamic schools at an international level. A qualitative case study was conducted using interviews, focus group discussions and observation to gather data. The theoretical rationale was based on functionalism that views education as one of the most important institutions in society. This research highlights the importance of collaboration between all stakeholders to establish a shared vision in order to improve the lives of Muslim youth in local contexts.

Key words: Islamic Secondary schools, moral values and ethics, structural functionalism, Islamic education, Islam, Muslims, cultural identity, functionalist analysis, opportunities and challenges, Mauritius.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

In the Name of Allah, The Excellent, The Merciful

This work would not have been possible without the help and assistance of Allah. Allah is indeed the true Teacher. It is Allah who nominates for us people with knowledge that can teach us and accompany us. Thus, He chose Dr Auwais Rafudeen. Dr. Rafudeen has been accompanying me since my Master Degree thesis. I am ever grateful to him for his patience and immense help. Thank you brother and may Allah make things easy for you in this life and in the hereafter.

My gratitude goes to the Unisa Islamic team of Pretoria who during my MA graduation ceremony has boosted my faith in pursuing my doctoral studies. Thank you to Prof Jaffer, Prof Dadoo, and Sister Nasreen.

To my life-coach, my late mother Anne who was my first teacher at school and in life, thank you mum from the deepest of my heart; every devoted teacher is a winner. That's who you are. Your teaching processes lie in me. It is a seed that never dies. I am sure you would be proud of me.

To my grandfather Arthur who had planted the seeds of knowledge in me since my childhood, may you rest in peace. To Fahim, who has always walked by my side, may Almighty Allah grant you *jannah*. My appreciation is extended to my faith sisters Hawa and Bibi Nasreen for their supplications and my whole family for their good intentions towards me. A very special gratitude goes out to all the rectors who willingly accepted to be interviewed. Finally, my thanks go to the different contributors and students.

“O Allah! Benefit me with what You have taught me, and teach me that which will benefit me, and grant me knowledge which will benefit me.”

Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

Maaidah Ammaara Uddeen Maniacara

# Contents

- ABSTRACT ..... II
- ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... VII
- ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS..... XIII
- SPECIFIC TERMS USED ..... XIV
- ARABIC TERMS ..... XVI
- CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND..... 1
  - 1.1 INTRODUCTION ..... 1
  - 1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE THESIS..... 2
  - 1.3 MOTIVATION FOR WRITING THIS DISSERTATION ..... 3
  - 1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT..... 3
    - 1.4.1 RESEARCH APPROACH..... 4
    - 1.4.2 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS..... 4
    - 1.4.3 SCHOOLS’ SAMPLING SELECTION..... 4
    - 1.4.4 SAMPLING OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS..... 7
    - 1.4.5 SAMPLING OF EDUCATORS..... 8
    - 1.4.6 SAMPLING OF STUDENTS ..... 8
    - 1.4.7 RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANT SCHOOLS..... 9
    - 1.4.8 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND INFORMED CONSENT..... 9
  - 1.5 DATA COLLECTION: INSTRUMENTS AND STRATEGIES ..... 9
    - 1.5.1 QUESTIONNAIRES..... 12
  - 1.6 SPECIFICATION..... 13
    - 1.6.1 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS ..... 13
  - 1.7 LAYOUT OF THE THESIS..... 14
  - 1.8 THEORETICAL RATIONALE - CLARIFICATION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS ..... 14
  - 1.9 CONCEPTS ..... 20
    - 1.9.1 DEFINITION OF EDUCATION ..... 20
    - 1.9.2 EDUCATIONAL PEDAGOGY ..... 21
    - 1.9.3 EDUCATION AND SOCIALISATION..... 24
    - 1.9.4 EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY ..... 28

1.9.5 EDUCATION AND UNIVERSALISTIC VALUES.....	30
1.10 ABRAHAM MASLOW: HIERARCHY OF NEEDS.....	31
1.11 THE CONCEPT OF CONSTRUCTIVISM .....	33
1.12 THE HEALTHY SELF .....	35
1.13 EMILE DURKHEIM'S VIEW ON RELIGION.....	38
1.14 THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE .....	39
1.15 SUMMARY .....	41
CHAPTER 2: THE PHILOSOPHY OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION .....	42
2.1 INTRODUCTION .....	42
2.2 ISLAM AS A WAY OF LIFE.....	42
2.3 RELIGION AS A SOCIAL ORDER .....	43
2.4 PHILOSOPHY OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION .....	45
2.5 ISLAMIC EDUCATION LEADS TO GUIDANCE .....	51
2.6 EQUITY .....	53
2.7 ISLAMIC CONCEPTS.....	55
2.7.1 THE CONCEPT OF DEEN-UL-ISLAM.....	55
2.7.2 CONCEPT OF GOD .....	56
2.7.3 THE CONCEPT OF TAQWA .....	57
2.7.4 THE CONCEPT OF AXIOLOGY OR ADAB .....	58
2.7.5 TO ENJOIN GOOD AND TO PROHIBIT WRONG .....	60
2.7.6 THE CONCEPT OF LOVE .....	61
2.7.7 COMMUNITY CONCEPT.....	62
2.7.8 PROPHET MUHAMMAD AS A KEY FIGURE .....	63
2.8 ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND HAPPINESS .....	65
2.9 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION .....	65
2.10 THE CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION .....	67
2.11 CONCLUSION .....	70
FOOT NOTES.....	71
CHAPTER 3: DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MUSLIM WORLD AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC SCHOOLS.....	72
3.1 INTRODUCTION .....	72
3.2 THE PLACE OF EDUCATION IN THE ISLAMIC CONTEXT .....	72
3.3 EDUCATION AFTER THE ADVENT OF ISLAM .....	74

3.4 METHODS FOR DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE .....	76
3.5 CLASSICAL CENTRES FOR EDUCATION .....	78
3.6 MOTIVATIONS FOR LEARNING OF EARLY MUSLIMS.....	80
3.7 EDUCATION DURING THE Umayyad Era.....	83
3.7.1 Education in Spain.....	85
3.8 Education during the Abbasid Era .....	86
3.9 Ibn Sina's Philosophy of Education .....	90
3.9.1 Ibn Sina's Concept of Education.....	90
3.9.2 Infant Stage [from birth until age two].....	91
3.9.3 Six Years Old – First Stage of Learning.....	91
3.9.4 Age 14 Onwards.....	94
3.9.5 Education for Girls.....	95
3.9.6 The Approach of Wisdom .....	95
3.10 Al Ghazali (1058-1111).....	96
3.10.1 Al Ghazali's Concept of Education.....	97
3.11 Islam and Secularism .....	99
3.12 The History of Islamic Schools in the West .....	103
3.12.1 The United States.....	103
3.12.2 The Netherlands .....	105
3.13 Islamic Schools in Non-Muslim Countries.....	111
3.13.1 School Choice.....	113
3.13.2 The Choice For Islamic Schools.....	114
3.13.3 Challenges Of International Islamic Schools.....	116
3.13.4 Advice From Muslim International Pedagogues.....	121
3.13.5 Analysis.....	123
3.13.6 Advocates of Islamic Schools .....	124
3.13.7 Another Side of the Coin .....	125
3.14 Functionalism.....	126
3.15 Conclusion .....	127
Footnotes .....	128
CHAPTER 4: THE HISTORY OF MAURITIUS AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM .....	129
4.1 Introduction .....	129

4.2 AN OVERVIEW OF MAURITIUS ISLAND .....	129
4.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MUSLIMS IN MAURITIUS.....	135
4.3.1 FIRST EFFORT TOWARDS ISLAMISATION .....	142
4.3.2 THE PROCESS OF ISLAMISATION.....	144
4.3.3 EARLY MUSLIM INTELLECTUALS .....	146
4.4 LEARNING INSTITUTIONS AND THE EMERGENCE OF SECTS .....	147
4.5 THE SITUATION OF MUSLIMS POST INDEPENDENCE .....	150
4.6 THE ROLE PLAYED BY COLONIALISM AND THE HISTORY OF SCHOOLING IN MAURITIUS .....	153
4.7 THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN MAURITIUS.....	157
4.7.1 SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAURITIUS .....	162
4.7.2 RECRUITMENT OF EDUCATORS AT THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS .....	163
4.7.3 THE COMPLEXITY OF THE MAURITIAN LANGUAGES .....	164
4.7.4 CREOLE AS A LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION .....	165
4.8 SECULARISATION AND YOUTH CHALLENGES .....	166
4.9 SOCIAL DISINTEGRATION .....	168
4.10 SCHOOL CULTURE AND YOUTH CULTURE.....	170
4.11 CONCLUSION .....	172
Foot notes: .....	173
Chapter 5 THE ANALYSIS OF THE FIVE PARTICIPATIVE SCHOOLS .....	174
5.1 INTRODUCTION .....	174
5.2 BACKGROUND .....	174
5.3 DAR UL MA'ARIF SECONDARY SCHOOL – A UNIQUE CONCEPT .....	175
5.3.1 CEHL MEEAH'S VIEWS ON EDUCATION.....	183
5.3.2 BRIEF SKETCH OF CEHL MEEAH .....	193
5.3.3 MOTIVATIONS FOR SETTING UP AN ISLAMIC SCHOOL .....	194
5.3.4 THE MAURITIAN REALITY AND ITS CHALLENGES .....	195
5.4 DOHA SECONDARY SCHOOL CUREPIPE – A STORY OF OPPORTUNITY .....	199
5.5 THE ICC OF PORT-LOUIS – A MUSLIMS' HERITAGE.....	205
5.5.1 CHALLENGING FACTORS AT THE ICC PORT-LOUIS.....	212
5.6 MADAD-UL-ISLAM SECONDARY SCHOOL – ONCE A MUSLIM GIRLS' PRIDE .....	215
5.7 Islamic Cultural College Form Vi – The Unique Pre-University School In Mauritius.....	226
5.8 ANALYSIS OF THE FIVE SCHOOLS .....	236

5.8.1 SCHOOL CULTURES .....	239
5.8.2 Religious And Social Engagement .....	240
5.8.3 Socio-Cultural And Spiritual Awareness.....	241
5.8.4 Language Written And Spoken .....	242
5.9.5 Other Challenges .....	245
5.9 CONCLUSION .....	245
Footnotes .....	246
CHAPTER 6 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS.....	248
6.1 INTRODUCTION .....	248
6.2 BACKGROUND .....	248
6.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....	249
6.3.1 ISLAMIC CULTURAL COLLEGE FORM VI .....	253
6.3.2 MADAD UL ISLAM .....	256
6.3.3 ISLAMIC CULTURAL COLLEGE PORT-LOUIS.....	258
6.3.4 DAR UL MAARIF .....	259
6.3.5 DOHA.....	262
6.4 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	270
6.4.1 CONCLUSION .....	275
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	277
APPENDICES.....	i
APPENDIX A INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED AT FIVE ISLAMIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAURITIUS.....	i
APPENDIX B: SEMI STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE .....	xi
APPENDIX C: THE EDUCATIONAL REFORM .....	xliv
APPENDIX D: SCHOOL CERTIFICATE AND HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE PASSES .....	xlvi
APPENDIX E: ISLAMIC STUDIES PAPER 2 FOR CAMBRIDGE A LEVEL .....	xlix
APPENDIX F: LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME.....	li
APPENDIX G: FUNCTIONAL LEARNING THROUGH A MINIATURE IDEAL SOCIETY.....	lii

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS**

**ACCA:** Association of Chartered Certified Accountants

**CIE:** Cambridge International Examinations

**CPE:** Certificate of Primary Education

**DUM:** Dar Ul Ma'arif

**DOHA:** also referred as Doha Academy

**ICC:** Islamic Cultural College

**ICCPL:** Islamic Cultural College of Port-Louis

**ICCVDP:** Islamic Cultural College of Vallée des Prêtres

**ICC FORM VI:** Islamic Cultural College of Vallée des Prêtres

**HSC:** higher school certificate

**MES:** Mauritius Examination Syndicates

**NESC:** National Economic and Social Council

**NYCBE:** Nine Year Continuous Basic Education

**O Level examinations:** School Certificate level

**PSAC:** Primary School Achievement Certificate

**PSEA:** Private Secondary Education Authority

**SC:** School Certificate

**SIMOI:** Société Islamique des Mascareignes et de l'océan indien

**TEC:** Tertiary Education Commission

**TVET:** Technical and Vocational Education and Training

**UNESCO:** United Nations Economic Social and Cultural Organisation

## **SPECIFIC TERMS USED**

Broader community: refers to the Muslim community

*Churidhars and kurtees*: are worn by ladies whose ancestors came from India

*Chuss* - is a foreign word used in the Mauritian Muslim context to mean legging

Director: takes charge of the overall aspects of the school and acts as an advisor to the rector

Educational leaders refer to rectors, directors and managers of these institutions

Educationists refer to rectors and teachers

Educators refer to secondary teachers

Eligibility to run a private school: According to the exigencies of the government and the PSEA, every school is eligible to a minimum and a maximum amount of population. All teachers should possess at least a degree in their respective subjects. The curriculum is set by the government so that students may sit for the Cambridge School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate.

Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp: three social media platforms

Grade: Secondary schools start with Grade 9 and ends with Grade 13.

Interventions: In the context of the thesis, an intervention is a combination of program strategies designed to produce behaviour change among individuals and uplift their cognitive understanding of this world and the next.

General population: it is those citizens whose ancestors were slaves and they have been married with the Franco-Mauritian people, so they form the general population of mixed origin. Their main religion is Christianity. [Catholic, Protestants, Church of Baptism]

Humanistic approach to learning: using cognitive and affective pedagogy

Mainstream society: refers to the Mauritian society

Manager: is above the rector. He is the one who manages the school

*Mehendi*: nail and hand decoration

*Miaji*: refers to Muslim clergy

Mufti Menk: Zimbabwean Scholar and public speaker

Nine year continuous basic schooling is a new reform in the system. The reform includes a six year formation at the primary school [Grade 1 to Grade 6] and three years at the secondary level [Grade 7 to Grade 9]. After which, those children who have the academic endeavour may pursue their studies from Grade 10 to Grade 13.

Rector: principal of a school

Stakeholders apply to all educational leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff and students

*Shab-e-Barat*, *Shab-e-Qadar* and *Yaum-e-Ashura* are terms used among the *Sunnat-e-jamaat*. The word '*shab*' means night and '*yaum*' means day. *Shab-e-Barat* is known as the blessed night which is celebrated mid-*Shabaan*; is the eight month of the Islamic calendar. Usually on that day, men visit the cemetery and ask forgiveness for the dead. *Shab-e-Qadar* is referred to the night of power which occurs during one of the last ten nights of *Ramadan*. It is also known as *Laylat-ul Qadr*. *Yaum-e-Ashura* is the day where many events took place, among which is the martyrdom of the prophet's [peace and blessings be upon him] grandchild, Hussayn at a place called Karbala in Iraq. It is celebrated on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar. Ashura is also a recommended day of fasting in Sunni Islam.

## **ARABIC TERMS: transliteration and meaning**

*Al-'Adl*: the Just

*Ādāb*: the complete behavioural aspects of human beings; adaab is also related to erudition.

Allāh: the Creator of the Universe including all living and non-living creatures

*Akhlāq*: Good manners

*Adhān*: the call for prayer

*Al Insān Al kāmīl*: the complete human being

*Al- Wādūd*: the most affectionate

*Amr bil ma'rūf wa al- nahi `an al-munkar* – to command good and to prohibit evil

*Aqīdah*: Islamic beliefs

*Bismillāh* - in the name of Allāh

*Da'wah*: Muslim invitation to the religion of Islam

*Dīn or Dīn al Islam*: the holistic role of Islam which is seen by Muslims to be a complete code of living

*Diwān*: record

*Du`ā'*: supplication

*`Īd*: the Muslim festival. It occurs twice in the year

*`Īd al-Fiṭr*: after the completion of one month of fasting in the month of Ramadan. *`Īd al-Fiṭr* is celebrated on the 1<sup>st</sup> of *Shawwāl* (10<sup>th</sup> Islamic month)

*Ḥadīth*: the word and action of Prophet Muhammad

*`Ibādah*: worship

*`ilm*: knowledge

*Ijtihād*: the process of legal reasoning through which the jurist derives or rationalises

law on the basis of the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*.

*Khalīfah*: Vicegerent

*ʿIlm al-Kalām*: knowledge based on the *Qur'ān*

*Ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*: means permissible and impermissible respectively. They are often used to denote whether a food is allowed or prohibited

*Hijāma*: cupping. It is known as a cure for various illnesses

*Hifẓ*: Recitation of the Quran by heart

*Fiqh*: Islamic Jurisprudence

*Ijtihād*: means effort; it is the effort exerted to find a solution which is not precisely covered by the Quran and Sunnah

*Iqra'*: an Arabic word taken from the first five verses of *Sūrat Al `Alaq* which were revealed on the first instance to Prophet Muhammad [peace be upon him]

*Jama`at*: community of Muslims

*Jāhiliyah*: ignorance

*Jilbāb*: the long dress, normally black worn by Muslim ladies

*Jinns*: known to be invisible creatures. There are good and bad jinns. Bad jinns are known to associate themselves with sorcerers, magicians and fortune tellers in order to lure human beings

Ka'aba: the house of Allah which is found in Makkah

*Na`at*: Recitation; normally chanted in Urdu language and its message is mostly addressed to Prophet Muhammad in terms of praises.

*Madrasahs*: school that teach Islamic education

*Markaz*: centre. In the educational perspective, it functions as a boarding school

*Masjid*: mosque

*Al Mi`rāj*: The prophet's [peace and blessings be upon him] ascension to heaven

*Mu`āmalah*: the affairs of the people (human interaction)

*Mu'addib*: derived from the Arabic root *adab* includes both moral and intellectual qualities that educators must possess and promote

*Mawlūd* : celebration of the birth of Prophet Muhammad

*Purdah*: face cover

*Qīblāh*: the direction to which Muslims turn at prayer

*Qur'ān* - the speech of Allah which is verbatim, unaltered from any human intervention and protected by Allah

*Raka`ah*: one station of prayer including standing, bowing and prostrating

*Ramaḍān*: According to the Islamic lunar calendar, it is the ninth month, and it is the month of Muslim fasting

*Salafism*: a group of Muslims who claim to follow Islam just as the companions of the Prophet did

*Ṣalāh*: the second pillar of Islam and means Muslim prayer

*Salīm*: pure

*Shar`ah*: the law

*Sunnah*: the practices of Prophet Muhammad

*Sunnat-e-jama`at*: refers to the Mauritian appellation of traditional and cultural Muslims who claim high esteem for Prophet Muhammad. Such esteem is put into practice by commemorating his birth date and by chanting religious songs known as *na`at*.

*Tabligh Jama`at*: a transnational movement with a local branch. It refers to a group of Muslims in Mauritius who follow the Deobandi Ḥanafī movement. It adheres to a strict orthodox religious movement and believes in gender segregation. Its mission is mainly to bring awareness to the Muslim community and to guide the “lost sheep” of the community to Islam. It is a apolitical missionary organisation. *Fazā'il-e- A'māl* [virtues of deeds] is the religious book used by the *Tablīgh Jama`at*. Every year, there is an annual gathering known as *Ijtema* where members of different countries around the world gather.

*Ta`līm*: to instil knowledge

*Taqwā*: fear of God's displeasure, God consciousness or spiritual fear

*Tazkiyah*: a method used to counteract the effect of negative knowledge and experiences

*Tazkiyat-un-nafs*: a method of teaching and is also a branch of knowledge that promotes peaceful living and provides positive energy that is essential for workability.

*Thawb*: Long traditional dress worn by Muslim men

*Tawhīd*: the strict adherence to the *Qur'ān* and the *ḥadīth*

"*Tawhidians*": those who believe in the strict interpretation of the Quran and hadith and condemn any act that have not been clearly practised or articulated by Prophet Muhammad and mentioned in the *Qur'ān*

*Ummah*: means community. Difference between community and society – community refers to the whole group of Muslims in Mauritius while society refers to the Mauritian population.

## **CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND**

---

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The system of schooling in Mauritius encompasses pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education. State secondary schools are divided into four regional zones to ensure adequate facilities for the needs of all Mauritian students. However Islamic Secondary schools fall under the category of private institutions that are either subsidised or non-subsidised by the government but in either way, are operated under the aegis of the Private Secondary Education Authority, which is responsible for the educational welfare of learners irrespective of religion, culture and ethnicity. Islamic Secondary Schools have been categorised as either cultural-oriented or religious-oriented according to their respective management. While there is a plethora of secondary schools in Mauritius, Islamic secondary schools exist to offer young Muslims a cultural environment conducive to their religious and traditional values. However, they have relied on the national curriculum of the Private Secondary Education Authority which is academic and exam-oriented. Along such a curriculum, religious-oriented schools have integrated the recitation of the Quran and its interpretation, *Fiqh* [Islamic Jurisprudence] as well as moral ethics to help young Muslims in their quest to obtain religious values and beliefs. This thesis argues that with time, some of these institutions have lost their abilities to maintain a religious cultural environment that can produce functional graduates and at the same time, their goals have been undermined by social disintegration.

Since the Muslim community and by extension Muslim schools are a subset of broader Mauritian society, this thesis deems a functionalist approach to the study of Islamic secondary schools to be especially appropriate. In the functionalist view, the school represents a miniature version of society. In this regard, the central question this thesis asks of those schools is: do they meet the needs of contemporary Mauritian society or not? Hence, this thesis argues, on the basis of a case by case analysis of these schools, that they exhibit both functional and dysfunctional characteristics. That is, in some respects they appear to be meeting the needs of broader society, while in others they show various limitations in this regard. The rest of this thesis will flesh out this argument.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE THESIS**

According to the international religious freedom report, the estimated population of Mauritius was 1.3 million in 2016. Its constitution forbids discrimination based on creed and provides for religious freedom, including the right of individuals to change, manifest, and to propagate their religious beliefs. The 2010 census reveals that Muslims are a minority, making up 17 percent of the Mauritian population. (International religious freedom report, 2016). Like other communities, Muslim parents have been keen to communicate their values to their children and this has been the impetus behind the setting up of private Islamic schools. However, such educational initiatives may have triggered debate in a multi-cultural and multi-religious society where the motto -learning to live together is the ruling creed. These debates centre around whether Islamic schools in general support the goals of nation-building, whether they positively contribute to the welfare of Muslim learners and whether the products of these schools will contribute in a healthy way to the socio-economic development of the country and above all, to the construction of a healthy sense of self. In addition, Islamic schools operate in an environment where the dominant liberal discourse privileges the notion of personal choice. This can stand in tension with Islamic teachings where, as in other religions, the notion of authority is taken quite seriously. Many Muslim students at these schools also hail from areas of the capital characterised by endemic violence and drug use. Internally, they face various critiques for not implementing the values they espouse, contending ideological positions within Islam itself as well as day-to-day financial and infrastructural issues. These external and internal issues, as well as their ramifications, need to be analysed in a local context. To better understand the views and objectives for setting up Islamic secondary schools in a Mauritian context and their responses to the challenges stated above, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and first hand observations of these schools have been undertaken. In areas where schools are deemed to have successfully met these challenges they are seen as functional and where they have not they are deemed dysfunctional.

### **1.3 MOTIVATION FOR WRITING THIS DISSERTATION**

The goals of education as well as the role of educators are noble. Islam lays great emphasis on the holistic approach to learning because education is what makes fulfilled human beings, capable of taking their responsibilities at hand. Since the beginning of Islam, the emphasis was laid on the reformation of the self, the purification of the soul, the understanding of the concept of God and being people-centred. However, there has been a shift in the values and methods of teaching in the current post-modern society and the researcher fears that social disintegration may be the outcome of such a shift. Arguably, an Islamic school is not simply judged on whether it meets the needs of contemporary society or not. While they must be responsive to those needs, they should also enhance society by helping to produce a graduate who has the potential to be *insān ul kāmil*, that is, the complete human being. The aims of Islamic education will be elaborated upon on later in the thesis, but in the researcher's own view, acquired through fairly extensive teaching experience at such institutions, Islamic schools are in general losing the ability to cultivate such graduates and are simply producing formal academic ones. One has to question whether these schools are really producing the transformative education aimed at by theories of Islamic education.

The aim of this study is to improve and develop the effectiveness of Islamic education in Mauritius and to prepare students for their holistic roles in the Mauritian society.

### **1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Islamic secondary schools are supposed to act as an alternative choice for many young Muslims who do not want to pursue their secondary education journey through the conventional delivery system. Such schools are supposed to protect teens from social disintegration and provide them with Islamic values and knowledge that can help them in their present and future lives. At the same time Islamic schools must offer a curriculum that will enable its graduates to effectively function within broader Mauritian society. So the question is posed: do Islamic secondary schools produce functional graduates in terms of both Islamic values and in terms of the needs of broader society? Hence, this thesis examines whether they are merely replicating the prevailing system in a different guise or whether they have something to offer to the new generation of students.

### **1.4.1 RESEARCH APPROACH**

The above problem statement is approached through an analysis of five Islamic secondary schools in Mauritius. Using the theory of functionalism as a basis, this research aims at examining the schools' relation to and impact on the Muslim community and on broader society. Specifically, it will look at challenges faced by these schools as well as their responses to these challenges.

### **1.4.2 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Among the questions raised in the course of this research, the following are pertinent:

- (1) How do Islamic Secondary schools promote Islamic education, culture and religious beliefs and practices?
- (2) How does Islamic education impact on the holistic achievements of students?
- (3) How do Islamic schools construct the healthy self?
- (4) How do Islamic schools engage with the aims of broader educational strategies in Mauritius?

### **1.4.3 SCHOOLS' SAMPLING SELECTION**

The target population for this research involved only Islamic secondary schools in Mauritius. As far as the researcher knows, there are nine Islamic Secondary schools in the country. Seven schools were chosen out of the nine because some of them share the same orientation and are replicas of participant schools. From the seven schools selected, five schools agreed to participate in the research. They are:

- 1) Islamic Cultural College Form VI [co-education]
- 2) Islamic Cultural College Port-Louis Boys school
- 3) Madad-UI-Islam Girls school
- 4) Doha Academy School [co-education]
- 5) Dar-UI-Ma'arif Secondary School [co-education]

The two schools which declined the invitation are Muslim Girls [Grade 7-13] and High School [Grade 7-13]. Muslim Girls officiates as a cultural school. It belongs to the *Surtee Sunni* society with a *Tablighi* inclination. The High School officiates as a *Tabligh Jama`at* school and is allied with a missionary movement from South Africa. Within the

Mauritian context, this movement is apolitical and orthodox. Its objective is to preach religious orthodoxy and to motivate Muslims in their quest for Islamic beliefs and practices. Its members observe strict gender segregation and women are encouraged to stay at home and to wear strict clothes. The founder of this religious movement was *Mawlānā* Muhammad Ilyās. The school was previously named the Institute of Islamic and Secular Studies [IISS] and was founded by Dr. Mehsan Mauthoor on his return from South Africa. He was able to witness the success of this type of educational establishment and was therefore motivated to establish the like in Mauritius. With the participation of South African educators, namely, *Mawlānā* Abbas Ali Jinnah who established several Islamic schools in Australia and South Africa, IISS opened its doors in January 1997 with 190 students (two kindergarten classes, four primary classes, two Form One classes and one *Hifẓ* Class – memorization of the complete *Qur’ān*) (IISS & Port-Louis High school, 2017).

The Dar-UI-Ma’arif school was founded by Muhammad Cehl Fakeemeeah after his return from Saudi Arabia in 1992. It consists of a pre-primary, primary and secondary school including a *markaz* [boarding centre]. Dar UI Ma’arif provides academic and religious studies in view of creating a perfect balance in the curriculum and to prepare students for their future roles in society. The institution evolves in a strict and supportive environment for both employees and students in an attempt to protect the latter from social and religious disintegration.

The Doha academy is composed of pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education. It was founded in 2003 by the Education Trust and was sponsored by His Highness Sheikh Tameem Bin Hamad Al Thani, the crowned Prince of Qatar and son of the Emir of Qatar. The Doha Secondary School came into operation in January 2003 and accommodated a student population of 150. The actual manager is Sadek Polin.

Both DUM and Doha follow a strict interpretation of the *Qur’ān* and *Ḥadīth* [not to be confused with Salafism]. In the Mauritian jargon, they are referred to as “*tawhidians*”. However, during the interview Sadek Polin maintained that the religious philosophy of the school is based on the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* but should in any way be referred to the appellation of *Tawhīd*. Their motivations are rooted in the fact that Islam is a

complete code of living which has already been stipulated and clarified by the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*. Any intrusion or addition is considered by them to be an act of innovation.

Madad UI Islam, the Islamic Cultural College of Port-Louis and Islamic Cultural College of Vallée des Prêtres are administered by manager Hassen Heerah. The latter is a member of the Islamic Cultural association and has been appointed by both the Islamic cultural association and the Madad-UI- Islam association to manage the three schools. Since many members of the association are already dead, the association has been taken up by their sons and close relatives who are not in a position to manage the school, being busy in their own professions. Both Madad and ICC Port-Louis have been in operation some 70 years. The school is held by a leading committee among the *Sunnat-e-jamaat* Muslims. The *Sunnat-e-jammat* comes from two words *'sunnah'* which means practice and *'jamaat'* means congregation. It can be referred to as the *Sunni Barelvi*. This group is so called because its adherents demonstrate a high degree of love for the Prophet Muhammad and celebrate its birthday and praise him through religious chants known as *na'at*. This gathering used to be known as *Mawlūd* (Emrith, 1994, p. 104).

The rector of each school was interviewed and in one case the manager was interviewed instead of the rector. In two schools where the directors are involved, they were approached for an interview. A minimum of two educators from each school were also interviewed. A maximum of 15 students from each institutions were selected for focus-group discussions ranging from 16 to 20 years old. Participation of students, rectors and staff were essential for collection of data. Their experiences were taken into account and thus the study of their experiences, views and perceptions become a critical part of such research. Observation, interviews with heads of schools, group discussions with students from each school and group talks with teachers helped to examine, analyse and cross-check the information received. Observation was crucial in collecting field data. Moreover, the qualitative research employed here also implied analysing written documents. This was done by viewing the schools'websites, Facebook pages and blogs. It also entailed looking at the academic performances of students at School Certificate and Higher School Certificate levels. All educators and

students answered essentially in Creole and their responses had been translated into English. Interviews were carried out separately for school leaders while their responses were manually recorded. The language spoken by all interviewees was French, except in one institution where Creole was chosen as the medium. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, all the responses have been translated into English and made available as part of a chapter in this dissertation. While these interviews naturally form the basis for the analysis in this dissertation, they are independent in their own right and so the appendix may also prove a valuable resource for researchers studying aspects of Islamic schools. After collecting all of the data in the form of questionnaires as well as ad hoc answers, the researcher was able to analyse, compare and re-write the answers in the order of importance. Data obtained through observation was noted down and compared with interviewees' answers.

#### **1.4.4 SAMPLING OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS**

In some institutions, more than one person can be active leaders. In that case it was necessary to ask who volunteered for the interview. For example, in one institution the researcher asked to talk to the rector over the phone. He kindly referred the matter to the manager who accepted a face-to-face interview. In two institutions, both the rector and the director were interviewed and in the remaining ones it was solely the rectors who accepted to be interviewed.

#### **1.4.5 SAMPLING OF EDUCATORS**

Educators from each institution were chosen mainly for the subjects taught. Preference was done to Islamic and Arabic teachers. Other criteria include (1) voluntary participation (2) communication skills and (3) critical thinking.

#### **1.4.6 SAMPLING OF STUDENTS**

A purposive sampling method was preferred. The following will explain the reason for this choice. Since the Islamic Cultural College of Vallée des Prêtres has a student population range essentially of 16-20 years old, the researcher believes that all the targeted students from the other institutions should preferably be taken from the range of 16-20 years old. Therefore, students were selected primarily for their age groups. The research utilises selective non-probability sampling based on characteristics of the

population and the objective of the study. The first criterion for sampling was based on age groups, so students from upper classes such as Grades 11, 12 and 13 were targeted. Another reason is that such age groups are more convenient for focus group interviews and for obtaining reliable responses. This is because this age group concerns students who are more mature and critical about the topic researched. A second criterion was necessary based on students' availability. In order to have an equitable number of student participants in each institution, a maximum of fifteen students was selected. The third criterion was volunteering. Some students were shy to volunteer and some of them do not have the communication skills to further develop their thoughts. This is why students were recruited on specific criteria of age, communication skills as well as volunteering.

It is to be noted that the Muslim community in Mauritius is a relatively small population and students enrolled in the five schools form a small homogeneous group. All of them are Muslims with a common cultural and religious identity. According to Saunders et al (2012), purpose sampling is also attributed to homogeneous sampling which -focuses on one particular subgroup in which all the sample members are similar, such as a particular occupation or level in an organisation's hierarchy. Hence, the purposive sampling will in no way cause any bias to the research and is therefore considered an effective method for qualitative research. Black, K. (2010) states that elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researchers because they believe that they can obtain a representative sample by using a sound judgment, which will result in saving time and money.

#### **1.4.7 RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANT SCHOOLS**

Mauritius is a small island and the Muslim community is relatively small. From word of mouth and by the help of a colleague or rector, it was easy to create contacts. The selection of these schools was based primarily on the fact that contact numbers were easily obtainable. In addition permission was granted to the researcher to speak freely to the students and staff. First contacts were established through telephone for appointment. Being employed in one of the five institutions, it was easy for the researcher to interview, discuss and observe participants in their natural settings. As far

as data collection tools were concerned, the conduct of the research involved the use of a semi-structured questionnaire which was used as an interview guide for the researcher. Some questions were prepared to allow the researcher to guide the interview towards the satisfaction of research objectives, and additional questions were formulated during the interviews. A friendly, informal and relaxed approach was used towards students.

#### **1.4.8 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND INFORMED CONSENT**

The principle of voluntary participation was explained to the respondents. All of them were informed about their rights to withdraw from the research study. The study maintains the anonymity of all teacher-student participants.

#### **1.5 DATA COLLECTION: INSTRUMENTS AND STRATEGIES**

The researcher designed an interview to be conducted at respective schools except for one case where the interview was conducted by telephone. The researcher phoned interviewees for a personal interview. Locations of schools are known to the researcher and the researcher is well acquainted with some of these locations. A semi-structured questionnaire was prepared to guide the interview process. Such a questionnaire was administered to foster understanding rather than the stilted replies that may be generated by over-structured questions. Such understanding was also aided by the fact that all the interviews were face-to-face and conducted as personal conversations. Given the semi-structured nature of the questionnaire, the questions were open-ended. Unstructured questions were used during the interviews to facilitate exchanges between the researcher and participants. The questionnaire includes demographics which aimed to assess who the participants were by inquiring about their age, hometown, gender and religion. This method helped when a question which was not mentioned in the questionnaire popped up during face-to-face sessions. Additionally unstructured questions act as incentives for more free-ranging and personal answers. The structured questions were in the form of independent variables which are not dependent upon any other factors such as first name, age, school name and home city. Few independent variables were quantified to record the number of times variables occur. Consistency of answers was quantified. They were spelt out as: -the majority of respondents said that,|| -respondents were unanimous,|| -some respondents said that,||, and -one respondent

said thatll. An example of the questionnaire is found in the appendix B. A qualitative approach was preferred as it offers numerous advantages for this study. It generates unique data and allows people to be themselves with the open-ended questions. A qualitative research approach produces a thick (detailed) description of participants' feelings, opinions, experiences, and interprets the meanings of their actions (Denzin, 1989).

The data collected was mainly primary data. During personal interviews the researcher was able to take notes. Notes were written down in a diary and were translated directly into English by typing in on the computer. Note taking was preferred because the next step was to translate all interviews into English. This method is easily translated from written notes to the computer. Once the interview was over the researcher read the responses and immediately translated them into English as it is more convenient to remember all the details, the facial expressions, and the school environment.

On several occasions, informal talks took place with some of the rectors in order to clarify certain issues arising from the study. Such talks and informal discussions not only served to deepen our understanding of their activities but also served as a means to cross-check the primary information gathered. Hence, they helped towards the validity and reliability of the study. In some cases, educators were interviewed at the same time and in other cases they were approached separately. In both cases they showed participative willingness in the conversation. Among those approached separately, discussions were conducted either by telephone or in person. At times when the researcher needed more explanation the questions were written down as messages via the social network application, *WhatsApp*, and the respondents recorded their answers and sent them via the same network. This method was cost effective and less cumbersome for the interviewees. In that case, they could answer back at their convenience.

The choice for Creole with some respondents is obvious as it created the right mood and atmosphere for conversation, narration, and the sharing of experiences. It helped generate original answers. Some interesting sentences or words have been kept in Creole to maintain the originality of responses as it presents a thick and rich description

of the research and aims at unique fieldwork. Normally, it is easier and more convenient to speak in one's mother tongue. Focus group discussions were also done in Creole. During observation, the researcher was able to observe students in various situations, such as the morning assembly, during recess time, after school hours, during *Ṭd* gathering, during prayer time, during Ramadan activities at school, in class, the interaction between students and administrators/educators, the interactions between students and school mates, and interactions with the researcher. These helped in gathering rich information about the manner of speech, body language, artefacts etc., for analysis of data. According to the researcher, after school hours revealed many unsaid realities, and such realities acted as a hidden curriculum for students.

Matters concerning confidentiality were explained to everyone. Group discussions conducted in this study were adapted to the interviewees' personality, their level of maturity, and literacy. However, the approach chosen still ensured that the same general areas of information were collected from each interviewee in order to keep focus on the research problem. Thus, the discussion techniques allowed for a degree of freedom and adaptability but were still structured with the larger problem in mind. The unstructured questions covered students' needs, their wishes, their expectations and their choice for an Islamic school rather than a public or non-Muslim school. As indicated, informal discussions with students and members of the staff as well as observation of their activities also played a role in gathering the data for this study.

Four main concerns with students were highlighted:

- (1) The students' understanding of Islam prior to entering Islamic Secondary schools and their understanding during school time.
- (2) The reasons for enrolling in an Islamic-based school.
- (3) Their relationships with fellow Mauritian Muslims and the role socio-cultural factors play in these relationships.
- (4) Their understanding of moral values and its enforcement at schools and in their private and public lives.

### **1.5.1 QUESTIONNAIRES**

There are three types of questionnaires which are addressed to:

- (1) The directors/managers/rectors
- (2) The teachers
- (3) The students

The questionnaires are semi structured and in order to better understand its relevancy, have been divided into five sections: A, B, C, D and E. Respondents are directed towards the sections which are relevant to them. For example:

Section A concerns personal data of the interviewee and name of school. This part concerns all interviewees.

Section B concerns the opportunities that the school offers to students. This addresses every interviewee.

Section C concerns the challenges met by educationists. This part concerns rectors and teachers.

Section D concerns the types of students that are enrolled in the particular institution. This part concerns rectors and teachers.

Section E concerns what types of problems students face in their educational pathways. This concerns students, rectors and teachers.

A copy of the questionnaire is found in the appendix.

### **1. 6 SPECIFICATION**

This research will hopefully contribute to positively enhancing the quality of education offered at Islamic Secondary schools in Mauritius. There is presently no specific work based on Islamic schools in Mauritius except some sparse textual sources that study the phenomenon of Islamic schools in Mauritius. However there is a vast amount of literature on secondary schooling in Mauritius and these, together with sources germane to socio-cultural conditions in Mauritius, were consulted in preparation for the

empirical leg of the thesis. However, as far as the study of Islamic Secondary Schools in Mauritius, ours appears to be the first such study.

### **1.6.1 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS**

Two Islamic secondary schools declined to participate in the survey. However, the data collected in this thesis is enough to shed sufficient light on the broad contours of Islamic secondary schooling in Mauritius.

### **1.7 LAYOUT OF THE THESIS**

This thesis is divided into a total of six chapters. Chapter I sets up the background. It identifies the aims and objectives of the project which helps in the definition of the methodology and findings. It includes the theoretical rationale which the study and other relative concepts integrate the functionalist theory.

Chapter II looks at the philosophy of Islamic education. Chapter III

looks at the history of international Islamic schools. Chapter IV shows

the history of Mauritius and its educational system. Chapter V

examines the five secondary Islamic schools in Mauritius.

Chapter VI regards the findings and analysis of research; conclusion and recommendations.

### **1.8 THEORETICAL RATIONALE - CLARIFICATION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS**

This section is divided into two main parts. Part I deals with the functionalist theory as a framework for this study. Part II deals with various concepts that are complementary to functionalism.

Functionalism was coined by French Sociologist, Emile Durkheim (1858-1917). Its philosophy begins with the observation that behaviour in society is structured. It means that relationships between members of society are organised in terms of rules which show how people are expected to behave. There are two types of rules: formal and informal. The latter is known as norms. One example is the school uniform (Haralambos & Holborn, p.8). Functionalist structural or macro perspectives analyse the way society as a whole fits together. Functionalism is based on the assumption of functional pre-

requisites. They are basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing and money. They also refer to factors that allow the society to maintain social order. Therefore, this assumption suggests how different parts of society help to meet those needs and how different elements fit together harmoniously (Haralambos & Holborn, p. 855). Thus, the functionalist framework is necessary for the present study as it fits the rationale of evaluating the functionality or ‘dysfunctionality’ of Islamic Secondary Schools in Mauritius.

The three conceptual frameworks which are religion, culture, and education, form part of the functionalist analysis. Concerning religion, the only observation made by Durkheim was Totemism. He used the religion of various groups of Australian Aborigines for the purpose of his argument (Haralambos and Holborn, p.396), but because functionalism has not done research on Islam as a religion, the Islamic concept has to be integrative.

What is the functionalist theory? As its name suggests, it examines the holistic nature of society in relation to its functionality. Durkheim was very much concerned about why and how the society functions as well as its social facts. Social facts are external factors that are interconnected within the society. The reason for choosing functionalism is because it offers a rich entry within the realm of education, religion and culture. All three concepts are closely related to the study of Islamic Secondary Schools in Mauritius. Durkheim is convinced that education is the core concept of a successful society. The theory was further developed by Talcott Parsons in the twentieth century who believes in the universalistic role of education (Haralambos & Holborn, p.8).

Additionally, though functionalists have invented the concept of dysfunction, it has been rarely used in the past. Neo functionalists have now applied the term for research coherence. Moreover, functionalism suggests that the society operates with individuals who claim common needs and desires; sometimes these needs are homogeneous and sometimes they are heterogeneous. Based on these commonalities and differences, societies are formed to cater to such needs. If the needs and desires of people are not met, there is dysfunction. Schools serve the purpose of educating and instructing young people in order to prepare them for their holistic development. In so doing, the school acts as an all-inclusive institution that functions positively for the welfare of the society.

Durkheim was particularly interested in the study of the society and its structure, known as social structure, rather than its internal aspects that make up the society. Such external aspects are known as social facts. Social facts that are mentioned within the scope of this thesis are values, religion, education, school, culture and subculture. Subcultures are formed when groups of individuals share specific norms, attitudes and values that are distinctive to them in a larger group or community. For instance, the majority of students and the staff of Islamic Secondary schools are Muslims but among them, there are small groups of people who have adopted some attitudes and ways that are proper to them. These can be positive or negative to the benefits of the community and the wider society.

Durkheim was particularly interested in the interconnectedness and the degree of functionality of these social facts within the society. Such aspects will be examined closely to underpin the functionality of contemporary Islamic Secondary schools. Interestingly, the school is dually represented by the functionalist theory. Firstly, it is a subset of the society and secondly, it is regarded as a miniature society. On that theoretical vein, the researcher claims that functionalism is best suited for this qualitative research. While functionalism emphasises the positive aspects of the society referring to its structure, Durkheim insists upon the belief that collective consciousness, values and rules are critical to a functional society and the maintenance of collective conscience is essential for social cohesion. Likewise, the society depends on a collective harmonisation known as the collective conscience. If one institution does not function correctly, the society will be at stake. Therefore, Durkheim was not interested in an individualistic role of the society; rather he believed that social science was purely holistic. Additionally, Durkheim believes that the society has a positive role to play. He is convinced of the construction of a transformative society through good morals and correct behaviour, and to achieve this, all parts of that society must work together in harmony. Consequently, he argues that the 'society has to be present in the individual' (Haralambos and Holborn, p.871).

He therefore concentrates on the various conceptual frameworks that make up a society. Being a proponent of both positivism and realism, Durkheim wanted to

understand the science of institutions. For Durkheim, the school is a miniature society. He sees a clear connection between the two. While school is supposed to form part of the society, it also represents a miniature society. (A functionalist analysis, n.d). Students come from a wide cross-section of society to mingle with each other in the pursuit of education and instruction. The school environment is based on a specific culture and sub-culture and it moulds students into their future roles by inculcating values such as compassion, love, discipline, and moral education so that they adjust well in society. It sows the seeds of love, tolerance, and perseverance at a very tender age, making them good future citizens. In other words, a society is a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. To that end, the functionalist theory is vital for what the study wants to demonstrate.

His theory is designed to demonstrate the functionality of the society through various groups and sub-groups that form part of the broader society. Durkheim is particularly interested in the efficacious roles of a society as well as its contributions. In order to demonstrate his point of view, he made an analogy between social systems and organic systems. He took the human body and its numerous organs as example. The structure of a society can be represented by the structure of the human body, and its various components are represented by the diversity of human organs. Durkheim posits that all of the organs together form the body; if one organ is dysfunctional, the rest of the body may weaken and ultimately stop functioning. Put differently, functionalism emphasises the societal equilibrium. If something happens to disrupt the order and the flow of the system, society must adjust to achieve a stable state. According to Durkheim, society should be analysed and described in terms of its functions. Society is a system of interrelated parts where no one part can function without the others. These parts make up the whole of society. If one part changes it has an impact on society as a whole. For example, if the state provides for holistic education, children will be equipped to live their lives effectively. As growing adults, they will contribute to the welfare of the society. Hence, the state investment is productive. A second example is the provision made by the state for technical abilities at school. Students learn a skill and after years of experimentation, they become professional workers. This boosts the economic system and in consequence, the state thrives. Another example is the provision made for the

Muslim community. If the government and non-governmental organisations work together for the eradication of drugs in Muslim areas and involve the youth in various noble activities, Muslim children may be less distracted by drugs. They will be able to concentrate on positive motivations, such as going to school, striving to attain a good education and contribute to society at the macro level.

With the emergence of new social institutions, Durkheim wanted to examine how the society could maintain its integrity and coherence in the modern era in which the traditional, social, and religious ties are no longer assumed as they used to be in the past. Old Islamic schools had played a vital role within the Muslim community during the late 1900's but with the emergence of modernity, the researcher argues that they are now less effective and struggle to meet the various needs and desires of the current young generation. Contemporary society is also marked by secularisation and media influences that create enormous tensions within various institutions such as family, school and religion. These aspects have been tackled by functionalist theorists to explain the causes of social disintegration. The functionalist theory is appropriate to this dissertation as it provides a coherent interpretation of the various components of social order and cohesion, and it therefore logically aligns with the question at hand.

The school is one of the primary bases upon which the broader society rests. School has challenging roles to play in the contemporary world. As life is not static, education should not remain so. The researcher therefore wanted to examine the external roles of various sub-institutions and individualistic roles that contribute to school success. Since the present study is based on Islamic Secondary schools in Mauritius, a functionalist view will help in the examination of five different schools having some similarities as well as differences. Are these schools functional or dysfunctional? This research intends to find out through the use of the functionalist theory.

In regard to Islamic Secondary schools, the functionalist theory contributes to explaining whether such schools are productive or not. Productivity is therefore assessed in accordance to their degree of functionality. In the case of Islamic Secondary Schools, the objective is to enforce religion and cultural understanding at its base. For Zygmunt Bauman (1990), socialisation into culture is about introducing and maintaining social

order in society. He suggests that any individual behaviour that lies outside the cultural norm of that society is perceived as dangerous and it can threaten the stability of that society.

In general, Islamic Secondary Schools seek to propose an alternative religious background and a cultural Muslim environment in order to promote religious beliefs through education and Islamic values, which strive to develop students into better Muslims as well as providing them with a sense of social citizenship. This study will examine whether they achieve this goal or not.

Looking at the various aspects that are known as normlessness or anomie by sociologists, Durkheim sees crime and suicide as a punishment and is indicative of the level of functionality of a society. Of course, crime has varying degrees of dangerousness, and it can broadly be divided into moral and physical crime. Moral crime involves spreading rumours at school about peers, back-biting, or calling names to the point of lowering people's self-esteem. Physical crime involves fights. Such actions are considered as a form of deviance and deviance is a violation of social norms. Referring to the case of a school, it may mean that educational leaders are not able to meet the various needs of the students and the staff; it can be moral needs, spiritual needs and educational needs through acquiring social cohesion and unity. Likewise, the number of wrongdoings that occur within a school indicates that there is a discrepancy at one or more levels. It can be either external or internal to the school. Examples of external factors can be factors related to parents, drugs and the home environment, whereas internal factors may concern teachers, rectors, other students within the institution, curriculum, discipline and so forth. Functionalists may indirectly shed light into the internal dynamics of society. For example, the fact that a school is categorised as dysfunctional allows researchers to research the reasons for its dysfunctionality. In order to look at the various dysfunctional areas, the internal aspects of the pupil's lives must be looked at. To illustrate, formal instruction at school deals with cognitive learning and often disregards emotional aspects of learning. For example, a student is not able to learn despite repetitive explanation and the use of pedagogical methods. However, the reason underlying the student's inattention may be due to stress and anxiety. They may have somebody in their lives that is involved in drugs or is

imprisoned. Such a disturbance can impact their memory and their interest to participate in class.

This research analyses the functionality of one category of school, namely Islamic secondary schools. Islamic secondary schools are based on a specific theory of the Islamic ethos. However, it possesses various attributes that can be discussed in relation to, and is compatible with, the functionalist framework as shall be seen in the next chapter.

## **1.9 CONCEPTS**

The concepts of education, religion and culture are viewed in light of the functionalist framework. By its nature, the concepts of education, religion and culture are intrinsic to this study. It is thus important to look at each of these concepts in turn in light of the broader functionalist framework.

### **1.9.1 DEFINITION OF EDUCATION**

The definition of education is important to set up the discussion. The term -educationll is derived from two Latin words; *educare (educere)* and *educatum*. -*Educare*ll means to train or mould to bring up or to draw out from inward to outward. The term -*educatum*ll denotes the act of teaching. It involves the principles and practices of teaching as well as the development of the latent faculties of the learner and involves a holistic process. Both Kumar and Ahmad (n.d) view education as the development of individuals in regards to their societal needs and demands; as a stabiliser of social order, conservator of culture, creator of new values, and as an instrument of change and social reconstruction. Simply put, they see education as a holistic aim to help an individual deal with all aspects of life (Kumar & Ahmad, n.d).

According to Chris Livesey, formal education takes place within the formal setting of the school and involves learning a specific range of subjects known as formal curriculum, the mastery of which is tested through formal examinations (Sociology Course book, chp.9, p.293). This idea is in line with the Mauritian education system. Informal education is what students learn through the experience of attending school that is not part of a formal curriculum, for example conformity to uniform, time-table hours, norms of behaviour and discipline.

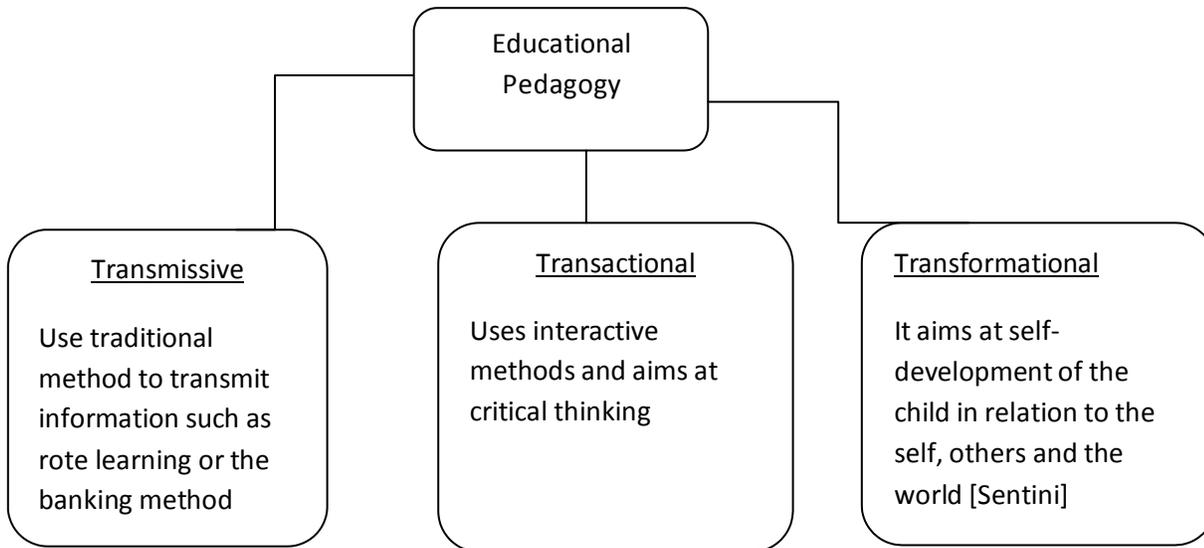
The holistic educational pattern is supposed to include moral ethics, character building and guidance dealing with instructional guidelines that endorse cognitive, behavioural and emotional intelligence. Many schools around the world promote religious education or an integrated curriculum in view of promoting both religion and academic subjects. With regards to the criticisms levelled against Islamic schools, Al Khatib claims that religious schools are not exclusive to Islam. In fact Christianity, Judaism, and Buddhism -among other religions- all possess their own forms of schooling, one of the primary aims of which is to secure the individual's right to worship as one chooses (Al Khatib: 2001).

In functionalist theory, the society is placed at the central part of all problems and issues since it is the parameter where individuals evolve and learn. This is why functionalists view education, religion and culture as positive constructs because their aim is to bring stability and integration into society's mainstream. Education and religion are socialising institutions that allow children to emerge successfully in the society and as individuals. It intends to bring about certain desirable changes in students with its well-defined aims and objectives. The curriculum is set and the academic achievements of students measured.

Henceforth, education helps develop socio-cultural and economic growth. Sociologists see a close relationship between mass education and the economy (Sociology course book, pg 153). Hence educated beings have the potential to develop into complete, responsible individuals. Such individuals are capable of maintaining intellectual tasks and handling key posts that serve to develop the society on micro, meso and macro levels. They are useful as social citizens as well as serving the country. By adopting the appropriate behaviour, educated individuals become functional citizens of a society. Consequently they contribute to its general well-being. This thesis will examine whether Islamic schools effectively play their roles in promoting such well-being.

### **1.9.2 EDUCATIONAL PEDAGOGY**

The term pedagogy refers to the methods used by educators to teach students. There are three modes of teaching, transmissive, transactional and transformational (Miller, 2007).



The transmissive mode relies on traditional pedagogical methods, whose aim is to transmit pre-existing knowledge. The transactional mode aims at critical thinking skills through interaction, conversation and collaboration in classroom set ups and the transformational mode involves self development and involves the relationship between teachers and students for more productive results. Miller argues that all three curriculum orientations are needed in order to achieve development of the whole person. This can be articulated in Islamic terms as *Al Insān Al kāmīl*, which will be elaborated upon in the next chapter. Hence the three teaching modes are highly intertwined. Accordingly, they are not to be considered as clear separations of different ways to teach or learn, but rather as three lenses from which to start when analysing a teaching/learning situation (Miller, 2010). For Alain Sentini, the transformative mode refers to a holistic approach where the individual learns to connect with themselves, others and the world around them. He argues that the term pedagogy in the contemporary world refers to the art or science of being a teacher, not only to strategies or styles of instruction but also to the facilitation and management of sustainable transformations, whether individual, social, structural or institutional. Sentini believes that -the classroom is envisioned as a site where new knowledge, grounded in the experiences of students and teachers alike, is produced through meaningful dialogue (dialogical method).<sup>11</sup> This pedagogy is intended to inform and empower educators to review their methods of teaching and to apply inter-relationship as a communication tool to help students in their lives. Sentini

states that -Transformative pedagogy empowers both teachers and learners. It encourages learners to be reflective and critical thinkers who are able to contribute meaningfully as members of local and global communities. It also redefines (the) role of teachers. Transformative education demands active and engaged students, asking critical questions and searching for additional information from other sources as well as those given in the curriculum. The students are trained in information literacy: searching and critically assessing the information obtained. The assessed information should then be placed in a context and used to solve a problem for example. (Daniel K. Schneider, 2007). The transformative pedagogy, as its name suggests, prepares students for change. In Mauritius, education has long been recognised as a critical mechanism for achieving development goals. It is generally agreed upon that many problems can be solved through knowledge and channelled through meaningful education. Transformative pedagogy is in contrast with traditional pedagogy where educators play a role and children listen passively and take notes. It takes its ideas from Pablo Freire, such as dialogic education rather than -banking education. A relevant education is not limited to the classroom, but seeks to contextualise the issues felt by surrounding areas and people as part of the learning environment. Students are encouraged to ask questions and to interact rather than being passive and absent-minded.

On that score, the researcher posits that these three methods are in line with functionalism which views education as an adaptive trend. Since education serves the needs of the society, students must be trained accordingly so that they may fulfil their roles in the correct manner. Moreover, functionalists view education as an exchange. Students are transformed through interactive processes. By so doing, they are engaged in the transformative education as they are bound to be transformed by the methods and manners of teaching. They believe that sorting is important because the sorting principle is based on merit. In the Mauritian context, sorting by merit is called streaming. High performers are sorted out so that they are able to learn and acquire skills whereas low performers need longer time to assimilate and therefore are put together so that they are not penalised. Functionalists believe that one of the latent roles of education is networking. It is the interpersonal connection that exists which develops into

professional and personal relationships with teachers as well as with other students. This in turn creates solid bonds that may be formed based on similar interests, income potential, similar educational levels, as well as similar backgrounds. Hence, education serves as a beneficial contribution to an ordered society. This thesis will examine whether these pedagogies are present and functioning effectively at Islamic schools.

### **1.9.3 EDUCATION AND SOCIALISATION**

The previous section referred to the notion of an educated citizen and it is important to unpack the notion of education from a functionalist perspective. Human beings depend on other human beings to socialise and learn the accepted ways of the society they live in. In other words, when a baby is born, they learn a set of behaviours based on guidelines that are learned; thus, the importance of both instruction and education. Durkheim states that: "Each new generation is reared by its predecessor; the latter must therefore improve in order to improve its successor. The movement is circular" (Emile Durkheim.org, n.d). Taken from this perspective, the researcher wants to highlight that the role of educational leaders as well as educators is to constantly review their policies and their ability to cope with new challenges in the light of spiritual, moral and educational processes. Moral education is therefore a must because it forms part of the formation of the child and lies at the heart of every successful and dynamic system. Education starts the moment a child is born. It begins as an informal process at home. Parents are therefore the primary educator of their new borns. The child learns through imitation and observation. According to functionalists, education is a whole concept of learning processes that help to develop various skills within a child as they grow up. Education is what differentiates human beings from animals because the functionality of human beings is more complex and more demanding than other animals (Haralambos & Holborn, p.2).

Durkheim considers education as something essentially social in character, in its origin and in its functions. Education evolves within a parameter called society. The society is constituted of individuals who need to be educated in order to meet the exigencies of the society. If they cannot meet the needs of the society, they cannot function within

society, so they collapse. In this sense, education is a social process. Schools act as a link between the society and individuals by offering a set of subjects that need to be studied in order for them to integrate into society. When various individuals and groups of individuals study the same subjects, they function together and develop various aptitudes that may serve society, thus making education socially relevant to the development of a higher functioning society. To illustrate further, when schools indulge in social activities, they create productive young adults and teach them the value of the self and the society. They become responsible beings because they are aware of the responsibilities that lie ahead as they grow up and take their own share in the society.

While schools are created to meet the needs of the society, the society needs schools to progress. So there is duality of needs and interests. Education which is received within the realm of schools fulfils the needs and aspirations of society and creates an intimate relationship between individuals and the society. Durkheim believes that education is not a static phenomenon but a dynamic and ever-changing process. Every society with its own changing socio-cultural needs may require an education that meets those needs. Since needs change continuously, education must adapt accordingly. The challenge of education is that it needs pedagogues to observe the changing state of society and find solutions to maintain educational equity. Moreover, pedagogues are responsible for proposing informal and innovative tools to match societal needs so that children are able to live well within their own society by improving it. Education is therefore multi-levelled and multi-functional. It helps to fill various gaps in society, seeks to cure social diseases and promotes social welfare. Education is thus a solution for social disintegration and helps construct a society through the creation of an educated mass public.

Education also takes into consideration the global change such as modernisation and its impact on young people as well as those who educate them. This aspect of modernity is expressed by Marshall Berman (1983, p.15) as such: -There is a mode of vital experience – experience of space and time, of the self and other, of life's possibilities and perils – that is shared by men and women all over the world today. Berman maintains that modernity promises adventure, power, joy, growth,

transformation of 'ourselves and the world' and the unity of mankind and at the same time, it is a unity of disunity because it can destroy everything one possesses. This is why Durkheim believed that there is a need to resolve social disorder and bring about a higher and nobler society. His wishes were to maintain social progress as well as social unity. (vcampus.uom.ac.mu, n.d).

Functionalists see school as a miniature societyll whereby different parties meet together for one purpose: imparting education to students. (vcampus.uom.ac.mu, n.d). Since the Mauritian society is multi-faceted, education needs to target various socio-cultural interfaces and help students understand how education impacts society. In the contemporary world, which is referred to as the post-modern society by sociologists, the role of schooling and education has been questioned. Of course, there are new challenges that are added to the functionality of education such as the creation of new jobs that are more interactive and based on team spirit. Additionally, companies in Mauritius often work nation-wide and its labour force comes from different countries. So learners should be conversant with the diverse market reality. This enables them to have a wide view of education and become aware of what is expected of them as future adults and the role they need to play in societies, especially the Mauritian society. It is important therefore to understand how students look at learning and what message is being conveyed to them concerning the process of education and its goals. Educational leaders and educators are guides that set up specific guidelines for students' future. It also helps in analysing biases that are predisposed in the school environment and its culture as well as among younger individuals. As a matter of fact, the challenge lies at a higher level. Those who teach need to be trained in order to be able to train the younger generation.

This is best explained by functionalists who focus on the positive functions performed by the educational system. Merton (1957) differentiates between two types of roles; they are latent and manifest. Manifest roles are those that convey basic knowledge and skills to the next generation. (vcampus.uom.ac.mu, n.d). Durkheim states that education functions to maintain the transmission of norms and values in society, especially with the ascendancy of secularisation. He claims that in order to make society function

properly and continue to survive, it is of prime importance that similarities exist between individuals. Thus, education according to him, contributes to weld a mass of individuals into a united whole so that society become(s) a homogeneous whole that makes people abide to fundamental values, become committed to each other and develop a sense of belongingness that ensure social stability in society' (Emile Durkheim: Education and social solidarity, n.d). This notion has been underlined by Talcott Parsons, who believes that education leads to universalistic values. He maintains that -education performs a link between family and the wider society which in turn leads to secondary socialisation. In addition, education allows people to train for their future roles in society (Parsons - Education and Universalistic Values). The latent role of education aims at socialising people into society's mainstream. For example, moral education helps maintain a more cohesive social structure by bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds (Cliffnotes: theories of education, n.d).

Education is thus a means of socialisation. Education includes morality and ethics which in turn contribute to shaping individuals. It helps form a more cohesive social structure by bringing together people from diverse backgrounds. There are two pertinent questions that act as guides to the functionalist analysis on education. They are: (1) what are the functions of education for society? (2) What are the functional relationships between education and other parts of the social system? The first question tries to assess the contributions of education in maintaining stability, value consensus and social solidarity in society while the second tries to examine the relationships between education and aspects such as religion, job prospects and the like, and consider how these relationships help in social integration. Education therefore is a primary vehicle for learning norms, values and skills and to apply them in the society they live in. Since modern society may lead to anomie (normlessness) [as has been predicted by Durkheim], education helps maintain norms and values of the society by reminding learners of the importance of cultivating relationships.

Education also assists social integration because a society can only function when the people subscribe to a specific set of beliefs and values around citizenry. (vcampus.uom.ac.mu, n.d). Another point which the functionalists have identified is

social placement, where students are identified by elders for their capacity to receive education and to demonstrate it. In other words, the better students are motivated to learn, the higher they will achieve in society. This aims towards a meritocratic society which is built upon social justice (Cliffnotes, n.d). Social justice here means that those who struggle and make considerable effort and show interest are finally rewarded for their efforts. The use of education is to improve social status and to gain better opportunities in life, thus education itself becomes a reward.

Finally, education is also associated with social and cultural innovation where students learn new things that can enhance the quality of their lives. Thus this thesis will examine whether Islamic schools are functioning as effective vehicles of socialisation, a key aim of the educational process.

#### **1.9.4 EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY**

Durkheim believes that a school curriculum should be devised in such a way that it instils general shared norms and values in a heterogeneous society. The Mauritian context is intercultural and interreligious and the study will examine the challenging roles Islamic Secondary schools play in connection to the broader society. Normally, Islamic schools are homogeneous while public schools are heterogeneous.

*"Society can survive only if there exists amongst its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity; education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the child from the beginning the essential similarities which collective life demands."* (Emile Durkheim – Education and social solidarity, Haralambos and Holborn, p.726).

The researchers argue that homogeneity plays an important role in the education of young learners. Students learn to appreciate each other when they have similar attributes such as age groups, religion, culture, social background, ethnicity and gender. They also share the same reality and can relate to each other in order to create a solid bond. This also creates conversation and in turn creates friendships and peer groups. Moreover, the image of school as being a miniature society prepares children for life in wider society. Children learn to live together, sit together, and share difficulties and joy.

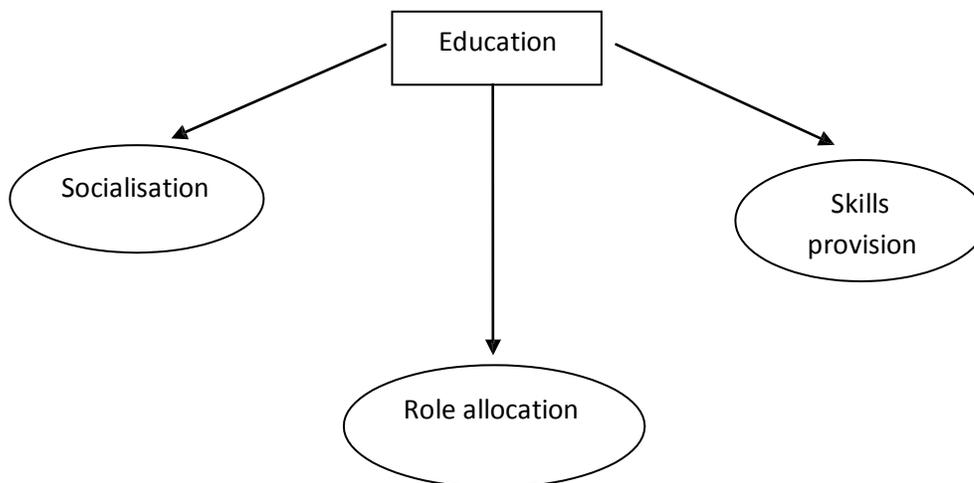
When they are together they value commonalities such as the same homework, same teachers, same classroom, same uniforms etc. Thus schools prepare students to live in the society. In a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic country, people of the same type tend to flock together to create a sense of belonging and shared identity. This argument can be applied to the Mauritian society where communities tend to create their own communal living areas; these are commonly known as Muslim bastions, Hindu bastions, Creole bastions and Franco-Mauritian bastions. Additionally, functionalists believe that school is structured to make individuals cooperate with other people who are neither kin nor friends, it provides a context for learning appropriate skills and school helps people interact based on a fixed set of rules that prepares them with conformity. For instance, conformity at school is representative of conformity to social norms and values. Students learn self-discipline which is important for work ethic. Finally, education ensures that people are equipped with the necessary skills for future occupations and roles in broader society. (vcampus.uom.ac.mu, n.d).

However, interestingly functionalists evoke an anomie situation which takes place once young people move from the family cocoon to the larger society. Anomie implies a state of normlessness in society and according to Durkheim, and later on, by Merton, young people learn a different culture once they step out of the house. They tend to forget certain traditions, customs and values that their family members have taught them and they adopt new ways of living in order to fit in the new environment (Introductory sociology, p.386). By doing so, they adapt to the new environment which is also necessary to create friends and to socialise, but forgetting learned values and traditions, the society turns into anomie, that is normlessness, and this may create social disintegration and alienation. For example, in schools where there are gangs and drugs, there is a risk that students may be influenced by this sub-culture and in order to be accepted by a group, some youngsters may forget the values of their own religion, culture and education in order to fit in the new environment. Leaving aside one's own culture is not necessarily anomie. It is also an act of consciousness, thus functionalists view the family as crucial for playing a primordial role in the socialisation process of adolescents and youngsters, enabling them to smoothly adapt to changes and choose

behaviour that is positive. This thesis examines the role of the secondary Muslim school in facilitating this transition.

### 1.9.5 EDUCATION AND UNIVERSALISTIC VALUES

Functionalist theory is based on harmonisation of the whole system in order to attain cohesion for the common good. Talcott Parsons links education to three roles - socialisation, skills provision and role allocation. Parsons explains that school becomes the focal socialisation agency after primary socialisation within the family. He is of opinion that school bridges the gap between the family and society as it prepares children for their future adult roles. Within the family, the status of members is ascribed at birth like being a son, daughter and siblings while in society the situation is different since people have to achieve their status through certain yardsticks like examinations, acquisition of skills, performance etc. In the same way, individuals are judged and treated in terms of particularistic values at home but in wider society they are judged in terms of universalistic standards (Revise Sociology, 2017).



Thus, schools better prepare individuals for this transmission by establishing universalistic standards and assessing conduct with school rules and regulations as yardsticks. Students learn punctuality and discipline at school. Likewise achievement is assessed through performances in examinations and this is applied to all learners regardless of gender, ethnic group, family backgrounds and social class. Parsons

argues that schools operate on meritocratic principles since status is achieved through one's own efforts. Moreover, school socialises young people into two basic values:

- **Achievement:** At school, children are encouraged to strive for higher levels of academic attainment and those who succeed are rewarded.
- **Equality of opportunities:** all children are put on equal terms so that they can compete with each other, however, only the best qualified students succeed. This fosters the value of equality of opportunities.

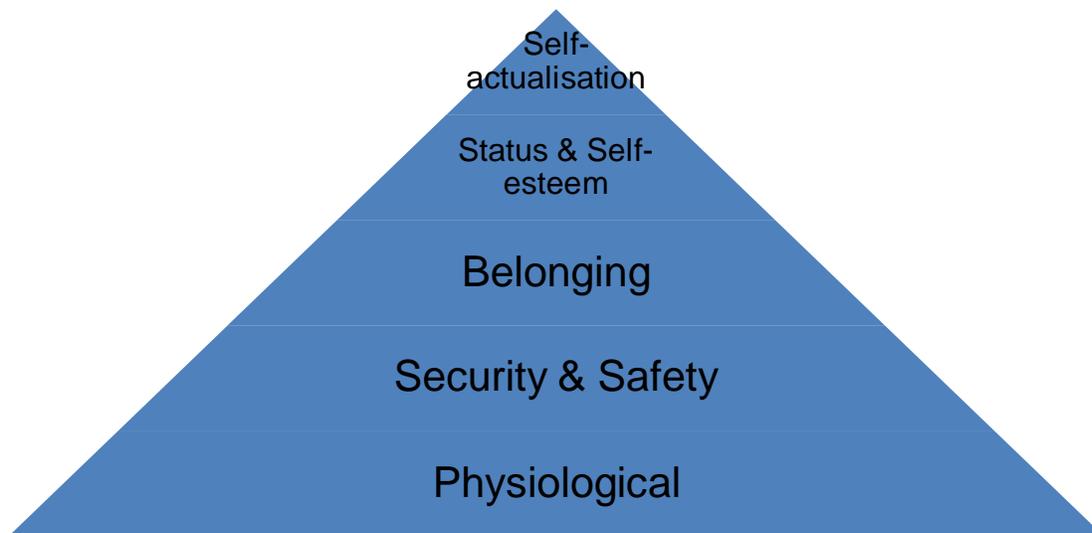
Parsons states that a highly industrialised society needs individuals who are talented in specific fields and a highly motivated and achievement-oriented workforce is required. Therefore, the best qualified will be rewarded for their efforts and capacity and this brings justice in the society where both the talented and the low performers agree with the rules. In this respect, the school is best suited to affect this process and by doing so, schools prepare students for their future adult roles. This thesis will consider whether Islamic schools help facilitate these meritocratic goals of functionalism,

### **1.10 ABRAHAM MASLOW: HIERARCHY OF NEEDS**

Another theory that can be connected to functionalism is that of Abraham Maslow. This theory of education stresses that motivation is the crux of successful educational pathways. In short, he views motivation as central to learning. This motivation is linked to a hierarchy of needs. Maslow has identified five human needs, ranked in order of importance, from bottom to top (The hierarchy of needs, n.d).

- **Physiological needs:** They form part of the most basic needs that are essential to the survival of the individual.
- **Security and safety needs:** This level represents the need to be safe and to feel secure, including financial security. It comprises the need for freedom and order, the need for seeking removal of fear and anxiety by gaining job security.
- **Belonging needs:** Security involves living in groups or/and sub groups where there is mutual understanding, love and appreciation.

- **Status and self-esteem needs:** Internal feelings of self worth; these include a person's need for self-respect and the esteem of others, the need for success, self-confidence, recognition and appreciation of one's own achievement, as well as the need for status. The recognition of all these needs leads to a sense of gratification. The lack of a positive construct leads to demotivation in the workplace.
- **Self-actualisation needs:** These needs are gratified when an individual aims higher to reach their fullest potential. These needs necessitate the need to grow and develop. It is the highest level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.



This theory is rooted in the educational structure. In order to maximise on the effectiveness of school-wide and individual classroom teaching programs, administrators and teachers must consider students' hierarchal needs. This must be a top priority in the development of these programs so that students have the capability of reaching their highest levels of potential. For instance, if students have not had their breakfast before they come to school, they will not be concentrating on learning; they will be preoccupied with the need for food. When students come to school without a proper breakfast, school systems must meet this need by providing breakfast programs so that these children will be more likely to learn effectively. There is a strong correlation

between cultural deprivation and educational achievement (Sociology Course book, pg 170).

Maslow believes that learning can be made meaningful through 'real life' experiences. Teachers should plan lessons which involve meta-cognitive activities and students should be involved in self-expressive and creative projects in order to actualise their potential. It can be argued that the concept of pastoral care can meet the exigencies of both students and staff in their personal, social, physical, spiritual and academic needs. This is why Maslow believes that in order for an individual to reach their maximum potential, they need to satisfy a number of needs. This thesis will examine whether Islamic schools meet this hierarchy of needs as given by Maslow.

### **1.11 THE CONCEPT OF CONSTRUCTIVISM**

Another theory that can be aligned with functionalism that will be used in this essay is constructivism. This theory, prominently developed by Jean Piaget (1936), is based on cognitive development and suggests that intelligence is a changing trait. Piaget believes that cognitive development is a process which occurs due to biological maturation and interaction with the environment. He explains how a child constructs a mental model of the world. Since the concept analyses the interaction between human experiences and their behaviour patterns, Piaget has relied on constructivism to elaborate upon students' cognitive abilities. For example, he stresses the importance of play and exploration as useful steps in developing educational approaches. By doing so, Piaget has based his theory on his observation of children at play and their understandings of the notions of rules, fairness and justice. He terms these as heteronomous and autonomous. (*Jean Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development*, cited by Saul McLeod, 2018).

Moreover, Piaget shows interest in the science of behaviour of learners as well as the functioning of the mind. Children, according to him, should be trained to think and develop critical thinking. Consequently, teachers should be trained to help rather than instruct. Constructivism lays tremendous stress on how students can construct their own understanding. It is through their own interest to investigate and conceptually grasp

a situation, that the conceptual changes they are making during reflection take place (Ramful, 1999).

Von Glasersfeld, the father of constructivism, is of the opinion that education has two main purposes:

- 1) Empowering learners to be perceptive, and
- 2) Promoting perceptions and actions in the future generation that are deemed significant to the present generation.

Von Glasersfeld believes that learner empowerment can be achieved through performance of what they have previously learnt. They must remain actively involved in the learning process. He considers the traditional method of teaching to be irrelevant since adolescents do not take part in the classroom. Additionally, constructivist learning is best put into practice when learners are confronted with issues and concepts in the form of problems that need to be explored, rather than, to be given -factoids to be ingested and then regurgitatedll (Von Glasersfeld E, 1995:184).

In his essay on pedagogy, Kant states that -the human being can be merely trained, broken in, mechanically instructed, or really enlightened. One trains dogs and horses, and one can also train human beings. Training, however, does little; what matters above all, is that children learn to think; the aim should be the principles from which all actions springll (Kant, 1803, Werke, vol ix, p.450).

According to Robert Gagne, learners can better participate in class activities when they are rightly guided. Teachers should set clear goals and objectives, prepare lessons; define, explain and clarify them; promote good questioning techniques that involve classroom participation; and ensure proper classroom management including maintaining order. He believes that teaching requires arranging conditions of learning that are external to the learner. These conditions need to be constructed in a step-by-step manner by taking into account learners' previous acquired capabilities (Robert Gagne, 1965).

A good and appropriate environment is important for learning to take place. Teaching should be graded or progressive and aims at specific educational goals. Teachers should take into account that learning is not a linear process, rather learners have different pathways and this should be sought during classroom activities. Some are high performers while others are slow learners. Put simply, teaching should be viewed as a progressive, repetitive and slow process since teaching is undermined by forgetfulness. Appropriate learning methodologies are required for better results.

While contemporary teaching styles tend to be group-focused and inquiry driven, a constructivist style aims at a mixed approach of teaching. Its methods include sub-groups of alternative teaching styles. These include modelling, coaching and test preparation through rubrics scaffolding. The end result is to promote student participation and better performances. Constructivism is in line with environmental stimuli. The school environment creates expectations and stimulates learning. It can be concluded that there is a strong correlation between the constructivism theory and that of the functionalist. Durkheim's theory maintains that human development is socially situated and knowledge is constructed through interaction with others. He suggests that people actively construct their knowledge of the world based on the interactions between their ideas and their experiences. This thesis will consider whether the lessons that are derived from constructivism, especially in the area related to teaching techniques, have application at Islamic schools.

### **1.12 THE HEALTHY SELF**

Katherine Mansfield says that: -I want, by understanding myself, to understand others. I want to be all that I am capable of becoming (Rosemary, 2010). Being conscious of who we are, our potential and our ability to perform is what education is about. Education serves the role of knowing ourselves in order to live in harmony with others and with the world. As functionalists see it, the society is a whole. However, Durkheim was not interested about the inner state of human beings. Therefore the constructivism theory is complementary to functionalism. The self has long been referred to as the ego, the soul, the heart, one's understanding of things and its analysis. To illustrate, if the

self is understood, students will be able to control their desires and excesses by knowing the responsibility they carry upon their 'selves' and therefore, contribute positively to their roles as students and future adults. Thus, the understanding of the self is a means to protect oneself from all forms of evil and it increases self esteem and self love which are important for the performance of higher duties. George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) advocates that the self has two parts: self-awareness and self-image. In his theory, Mead supports the self as a social element. He believes that the notion of the self [who you are], what the self likes and the constructed personality through being in the world, can be developed; thus, self-awareness and self-image are not static. He argues that the self is not innate because it passes through various levels of reflection and interaction through which it is transformed. Self-awareness and self-image are developed through social interaction. The self cannot exist without being part of a larger social community because the self is a reflection and a response of what others think of us (*social theory re-wired*, 2016). In the same vein, Cooley discusses the concept of *looking glass self*, which is a social psychological concept describing the development of one's self and of one's identity through one's interpersonal interactions within the context of society. In short, the self is mirrored in the reactions of the other. Cooley argues that the self is a product of social interactions with other people that involves three steps:

- 1) The imagination of our appearance to other people and associated feelings;
- 2) Imagining that others are evaluating our behaviour;
- 3) The development of feelings and reaction to the imaginary evaluations of ours as objects (Charles Horton Cooley, 2001).

This concept is put into context by imagining children who first look at their mother and father. They exemplify what their parents say and do. Gradually, while they meet other people, at school or other places, they learn to take the points of view of more people into account until finally they fully socialise and take the viewpoint of the society into consideration. The researchers suggest that for the examination of this study, the self is an important concept which is in line with both the Islamic and the functionalist

viewpoint. As the functionalist says, each part must be interconnected to function. It is in the mind [self] that everything is constructed. If the mind is clear and coherent with its duties and responsibilities, the mind will function accordingly.

This happens when youths have internalised the widespread cultural norms, traditions, and expectations of behaviour appropriate in that society. At this point, when they think about their behaviour, they are thinking about the generalised –other’and how this generalised –other’ sees them and their behaviour. When they take this final role, Mead calls it the generalised other. This theory is interesting for all pedagogues involved in shaping the moral character, attitude and future of children. If teachers are properly trained in their pedagogical fields, they can better serve the students by enabling them to be more attentive to their needs and inculcating moral values and the right actions in children – the adults of tomorrow. Children should be aware of the self because it is obvious that the adolescent phase is a difficult one; often filled with stress, complex situations, inner confusion and even suicidal inclinations. Moral values build character and character is essential for socialisation. Character, attitudes and behaviours that are deemed as deviant by the society are seen as harmful for the society and the self. In relation to the above, Rogers has created a theory implicating a -growth potentialll whose aim is to integrate congruently the -real selfll and the -ideal selfll, thereby cultivating the emergence of the -fully functioning personll. Rogers assumes that human beings have one basic motive in life, that is, the tendency to self-actualise. By self-actualisation, Rogers means that people fulfil their potential by accomplishing their wishes and desires. Moreover, Carl Rogers (1902-1987) believes that humankind is inherently good and creative. When they are given the opportunity to fulfil their dreams, they are in harmony with life and the society, but they become destructive only when external constraints override the valuing process. In other words, to achieve self-actualisation they must be in a state of congruence. (Saul McLeod, 2014). Again, it can be argued that this theory has a direct link with both Islamic and functionalist views. While Islam promotes self-development (as will be seen in the next chapter), functionalism as we have noted holds that there must be a congruence between society’s changing needs and the individual’s growth.

### **1.13 EMILE DURKHEIM'S VIEW ON RELIGION**

In the wake of 19th century, European industrialisation and secularisation, Durkheim was one of the theorists who attempted to examine the relationship between religion and society. Durkheim defines religion as a -unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things. Examining the religion propounded by the Aborigines, Durkheim came to the conclusion that religion has a social power and cohesion; in brief, he views religion as a positive function. This aspect is particularly relevant to our research, though not extensively. Durkheim's idea that people of the same beliefs cling together in society is what this research is about. Durkheim has not observed other forms of religion and therefore his conclusion about religions in general may contain biases. Practising religion can be a positive aspect but it also depends on its interpretation and how it is practised in the society towards one's group and towards those who do not share the same beliefs. However, one aspect which is central to Islam is moral ethics and this is also a major aspect of Durkheim's vision of a healthy society.

Just like education, religion plays a major role in the socialisation process. Durkheim was interested to understand how religion can integrate societies and promote positive awareness among people of different cultures and ways of living. This aspect is important for inter-cultural relationships as well as any aspect relating to societies.

Ron McGivern states that Durkheim analyses religion in terms of its societal impact. Above all, Durkheim believes that religion is about community: it binds people together (social cohesion), it promotes behaviour consistency (social control) and offers strength for people during life's transitions and tragedies (meaning and purpose). By applying the methods of Natural Science to the study of society, Durkheim believes that the source of religion and morality is the collective mind-set of society and that the cohesive bonds of social order result from common values in a society. He contends that these values need to be maintained to uphold social stability. He believes that religion provides differing degrees of -social cement that bind societies and cultures together (Introduction to sociology, n.d).

In the same theoretical vein, Talcott Parsons (1902-79) sees religion as part of the cultural system. According to him, religious beliefs provide guidelines for human actions

and standards against which people's conduct can be evaluated. Knapp states that -people act on the basis of their values; their actions are oriented and constrained by the values and norms of people around them; and these norms and values are the basis of social order (Knapp, pp. 191-192). Parsons, as cited by Stephen Moore, views individuals as carrying out actions that maintain order in the system. Socialisation and education [from childhood to adulthood] are the means by which the norms and values of society are learned by individuals. This is what binds the individual to the social system as a whole and successful socialisation involves internalised norms and values within individuals (Sociology for AS-Level, 2001, p.7). Additionally, individuals who pursue their own interests serve the needs of the society as a whole. For instance, Parsons believes that members of a family flock together to relieve the stress of modern-day living [known as the warm bath theory] and the female members provide a relaxing environment for the male worker to immerse himself in after a hard day at work (Sociology for AS-level, 2001, p.38).

#### **1.14 THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE**

The word culture originates from the Latin word *cultura*, which means to cultivate. It is a derivative of the verb *colo* (infinitive *colere*) meaning to tend or to cultivate (Tucker, 1931). Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, encompassing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. It includes religion, food, dress code and the manner of wearing it, language, marriage, music, the formulation of right and wrong, the way people sit at a table, greetings of visitors and behaviour with loved ones, among others (Cristina De Rossi, 2017). Edward Burnett Tylor has termed culture as a full range of learnt human behaviour patterns. He believes that culture is prone to constant change and can be both objective and subjective. For instance, they are objective when they are in the form of material culture and subjective when they refer to an individual's own interpretations of things that are found around them. This is why, although culture is shared and acquired, it is also varied from place to place and society-to-society (Edward Burnett Tylor: 1871). Jenks describes four main domains in which culture can be used:

1. A cultured individual is empowered by goals and ideas of perfection or aspirations which they envisage to achieve; thus people are ranked above each other according to their intellectual and learning capabilities.
2. Culture is related to the idea of civilisation where some societies are seen as superior to other societies.
3. High level of culture is present in the collective body of arts and intellectual works.
4. It is present through the collection of ideas and habits that are learnt, shared and transmitted from generation to generation. It represents the patterns of normal behaviour that are expected from members of a particular society; it thus acts as a social heritage (Christopher Jenks: 1993).

To the functionalists, culture is viewed in the sense of norms, values and lifestyles. They approach the issues of societal culture as a changing phenomenon as society evolves (Haralambos & Holborn, pp.5-6). According to Durkheim, both order and individual achievement are dependent upon proper socialisation. He believes that people must learn how to behave correctly in different circumstances and attain appropriate knowledge of the collective culture that binds them together like invisible social cement (Tony Bilton et al: Introductory sociology, p.471).

It can be argued that the functionalists see a clear link between culture and education. By analysing the functions of education, functionalists point to its multi-faceted aspects and its multiple roles in the society. One of them is the dual aspect of culture; in preserving culture and changing culture. It has been noted that the more people become educated, the more they encounter a variety of perspectives. Thus, according to functionalists, more educated individuals are generally more liberal while less educated people trend towards conservatism. Hence the primary role of education is to preserve and pass on knowledge and skills while at the same time it aims to transform individuals and societies. This thesis will examine these elements of religion and culture as they play out in Islamic secondary schools in Mauritius.

### **1.15 SUMMARY**

This chapter has presented the background, motivations, objectives, scope and methodology involved in this study. It includes the research design, the methods of data collection, the selection of the sample and the research process, the ethical considerations and the research limitations of the project as well as future scopes. More significantly, it deals with various key concepts and the theoretical framework which is based on functionalism. This was combined with insights from Maslow's hierarchy of needs and constructivism. Functionalism is only one arm of the theory employed in this study; the other arm derives from Islamic theories of education. It is this to which we turn in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 2: THE PHILOSOPHY OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter examines the philosophy of Islamic education and also scrutinises the purposes of education from an Islamic point of view. The researchers believe that Islam can be viewed as a conceptual framework and the various concepts have an intrinsic connection with Islamic education.

This chapter theoretically complements Chapter 1. By combining a functionalist perspective outlined in that chapter with insights from the Islamic philosophy of education provided in this one, the researchers hope to set a solid theoretical basis for an exploration of Islamic secondary schools in Mauritius.

### **2.2 ISLAM AS A WAY OF LIFE**

Before undertaking to speak about the philosophical approach of education in Islam, it is important to view the meaning of Islam itself. The Arabic word \_Islam means peace and submission to One Creator, Allah, which is also referred to as the concept of God. This meaning is based on the fact that every single thing in the universe has been created and that Allah is the sole and unique Creator who administers everything by His will and power. Creation is therefore not coincidental and has a defined and clear purpose. Beyond this concept, the researchers understand that Allah is the owner of the universe. He commands everything and everything is under His command. Human beings are therefore subservient to Allah because Allah is All-Powerful and All-Knowing. They have therefore been commanded to submit to Allah in order to obtain peace. As a result, peace is conditional and is attached to the principle of knowing Allah and His attributes. For a believing Muslim, the philosophical basis of Islam, namely its view of reality, of one's relationship to Allah, of one's duties to fellow human beings and fellow creation in general, of the need to be aware of the next world, must be taken into consideration in any approach to Islamic education. This basis thus forms an essential complement to the views of Durkheim, Freire, Maslow, and others that were discussed previously.

### **2.3 RELIGION AS A SOCIAL ORDER**

Islam is a structure and the researchers understanding is based on the premise that it is a holistic system of life where several components are grouped together to form the Islamic vision and perspectives. To illustrate, religion, education, spirituality, socio-cultural aspects, economic and politics are part of the Islamic system. Altogether they form one entity. Likewise, functionalism believes that the various components of society form one universal truth and reality (vcampus.uom.ac.mu, n.d). However, the main difference lies in the fact that whereas functionalists such as Durkheim practically equate -Godll with -societyll, (Reader in comparative religion, 1979) Islam believes that God is the Creator of the society and that Islam is structured within the society.

Muslims assert that the social order deployed through a set of principles is inherent in human nature. Among them are: socialisation, love, security, mercy, and care for humanity irrespective of differences in religious beliefs and practices. Unity and uniformity are possible when the objective is rooted in the belief of one God and His obedience. In other words, the society can function through elements of peace and submission to one God. Durkheim also espouses the view that -social life is possible with shared conscience and social orderll; social control and social solidarity are all possible within the societal framework. He claims that human beings should be subservient to the society and by doing so the values and moral beliefs that form the basis of social life are strengthened. Indirectly, people recognise the fact that social groups are important and their dependence upon it proves that society is superior to them. He believes that religion is a social force that creates within individuals a sense of moral obligations to adhere to society's demands (Haralambos and Holborn, p. 397). While Islam agrees to the attainability of social order and cohesion, it is agreed upon that knowledge is at the core of every thought and action. Any knowledge revolves around a recurring truth: the belief in Allah, the reward of good deeds and the retribution of evil deeds in this life and the afterlife. Islam pertains to the present and the afterlife world, rooted in one specific objective, pleasing Allah. As such, teenagers must be trained to control their thoughts and actions so that they thoroughly understand the objective of life and its whereabouts. This is better understood through the following

verse: “Say: Verily, my *Ṣalāh* (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the Universe” (Qur’ān :162).

However, we should not forget that negative and harmful aspects that go against the nature of human beings must be shunned in order to attain functionality. Muslims are therefore summoned to keep away from any social gatherings that involve disobedience to Allah and any action contravening Islamic law. When humankind obeys to such universal laws, they naturally submit to the Creator and consequently attain peace of mind, heart, and soul. To demonstrate further, a dysfunctional school is a school where students are not reminded of their negative attitudes and traits of character; there is no role model and no one to remind each other about doing good and shunning evil. This is why Islamic education should be enforced in order to maintain society's equilibrium.

Hence the objective of such a stance is to keep youth away from any form of pollution: spiritual, moral, physical and environmental. This can be explained by the business of drugs, alcohol, and casinos that acts as agents of distraction for the youth preventing them from reaching their potential. Islam has provided a cure for such distractions. It is known as *Tazkiyah* [purification]. *Tazkiyah* is a method used to counteract the effect of negative knowledge and experiences. Additionally, young people easily fall prey to negative distractions. They should be aware of how to protect themselves from such traps and if they ever fall into them, they should know how to get rid of them as soon as possible. It is useful especially when people are experiencing difficult moments and through this method of *tazkiyah*, they can even experience happiness because their soul and mind are prepared for such trials. Education in the Islamic view is therefore a means of protection and a means of preparation for the present and the future. In other words, the philosophy in Islamic education is multi-levelled and it underpins righteousness at all levels. *Tazkiyat-un-nafs* is, therefore, a method of teaching and is also a branch of knowledge that promotes peaceful living and provides positive energy that is essential for workability. The objective behind this is to raise a generation of God-conscious citizens, mindful about society and themselves. This allows individuals and groups of individuals to cohabit together in harmony through positive education. Hence,

on that score, functionalism is in agreement with Islam and states that uniformity brings social coherence and structural order.

## **2.4 PHILOSOPHY OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION**

At the core of Islamic education stands one current truth. Truth according to Islam is that everything is centered about worshipping one Creator. Worshipping is not limited to prayers, symbols, and beliefs as was understood by Durkheim. The Islamic concept of worship is not an abstract philosophy. It is rational, down to earth and a functional epistemology. For instance, Allah says -*'And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me'*ll (*Qur'ān*, 51:56). This verse proclaims that Allah created the jinn and mankind with the purpose of worship. Worship is inclusive in every intention and action that is directed towards Allah (III&E Brochure Series; No. 5, n.d). For instance, studying, working, giving advice, supporting a person in need are all acts of worship but they must be done with the sole intention of pleasing Allah. Thus, there is a strict correlation between intention and acts of worship. Seen in this perspective, worship is at the heart of Islamic philosophy. Every matter revolves around that. To show this, let us use the analogy between the functions of the human body and the society as explained by the functionalists. Functionalists claim that all the organs must function properly to allow a person to live in good health. When the heart stops functioning, the person dies. (vcampus.uom.ac.mu, n.d). Therefore, a person must care for his health if he wants to live happily. Similarly, Islam says that if a person's intention and actions are not directed towards Allah, he will not reach his objectives since whatever he does will ultimately be baseless and he will reap nothing but despair, confusion, frustration, and hardship. In brief, a dysfunction has occurred between his actions and him. To return to the essence of worship, we should perceive it in terms of needs. Mankind needs Allah, this is why he needs to glorify Him and obey Him in all things. Although human beings have been made vicegerents of Allah on earth, they depend on Him in all their affairs. All the information, creativity and abilities that humans possess, they get them as favours from the Creator of the universe. Therefore, when they worship Allah, they open the door to His mercy and are able to perform their tasks with a peaceful heart. This is why teaching about the essence of worship is a compulsory part of education. The society must, therefore, produce educators who can bring faith in their teaching; no matter what

subjects they teach, they should be able to enforce these concepts at the core of reasoning. Thus, they should bring faith and conscience to co-habit harmoniously.

In this view, whatever achievement is made by an individual is because Allah has willed it for them. Whatever effort is made to perform work is gratified by Allah. Man does not create anything. He only discovers what is already there. Fame, honour, wealth are all gifts from Allah. When a person has been able to learn and acquire knowledge, they must be grateful because their effort and knowledge have been given to them as a gift. If human beings do not learn the essence of gratitude, they lose their human faculties. They have been shown the secret towards this gift while poor and needy. Prophet Musa made a *du`ā'* to Allah when he was in dire need. He said, "Oh my Lord, grant me whatever good that comes from You for indeed I am poor!! His gratitude and humbleness granted him immense satisfaction and he was elevated in this world and the next. Allah says in the Quran: "*... and whoever is grateful, he is grateful only for his own soul, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely my Lord is Self-sufficient, Honoured*" (Qur`ān, 27:40). No one on Earth can claim that his knowledge, wealth, health or power are his or hers. They are only gifts and gifts can be taken away at any time. This is the philosophy of Islamic education and this is the essence of teaching and studying. This is the starting point of learning and is a means of training for young people. Students come to school to learn about Allah, their own selves and the society by showing gratefulness to Allah in all their affairs. This is why they start learning

-*bismillāh*!! [in the name of Allah] when they start classes. It ignites the conscience towards the current truth. What is this truth? The truth is that they cannot perform except by the will of Allah. All babies when they come to Earth, they come with a memory filled with empty drawers. While they receive information and interact with people around them, these drawers are filled in with either good or/and bad information. When they reach the age of consciousness, they learn to analyse and perform actions that give meaning to their lives. If they have not been surrounded by knowledgeable people who have initiated them in good deeds, they will act badly. This is why schools are important for their educational pathways and guidance. If they are monitored by people who are not role models, who do not have the correct understanding of worship [*ibādah*], they will not be able to fulfill their duties to Allah, the society and the self.

If they are surrounded by naughty minds that constantly deviate them from their true objectives, they will not reach the pathways with guidance. They may stumble and fall and their lives will be miserable. There are many examples in the world where people are financially rich yet miserable. There are also many examples of people who have fallen due to the negative influences of friends. There are also many people who believe that this life is the end of everything and therefore they strive only for this world and neglect their own souls. Allah says in the *Qur'ān*: *"Therefore, the disbelievers said [regarding the news of Resurrection]: "This is a strange thing! "When we are dead and have become dust [shall we be resurrected?] That is a far return" (Qur'ān, 50:1-2).* So, their intellect has been programmed to think that when they die, they shall not be raised again. This perception signifies that many people can enjoy this life without caring about its consequences until they die and they believe that death is finality in itself; so, they can kill without prejudice. This is so because their education has been limited and they are unaware of the consequences of their intentions and actions. From the Islamic perspective, all intentions and all actions should have one objective and goal which again comes to the initial point of pleasing Allah. This notion is fundamental to the understanding of the philosophy of Islam and Islamic education. People do not seek knowledge for the sake of knowledge and for the sake of this world. People are commanded to acquire knowledge for the sake of Allah because the concept of God is the central part that presupposes that everything must return to its initial place. Allah says: *"From the earth We created you, and into it, We will return you, and from it, We will extract you another time" (Qur'ān, chapter 20: 55).*

To illustrate this point, the researchers claim that Allah has created everything for the survival of mankind. Thus mankind creates nothing. His mission is only to discover and make good use of the treasures bestowed upon him. For example, nobody can create rain, blood, and spermatozoa. Human beings can study and research to find a solution in various fields of studies such as environmental problems, sophisticated means of transport, road infrastructure and medical sciences among others. The ultimate aim of studies is to help humanity survive and to live in peace and harmony but since life is temporal, everyone will taste death, therefore, they need to pass on their legacy to others through education. The basis for being able to learn relies on the brain and

memory. Allah constantly refers to the ability to reason, to think, to reflect and to analyse. This is the power of human beings which have been partially attributed to some other creatures.

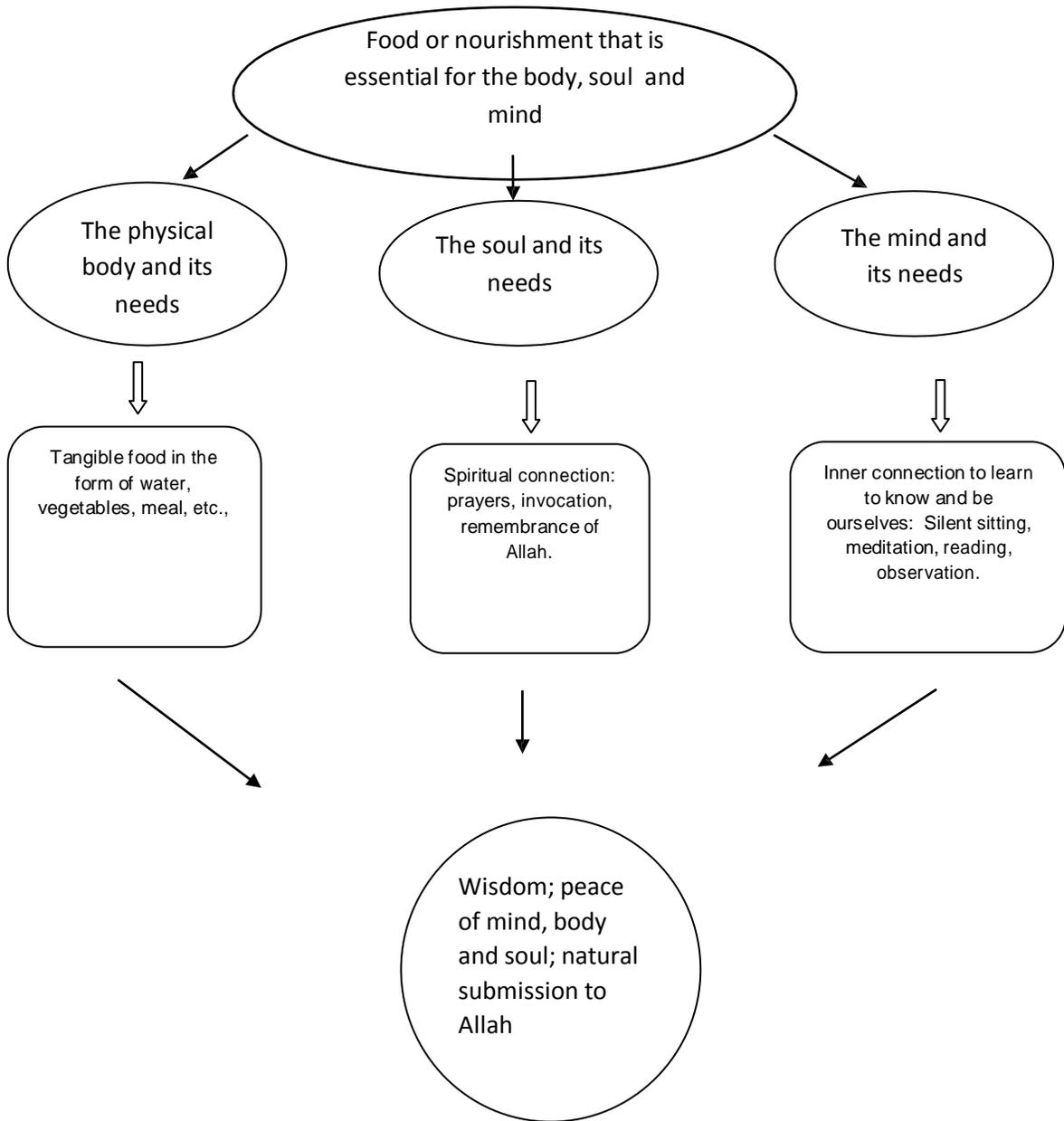
Knowledge in Islam has three levels (1) Deductive [knowledge by inference], (2) observatory [knowledge by perception] and (3) empirical [knowledge by experience or intuition]. The three main areas of Islamic philosophy are metaphysical [ontology], axiology and epistemology [the concept of knowledge]. The ontological knowledge is based on the fact that the Quran allows mankind to make their own judgment by calling them to see, to reflect, to analyse and to experiment. Allah claims: “[And] who created seven heavens in layers. You do not see in the creation of the Most Merciful any inconsistency. So return [your] vision [to the sky]; do you see any breaks?” (Qur’ān, 67:2). This verse allows children to observe the sky during the absence of sunshine and to see if they can find any place where the sky has been sown or torn. Secondly, it allows the mind to reflect that there are things that are beyond the faculty to see with the eyes yet they exist. Just as the air is invisible to the eyes yet scientists have proved its existence, likewise, the sky is divided into seven layers though human eyes have neither seen nor can perceive this division.

To demonstrate this point, the researchers claim that people should develop a habit of inquisitiveness, thoughtfulness and deeper understanding. They should learn to ask questions in order to satisfy their lack of knowledge. People retain what they learn through memory which is broadly divided into two parts: short and long. This means that people can acquire knowledge through reading, listening, observing and experimenting. People must develop their critical abilities so that they can differentiate right from wrong and vice versa. This then gives way to critical thinking as a second method of learning. People can learn by experimenting with things. They can acquire knowledge through trial and error and they also observe around them in order to understand things and develop their own talents. This gives rise to transformational learning. Islam invites humanity to learn, to discover and to advance positively. It underpins the notion of participation since we cannot advance in the world by being mere observers. Our mission presupposes that we advance as participators in the universe. However, Islam

is against two things: (1) learning with the wrong intention such as learning for the ego, learning in order to denigrate others or to wrong others; and (2) learning what is harmful to the mind, body and soul. For example, someone learns magic and sorcery in order to harm their enemies and opponents or become fortune tellers in order to tell people about their destiny while destiny belongs to the future and no one has the ability to know the future. In other words, learning is highly laudable but it has to be noble, wise and people-centered so that the society may benefit from such education. We conclude with this *hadith* reported by Ibn Masud: "The son of Adam will not pass away from Allah until he is asked about five things: how he lived his life, and how he utilized his youth, with what means did he earn his wealth, how did he spend his wealth, and what did he do with his knowledge" (*Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 2416).

Al Attas states that religion provides an "all-comprehensive norm of the human creature, and an all-inclusive goal for education". He maintains that this norm is stable because its values are regarded as absolutes, derived from the absolute attributes of Allah, which are being continually realised in a relative context in time and space. Hence, he posits that values never change. He further explains that religion furnishes education with a meaningful goal. This goal has been revealed to humanity, and thus possesses an objective status. It is neither concocted by intellectuals nor derived from experience. He says that all experience is tied to time and space, and is hence relative. By contrast, the goal of religious education is verified by experience as the most desirable one because it has succeeded in transforming barbarous people like the pre-Islamic Arabs into the most advanced, civilised and cultured peoples of the world, and produced individuals of the outstanding depth of character (*The aims of education*, n.d).

Islamic education is based on the fact that information has to be conveyed to every single part of the body because the inner and outer body is essential for the performance of actions. The body is structured into three broad parts which are the soul, the physical body and the mind. All of them need to be nourished in order to survive and perform the right action that leads towards righteousness, wisdom, and peace. In other words, a human being needs to feed his entire body in order to be functional.



Henceforth, Islamic schools exist because they want to prepare students to become good Muslims by learning about Islam. Learning about Islam entails learning about the Creator, the interrelationship between God and human beings and the duties and rights of human beings among other fields of studies. The researchers suggest that Islamic education starts with the education of the *Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth*. Since all sciences are based on evidence, Islamic sciences are based on two primary sources which are the *Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth*. Both the *Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth* serve as references to understand human nature, society, and all affairs pertaining to the universe. Thus, to learn in Islam is to learn about what is productive and positive for the soul, the body and the mind in order to regain tranquillity and peace. However, as explained above, knowledge is not necessarily good and healthy. For instance, using magic and witchcraft to harm people and to separate couples (*Qur'ān*, 2:102) are illegal acts and condemned by the law. Since such knowledge is against the law of nature, it is unproductive and is considered by functionalists to be a deviant act.

The *Ḥadīth* is believed by Muslims to contain important guidelines that have not been elaborated upon by the *Qur'ān*. Thus, it can be argued that Islamic education aims at reconciling theories with practices. The functionality of a society depends on the construction of the self through theoretical knowledge and good practices. Hence, it connects with the functionalist point of view about the society being a whole with its various parts forming a weld of mass.

## **2.5 ISLAMIC EDUCATION LEADS TO GUIDANCE**

Actions are the accomplishment of what the mind and the soul have grasped. Therefore, noble deeds are formed by the certainty of the mind and the soul after they have received true knowledge. To confirm this, Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor *et al* (2012), state that Islamic education is necessary because it is the basis of building knowledge from a physical and spiritual angle. While everything has a beginning and an end, Allah has no beginning and no end and is therefore eternal. So, people are bound to depend upon Allah because their passage on Earth is temporal and they can only strive towards the development of the society, the realisation of the self and their abode in the next world; otherwise, life becomes meaningless. So the philosophy of learning is to become

self-aware of all these aspects, to develop a deep insight into the creator, the motives of the creation, and the objectives of life which will eventually lead to guidance. It becomes the duty of all human beings to acquire in-depth knowledge concerning the above. Since there is a number of Islamic educational concepts which are seen as primary factors in producing individuals who are God-conscious and subservient to Allah, -those concepts become the main moving force to achieve the educational aims, that is, to form individuals who possess their own aims and philosophies in life who function as a servant and representative on this earth and who at once form members of society which is progressive and civilised as has been underlined by Islam itself for its adherentsll (Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor et al, 2012). Henceforth, it is clear that Islam is not limited to mystical ideologies; rather, it uplifts the nature of human beings who are themselves created, weak, limited and who cannot depend on their own if they are not guided by the Creator and if they do not conform to their own nature. In other words, they are not pleasing a Creator for the sake of the Creator. They are conforming to their own nature and this is the pathway to their own peace. This does not presuppose that Muslims should learn the Quran and its recitation and negate the world; rather, what is being claimed is that human beings should learn with the right objective and they must choose topics and fields of interest that conform to human nature. For example, Metaphysics<sup>2</sup> are an important aspect of knowledge because children need to know the basics of who they are and their natural environment in order to obtain peace of mind and act with goodness towards nature and the self. *‘And We send down blessed water [rain] from the sky, then We produce therewith gardens and grain [every kind of harvests] that are reaped’* (Qur’ān,50:9). And Allah links its interpretation to another verse which underpins critical thinking. *“A provision for [Allah’s] servants. And We give life therewith to a dead land. Thus, will be the Resurrection [of the dead from the graves]”* (Qur’ān, 50:11). From these verses, children learn, for example, that it is Allah who sends down water from the sky. Water does not come from human beings and water cannot be created by any human beings. The latter can only use their abilities and efforts to maintain Allah’s gift and manage it so that they can have water for all their necessities. Secondly, children learn that the Earth and the plantation die if they do not have rain and Allah has the ability to give life to a dead land by pouring rain to the Earth. Finally, Allah compares the resurrection day with the dead land. Dead people will

be resurrected from their graves and be given life whilst they were initially dead. Indeed, the *Qur'ān* is self-explanatory in a number of ways because it touches profound subjects that are essential for peace of mind, deep happiness and it is only when human beings are aware of facts that they are bound to submit and to produce positive thoughts and actions that are necessary for a functional and resilient society. Thus human beings need to learn the right information since their childhood and the *Qur'ān* will play a key role in this regard in terms of Islamic education.

Education is thus commendable and marks a clear distinction between the knowledgeable and the ignorant. To this effect, the Quran states:

*“Are they equal those who know and those who do not know?” (Qur'ān, 39:9)*

This verse aims at consolidating the notion of education and its hierarchy upon those who do not possess knowledge; rationally speaking, those who know are above those who are ignorant. The ignorant must constantly rely on those who know in order to perform an action or take a decision. The *Qur'ān* also rejects people who have been given the faculty of reason but deny this fact by following their baseless instinct. They have been compared to the donkeys which carry a load of books but are unable to make any difference. Thus, the *Qur'ān*, akin to functionalism, promotes a meritocratic society. Meritocracy, in this case, is primarily determined by one's level of knowledge.

## **2.6 EQUITY**

The philosophy of Islamic education is rooted in the essence of justice. The objective is to move towards a just society (Nazim Qayoom Rather and Daniel M., 2006). A society based on evil intentions and deeds with discrimination based on gender, race, skin colour and social status is dysfunctional in every sense of the world. One of Allah's characteristics is *Al-'Adl* which means Just. Allah is just and He wants justice for all. However, justice has to be sought. To achieve this, He has given mankind all the tools and it is the duty of each individual to seek justice for themselves and for the whole society. By doing so, they are showing gratefulness and justice to their Lord and Master, Allah.

Gender equity is mentioned in the next verse and demonstrates the qualities achieved through the advancement of education. It also aims at invalidating gender discrimination

at work since knowledge and hard work are not biologically attributed to one gender. Allah says:

*“Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so - for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward” (Qur’ān, 33:35).*

The philosophy of Islamic education is also based on an appreciation of diversity and hence mutual respect. The *Qur’ān* proves this by stating that human beings have been created in ranks. This suggests that mankind does not possess the same level of intelligence and cognitive abilities. Referring to Howard Gardner’s (2011) nine types of intelligence, which are naturalist, musical, logical, existential, interpersonal, bodily-kinaesthetic, linguistic, intra-personal and spatial, the researchers suggest that children are either born with special abilities and talents and that school helps to rediscover them and to help students in their educational pathways. The researchers recall that before the advent of Islam, many Arabs possessed astrological intelligence<sup>1</sup> that can be referred to spatial intelligence in reference to Gardner's suggestion. What we notice also is that people have different inclinations and orientations. For example, some people like to be in the limelight while others like to remain in the background. Some have cognitive abilities and others have manual abilities. Some are noted for piety and profound insight and others excel in leadership abilities. So, Islamic education has the power and ability to enforce all these, though in the contemporary world, students are tested mainly on their cognitive intelligence and they are held captive concerning the variety of intelligences. For example, a child who naturally loves travelling and being on the move is required, in normal schooling, to remain seated during several hours inside four walls. Adapting the functionalist's point of view, such an attitude is irrelevant to other fields of intelligence and therefore is dysfunctional to the holistic approach of the educational system. Only recently have some sociologists

and psychologists paid attention to the emotional and intuitive intelligences of human beings. This is in addition to concepts of rational and social intelligences.

However, as far as the researchers know there has been no study of Muslim youth with regard to these intelligences. The researchers believe that teenagers should be taught in a fashion that develops these various intelligences and in this way they would have a better understanding of their self and soul from an Islamic perspective and thus contribute to a better functioning society.

## **2.7 ISLAMIC CONCEPTS**

The philosophy of Islamic education has one specific goal: peaceful living and attainment of bliss in the present and afterlife. To attain this, various key concepts have been used by the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*. Such concepts are multi-levelled and multi-faceted in view of satisfying every individual, their relationship with the Creator and their fellow beings, both Muslims and non-Muslims, and finally, their relationship with the world and any living and non-living creatures. Such concepts are described below and they are all necessary tools for the understanding of this present life and the final destination which is death. Death marks the end of the present life and the rewards of deeds, good and bad. In a more theoretical vein, Islamic concepts are compulsory factors that function together to bring success on all fronts. They function as beads on a chain. If one bead is detached from the chain, the chain is either broken or loose. Likewise, all the concepts are essential to lead a prosperous life on Earth. This can be better understood by setting a concrete example of growing teens who lack the essential knowledge of life; the fact that they do not understand life situations fully means that they can develop confusion and fall into precarious situations. Eventually, to fill in such blanks, they may have recourse to drugs and alcohol to compensate those needs. As a remedy, Islamic education proposes that young people learn about the principles of Islam that will appropriately guide the ethical life of students. Key concepts in this regard will be outlined in the following sections.

### **2.7.1 THE CONCEPT OF *DĪN-UL-ISLĀM***

The Arabic word used by Muslims to mean a comprehensive holistic code of life is *Dīn*. *Dīn-ul-Islām* is therefore the entire system of life wished by Allah for humanity. What is commonly known as religion is a simplistic understanding of belief in God and adherence to a specific creed but Muslims view Islam as a way of life. It comprehends the notion of social justice and social order. In order to reward the doers of good and to punish wrongdoers, Islam has set some principles known as the *Sharī'ah*. The *Sharī'ah* is a kind of marker that sets the limit of thoughts and actions. In other words, it is a marker between what is acceptable as opposed to deviant behaviour.

For Durkheim, deviant attitudes are symptoms of societal problems and demonstrate that fair rules have not been established. This is why some people cannot conform positively and they commit violence and crime. It is indicative that the society must adjust to create a more balanced environment for all. In the same way, in order to guide humanity towards righteousness, the Quran prescribes correct conduct and attitudes in order to elevate humankind to the position of vicegerents of God on Earth. Such a mission requires a holistic approach and training. Once again it connects with the functionalist theory where one type of knowledge is not sufficient; it often requires a set of knowledge in order to perform one noble act. For functionalists, everything has a core or a centre and everything has to revolve around it. Similarly, for the Islamic point of view, everything has to revolve around the understanding of a Creator. In order to achieve this, guidance is essential. Guidance is not coincidental. It is acquired through a revealed Book, the practice and sayings of prophets, those who have tread in the path of pious and truthful men, experiments and with people of knowledge; both experiments and knowledge are further acquired from the Creator of humankind who knows exactly His creation and their needs in order to make them functional.

### **2.7.2 CONCEPT OF GOD**

The concept of God is unique to Muslims' understanding although Muslims believe that its reality encompasses the realm of one community. Muslims claim that the Quran addresses humanity and its objective is to bring a solution to the entire universe. The concept of Islam is based on the uniqueness of Allah, incomparable to any of His Creatures, living and non-living. However, for the present thesis, Islam may be looked at

from its social perspectives. Islam is seen as a down-to-Earth concept that aims at bringing peace to the world; peace is essential for the mental and physical well-being as well as for socio-cultural, economic and political welfare. This is in opposition to Karl Marx's legendary expression which claims that religion is the opium of the people and -the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions (Austin Cline, 2019). It can be argued that the concept of God can be approached with a rational mind to counter the negative effect and influence of the society, to achieve bliss and to propagate wellness on Earth. This is considered to be the highest goal and achievement of humankind through which they are morally, spiritually and physically blessed. Moreover, the Arabic word *Tawhīd* is referred to as the oneness of God. In practice, it means the rejection of any form of deities; deities may take any form and they are hindrances in the path of God as such understanding takes the form of slavery of men and objects. For instance, people from a poorer position can venerate people of higher ranks in view of rewards. By eliminating any form of -'godship' among creatures, Islamic leaders are thus eliminating all forms of injustices and evil that may creep in the society and the self. Thus, there is a close link between the concept of God and the understanding of this life and its motivation; its practices and its consequences. In this Islamic interpretation of the functionalist theory, the researchers claim that the concept of God brings social cohesion and solidarity among humankind. It is also a unifying agent that brings all like-minded people together to work together.

### **2.7.3 THE CONCEPT OF TAQWĀ**

At the core of Islam lies one important aspect, that is, *taqwā*. *Taqwā*, which cannot be fully translated into English, can nevertheless convey the essence of God-fearfulness and God-awareness. It acts as a catalyst for the performance of good deeds and the giving away of bad deeds. This is vital for the survival of humankind as well as excellence in educational fields. When people learn to fear only the displeasure of Allah and no one else, they are naturally peaceful, joyous, good-hearted and they learn to develop skills and overcome any other form of fear that can be called hindrances on the path of intelligence, developmental skills and creativity; because humans have been created to fulfill duties and perform noble actions so that every individual may lead an

enjoyable and problem-free life on Earth [except in cases of tests and trials wished by Allah]. In fact, there is absolutely no reason why a teenager should avoid the knowledge of Allah and *taqwā* and focus only on academic education. Setting up Islamic schools is a responsibility towards Allah, the self, parent, and youth. *Taqwā* helps protect every individual and acts as a shield towards any misleading conduct. It is a vital key that protects teenagers from falling into the abyss of misery through careless deeds. So, this aspect is central to learning and teaching. In other words, the foundation of Islamic schools should be based on developing *taqwā* as a key element for success.

In order to develop *taqwā*, knowledge of God is required. To seek knowledge, patience is needed because knowledge takes time to grow and sprout internally and externally. This is why learning should start at a young age when the heart is tender, the memory sharp and the mind fresh. Moreover, learning should take place in a clean, lovable place that attracts the heart and mind and is conducive to concentration. This is the way to Islam and Islam promises its adherents an enjoyable life-long educational journey (Aminudin Basir et al, 2015). Henceforth, the graceful concept of *taqwā* aims at a holistic education system where teens are morally and spiritually nourished to perform their daily tasks. Arguably, lack of God's fear can promote indifference towards others' pain, egoism, arrogance, greediness, lawlessness and the love for worldly matters. To illustrate further, people can be active in various school activities which are promoted by hidden egoistic reasons and not to empower students.

#### **2.7.4 THE CONCEPT OF AXIOLOGY OR *ĀDĀB***

Axiology is a fundamental part of Islam. It can be defined as a holistic behavioural manner. It is based on a holistic understanding of behaviour, attitude, and ethics. Ethics has a dual role. First, it acts as a prelude to education and second, it has a perennial aim in education. All civilised societies believe in moral education and good manners. However, the term *ādāb* differs slightly in meaning and practices since it is an inherent part of the Islamic concept. For example, when an individual is aware of the ethics relating to food, they become conscious that throwing away food is bad because it has dire consequences for them and for social order. When they throw away food, they are showing a lack of respect towards the Master of the universe who provided them with

that food and is being ungrateful towards such blessings. At the same time, they show indifference to the suffering of those who are needy and those who are in dire needs of eating a morsel of food. What the researchers claim from such an illustration is that *ādāb* is at the core of many blessings and someone who lacks *ādāb* creates many troubles for themselves and around them. Another illustration is to be aware of the health system; an individual having a correct understanding that eating with dirty hands can cause many types of health problems. They are conscious about it and also take time to sit and glorify Allah for the food offered. By doing so, they become self-aware of their dependence upon Allah and at the same time develop God-consciousness, which is known as *Taqwā*, and further develops gratefulness towards Allah and moves to the next step which is *tawwakul* [complete reliance upon the One who created them]. They pay attention to the food, eat with their right hand and eats what is in front of them first and when they are finished eating, they show gratitude by thanking Allah. Such behaviour denotes discipline, care, deep insight, and respect. When such actions are accomplished by a group of people, it becomes apparent and is a mark of respectability and therefore becomes 'contagious' for others to follow. Hence, moral education is positive education and is known to be a powerful tool for bringing humankind together. It is powerful. It empowers and it assists with power the one who protects themselves with the robe of *ādāb*. Since the functionalists believe that education brings harmony, *ādāb* is an element of harmony. It is rightfully achieved through character building. Thus, *ādāb* acknowledges Allah's right, the self, and the society. Akhtar and Rawat explain that the word *mu'addib*, which is derived from the Arabic root *ādāb*, includes both moral and intellectual qualities that educators must possess and promote. Character is part and parcel of religion. It enhances the way a non-Muslim perceives Islam by looking at its followers. Al-Naquib Al Attas (1979) discusses two challenges met by the Muslim community in the modern era; the first category is public education, mass media, and mass literacy and the second category is the formation of learning institutes based on Western concepts, values, and processes. All of these problems are entangled in one root-problem which is, according to him, the absence of *ādāb*. He believes that good character is a 'stable state of the soul.' He maintains that good character may be achieved by learning and training, and in some cases, it may come as a divine gift. The character may change from bad to good and conversely from good

to bad if it is not continuously tamed. Thus, the researchers claim that axiology (*ādāb*) cannot be separated from other learning since it is inherent in all forms and all types of learning and is the foundation for approaching life in all its multiplicity.

### **2.7.5 TO ENJOIN GOOD AND TO PROHIBIT WRONG**

This concept aims at social cohesion and the formation of the self and society. It promotes social justice and harmony. It brings all students onto the same level of justice without discriminating anyone. In Arabic, it is known as the concept of *al Amr bil ma'rūf wa al nahī `an al-munkar*. Muslims are summoned to play an important role in society and act as role models for humankind. While they perform good deeds, they also command others to perform good deeds. By doing so, they are protecting themselves and protecting society. Social justice is therefore maintained and family ties as well as individual good habits are strengthened. This is in line with Parson's view of secondary socialisation. As a functionalist, Parsons believes in universalistic standards and values such as manners and the right attitude to convey at school. Eliminating evil means its eradication at school. This is attained through the correct pedagogical methods such as transformative pedagogy where educational leaders motivate students towards the realisation of the self through various interactive activities, seminars and system experiments. Students are determined to respect themselves and their institutions through the correct informed behaviours. This aspect is referred to as the moral education of Islam. Morality involves thinking, feeling, and acting. When a child reaches the age of reason, they become responsible for their acts; so teachers and parents are role models who model the child by guiding them towards the right thought and conduct.

Parsons believes that education acts as a bridge between the family and the wider society. Apart from the family having the primary role of inculcating such good practices in the child, the school serves the same role. Schools are moral institutions whose role is primarily to provide knowledge that can frame a person. Moral education according to Islam possesses all of the attributes that can build positive habits because a human being needs to nourish their heart, body, and mind. The nourishment of the mind is based on moral ethics or *ādāb*. In short, the schools serve as a moral institution to instill the right attitude and initiate good habits in learners. Hence, schools play a central role

in helping learners in thinking good thoughts and doing good deeds.

The cognitive mind tends to accumulate information and processes it. Wrong information will lead to wrong decisions and, consequently, wrong acts. *Akhlāq* [the reformation of character] is thus an important aspect of teaching. Learners cannot produce good behaviour unless they have been trained to do so. The teaching of *Akhlāq* assists in the input of correct information to a collective group of learners, in the hope that this will produce appropriate action. The fact that this input is collectively done also helps in cultivating social solidarity.

Kant gives the correct approach concerning moral education by stating: -If one punishes a child when it does what is wrong, and rewards it when it does what is right, it will do what is good in order to be better off (Kant, 1803, vol.IX, p.480). This is better known as the reinforcement method propelled by Islam which uses rewards and punishment to motivate and thus reinforce determination to perform good deeds and demotivation to perform wrong deeds; the notion of paradise and hell are forms of motivation to perform good deeds, to keep away from evil deeds and to prepare one's life towards excellence and hard work. Thus, the abilities linked to the comprehension of nature allow us to cultivate happiness.

#### **2.7.6 THE CONCEPT OF LOVE**

The foundation of Islam is based on love and such love is multi-dimensional. It can signify the Creator's love for his humanity; the love of human beings for their Creator and humanity at large. Love for Allah is the highest station an individual can reach because it presupposes that the individual has acquired a high level of understanding of this world and the next and that they have been able to protect themselves from various forms of distractions in order to focus on the main objective of life.

Love is a core human need that is expressed through intense emotional feelings and actions. Love is deeply rooted in the religion of Islam, incorporating aspects such as the love of God, love of the prophets, love of the self, love of angels, love for parents and love for mankind. Love is directly linked with respect and upright behaviour towards God, the self and others. Universal love is reached through proper understanding of the self and the role one has to play on Earth. The researchers suggest that love should be

initiated at school just as it has been present throughout the teaching of Prophet Muhammad and is grounded in the phenomenal system of brotherhood and sisterhood effected during the ten years in Madīnah. For the functionalist, love is functional because it elevates society and brings various classes of people to cohabit in peaceful terms.

### **2.7.7 COMMUNITY CONCEPT**

Islam believes that human beings are social beings. They cannot develop marginally. They need peaceful cohabitation for survival as well as for personal and group development. Islam highlights the special bond that exists among believers, men and women. They are considered brothers and sisters of faith. They are graciously linked as one family and one body. When one of the believing members suffers, the whole community suffers. Such a powerful understanding is linked to the functionality of society. Since society does not want to suffer or suffer any backlash, its members will work towards social cohesion so that nobody suffers. In the same line of thought, Fahad Khalaf al-lamia Al Azemi (2000) claims that -the orientation of the Islamic religion must be in accordance with the changes taking place in the wider world and that people should be encouraged to benefit from the acceptable aspects of progress taking place in the modern world, as, for example, in the fields of science and technology, so that people may live more comfortable and secure lives.

The beginning of Islam witnessed a real need for social organisation and stratification. The tribal system favoured clans and privileged some over others. Lack of formal education and proper knowledge brought social disintegration and the formation of a powerful elite. The Arab people were known to be freedom-loving and indifferent to civilisation, thus promoting cultural anomie. The only known refined culture was the expansive use of poetry. Poetry at that time was developed to a high standard where competitions were held every year at Ukaz. Poetry was a means of expression and a means of communication which had a cultural authority among the Arabs. -Very early on, Arabs became associated with being producers of poetry. The fact that Arabs have a mastery of poetry is something that distinguishes them as a unique quality of their learning. (Peter Webb, 2017). Morality and positive behaviour were vain words. The challenge of Muhammad as the messenger of Allah was to instruct and educate a

people entrenched in their asocial and traditional habits. He started by making them aware of the existence of God which had been a means of confusion in the period prior to his Prophethood.

### **2.7.8 PROPHET MUHAMMAD AS A KEY FIGURE**

According to Muslims, Prophet Muhammad has been shaped by the understanding of the Quran, therefore his attitude, manners and beliefs reflect the *Qur'ān* and therefore, he can be seen as a means of emulation. Prophet Muhammad is chosen by Muslims to be the model for mankind per excellence. This is clearly stated in the *Qur'ān*: *“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often”* (*Qur'ān*, 33: 21). Muhammad as the messenger of Allah has had the duty and responsibility to instruct a group of people who at their base were illiterate, unmannered, dis-organised and profoundly attached to traditional and cultural beliefs and practices of their ancestors. He is used as a role model to teach, to instruct, to educate, to advise and to remind, to model others and to accompany them in their quest for guidance.

He was the propounded of life-long education because he believed that education is the key to successful living. However, his notion of education is not what is commonly known today. Today, education is being advertised as the key to successful living in the form of having a salary and shunning material poverty. For Islam though, there is another poverty that often goes unnoticed. It is known as the poverty of the heart and mind whose solution is found in the search of useful knowledge and the understanding of the inner self. This is confirmed by the statement of Syed Ashraf Ali (n.d), who is convinced that a man of knowledge is not necessarily fulfilled, but rather that some basic values are compulsory to achieve inner harmony. This is why there is an equation that says: if you learn to know God and His creation, then you learn to know your limits and the solution to your problem because the attributes and names of God represent the answers to the weakness of man. For instance, Allah is the Provider of peace and affection [*As-Salam, Al-Wadūd*]. Human beings crave love, affection, and peace. They are constantly in search of them. So, if

they know that Allah can provide them with peace of heart, they become aware that they are dependent upon him and they will work in the correct direction to find peace in their everyday lives.

Additionally, Prophet Muhammad believed in democratic learning. Learning should be accessible to all and should be made easy for different levels of brains because people are not born with the same abilities and the same intelligences. For example, a person who is a professional carpenter may be tagged as unintelligent if they are not able to write correct English and an English professor may not know how to handle the carpenter's tools. This proves that intelligence is multi-faceted and wide and children must be able to learn what they like and what they are comfortable with. If the government imposes only certain criteria for learning, then it is not democratic because only those who are naturally inclined towards those subjects will excel in them and there is little probability that those who are less comfortable with them will succeed or will feel happy with such studies. Democratic education opens the door to women and empowers them through educational processes. Thus, the status of women was raised during the prophethood of Muhammad and gender equality became one of the key aspects of education. During the battle of Badr, the prophet ransomed some prisoners of war on the condition that they taught writing and reading methods to young Madineses (Massialas, 1983).

Furthermore, Prophet Muhammad would spread his positive energy through his excellent manners, his truthfulness, honesty and excellent communication skills. Thus, he was made an excellent example to be followed.

For Muslims, Prophet Muhammad is the best example to be emulated and is referred to as a 'sacrificing' and a transformational leader since his role had been to serve humanity at large by sacrificing himself and he had such noble, powerful, communicative skills that had transformed a Bedouin society into a cultured, knowledgeable, fully aware and organised one. Prophet Muhammad's life [*sīrah*] should, in the view presented here, be studied by Muslim educational leaders in order to understand the rationale behind his actions, sayings, and motivations. In this sense, it correlates with the functionalist approach of religion. Religion is viewed as an influential

phenomenon which has the ability to shape the moral standards of individuals and shape the collective conscience of society which in turn influences the nature of that society and the world in a far-reaching way; thus, a micro and a macro system; hence, the functionalist's view of religion. More details will be provided in the next chapter concerning the methods and ways of education after the advent of Islam.

## **2.8 ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND HAPPINESS**

There is a clear correlation between Islamic education and happiness. Islam goes deep into the inner understanding of the self to cure it and to provide solutions for the various ailments of the body, mind, and soul. When people understand the how and the why, they are naturally peaceful. Allah asserts to humankind: -'But perhaps *you* hate a *thing* and it *is good* for *you*, and perhaps *you love* a *thing* and it is *bad* for *you*'ll (Qur'ān, 2:216). This demonstrates that humankind does not know themselves. So, they hate things that are good for them and they are not aware of the things that can bring happiness to their lives. Clearly, happiness in the Islamic perspective is a gift from Allah. And humanity needs a mentor to guide them towards its acquisition. This is the prime objective of education. It is the foundation upon which rests the inner and outer comfort of man. The absence of a concept of happiness results in social disintegration, anomie, and deviance.

Hence, what is needed is the basis of youth participation by learning to know who they are, what activities and plays may contribute to happiness and enhancement of the self and the fair distribution of benefits resulting from their active participation; first, in their own country and second, at an international level.

## **2.9 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION**

The Islamic term for knowledge is *'ilm*. *'Ilm* is an all-embracing term covering theory, action and education. The importance of this term in Muslim civilisation and Islam says that it gives things a distinctive shape. Therefore, the researchers argue that *'ilm* encompasses a vast area of knowledge, based on the mundane and the next life. Its comprehension is not limited by human terminologies. The *Qur'ān* states -'O God, *increase me in knowledge*'ll (Qur'ān, 20:114). This passage suggests that human beings are dependent upon their Maker. They need to be instructed about things

in the universe, in the society and within their own selves in order to feel secured and peaceful. The researchers remind the reader that this supplication presupposes the good intention of positive learning and therefore the acquisition of correct knowledge.

Education is referred to as *ta`līm*. *Ta`līm* is essential for any human being because it is an act of survival. Children begin their formation step by step rather informally until they reach an age where they can undertake formal learning. Knowledge is thus first acquired through parents. A mother is known to be the first teacher and the first *madrasah* of her child. She nurtures important attitudes, behaviour and discipline that are important for cognitive, emotional and psychomotor growth.

An Islamic school ideally continues this process of education rather than mere instruction.

In his essay on *The Aims of Education*, Syed Ali Ashraf (1925-1998) makes a sharp distinction between education and instruction. He states that education is essential for the complete growth of each individual. Moral ethics, good character, righteousness and devotion to society are all attributed to education whereas instruction is limited to train the individual in the efficient performance of their task. He says:

Someone may be a very fine painter, a good poet; or possess a love of beauty which is highly delicate and sensitive, but may, at the same time, be cruel or brutal, or an untruthful, unsocial individual, who deliberately ignores his or her duty towards neighbours or even spouse and children. We can say that people who have specialized in certain educational fields are well-instructed individuals, but we cannot necessarily regard them as truly educated. On the other hand, someone who knows and performs his or her duty towards self, family, neighbour, and humanity, and at the same time has acquired basic knowledge about how to earn a livelihood honestly and live a decent life, should be called an educated person (Aims of education, n.d).

Ashraf Ali is of the opinion that learning is both a process and an outcome. The role of

educational leaders should focus on creating environments that are conducive for learning. He believes that the conventional method of drilling knowledge into students should be stopped. Rote learning is bound to create unfulfilled adults who are unable to perform their duties towards Allah and the society, though they can still earn a living. Education is, therefore, the acquisition of knowledge which is spiritual, moral, affective and cognitive. Education takes place at home by imitating authoritative adults; at schools where the authorities are teachers, principals and non-teaching staff. Education can also be assimilated in peer groups and other circles of friends; it is extended through documentaries, films, leisure activities and so on. This is why it is important to be surrounded by people of true knowledge as they serve as catalysts for shaping characters and right conduct. Skills and abilities to learn a specific function and become career adults are directed towards instruction. Henceforth, schools should be habilitated to both instruct and educate (The aims of education, n.d).

Based on the above, it is posited that religion should be seen in a much broader sense than its spiritual aspect. Religion has the ability to shape the moral values of individuals and shape the collective conscience of society which in turn influences the nature of that society and the world in a far-reaching way. Education and instruction are therefore inherent components of the notion of religion according to Muslims' beliefs and are grounded in holistic learning.

## **2.10 THE CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION**

The discussion above leads to the question of what kind of leadership Islamic schools require from an Islamic perspective.

The first attribute of a leader is based on their piety and total surrender to Allah. It is therefore a priority for leaders to learn the various concepts of Islam and to lead and live accordingly. The second aspect that is required is character. It is suggested that the character makes a person, not a qualification. Qualifications are added value but the construction of the self as explained in Chapter one of this thesis is essential to lead, manage and guide young students towards their life goals. It is well-known that a leader should be able to plan, organise, lead and control. It requires specific skills such as motivation, mobilisation, connection with the spiritual world and the natural love for

humanity. However, Islam lays emphasis on the character of the leader. With reference to the Islamic perspective, Allah says: *“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him]”* (Qur’ān, 3:159).

One important aspect of leadership which is often neglected is based on the relationship with one’s followers and attitudes towards them. Leadership has a social connotation and implies a relationship with followers. Leaders act as reminders, both towards their own selves and towards their staff. Constant reminders are essential for the smooth running of an institution. People forget with time and through pressure.

The structural-functionalist theory highlights such a connection. It views the various elements such as religion, education, culture and society working in harmony to satisfy everyone within the hierarchy. In the school, the staff share common goals which allows them to work together to promote social cohesion. To achieve this, a leader is required to maintain peace, unity, and justice among all the members of the staff. Therefore, like-minded people can achieve their goals by promoting a positive climate. It is a common mistake to believe that teamwork essentially means a shared piece of work. While this is true in many circumstances, it is not always efficacious. Among the various types of intelligences, there are people who can only ‘create’ when they are alone, when there is no one around them to talk and to make unnecessary noise and thus dilute their creativity. So, when they are alone, they perform to their maximum and when they are in groups, they may produce mediocre work. Different personalities are required for different jobs. For example, in an industry, division of labour is used for producing massive work; a writer or a translator may also work in a team but separately. There is a close correlation to this based on the practice of *ṣalāh* [Muslim prayer]. *Ṣalāh* ignites within our mind the desire to be alone, to dive into the self, to connect with the Creator, to understand the hidden treasure of spiritual exile and what is gain from it is positive energy that can help people to better concentrate in their work. In short, Islam, like structural functionalism, perceives both group work and individual work as effective and efficient depending on the context.

Muslim educational leaders in reference to rectors, directors and managers of Islamic schools (because they are the ones who manage the school and provide instruction for the general administration of their staff, students and the school) must be able to deal with anyone at any level and at any time. It therefore requires functional leadership abilities. Functional leadership is interested in the way leaders can inspire a team. It is a known fact that followers can only work according to the pace of the leader. If the leader is functional, dynamic and proactive, they will certainly produce a dynamic team who will imbibe such leadership qualities in turn. Thus, in a school set up, everyone is a leader at different levels of hierarchy and should work together towards common goals. Leaders also have to learn from difficult situations and learn to manage with respect and empathy. If this is not achieved, it will lead towards dysfunction because leadership implies that you should be able to act in situations where you do not know but where you envisage knowing at the right time.

The objective of educational leadership is to empower administrators, teacher, and students within a school context in view of achieving common goals and creating a pool of like-minded intellectuals. Muslim educational leaders are morally commanded to acquire academic Islamic knowledge, to keep updated with developing skills that bring togetherness, reconciliation, and love and represent an excellent role model to everyone. They exhibit leadership skills in overlapping ways and promote innovative tools as well as innovative ideas. Since educators work at the pace of their leaders, the latter should be able to enforce quick and continuous actions to maintain a highly motivated team. Regardless of the roles they assume, educational leaders shape the school culture and give it a direction. Among the numerous forms of leadership styles are the *laissez-faire*, transactional, servant and transformational. To implement communal living, leadership skills are needed because a leader requires certain cognitive abilities and social understanding to create togetherness. In this sense, functionalism is in line with Islam which considers leadership skills to importantly shape the society.

## 2.11 CONCLUSION

The philosophy of Islamic education gives the opportunity to students to dive into the inner self, to look for answers that mere instruction cannot provide because according to Islam there is a world that exists inside each human being and this is a type of intelligence that can create eternal bliss. Therefore, students should be guided towards the construction of the self, towards its awareness and find solutions from within. This can be demonstrated from this verse where Allah says: *“And He taught Adam the names - all of them. Then He showed them to the angels and said, “Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful.” They said, “Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise” (Qur’ān, 2:31-32).*

This verse is proof of the special status granted to humankind above the angels and all other creatures. Humankind has been granted a special gift. Their duty is to discover, to struggle to find solutions for themselves and the society they live in while taking into consideration that life does not stop at death. Death is only a passage towards the discovery of the next world. Therefore, the goal of any Islamic education is to make students conscious of this wider reality.

In short, Islamic education prepares the youth to live their lives in a real context. It does not sell dreams. It celebrates the value and potential of everyone and transforms them into noble actions where everyone has their shares. When knowledge is transformed into reality-based experiments; when projects are formed, when young people can play a role in their community and help those in need, then it can be affirmed that education has been functional because it has been able to transform the society through education. In a nutshell, education creates a circle of opportunities. This is exactly what has been suggested by the functionalists. So far, the researchers want to focus on the challenging words of Jean Piaget (1896-1980), a specialist in child development, *who said: “Intelligence is not what one knows, but what one does when one does not know”.*

This chapter has provided an outline of the philosophy of Islam education. As shown throughout the chapter, it correlates with the theory of functionalism outlined in chapter one in many respects. The theoretical approach used may therefore be described as Islamic functionalism. The object of the thesis is to look at how the norms and guidelines laid out by both functionalism and the philosophy of education play out in Islamic secondary schools in Mauritius. But before that is discussed context needs to be provided by first looking at the history of Islamic education internationally and, secondly, locating these schools within the history of Mauritius. These contexts will be the subject of the next two chapters.

---

#### **FOOT NOTES**

1. During the pre-Islamic era, the Arabs used to rely upon the constellations for guidance in their journey. Brass astrolabes were a Hellenistic invention. The first Islamic astronomer reported as having built an astrolabe is Muhammad Al-Fazari (late 8th century). Astrolabes were popular in the Islamic world during the "Golden Age", chiefly as an aid to finding the *qiblah* (*direction to face while engaged in Muslim prayer*). The earliest known example is dated to 927/8 (AH 315).
2. Metaphysics deals with abstract concepts such as being, knowing, identity, time, and space.

## **CHAPTER 3: - DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MUSLIM WORLD AND ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC SCHOOLS**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides an overview of the history of Islamic education from the Prophetic period to the modern one. Specifically, it studies the rise of contemporary international Islamic schools and the reasons for their establishment. The data from this chapter will be used to contextualise the present research on Mauritian Islamic schools. Given the long historical development of Islamic education, this chapter will limit itself to a brief sketch of these developments by highlighting some key ideas and methods that are important for the present study.

### **3.2 THE PLACE OF EDUCATION IN THE ISLAMIC CONTEXT**

From early on, Islam has emphasised two types of knowledge, revealed and earthly, that is, revealed knowledge that comes straight from God and earthly knowledge that is to be discovered by human beings themselves. Islam considers both to be of vital importance and directs its followers, both men and women, to go and seek knowledge (Boyle Helen, 2002).

Thus, Islam lays a major concern on the need for acquiring knowledge due to the fact that it is needed to impart cultural values and generate the information necessary for development. For Muslims, the Maker - Allah - has created Adam and has bestowed upon him the faculty to reason, to know, to think, to research, to analyse, and to implement.

*-<sup>1</sup>And He taught Adam the names - all of them. Then He showed them to the angels and said, "Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful." They said, "Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise." He said, "O Adam, inform them of their names." And when he had informed them of their names, He said, "Did I not tell you that I know the unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth? And I know what you reveal and what you have concealed" (Qur'ān, 2:31-33).*

These verses are taken as proofs by Muslims to demonstrate that knowledge has been bestowed upon humankind by Allah. In the Islamic perspective, humankind does not produce anything because the raw matter belongs to Allah, the Owner, and Sustainer of

everything. Humankind can only act as the representatives of God on Earth and discover the various paths that lead to truthfulness, harmony, and justice for all.

This is why Durkheim was concerned about the impact of practical science upon society. He believed that its absence would create *'anomie'* which would eventually result in social disintegration. According to him, the absence of social sciences can bring people towards instability and chaos due to the fact that they become unaware of societal norms, values, and cultures. To illustrate, when people are unaware of moral ethics, they tend to disregard respect and healthy relationships (Emile Durkheim.org, n.d).

Additionally, these *Qur'anic* verses are evidence that humankind has been granted the mission to establish moral values, its rules, and regulations in order to develop the land and to create a functional society where justice and peace prevail for all. This idea was a major concern for Durkheim who believes in the constructive transformational society that can be achieved through moral education (Robert N. Bellah, 1973). Therefore, the researchers claim that human beings can only achieve success through correct guidance, and for Muslims, guidance is found in the *Qur'ān* in the form of knowledge. In Islam, Knowledge also implies formal and informal theories, actions and experiments; together they mould individuals towards the construction of the self to protect them from unnecessary pain and suffering. The *Qur'ān* says: "*We have not sent down the Quran to be a cause for distress*" (*Qur'ān*, 20: 2). Further, the *Qur'ān* guides the populace to supplicate "*say, "My Lord, increase me in knowledge"*" (*Qur'ān*, 20:114).

However, knowledge is of two types: good and bad and the Quran guides humankind towards goodness and protects them against any form of evil. To attain the path of truth, Allah has appointed prophets and messengers throughout time. They have been created as excellent role models so that they can inspire their nations in their spiritual and social quests. Referring to Muhammad, Allah says: "*There has certainly been for you, in the Messenger of Allah, an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often*" (*Qur'ān*, 33:21).

In short, the *Qur'ān* reveals that Muhammad has been endowed with the best morals and Allah made him an excellent example to be followed by humankind. Indirectly, we point out that the search for a role model is inherent in human nature. This can be demonstrated through the number of young people who take as models public figures from the world of entertainment, thus creating a new form of culture and behaviour. This can be a source of anomie in society when these role-models do not cultivate what religions see as appropriate norms. In the Islamic view, this is Allah's *Sunnah* as He has previously sent down excellent models to be emulated. Allah confirms this in the *Qur'ān* "*Abraham was indeed a model, devoutly obedient to Allah, (and) true in Faith, and he joined not gods with Allah. He showed his gratitude for the favours of Allah, who chose him and guided him to a Straight Way. And We gave him Good in this world, and he will be, in the Hereafter, in the ranks of the Righteous. So, We have taught thee the inspired (Message), "Follow the ways of Abraham the True in Faith, and he joined not gods with Allah"*" (Qur'ān, 16:120-123).

This is why, in the Islamic view, education cannot be realised without the spirit of guidance as found in the Prophetic role model. Those who are guided, -their feelings, their desires, their ideologies, their thoughts and opinions, their likes and their dislikes, all are shaped by Islam (Fundamentals of Islam, p.115-116). To this effect, Aslantürk claims that we should not limit Islam and Prophet Muhammad to a certain time or culture; rather we should be able to understand the universal subtleties of his teaching that goes beyond time.' She further mentions that Muhammad had been an excellent model before he received divine revelation. Among his qualities were honesty, mercy, truthfulness, charitability and trustworthiness, and people already admired him for his outstanding traits of character. These universal values he exhibited in his personality were the reason the Quran showed him as an example to mankind' (Hümeýra Aslantürk, 2010).

### **3.3 EDUCATION AFTER THE ADVENT OF ISLAM**

According to Muslim beliefs, a new educational era was developed with the introduction of Islam. Although the Arabian Peninsula had a rich oral tradition, literacy was not

common prior to Islam. According to Tibawi (1972), only seventeen people from the Quraysh tribe knew how to write. It is important to highlight that Arabia counted two types of dwellers: the city and desert dwellers. The desert dwellers living as Bedouins were best known for the upholding of the pure Arabic language (Kees Versteegh, 1997).

In general, pre-Islamic Arabs were especially known for their poetry. Poetry was not limited to mere leisure and competition; it was also used as a war tactic and a means of expression. Muhammad Ahsan Shakoor (n.d) states that poetry during that period enjoyed a unique position among the Arabs. It was the *diwan* [record] of the Arabs and it occupied the first place in the Arabic Arts. To illustrate Shakoor comments that outstanding poems were hung on the walls of the *Ka'bah* due to their outstanding features. The suspended odes or hanging poems were known as *Mu`allaqāt*.

With the advent of Islam, the concept of God became central to education and from this emerged various fields of studies. This concept alleges that knowledge and power [among other aspects] must all be rooted in the core essence of the omnipresence and omnipotence of Allah. From this, the researchers posit that all knowledge is strictly linked with and embedded in the notion of Allah as the Maker of this universe. Put differently, this idea of a core education was mainly focused on the study of the Quran in order to raise a generation with certainty [*yaqīn*] in Allah and the behavioural ethics which are necessary tools for the formation of the Muslim child and grown-ups. Many chapters of the *Qur'ān* known as the *Makkan sūrahs* refer to the importance of belief in Allah in order to bring awareness in the hearts of humankind. It is understood that true freedom lies in worshipping Allah alone.

However, it was in Madīnah that education started becoming more expansive due to the fact that Muslims were free from the constant persecution led by the Pagan Arabs. That era witnessed Muslims committing large portions of the Quran to memory so that its recitation could be used in everyday prayers and daily recitations. But it was not merely memorisation. Muslims believe that the *Qur'ān* must be acted upon as it develops reasoning, awareness and acute intelligence. For Muslim scholars, it invites them towards reflection, silence, creativity, rationality, critical thinking and scientific analysis. As such, characters are built through the principles of the *Qur'ān* (Islam in focus,

pp.194-197). Next to it is the *Sunnah*. The *Sunnah* is referred to as the words and practices of Prophet Muhammad. According to Muslims, it contains examples to be emulated (Yasir Qadhi, 2006). Shaykh Yahya Rodhus (2017) mentions that *taqwa* and good character are what enable people to enter paradise more than anything else.

It was in Madīnah that people from all walks of life and irrespective of gender were offered the opportunity to educate themselves under Prophet Muhammad's banner. Rahman M.M (2018) remarks that Prophet Muhammad was an effective teacher and an enthusiastic promoter of learning. The Prophet encouraged his followers to seek knowledge as far as possible and motivated them to become passionate learners; the objective of which was to create a group of religious intellectuals. According to *Shaykh* Uthaymin, after such a group was created, its members were chosen to preach Islam and to learn other languages in order to be able to communicate the message to others (The ruling of learning the English language, 2017). A group of Muslims resided at the Suffah, a rear enclosure connected with the mosque, and they would learn from the Prophet. The *Suffah* can be compared to a residential school (Ahmed, 1987). The researchers contend that it was the beginning of a revolutionary era where revelation, religion, and reason would co-exist. The sole objective of education was to quit ignorance in all forms and shapes and to embrace knowledge as a means of salvation for this world and the next.

### **3.4 METHODS FOR DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE**

Education began in the form of interpersonal communication where Prophet Muhammad would address people individually or in small groups. He used a persuasive approach to communicate his message to his nearest ones. After the acquisition of knowledge, those Muslims were recruited as mentors and their duties were to serve the community by educating the masses. For example, after the Prophet had empowered his wives with the right knowledge, they were selected to impart knowledge to other women especially in regard to women affairs. The embodiment of teaching was the reformation of the society targeting individuals, both from the city and the desert dwellers, irrespective of gender and age. Their mission was to expand knowledge as far

as possible and to allow mankind to learn the concept of God and its application. Thus, the concept of God remains at the core of all knowledge and this is the basis of all education.

However, education itself did not start with Islam. Muhammad Hamidullah (1939) states that it is such bewilderment that Arabic did not start to flourish during the golden period of Islam; rather it was the classical and standard diction of the Arabs who excelled in this language at the very dawn of Islam and even before. He speaks about the refinement of the language, the richness of its vocabulary, the fixedness of the grammatical rules and the fastness of poetical literature which was of a high standard. It was natural that education was taught in the local language, Arabic, which was known by all the Arabs. Hamidullah claims that it was due to the literary talents of the pre-Islamic Arabia that the first Arabs were able to produce a rich harvest in letters and sciences; however, it was Islam that came to awaken their latent qualities and brought them towards excellence. Being the language of the *Qur'ān* and a vehicle of culture, Arabic was widely used in various communication exchanges. Though Arabic was considered the language par excellence, the companions of Prophet Muhammad were encouraged to learn other languages in order to develop communicational skills and by so doing expand intercultural relationships and break boundaries; the end result being the expansion of Islam and civilisational attainments. It is reported that Prophet Muhammad requested the services of those who knew foreign languages. For this purpose, Zaid ibn Thabit, the chief scribe of the Prophet, is reputed to have learned Persian, Greek, Ethiopian, and Aramaic. It is mentioned that at the express instance of the Prophet, he learned the Hebrew script in some weeks. It was he who wrote letters addressed to the Jews and it was he who read out to the Prophet letters received from them (Muhammad Hamidullah, 1939, pp.51-59).

Hamidullah, citing Ibn Qutaibah, declares that there were veritable schools - however primitive they might have been - for both girls and boys who lived not far from Makkah. They were tribes of Hudhail and kinsmen of Quraish. Hamidullah goes even further to declare that Waraqah ibn Nawfal, a Makkan, had translated "in the *Jāhiliyah* the Old and the New Testaments into Arabic". He argues that it was the people of Makkah who

made Arabic a written language. During the nights of the full moon, people would gather in their\_family clubs or the municipal hall' where some professionals recited\_extempore night tales'. But Islam came to reinforce their knowledge, to polish it and to remove what was wrong. In reference to that, the Quran says: "*You were taught that which ye knew not yourselves nor did your fathers (knew) it*" (Qur'ān, 6: 92).

During the time of prophethood, women were separated in learning and they were offered a special day on account of their request to attend classes. Many intelligent women emerged and they were interested in learning as much as men. They would compete with each other in doing good deeds and to render services to the community. Literate women would teach other ladies and children. Besides, the Prophet requested them to seek knowledge and even the slave girls were able to learn. Ā`ishah, the prophet's wife was a model to be emulated. She was so gifted in *Fiqh* and Muslim sciences besides letters, poetry, and medicine that the Prophet is said to have remarked that she mastered half of the human sciences (Educational system in the time of the Prophet, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 51-59).

### **3.5 CLASSICAL CENTRES FOR EDUCATION**

In the beginning, private education was offered at the house of the prophet. It was natural that a portion of the mosque was dedicated to learning. Al-Arqam's house was also selected as a place to pray, to gather and to learn during the hectic times in Makkah (Daarul Arqam, n.d). The next step was to offer discourses in faith and other related subjects at the mosque. Henceforth, the acquisition of knowledge was intimately tied to mosques, which became the first known Islamic universities. This was made possible after the early Muslims' migration to Madīnah, where the first mosque was constructed. Khuda Bukhsh as cited in the book \_A survey of Muslim institutions and culture' (1964) says: "For Muslims, the mosque does not bear the same exclusive character as does a church for Christians" (p.164).

At first, the mosque was associated, besides prayer, with the study of the Quran and ahadith. Prophet Muhammad used to teach his companions and would repeat a verse three times in view of memorisation. There were nine mosques in Madīnah and they all served the purpose of schools. Sometimes, the prophet would supervise the

schools personally. This practice was extended after the demise of the Prophet. Umar, the second caliph of Islam appointed several learned Muslims to different regions within the Islamic states to lecture in mosques and the topics taught were related to Islam (Manzoor Ahmad Hanifi, 1964, p.164-165). The mosque was considered the ideal place to disseminate religious knowledge whose objective was to inform the Arabs about themselves, their duty to Allah and eventually targeting the whole humanity.

The mosque served several noble purposes among which were the centre of learning and praying. This was later developed into the concept of *madrassah*.

Later on, home-schooling was in vogue and people used to learn with a private tutor. Schools existed and the "school of *Suffah* provided instruction not only for the boarders but also day - scholars and casual visitors attended it in large numbers. A record shows that at one time, boarders in *Suffah* were seventy in number. Besides the local population, batches of students from far-off tribes used to come and stay there for a while and complete their course before returning to their country. Some of the Islamically trained companions used to accompany the tribal delegations back to their respective countries in order to organise education in their countries and then return back to Madīnah. Hamidullah comments that the despatch of teachers to other countries or provinces was a common feature as well as batches of students coming to reside in Madīnah. Those who embraced Islam during the early years in Madīnah were asked to migrate at least nearer to the city in order to receive appropriate education and they were taken care of in such circumstances. During the time of Muhammad, there were already nine mosques and all of them were centres of education (Muhammad Hamidullah, n.d.). Education was considered of prime importance. To this, Allah says: "*And the believers shall not all go out to fight. Of every troop of them, a party only shall go forth, that they (who are left behind) may gain sound knowledge in religion and that may warn their folk when they return to them so that they may beware*" (Qur'ān, 9: 122).

The illustration below shows the various centres of learning since the beginning of Islam and its evolution with time.



### 3.6 MOTIVATIONS FOR LEARNING OF EARLY MUSLIMS

Education became a catalyst for acquiring good manners and being god-fearing [*taqwā*]; it was also a means to destroy falsehood which was entrenched in ancestral beliefs, practices, and traditions of the Arabs. Such methods led to the organisation and discipline of a disorganised Arab nation. Slaves and Aristocrats were united as brothers and sisters, making the Arabic nation a homogeneous one with Islam as a unifying factor. Paradise and hell acted as motivating factors for doing good deeds and refraining from bad ones. Various Muslims were taken as role models so that they could influence others in performing well. Such models existed among children, teens, and adults irrespective of gender. As a matter of fact, the small community of Muslims emerged as one strongly united group. As explained by the functionalists, similarities and shared cultures bring people to co-exist. Consequently, the religion of Islam had a positive effect on new converts.

More importantly, the researchers remark that the Arabian Muslim society had transformed simple human beings into spiritually intellectual beings with profound reasoning. They were highly eloquent in matters relating to God and the hereafter. Some had become great thinkers and decision makers; others were successful traders who were convinced to leave the material world in view of the next. The desert dwellers were able to replace immorality with productive thoughts based on community, love, care and security for all. This put an end to tribal wars (*Madinan society at the time of the prophet*, Vol I, p.51). Thus, the essence of true knowledge was based on the concept of love for Allah, for oneself and for humanity at large. The researchers posit that such an era was the purest since knowledge had a dualistic role: the spiritual and the practical.

Therefore, such vision aims at what Durkheim called the functional society. Consequently, quality education was based on positive learning and evolved around people-centeredness rather than egocentrism. The emphasis was put on the purification of the heart and the message was addressed to the hearts as a means of motivation (*Madinan society at the time of the prophet*, vol I, p.79). One of the methods of teaching of Prophet Muhammad was to underline real problems by using down to Earth examples. For example, he reminded his companions that: "In the body is a morsel of flesh which, if it is sound, all the body is sound and which, if it is diseased, all of it is diseased. This part of the body is the heart" (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*). He was able to detect heart disease that was due to the passions and greed of the world and was thus an obstacle to faithful life and education. His approach was multi-dimensional and he was able to evaluate the level of intelligence of his audience and would talk to them according to their cognitive and emotional levels. In other words, when critical thinking, communication, creativity, and collaboration are integrated, they become important tools for educators and students.

Both the *Qur'ān* and the *Ḥadīth* have made use of ontological and epistemological principles. One example of ontological knowledge is that there are various inter- and cross-relationships that exist between Islam and spirituality, human psychology, moral ethics, physics, environment, biology, etc. Therefore, the *Qur'ān* offers a plethora of

research perspectives in the form of ontological and epistemological approaches. Both the ontological and epistemological are relevant to the functionalist perspectives which are based on the evaluation of the society in relationship with various factors and how they are related to each other. Epistemological knowledge guides researchers towards how to live according to the tenets of Islam, how to differentiate between pillars of Islam and the pillars of faith; how to keep a good relationship with non-Muslims and how to remain within the limits imposed by the Islamic law. Hamidullah states that in order to motivate the companions, the Prophet put forward a policy that the most learned in the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah* should conduct religious services; they would be recruited as chiefs in these places and people competed in the way of Allah, searching His pleasure.

According to Muhammad Hamidullah (n.d), it was like passing the government test. The end result was that literacy spread very quickly and many written works were made possible such as the writing down of various verses of the *Qur'ān*; every transaction on credit was written down to avoid doubts in the hearts of people; political treaties and conventions; state correspondence, enlistment of militia; permanent representation in Makkah in order to inform the central government of what was going on in other countries and states; census among others. Hamidullah mentions that more than two hundred letters of the Prophet had come down to the contemporary Muslims as proof. Muhammad was also the first to introduce seals in Arabia. Already in the time of the Prophet, specialisation had developed considerably and the Prophet encouraged it. People could choose the subject of study and were referred to specific teachers in that field. Teachers were highly honoured and respected. The researchers therefore observe that the positive undertaking of education was productive at both individual and societal levels, and has crossed many frontiers. From a generation of uncivilised nation, Muhammad as the last prophet and teacher [*mu'allim*] spent all his time and energy to construct the city of Madīnah and turn it into one of the most functional cities of the world so that today, generations after, people continue to embrace Islam, to benefit from the work of the first generations of Muslims. It started from scratch and it was done for only one purpose: Allah. The researchers further claim that sincerity is the way to reach the hearts of people and when they understand with their hearts and mind, no one and

nothing can stop them from doing good and with this, the researchers intend to verify what the next generations will be able to propose.

### **3.7 EDUCATION DURING THE Umayyad Era**

The desire to spread knowledge has been consistent since the beginning of Islam. Since Muslims in general, and specifically the caliphs, were convinced of the importance of knowledge and the dissemination of education, the latter had invested time, wealth and human resources to cater for the educational welfare of both men and women. Under the leadership of Mu`āwiyah bin Abī Sufyān, the Islamic state took a new direction and education became more diversified. In order to extend knowledge and to promote learning, teachers were paid a salary. Elementary education [*kuttab*] successfully paved its way. Ahmad Hanifi (1964) reports that a *maula'* [learned man] was sent to Egypt in order to teach Egyptians the *sunnah*. The poet, Al-Kumait, was selected to teach students in the mosque of Kufa at the beginning of the eighth century A.D. Wealthy people such as princes as well as ambitious scholars went to *Al-Badiya* (Syrian Desert) which can be referred to as a language school to learn the pure Arabic language (Philip. K. Hitti, p.465).

Muawiyah's grandson, Khalid bin Yazeed, was deeply interested in medicine, astrology, and alchemy (S.M. Ziauddin Alavi, p.3). He encouraged the translation of Greek scientific works into Arabic. During the same period, some government officials like Yahiya bin Khalid were busy arranging regular conferences for philosophers and other well-known figures in the religious studies for free discussions about topics mostly related with *Ilm al-Kalam* (Jurji Zaidan, pp.142-3). It is reported that the courts of government officials were always full of men of science, poets, physicians, and philosophers from every part of the civilised world and of various faiths and nationalities (Syed Ameer Ali, p.278).

The system of elementary education in turn, provided the basis for further developments in different fields of knowledge, especially in the field of science during the later periods. By means of land conquests, culture and civilisation expanded further and with the

foundation of the Umayyad Empire, many mosques, *madrassahs* and schools were built. These served as educational centres to spread knowledge. Traditional religious education continued in the form of interpretation of the *Qur'ān* [*tafsīr*], the recitation of the *Qur'ān* in Arabic, the understanding of *hadith* and law; as well as the study of the life of Prophet Muhammad, early prophets, caliphates and past civilisations. At that time mosques continued to play a central part in the spread of knowledge.

Mu`āwiyah, the founder of the Umayyad Caliphate was far-sighted and one of his main wishes was to make the Islamic state a more civilised nation. The Umayyad set out to create a new culture by erecting great palaces, mosques, hospitals and other public buildings as centres of learning. Literary studies, as well as poetry, were also pursued in mosques. Muhammad Akhtar and Khalid Jamil Rawat (n.d), explain that the success of the Umayyad lies in the fact that they modernised the government, they encouraged learning as a luxury and amusement. Extensions towards other fields of interest were also encouraged; thus creating a new culture. Non-Muslims were also appointed for their talents and competence in various administrative fields. Teachers were paid by the government to educate children and adults. There were forty educational circles (*Zāwiyahs*) present in the mosque *Jami` Al-Amr`*.

Elementary schools were developed during the Umayyad and teachers were recruited to teach princely or wealthy students at their homes. The curriculum was based upon the Quran as a reading textbook. "Along with reading, the skill of writing a text was also developed as a part of the curriculum. These elementary schools [*kuttub*] existed in mosques as well. The teacher there was called *Mu`addib`* (tutor or preceptor). The word *Mu`addib* is derived from the root *Adb*, which includes both moral and intellectual qualities and therefore it was applied in this sense as the tutor has to promote both of these qualities. The special dress code for teachers was the *Izar*, *qamees* and a mantle wrapped about the shoulders (Akhtar and Rawat, n.d).

Although Qur'anic learning continued in various regions within the Islamic state, the process of extension in other fields of interest was expanded. The teaching of art, poetry, calligraphy and other subjects started to gain popularity. Many private houses were also used as schools in Muslim territories where eminent scholars used to sit to

lecture any seeker of knowledge. In fact, palace education would equate to home-schooling of today's generation, but at that time it was meant for children of dignitaries. (Akhtar and Rawat, October 2018). Hence, the highest credit that goes to the Umayyad dynasty is that they thoroughly developed a system of elementary education.

### **3.7.1 EDUCATION IN SPAIN**

During the Umayyad Dynasty in Spain, Cordoba became its leading city. During the latter part of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup> centuries, a large number of academic institutions and colleges were built in Spain. The Umayyad era concentrated on the expansion of culture, art, and education. It is recorded that great rivalry arose between the rulers of Granada and Cordova in their patronage of the arts and other sciences. Granada was the bastion for the creation of distinguished scholars and poets as well as outstanding soldiers in the military field. The rulers encouraged literature, philosophy, history, music, medicine, and the natural and exact sciences. These sciences were advanced with passion and zeal. Spain also produced eminent lady scholars such as Walladah, the daughter of Al-Mustafa of Cordova in the field of poetry and rhetoric and Aishah, the daughter of Prince Ahmad of Cordova, a genius whose orations were often presented in the Royal Academy of Cordova.

The majority of the population was literate due to the extensive availability of books. There was a strong desire in the caliphs to bring Muslims among the civilised nations. Muslims built great libraries and learning centres in places such as Baghdad, Cairo, and Cordoba. Cordoba became the greatest intellectual centre of Europe, with celebrated libraries and schools. In Cordoba, Medical, technical and vocational schools were built as well as hospitals, chemical plants, and observatories. As a result of various expansions and developments, Cordoba became the civilisation capital of both Spain and the West in general. This civilisational movement spread into various cities of Spain as well (Rawat and Akhtar, n.d). The researchers therefore state that the Umayyad eras have been successful on the educational level. Caliphs, as well as ordinary people, have worked together to promote Islamic civilisation. Since Arabic has been the language par excellence, its rigorous maintenance has helped leaders to expand it to

various conquered countries. Today, around twenty countries speak Arabic in the World.

Sciences flourished during the Umayyad caliphate. The Arabs preserved the work of Hippocrates and Galen. Thanatassa (n.d.) states that -Mathematicians practised algebra, geometry, and arithmetic at a more advanced level than in the west, and astronomers continued the Mesopotamian traditions of calculating the movements of the sun and planets for religious purposes (ascertaining the correct direction for prayer) and astrological ones. Such outstanding capacities reached an advanced level that was unrivalled by European countries. Hence, the highest credit that goes to the Umayyad dynasty is that they thoroughly developed a system of elementary education. This system of elementary education, in turn, provided the basis for further developments in different fields of knowledge, especially in the field of science during the later periods.

### **3.8 EDUCATION DURING THE ABBASID ERA**

After the downfall of the Umayyad regime, the Abbasid was endowed with a prosperous educational legacy and the state decided to take full advantage of it. Rawat and Akhtar (October 2018) explain that the "Abbasids took full advantage of the prevailing elementary system of education and a richly developed Arabic language in grammar, lexicography, rhetoric, and literature". Mosques had become places for public lectures, not only on theological and traditional matters but had been extended to other branches of Art and Sciences as well.

Additionally, the regime was ambitious, far-sighted and there was a strong desire among several caliphs to conquer lands, which they did by entering three continents and thus, the expansion and mixture of cultures, ideas, civilisation, and knowledge reached its peak. Many scholars and philosophers have emanated from these two epochs. Many books have been written which contributed to making the regime, the golden era of Islam. It can be claimed that it was the first time in history that the secular and the sacred were harmoniously knitted to provide a unique piece of artistry in educational advancement. The functionality of education was such that it created unique scholars with men and women emerging from the educational system and

willingly advanced to acquire knowledge. Knowledge was enthusiastically sought because people were aware of the importance of education and what education could accomplish in regards to the construction of the self and society.

The capital of the Islamic state was transferred to the newly built city, Bagdad. Historians have cited Bagdad as being one of great pride to the Abbasids due to the uniqueness, beauty, and modernity of its architecture. Musicians and singers were allowed to sing openly and were paid for their services. Various cultural events took place in the round city and people from the four corners of the world would travel far and wide to see Muslims' cultural shows. One of the famous plays performed by Caliph Hārūn al Rashīd is *One thousand and one nights*. His era marked scientific, cultural, and religious prosperity. It was the time where many grand scholars arose, who dedicated their time and love for new discoveries and they brought a new approach to research. For example, physicians could harmoniously speak about the relation between the Quran and cognitive sciences which shall be explained below. Among the cultural successes were Islamic Art and Music which gracefully paved their way. In short, the researchers suggest that it was the most powerful civilisation that humanity has ever seen where revelation, reason, and science would co-exist.

The first Islamic school was institutionalised in Bagdad by Seljuk Wazir Niẓām Al-Mulk in the year 459 A.H. and is well-known as Al Niẓāmiyah. Hārūn al Rashīd and Al-Ma'mūn, who are two well-known early Abbasid caliphs, were also famous scholars of their time. Their greatest contribution in educational fields was the establishment of various institutions to allow the maximum amount of people to study, to promote free education and to offer a free boarding education to students. Caliph Mustanṣīr (1242 CE) added a magnificent college with the library and other arrangements under the name of *Mustanṣariyyah*'. It soon became a model to be emulated in different parts of the Islamic World. Among the prestigious educational institutions are *Jāmi`aAl-Amr*, *Jami` Dimashq* and *Jami` Al-Mansūr*. Prominent scholars were recruited to teach a number of educational circles of different subjects. Importantly, co-education was the norm during the Abbasid period. Girls and boys of tender age were educated together in the same school. Residential education was common to Muslim students. Education

would begin at a young age with the study of Arabic and the Quran, either at home or in a primary school, which was often attached to a mosque. (Jonathan Berkey, 2004).

For Akhtar and Rawat (October 2018), the next important factor that added to the fame of the Abbasids was the imparting of free education which was controlled by the state. Teachers received their salaries either directly from government treasury or from the resources of permanent endowments arranged for these schools. Students were provided with bread, meat, stationery, and a daily allowance together with clothing and a room for residence. A library with rare books treating various sciences was so arranged in these schools that students could easily consult them. Schools spread extensively and gave rise to mass education where the majority of the population experienced formal schooling. The researchers state that free mass education is functional in the sense that it put an end to cultural deprivation. Cultural deprivation can be seen as a cause of underachievement and unschooling. In that sense, it is viewed as a positive endeavour.

Additionally, the first Islamic Academy (*Bayt al-Hikmah*) was founded with a library wing. Many libraries were founded by following this model in the later period, initiated both by the state and individuals. Rooms were available for students who wanted to live in the library wing. Acting as a librarian was considered an intellectual job and learned and distinguished scholars were selected for this post. Generous donations were obtained from wealthy people for the development of new discoveries in the field of education. Representatives were sent to Rome, Armenia, Egypt, Syria, Cyprus, and other places to collect books from ancient scientific and philosophical knowledge and were translated. A scientific attitude was developed in society and reached a very high level that it produced exceptional individuals who laid the foundations of new disciplines of knowledge both in religious studies and modern sciences'. Muslims became the heirs to the sciences of ancient civilisations from China to Alexandria and from India to Athens. Caliph Ma'mūn played a determining role by ensuring permanent endowments for every institution at the time of its establishment in the form of pieces of lands, shops in the markets, orchards, houses, etc. and they constituted of a free of cost boarding education which was offered to students. (Akhtar and Rawat, October 2018).

The Abbasids were also very fond of accumulating the best intellects in the Muslim world. On that score, the researchers mention Al Kindī, Ibn Haytham, Ibn Al `Arabī, Abdul Qādir Al Jilānī, Al Ghazālī, and Ibn Sinā. The Abbasid further undertook to educate the princes and to achieve this, eminent scholars were employed, being generously paid and honoured. Since the environment was conducive of learning, the Muslim world was able to produce \_those philosophers, scientists, jurists, the men of letters and experts in every field of knowledge, who had made incredible contributions to art, literature, poetry, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, geography, physics, alchemy, mineralogy, politics, etc. This in turn served as a basis for the development of modern science' (Akhtar and Rawat, n.d).

The researchers suggest that the passion, dream and natural love brought by the involvement of intellectuals produced high expectations and high quality in the overall process of education. Such determination and zeal have gathered scholars and experts of different fields of knowledge, irrespective of religion and creed, to form part of the construction of transformational education. This produced excitement and enthusiasm in the hearts of teachers as well as students. It was such academic freedom that has unleashed potential, thus creating an unprecedented educational system and this is why the Abbasids were known to produce the most talented scholars in different fields of sciences. Hence, \_a scientific scholastic culture was developed in the Muslim world where scholars stood even higher than rulers.' Teachers were in high demand and they were more than just admired. Their dress codes were a distinctive black turban and *Taylasan* or *Taylas* (Akhtar and Rawat, October 2018). `Abd Al-Raḥmān Al-Naqīb, (2000) explains that -learning was much in demand, scholars were numerous, [and] libraries were filled with the outpourings of the scholars of Islam, and with translations made from the sciences of other nations in accordance with the desires of caliphs and viziers.¶

Scholars in the Abbasid period also wrote on the philosophy of education and an examination of their thought in this regard may help explain some of the success in that era. With this in mind, the researchers turn towards the thoughts of two well-known scholars in this regard, Ibn Sinā and al-Ghazālī.

### **3.9 IBN SINĀ'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

Ibn Sinā [980-1037], a Persian polymath, is a well-known Muslim figure emanating from the Abbasid era. According to `Abd Al-Raḥmān Al Naqīb (2000), this Muslim intellectual [known in Europe as Avicenna], had developed his own views on education. He speaks about humanity, society, knowledge, and ethics. Al-Naqīb argues that the same problems dealt with by ibn Sinā face contemporary educators as well and so his work has continuing relevance.

Ibn Sinā is well known for being a living illustration of philosophy and education. He devoted his whole life in helping society through his research and work. He was the head of a philosophical school that influenced education from the Islamic east to the Christian West. Since the age of ten, he had already memorised the whole Quran and a considerable amount of *hadith* literature. He was concerned about the educational pathways of a child, from birth to adolescence. He decided to master the Arabic language which was then the only acceptable language of learning. He excelled in various fields of studies such as philosophy, geometry, and mathematics; He also studied *fiqh* (Muslim law) and Sufism with Ismail Al Zāhid al-Bukhārī. He was also a student of philosopher Abu Abdallah al-Natli, but soon the latter diverted the child's attention towards theoretical sciences and philosophical studies. Ibn Sinā's views on education still fascinate scholars and pedagogues around the world.

#### **3.9.1 IBN SINA'S CONCEPT OF EDUCATION**

Ibn Sina was convinced that education has the ability to shape the overall growth of the individual: physical, mental and moral. Education, as he sees it, should be followed by preparation in the work field according to the individual's aptitudes. Education should not exclusively aim at 'intellectual development and the amassing of knowledge' rather it should enforce the complete personality of the individual, in mind, character, and body. He believes that education should not be solely targeted towards the becoming of a good citizen, but rather that it should prepare the individual towards a profession whereby they can contribute to the social structure, because society, in Avicenna's view, is built entirely on 'co-operation', and mutual exchange of services among its individuals

(Abd al-Rahman al Naqib, 2000). He was convinced that people can achieve through their profession and this is why he believed that specialisation was crucial to offer society the best services. In other words, education helps in the making of an upright citizen, sound in body and mind, and preparing them for some intellectual or practical work. Arguably, there is a close correlation between Ibn Sina's view and that of functionalism. Referring to the chapter of division of labour, Durkheim is of the opinion that there should be a close connection between a code of ethics and the profession. It can be a solution to prevent anomie. He believes that self-interests of businessmen and commerce should be replaced by a code of ethics which 'emphasises the needs of society as a whole.' He believes that 'economic activity should be permeated by ideas and needs other than individual ideas and needs' (Haralambos and Holborn, p.186). In that way, the opinions of Ibn Sina and Durkheim are similar.

### **3.9.2 INFANT STAGE [from birth until age two]**

Ibn Sina divided education into various stages. Ibn Sina considered that child development is a vital stage in the life of any human being. He suggested that parents or tutors should take care of the baby's sleep, bathing, breastfeeding, and exercise that are adaptable to his age. He gave various instructions about the position of his sleep and saw a close correlation between his intellectual and physical abilities to the sleep position. He also spoke about the importance to relax and to divert the mind through play (Abd Al-Rahman Al Naqib, 2000).

### **3.9.3 SIX YEARS OLD – FIRST STAGE OF LEARNING**

Ibn Sina claimed that upon reaching six years old the child must begin receiving education of a more serious kind, gradually moving away from games and sport in order to perform organised study. They should start learning the Quran as well as poetry. By studying poetry with easy rhymes, children are delighted and appreciate virtue. They also learn 'the principles of Islamic culture' from the Quran and Islamic rules of good conduct. The curriculum proposed by Ibn Sina consists on the learning of the Quran along with its memorisation, poetry, and play; however, poetry should include passages on moral ethics, the importance of learning and the disgrace of being ignorant. Emphasis should be put on devoutness and respect to parents, good behaviour, and hospitality to guests and high moral standards. He maintained that moral education is

crucial in students' educational pathways; this should be the goal of all human beings and the source of their happiness. He also mentioned three paths of teaching and learning methods, namely transmitted, intellectual and vocational (Al-Naqib, 2000).

Other subjects such as languages, poetry, and calligraphy may be added for all children as at this stage they have not yet developed any preferences. The tutor should choose basic poems with simple expressions and language, with short stanzas and a light meter so that students can easily memorise and understand them. The tutor must be careful to select poetry that has been composed for a high moral purpose, praising noble virtues and condemning misdeeds, because the child during these years is strongly influenced by what they read and hear. At this stage, both parents and educators must contribute to the welfare of their children and protect them from immorality and harmful environments. The researchers believe that this stage is particularly important for the intra-psychic and interpersonal functions of the child's emotion. Though the functionalists have not delved enough into this area, Islam has high expectations about childhood development, which can be seen in Ibn Sina's concern. Through his observation, he could see whether a child was battling with a learning disorder and is unfit for theoretical and practical education. Such children must be taken due care of and should live under the supervision of a warden. Those for whom there was no hope of improvement should have their care and their sustenance guaranteed. Avicenna says: It may happen that a person's nature is incompatible with any culture or attention, and he learns nothing from them. This can be seen from the fact that people of intelligence have wished to educate their sons, and have spent much effort and expense on that purpose, without attaining their objective' (Al-Naqib, 2000). This, the researchers believe, is particularly instructive for future discussions about Mauritian students and their academic abilities.

Ibn Sina believes that this stage should be carefully examined by parents or educators in order to perceive the kinds of inclination in the child's emotions or behaviour. Moreover, Avicenna believes that group instruction at this stage is beneficial because children can learn through interpersonal and group relationships where they learn from each other; they also befriend each other and by doing so construct their own

personality. They learn how to socialise by living in a group and benefit from that life. At a later stage, they learn to develop taste and behaviour. In the point of view of Avicenna, it was deemed important for the teacher to study the capacities of the pupil and to provide them with a method which is conversant with their level of understanding. If classes are formed after an intelligence test of the students, excellent results can be achieved.

The method of instruction, according to Ibn Sina, is to learn the Quran and the letters of the alphabet at the time the child is ready for instruction. He refers to the practice current in his day for teaching 'handwriting' by drawing on a wooden 'slate'. The teacher would draw the letters of the Arabic alphabet, and the child would have to learn them, both by heart and by hand, until they could write and pronounce them perfectly; followed by the next stage - composing individual words and sentences. Henceforth, the pupil could begin writing with their own 'slate' the Quranic verses which they were supposed to learn by heart (Al-Naqib). Based on Ibn Sina's view of education, it can be concluded that it is of prime importance that a Muslim teen should be able to read the Quran in Arabic, to understand its meaning and to behave according to the tenets of Islam.

Regarding the need to play and exercise, he mentions games as a necessary element by which children acquire various physical and motor skills. Ibn Sina considered that the soul, with its various faculties, is the path to knowledge or perception for it distinguishes between sensory perception and intellectual perception. He was also concerned with the child's sensory and motor development as well as their moral and emotional training. Physical exercise contributes to the child's growth: their physical and motor development; this in turn may develop their moral ethics as well as mental habits. Group study, as he sees it, develops community conscience. He put a high emphasis on the role of exercise in education and its necessary place in the child's life and explains that this exercise differs according to age and the child's capability. The overall aim is to uplift and create a balanced human being. Moreover, he believes that music should form part of the child's education, which is supposed to create a multitude of emotions and feelings in them such as pleasure, joy, purity and the sense of exaltation which

music produces in the child. Simply put, music alleviates many problems and helps in holistic development. Sport and music are therefore the most important components of the method at this stage. These are the two methods of instruction which prepare the child for primary education.

#### **3.9.4 AGE 14 ONWARDS**

This stage is known as the stage of specialisation. At this stage, more emphasis should be put on the principles of Islamic culture, the Quran and Arabic poetry, calligraphy, Islamic rules of good conduct as well as calculation. He believes that upon reaching the end of primary learning, the aptitudes of the child become apparent and it is easy for them to choose the correct field for specialisation. Consequently, the researchers state that the duty of the teacher is to act as a psychologist in order to understand the emotional and mental needs of the student. It means that the teacher should not only possess an academic qualification but should also be endowed with moral values, natural love, motivation and dreams in order to transmit these potentials in the child so that the latter can relate to these positive learning and be able to achieve such potentials in their present and future lives. In other words, this is what functionalism aims at; to become a functional being in order to serve society.

Thus the researchers assert that the Abbasid era has distanced itself from mere agrarian society and this is why Ibn Sina valued the very close connection between education and socio-economic needs of society, as well as the role of individual skills and abilities in defining the type of learning or occupation in which each student should specialise; thus, he makes higher education the stage of specialisation. He claimed that every student should specialise in the field of their liking with the hope of obtaining an income out of it. He also believed that students would be able to enjoy what they learn and this inner happiness will naturally outpour in their talents and potentials, thus creating in them the desire to pursue their dreams and potentials.

Parents and tutors should care about the child's future occupation based on their inclinations and aptitudes. This is open-ended and continuous learning. Avicenna posits

that once the child has completed the various study tasks, the tutor should add more themes such as literature, epistles, speeches, argument and dialogue and other similar subjects. They should also learn calculation and initiation to administration through a practical course; the tutor should supervise their handwriting and if they seem destined for another discipline, should be guided accordingly (Rawat and Akhtar, October 2018).

Ibn Sina divided education into theoretical instruction and manual or practical instruction. Practical learning occurs during the practice and training of a craft while theoretical education is acquired through lessons and speech. Theoretical teaching is also made up of two kinds: through transmission and intellectual/philosophical theoretical teaching. Each type of theoretical or practical teaching has its means and methods that prepare the individual for specialisation in the chosen field. Ibn Sina insists that any field of learning should be accompanied by practical skills in order to develop a more responsive attitude towards studies, understand its usefulness as well as learning to earn a living.

### **3.9.5 EDUCATION FOR GIRLS**

During the Abbasid period, it was still not compulsory for girls to specialise in a specific field or to seek higher education. Since the society was based on the patriarchal concept, it was the general understanding that men needed to be trained for work or craft so that they could earn a proper living. Women were more apt to study fields that could assist them as a perfect wife, mother, and sister. Homeschooling was preferred for women by hiring a private tutor assigned for this task or a family member. They would also be instructed in moral, religious and cultural preparation as they desired (Al-Naqib). Consequently, Ibn Sina did not pay much attention to girls' specialisation. However, the fourth century of the Islamic era witnessed great activity in the field of girl's education and this gave birth to some outstanding women lawyers, poets, and singers (*Mabadi' al-Tarbiya al-Islamiyya*, p. 148-50). Arguably, this gendered curriculum is losing pace because the economic demand is changing.

### **3.9.6 THE APPROACH OF WISDOM**

Avicenna shows a profound understanding of the psychological bases of moral education. He mentions a healthy environment, encouragement, persuasion, and

kindness to name a few. As preventive measures, he proposes admonition and punishment. Avicenna foresees the harmful consequences of physical punishment and this is why he allows it only in cases of necessity. He considers excessive beating as an element of revenge which is incoherent with teaching. Additionally, he believes that teachers should have proper training before they are hired in the profession. They should be selected with care based on specific qualifications such as moral values and competency in the subject taught. The teacher should possess excellent behaviour, be well acquainted with the values of the society and be pious so that they can guide the students and act as a model for them (*Kitab al-siyasa*, 1906, p. 1074). This is so because students acquire many habits, ideas, and values from them. It is the duty of teachers to bring students in contact with the values, ideas, and virtues that they possess. Children learn through imitation and they copy the manners of their tutors and they may do so effortlessly and without realising it (A. Zaki Saleh, 1959, pp. 401-402).

In conclusion, teachers play a decisive role in the development of the child; childhood development is a crucial aspect for humankind. Therefore, all teachers should convey Islamic values and moral ethics with care and affection so that students may naturally copy their manners and virtues. This aspect is known as the natural process of learning by imitation, which is inherent in all human beings.

### **3.10 AL GHAZALI (1058-1111)**

Al Ghazali is a well-known figure and his educational concept had a notable influence inside and outside the Muslim world. His books are used in various institutions and he is considered to be one of the most influential educators in Islam. Among his numerous quotes, Al Ghazali mentions that -education is not limited to training the mind and filling it with information, but rather it requires -intellectual, religious, moral and physical abilities of the learner. In other words, true learning, as he sees it, is that which affects behaviour whereby the learner makes practical use of his knowledge. Al Ghazali reiterates on the processes of learning to be effective only in practical instances, and aims at inculcating the right habits rather than simply memorising information. He believes that the purpose of knowledge is to help humankind achieve plenitude and attain true happiness - the happiness of the hereafter - by drawing close to Allah and

gazing upon His countenance. The value of learning lies in its usefulness and veracity. Comparatively, he affirms that religious sciences are superior to secular sciences because they concern salvation in the eternal world rather than the transient world, and because they contain greater truth than secular sciences; however, he agrees that secular sciences are not to be ignored as they are useful for the society.

### **3.10.1 AI GHAZALI'S CONCEPT OF EDUCATION**

According to Nabil Nofal, Al Ghazali had developed a theory of education and had detailed the relationships between scholars, teachers, and pupils. Though he worked as a teacher at the beginning of his career, he was a philosopher of religion and ethics. For Ghazali, knowledge is part of worship, and teaching is a duty and an obligation and is considered by him to be an excellent profession. He sees teachers as indispensable to society. Al-Ghazali believes that educators should have a professional code of conduct and they should practise what they preach so that they are the embodiment of ethics and an example to their students and society. Al Ghazali sheds light particularly on the types of qualities that educators should exhibit. Among these, he mentions erudition, renunciation of the world, spiritual accomplishment, devotion, frugality, and morality. Children are required to devote attention to religious education so that by the age of 7, they are able to practise the basics of Islam, such as ablution and the five prescribed prayers. Moreover, they should be trained to undertake several days of fasting during the month of Ramadan until they become accustomed to their practices and are able to fast for the whole month.

Al Ghazali was much concerned about gender differentiation in education. He proposes that boys should not be allowed to wear silk or gold which are proscribed by Islam. He insists on purity and decency. Al Ghazali enforces ethics at childhood so that these qualities would be ingrained in them at later stages. He maintains that children should be preserved from all worldly temptations by leading a simple and rough life though they should not be restricted from playing games after teaching lessons. He considers playing as an essential activity that helps the body and mind to recover from fatigue. He believes in education-play equity in order to create a balanced mind and that rewards

and punishment act as psychological enforcement in childhood formation. Henceforth, good manners should be praised in private and public as it is helpful both for the child and acts as an incentive to be emulated by others. From time to time, teachers are summoned to correct the mistake of learners in private and if the child continuously repeats the same mistakes over and over again, they are allowed to lightly physically discipline them for the purpose of chastisement rather than physical injury. Educators should possess a pedagogical and psychological approach in order to recognise multi-levelled cognitive abilities in learners in order to help and support them accordingly. It is recommended that they do not push students beyond their cognitive abilities, otherwise the result would be counter-productive. In the same manner, a highly skilled student should not be kept to the same level as an average student. This may stifle their intellectual growth. Students of higher education were advised to divide their days by invocation to Allah from dawn to sunrise; from sunrise to mid-morning to seek knowledge from tutors; from mid-morning to mid-afternoon in writing notes and making fair copies; and from mid-afternoon to sunset in attending learned gatherings or in performing rites of invocation, begging forgiveness or glorification of God. The first third of the night should be spent in reading, the second third in prayer, and the final third in sleep.

Abd Al-Rahman Al Naqib is of the opinion that Al-Ghazali's written work on education represents the most important thought on the subject in the Islamic world. It is believed that his theory of education -is the most complete edifice relating to the field; it clearly defines the aims of education, lays out the path to be followed, and the means whereby the objectives can be achieved". He claims that from the twelfth to nineteenth centuries A.D., Islamic thinking on education was heavily influenced by al-Ghazali. Consequently, a large majority of teachers would borrow from his writings and summarise his ideas as well as written works. The researchers therefore posit that the contemporary world still accepts Imam Al Ghazali as one of the most influential Muslim scholars. His books are still circulated among Muslims and non-Muslims and he continues to be an example to be emulated. In fact, his life and philosophy of Islam are provided in the syllabus set by the Cambridge International A Level Islamic Studies. This syllabus is directed for higher school students majoring in Islamic studies in Mauritius.

From the analysis of the above, it shows that from the sixth century of the Islamic calendar, the approach to education has been an adaptive one. Many impressive achievements have been made and many Muslim luminaries emerged during this period, which gave rise to educational expansion, philosophy, artistry and scientific works. To various degrees and varying degrees of success, this adaptable approach to education, as well as the underlying unity between the sacred and secular, was characteristic of all Islamic education in various parts of the world throughout the pre-modern era (up until about the 18<sup>th</sup> century). However, with the rise of modernity in the Muslim world difference was made between secular and religious studies and this has further promoted the rise of secularisation in education in the modern and post-modern eras.

### **3.11 ISLAM AND SECULARISM**

It should be noted that at the beginning of Islam there was no such demarcation between the divine and the secular. However, in the modern and post-modern world, Muslims differentiate knowledge into two kinds: Islamic and Secular. Secular knowledge, according to the majority of Muslims, is any knowledge that is not directly related to religion or intrinsically, the absence of religion.

The drastic separation of knowledge into religious and secular was brought about after the destruction and fall of Baghdad at the hands of the Tartars, and with the end of Muslim rule in Spain, the centres of learning for Muslims were closed. It was the fear of misrepresentation and misinterpretation of Islamic thought that particularly led to the closure of *ijtihad*. Greater emphasis was placed on the study of the Quran and the *hadith* until the nineteenth century of the Western calendar, where some Muslims were of the opinion that they should pursue the new fields of knowledge and its educational system. The fact that there were two different opinions among Muslim scholars, one favouring the research of new knowledge and one which favoured staying confined to religious education has led to the clear demarcation of Islamic education and secular studies. In order to put an end to all forms of conflict, a separate system of education was introduced and was known as modern education, which adopted the western secular system divorced from the religious studies (Unisa tutorial 101, 2004). The

concept of secularism was imported along with many of the ideas of post-enlightenment modernity from Europe into the Muslim world, namely the Middle East and North Africa. Among Muslim intellectuals, the early debate on secularism centered mainly on the relationship between religion and state, and how this relationship was related to European successes in science, technology and governance (Tamimmi Azzam, 2000). Egypt's first experience of secularism started with the British Occupation (1882–1952), an atmosphere which allowed for the propagation of western ideas. Secularism in Turkey was a dramatic turning point in the Muslim international community as it signified the downfall of the Ottoman caliphate. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk led a cultural and political revolution and adopted a Western-oriented mode of modernisation. Among the changes he made were to create a separate institution that dealt with the religious matters of the people, to change the alphabet from Arabic to Latin, to dismiss Sufi orders and religious lodges, and to abolish the religious court system and institutions of religious education (Alev Cinar, 2005).

Ever since the Prophet ordered Muslims to seek knowledge and to excel in education, Muslims were determined during both the Umayyad and the Abbasid caliphates to raise their commitment towards the enrichment of knowledge in various domains. While the Abbasid era was considered the golden period of Islam due to its development in education, culture, Arts and architecture (among others) such development was soon stagnated. After the destruction and the fall of Baghdad at the hands of the Tartars, and later on after the end of Muslim rule in Spain, Muslim scholars began to fear the misrepresentation of Islam. The centres of learning were closed in an attempt to safeguard the Muslim educational heritage. However, this was not to be without consequences as the contraction of education resulted in a period of passivity and retardation.

Indeed, Muslims were not encouraged to take initiative in research activities and the door of *ijtihād* was closed. Muslims preferred to confine themselves to religious education and the period of stagnation in scientific advancement favoured the West over Muslim countries.

In the early twentieth century, the limitation of knowledge was clearly visible between the Muslim countries and the West. While some Muslim governments wanted to expand knowledge towards new sciences, another group of Muslims was resistant. To avoid any conflict and antagonism, it was decided that a new system of education would be introduced known as secular education. Thus, two separate channels of education were established, the Islamic and the Secular. From the Western point of view, religious education and ethics are secondary and do not account to secularism.

According to some prominent Muslim scholars, secularism is a root cause for all problems because Muslims have renounced Islamic education and have embarked on secularism. For these scholars, by putting an end to the true knowledge and essence of Islam, they have fallen into the trap created by Western ideologies that reject faith. This is relevant to what Gardner has previously explained the Western biases mentioned in chapter two.

One such scholar is Naquib Al Attas. The solution proposed by Al-Attas to eradicate social disintegration is the rehabilitation of Islamisation of knowledge. He explains that the loss of discipline [*ādāb*] is fatal for human survival and it accounts for the destruction of the soul, body, and mind. Loss of *adab* results in confusion of knowledge and it further results in the emergence of false leaders who eventually train other false leaders as their successors and the circle continues. Al Attas posits that many leaders have risen within the Muslim community even though they do not possess high moral, intellectual and spiritual standards required for Islamic leadership. With such limitations, these leaders want to dominate all affairs of the community. For Naquib Al Attas, in order to break the vicious circle, the revival of *ādāb* is necessary. He profoundly believes that true knowledge can only be instilled with the precondition of *ādāb* in the one who seeks it and to whom it is imparted. He believes that *“humanistic philosophy and the gradual process of secularisation together with the rise of secular philosophy and science, made a tragedy, instead of religion, the exaltation of man”*. Al-Attas explains that to produce a ‘good man’ is worthier than a ‘good citizen’, ‘for the good man will be a good citizen, but the good citizen will not necessarily be a good man’.

Specifically for Al-Attas, the solution lies in the correct understanding of human nature. Human nature needs a proper guide in the name of Prophet Muhammad who has been chosen to guide humanity according to the Qu'rān. Discipline, moral ethics, good character, and leadership skills are all found in one concept called *adab*. *Adab* can thus be understood to be the complete behavioural manners and attitudes that need to be implemented in the self through correct knowledge. The primary focus on the individual is so fundamental because the ultimate purpose and end of ethics in Islam is the individual. It is because of this notion of individual accountability as a moral agent that in Islam it is the individual that shall be rewarded or punished on the Day of Judgement. (Naquib Al Attas). We consider that it is useless to paraphrase the words of Naquib Al Attas which are very powerful and useful for the reader:

*-A person of adab by definition, as al-Attas understands and practises it, can deal successfully with a plural universe without losing his identity. Dealing with various levels of realities in the right and proper manner would enable him to attain the spiritual and permanent state of happiness here as well as in the Hereafter. This implies that the planning, contents, and methods of education should reflect a strong and consistent emphasis on the right adab towards the various orders of realities. To realize this objective, a new system of education must be formulated and implemented in the Muslim community which must focus on the university".*

Another scholar, Muhammad Qutb, is of the opinion that two things should be done almost simultaneously: serious application of Muslims about religion and bringing religion into its correct place in educational curricula. He maintains that religious guidance should not be restricted to the formal traditional lesson. As such, he proposes that Muslim educators should reconsider the syllabuses devised for this particular lesson and re-evaluate them in most parts of the Muslim world. He is convinced that the objective of religious education is to produce Muslim men and women and this cannot be achieved "through a few disintegrated pieces of religious information to be learned by heart and tested at the end of the school year, especially if one's concepts, attitudes, morals and modes of behaviour are all non-or anti-Islamic" (Muhammad Qutb, 1979 ).

Al Kandari (2004) believes that education in Islam caters for both aspects of human nature: it tends to the spiritual needs that are ingrained in the individual's relationship with his creator, Allah, and it provides the skills and fundamentals necessary for material existence, meaning life as it relates to economic, social, and family dealings. Essentially, as Allah's creations, humans must -educatell both halves of themselves to understand the world fully and to realise the roles they must play in it. Stemming from this philosophy, the theory of Islamic education seeks to create a balance between the learners' spiritual, material, and social needs, primarily because they cannot be separated (Al Kandari, Kalthoum Mohammed, 2004).

There are other scholars also involved in the Islamisation of knowledge, including influential figures such as Ismail al-Faruqi, but the intention here is simply to show the types of ideas that were behind the rise of Islamic schools.

### **3.12 THE HISTORY OF ISLAMIC SCHOOLS IN THE WEST**

#### **3.12.1 The United States**

One of the Islamic schools that has been in operation for more than eighty years and which has been essentially dedicated to the African American Muslim community is the Sister Clara Muhammad School. It was sixty-five years after slavery was abolished in 1865, the year 1932, that a group of African Americans in Detroit, Michigan, led by the Honourable Elijah Muhammad, opened their first school, the University of Islam School [UOI], under the direction of Sister Clara Muhammad.

In fact, the African American Muslim community has been in existence since the 1920's, when an Indo-Pakistani Muslim who was working as a door-to-door salesman invited some African Americans to convert to Islam. He was called Master Fard Muhammad or Master W.D. Fard because he had been the headmaster of a school in Fiji before his reconversion to salesmanship. Master Fard's *dawah* was determinant in the lives of a considerable number of African Americans who readily joined his organisation, basically for two main reasons; the first reason is that God is not represented by any picture and

so, God cannot be portrayed as either Black or White. Secondly, Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said that no white is better than a black, nor is a black superior to a white - except because of his or her piety.

African Americans had deeply suffered from segregation and racism and most of their ancestors had been deprived of education. After their liberation from slavery, they were not able to stand on their own feet because they had not learnt to socialize into wider society, learnt the skills to have a decent job or to be able to afford decent clothes, food and proper living standards. Islam was taken as an opportunity to survive the difficult times and the Sister Clara Muhammad School was established to re-socialise their descendants and to provide them with appropriate tools to develop their skills and mould them into independent, decent and able-thinking beings. It was Sister Clara who had the task to administer such a school. To achieve the above, the school made use of certain tenets of Al Islam that were necessary for the process of transformation. This period was known as the first resurrection, which lasted up to 1975. From that period emerged Malcom X and Muhammad Ali [the Champion boxer] who embraced Islam as their way of life, dedicated their time to educate the American African Muslims and struggled to change the unequal system that prevailed at that time between white and black people.

After the passing of his father, Elijah Muhammad in 1975, Imam Warith Deen Muhammad decided to change the policy of its community towards mainstream Al Islam in order to be in line with the evolving mentality of the Americans. This process was known as the second resurrection, and at the same time, Imam Warith Deen decided to rename the University of Islam to the Clara Muhammad Schools [CMS], in honour of his mother.

The schools' approach to the philosophy, content, and methods of education is based on the guidance of the *Qur'ān* and the commentary of Imam Warith Deen. Taking the Night Journey [*Al Mi'rāj*] of Prophet Muhammad into the seven heavens as an ascension framework, the school reconciles creation-inspired knowledge with revelation, the roots of knowledge in creation (based on the mathematics of creation) and informs the abilities and faculties of logical understanding of independent thinkers. For Warith Deen,

these steps are fundamental in the evolution of humankind as responsible members of society.

The school administration believes that all knowledge and curricula exist in a philosophical and cultural context, and such an evolving approach to education allows the school to focus on the self and the social development that begins with respect for the common soul which is represented by the first man on Earth, Adam. Moreover, the philosophy of the school is rooted in the obligations of faith and is established by the logic of science and reason as exemplified by Prophet Abraham and which was finally established by Prophet Muhammad. The objective is rooted in the formation of their identity and the building of self-esteem. Such approach aims at social justice and its cohesion. According to the school philosophy, the seven levels in the Ascension are universal and imply a unified and logical approach to knowledge, curricula, and educational methods whose content and pedagogy are in the process of being researched and developed.

The Ascension is modelled on the Qur'anic philosophy and specifies the needs for education as well as its goals. The education paradigm guides the efforts of the educators to prepare students for service to the Creator, Allah, while using the life example of Prophet Muhammad. They operate under the banner, 'intelligence without morality is a destructive force' and have made tremendous efforts to develop their own curriculum, independent of the materials and philosophy of other schools (Geert Driessen and Michael S. Merry, 2006).

Several such schools have been established in the United States and Bermuda. Today there are some forty Sister Clara schools in these areas. The schools are administered individually though the curriculum is uniform. Such schools are opened to Muslims as well as non-Muslims (ClaraMuhammadfoundation.org.n.d). Challenges facing Clara Muhammad schools include the effort to be more 'Islamic,' and generating sufficient resources to maintain high quality instruction (Hakim & Muhammad,1992).

### **3.12.2 The Netherlands**

Muslims originated mostly from Asia and Africa and had been migrating to European countries since World War II. According to Shebaib (2004), between 15 and 25 million

Muslims live in the European Union. The Netherlands is estimated to have a population of 920,000 Muslims or some 6% of the total Dutch population. In large cities like Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht more than 10% of the inhabitants are Muslim (Geert Driessen and Michael S. Merry, 2006).

Since 1917, equal constitutional rights have been given to public and private schools to operate. This implies, among other things, the freedom to establish a school, the freedom to teach according to a particular ideology or certain educational and instructional principles, and the freedom to choose a school. These freedoms and the associated right to equal funding by the government have led over the years to a colourful array of denominations (Driessen & van der Slik, 2001; Patrinos, 2002). Such equality was made possible due to the social and political emancipatory process of pillarisation that penetrated all aspects of society (de Rooy, 1997). There was a close interweaving of the religious and the secular which lasted until the 1960's; after that time, a process of secularisation and de-churching was initiated and the role of religion and the church within society changed drastically (Felling, Peters, & Schreuder, 1991; Lechner, 1996).

According to Driessen and Merry (2006), despite the opportunities offered to establish Islamic Schools in the country, it was not an easy task and it was only in the 1980's that the first initiatives were undertaken. In their view, the delay was mostly due to the inexperience of the initiators, the inability to speak the Dutch language efficaciously, and the fact that they did not receive enough cooperation from the central or local authorities. In 1988, the first Islamic schools were founded in the cities of Rotterdam and Eindhoven to initially cater for the needs of Muslim students in terms of Islamic faith and quality education. There was a demand from Muslim parents, especially from the Moroccans and Turks, to send their kids to a school where they could fast during Ramadan and pray in accordance with the principles of Islam. Since, Muslim students had been deprived of such rights at the primary schools, and instead were instructed according to the Christian religion, thus parents were willing to transfer their kids to an Islamic faith school. Due to the lack of Islamic faith schools, many of the Moroccan and

Turkish students attend privately funded and organised *Qur'ān* classes after school, held in local mosques in order to balance their academic and religious lives.

Other factors prompting parents to transfer their children to Islamic schools is the idea of having boys and girls swimming and engaging in other sports together, learning about reproduction in biology classes, and the uniform regulations. Additionally, Muslim parents are aware that their kids are academically far behind the native Dutch and they had therefore decided to look for an alternative school where their kids would be looked after according to their own educational needs. Therefore, Islamic schools aim at helping young Muslims to strengthen their sense of identity, that is, cultural and religious personality development in the spirit of Islam as well as the integration of immigrants into the mainstream society. They intend to do this through parental involvement and with integrative religious curriculum along with the national curriculum. In their view, such approaches to learning are supposed to boost the ability of young Muslim immigrants to achieve academically.

However, the idea of founding an Islamic faith school is not readily accepted by the entire Muslim community and the non-Muslim community. Such opponents believe that Islamic schools will lead to isolation and segregation instead of integration. Right from the beginning, Islamic education has been a controversial issue and this has worsened with the 9/11 event. Kabdan (1992) is of the opinion that founding Islamic schools is more of an ideological and political affair than a religious one. Spiecker and Steutel (2001), reinforce the idea by stating that a policy of re-pillarisation, that is, creating an Islamic -pillar or social-political demonination in Dutch society, is both unfeasible and undesirable. Their views are emphasised by the fact that the Muslim community is subdivided in their views of founding an Islamic school.

Among the various Islamic schools that are already in operation, only a few of them want to shield their pupils so that they are not influenced by non-Muslims. Some schools are hardly different from any Dutch school because the intention is to prepare students to live among non-Muslims. Other schools have decided to inculcate some Islamic values along with the national curriculum (Driessen and Mery, 2006). However,

what appears is that all of the schools offer an Islamic cultural climate to Muslim students who are able to express themselves within a homogeneous group.

A recent large-scale study by Phalet and ter Wal (2004) showed that almost all Turkish and Moroccan Muslims still identify strongly with Islam; to them, Islam is an integral part of their existence. The support for religious exclusionism (i.e. fundamentalism) was found to be very small, only a tiny percent of Muslims in the Netherlands are sympathetic to this trend.

Despite all the efforts made to cater for Muslim students, Islamic schools have not proved to be more academically efficient. In fact, they have yet to attain one of their central aims, which is to improve the school performance of their students. The main problem identifier is that most of the Muslim teachers are not fluent in Dutch, which is the compulsory language of instruction. Another challenge is that the larger part of the teaching staff is non-Muslim and they are not conversant with the Islamic values and their norms; consequently, they may share ideas that are irrelevant to the Islamic principles and their values. The next challenge is that the Ministry of Education keeps a supervisory eye on all the local schools, public and private, in order to make sure that they are running according to a proper standard set by the government. Each school must produce a 'school plan', which has to be submitted to the Education Inspectorate for approval (Driessen and Merry, 2006). These standards, among other things, prescribe the subjects to be studied, the attainment targets or examinations syllabi and content of national examinations, the number of teaching periods per year, which qualifications teachers are required to have, giving parents and students a say in school matters, and planning and reporting obligations (Act: NMECS, 2005). Concerning the religious instruction lessons, a review shows that there have been problems in the sphere of adequate teaching staff and teaching materials. As to the content and persuasion of these lessons, no clear picture has emerged.

According to Driessen and Merry (2006), the demand for Islamic schools keeps on increasing despite insurmountable problems faced by the exigencies of the Ministry of education in the Netherlands. In the last 18 years, more than 48 Islamic schools have

been established in the Netherlands and at the moment a number of schools are in the process of being founded.

## **Belgium**

Belgium has the second highest Muslim population per capita within the European Union (Soeren Kern, 2013). In 2014, Muslims numbered 650,000 and comprised roughly 6% of the Belgian population (Soeren Kern, 2014). In response to the shortage of labour workers following the two World Wars, Belgium has adopted policies to attract immigrants including the establishment of bilateral migration agreements. In 1964, immigrants from Morocco and Turkey arrived in Belgium followed by Tunisians in 1969 and Algerians in 1970 (Marco Martiniello and Andrea Rea, 2003). From amongst the immigrants, the largest group of inhabitants was from Morocco, with around half a million residents living all over Belgium. The next biggest ethnic group of immigrants is from Turkey, and these people are also present in significant numbers all over Belgium (Belgium population, 2019). It was in 1974 that Islam was state-recognised and was therefore entitled to the government subsidies (Islam in Belgium, n.d).

Though Muslims are a minority in Belgium, the government offers Islamic education at public schools in order to provide Muslim students with Islamic knowledge along with the secular curricula. Such instruction was provided in the years 1975 and 1976 and salaried posts were created for Islamic teachers on the same basis as other religions. It is estimated that more than 700 Muslim teachers provide Islamic instruction and are employed in the Belgian education system (Merry, 2005). However, since 1986, Islamic education teachers are required to have either Belgian nationality or a minimum of five years residency. Instruction is given in either Dutch or French, and teachers should possess a diploma recognised by the Ministry of National Education (Leman & Renaerts, 1996).

Some Catholic schools with high concentrations of immigrants also offer Islamic education to Muslim students. Apart from the option of attending public schools and Catholic schools, Muslim students have the right to enrol at any Islamic school which, in any way, is controlled by the state. State control means that the range of subjects and

number of hours of instruction in each is carefully specified. Instructions should include several world religions as well as multiculturalism. The language divide in Belgium means that the German, French and Dutch-speaking communities handle matters as they pertain to education. However, education is not discussed on a national level, but is left to the regional government to decide, though the Islamic curricula is solely decided by the Muslim council and it generally includes the Qur'an (with recitation), the *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), the *sīrah* (life of the Prophet, the period of the first four Caliphs, and Islamic dogma).

The first private Islamic school in Belgium was opened in fall 2007. The Avicenna Islamic School is a nongovernment subsidised school and such parents who are not satisfied with Islamic Education provided by States' schools are free to enrol at the Avicenna School. However, it implies that Avicenna school diplomas have no official value, and graduates must pass a Belgian public examination in order to receive an officially recognised high school diploma. One of the advantages that the school offers for female students is the right to wear headscarves without prejudice and peer pressures (Islamic Education in Europe, n.d).

One of the main reasons why some Muslim parents are not satisfied with the Islamic education provided by the State is the number of hours, which is limited to two per week. Despite the call made by the Arab European league to increase the number of Muslim schools, the project seems to have died out. Three reasons are responsible for its mutation: (1) Islamic education is widely offered at State schools (2) most Muslim parents lack the shrewdness and motivation (3) there is a strong public opinion to dismiss such an idea, especially those of the Vlaams Blok, which for the past fifteen years has enjoyed as much as one-third of the vote in the province of Antwerp and in the last elections became the largest party in Flanders (Driessen and Merry, 2006). The idea that Islamic schools can jeopardise the integration of young Muslim immigrants into the Belgian society was reinforced by the Royal Commissioner of Immigration Policy who maintains that the only acceptable Islam in the country is an integrated Islam. But according to the article 17 of the Belgian Constitution, the establishment of Islamic schools is permitted (Dwyer & Meyer, 1996; Leman & Renaerts, 1996).

### 3.13 ISLAMIC SCHOOLS IN NON-MUSLIM COUNTRIES

Indeed, the increasing number of Islamic schools in non-Muslim land is consequent. With the increasing number of Muslim immigrants and Muslim converts in various non-Muslim countries such as England, France, and America, there is a corresponding demand and growth of Islamic schools. In his thesis, Asif Padela (2015) forecasts the doubling of the Muslim population within the coming two decades and the resultant increase of Islamic schools. Kucuckan (1998) says that the objective of Islamic education is to educate to the highest educational standards and principles of Islam, to enable students to live, study and work in a multicultural, multi-religious environment. Religion, though it is not a new phenomenon, is a challenge to countries where people are neither religiously inclined nor religiously demonstrative. With the advent of Islam in such countries, lively debates and discussions have livened up and the display of religious symbols and women dress codes have created an uproar in some countries, notably France, where students were summoned to leave the school if they persisted in wearing Muslim attires such as headscarves. This has been a strong motivator for the rise of Islamic schools in such countries.

Moreover, serving non *halāl* food at school canteens has posed many problems for Muslim students whose religious conscience does not permit the eating of certain foods that are considered *haram*. In other words, socio-cultural and religious practices are rendered fragile by public schools, contributing to the increase in Islamic schools which is seen to meet the necessities of parents as well as their children.

For example, Abdul Mabud (1992) says that -British Muslim parents feel that there are not enough possibilities for their children to fast and pray in accordance with the principles of the Islamic faith. Furthermore, clothing regulations and the idea of boys and girls swimming and engaging in other sports together and learning about reproduction in biology classes are reasons for their parents to look for alternative schools. Meyer advances that Muslims in the Netherlands are dissatisfied with the quality of existing schools. To improve children's opportunities, parents look forward to more parental participation and contribution towards a students' sense of identity (Meyer, 1993). Parents are primarily concerned about the moral and physical security of

their children. -The desire of some Muslim parents to educate their children in an Islamic environment is also influenced by the difficulties their children can face in mainstream state schools (Tinker Claire, 2006).

The Muslim Council of Britain has brought forward a list of needs concerning Muslim students such as:

- Modesty in dress code
- *Halāl* meal provision
- Provision for prayer and collective worship
- Allowances made for those fasting during Ramadan
- Allowances made in relation to Islamic festivals
- Gender separation during physical education and swimming lessons
- Dance activities must be consistent with the Islamic requirements for modesty as they may involve sexual connotations and messages when performed within mixed- gender groups or if performed in front of mixed audiences.
- Religious education should be conducted with accurate materials without discrediting Islam and schools should honour the right of pupils to withdraw from religious education
- Beards for male students should be respected (any decision by Muslim pupils to manifest their religion by growing a beard should be respected by their school).
- Schools take into account 'Islamic moral perspectives' when teaching sex education
- Language - Muslims should be given the opportunity to study Arabic and other languages relevant to their background.

According to Halstead (1992), Muslims want two things from education:

1. The preservation, maintenance, and transmission of Islam; an
2. An integrated education based on both Islamic and secular learning that enables them to compete in the employment market on equal footing with non-Muslims. In

other words, Islamic education should aim to provide a theological perspective on education for sustainability.

Shadid and Van Koningsveld (1992) summarise the objectives of Islamic schools as follows:

(1) To strengthen the students' sense of identity such as cultural and religious personality development in the spirit of Islam

(2) To improve students' achievement level through quality wise education

These aims are aligned with Küçükcan's (1998), whose opinions about setting up Islamic schools are mainly to: (a) To educate Muslim children according to the highest educational standards and principles of Islam; (b) The opportunity to live, study and work within a multi-cultural, multi-religious environment. Driessen and Merry state that the founding of Islamic schools in the Netherlands is based fundamentally on two reasons. The first one pertains to faith and the second one to the quality of education. Muslim parents believe that non-Muslim schools do not offer enough possibilities for children to fast and pray in accordance with the principles of Islam. Religious instructions are not provided and many Muslim students receive Christian religious instruction which is incompatible with their faith. Driessen and Merry explain that "almost half of the Turkish and Moroccan students attend privately funded and organised Qur'an classes after school, typically in local mosques. Furthermore, clothing regulations and the idea of boys and girls swimming and engaging in other sports together and learning about reproduction in biology classes are reasons for their parents to look for alternative schools". Moreover, Muslim parents are dissatisfied with the quality of existing schools because most immigrant children's achievements lie far below that of their native-Dutch peers. To improve their children's opportunities they want better education that is geared towards their specific needs. In addition, \_improving parental participation and contributing to the students' sense of identity are important motives for founding Islamic schools" (Driessen and Merry, November 2006).

### **3.13.1 School Choice**

There is an increasing demand for school choices at the international level. To illustrate, Beamish and Morey (2013), explain that the -educational system in Australia allows

parents to have a choice when it comes to selecting a school for their children. The variety of schools offers choices to parents and students so that they may fulfil their needs and wishes. Parents have become consumers in an educational market, and schools, including Christian schools, now find themselves operating in a competitive space. However, while home-schooling is not allowed in Mauritius, it has been a parental choice in many countries that advocate this type of education to take their children out of school and to opt for homeschooling. Among the various reasons advanced to home-school a child is that public schools lack moral and religious instructions as well as academics. Home-schooling was common in America and it has just re-emerged to meet the various needs of parents for their children (Aneela Saghir, 2008). Home-schooling has re-emerged in the modern time and act as a powerful educational alternative (Gaither, 2008) points out that the reason Muslims prefer to deschool their children is that Islam does not function as a mere religion, rather it is a way of life that incorporates a system of education (Gorder. C, 1987).

### **3.13.2 The Choice for Islamic Schools**

Islamic schools are normally chosen by Muslim immigrants and converts though not exclusively. For example, in Mauritius, non-Muslims attend Islamic schools for reasons that will be enumerated upon in the next chapter. Islamic schools are substitutes to public schools that do not provide facilities to Muslims. This can be better explained by examples. When Bill Cope (1993) visited an Islamic school in the western suburban area of Sydney, Australia, he was surprised to see a new school outlook where both boys and girls were dressed in Muslim attire. His interview with Siddiq Buckley, a convert to Islam and principal at the Islamic school, reveals that the increase in Islamic schools is not based on immigration. Rather it is based on broad social change, "a change which has signalled the demise of comprehensive education". He explains that in modern reality, "there are principles of multiculturalism and the right to be different. Now, even in public schools, there's market differentiation and touting for students". So according to Buckley, an Islamic school in a non-Muslim country is already a blessing from Allah. He does not reject the importance of any secular teaching, though in his opinion secular studies come after the reality of Islamic education which, according to him, will weigh heavily on Judgment Day where every individual will be questioned

about his knowledge of the Creator, his prophet and his system of life. Other questions will be about the number of *raka`āt* every individual would have performed with understanding, sacrifices done in the path of Islam and recitation of the *Quran* with understanding. Parents will be questioned how they sacrificed themselves for their children's future in the next world.

In an article written by Samana Siddiqui titled: "Muslim schools versus Public schools", she mentions that Islamic schools offer a better environment than Public schools. The strongest argument for sending Muslim children to Islamic schools, according to her, is due to the Islamic environment interaction with other Muslim children during break and in classes. A claim is also made that children at these Islamic schools are also generally less exposed to sex, drugs, alcohol, and violence. In the same vein, the article explains how Muslim children are shaped into what is seen as non-Islamic values by their friends and teachers in Public Schools in North America. As a matter of fact, parents often choose to transfer their children to Islamic schools after they find out that their children's lifestyle and peer pressures are hindrances for their Islamic progression. Siddiqui quotes Sharifa Al khateeb, the President of the Muslim Education council in Virginia to have said that Muslim schools give students a sense of self-worth, pride and cultural identity which they could never get in public school. The article mentions the fact that Islamic schools offer a better environment for students than public schools. It relates the case of Najla Abdullah, mother of Seven-year-old Zaahirah Abdullah from Nebraska, America, who confided her worries about Public Schools. Zaahirah has a passion for nose rings as well as belly button rings and she is supported by her friends and teacher.

In the same vein, Al Khateeb outlines the various advantages of sending Muslim children to Islamic schools due to the Islamic environment interaction with other Muslim children during break and in classes. A claim is also made that children at these Islamic schools are also generally less exposed to sex, drugs, alcohol, and violence. In addition, she believes that Muslim schools are the right places to build identity and security. "A sense of identity comes not just from being with other Muslim kids but also with the memories of praying, hearing the *adhān* and discussing Islamic issues. For the child, "that's invaluable," she noted. Taha Ghayyur, former president of the young Muslims of Canada, an Ontario-based youth organisation, relates that he knows many

Canadian-born brothers and sisters who attended public schools to be unable to read Arabic invocations and the Quran and sometimes there is a difference in the way they think about Islam or certain things. Hussam Timani (2015) explains that America's Muslim immigrants believe that without teaching their children the Islamic culture and religion, they will be brought up as anything but Islamic. Parents may be willing to choose Islamic schools because Muslim children are rejecting the ethnicity of their parents and embracing the American culture. Thus, American Muslims have realised that without Islamic education, many first-generation Muslims would likely abandon Islam, when they reach their adolescence, and adopt Christian and secular values.

### **3.13.3 Challenges of International Islamic Schools**

For Caldwell and Keating (2004), public education is more conducive to democratic and socially cohesive attitudes among students because it provides the basis for knowledge, values, and loyalties that form the foundation of a liberal democracy. This notion is generalised among many Muslims and non-Muslims, though there is an increasing awareness among parents as well as students who seek to choose other school types. Concisely, this given argument has not received a unanimous call among Muslims. However, there are many problems that are still unaddressed. To illustrate, Al khateeb mentions many gaps that need to be fulfilled; one of them is disorganisation. Many Islamic schools are disorganised in terms of the school curriculum and daily time management. However school curriculum and daily time management are not the main factors. She is of the opinion that the problem of staff turnover is due to two main realities: poor wages for teachers and culture clashes at the administrative level.

According to her, it is difficult to stick to rules and to start classes on time. Another difficulty is staff turnover, which is due to two other problems: poor wages for teachers and culture clashes at the administrative level; poor wages, she believes, eventually discourage longterm teachers within the schools. On the other hand, there are complaints of parents who have to spend high fees at the end of each month. Hence, the problem of staff turnover is due to two main realities: poor wages for teachers and culture clashes at the administrative level. Al Khateeb believes that parents are not very convinced about the need for an Islamic school, except after the latter turns out to be

unruly. So, they decide urgently to transfer their children to Islamic schools. Parents think of Islamic schools as 'holding tanks' and parents turn to Islamic schools for a quick fix and that the transfer in itself can do miracles. She points out that it is the responsibility of parents to devote time and commitment and not only money. Parents play an important role in initiating their children to accept Islamic schools and to conform to Islamic ethics and values. Parents should be convinced that Muslim schools are not supposed to be substitutes for parental responsibility. Among the various concerns which parents fear are that their kids become insular children who develop shyness, and are incapable of talking to their non-Muslim neighbours and citizens. They want their children to grow up with a positive frame of mind, that they are competent citizens capable of interacting with non-Muslims without any bad feelings or feelings of shyness. Nevertheless, Al Khateeb believes that problems face by Islamic schools are -a necessary element of the eventual excellence of Muslim schools and she thinks the Muslim schools are on the letter -H' on a scale of A to Z. 'H' stands for 'How To' because these schools are still learning how to and for her, that is a good sign. For Al-Khateeb, this situation is a huge challenge for Islamic educators and rectors (principals) to bring those children to fit in the Islamic environment and to adapt themselves with the Islamic curriculum. It is a challenge to be able to provide a better environment than public schools when it is the same children who made up the public schools that decide to fill in Islamic schools. Al-Khateeb explains that children who previously attended public schools had to fit in with the Islamic students in terms of Islamic knowledge, prayers, and manners. Another problem written by Siddiqui is the fact that many Muslim schools struggle to stay open and in some cases, rely mostly upon private donations apart from the fees they collect. They also depend on the good intentions and the Islamic spirit of Muslims who are willing to teach at low salaries. The same article mentions Shabbir Mansuri, founding director of the Fountain Valley, a California-based Council on Islamic Education, who sees the Islamic knowledge offered by many Muslim schools as limited. Mansuri explained that his youngest daughters, compared to the two elders, attended an Islamic school. He noted that his daughter was able to learn *sūrah*s and verses from the Quran, but he added: "Did the school make a difference in the thinking and understanding of those Quranic verses? The answer is no." He complains

that Islamic schools do not provide enough tools for students to think as a Muslim and to understand *Quranic* verses (Sound Vision, n.d).

Nadeem Memon, in his article, *The pedagogical divide*, says: -In the push toward making Islamic schools more effective, mainstream conceptions of effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability have been employed without critical reflection on the values they promote thereby creating many unnecessary problems. What he proposes is -a foundational return to an Islamic pedagogy that transforms the heart and brings out one's humanity through the enactment of an *Adamic* education based on an Islamic epistemological framework.

Other external factors can create problems to Islamic schools, especially in Muslim minority countries. An incident happened in Denmark when a female principal advised her female students not to be involved in love relationships if marriage is not the goal, created uproar within the Danish society who believed that the principal did not have the right to interfere in the children's private lives and that these children should adhere to the Danish society's reality. This is taken as a challenge for Islamic schools which operate in European countries where a liberal relationship is regarded as a norm. (The Local, February 2016). Moreover, inspectors examining the Rabia school for boys and girls in Luton, founded in 1996, were intrigued that the staff was segregated. According to the inspectors, this demonstrates inequality and disrespect towards females (Sean Coughlan, 2016). An Ofsted spokeswoman affirms concerning the Olive Tree School that the objective is not to force Muslims to abandon their religious principles, but rather what is expected is to ensure that -pupils are adequately prepared for life in modern Britain" (BBC News).

In another article written by Charles Moore, (2015) titled: "Tell the truth: Muslim faith schools must be scrutinised more than Christian ones," the journalist wrote that during Ofsted's inspection in Luton, England, Ofsted remarked that some Islamic schools did not meet the standard set by the society. He said: "The problem arises not because of religion itself, but because of Islamist political doctrines which are intended to subvert our society." Besides, these schools, still according to Ofsted's inspection, are dirty and contained literature which is homophobic, anti-semitic and hostile towards women.

Likewise, Ofsted does not agree that marriage should be solely conveyed between a man and a woman and that homosexuals do not have their place in society.

Contrastingly, the report written by Ofsted's (the Office for Standards in Education) watchdog praising the *Tabligh Jama'at* to be dedicated to Islamic studies and telling how well it prepares its students to cater for the changing needs of British Muslims and the wider community had attracted the attention of Caroline Mortimer who disagrees with such an analysis.

For Mortimer, the school is homophobic and gender discriminatory. According to Mortimer, praising the *Tabligh Jama'at* school at Dewsbury contrasted heavily with the reality of the school. Her position is that the analysis of the report of the watchdog is in contradiction with what is being observed in the report. For instance, the school provides a pupil and parent handbook which contains a *Shar'ah* law section warning them that portable televisions and cameras are forbidden, the school prohibits students from socialising with non-Muslims and if they persist, they are expelled. For Mortimer, such principles tend to segregate students against mainstream society and do not allow them to evolve as British citizens do (the Independent, 2005).

The views of Timani about Islamic schools are that they should not aim at alienating Muslim students from mainstream society. In his opinion, -Islamic education must be geared towards Islamising Muslim children without de-Americanizing them. He explains that Islamic organisations and Muslim educators have capitalised on the ills of public schools to put pressure on Muslims to build Islamic schools, where (re)Islamising Muslim children would be the goal. However, in the process many of these learners have been kept excluded and isolated from the rest of society, and, in some cases, exposed to anti-American, anti-secular, and anti-Western propaganda, which can be more harmful and damaging to the shaping of the Islamic identity in Muslim children than attending public schools. Timani explains that Islamic educational leaders face such challenges that are not the norm in the United States public schools. Among these challenges, he mentions the ability to balance their "religious and national identity, navigating their citizenship, and transitioning to environments that are not religiously or culturally familiar".

Islamic schools are more challenging because leaders need to navigate between religious and social lives while fostering the optimal environment for students. Within Islamic schools, educational leaders must balance the academic demands of modern education with the social, cultural, and religious demands of the Muslim community, while maintaining a profound respect for both. This juxtaposition of responsibilities and sensibilities is a significant challenge for leaders of Islamic schools operating in Canada. While the example is taken to represent the reality of Canadian Muslims, it is also a worldwide problem in non-Muslim countries such as Mauritius.

The Canadian version of multi-culturalism strongly promotes the integration of immigrants into mainstream society (Reitz, 2012). Islamic schools are supported, both politically and financially, by the provincial governments. Proponents of Islamic schools believe such schools promote particular cultures and religions that aim at moving the experiences of their students to the core of educational discussion rather than remaining marginalised (Ameli, Azam & Merali, 2005). However, opponents consider Islamic education to be a rejection of democratic values, deliberately intended to isolate students from the wider society, promoting a separatist cultural heritage that also limits students' opportunity to engage in an open dialogue and critical thinking (Gutmann A., 1996). Faisal Ali and Carl Bagley (2013) claim that it is understood from interviewees' answers that the Islamic school program helps students to enhance and maintain their identity and self-esteem in practising Islam, particularly in Western society. The chair of the school board explains that the program helps instill in learners the values of Islam so that they may be at peace with their own identity, especially in the West. A female student is reported to have said that the school offers such facilities as performing prayer and the wearing of *hijab* is made easy since every female student is doing it. However, she mentions the difficulty encountered in public. Some young people may be concerned about losing friends or being pressured, which is why they sometimes do not practise Islam.

In the essay of Sham'ah Md-Yunus, Associate Professor, Eastern Illinois University, titled: "Muslim Immigrant Children in the United States: Practical Suggestions for Teachers", Md-Yunus (2015) explains that teachers must be attentive to the Muslim

culture and backgrounds. Some topics and lessons in science and technology might be conflicting with Islamic teaching and values. For Muslims, human beings were created by God and not by evolution. He believes that teachers should be sensitive while explaining theories that are contradictory to the Muslim community. At schools, immigrant children with Muslim backgrounds generally practise Islamic teaching, beliefs, and values which may not be compatible with Western cultures and this needs to be addressed.

In addition to the above, Athar (2011) maintains that there are culture-specific beliefs regarding watching television, listening to music, and pursuing secular activities that do not in some way enhance spirituality. In addition to music, art projects involving human forms might be a concern for some Muslims (Ismail et al., 2009) whose belief in one God has led them to question the use of photos or pictures of human beings, animals or even statues that might be considered idols. In addition, Muslims are not allowed to keep dogs and puppies as pets or to touch these animals (Borhan, 2004). Parents may feel offended by books, stories or movies that glorify these animals.

Having looked at the reasons why Islamic schools arose in the West, as well as the various challenges they face, some views on how these challenges should be faced will now be examined.

#### **3.13.4 Advice from Muslim International Pedagogues**

Nadeem Memon encourages Islamic educators to question the values that are promoted through mainstream practices and to analyse them in regards to Islamic pedagogy. He invites them towards self-improvement, to extend the articulation of the word "Islamic", to go beyond environment and curriculum integration and to think about the purpose of schooling. He says that standardised curriculum, standardised testing, managerial-like administrations, and the avoidance of the range of substantive social justice issues in schools disallow for the nurturing of socially active, ethically aware, compassionate and transformative human beings. Memon, contextualising the Islamic schools challenge, says that the vision of providing an Islamic environment and identity has been achieved primarily in two ways, the first of which provides a learning space where Muslim students can establish prayers, daily routines of remembrance (*adhkār*),

ethical behaviour and dress, and most often are taught by those who exhibit the same. The second method of fulfilling the purpose of Islamic education, and one that is a more recent emphasis, is the aim of integrating Islam into the curriculum. This relatively recent approach has looked for ways to integrate Islamic content into the province/state-approved curriculum in order to broaden students' knowledge base by including the contributions made by Muslim scholars to the ocean of knowledge in all academic areas and disciplines. It is the combination of these two approaches that the researchers wish to take to task and question whether they are really achieving the "Islamic" in Islamic education.

Timani mentions that American Muslims have succeeded in transforming Islam into an American religion. Nevertheless, Muslims are concerned about their religious survival within an un-Islamic society. Practising Islam is often hard because Muslims do not have the same privileges as Christians and Jews. Attending public schools is a big threat for children who are socially and religiously pressured. There is an attempt to Americanise young Muslims and to de-islamise them. So, the solution has been to open up Islamic schools without a feasibility study about the know-how. While the main aim is to safeguard religion and culture, the outcome may be social division and the alienation of Muslim children from the rest of society. However, in the process many of these children may end up alienated and isolated from the rest of the society and in some cases, be exposed to anti-American, anti-secular, and anti-Western propaganda, which can be more harmful and damaging to the shaping of the Islamic identity in Muslim children than attending public schools. Timani argues that Islamic education must be geared towards Islamising Muslim children without de-Americanising them (Hussain Timani).

In his article, -why Islamic schools?|| Omar Ezzeldine (n.d) explains that the need for an Islamic school should first be spelled out. He argues that without the need to stay healthy, there would be no doctors. Likewise, every business or organisation that provides a product or service must first establish a need. After having done so, the school should look for teachers because without teachers, there would be no learning. So, he believes that before setting out to govern or manage an Islamic school, one must

first understand the purpose of establishing an Islamic School. He believes that the problem must be identified by all stakeholders and after that, they should work together towards solutions for eliminating the problem. Ezzedine offers some valuable questions to brainstorm those involved in setting up an Islamic school. He explains that all solutions must begin with a problem and that problem must be clearly stated and identifiable by all. If Islamic schools are seen as the solution to a problem, the problem must first be identified and understood. In turn, this will also help narrow the focus in order to identify what the problem is not. Such methodology, he believes, will lay a valuable foundation for the rest of the discussion. He concludes by saying that the purpose of Islam is to serve, so Islamic schools have the duty to serve the society and that service must be clearly defined.

### **3.13.5 ANALYSIS**

Many Muslims are forced to leave their countries and take refuge in western countries where differences in culture, values, traditions, and religions are considerable. For Muslims, this culture shock impacts heavily on their values and in order to maintain their religious identity, parents struggle to find ways and means to educate their children according to the Islamic tenets. While such values may be maintained in the home environment, outside of the home children are destabilised by what they see and hear and they are greatly influenced by western cultures. The consequence of this is a constant psychological battle for children. This is indeed a great challenge and may result in chaotic situations such as Muslim families being unable to meet the psychological and spiritual needs of their children. The Generation gap may aggravate the situation where children are not comfortable to speak about their feelings and emotions to adults and prefer to discuss with their peers who do not share their culture and values and thus misguide them even further. This has been further explained by Hussami, who states that -Muslim families find it problematic to see their children join in celebrations that have Christian or pagan connotations such as Halloween, Christmas, Easter, etc. Muslim parents feel that it is their responsibility to act to preserve their Muslim identity and to pass it to their children. The researchers conclude by emphasising that training the child according to the Islamic tenets is possible when parents are themselves islamically groomed, matured and devoted. In the eyes of Islam,

the status of the father and the mother is highly exalted and their responsibilities are huge. Parents are instruments for shaping their children and the greatest service which parents can render to their children from an Islamic perspective is that they train them to be God-conscious and God-loving, having a sound moral education and the ability to be people-centered. Nevertheless, many Muslim pedagogues have questioned the viability of Islamic schools and the traditional model of teaching. Arguably, Islamic schools are not solving the problem of all Muslim youths since a large majority of them still attend public and other private institutions.

### **3.13.6 ADVOCATES OF ISLAMIC SCHOOLS**

Aktar and Rawat (n.d), state that the Pakistani system of education under British rule hid much broader aims. One of these was to keep the people away from their religion, socio-moral tradition and culture. The other was to inculcate European manners in the form of dress, language, architecture and domestic furniture because the then government was expecting a large scale conversion to Christianity through this new education system in the subcontinent. Their statement is particularly interesting to examine in light of the Mauritian educational system which has also been colonised by the British. The narration of Emerick (1997) is particularly useful when he relates to the attitudes of parents towards their children. He claims that many children are not only devoid of Islamic knowledge but also reject Islamic identity and prefer to live as non-Muslims in their motivations, habits, and values. For him, these children had never been Muslims -in the full sense of the word. However, Emerick is willing to teach at low salaries because his objective is different from being a mere employee. Explaining his reason for choosing to teach at a Muslim school over a public one which pays better, Yahiya Emerick noted that he could not justify to himself going to a school every morning in which he would not be allowed to mention Islam and its truth. He could not bring himself to go to a school and teach a bunch of students useful worldly knowledge when he knows that later that day they will be getting drunk, would go dancing, having premarital relations, swearing, smoking, and other such evil things. He questioned: "Whom would I be making stronger? If I don't teach in a Muslim school, then someone else will have to be found and the children may not benefit from my experience and enthusiasm for the Deen." Emerick, who is a staunch advocate of Islamic schools,

strongly rebuts the notion that students become insular when they attend Islamic schools. The question he poses is: "Do Muslim kids who attend Christian schools in Pakistan have any danger of becoming closed to their society? Are Jewish kids who attend Jewish schools in America somehow socially stunted or unable to cope with American society?" the answer is no, he says (Yahya Emerick, 1997).

Al Kandari, another advocate of Islamic schools, wrote in his doctoral thesis that such schools are not exclusive to Islam but that other religions such as Christianity, Judaism, and Buddhism possess their own forms of schooling, one of the primary aims of which is to secure the individual's right to worship as one chooses. The marked difference with Islamic schools is that people unfamiliar with Islamic principles have been misinformed by the media which intends harm to Islam. Al Kandari (2004) observes that little effort has been made to destroy the subversive information of those media and the stereotypical simplistic and negative image of Islamic schools. He refers to after the 9/11 event where Islamic schools have been characterised as virtual factories for terrorism. In addition to such criticisms, questions have also been raised by the media regarding the need to reconsider the teaching of selected Qur'anic verses believed to foster or nourish terrorist activities. According to media claims, such verses indoctrinate in students a hatred of or hostility toward the west, specifically the United States (Al Kandari, 2004).

### **3.13.7 THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN**

Andrew Thurston, author of *-Inside US Islamic schools* affirms that new study findings have proven that Islamic schools cultivate engaged citizens. He nevertheless reports that a Public Religion Research Institute survey found 47 percent of Americans thought Islam incompatible with American values. Many people are suspicious about the goals of these schools and they interpret things as propounded to them by some media or some anti-Islamic groups. He concurs that though such views are swirling around their religion, Muslim youth at Islamic schools in the United States have found ways to embrace their faith and their nation. They are committed to the community and see themselves as American Muslims who have an active role within the society.

Surprisingly, he confesses that Charles Glenn and his team found students got their biggest exposure to American culture not in social studies or history, but in Islamic studies. It was during those classes that students could talk about their place in society, openly covering topics as diverse as pop music, painted nails, dating, and sexuality. One educator told the researchers that the purpose of such classes was teaching -how to be a good person. Glenn's team also noted that the Islamic schools placed a premium on fostering community connections, from organising sports activities with neighbouring institutions to running volunteer efforts at homeless shelters. -All of them emphasise that they do welcome public visits, says Munirah Alaboudi, one of the researchers on the project and a doctoral student at the Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED). -These schools are announcing their mission, their vision to foster their students' identities, foster their religion, and to express themselves - as not only Muslims, but as American Muslims; as contributors in their own society and community.

Thurston says that Glenn started the study of Islamic schools expecting to hear about tension: -kids trying to straddle two worlds and struggling to balance their religious identity with their national one. -He mentioned a student's comments who said that being Muslim is his way of being American. -America is kind of like a melting pot, right? said the student. -And to be able to blend in, you have to stand out in a way. I think faith gives you that edge, he concluded. In America and elsewhere, Glenn says, research suggests that -kids who attend faith-based schools are less alienated from their society than kids who attend public schools, where they feel part of a singled-out minority (Andrew Thurston, 2016).

### **3.14 FUNCTIONALISM**

In support of the above view, Emile Durkheim claims that the primary role of education is to preserve and pass on knowledge and skills. Education is also seen by him as a way to transform people; in other words, education has a functional role in society.

Traditional functionalism takes a wide-ranging approach. It focuses on understanding how religion functions 'to create, promote and maintain the cultural values that provide the moral basis for social order'. Cultural institutions include education and the media; they exist to create and maintain order in society (Course Book p.293).

Durkheim did not see any conflict between the study of religion, morality and social science. He believed that both social science and religion were directed towards universal principles. Both have the ability to uplift human beings above the limitations of their private individual nature in order to live a rational and impersonal life. Durkheim was convinced that humans can live both an individual and social existence (Emile Durkheim, pp.115-155).

Functionalism is particularly important for the history of Islamic education because its theory is embedded in the positive aspects of life and education. In this sense, functionalism views religion as a mechanism that can bridge certain gaps and bring people together. Religion has also a cognitive function since it relies on intellectual abilities to understand certain concepts such as beliefs and practices. Though functionalists do not elaborate on the spiritual aspects of religion, they nevertheless agree to say that religion has a positive aspect in society. Durkheim saw religion as contributing to the formation of an ideal world (Ameli, Azam & Merali, 2005).

Hence, functionalism is particularly important for this chapter because it highlights one critical aspect which is ethics. Moral ethics is central to education and society. Functionalism emphasises societal disintegration by focusing on the problem of anomie, which is central to various youth problems, and such problems can jeopardise their future. In short, functionalism is in line with this study because it draws attention to the problem of the young people which is centered on the inability to be coherent with them and the people around them.

### **3.15 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has painted a broad overview of Islamic education as well as its philosophy. Modern Islamic education is, in general, a response to secularisation and its philosophy draws on the history of pre-modern Islamic education and insights of great scholars such as Ibn Sinā and Al Ghazālī, as well as contemporary scholars such as Al-Attas. The chapter then honed in on Islamic schools worldwide and the challenges they face. During these past decades, Islamic educators and scholars have made huge strides to change the learning environment of Muslim children by offering them an Islamic environment to study as well as a relevant educational curriculum. The

contemporary era has witnessed a considerable number of Islamic schools across the world, though there are contrasting perspectives about their aims, objectives, and modes of operation. Debates about Islamic schools are still ongoing and consensus about its effectiveness is difficult. However, it can be argued that these schools seek to find a place for Muslim students in broader society, without losing their Islamic identity and values. In this regard, the concept of Muslim schools can in principal, at least, contribute to the positive functioning of society. This is because functionalists view religion as a mechanism that can bridge certain gaps and bring people together. However, one also needs to look at the problems that may be associated with these schools because dysfunctional schools can in a functionalist perspective, contribute to wider societal dysfunction, or *anomie*. The discussion on Islamic schools internationally in this chapter offers a useful entry point into discussing the types of challenges that are faced by similar schools in Mauritius. But before directly dealing with the challenges faced by Islamic schools in Mauritius, it is vital that they are located within the Mauritian historical and social context. This will be the purpose of the next chapter.

## Footnotes

1. *Anomie is defined in Encyclopaedia Britannica as "a condition of instability, resulting from a breakdown of standards and values or from a lack of purpose or ideals." The theory of anomie was proposed by Durkheim in his book Division of Labour but later he developed this idea in suicide. In the final chapter of Division of Labour Durkheim emphasized on the occupational rules and anomic division of labour in economic crisis as he explained about lack of solidarity in society that "it is because the relation of organs is not regulated, because they are in a state of anomy" "Anomie | Sociology." Encyclopaedia Britannica Online. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 25 Nov. 2014. Web. 4 Jan. 2015.*

## **CHAPTER 4: THE HISTORY OF MAURITIUS AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter starts with an overview of Mauritius Island and the historical review of Muslim society. It focuses on the various struggles made by Muslim elites to establish a unified system known as a community in order to secure a strong place within the multifarious Mauritian society. The diversity of the country and its multi-levelled challenges, the strong wish to establish schools for the Mauritian citizens and the struggle of Muslims to win a comfortable place in the society and to establish Islamic schools, organisations and *madrasahs* for the young generations are all examined. The structural-functionalist approach is best suited to view the society as a complex whole where various institutions, notably schools, religion and culture work together to promote solidarity, stability and other wellness to humankind. The researchers aim to show whether Islamic schools have worked towards such wellness.

### **4.2 AN OVERVIEW OF MAURITIUS ISLAND**

Mauritius is a small island situated to the east of Madagascar. It is located in the southwest part of the Indian Ocean and north to the tropic of Capricorn. The island is 2040 square kilometres and has a population of 1.3 million inhabitants; inhabitants of whom the majority are of Indian origin. The island is known for its multi-ethnic, multi-faith and multi-cultural society where different religions are practised freely. Indeed, the Mauritian society is noteworthy for its high degree of religious tolerance and counts fifteen national holidays per year (Prime Minister's office, 2017).

Mauritius remained uninhabited until the seventeenth century. The island was successively colonised by the Dutch period (1598-1710), the French period (1715-1810) and the British period (1810-1968) (Rosabelle Boswell, 2006). It was after the end of slavery that labourers were brought from various countries to work on the sugar estates and other work fields. According to the Aapravasi Ghat (2017), it was between 1834 and 1924 that immigration took place and by the end of 1924, -nearly half a million Indians have migrated to Mauritius, mostly to work in sugar estates or in the construction of public infrastructures. At the end of their contracts, the majority settled here." Having no native population, the country was soon populated by diverse types of immigrants coming from

India, Pakistan, China, Africa, and Europe. The comments of Charles Boyle are significant with regard to Mauritian diversity.

-You can have no idea how striking and varied a feature of life in Port Louis is its population. You have natives from every part of the vast continent of India, all differing not less in feature than in form: weedy and athletic men, imperial-looking, by far the rarest of the two; and miserable, insignificant women. They are of all hues and shades. In the course of half an hour's walk, you stumble on Parsees, Arabs, Cingalese, Chinamen, Lascars, Malays, Mozambiques, and Malgaches (natives of Madagascar). Add to these the Negro, the Mulatto, the French Creole, the English Creole; nor do I throw in all the other Europeans. Then, picture to yourself the confusion of tongues and diversity of costume of all this small Babell (Charles John Boyle, 1867: 14).

People coming from India were split into multiple and complex subgroups. Among them were Indian Muslims and Hindus. The appellation of Hindus contains various sub-categories of Indians such as Hindus, Tamil, Telegus [who migrated to Mauritius as early as 1837] and Marathi. Muslims, who were a significant part of the Indian immigration, wanted to be seen as a separate entity from the Indian immigrants in order to be recognised by their faith instead of their nationality (Mauritian Hinduism, n.d).

Oddvar Hollup claimed that the medley of races that exist in the country was possible due to colonialism. Plantation slavery, indentured labourers and French and British colonial mercantile interests eventually shaped the socio-cultural environment of the island. With time, several minority groups have multiplied through immigration, have lived together over the years and have formed several sub groups known as communities. Communities are divided by race, religion, language, and culture. Benedict (1966) claims that the plurality of the Mauritian people is even subdivided into a greater variety of mixed races due to inter-marriages and have therefore formed a myriad of Métis (p.22). Though inter marriages often create mixed religious identities (Mauritian Hinduism, n.d) and sometimes the abandonment of one's religion to securely adopt another religion, Jahangeer-Chojoo (2010) claims that all Mauritian communities place a high priority on their religious identity which makes incursions in this sphere a sensitive matter. She observes that -more public and private resources are devolved into

cultivating differences than in building commonness. Even if the statement may suggest that cultivating differences are a negative endeavour, the government sees in it a high degree of socio-cultural and economic wealth and opportunity and has decided to go on with the project of making Mauritius a cultural hub so that every community can celebrate its own culture. This is commonly referred to as 'Unity in diversity' and the idea has been highlighted on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence Day of the country by the prime minister. In his address, Pravind Jugnauth, the prime minister of the Republic of Mauritius, emphasised the importance of unity which highly contributes to the socio-economic development of the country. He maintained that the government will continue to support the Mauritian citizens with its diversity and values. He believes that the determination of the Mauritian youth in maintaining unity in diversity will lead to the future progress of the country (Prime minister: 9/3/2018). Rosabelle Boswell is of the opinion that public rituals in Mauritius such as the pilgrimage to the holy lake [Hindus celebrations], the celebration of the Assumption of Virgin Mary [Christian celebration] and the Chinese New Year emphasise cultural homogeneity and in her view, also creates the impression of economic homogeneity. She believes that those who are rich tend to have more elaborate celebrations such as decorations and delicacies on Divali festival and those who are poor have to limit themselves to the celebration of light (Rosabelle Boswell, 2006).

However, such festivals are extended to the heterogeneous society. The delicacies of Divali are shared among neighbours, friends and colleagues irrespective of faith. The Mauritian society has a high degree of religious tolerance and Mauritians 'often share in the observances of religious groups other than their own' (Cultural Atlas, 2019). But for Suntoo and Chittoo, 'one of the major problems that remain unsolved is the management of the diversity of people by the state' (Rajen Suntoo and Hemant B. Chittoo, 2012). In fact, managing diversity involves not only the state but it depends on various organisations to work together towards the same goal. It implies accepting that there is homogeneity as well as heterogeneity groups that are naturally formed and they need to be respected for their specificities and wealth without jeopardising the micro society. This is what the structural approach of functionalism is all about; it sees the society as a complex system that works together towards a common goal and therefore

sets out to bring the various parts of the society into a united whole as explained in chapter one. This is so because social structures have social functions. They act positively upon individuals, families, communities and hence, the society. As a matter of fact, the researcher concludes that these social structures such as schools, religion, cultures, and values work together to shape the lives of individuals and give them a sense of positivity and peace.

Ethnicity is a very important aspect of Mauritian lives. It consists of cultural characteristics such as language, values, history, customs and manners of greeting each other that are shared by a distinctive group of people. Winston (2005) claims that ethnic identities are developed when individuals 'see themselves as being distinctive in some way from others'. Because of its long history of diversity in culture, ethnicity, and traditions, Mauritius is referred to as the Rainbow Island. Despite several attempts to cultivate unity among all citizens, it has not been an easy undertaking. Referring to the island as 'harmonious separatism', Toth claims that 'such variances may at times create conflicts and social disintegration' (Toth, 1995: 98). Susan Chazan Gillig sees an -apparent contradiction between the facts that abroad Mauritians have a strong sense of their own identity whereas at home they usually clearly mark their ethnic background. Since it is believed that the ethnic segmentation of Mauritian society permeates all spheres of life, ethnicity has played a pivotal role in the educational system of Mauritius post-independence. As an example, the ministry of education has included a list of optional oriental languages within the primary school curriculum. These are meant to allow children to dive into their culture from a young age. Among them are Arabic, Urdu, Bhojpuri, Hindi, Mandarin, Marathi, Sanskrit, Tamil, and Telugu and most recently, Creole (Mauritius Institute of Education, 2018). Many among these subjects are also offered at secondary and tertiary levels.

In Mauritius, Hindus and Muslims are known as the Indo-Mauritians (Burton Benedict, 1966, p.22). Having their ancestors born in India, they share various cultures, norms, and traditions. Such traditions may include the taste for a specific food, the types of clothes and their respect and appellation to elders. However, they differ in greetings, religious beliefs and practices as well as in number of population (Claude Calvin). It was in 1962 after a population census was done that the data became official about the

percentage of Muslims and Hindus in the country (Central Statistical Office). While Hindus form the largest community in Mauritius, Ajaheb-Jahangeer and Jahangeer claim that the percentage of Muslims is approximately 17 percent of the whole population. A small section of the population is from China and the general section of the population is made up mainly of French origin and Creoles. For Helen Chaplin, the Indo-Mauritians, which constitute about 69% of the population, are further scattered into different ethnic groups: Hindus, Muslims, Tamils, and Telegus. Descendants of French settlers represent about 1,7% of the population, Africans constitute around 27% of the population and the Chinese community makes up 3% of the population (Metz, Helen Chapin: 1994). This has had an impact on the economy and job placement. For Burton, the pattern and nature of immigration have produced a system of social stratification and some jobs tend to fall within the hands of some ethnic categories. For example, the French were the landowners, the British were senior officials; the Creoles were junior officials and craftsmen. The Chinese were the small traders and the Indians the cultivators. Yet he argues that this description is too simplified. First of all, it was not by the ethnic categories as such that the control of access to certain jobs was achieved, but through something much larger, such as family ties, friends' relations or economic association. Secondly, there were early opportunities for mobility to climb the ladder. Within each section of the population, class differences emerged, based on wealth and employment, which led to differences in behaviour (Benedict Burton, 1966, p.22). With regards to this, Hollup states that it is natural for Mauritians to privilege their own community over other communities. During research he undertook, one participant of the government teacher's union admitted that -every monkey must protect its own mountain;ll this typical Mauritian expression is widely used and arguably relates to the emotional and economic attachment to communal favouritism (Oddvar Hollup, n.d).

Mosquée Al Aqsa claims that during the early years Muslims were subjected to a variety of civil and political disabilities, yet they held value for the authorities as they mostly worked in the port area and in government offices as -*pions*ll [French word designated for attendants]. The Muslims lived together with other ethnic groups of the Indian population but kept themselves distinct due to their different religious appurtenances (Mosquée Al Aqsa, n.d). This can explain the communal feature of the Mauritian

society. For example, this was portrayed by the appellation of their sports club: their football team was called the Muslim scouts and the Hindu team was named the Hindu Cadets (Claude Calvini, Université de la Réunion, 2006).

This communal attachment will be developed in the next paragraphs concerning the Muslim community and can best be understood through the functionalist theory of homogeneity. Functionalists believe that homogeneous group offers a positive schema for society because of its shared security, interests, support and mutual understanding. This degree of similarity is crucial for the survival of the society. (Karl Thompson, 2017). Nevertheless, one can argue that the outcome of homogeneity can be fanaticism and racism if it is not well managed. Yet, it can create a wealth of culture and understanding if the government, non-governmental organisations [NGOs] as well as sociologists work towards the acceptance of its recognition so that people can naturally live up to their ideals without being constantly accused of being retrogrades and fundamentalists. The researchers believe that these organisations can make a more positive contribution if they recognise homogeneity within Mauritian society and acknowledge the various differences that exist among various ethnic and religious groups in Mauritius while celebrating their commonalities. For example, one pragmatic challenge is to accept that Muslims do not pray to idols and they are not ready to participate in religious activities that are in opposition to their beliefs and practices. Apart from a few restrictions, Muslims can openly be friendly to non-Muslims and they can learn about other cultures and religions in order to understand the differences that exist among the various communities (Saad Buxoo, 2017).

### **4.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MUSLIMS IN MAURITIUS**

It is believed that the Arabs first discovered Mauritius in the twelfth century. This has been corroborated by a map drawn in 1153 by the famous Arab geographer, Al-Sharif El-Edrissi, which accurately shows the location of three islands in the name of Dina Arobi, Dina Margabin and Dina Noraze, respectively referred to today as Mauritius, Reunion and Rodrigues islands (Jummah Masjid, n.d). The Jummah Mosque posits that the presence of Muslims in Mauritius can be traced back to the passage of Arab and Malay sailors in

the twelve century, though the Arabs did not settle on the island and have left no proof of their passage. But for Mosquée Al Aqsa, the settlement of Muslims can be inferred from the days of Dutch colonisation. During the two abortive attempts at settlement by the Dutch (1638-1658 and 1664-1710), slaves were brought from Bengal, the Malabar Coast, and Indonesia. It is well-known that by that time most of the coastal population of these areas were Muslim. Nonetheless, it was during the French colonisation from 1710 onwards that the Muslim community can be traced with precision. In short, Muslims came to the island during the French rule with the arrival of indigenous Indians as sailors hailing from Pondicherry and Bengal. These Muslims bore the Persian name 'lascar', which means sailors. Still to this day the term 'lascar' has become a synonymous appellation for them. They constituted a racially mixed group par excellence and settled in the eastern part of Port Louis named *Camp des Lascars*, which is now known as *Plaine Verte* (Mosquée Al Aqsa). Among such groups were indentured labourers, seamen, artisans and rich merchants who travelled in the hopes of commercial businesses and permanent settlement. In 1735, a group of skilled tradesmen were brought to the island during the reign of French governor, Mahé de Labourdonnais. Jummah Masjid relates that Historian Muslim Jaumeer, who had been studying the population of the colony during the period 1768-89, mentioned twelve Muslims of Indian origin born in Mauritius. These names were: Baboucamp, Assary or Assoury, Sabire, Fajaoux, Manbot or Maubotou, Azime, Dina, Bazardy, Darbarie, Mirza and Sadou. Jummah Masjid is of the opinion that Muslim African slaves who were generally shipped from the east coast of Africa, notably from Quiloa and Mombasa, were brought to work on the sugar cane plantations, but their identities were lost under the Christian names given to them by their white masters (Jummah Masjid, n.d). A few places in Mauritius still exist under Arabic appellations such as *Médine* [Madina], *Mecque* [Makkah] and the Casela - Yemen area; thus suggesting the passage of Arabs to the island. Such places are found between Richelieu and Tamarin (*Médine* sugar estates, 2005). After slavery was abolished in 1835, there was an influx of Indian immigrants. From these Indian immigrants was issued a group of Muslim community. Anderson noted that during the British reign (1815 - 1837), some 1500 Indian convicts were transported to Mauritius; among them were some Muslims (Clare Anderson). Jumeer Musleem claims that there were five groups of Muslims: (1) the Lascar sailors, (2) the engaged

labourers known as the Calcattias, (3) the traders – Meimans and Surtees, (4) the Cockney boatmen, and (5) the Bohrah traders. The Cockney and the Bohrah belong to the Shi'ites. The Sunnis were further split into two groups (a) the orthodox Hanafists (b) the reformist Shafei<sup>2</sup> (*Les Indo-Mauriciens de foi Islamique à l'Île Maurice*, 1999, p. 106).

Rajah-Carrim further divided the Muslim community into three ethnic groups on the basis of history, culture, and linguistics. They are the Calcattias, whose ancestors were indentured labourers. They formed the largest ethnic group within the Muslim community and spoke Bhojpuri. The researcher notes that though the Calcattias were the poorest among the Muslim community, with time, they have sent their children to school and many among them have sought many opportunities to develop businesses, to send their children to secondary and tertiary institutions, and become career persons.

Rajah-Carrim (2010) went on to say that the Surtees spoke Gujarati and the Meimans spoke Kutchi. Both Surtees and Meimans were from family traders and unlike the indentured labourers, deliberately came to settle on the island for business purposes. For Rajah-Carrim religion was the unifying agent that bound the three groups of Muslims. He claims that the concept of community, which can be referred to as the *Ummah* concept, is ingrained in them since childhood; based on this, they refer to all Muslims in Mauritius and around the world as one big family. Hence, Muslims share one language, one culture, and one race as well as one unique way of praying. All of these unifying aspects have reinforced their brotherhood ties (Aaliya Rajah-Carrim, 2010). This reminds the researchers of the statement made by Hollup [above] about each community having to protect its mountain. It can be suggested that the more powerful Muslims have been protecting their fellow-Muslims from lower socio-economic rungs and had secured for them some favours such as the construction of mosques, schools, and job placement. This reinforces the theory of functionalism, which states that socialisation is easier when groups of individuals have common goals and cultures, and this philosophy can be extended on the basis of shared beliefs and practices.

However, there are also differences among Muslims. Amenah Jahangeer-Chojuo (2010), states that among the distinct groups of Muslims were the Gujarati traders, who

were split into several competing castes and sects, namely the Sunni Meimans, Sunni Surtee Vohras, and the Shi'ite Bohras and Khojas. They formed distinct social classes with linguistic and sectarian divisions. However, with the settlement of indentured labourers in the villages in the 1860's, mosques were built and Muslims began to unite through the Islamic banner as one distinct community. The Calcuttias Muslims decided to mark a clear distinction between them and the Hindus with whom they shared the Bhojpuri language and folk culture. By doing so, they rejected the Bhojpuri language and accepted Urdu as the Muslim common language. The researchers therefore suggest that their separation with the rest of the Indian immigrants had a definite impact upon the future of Muslims in the Mauritian society.

Jahangeer-Chojoo (2010) claims that Muslims played a decisive role in the economic and political sphere of the country. They entered into the political arena during the 1940's and 1950's. It was the Indian Muslim preacher, Maulana Abdool Aleem Siddiqui who motivated the Meimans to seriously think about their entrance into politics and also mobilised Muslims to form one unifying community. Jahangeer-Chojoo claims that Muslims invited the Governor and other dignitaries on the occasion of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday to make several political demands, including 'religious endowments and the inclusion of Muslim Personal Law into the local legal system'.

Consequently, it was in 1958 that Abdool Razack Mohamed, a Meiman trader formed the *Comité d'Action Musulman* (CAM) with a group of Muslims. In 1959 the Muslim party allied with the Hindu elite, Dr. Seewoosagar Ramgoolam and tried a 'power-sharing experiment'. However, the alliance did not last long due to diverging opinions.

Born in a rich mercantile Meiman family in Calcutta in 1906, Sir Abdul Razack was Lord Mayor of Port Louis in 1949, 1953 and 1956. He had served many different posts for Mauritius, including deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Land Development and Minister of Social Security from 1967-1976. His son, Yousuf, was a Member of the National Assembly, Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations from 1976 to 1979 and Ambassador to Egypt and other Middle Eastern Countries. To date, he works as a barrister. His son, Shakeel, also officiated as a barrister [2005-2010]. He was the Deputy Government Whip between 2008 and 2010. He had been a Member of Parliament at the national assembly (Revolvy, n.d).

-We believe that this political endeavour had positively served the Muslim community and they have attained some prominence in the public sphere through personalities such as Abdool Razack Mohamed... Many Muslim men and women have formed part of the political struggle of the country and they are not necessarily from the *Meiman* and the *Surteel* (Cehl Meeah, interview 2018).

Muslims soon understood that they also had to succeed in the economic sphere in order to survive in such a diverse society. To this end, they formed organisations based on their ethnic origins such as the Cutchee Meiman Sunnee Mussulman Society (1852) and Surtee Sunnee Mussulman Society (1890) which still exist today. Eisenlohr posits that the Cutchee Meiman Society of Mauritius -gained exclusive control over the Jummah Mosque in 1908 after a long and bitter lawsuit against their chief Gujarati competitors, the Sunni Surteesll (Eisenlor Patrick). Even today the Jummah Mosque is part of the Meiman society and is officially recognised by the government to be representative of the Muslim community. Those affiliated with the Jummah Mosque are in majority in the country. They are known as the *Sunnat-e-jamaat*. Several *madrassahs*, mosques, schools and *awqaf* are run by them. Jummah Masjid states that -the Surtees, who generally specialised in the commerce of textiles, established themselves mostly in the quadrangle bounded by Royal, Bourbon, Farquhar and Corderie Streets - which came to be known as the Surtee Bazaarll. The Surtees, like the Meimans who still maintain a high profile as dealers in foodstuffs and other household commodities, are still reckoned to be among the most reputable textile dealers in Mauritius. Among the well-known early traders in the Surtee Bazaar were: Molledina Abdoulla, Hassen Agha Mohammed, Elias Hajee Hamed, Mirza Mohamed and Sheik Abdool Razack. As for the Meimans, they indulged mostly in groceries and building materials. Their place of business was located mostly in L'Hôpital (now Louis Pasteur), Des limites (now Remy Ollier) and Queen Streets, in Port Louis. For many years, these locations were known as the Meiman Bazaar. Jummah Masjid goes on to say that -in 1851, Mohamed Hajee Esmael, Hameer Cassim, Hajee Issop Noormamode and Osman Hajee Allarakia were the leading merchants and traders in the Meiman Bazaar. The number of Muslim traders in Mauritius rose steadily in the twenty years that followed as more and more of them continued to arrive and settle in the colony, and soon it came to

pass that the number of businesses owned by Muslims in the colony exceeded by far the total number owned by all the other religious groups in the island." (Jumma Masjid, n.d).

Indeed, Muslim merchants had established firms and stores and became leading dealers in foodstuffs and textiles. They also tried to engage in other businesses such as the sugar estates. "In 1898, the well-known firm Ajum Goolam Hossen & Co. owned the Bon Air Sugar Estate in Pamplémousses district and in 1900, the Atchia Brothers of Rose Hill were operating the sugar factory of L'Industrie and also an aloe-fibre factory - the New Mill Fibre Factory. During the same period, Aboo Bakar Mohammed Taher owned an aloe fibre factory known as the Leonbergs. Both factories produced aloe bags used by the sugar plants for packaging sugar. Another prominent Muslim trader and industrialist at the time was Dawoojee Mohamad Vayid, who owned the Valetta Sugar Estate, while another Muslim, Hajee Alhaman Sohawon owned some 2,000 acres of land under sugar cane cultivation in the southern districts of Grand Port and Savanne". However, this endeavour was short-lived while success was continuous in trade and commerce (Jumma Masjid, n.d).

The Surtee Sunnee Mussulman is still actively present in the Mauritian society and organises various events. In 2014, the society hosted a three-day workshop for the event -Learning to live together with a peace aim among various socio-cultural groups (Arigatou, August 2014). In July 2018, a famous scholar, Mufti Menk from Zimbabwe was invited for a conference. Such an event took place at one of the Surtee Sunnee's famous gathering places called Taher Bagh (Building bridges: July 2018). Additionally, various Islamic wings were created to help Muslim men, women, and youth find their place in society. For instance, Islamic Movements and Associations were set up in the seventies. Such movements as the Islamic Circle, the Students Islamic Movement, later to be known as SIMOI and the Women Islamic Movement are still in existence and working on the *Da`wah* (propagation) scene. The SIMOI has launched the first Islamic Institute of Education and Training (IIET), which caters for the education and training needs of the Muslim Community. Various international organisations have been created such as the *Tabligh* movement and the World Islamic Mission. Such organisations work for the betterment of Muslims' education and welfare. The Muslim Girls secondary school is

managed by the same Surtee association (Mauritian Muslims, n.d).

In conclusion, immigration is a form of spatial mobility where migrants must adapt to new developments, places, and people where they encounter several socio-cultural and religious challenges. Children have to adapt to a new form of education and languages. This is especially true for the Indian Muslim migrants whose children have adapted to the Mauritian trends and at the same try to keep with their faith. This faith has clearly united them at one level and created a sense of religious solidarity despite their significant internal differences. With time, the number of Muslims went on increasing and with the insecure politico-economic realities of the time and the politics of *„deux poids deux mesures'* [unfair measures], many Muslims from lower socio-economic rungs were forced to work as street vendors because the white collar jobs [Franco Mauritians] and the public sectors [Hindus] were both reserved for specific categories of the population (Cehl Meeah, interview 2018). It is understood that many of these vendors and their children have not been able to economically and culturally lift their social position as we shall see later. Most of them live in troubled areas of the capital such as Plaine Verte, Vallée Pitot and Cité Martial. This aspect of *„deux poids deux mesures'* has been tackled by the International Religious Freedom Report (2002), which states that the Mauritian minorities such as the Creoles and Muslims *„allege that a glass ceiling exists within the upper echelons of the civil service that prevents them from reaching the highest levels; however, citizens with a Hindu background predominate in the upper echelons of the civil service'*.

The problem of social groups such as Meiman, Surtees, and Calcattias is ever present in the minds of the young generation. There is a definite demarcation in their private and public lives and there are many instances where they do not meet. The frustration of the Calcattias is somehow understood because they are the ones who have suffered most (Cehl Meeah, 2017). Besides which, poverty is related to sequences of segregation. Chris Livesey states that poverty may have dire consequences on social, economic, cultural and physical segregation. One example claimed by Livesey is that the poor and the non-poor experience different life styles, live and work in different worlds and rarely meet (Course Book p. 233). The culture of poverty passes on from one generation to the next and it is also related to the living areas of its inhabitants. Yannick Bosquet- Ballah,

(2013) explains that ethnic segregation can be clearly seen in the geographical space occupied by the different segments of the population and the names that have been attributed to these regions are significant. For example, he mentions that in some places there are translated versions such as Black River [Rivière Noire], Long Mountain [Montagne Longue]; whereas some places are French and have no translation; such as Quatre-Bornes, Beau-Bassin, and Curepipe. Some other places are referred to Creole appellations such as Karo Kaliptis, Dilopouri, Kan Karol and Batri Kase<sup>1</sup> (pp.13-39).

This overview has demonstrated the struggles made by early Muslims to bring their religious and socio-cultural ways of life through education and hard work and through this wanted their culture to be respected by all. It can be concluded that the variety of Muslim sub-groups has in certain respects joined hands in order to form a homogeneous community and this has helped them survive over the decades. Thus a functionalist analysis can be applied to the Mauritian Muslim community on the basis of this homogeneity. That is, they can be treated as a social unit. But as has been noted there are also important eternal differences. For example, the researchers notice that the Muslim elites have been successful on all fronts while this might not be the case with the Calcattias.

#### **4.3.1 FIRST EFFORT TOWARDS ISLAMISATION**

During French colonisation, the only religion allowed was Catholicism and Islam was secretly practised. However, growing in number and gaining group strength, Muslims began celebrating the tenth of Muharram as a public festival in 1765 (Jumma Masjid). Following that event, they were interested in building a mosque to serve their community-practice. Therefore, they petitioned the Governor Malartic for the concession of a plot of land in Camp des Lascars, but their request was denied. Convinced about their idea of organising congregational prayers, four years later, on 02 February 1802, they renewed their demand in another petition to the successor of Malartic, Governor Molière (1800-03), but again their demand was rejected. Three years later, in 1805, they petitioned Governor Decaën, the successor to Governor Molière and finally, on 16 October 1805 Governor Decaën conceded to their request and offered them a land of concession to build a mosque. "By signing the Deed of Concession, Governor Decaën reckoned the sale of a plot of land in Camp des Lascars to a group of lascars

propriétaires' for the construction of a chapel for practising their religion. The chapel's name is now known as Masjid Al Aqsa. It was built in 1805 and according to the Jummah Masjid, it was 'a determining proof that would bring Muslims towards islamisation' (Jummah Masjid, n.d). After the construction of the first mosque, more mosques have been built to cater for the increasing number of Muslims. Such new empowerment paved its way towards other successful projects. It gave Muslims a sense of empowerment within Mauritian society. In addition, the mosque had served as a centre for communication, meetings and fraternity. Urdu, which has been accepted by all Muslims to be the official language, acted as a unifying factor. Thus, Urdu developed into a functional language for Muslims in the affairs of religion and education. Urdu was first initiated in *madrassahs* and later in 1953 was introduced at primary education level (Sebastopol State Secondary School). Buglah states that the famous poet-philosopher, Dr. Mohammad Iqbal was well appreciated by Mauritian Muslims and the recital of his famous Urdu poems became a daily feature in all the Mauritian *madrassahs*. With such a deep love for Urdu, Mr. Foondon decided to initiate and establish formal links with the Aligarh Muslim University as from 1957 by organising annual Urdu examinations for local students. Such qualifications were useful for obtaining a job as Urdu teachers. Free tuition in the Urdu language was offered during the weekends at the Madad-ul-Islam Secondary school and the Pakistan Club, Plaine Verte for prospective candidates taking part in the examination (Assad Buglah, n.d). To date, Urdu is taught at some secondary institutions such as Madad-ul-Islam and the Islamic Cultural College Form VI among others. It is also taught at the tertiary level and the government of India offers a scholarship for the best Urdu candidates at the Higher School Certificate (Sebastopol State Secondary School, n.d). Through a constant effort to maintain Urdu as a cultural language, it finally received a higher benchmark and by an Act of Parliament, the Government of Mauritius established the Urdu Speaking Union in 2002. The Urdu Speaking Union operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Arts and Culture and receives governmental grants annually to carry out its activities (Buglah Assad). Through Urdu, Muslims have shared many religious and educational opportunities. The *Naat* is still being recited and heard by the young generations (Ali Qadri Mauritius, 2011). It can be noted that homogeneity of language became an overwhelming factor around which Muslims could create community solidarity.

Another important fact revealed in the article Mauritian Hinduism is the monopolisation of India as the ancestral homeland by the Hindus of Mauritius. Even though both Muslims and Hindus originated from India, this frustrating reality had influenced some Muslims to turn to the homeland of their faith for guidance and support. To illustrate, they have taken funding from Saudi Arabia as well as other Arab nations. Again, according to that same article, the monopolisation of political power, as well as the influence of Hindu groups, led to the creation in 1992 of a radical Muslim political party called *Hizbullah* whose views are heavily influenced by -fundamentalist movements in the Arab world and Pakistan; -its creation is evidence of the continued strain on Hindu-Muslim relations in Mauritius and the trend since the 1970's for both to become more defensive, especially in the political arena However, the same article admits that Mauritius being a country of immigrants needs to strongly connect to other powers outside of the island so that it can develop -economically, politically and culturally. It refers to the influence of Saudi Arabian Islam among many Mauritian Muslims. Funding from Arab nations and Mauritian Islamisation has also built more mosques, made more opportunities for religious education, and made Arabic, as opposed to Urdu the language of choice for many young Mauritian Muslims to learn to speak (Mauritian Hinduism, n.d).

Hence, Islamisation was made possible through the strong mobility of Muslims and their quest to keep their religious cultural community alive. Jahangeer-Chojoo declares that "Islamisation has strongly underlined the socio-cultural and political evolution of the Muslim community. It has accompanied the rise in the socio-economic status of the agricultural and trading classes by providing cultural idioms belonging to the upper classes in Indo-Muslim societies. It has served to articulate the identity and interests of its adherents in changing political contexts and in the pursuit of integration in a specific cultural context. Diasporic ties and global links have inspired this community and influenced its thought patterns" (Jahangeer-Chojoo, Amenah: 2002). O'Beirne (2004) claims that religion is a relevant aspect in a person's self-description, particularly for people from the Indian subcontinent. His statement suggests that religion is a binding factor irrespective of race, ethnicity, and culture. This is in line with functionalism which

emphasises religion's role in social order and cohesion.

#### 4.3.2 THE PROCESS OF ISLAMISATION

According to Mungly, the history of *Madrassah* education in Mauritius is intricately linked to the establishment of mosques. In fact, the establishment of a mosque, 'acted as a catalyst for the provision of formal madrassah education to Muslim children in the early Muslim community' (Mungly, 2011, p. 17). Hollup claims that Islamisation developed in the form of new mosques, schools, and Islamic centres. Invitations were sent to foreign missionaries for Islamic endeavours in the island. The invitation was extended to the transnational *Tabligh Jama'at*, which originated from India to teach Islam. There was a need to go back to the Islamic sources and to educate the masses. Such orthodoxy aimed at bringing Muslims back to the essence of Islam through the process of *da'wah*. The researchers wish to clarify that *da'wah* in this sense does not mean an invitation towards non-Muslims, rather it means an invitation for born Muslims to come back to the essence of true principles. By doing so, the emphasis was put on Arabic. The researchers can assume the duality between two groups of Muslims, those who were ready to unlearn the processes of traditional religion and to relearn the new precepts versus those who were unwilling to change. This is a crucial point in the thesis which will help in the understanding of cultural schools and Islamic faith schools.

Hollup states that the processes of *da'wah* include behavioural changes and dress codes for both genders, positing that decency is a branch of faith. To this effect, boys reaching the age of puberty were required to cover their bodies, especially from the navel to the under knees. When a girl reached the age of puberty, she was commanded to wear a head scarf and to cover all parts of the body except the hands and the face. Hollup explains that men were summoned to have a beard and the *kurta* was discouraged, and the *thawb* [long dress for men] was preferred as it best represents Muslim attire. Women, who had previously discarded the traditional saris and preferred the Punjabi and Lucknowi costumes worn by upper classes in their country of origin, were then asked to wear the *jilbāb* and the *ḥijāb*. A few women also adopted *pardah*, encouraged by missionaries. Adult education was thus enforced by foreign missionaries and Muslims in Mauritius were concerned about acquiring religious knowledge instead of being cultural Muslims. This has culminated in the argument that that personal

religious law has primacy over civil law. Hollup relates an incident of a Muslim girl attending a private non-Muslim secondary school. She was rebuked by her rector for wearing the hijab which had been recently introduced by missionaries. The girl was expelled from the school and the following Friday, more than 1000 Muslims demonstrated in public. Since the incident received press coverage, it was a controversial issue for the government. Muslims won the ensuing case and currently, the *ḥijāb* and *jilbāb* are accepted in all public schools and government work. The researchers suggest that this event marked the beginning of *hijab* awareness among the young generation in Mauritius (Oddvar Hollup, n.d).

As explained earlier, Mauritians have acquired a rich legacy of languages, cultures, traditions and customs. On that score, Jahangeer-Chojoo claims that: "the relative ease with which the Mauritian Muslims seem to change ethnic markers and linguistic loyalties should not surprise the observer, as the Mauritian context is highly pluralistic and heterogeneous." She explains that Muslims, as well as other Mauritians, live "multiple identities, activating any one or the other at will, depending on the context. For the Muslims in any case, the basis of the ethnic group is neither language nor folklore nor dress but religion itself. However, religious ideas are contingent on contemporary mores material and political preoccupations. While the statement of Jahangeer-Chojoo is relevant, there is nevertheless a group of conservative Muslims who claim religion and culture from their ancestors and religion is deeply rooted in their behaviour, religious understanding, and mindset. Arguably, they are those Muslims who are still attached to Urdu, who still wear cultural Indian dresses and gowns, who marry according to their ancestors' traditions and cultures such as the famous „*Chawtari*“ and „*Mehendi*“. *Sūrat al-Fātiḥah* (The Opening Chapter of the *Qur'ān*) is still recited by a „*Miaji*“ to bless individuals and their homes. These „*Miaji*“ would "perform -*Fatehas* and -*duas* at home level on special occasions like *Shab-e-Barat*, *Shab-e-Qadar* and *Yaum-e-Ashura*" (Assad Buglah, n.d). The researchers believe that it is their attachment to their traditional values and religion that has motivated them to remain as a homogeneous group and to pass on their way of life to the next generations.

#### **4.3.3 EARLY MUSLIM INTELLECTUALS**

Through hard work and positive ambitions, it was possible for many early Muslims to

climb the social ladder and become intellectuals and bureaucrats. Jummah Masjid claims that these Muslims emerged mostly from their rich ancestors. Such rich ancestors were highly respected in the colony and enjoyed an aristocratic life due to their economic prospects. Jummah masjid claims that early Muslims were deeply conscious of the value for education and they had made sacrifices to educate their children. Thus the Muslim community produced medical doctors, chemists, attorneys, teachers, clerks, and civil servants. Dr. Hasen Sakir was the first Mauritian Muslim and also the first Indo Mauritian to graduate from Medical School followed by Dr. Idrice Goomany. The first Mauritian Governor-General, Sir Abdool Raman Osman (1973-1977) was from the Muslim Community. The first Muslim Municipal Councillor was Dr. Hassen Sakir, elected in 1900. The first Muslim Mayor of Port Louis, Mr. G.M.D. Atchia was elected in 1938 after being a Municipal Councillor for over sixteen years. Jummah Masjid, n.d reports that it was the first time in the annals of the town that an Indo-Mauritian was so honoured and on 1st July 1992, Cassam Uteem became the first President of the Republic elected by the National Assembly of Mauritius (Jummah Masjid). It is to be noted that Muslims have endeavoured to make those names memorable in history. For example, one state school is named after G.M.D Atchia at Champ de Mars, Port-Louis; a street has been named after Dr. Hassen Sakir in Plaine Verte and Idrice Goomany is a well-known dispensary at Plaine Verte.

According to the researcher, there is a clear demarcation between rich and poor in the Muslim community.

#### **4.4 LEARNING INSTITUTIONS AND THE EMERGENCE OF SECTS**

Al Aqsa Masjid is intimately linked with the history of Muslim sailors in 1720. It is regarded as the birth-place and cradle of the local Muslim community and is intimately linked with the history of the country. This historical mosque has been conferred the status of National Heritage as a religious and cultural site in April 2016. The site has also filed an application to be registered as a World Heritage site by UNESCO through the Ministry of Culture. It is regarded as a 'gem' in the southern hemisphere (Al Aqsa masjid). To date, the mosque has been renovated and serves as an educational institution as well as prayer space.

Jahangeer-Chojoo (2010) narrates that "the first rural mosques appeared in 1863, and by the year 1900, 30 mosques had been built in villages". The settlement of Gujarati Muslim traders in Port Louis from the 1840's onwards was to provide considerable assistance in the institutionalisation of Islam in Mauritius. They built a mosque in the city centre in 1852 and a Muslim cemetery in 1872. They have constructed mosques to preserve their faith and identity. They have also contributed a large extent to the socio-economic development of the country. The building and running of a mosque requires the formal organisation of the congregation at a village or local level. An initiative was made to create a Muslim group [*jamaat*] to handle the affairs of mosques and other related issues. They were financed by rich Muslims. The Suratis set up shops in village agglomerations. "Mosque attendance and membership in a *jamaat* became the mark of the new rural elite.¶

Hossanee Zaoul states that the concept of regional mosques was to integrate their own *madrassahs* in order to educate Muslim children in their immediate surroundings. *Madrassahs* provide free religious education to the majority of Muslim children in the early community. A small percentage of private tuitions were dispensed by *Imams* and other informal male and female teachers at home for children of the wealthy Muslims. Moreover, Hossanee posits that -the Muslims' role and challenges in the Mauritian context can be looked into, firstly, by considering the community as a homogenous block living along with other communities in a secular statell (Hossanee Zaoul , n.d). However, despite the struggle of Muslims to establish unity, the demarcation between the rich and the poor of that same community still exists to this day.

However, it is clear that the educational rise of Muslims in Mauritius has been slow given the long gap held to first establish mosques on the island. Eventually, schools were constructed to help both boys and girls to be instructed in a cultural environment in view of safeguarding their religion and culture while gaining academic knowledge. A Muslim High School was constructed by the Surtee Sunnee association in 1897. The Meiman association established primary and secondary schools such as the Islamic Cultural College in 1949 and Madad-ul-Islam College a few years later. However, it can be suggested that Islam witnessed a sudden change as well as the proliferation of Islamic

schools on the Mauritian ground with the formation of Muslim scholars from Saudi Arabia. Scholars emerging from Saudi Arabia were convinced that Urdu had to be replaced by Arabic in terms of religious teaching such as Friday sermons, the reading of the Quran and its memorisation. It is worth noted that the first Imam of the Jummah Mosque was a Saudi, Imam Hammad of Madina, who officiated in the 1950s. Hossene states that the scholar and da'ee, Maulana Abdul Rashid Nawab, of Saudi origin, left his print in Muslim history. He was formerly a teacher from Nizam of Hyderabad. Nawab had set up *madrassahs* in Mauritius to teach the Islamic faith and Arabic to the very young in the 1920's and train future *da'ees* and *imams*. His *madrassah* in Port Louis was known as The Muslim High School. It has now developed into a remarkable Islamic secondary institution catering for both Islamic and secular studies. Nawab died in 1951 and is buried in Mauritius. After his death, a street in Plaine-Verte was named after him. Egypt has also contributed to helping young Mauritian Muslims with scholarships in Islamic studies at Al Azhar University and Medicine at Cairo and Alexandria University. Through inter-country marriages, some Egyptians have settled in Mauritius and have helped in the propagation of Islam and the teaching of Arabic (Hossanee Zaoul, n.d).

Cehl Meeah explains that it was in 1979 that Parvez Kureemun, having specialised in the Arabic language, came back to Mauritius after ten years of study in Makkah and Madina. Kureemun was among the first batch of students who had received a scholarship to study in Arabia. His motivation was rooted in the fact that many Muslims, according to him, were leading a loose life, devoid of knowledge. He made his own house a centre of learning and imparted intensive training to both men and women separately. He soon established a congregation and held many conferences around the island, wrote Arabic books for primary and secondary students and was concerned about helping the younger and older generations to read the *Qur'ān* in Arabic language. People would lend their houses freely to help in the dissemination of Islamic education. Meeah states that he was one of Kureemun's Arabic students. Besides Arabic, Kureemun was entrenched in what he saw as the strict interpretation of the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*. His outspoken speech was much appreciated among a segment of the community and people would travel from villages to listen to him and became fervent adherents of his ideology. This ideology attacked the tradition-bound Islam associated with Mauritian Muslims. He was

particularly concerned about the Muslim generation in regard to the increasing use of television broadcasts, cinemas and video clubs held by Muslims. It was the rise of the *tawhidians* (Cehl Meeah, interview 2018).

To date, the mushrooming of mosques, *madrassahs*, Islamic pre-primary, primary and secondary schools in the four corners of the island can be attributed to the hard work and religious legacy of previous Muslims towards the present generations. Another reason can be attributed to the lack of leadership control within the community because Muslims do not abide by one leader. As a matter of fact, each group of Muslims has built its own mosque. In addition, some believe that the emergence of ‘online sheikhs’ or ‘Google sheikhs’ has largely contributed to the emancipation of Muslims’ individualism. This has resulted in everyone having an opinion about Islam, its beliefs and practices and everyone having a claim that they are on the right path without referring to any Book (Saad Buxoo, 2017). The emergence of sub-groups gave rise to the *Sunnat-e-jamaat*, *Tawhidians*, *Shī’ah* known as *Kojas*, *Sufis*, *Tabligh-e-jamaat* and *Salafis*. One sub-group may manage several mosques around the country. In the 1980’s the *Jama`at-ul-Muslimeen* was created and a garage was transformed into a prayer room so that adherents would be able to pray together as brothers and sisters and would also join in to learn Quranic injunctions. Islamisation based on the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* was initiated to Muslims of all ages. In a nutshell, the old garage has served both prayers and lessons (Cehl Meeah, interview 2018). To date, Meeah has followers around the country. Referring to the phenomenon of sects, Wilson sees a clear relationship between sect development and rapid social changes. He believes that rapid social changes disturb ‘traditional norms and create feelings of confusion and despair.’ In counterpart, sects offer a ‘solution’ to these problems (Wilson: 1982). While it may offer solutions to their immediate problems, the researcher argues that heterogeneity in terms of group variety has split the Muslim community into sub-factions. This eventually fragmented or marginalised the Muslim community.

The divisions noted with regard to socio-cultural background, religious interpretations, economic positions and political influence or the lack thereof raises the possibility that while in identifying as Muslims, and in this way creating a sense of solidarity with each

other, the community can lay claim to being a functional unit, the tensions exhibited around their divisions can be seen as signs of dysfunction.

#### **4.5 THE SITUATION OF MUSLIMS POST INDEPENDENCE**

Four political parties ran for independence in 1968; among which was the *Action Comité Musulman*. Each one proudly chose a specific colour to represent their parties. Muslims chose green, which represents the Agricultural fields. These colours were later proudly accepted to represent the quadri colour flag of the island: red, blue, yellow and green; at the same time, it demonstrates the rainbow nation (Dukhira Chit, 2002, p.170). Mauritius did not win independence in favourable conditions. Some ethnic groups were not in favour of independence because they feared that Hindus would reignite with favouritism. Finally, a war broke out between the Creole and Muslims. -A civil war broke out post-independence on the ground of ethnic inequalities and this time, the Christian Creoles and Muslims fought each other, giving rise what is commonly called the -Bagarre racialll (Race Riot). While the Hindu community did not fight, the Christian population including the Creoles and the Whites were dissatisfied with the election. The White people feared the after consequences of the Independence where a man of Indian origin would rule over them and many of them left the countrysll (excerpt from Maniacara, M: 2015, p.25). After Independence, many Franco Mauritians left Mauritius fearing the after-change situation. However, many of them have stayed and some have returned to the country after years of migration to countries such as South Africa and France. According to Tijo Salverda, the Franco-Mauritian citizens live in seclusion from the rest of the population and their social life is strictly organised; by doing so, they have been able to preserve their cultures and language which is French. Salverda believes that this aspect can be proven by the strict social life they organise around their own community. -The community maintains several white-only sport and social clubs, like the Dodo Club. The national rugby team is virtually all-white, as the only islanders playing the sport are members of Franco Mauritian clubs.ll Salverda explains that -this guarantees ethnic separation and intensifies the high visibility of whiteness in an overwhelmingly non-white societysll (Tijo Salverda, 2015, n.d).

However, Hollup claims that before independence, Mauritius was home to a heterogeneous community of Muslims, Hindus, and Christians living together in harmony.

Many Muslims left village areas to settle in the capital and Plaine Verte has turned into a Muslim bastion (Hollup)." After the *'bagarre raciale'*, socio-cultural interrelationships were strained in the country. Hatred and animosity were present among Muslims, Christians, and Hindus. The Hindus moved to Triolet [the North], the Black creoles to Roche-Bois and Cite la Cure [two suburban areas of Port-Louis], the caucasian people stayed in the district of Plaine Wilhems in Curepipe while Muslims settled in Plaine-Verte and the neighbourhood that is Vallée Pitot" (excerpt from Maniacara, 2015, p.26).

For many years, Muslim communities have suffered socially and economically. Segregated, Muslims paved their way to various activities. They clung together as one community. The mosque represented not only a place of worship but a congregational meeting place to exchange joy and share problems. Since they could not gain entry to white collar jobs, they started to import articles and used the street as their offices to sell these wares, leading to a number of Muslims becoming wealthy merchants. Wealth was not limited to the elites but it was extended to some of the Calcattias, who through hard work earned their due. Muslims became very active in social lives and *dawah* works. The article, *Mauritian Muslims*, claims that in the 1970's Mauritius was economically very weak and the country established ties with the rich Arab countries. Iraq sent Arabic teachers to teach at the primary school. In 1984, the Libyan embassy was closed and its ambassador was expelled *manu militari*, though the reasons for closing up have never been made publicly clear. The contract of the Iraqi teachers was not renewed (Mauritian Muslims, n.d). Jahangeer-Chojoo states that the *Hizbullah* [now FSM] was one of the numerous Islamist movements that sprang up in the 1980's and 1990's, heralding a new era of Islamisation. These movements were headed by educated members of the Muslim community. They advocated for the introduction of Islamic principles in every sphere of life and rigorous practice of rituals and precepts. Jahangeer-Chojoo explains that these Islamist movements were involved in missionary works and social work for the educational and moral benefit of the poor and the marginalised. -The *Hizbullah* distinguished itself by fighting against drug trafficking and starting rehabilitation programmes for addicts. The leader, Cehl Fakeemeeah, managed to develop a good following which eventually became a distinct religious group, praying in special meeting places. This pattern was common to most of the neo-Islamist groups which eventually built their own mosques, breaking away from *jamaats* which had other ideological

inclinations. Jahangeer-Chojoo (2010) maintains that the Islamisation process was crucial in "shaping thought patterns and behaviour, particularly in the cultural and political fields"; "religion and religious ideology have served as a basis of social identification and communal boundary maintenance."

This idea is reinforced by the article of *Mauritian Muslims*, in which it is stated that in the later years of the 20th century, Mauritius was "inundated with Islamic organisations which unfortunately have thrived on the differences in schools of thought, exacerbated by the influx of students who have studied Islam at various universities in India, Pakistan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. "Signs of intolerance have unfortunately appeared in the Mauritian Muslim scenery" (Mauritian Muslims, n.d).

#### **4.6 THE ROLE PLAYED BY COLONIALISM AND THE HISTORY OF SCHOOLING IN MAURITIUS**

The role played by colonialism in terms of stratification and education needs to be addressed. Colonialism can be viewed as a multi-dimensional phenomenon that has brought profound changes to the educational, social, political, religious and economic structures of the country. It was especially the French and English colonisations that have permanently impacted on the Mauritian society and its people. Mauritian schools are either French or English instructed and are largely based on the British system while there are a few private schools that are run according to the French educational system (Ajaheb-Jahangeer & Jahangeer, 2004). Colonisation does not have to be necessarily negative. It has brought about positive developments in the country such as economic development, a wealth of languages, culture, religion, and religious infrastructures. Such wealth has contributed to the make-up of the Mauritian society. Due to its unique history based on the decision of British conquerors to allow the French settlers to live and to continue their activities on the island, Mauritius has developed into a cultural hub.

In the economic sphere, Gillig claims that the colonial Dutch and the Portuguese were responsible for the exploitation of timber, the destruction of forests and the extinction of the dodos (Suzanne Chazan Gillig, n.d), and they had already set the stage for sugar planting (Ly Tio Fane 1993: 10). Selvon (2005) states that slavery was formally abolished in 1835 but slaves were not completely free and had to remain on the estates as apprentices. Once they became totally free individuals, the majority of them left the

plantations and started to live on their own. They set out to perform various tasks such as fishing, agriculture, artisan work, and others in order to earn a living. Nonetheless, many of the ex-slaves were unable to survive on their own and would live in extreme poverty without the slightest form of education. Some sought refuge in alcohol and idleness. The presence of Jean Lebrun and Father Jacques Désiré Laval tried to provide the newly enfranchised people with a religious and basic academic education (Selvon 2005: 224). Gillig states that sea trade had expanded and Holland had established supremacy in the Indian Ocean and the Indian Ocean sea route was quite common. A wave of Indian immigration in the 1850's and early 1860's resulted in a wage decrease for the most highly skilled workers, bringing about the impoverishment of some Creoles who economically had just emerged (Suzanne Chazan Gillig, n.d). According to Addison and Hazareesingh (1984: 58), the indentured labourers who were recruited to replace the slaves did not have better treatment. However, Adolphe de Plevitz and Governor Gordon fought for the rights of the Indians despite the fury of the French planters (in Addison & Hazareesingh 1984: 63). Surprisingly, from this group of Indian labourers emerged important political personalities such as Seewoosagur Ramgoolam and Basdeo Bissoondoyal, who militated for the independence in 1965 (Selvon, 2005: 277).

According to Eriksen, "when the British conquered Mauritius during the Napoleonic wars, the Franco-Mauritians were promised, in the terms of capitulation, the right to retain their customs, language, and religion". The Franco-Mauritian citizens have contributed to many developments in the country. This has allowed the French missionaries to play an important role in educating the masses. They were involved in teaching and preaching to the slaves and this explains the large number of Roman Catholics among the general population. According to Cader Kalla, Sir Robert Farquhar, colonial governor and Member of Parliament, was a devout Christian and a freemason who was deeply committed to humanitarian work. He wished for evangelisation and education for the children of Port-Louis. Upon his request, Reverend Jean Lebrun reached Mauritius in May 1814 to 'fashion' the coloured people and freed slaves and embarked on the process of literacy and socialisation. Kalla claims that Lebrun acted as a role model in the education of coloured people and freed slaves. In reference to his grandeur, a primary school at cite Martial is named after him. His curriculum was primarily based on moral and religious

education. Kalla refers to that period as the fashioning years. He recalls that the Mauritian society was "pyramidal in structure with the Whites occupying the apex and the slaves at the broad base, with the people of mixed parentage – [*the gens de couleur*], in between. Skin colour was a social marker and this was most felt among the *gens de couleur*. Kalla contends that the motto of all

missionaries was "preach and teach" and teaching was primarily based on scriptures. This example can be compared with the academic style of Islamic schools in Mauritius. Jean Lebrun's methodology can be revisited by Muslim educators so as to provide students with a solid moral education based on the Islamic pedagogy.

British text books were used along with professional monitoring which motivated the young students. Activities were used to foster a sense of leadership among learners. Arithmetic, Geography, and reading were taught and later, Lebrun designed his own curriculum and wrote primers. Lebrun, therefore, went beyond the objective of 'missionary education' and citing Kalla, Lebrun was conscious of the power of education that cured social illnesses. Eventually, with Lebrun's methodology, education developed into a holistic approach where the youth were engaged in critical thinking. Beyond that, they were entrenched in moral ethics, belief in God and became intellectuals capable of undertaking a job. Kalla believes that Lebrun's schools, in various regions of the country, offered 'several pathways for social uplift[ing]'. He contends that "literacy was packaged in moral and religious wrappings where most of the textbooks contained materials from the Bible. He posits that the missionaries saw Christian tenets as a prerequisite for freedom. Hence, teachers in the Micro schools indulged in preaching with the objective of converting the ex-slaves. -There were clashes between the religion preached by the French and the religion preached by the British. The issue of denominationalism was a vexed one during the colonial period. The former was rooted in Catholicism while the latter favoured Anglicanism (Cader Kalla).

Eriksen states that -regarding other aspects of culture, some religious beliefs and practices have survived, in modified forms, although the slaves were converted to Christianity and their descendants are Catholics. According to Kalla, 'the Mauritian society was structured 'pyramidically' with the White occupying the apex and the slaves at the broad base and the Free Coloured and Indians in middle. He claimed that

besides the ethnic and racial differentiation, skin colour was an important social marker. Kalla explains that the history of religion was linked to that of political changes and colonial administration. He narrates that during French colonial times, Catholicism was the state religion, and 'slaves were forced to give up their ancestral customs and traditions'. However, in the nineteenth century, the British administration encouraged the development of the Anglican Church but allowed the Catholic Church to continue with its mission. With the massive immigration of Indians to the island during the same period, the religious and cultural setting of the island changed thoroughly. These changes are visible today, with Hinduism being the main religion.

Ramdoyal says that the Mauritian Archives for official documents do not relate to any educational provision before 1779. During that period, the variety of 'ethnic groups' and 'different social classes' used to live in 'mutual isolation' from each other, which was mostly due to 'specific socio-cultural orientation and an equal economic status' (Ramdoyal, 1977, p.31). Such an era had a mixed population of Whites, Coloured and slaves (Ramdoyal, 1977, p.20) and the act for the abolition of slavery was passed in 1834 (Ramdoyal,1977, p.72). The twentieth century marked the educational concern for the administrators. However, the conditions and standards were not to be level expected. Dr. Barteman, the first director of education appointed in 1901, published a report in 1923 in which he declared that 'schools exist in Mauritius and cannot now be closed, but they were better closed than remain monuments of wasted money and use less energy, where children are looked after, perhaps kept out of mischief, but certainly not educated' (Ramdoyal, 1977, p.117). "Nevertheless, the efforts of administrators and the attitude of the Mauritian public to education contributed to the idea of national literacy. In the year 1955-56, 85,446 pupils were enrolled in primary schools and 126,173 in the year 1959-60" (Ramdoyal,1977, p.125). Primary and secondary schools existed since the reign of the French colonisation. The creation of the Royal College of Port-Louis dates back to 1799 during the French period. It was Charles Decaën who founded primary schools and the Lycée Colonial. In 1810, the island became an English colony and the name of this elite school has been modified with time to finally be called Royal College, a well-known star college in Mauritius where its students are called Royalists (Royal College Curepipe). In the early 20th century, the country's most

prestigious school, the Royal College in Curepipe, began vying for enrolment by other ethnic groups. In response, many elites transferred their children to Catholic missionary schools, the best of which was dominated by Franco-Mauritian pupils. However, the state gained control over these schools, and in the 1970's while competition for enrolment increased, the Franco-Mauritian community was forced to compete for admittance with all Mauritians based on merit. Referring to the Franco-Mauritians as elites, Ajaheb-Jahangeer and Jahangeer state that they anticipated the decision of the government to democratise schools and sent their children to French private schools, which are known for providing quality education.

It can be suggested that the legacy of the English and French has contributed greatly to the creation of Mauritius. The unconscious shift from English to French and French to English and the natural insertion of such a combination into Creole can be uniquely attributed to the Mauritian people. While a segment of the population is trying to renew their ties with Creole as their ancestral legacy – as shall be seen later – there is a new outbreak of English and French irrespective of ethnicity. Students continue to learn English and French Literature at school. There is also a revival of French and English culture. "La veuve joyeuse", which is a famous French legacy, has been taken up by the Mauritian opera and local artists (Le Mauricien). High French gastronomy is still in demand. However, it can be observed that it is not reserved for one segment of the population; rather it depends on taste, culture and financial means. One example is *La Clé des Champs* at Floréal (Restaurant La Clé des Champs).

#### **4.7 THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN MAURITIUS**

The structure of the Mauritian educational system is actually based on pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Since its incursion, primary schools have always been offered for free to all bases to Mauritian citizens. Education has long followed the English-style grammar schools with six years at the primary level and seven years at the secondary level. Though the British educational pattern did not change post-independence, various reforms were made in the educational system in the upcoming years. Such reforms have been constantly reviewed by the Minister of Education and Human Resources over the years until recently. To illustrate, in 2001, the Ministry of Education reformed the system (Jimmy Harmon, pp.22-30).

When Mauritius obtained its independence, provision was made in the law concerning education. According to the UNESCO organisation, the law stipulates that any individual has the right to open a school and admission to a school should not be denied to any pupil on the basis of race, creed and sex. In 1976, secondary education was made free to all citizens in an attempt to reduce illiteracy on all grounds and to put an end to inequalities among sexes. It is compulsory for all Mauritian students to attend school up to the age of 16. It was an attempt to broaden access to girls as well as boys. To that, Libby Brooks says that this decision has broadened access to both genders and has increased the capacity for girls to be schooled so that families do not have to choose between the schooling of their male and female children (Libby Brooks, February 2000). Additionally, schools and colleges have been built in every district to support the project and at the same time eliminate gender discrimination as well as rehabilitating the poor and the needy. Students are given a bus pass so that they can travel in any bus freely. Those parents who are registered for social security are allotted free books and other facilities for their children (ministry of social security, 2018). Every government makes new reforms in the education department with the objective of developing the current system and improving the conditions of students. The most recent reform in the educational sector has been done by the education minister, Leela Devi Dookun. According to the World Bank, education has -the function to reform and transform the society instead of maintaining the status quoll. Its motive is to promote social justice starting with the school in view of a wider aim, the society at large (World Bank). During the late 20th century the economy of Mauritius flourished considerably. Many economic opportunities were engaged. The government was willing to bring education to the next level. The secondary education landscape was reshaped with numerous State Secondary schools that were built around the country to facilitate students to attend the nearest regional schools. Despite the wide-ranging project of public schools, the government continues to support and finance private schools that were, and still are under the aegis of the PSEA.

The late 20th century has witnessed a proliferation of various school types such as Parochial, Religious, Academy, Selective and French-based systems. With the emergence of Muslim scholars who graduated from Saudi Arabia and the propaganda

about the need for Islamic knowledge, more Islamic schools have been created to cater to the needs of Muslim children. Among them are the Dar Ul Ma'arif, the Doha Academy and the Islamic Cultural College Form VI which have all been mentioned in chapter One. All of these school types are licensed by the government and they are conversant with the strategies of the government with regards to education. It is a fact that given the complex demands and pressures facing schools, public schools have not been able to satisfy a large number of students. Despite all of the projects based on reforms, public schools are looked down upon by many parents who prefer to send their children to privatised or independent schools. Hence, despite various debates and discussions about educational reform, there is still a strong need felt for private schools.

In 2017, the educational reform took place and the nine year continuous basic schooling system has replaced the previous one. The Nine Year continuous Basic Education [NYCBE] program, which is a comprehensive program for all Mauritian children is supposed to meet this global need. The reform includes nine years of continuous schooling instead of six years, upon which students will be tested at a national examination. From that point, the government will decide if students need to pursue academic studies or to join technical schools. Under this system, the learners at primary education are expected to acquire appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy as well as life skills and ethical and civic values which were not the case with the previous system due to its high level of elitism and examination-oriented basis. However, the first batch of students emerging from the new system will only reach Grade 9 in 2020. Meanwhile, secondary education at the upper level has remained unchanged (Ministry of education).

In 2017, the Certificate of Primary Education [CPE] by an end-of-primary cycle assessment was replaced by the PSAC [Primary School Achievement Certificate], involving the nine-year basic continuous schooling. The CPE was highly competitive and was basically a kind of streaming at the national level. Students were seen as competitive candidates with competitive goals and viewed education as a competition rather than a personal upbringing. It can be argued that due to its elitist features, the system of ranking has met much opposition during the last few years. The present government is of the opinion that the NYCBE will relieve students from high competition

and stress. The new system affects the Secondary levels which used to start from Form I to Form VI requiring seven years of schooling including two years preparing for the 'A' Level examinations. From Form I to III, there was no major nationally devised curriculum since each school has to plan its work according to the level of literacy of students. Subjects like English, French, Mathematics, Sciences and Social Studies (including Geography and History) are compulsory. Forms IV and V prepare students for the Cambridge School Certificate, where students choose a minimum of six major subjects for their O level examinations. The next and final stage is the two-year cycle which prepares students for the Cambridge Higher School Certificate. Students have to specialise in 3 main subjects and 2 subsidiary ones for the A-Level examination (UNESCO).

The overall objective of the NYCBE is to enhance the quality of basic education which is considered to be the cause of unskilled labour, unemployment and rising inequality. The focus is also about improving access to the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), including Polytechnic Education, and higher education programmes aligned to the economic needs of the country. The Ministry of Education has envisaged imparting education at a holistic level in order to boost the economy and prepare students for their future careers. The overall goals of NYCBE reform can thus be summarised as ensuring that all children (1) Complete nine years of quality basic education and achieve relevant learning outcomes; and (2) Successfully complete the secondary education cycle, whether general or technical. The National Assessment is carried out in the third year of Secondary education. During the first three years, a variety of subjects are imposed upon students which are known as core subjects, as well as some non-core subjects. Those students who are promoted to Grade 10 are streamlined according to the subjects they choose. At the end of the 5th year of study at the secondary level, students sit for the Cambridge School Certificate (SC) examination. Passing the SC exam allows them to continue another 2-year study ending with the Higher School Certificate (HSC) exam (Ministry of education) The minister of education, Dookhun-Luchoomun (2017), declared that its objective is that every learner emerging from the system is inspired to become a self-motivated individual, an autonomous lifelong learner, a responsible citizen with a strong value base and a productive

contributor to society. While Public schools are expected to implement the policy, they must ensure that they act in a religiously and culturally neutral way. However, non-public schools are allowed to offer religious and moral education as per their wishes to meet the needs of a segment of the population, in this case, the Muslim community. Based on the fact that Islamic schools follow the Cambridge Examination system, this explains why they comply with the instructions and advice of the PSEA. Academic studies such as Mathematics, English, French, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, and Arts are compulsory subjects until Grade 9. From Grade 10, students can choose a combination of subjects until they complete the secondary standard of studies. Along with these subjects, Islamic studies and Arabic are taught in many public schools as well as Islamic schools. They are both included in the Cambridge Examination curriculum. Along with this curriculum, Islamic schools have sought to propose a model of schooling based on religious and secular studies.

However, the researchers can infer that the PSAC has not been able to eliminate the system of 'sorting by merit' and students that have successfully passed their PSAC are still admitted to the best secondary schools. Thus, as an example, a student with good grading is admitted to Doha while a low performer will be sent to Islamic Cultural College or Madad-UI-Islam. Those who are low performers may seek admittance into private schools whose margin of enrollment is less rigid than public schools. This may be a potential explanation of why Muslim learners are scattered in various schools such as Public, Catholic, privatised and Muslim schools.

In fact, there are approximately ten renowned Islamic secondary schools. The Dar Ul Ma'arif, High school [previously known as Institute of Islamic and Secular Studies], Doha, Islamic Cultural College, Muslim Girls college, Madad-UI-Islam Girls college, Aleemiah co-educational college, Islamic Cultural College Form VI. The certificate obtained at the final stage of the primary school, known as the PSAC, is determinant for secondary school entrance. Thus, students who have been highly graded may obtain access to a star school. Doha and Dar-UI-Ma'arif are well-known for their pass rates at the primary levels.

Commenting on the Reform 2008-2014, Bunwaree states that "the Education System in Mauritius is today well-embarked on the process of an in-depth transformation. It is driven by the central concern of equipping our students with all the means and the right attitude to succeed in life, taking advantage of new and emerging opportunities and overcoming the inevitable challenges that this new era continually posits." He explains that the objective is to render students multi-talented, creative thinkers, with leadership and entrepreneurial skills, as well as ulterior global standard goals. He proceeds to say that the 21st century "asks of them to develop the capacity to accumulate transferable knowledge and to ascertain positive outcomes in education, work, and other areas of life". However, the ex-minister of education admits that "educating a multicultural Nation in all its diversity is never an easy and stress-free venture-but it is also a unique and a lifetime experience, especially if the net finality and outcome is to make the system stand out as a model in the worldll (Dr. Vasant Bunwaree: 2008-14).

#### **4.7.1 SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAURITIUS**

A secondary school is an educational institution that operates to provide formal secondary education to adolescents ranging from 11 years old to 20 years old. It prepares students for Cambridge School Certificate (SC), which is the penultimate stage of secondary school, followed by a minimum of two years for the Cambridge Higher School Certificate (HSC). The Mauritius Examination Syndicates (MES) jointly with the CIE [Cambridge International Examinations] organise the SC and HSC examinations for all students in Mauritius. All students are eligible for the total examination fees for SC and HSC subject to certain conditions that the candidates must abide by. Most markings are done in the UK and the results are published through MES. Students have the opportunity to compete for laureateships and other scholarships at the HSC level. Competition is based on the choice of state combinations.

The MES is responsible for allocating all of the seats in Grade 7 in Regional State Secondary Schools and 50% of the seats in Grade 7 in grant-aided Private Secondary Schools.

The objective of Secondary education is to prepare students for a career or jobs - that is, to produce school leavers who are functionally ready for work and prepare them for

higher education [tertiary level]. All public secondary schools in Mauritius abide by the educational agenda proposed by the Ministry of education. Private secondary schools are either granted aid by the PSEA or are fully private fee-paying schools. Islamic secondary schools fall under the category of private schools both grant-aided and non-grant aided. The latter is either financed by individual owners or by non-profit organisations. All private schools are expected to be officially registered with the government. Their main intake is based on the Muslim community though there is a small percentage of non-Muslims in some Islamic schools. The intake may comprise of weak, average and high performers which means that students have mixed academic abilities.

The teaching philosophies of both school types may vary. State or public secondary schools are academically focused. Moreover, the procedure of admission is also different. Students normally attend state schools via results from primary school. In private schools, there is the possibility for all students to be in the same class irrespective of primary school results and academic ability.

However, there are also elite private schools that focus on English and French, thus providing better opportunities for success in the commercial world. Many parents register their children in these schools since there is a perception that the government schools are not meeting educational expectations. Education thus becomes a private good where only those who can afford it, or who are academically talented, can reach and thus aim at a future with better prospects (Oddvar Hollup, n.d).

#### **4.7.2 RECRUITMENT OF EDUCATORS AT THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Educators are recruited on the grounds of holding a degree from the University of Mauritius or any international university approved by the TEC [Tertiary Education Commission]. Thus, any candidate can seek employment at secondary schools after having successfully completed three or more years of learning in their respective fields of study and must produce a certificate of morality. This applies to both public and private secondary schools. Private schools receive subsidies from the government based on a number of children admitted to the school, while the owners or management of these schools control the recruitment and employment of teachers.

### **4.7.3 THE COMPLEXITY OF THE MAURITIAN LANGUAGES**

Language has always been a complex factor among the Mauritians but most recently, the introduction of Creole at the primary education level has created some uproar among sociologists and academics. In order to better understand the relevance of languages in the country, a short review is deemed important.

With the introduction of slaves during French colonisation, a new form of language was created called Mauritian Creole. Ferguson states that "a French lexified pidgin, which was soon turned into a Creole, was developed between a master and slaves, creating a diglossia situation in which French was used as the High variety and Creole as the Low" (Ferguson, 1959). Communication between the slaves and their French masters was often mediated by foremen who could speak both French and the African language. The only common language that they heard was French. -Successive generations of slave children took the French that they heard when their parents communicated with people from other ethnic groups and naturally developed a Creole version similar to other French colonies around the world. Since the French slave owners neither communicated with the slave children nor caused them to be educated, the drift continued and the Morisyen language arose and became embedded both amongst the slaves and the freemen of colour. Eventually, the Franco-Mauritians, especially administrators and Catholic priests, were forced to learn the language in order to communicate with the majority non-white population. With the British colonisation, the culture of languages did not change. After the abolition of slavery by the British, indentured labourers from India were to replace the slaves. They too had to learn Morisyen to communicate with the -general population. But for Munisamy, it is clear that Creole has never replaced English and French since it has remained an oral communication and not a written one with grammar. However, things changed recently when some young Mauritians invented their own Creole via chat messages in order to communicate with friends. For Munisamy, this is a natural democratic process, but what he condemned is that a group of academics have proposed creating a written form of Morisyen to be used as a medium of education, which he claims to be an undemocratic process performed by a self-appointed elite (Richard Munisamy, n.d ).

Mauritian Creole is commonly known to be a dialect mostly derived from French. With time, Mauritian Creole became the lingua franca among all Mauritians though it could not develop into a written language. The reason is understandable because Creole has a free style and does not have a uniform vocabulary. It is spoken in different ways by different sections of the population. Whenever a word is missing, it is common to borrow one from any known language such as French, English, Arabic, Urdu, etc. or just to replace the missing word by "that thing". Each generation has had the freedom to invent its own vocabulary that can be referred to as trend words. With time, those expressions disappear and the next generation invents other words which again pass away with time. Mauritian people may speak different versions of Creole based on various factors such as academic level, region, age, culture, etc. For example, it is common for intellectual Mauritians to mix English, French, and Creole in their everyday interactions. The insertion of foreign languages is partly due to acculturation. Eriksen states that Mauritian Creole is the native language of many Mauritians; although it is not officially recognised, it is the language of solidarity. Its status has been described as that of "an unofficial' national language" To Eriksen, Arabic, Bhojpuri, Hindi, Gujerati, Kutchi, Mandarin, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu are associated with ethnicity and/or religion. Some of these languages, like Gujerati and Kutchi, seem to be in a precarious position. Creole appears to be taking over some of the domains in which these ancestral languages were used as young people often use Creole as slang and there are various new expressions that have been invented to ghettoise themselves further from the elites and act as social barriers in the society. In other words, Creole has become a means of marginalisation. This must be taken into consideration when examining the use of the language of Islamic schools in Mauritius.

#### **4.7.4 CREOLE AS A LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION**

While many pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary teachers make use of Creole as a means of instruction, or borrow from English, French and Creole during their classroom explanation, Creole was not recognised as a language of instruction. It was officially introduced at the primary level as a means of instruction and communication in January 2012 by the Ministry of Education. (Le Mauricien, 2012).

In 2011, parents willing their kids to learn Kreol Morisien were invited to subscribe and the number of subscribers amounted to 3,384 (Le Mauricien, 2012). However, the introduction of Creole at the primary level as a means of instruction and communication in class has fuelled debate. For Jimmy Harmon, many Mauritian students -struggle to memorise words and concepts, repeat what the teacher says and keep quiet. Those who cannot cope with the subject, end up as low achievers and resent schoolingll (L'Express.mu, 2007). Richard Munisamy has another opinion on the matter. For him, it is clear that there are ulterior motives to the introduction of Creole to perpetrate communal and class divides. Political and religious leaders may be looking for either reward or recognition, and to -strengthen their hold on the segments of society they seek to shepherdll. The fact that they insist on calling the language Creole instead of Morisyen is a problematic since it refers to one segment of the population while the term morisyen is all embracing. He believes that the introduction of Creole at schools \_will dumb down the population' and that the \_economic elite have a lot to gain from that.' The latter sends their children to English and French medium schools. In a sense, if they want to learn the language, they can do so naturally through their peers without having to learn it at school. By imposing Creole on the lower classes, this definitely increases the inferior standard of education and henceforth creates -a gap between the classes that will be ever more difficult to cross. This will reinforce their position of dominance, especially in terms of dealing with the outside world, which will become increasingly important for Mauritiusll. (Richard Munisamy: n.d).

#### **4.8 SECULARISATION AND YOUTH CHALLENGES**

The term secular is understood by Chris Livesey to be anything that is -not religiousll – in other words, the absence of religion. He posits that -secularisation, in simple terms, refers to the idea that society and social behaviour is becoming increasingly less influenced by religious ideas and practices. In other words, religion and religious ideas are becoming increasingly less important to peoplell (Chris Livesey). In his book, the phenomenon of religion, Moojan Momen (1999) claims that secularisation is -the separation of society from the religious world so that religion becomes a purely personal matter." He states that religious groups become -increasingly concerned with the things of this world rather than the spiritual world."

Durkheim (1961) believes that there is 'something eternal about religion.' However, he was convinced that religion would have little social significance with time (Haralambos and Holborn, eighth edition, p.473). Indeed, it can be suggested that the era of industrialisation coupled with post-colonialisation has given rise to the expansion and pathways towards secularism in Mauritius. It has also disturbed the family equilibrium and the long traditional history of Mauritian families. With the introduction of industrialisation in Mauritius known as the *Free zone in 1971* (Kirsten Koop, 2004), many women left their cocoons to work as machinists in industries. With the new shift in women roles in the society and their presence in the market place, the Mauritian family set up had been disrupted. It is incontestable that economic shifts have redefined the role of women who have been relegating family and child care for their personal economic advancement and have become career seekers; (L'Express, March 2018) thus with time, this aspect has opened up to a more individualistic world where every member of the house must rely on their own abilities and the notion of togetherness is less privileged. This aspect is termed by functionalists as 'functional fit', which suggests that individuals have to fit their various roles and adjust with the societal challenges.

Additionally, without having free time to indulge in things other than work and school homework, religion has lost its power to unite. The opinion of Alar Kilp about secularisation is that it will lead to the decline of the authority of religious institutions, beliefs, and values in society, culture and politics. Kilp believes that the root cause of secularisation is socio-economic modernisation which consists of urbanisation and economic development, advancement in science and technology; increasing social, religious and political pluralism, growing rates of literacy and the introduction of mass education as well as "the increasing importance of modern secular social and political institutions". Kilp declares that "one of the main indicators of the influence of modernization on religious behaviour is related to the declining attendance at religious services and decreasing engagement in regular prayer and meditation, although the third form of participation – support for religious services at birth, marriage and death – can remain relatively widespread. While this aspect portrayed by Kilp may be referred to any society, it nevertheless shows an alarming truth in Mauritian society (Alar Kilp).

With secularisation, religion is relegated to the private sphere while only academic subjects are advocated at schools. Secularisation therefore privatises religion and consequently alienates faith-based communities. Consequently, in the realm of education, religious studies are relegated to non-core subjects or are just ignored. This makes education a critical battlefield for young Muslim learners.

In the light of such external societal pressures, Maudarbux believes that the Islamic Studies curriculum does not promote multi-cultural peace, but rather it aims at societal fragmentation and disintegration. He contends that the syllabus has produced -successive generations of schizophrenic and confused adolescents trapped in between a rapidly moving society and a crystallised utopian ideal, mirrored as the only way to salvation (Belal Maudarbux, n.d). To confirm Maudarbux' opinion, the Urdu curriculum has also remained mostly unchanged for the past forty years, with only slight changes over the years. While the school curriculum is exam-oriented, it does not prepare adolescents for their future roles. According to Abdool Moonib Heera, the Cambridge examination reports [from November 2001 to November 2007] show that Mauritian students lack the critical thinking to be able to answer various questions. (Abdool Moonib Heera, 2009). Moreover, secularisation has destroyed family structures and values. Since instruction is focused on one particular role, that is, exam orientation; there is no focus on values, respect and the formation of the self.

#### **4.9 SOCIAL DISINTEGRATION**

Stiglitz Joseph (2011) speaks about Mauritius in praiseworthy terms. He explains that "Mauritians have chosen a path that leads to higher levels of social cohesion, welfare, and economic growth – and to a lower level of inequality". Stiglitz (2011) believes that education for all was crucial to social unity and all of these together have led to the -Mauritius Miracle-. Stiglitz (2011) further states that Mauritius has long been considered a peaceful island on the international scene, with its diversity in religion, culture, ethnicity and social stratification. However, this view is not shared by Mauritian Pavi Ramhota (2011), an anthropologist and sociologist who sees the Mauritian situation to be -out of control. Ramhota (2011) believes that Mauritius has been putting more emphasis on the economy and neglecting social issues. Taking the most recent

development projects into account, such as road infrastructures and the metro express, he concludes that what is missing are concrete social projects for the youths'. He contends that violence is one of the symptoms of frustration and poverty which cuts across all communities. He refers to such examples where children are killing their parents. For Ramhota (2011), drug circulation and betting houses have largely contributed to social disintegration targeting the youths. He posits that synthetic drugs which comprise of fatal concoctions are ever present in schools; they are preferred due to being inexpensive and easy to buy. The second alarming factor viewed by the sociologist is technology; it is directly linked to youth access to drugs. Ramhota (2011) argues that the Ministry of Education is laying too much emphasis on the Nine-Year Continuous Basic Education instead of tackling serious issues such as drugs in schools. He maintains that the government should tackle the problem at its core by raising awareness amongst people, especially the youth. He suggests that the law should be more severe with drug dealers and smugglers and they should not be released on bail. Ramhota states that the advancement of society can be achieved if the government invests in the education of the youth and future generations. He sees education as the key to combat drugs; many Mauritian family members who are parents are involved in drugs. He insists on educating them because many young couples do not know how to educate their children; moral and social values and norms are more important than pocket money. The loophole in the educational system is the double standard of laws created to protect children at school; while the law is positive, it also gives children a sense of impunity even when they cross all limits and tutors are helpless in front of the situation (cited in Defi Média with the commentaries of Rahi Ramhota, 2011). Referring to the negative impact of drugs in social and economic terms, Dhunnoo (2011) claims that the government invests huge sums of money on Methadone replacement therapy and the number of people living with HIV may increase in the coming year if nothing is done to stop the dreadful situation. He reveals that many young girls and boys are affected by drugs that are in high demand and drugs have had a direct repercussion on the breaking up of families. His opinion is that penalties should be made tougher in order to save the young generation (Imran Dhunnoo cited by Défi Media).

On that same score, Tony Smart (2011) attributes the problem of violence to massive alcohol addiction and a serious opiate abuse problem. His statement is confirmed by the National Economic and Social Council (NESC), which reveals that the rate of alcoholism among young people has increased from 20.8% in 2007 to 25.2% in 2011. From the sociological perspective, such a situation can be referred to as acts of deviance. With the immersion of social disintegration in Mauritius, young Muslims are submerged in many hardships. These social issues must be taken into consideration in any analysis of Islamic schools.

#### **4.10 SCHOOL CULTURE AND YOUTH CULTURE**

School is seen as an agent for conveying culture. According to Bush (1995, p.29), culture refers to the -values, beliefs and norms of individuals in the organisationll and is -manifested by symbols and rituals rather than through the formal structure of the organisation." This is based on various factors such as the rector's appreciation of things, his values, and motto; teaching and non-teaching staff, religion and language among others. Furthermore, Bush (1995, p.130) argues that the technical aspects of institutions are inadequate for schools to aim at excellence and the only way to achieve a high standard is by focusing on values and attitudes which -produces a more balanced portrait of educational institutionsll. The researchers therefore claim that Islamic schools in Mauritius can share some commonalities and differences among them which are going to be evaluated in the next chapter.

From the functionalist perspective, culture is first gained through family members at the home level, and then it is obtained when the child integrates into the school and merges with different kinds of children and adults. The culture at school is influenced by many factors such as languages spoken and mediums of instruction, values, behaviours and philosophies or outlooks that are a part of education. It is the variety of rules and regulations that students learn to fit into the school. Eventually, it is suggested that such culture develops into positive assets for the school, to students, and to the whole society. Fidler, *et al* (1997, p.35) claim that culture acts as a -unifying force within the organisationsll. They maintain that there are two types of culture within one school

community. One is attributed to the culture of students and the other is to the culture of the staff.

In support of this argument, the researchers suggest that Islamic schools offer a homogeneous environment that is created by educationists. Sub-cultures are formed by the variety of students who take their habits and mindset from their home environment. By bringing such ethos at school, they develop a new kind of sub-culture. However, students and adults may share the same culture when adults were previous students of these same institutions. They have grown up with the same mindset and therefore they share the same values, ethos, behaviours, and attitudes with students. One example is reflected in various Islamic institutions where teaching and non-teaching staff were previous students of these same institutions. They perpetuate the same culture from one generation to the next. Yusef Lateef (2014) claims that these people often cling, deliberately or unconsciously, to the attitudes and ways of their parents, rearing their children according to their own upbringing and instilling in them the values of their own culture.

Functionalists see culture from an evolutionary perspective. They emphasise the changing nature of culture as society evolves. Additionally, culture is viewed in terms of norms, values and lifestyles. Durkheim believes that culture has a social origin and that religion plays an important role in this respect. Durkheim had the opportunity to observe the Australian aborigines, after which he concluded that religion is an important element of culture since it provides the very basis for collective conscience (shared moral values and beliefs) that are learned, shared and transmitted to members of that particular society. Thus religion is seen to contribute positively to societies, especially those living in primitive, non-industrial societies. The collective conscience is argued to be a strong element where the division of labour creates egoism, favouring excessive individualism and situations of normlessness called anomie. This is why Durkheim concludes that culture has to be shared in order for society to run perfectly. Culture has a strong ability to constraint normlessness and connects successive generations to others. For Durkheim, ritual binds individuals to the community and forges the cognitive categories whereby the world is made symbolically meaningful. When youths move from the family

cocoon to the larger society they are faced with an anomie situation. Their values at home differ from those of peers and colleagues. Sometimes youngsters forget about their own traditions and customs and adopt new ways of living. Nevertheless, Durkheim believes that the family has a primordial role to play in the socialisation process of adolescents and youngsters enabling them to smoothly adapt to changes and choose behaviour that is in line with societal mainstream culture. This theory would help determine the attitudes of students in terms of societal disintegration.

Many young Muslims come from disruptive suburban areas where parents are struggling to survive and do not have time to morally care for their kids. Adolescents are vulnerable, torn, frayed, frustrated and stressed. Meanwhile, drug addiction, alcohol, cigarettes, violence, and anomie have proliferated. Despite a wide variety of policy interventions at Islamic schools in recent years, social disintegration has accelerated, gradually encompassing a larger share of the population. The targeted secular curriculum does not support moral education and religious practices, though some educational Islamic leaders have integrated religious beliefs as part of their curriculum as well as creating Islamic awareness and a proper environment for Muslim students (Saad Buxoo, interview 2017). This helps create the need for Islamic schools.

#### **4.11 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has provided the broader historical context for understanding the system of education in Mauritius. Education has been given a high consideration in the eyes of the government that sees in it the opportunity to raise a group of intellectuals capable of bringing the country to the next economic and political levels. However, it appears that the curricula lay too much emphasis on cognitive areas rather than the need for moral values, socialisation and inter-cultural understanding. Students are not prepared to be and to become the adults of tomorrow. Islamic schools are supposed to counter such trends and to offer an alternative option to students based on Islamic values. The next chapter will shed light on the philosophy of each participative school and their contribution at the micro, meso and macro levels.

---

**Foot notes:**

1. "Eucalyptus Field, Rotten Water, Camp Carol (this is a place where refugees from Hurricane Carol have been relocated), Broken Battery".
2. A Reformist Shafe'i means that a new group of Muslims came from Saudi Arabia after they had been graduated in the *Shari'ah* law. They establish a new way of life to counter the lethargic Muslims who were more traditional in their approach. Among the reformists were Cehl Meeah, Parvez Kureeman, etc.

## **Chapter 5 THE ANALYSIS OF THE FIVE PARTICIPATIVE SCHOOLS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The objective of this chapter is to examine five Islamic Secondary schools in Mauritius through the lens of their educational leaders. The responses of participative teachers and students have been used as examples to provide a bigger picture to the study. Each school is examined individually in regard to the challenges and opportunities that are encountered. Responses from interviews will be collated and the data analysed for content, similarities and differences. This will then feed into the broader analysis of the thesis.

### **5.2 BACKGROUND**

A key difference between religious schools and cultural schools in Mauritius is the fact that religious schools come with a doctrinal foundation that would necessarily shape student's vision of life. However, the appellation of Islamic Cultural schools clearly differentiates itself from the faith-based schools in the sense that the environment is mostly cultural and they honour their forefathers' traditions, who were initially Indian Muslims. Put simply, these schools have an Indian religious-cultural approach. The *Yawm-Un-Nabi* (the day the prophet of Islam was born), the *Shab-e-barat* (known as the holy night where prayers are offered to the dead) and the *Mi'raj* (the prophet's ascension to heavens) are considered part of their cultural celebrations whereas the two religious schools, namely the Dar Ul Ma'arif and the Doha Academy are inclined to the Saudi Arabian culture and restrict their celebrations to the two 'Ids: 'Id al-Fitr which marks the end of the fast of *Ramadan* and 'Id al-Adha which is the festival of sacrifice. Additionally, both Dar Ul Ma'arif and Doha have integrated Islamic subjects such as moral education in the form of ethics, proper behaviour and attitude; the recitation of the *Qur'an* and its understanding as well as the study of hadith and law.

The above examples set the cultural environment of both schools, their values, beliefs and norms. According to Bush (1995, p.29), culture refers to the -values, beliefs and norms of individuals in the organisation and is -manifested by symbols and rituals rather than through the formal structure of the organisation. Bush (1995, p.135) points out that the culture of a school may be -expressed by its goals. In other words, the

culture and the ethos are the outcome of the institution. Islamic cultural schools are based on the continuation of the work of their founders; founders who have acquired their religious and cultural understanding and motivations from their forefathers who came from India. The old Islamic Cultural schools have remained faithful to such traditions. It is to be noted that the new Islamic Cultural School has a mixed culture due to the cultural backgrounds of its staff, and therefore the celebrations are restricted to *Ramadan* and *Eid* in order to accommodate everyone.

With this in view, the researchers intend to analyse each school according to the purpose of the research and to look at how the schools intend to prepare students for their holistic development based on Islamic education.

### **5.3 DAR UL MA'ARIF SECONDARY SCHOOL – A UNIQUE CONCEPT**

Dar Ul Ma'arif is comprised of pre-primary, primary and secondary education. The building is separated into two distinct parts; one area is assigned to the pre-primary and primary departments and the other is assigned to the secondary department. The secondary wing is newly built and is further divided into two distinct areas. One block has a ground-floor and an underground to accommodate Grade 7 to Grade 13 classrooms. The adjacent block consists of a ground-floor and is assigned to the rector's office as well as the director's office. Annexed is the *masjid*.

The school's philosophy is grounded in the concept *“there is no God, there is only Allah.”* This idea is celebrated in all the religious teachings. It is meant to bring awareness to young students that Allah, the Creator, is Supreme and every intention, action and vision should be done with the sole purpose of pleasing the Divine; any action that is done purposelessly or with the wrong intention is meaningless. It is with this state of mind that children are instructed on a day-to-day basis.

The ethos of the school is considered to be unique because it is affiliated with an Islamic movement known as the *Jamaat-Ul-Muslimeen*, whose founder is Cehl Fakeemeeah, commonly known as Cehl Meeah. The school culture, its aspiration as well as its practices have well-determined goals. Students come to school with the objective of learning about Islam because it is believed that Islam is a complete system of life which acts as an equation for success in both worlds; the material world and the

spiritual world.

The *Jama'at-Ul-Muslimeen* is a national Islamic movement whose members are committed to the leadership of one man: Cehl Meeah. The members of the organisation are convinced that they have to struggle with their wealth and their physical efforts. Such idea is based on several verses of the Quran<sup>1</sup>. In order to implement those verses, they offer free services to the school as well as to the movement.

The movement is divided into several branches such as:

- (a) Education: education is broadly divided into two categories: schools for children and Islamic lessons for any age group. It is related to the spiritual and religious affairs of the movement. Meditation on the Speech of Allah is considered an obligatory path to the understanding of the message of the Quran. Cehl Meeah acts as the director of Dar Ul Ma'arif. His expertise is sought in various matters, notably Islamic Jurisprudence. He personally teaches moral values at school and he monitors Islamic classes. In general, Meeah, who is known as the *Ameer-Ul-Mu'minin* of the *Jama'at-Ul-Muslimeen*, holds several Islamic classes in different regions of the country after night prayers.
- (b) Spirituality: in view of shaping the morals of Muslims, spiritual classes are held for a group of Muslims who is interested with *Tazkiyat-un-nafs* [the purification of the soul]. Such classes are done once every fortnight after *Maghrib* prayers (offered after sunset) at the *Markaz*. The program includes prescribed prayers, lessons, meditation, eating together and *tahajjud* prayers (offered after midnight).
- (c) Politics: the group is named after the *Front Solidarité Mauricien* [FSM] and its objective is to counter the existing political parties that exist in Mauritius. By its presence, it exerts the *Fard Kifayah* (communal responsibility) mission, which means that a group of people has to stand against corruption and inequalities otherwise the whole Muslim population will be questioned on the Day of Judgment.
- (d) Finance: a *zakat* committee has been established in view of collecting funds for the welfare of the Muslim community. The Al Barakah Multi-purpose Co-operative Society was founded in 1998 in view of helping the Muslim community with financial purposes.

(e) *Mu`āmalāt*: a committee is established to look after the poor, the needy and those who seek advice. The movement has established a branch which is in charge of the affairs of non-Muslims such as personal advice, conversion to Islam and so forth. Several members work benevolently for the movement with the objective of obtaining rewards from Allah. Men as well as women are empowered to offer free services to the school and to students. Among the administrator-members are Saad Buxoo and Ubaydah; the former is a graduate from Pakistan and the latter is a graduate from Saudi Arabia. There are many cases of mental and physical sicknesses that are treated by the members of the group in the form of recitation of the *Qur`ān* and cupping [*hijāma*].

Meeah sees himself as a Mauritian Muslim reformist [not to be confused with the *salafist* movement]. The word reformist indicates that he intends to reform the Muslim community by providing its members with Islamic knowledge based on the Quran and the *Sunnah*. In the Mauritian jargon, he is known to be a *tawhidian* since his speech is axed on the importance of loving Allah without attributing any partner with Him in terms of love, practice and commitment. He disregards any practice that contradicts the essence of the Quran and the *Sunnah*. He believes that children should grow up with the sole intention of worshipping Allah as has been clearly stipulated by the Quran<sup>2</sup>. Meeah is a full memoriser of the Quran and a staunch believer that the Quran and the *hadith* are enough for guiding humanity towards bliss. However, he believes that respect is one of his priorities. He respects anyone who does not share his belief since the most important thing for him is to love humanity as exemplified by Prophet Muhammad.

Despite the fact that the movement has its own adherents, the recruitment of staff is open to all Muslims based on their qualifications and their commitment to work for the welfare of students. All secondary school teachers are university graduates, as stipulated by the PSEA [Private Secondary Education Authority] requirements. Entries for students are open to all ethnic groups and religious appurtenances, though the only student population consists of Muslims with adherents and non-adherents to the national group. The rector of the school does not form part of the movement but he has

been recruited to take care of the school administration. There are clear cut rules and regulations for anyone. The hidden curriculum [aspects that are learnt but which are not openly intended] is aligned with the school culture.

Broadly, there are two aspects that must be understood about the school; the academic aspect does not differ in any way from any secondary school since the national curriculum is similar to any secondary school that is affiliated with the Cambridge board of examination. Students of Grade 11 and 13 sit for their School Certificate and Higher School Certificate. As explained earlier, the integration of religious studies is based on the understanding that Muslims should first and foremost build their relationship with Allah, to live up to Islamic principles so that they can act as role models to students. To reach this, a side curriculum is used to promote the recitation of the Quran, its understanding and moral ethics. Religious classes are held by the community leader, Cehl Meeah, in order to inspire the young generation. Students are summoned to learn and to memorise at least one *hadith* per week, to pray five times daily at their prescribed times, to attend the *Jumu`ah* prayer (Friday congregational prayer) which is held within the school premises, to dress respectfully and the female gender is summoned to wear an outer garment as a sign of respect and dignity as is mentioned in the *Qur`ān*.<sup>3</sup> The construction of the new mosque and its amenities serve as a communication quarter where various ongoing activities are held from morning to night. The school encourages male students to recite the *adhān* in the microphone. Students are advised to act as the *mu`adhdhin* on an alternative basis and they train themselves to become excellent reciters. All students attend the Friday prayer at school and listen to the sermon which is held in Creole. The use of Creole instead of Arabic language is to promote understanding among the audience. Students have the opportunity to act as imam [leading people in prayer]. Boys are requested to wear the long Muslim dress known as *thawb* whenever they lead others to prayer.

The dress code for both genders is based on a school-parent-children agreement. The number of absences and incidences of tardiness are few. Interviews showed that students like to attend school because they are given the impression that each day they get to meet their extended families in the form of their friends, teachers, other staff and

their leader. Students like the supportive and religious environment which is free from bullying, peer pressure and violence. The administration offers a zero-stress service to students as they travel by school van from home to school and back. The rector says that parents feel safe because their kids are in security with the school driver. Students do not have to stop at any bus stop because the van directly takes them back to their homes. The only complaint that was made by participative students is that the yard is too small and girls do not have the opportunity to play during recess time; as for the boys, a small yard has been transformed into a football playground to allow them to play during the recess time. Due to the lack of playground space, many activities are held indoors.

In an effort to restructure the school activities, outings, excursions, visits to isles, visits to orphanages, various academic competitions and sports activities were organised during one academic year. The objective was to empower students through extra curriculum activities and to create awareness about the creation of Allah. The positive effect of school activities can be confirmed by an analysis of data done by the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988, where students participated in structured activities, religious activities, and activities with adults during two years; a significant positive impact on educational outcomes was noticed. -Participation in extracurricular activities produced a greater increase in youths' educational expectations than participation in church activities did, although both types of activities had a significant positive impact (Jordan & Nettles, 2000).

In an attempt to establish inter-cultural relationships, a *swami* [Hindu priest] was invited to address students. His speech was based on the various similarities that exist between Hinduism and Islam. The school is based on a humanistic and supportive environment in order to help students in their quest for religious and academic knowledge. Some students are not able to cope with their home environment due to various forms of distraction. In order to restrain such negative culture, the school has decided to launch a new project known as the *Markaz*. The *Markaz* is an Arabic word and is used to mean the 'centre'. The *Markaz* acts as a boarding school and students stay during week days. They are assisted in their homework and they attend night

sessions such as *tahajjud* prayers and spiritual lessons. Buxoo states that the project of boarding school has emerged after deep reflection and the management encourages the students to stay on the school campus in order to work out their personalities and personal developments. Buxoo believes that it is important to build their confidence and transform them into catalysts for change. Buxoo is of the opinion that it is the right of the young students to stay within a safe environment and to befriend people of values. -One study showed that a student's values, as well as peers' values, can have positive effects on out-of-school behaviours. (Hanson and Ginsburg, 1988).

One of the main challenges of the school is limited finance. Fund raising is done at least once a year to collect funds for the school. The school counts heavily on the generosity of its members and donations of some wealthy parents to survive. Nevertheless, such students whose parents cannot pay a fee are accepted by the school. Due to the fact that teachers are not paid according to the requirements of the PSEA, many young teachers leave the school once they are offered a better job. This affects the good running of the school and it happens that teachers leave during mid-term and students are left unattended. However, the school counts on a number of staff who is devoted to the cause of Islam and the school and who agree to stay despite the low salary which is paid to them.

The school also counts on the parent teacher association to fulfil various tasks. They offer free services to the school such as the cooking of food and the preparation of extra school activities among other things. Parents are regularly invited to form part of the school activities and to share their opinions. Many parents are themselves members of the Jamaat UI Muslimeen and therefore have vested interests in the performance of the school. This partnership contributes to the reinforcement of the school culture and its philosophy. The management wishes to create positive circles by integrating parents, students and staff in view of breaking old norms, beliefs and practices and to reform the Muslim society through God consciousness. God consciousness [*Taqwa*] is believed to be a cutting-edge for all social evils. The constant remembrance of their duty to Allah and towards humanity serves as a moral and physical protection for children (Saad

Buxoo, interview 2017). However it has been noted that there is no professional approach to parent teacher associations.

In the same line of thought, Meeah (2017) states that childhood development is believed to be the best part but also the most important aspect in the life of a child, so it needs to be coherent with nature. Nature, in his opinion, is coherent with the message of the Quran and the behaviour of Prophet Muhammad. Anything that is against nature has been shunned as evil acts because they destroy the self, the community and the society. In other words, his claim is that any evil deed is dysfunctional to the self, the community and the society. He believes that the purpose of education should address such issues which are fundamental for the development of the child.

He states that education is extended to parents because he firmly believes that parents need to be religiously educated otherwise the effort and time allocated to kids is useless. He maintains that parents are the backbones of education because they have been granted the primary role in shaping their children.

The school population is relatively small, with approximately 150 students. One of the reasons that can be attributed to this small amount of students is the fact that the school is not subsidised and therefore is a paid school. Students' academic levels range from low to high and there is no possible way to establish a system of streaming, which is to sort students by academic merit in order to balance the academic equilibrium of students.

The rector is of the opinion that working with a small number of children has its advantage for both the students and staff. However, on the financial basis, having a small percentage of students means less money that comes in. Parents accept to pay a monthly fee to protect their children from numerous social vices that prevail in the country. There is a constant fear that Muslim youth may fall prey to synthetic drugs. In his thesis, Heera (2009) confirms this reality by saying that juvenile delinquency is very common among youngsters, and that virtues such as decency and morality are fading away. Besides which, adolescents continuously face identity, emotional, spiritual and

psychological crises and he is convinced that proper teaching of Islamic Studies can redress the situation (Abdool Moonib Heera, November 2009).

At DUM, the percentage of pass rate is high and this has been attributed by the rector as due to the fact that the environment is conducive to learning; there is a culture of studying that is promoted at the school and the school is cleansed from all types of distraction (Mohamed Rezah Jauffur, October 2017). Though Jauffar is not a member of the *Jama'at-UI-Muslimeen*, his many years of experience as a teacher and rector in several institutions has gained him respect. He is well appreciated by the members of the staff as well as students due to his professionalism and academic advice.

The staff consists of a young, average and mature team which together form a complementary group. DUM is the only institution that has merged with a boarding school. Despite the rigorous training on religious and academic levels, students are not totally disconnected from mainstream society. Young boys wear jeans, t-shirts and shirts, however they can make a differentiation as to when they should wear them and when to wear modest clothing in the form of long gowns. Girls wear jilbab and hijab only when they are among male strangers. Otherwise, they enjoy life like any youth of their age except that they do not take part in harmful activities or any such activity that may have negative consequences in their life as a Muslim and as a human being (Saad Buxoo, interview 2017).

One male educator confides that he will never be able to work in other schools even though he has not been schooled at the DUM and is not a member of the national movement. He came to the DUM as an educator and since then, he feels that Allah has offered him a great opportunity to live in a calm, peaceful and spiritual environment which is stress free and vice free. He claims that the small school population allows him to better care for his work and to be more confident about displaying his talents. Despite his relatively young age, he is grateful that the DUM has offered him the opportunity to teach and to receive practical experiences. He teaches both girls and boys and his aim is to help the young generation of Muslims in various ways so that they become conscious that ambition is a positive thing and that girls can also think far and wide, and become career women without neglecting their duties to Allah.

Among the activities held at school are quizzes, debates, allocutions and some indoor and outdoor games. While the boys have been granted a football playground during recess time, girls prefer the chatting activities. Girls interviewed were very interested in meeting a serious male partner and others were already engaged to be married. However, this idea is not well grounded in the mind of female students. Some girls are already engaged to be married. They confide that their dreams are to have a good husband in order that their faith may be completed. Moreover, they believe that marriage brings peace of mind and creates a balanced life and protects from emotional and physical insecurity. There are few cases where boys meet their future life partner at school. Elder & Conger reveal that religious values influence youths' perception of their friends and that, even at this stage of their lives, they develop future marriage plans in light of their religious beliefs (Elder and Conger, 2000).

One of the greatest challenges remains that the school is not able to pay teachers on time and to offer them a decent salary and these teachers come to the institution for gaining experience and most of them leave mid-term. Such an aspect is detrimental for both the school and students. Due to this, there are some cases where students refuse to pursue their Grade 12-13 classes and decide to transfer although the school has been nurturing them for many years and they had scored the highest marks at the School Certificate. Such students are of the opinion that the changing of teachers during one academic year is stressful and therefore they decide to enrol at other Islamic secondary schools. A second factor is related to the distance and some students decide to transfer to a regional school since they are too tired from travelling every day.

### **5.3.1 CEHL MEEAH'S VIEWS ON EDUCATION**

Cehl Meeah believes that education, according to the Islamic tenets, goes beyond the simple idea of learning processes that can stimulate the brain to create intellectual abilities and social integration. He points out that the legendary word *'iqra'*, which was first uttered by Prophet Muhammad at the time he was visited by Archangel Jibril in the cave of Hira, carries an in-depth understanding of the true essence of education. He remarks that the message of Islam is multi-fold because it unfolds itself according to the level of intelligences of the audience. Less educated people or children can grasp the

primary level of the message; then the same message unfolds itself to a more elaborate mind; then the same message goes deeper and deeper into the heart, ears and brain according to the reader's ability and spirituality to assess it. This is why a message has the ability to transform someone while the same message can die before reaching the heart of someone else. In the same vein, he claims that Allah has designed a holistic program which is called Al Islam and to form part of this program, individuals should be prepared to listen attentively without formulating any bias.

According to him, reformers are the representatives of Allah on Earth since their roles and missions are to provide people with the right education. The fundamental teaching is based on *aqeedah* [rejection of all forms of partnership to Allah]. Anyone who masters the right knowledge is raised to the highest level of God consciousness. It means that their emotion and understanding work together to counteract ignorance. Ignorance is not only seen as the absence of knowledge, but it targets any form of knowledge that contradicts the essence of nature. He states that at an early stage of life, ignorance is a blessing because babies are born with an empty, unformatted mind and if it is nourished with the right spiritual food, it becomes *'salim'* [blessed and pure]. Thus, the environment is very important for the preparation of the mind, body and soul. Meeah is convinced that the DUM provides the right environment for any teenage boy or girl who is willing to grow up with sound visions and academic development.

At the same time, Meeah believes that education has been politically and economically manipulated and innocent souls [children] suffer from the syndrome of indifference and confusion. To illustrate, he explains that the education system has produced many professionals but there are rarely many professionals who have courageously contributed through their work for the advancement of the society in terms of morality, justice and knowledge of Allah so that children can live up to rightful expectations. He believes that there are no equal opportunities for education and employment. He claims that education has not been able to play a positive and constructive role in the world because basic needs have been violated. By basic needs, he means the ability to construct one's own happiness with dignity. Poverty, unemployment and a lack of career opportunities creates frustration and anger and also destroys natural youth

potentials to perform and to work for the country. Many Muslims are well off yet they are not convinced in an Islamic project that can protect the youth from falling easy prey to drugs and other vices. He claims that the Muslim community has inherited a negative culture which is not conducive with the development of a healthy society. In his opinion, Muslims spend huge sum of money in the construction of mosques but they neglect the education of children which is a fundamental source of guidance, happiness and salvation. Many children are formed by those whose concept of happiness is erroneous and they are interested only in the economic development of the country without taking into consideration the self.

To achieve this, he suggests that the world should submit to one force: the invisible power that created the world and everything: Allah. He believes that the curriculum should promote the construction of the self, the ability to socialise with homogeneous and heterogeneous groups, to learn the codes of socialisation in the form of positive education and learn the simple codes of survival such as basic Mathematics, basic form of languages and so forth; academic excellence should be sought by those who are capable and willing. Basic sciences and hands-on experiences are important to bring children into the world of reality because children need to learn about the oceans, the skies, the Earth, the rain and the human organs in a way that is interesting and practical. He mentions three elements that cannot be reproduced so far by any human being: rain, spermatozoa and blood, which constitute the basic elements of the understanding that Allah is unique and His art is therefore unique, though it should be noted here by the researcher that there are many academic fields looking at projects such as cloud seeding, artificial spermatozoa and artificial blood made from Perfluorocarbons which can perform the same functions. He explains that these three elements are taught at the DUM so that students may better understand the uniqueness of Allah and His Supremacy. This, he believes, can counteract the materialist world and its vision. Students should therefore be offered the opportunity to learn about the truthfulness of this life instead of being confronted with complicated theories without having the ability to see, touch, smell and feel. He believes that education is a functional aspect if it is taken from its root and he suggests that all leaders and educators start from learning the Quran as a functional and practical message.

He states that education is an act of love, kindness and worship. Worshipping takes the form of learning. He posits that there is no other way of loving God except through knowledge and understanding; in fact, people learn to love God, to respect the creation [nature] after they have learnt what is right for them and the society and what is wrong for them and the society.

Meeah claims that it is not an obligation for boys and girls to seek knowledge in all aspects of learning, but it is an obligation upon them to first seek for religious knowledge so that they may fulfil their duties to Allah and earn a place in this world and the next. His idea is that people have been created in ranks, that is, through various levels of intelligence and capabilities. Some of them have been created for higher duties and others are simple followers. But knowledge of Allah is for all because guidance is a necessity and not a luxury. In other words, his concept of education is relevant with the concept of functionalism which sees education as a functional role in the society.

Meeah further explains that there is a difference between knowledge acquisition and knowledge understanding. When Allah loves someone, He provides him with deep understanding. While the former is simply an access to the world of knowledge, the latter brings insight and awareness. He claims that those who are loved by Allah are given awareness. Awareness is essential for the promotion of Islam as well as the ability to commit oneself voluntarily and wholeheartedly for the cause of Islam. Knowledge as he sees it provides people with the ability to be inwardly affected and this allows them to stay away from wrong deeds and to serve Allah's *Dīn* with their utmost abilities. It is necessary for Muslims to strive in that path as Allah loves those who are knowledgeable and obedient. Citing a verse from the *Qur'ān*, he says that those who excel in knowledge are not equal to those who do not have knowledge.<sup>4</sup>

He maintains that the function of learning is to create awareness of God. Man is best occupied whilst seeking knowledge and knowledge must be sought until death. He believes that the nobility of learning is not foreign to anyone, since it is something peculiar to all humankind. Through it, Allah reveals the pre-eminence of Adam [the first man and first prophet] over the angels whom He commands to prostrate. However, he

believes that children's education should not be entrusted to those who are preoccupied by the ephemeral world and its traps.

He believes that the child starts their formation once they are born. His or her immediate tutors are their parents, more specifically their mother. This is why, he explains, a mother is known to be the first teacher. Meeah spoke about the importance of nurturing students at a very young age. The second institution is the school. The school has the role to instruct and educate and the school environment is equally important to impart the right education. He remarks that children tend to be obedient to principles when they are young and have not been formatted by the society and the immediate environment. Failing this stage, they may be refractory to change. He believes that children are attached to their teachers when they are young of age and it is during such stage that love, respect and affection develop. Once attachment to Islamic values is secured, the child can embrace the values embedded in those religious principles and it becomes a natural behaviour in them. Therefore, children should be taken care from a very young age.

Meeah affirms that Islam cannot be called religion, but rather it is best known as Deen-ul-Islam, which can be described as a complete system of life for mankind. The notion of belief in One Creator, Allah, is the foundation upon which rests the entire system. Education is the pathway to reach that foundation. According to him, *Dīn-ul-Islām* is an entity which contains several sub parts: politics, economics, social, cultural, educational, religion. All together these make a whole and every part must function properly so that the believer is spiritually, morally and physically balanced.

He is convinced that Islam views education beyond the extend of simple understanding of the present society and its needs; Islam believes that the crux of all societies lie in the understanding of human beings as vicegerent of Allah; as a matter of fact, they fulfil first-hand the role of *khalifah* (vicegerent). Meeah argues that Dar Ul Ma'arif has emerged to match the needs and cater for the demand of Muslims boys and girls altogether, in both academic and religious studies, while public schools, he claims, are only academic based. He confides that moral education is missing in public schools and often students who have left Dar ul Marif for public schools come back

disconcerted by its reality.

Meeah's statement is in line with Mariaye's opinion of the generality of Mauritian schooling. Mariaye sees the dysfunction of schools -as one contributing to the degeneration of social mores. Prime among these dysfunctions is the fact that our schools are not adequately providing for one important aspect of child and adolescent development, that is, moral education<sup>11</sup> (Marie Hyleen Sandra Mariaye, 2009).

For Meeah, living in a country where there is a lack of Islamic exposure is a drawback for Muslim students. Islamic exposure, as he sees it, is essential for correct living. In order to sustain his argument, he states that the national television agency has ongoing programs that affect both the cognitive and affective state of any human being. He is of the opinion that these entertaining movies are meant to pollute the mind and the heart and distant people from the main objectives of life. He believes that such films are hindrances for education and for youth development. In his views, the film industry in the form of TV Series as well as reality shows have a destructive effect on the active brain and has been invented to counter intellectual abilities of people and today it is well known that silliness and naughtiness are qualities that are approved by the society. Indecency is portrayed through publishing billboards, on the road and on television; hence, it is everywhere. To illustrate, he questions: -why do academics believe that instruction should be learnt while proper behaviours and values should not be learnt? Why do academics believe nowadays that there is no need to talk about proper dress codes for educators, while at the same time believing that children should develop proper socialisation and be rightly guided? Why do people have to uncover themselves in order to be trendy, modern and free? What is the correlation?<sup>12</sup>, he asked. He also mentions that the present generation of adults who are criticised for their immorality and unethical manners are in fact the outcome of the educational system.

Talking about the past school curriculum, Meeah explains that -in Mauritius, some forty years ago, primary as well as secondary schools did not teach Islamic subjects and Arabic language was not understood by the vast majority of Muslims. Urdu was considered the language of Muslims and it was taught as an Oriental language<sup>13</sup>. Meeah says that *madrassahs* were opened to help Muslim children in their religious knowledge and application; however, *madrassahs* were held by people who had failed their CPE

and who were academically illiterate. Such people were not able to be critical and whatever they had been taught by some Indian preachers was accepted and this had led to the ghettoisation of Muslims in Mauritius. -With this sad reality, he says, -Muslims have been lacking in culture, good manners and quality knowledge. He maintains that their level of Islam was basic and traditional. He is well aware that a huge challenge lies ahead though he is confident that the time will surely come where everything will naturally take its own place. He comments that one of the tests that lay upon reformists is patience because Allah likes to test the sincerity of those who strive in His path. Moreover, he is of the opinion that education is a means for change but that human beings must do their own effort and be willing to change otherwise education has not served its noble purpose.

Another challenge mentioned by Meeah is the intensive program of the CPE, where exhaustive competitions are held to obtain admission in the best schools. In so doing, many Muslim students prefer to concentrate on their secular studies in order to obtain good entry marks for the secondary level. In his opinion, this aspect is detrimental for young Muslims who cannot balance their academic and religious affairs. Meeah believes that secularisation has overridden religion and the noble vision of education has been tarnished in the Mauritian society as well as in the world. He recalled how all parents used to cuddle their children, chanting the famous Mauritian lullaby *Latanier River* taken from the slaves [*La rivière latanier*], in which he quotes part of the song: -*Way, way, mes enfants il faut travailler pour gagner son pain* [way way, my kids, you must work in order to get your daily bread]. In his opinion, the Mauritian citizens, especially the descendants of indentured labourers and slaves, were conditioned to struggle painfully to get their 'daily bread'. Those parents who had suffered from hard work, were convinced that there was no other alternative to get their generations out of this situation except to send their kids to school and in turn, they will obtain a certificate which is an entry for a white collar job, hence a monthly salary. Since company jobs were limited and restricted to a specific class of citizen, poor and average people had to strive harder. The idea of hard work was also associated with learning hard at school. School was not aimed at shaping children to becoming religious, good mannered and to learn to live together in peace; rather its objective was to get a 'good job'. This was very

significant to shape the mindset of Mauritian children in thinking that they have to strive to get a job. Such an elusive attitude has passed on to generation and today this is taken as a certified reality. This appears to be a fact as explained by Arti Kumar (2007), -We live in a world where change is exponential and we are helping to prepare students for jobs that don't yet exist, using technologies that have not yet been invented, in order to solve problems that we don't know are problems yetll.

Meeah states that white collar jobs were based on elitism and ethnicity. Though this is in contradiction with the essence of Islam, students, irrespective of their religious affiliation, had been made to believe that they must confine to the school pattern to make sure they will have a bright future career. However, he declares that the employment market is saturated and many degree holders are unemployed and desperate for a good job. This is confirmed by UNESCO (2006: 20), who mentions that there has been an increase in unemployment.

Meeah says that he fears that the world is heading towards a 'no God' society because the meaning of God does not make sense to many students who have been deprived of a spiritual background and they are used to a material world where gadgets and technology have taken the lead. The secular system is endowed with appropriation of goods and services. Slavery has never stopped. The concept has only been altered to suit each generation of people. Slaves are formed within the school framework to elitism.

He argues that due to the fact that English and French are compulsory subjects at school, the majority of Muslims have declined to learn Arabic. At DUM, emphasis is put on Arabic because it is the language of the Quran and -if you understand what the Quran is saying, you understand what Allah is saying to you; because Allah talks to each one of us and this aspect is very important to convey to our young generation. In his views, it is surprising that Muslims take several years to learn in order to get a good job, but they are not aware that they should learn Arabic in order to earn a good life in the hereafter.

He says that the objective of an Islamic secondary school was deemed important to continue the noble work started at pre-primary and primary levels. If students are taught Islam since childhood and after that, pursue their secondary education in public or any non-Muslim school, the mission is unfulfilled. There is a risk that they will be indirectly influenced or pressured to follow the general trends of the society.

Meeah says: -I educate my community since I was a teen and this mission was perfected after my return from Makkah. Hundreds of people followed me and were interested in my speech but when I told them that this mission would not be complete without politics, many turned their back to me. I am aware that their traditional understanding of Islam has narrowed their mind but I want the kids to understand that Islam is a complete system where religious, social, economic, education as well as politics has their place within the system. Learning is indeed noble, for it leads to the fear of Allah which entitles the believer to receive Allah's benevolence and eternal bliss. It is necessary for the student, in their quest for knowledge, to strive for the pleasure of Allah, the abode of the Hereafter, the removal of ignorance from themselves and from any form of ignorance because the survival of Islam depends on useful knowledge. Meeah explains that all babies are born with the same *fitra*, that is, an innate inclination towards the oneness of God as well as other characteristics, such as compassion, playfulness, curiosity to learn, vivid imagination and natural intelligence. He maintains that if they were left in a natural resourceful setting, these babies would have grown up with the natural inclination to love Allah, to differentiate between right and wrong, to serve humanity and to love everyone irrespective of skin colour, race and social status. He is of the opinion that the society puts too much pressure on the child and they are somehow formatted to follow what the society wants them to be.

Meeah is of the opinion that everything has a starting point. The starting point for all Muslims is to learn according to the point of view of the Quran and the Sunnah. In order to achieve this, a proper environment, dress code and coaching are necessary. A child is comparable to a tree. He argues that -if you plant a tree and you want that tree to grow, you need a fertile land and you need to water the plant. This is why we have opened a *markaz* for students who want to stay at school during week days where they

are groomed according to the principles of Islam. Meeah explains that learners need social bonding that provides love and an appropriate cultural and educational path within a secured environment. This is so, so as -he may taste the flavour of Islam every second of his passage at school, which is precious, to frame his 'little mind' and make him grow up into a responsible being, imbued with *taqwa*, that is God consciousness and the natural fear that boosts his *iman* [faith] and accompany him every day with the enthralled hope to meet His lord one day; thus, the creation of an Islamic school. From them will spring *in sha Allah* sincere Muslims who in turn will convey the right Islam to the next generation. Many parents send their kids to Dar-UI-Ma'arif because they want them to have a proper environment and they are also aware that this is not possible due to their own traditional upbringing. While staying with grandparents, in-laws etc, there are disputes about the ways children should be brought up.

While there are many stereotypes about Islamic schools, Meeah is convinced that Muslim students have the right to study in an Islamic environment, the same way non-Muslims evolve freely in a non-Islamic environment. He believes that the objective is not to marginalise children, but rather to nurture their potential and skills so that they are strengthened in their own beliefs and values and can live together in a plural society without any problems. He maintains that all religions have their own principles and that the Mauritian society must accept these differences just as they accept similarities. In his opinion, accepting differences is learning to be wise and mature because it is Allah's wish and will to create diversity. Many people have fallen prey to false modesty and vices because they have placed higher priorities on their degrees and certificates, though Islam reminds Muslims that human beings have been created for a noble cause. He claims that servitude to the Creator means to strive in every way to do things that bring peace to the heart, body, mind and soul. However, those who look for truth and strive for truth will be rewarded in this life and the next. Since he believes that the present world is an illusion, he is convinced that truth must be sought and morality must be established in order to experience peace which is an aspect of Allah's attributes.

He explains that there are other non-Muslim faith schools in Mauritius that promote their own religious beliefs and practices to students irrespective of their religious appurtenances, yet the media and the society do not target them as extremists.

### **5.3.2 BRIEF SKETCH OF CEHL MEEAH**

Cehl Meeah is the director of Dar Ul Ma'arif pre-primary, primary and secondary school at Curepipe. He speaks five languages; Creole, Urdu, Arabic, English and French. His conviction is ingrained in the religious and spiritual struggle of his community and was pre-disposed as a child. He believes that Allah, who is the owner of the universe, has chosen him as a model to be emulated in his country. He was raised in a modest family and his parents have done their best to send his brothers, sisters and himself to school. His maternal grandfather was a well-known imam and his father was very strict about Deen. Since adolescence, Meeah had been well-versed in Quranic knowledge and its recitation. At the age of 15, he memorised *Surah Al Qiyamah*<sup>3</sup> as well as its meaning and this changed his whole perspective of life. Due to his intellectual abilities, he was bestowed a bursary at the national primary level; which was necessary for the obtention of one of the best secondary schools: the Royal College of Port-Louis. He was transferred to another star school, the John Kennedy School, where he was elected to be the spokesperson to discuss matters with the administrators. He petitioned a special place for Muslims to pray their noon prayer and this plea was granted for all Muslims. Upon completion of his Higher School Certificate, he was neither convinced about pursuing his academic studies nor to seek a white collar job. At that time, life was still very hard and there was barely any employment, especially for Muslims. -I supplicated Allah to open up His doors of mercy and I was saved from worldly occupations. I was offered a bursary to study in Saudi Arabia where I stayed for twelve years. During those twelve years, it was obvious that I saw life in a totally different perspective. He was more absorbed in his thoughts and endeavour to save my community entrenched in ancestral traditions and trapped in the slavery of the world and the *shaytān* (Satan). The illusory world offers nothing but falsehood and it is a barrier for those who seek closeness to Allah. So, he was determined to act as an educator-leader for his community (Cehl Meeah, interview 2017).

Meeah also indulged in the rehabilitation of drug addicts. He was conscious that many young people were afflicted by drugs and he feared that drugs would extend within the Muslim bastion of Plaine Verte. He further extended his motivations and -wants to function in the electoral system reputedly to work for the poor and downtrodden and he -was active in social work at grassroots level [precisely in disadvantaged regions of Port-Louis] in that area (Amenah Jahangeer-Chojoo, 2010).

### **5.3.3 MOTIVATIONS FOR SETTING UP AN ISLAMIC SCHOOL**

The idea of a structural mosque germinated while he [Cehl Meeah] was studying in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. He was already aware of the *jahiliya* mindset of the Muslim community, entrenched in traditions and values that are in contradiction with the Islamic essence. During his stay in Makkah, Meeah consented to come regularly to Mauritius and to establish a movement. He was offered an old garage at Plaine-Verte, which he undertook to make his Centre, according to the Mauritian jargon. The centre is called Jamaat-UI-Muslimeen which implicitly operates on an extensive understanding of religion and its social function. After having created the centre [a *masjid* which serves the purpose of education and religious activities as well as prayer room], he was inspired to form a holistic movement and this is how he undertook to create a school for Muslims. He proposed to set up a school so that Muslim children could be religiously and academically nurtured. He envisions seeing the Muslim community involved in various religious, socio-economic and political activities.

Meeah states that he is aware of all the favours of Allah conferred upon him and he has been able to meditate upon them at various instances of life and more importantly, he was convinced that it was his duty to spread knowledge to the people and open a school that would change the status of Muslims who live as a minority in Mauritius. At the beginning, the purpose was to protect the children from the bad influence of society, to distance them from an unhealthy environment, make them live -among Muslims and inculcate Islamic values in them while they are still young and innocent. In other words, the leader does not see religion in a narrow, purely spiritual manner but he believes in the holistic development of the child. This is the distinguishing mark of the organisation which has members throughout the island. Nevertheless it was clear that the teachers

were neither fully experienced nor pedagogically qualified enough to operate as a functional school. It took many years juggling among various issues, but the result, according to him, was astounding. Children were motivated to learn the Quran, to study the Sunnah and to behave like good Muslims and good citizens.

During the last two decades, the Jama'at-UI-Muslimeen organisation has sought to present a rationally based understanding of Islam based on the two Islamic sources [Quran and hadith] agreed upon by the majority of Muslims. Its purpose has been to develop awareness of Islam at the spiritual, socio-cultural, and political levels among both Muslims and non-Muslims alike through education and social work. Its educational component comprises of its teaching programmes and its school structures. Its social work component consists of such actions as assisting the poor, caring for the sick and the elderly; and sheltering the homeless because religion is considered by the organisation as one of the major tools in the society that ties people together and can be used to promote welfare and wellness among individuals.

### **5.3.4 THE MAURITIAN REALITY AND ITS CHALLENGES**

Buxoo (2017) says that education does not promote critical thinking and the ability to identify oneself with one's own culture and religion. This is why the DUM exists to cater for such disparities and to enable teenagers to grow up with a positive mindset about themselves, their community and their society. They can definitely play a positive role in the society.

Buxoo believes that the decision taken by the school committee to forbid students from using social media such as *Facebook* and *Instagram* was based on the fact that they acquire ideas, trends and manners that influence their way of behaving which is often inconsistent with the school philosophy. He explains that the lives of many young people have been jeopardised by social networks and many parents come to the DUM for help because they want the DUM to rescue their students from the bad influence. Since stakeholders and policy makers are not always people of maturity, high morals and clear visions, they lack cohesion in the way they look at education and its promotion. He believes that the capitalist system is more present than ever in the Mauritian society where social inequalities exist. In the current society, education is a

means of power control. People learn from an early age and after eighteen years of learning, they are still ignorant; ignorant of themselves, their needs and their ambitions. The level of religious literacy at DUM is believed to be 100% and this is the main objective of the school.

He is saddened by the fact that many Muslims are ingrained in the capitalist system and they have acquired knowledge only to become employees. This is why they are no more respected in the educational field and children are controlling adults. However, this concept is irrelevant in Islam. Islam shows that anyone can twinkle at different levels and anyone should be given the opportunity to unleash their inner abilities.

The DUM offers such opportunities to each attendee. He considers the small number of students as a blessing because the number is manageable. He agrees to say that the task is huge and faith is a miracle because having hope in Allah brings peace in the heart and mind. The rector of the school states that there have been many brilliant students at DUM from both genders. Many girls have pursued their studies in the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants [ACCA] and some are studying at the University of Mauritius while some are teachers at the DUM.

The financial reality is definitely a difficult task to handle but no sincere work is done without test. So, test, as he sees it, is part of the educational motivation, to always rely on Allah, to supplicate unto Him and to hope only in Him. Until now, Allah has been ever present to the call of DUM.

Education is a power struggle. Today there is selective learning. -So, to conclude I envision a school with a deeper understanding of education. Of course, we have to follow the trend. Schools are meant for learning different subjects and this is a good thing and this is what we are doing. However, we want to bring the best of education for our kids; for example, when we teach them science subjects, it is not an intellectual subject without meaning. We want the child to compare what Allah has said in the Quran about this and that; for example, the creation of man is directly related to the subject of Biology, so our students watch the film and gain the Islamic perspective of it

and this helps them in their subject and of course, we have a high level of passes in our school (Cehl Meeah, 2018).

Meeah says that education can take place in a *masjid*, under a tree or even in a garden, though more often than not, formal education takes place within the formal setting of the classroom. It involves learning a specific range of subjects which is known as the formal curriculum and students are tested through formal examinations by Cambridge. However, this aspect is too limited, considering the nature of human beings. He insists that students should not be trained for examination purposes, but rather they should be taught how to think properly. He agrees that school is oriented towards memory tests and rote learning but at the DUM, children are constantly being reminded to think, reflect and analyse as this process is a *Quranic* order. He explains that moral education is enhanced through various non-core religious subjects. During these classes, students are morally prepared to face the world and to understand the higher purposes of life.

He declares that life itself is a challenge and that as an educator he has to comply with the Mauritian reality as well as the reality of this world. According to him, learners become secular, materialistic and certificate seekers where success equates to money and career advancement. So, parents want their children to achieve by getting the maximum marks and grades at exams, but after leaving school, they forget the reality that these innocent children have to face – they have not learnt the formulas of life and therefore are unable to cope with its reality. He mentions cases of suicidal adolescents which have occurred in some star schools or from frustrated laureates who could not get a good salary, to show that there is definitely a disparity between school instruction, strengthening of the character and moral ethics.

Meeah (2017) maintains that there is not one single case of a synthetic drug user at the DUM and that the school will never tolerate any such thing. He personally knows every student as well as their parents and any act of indiscipline, if any, is immediately dealt with. Students have been warned about the use of *Facebook* and other social media in an attempt to protect them against ill-famed youth and adults. -Mass media has become the primary socialising agent in modern society. It not only tells us what to think or how

to behave, but most importantly it shapes people's perceptions (Ahmad & Harrison, n.d).

He says that in the year 2019, his staff wants to integrate self-assertiveness so that students may learn to manage their emotions. He is conscious that both public and private schools suffer a lack of youth understanding through a proper program of self-assertiveness. He declares that playing has been introduced to motivate children to know the self.

Meeah says that the journey at Dar-UI-Ma'arif is uniquely designed to help learners discover the practical aspects of Islam and better understand who Allah is. Since Muslims live in a multi-religious and multi-cultural society, there may stem many forms of confusion and mismatched religious ideas. So, according to him, children must be habituated with the notion of one Creator and be aware of their potential as human beings endowed with Islamic values and understandings. He believes that it is important to address such questions that are relevant to the actual society in order to allow students to live happily and peacefully.

He agrees that adolescence is a critical period where there is a lot of questioning in terms of the self, the surrounding and above all, the reason for their creation. So, to begin with, students need to be aware of who they are, why they have been created and what Allah wants from them; in other words, what their mission on Earth is. Once students are correctly guided, it is easy for them to find their way in society.

He agrees that the DUM must constantly review the implementation of their objectives. The objectives, he says, do not change because there is only one objective in life: to please the Creator. However, the society is mutable and non-static and there are a variety of elements that come forward over the years, and these elements have to be discussed in the light of Islamic texts.

He is aware that there are many upgrades that need to be done. He agrees with the fact that the Muslim community lacks certain know-how and says that he is open towards everyone who wishes to share their viewpoint with him. He says that he is willing to learn and that he has always been open to discussion. He claims that the school's

strength is based on the connecting bridge of his followers, parents, teachers, students and himself with the Almighty. He is convinced that in the future, many parents will solicit his help because the young generation is unprotected and Dar-UI-Ma'arif will generously open its arms to their children, as from experience he knows that without religious awareness, people are going to collapse.

#### **5.4 DOHA SECONDARY SCHOOL CUREPIPE – A STORY OF OPPORTUNITY**

Founded by the Islamic Consultative Council in the year 2003, Doha was officially inaugurated by the school, which took place in 2005, by his Excellency, the High Commissioner of Qatar, Shaikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani. It is comprised of pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education, a project funded by the State of Qatar. With the great demand, the manager decided to open a new branch of secondary school at Souillac. The institution is commonly known as Doha Academy or simply, Doha. The school infrastructure obtained a five star school rank by the ministry of education and continues to be nationally recognised by the Mauritian citizens as one of the best school in the country.

The school consists of four separated building blocks of three storeys each, housing the pre-primary and primary department, administrative department, boy secondary department and girl secondary department. The tertiary level is active after school hours at the boy's department and offers a joint degree in Islamic studies and Arabic. It is affiliated with the RIPHAH international university of Pakistan. <sup>8</sup>

The Doha Secondary School came into operation in January 2003 and accommodated a student population of 150. The building was erected on a plot of land of approximately twenty nine thousand square metres. Located in the high Plaine Wilhems, the school is registered as a co-educational one. The student population counts 1200 and is the maximum number allowed by the PSEA. The school has all the modern facilities that can serve the interest of teenagers; well furnished and airy classrooms, laboratories, a library with a large collection of books, a vast play-ground and an impressive entrance path lined with a few date trees. Doha inspires high ambitions for the students and offers a large volume of space as well as fresh and

unpolluted air. It also accommodates students with a supportive academic and religious environment, free from all types of social vices.

The manager, Sadek Ally Polin, claims that over years, the name Doha has become a symbol of pride for the pupils and the college. He states that parents are proud to send their kids to Doha for two main reasons: its discipline and its high academic achievements. This has been made possible by his staunch character and perseverance. Polin speaks four languages: Creole, Arabic, English and French fluently. He was previously in the private sector and has decided to leave everything behind in order to undertake an Islamic project of helping the young generation. Despite all of the challenges that this work consists of, he is determined to keep Doha at the top. His philosophy is based on professionalism, hard work and discipline. He likes to be surrounded with people who can seek the opportunity they have to achieve success and he likes to be surrounded with people who are positive, dynamic, well-mannered and voluntary workers.

The culture of the school is expressed by well-defined goals. The motivation of the management is to maintain a good academic standard. He seeks to provide the possibility for each child to develop their potential in the specific area of their interest and ability. Stress is laid essentially on the quality of education, the personal development, moral formation of the individual and discipline. This culture is the bedrock for the effective running of the institution. The school regulation lays considerable stress on uniform, especially regarding students. The uniform represents the equal status of students regardless of their social class. Uniforms are prescribed for both boys and girls. The wearing of *hijab* and *jilbab* are parts of girls' uniform as well as female employees' dress code. All school girls wear a black cloak and a white Islamic scarf. The manager argues that the correct dress code for women and girls is not meant to discriminate against them. He declares that Allah invites both men and women to show modesty and respect. -By respecting our own selves and being respected in return, is certainly an aspect of freedom and peace. Peace of mind, body and soul is obtained through the principle of submission to the Creatorll.

Besides being hard-working and having a strict personality, Polin is also well versed in the Quran. He is surrounded by a group of teachers and administrators who are also staunch in their philosophy; that of raising a generation with high moral values and Islamic education. The role of the rector is mainly concerned with the assistance of the staff in their duties, to advise them and to appraise them. All the members of the staff work together to create a synergy around students. Parents, pupils, and staff are invited to work together in harmony. Pupils are supported by remedial measures, psychological care, and counselling that closely involves both the home and the school. Those who want to achieve excellent results are closely monitored by their teachers. Any additional work is done on a voluntary basis and this creates a strong bond among the pupils and the staff (Polin, interview December 2017).

Since its creation, Doha has been renowned for its academic and religious performances and the fact that the school has many amenities has increased its esteem in the eyes of stakeholders. Doha boasts a library with a rich collection of Islamic books to facilitate students in their quest for Islamic knowledge. Doha is therefore nationally known to be among the best schools in Mauritius and its continuous effort has been fruitful over the years. The manager considers quality education to be an Islamic mandate. According to him, his far-sightedness and ambition has given him the strength to raise the school to a noble level. He confides that he had been in the government service, specifically in Civil Aviation before he decided to shift to secondary education in order to help the Muslim community in their academic and Islamic roles. He said that his previous employment was easier since it was less challenging to manage a group of adults than to manage parents, students, and staff. Additionally, he considers that managing the cultural and religious differences among Muslims is another challenge and he understands that he has to find a just balance. However, his determination is real and he believes that Doha has paved its way towards success and is several leagues ahead of other schools in Mauritius.

Apart from Islamic Studies and Arabic, emphasis is put on religious awareness such as Quranic injunctions, *hadith*, *Fiqh*, *akhlaq* and *adaab*. For Syed Kazim (2013), Muslims learn to -to speak the truth, to speak good words, to greet others with peace, to thank

people, to be polite, etc. They also learn not to lie, not to backbite, not to speak in a high tone with parents and elders or anyone else, not to hurt someone's feelings, not to abuse, not to taunt, not to call others by nick name, not to indulge in any kind of talk which is vulgar in nature, etc. All these do's and don't's help a person become better in character. At Doha, Islamic education is also conveyed by the recitation of the *adhān* which is the Muslim call to prayer. It is recited in the microphone before the noon prayer [Zohr]. -*Adhān* has become such an effective and powerful tool that it reminds people about *Salah* when they are busy in their worldly and personal affairs (Syed Kazim, April 2013). The school offers the opportunity to male students to recite the *adhān* and to stand as *Mu`adhdhin*.

On Fridays, the recess time is extended so that every student can attend the prayer and listen to the sermon. -The Friday sermon is another strong medium which is used for mass communication and its primary objective is - to educate, inspire, guide, and strengthen the faith of the congregation by providing the community with encouragement, hope, and guidance for day-to-day living based on Qur'ānic teachings, sound Prophetic traditions, and general Islamic principles, to guide fellow community members to read and further research their faith in general and the topics covered in the sermon in particular. The Friday sermon also aims at addressing problems or calling for reform, and fostering respect for all, regardless of race, nationality, faith, gender, orientation or disability; and to communicate all this in a manner that is absolutely respectful to all people and to all religious traditions (Syed Kazim, April 2013).

One pedagogical method which is in line with the functionalist theory is the streaming system. The streaming system implies sorting students according to their academic merits. Polin is convinced that streaming is the best method to achieve good academic results. He believes that this system allows both students and teachers to juggle between classroom instructions and its management. In his view, teachers have not been trained to handle multi-levelled 'brains'. Secondly, it is both time and energy consuming for the students and teachers. At Doha, a streaming system is prioritised for personal assistance and care, thereby meeting various school and examination exigencies. In the same line of thought, streaming allows high performers to compete

for the higher school certificate. Teachers interviewed said that they are grateful for that because they can better manage their classes and this explains the high quality of the Doha educational system and the high intake demand. Hence, the school has maintained its academic level of performances and the demand for Doha keeps on increasing.

However, recently the integration of the school as a PSEA has been accepted as a challenge. The manager explains that the decision to be part of the PSEA was to release parents from the burden of having to pay a monthly fee. Being part of the PSEA means that the school is no longer burdened by the payment of the staff. However, it also means that the government provides the school with a percentage of candidates at the Grade 7. Those candidates are mainly chosen for their good performance at the PSAC examination. Such children as well as their parents are not necessarily interested with the religious inclination of the school. They are mostly motivated by the academic orientation of the school. This can be a form of challenge for the school administration. Moreover, the fact that the school has opted for a system of repeating a class whenever the student has failed their end of year examination is not always accepted by some parents and students. To this, the manager is clear. -Parents should learn their limits, be well-mannered and respectful towards the school decision. They should not be made to believe that because we are all Muslims and we form one family, they can defy all rules and regulations and impose on us their way of seeing things (Polin, December 2017).

It can be said that, with the insertion of the school at the PSEA, there are two categories of students: those who are there of their free will and those who have been granted a seat by the government. From feedbacks of students and teachers, it is clear that the passing from independent schools to PSEA has changed some of the school policies. Students interviewed said that they preferred their old school philosophy because it was more competitive on the religious ground. Many incentives were offered to students to acquire Islamic knowledge and those who were among the best students could earn points so that their parents did not have to pay full fees at the end of the month. These were very motivating. The Islamic vibes are still present but the new intake of students

who are academically brilliant but not necessarily religious have brought some changes at the school level. The percentage of students emerging from the *Sunnat-e-jamaat* [50 %] group is higher than the *Tabligh* [20 %] and *Tawhid jamaat* [about 25 %] and the rest of the students do not belong to any group of Muslims. Thus, some changes have been made to accommodate everyone; the objective being that no one should be ghettoised and rather that everyone should be able to feel comfortable and happy while conforming to the discipline of the school. However, the segregation of men and women among the staff is maintained because the rector believes that it is a cultural motivation more than a religious one. He understands that Muslims who come from India may not adhere to such practices (Osman Jaunboccus, July 2018).

The school counts one laureate<sup>3</sup> from the 2016 batch. She has been the school's pride as well as the manager's pride, being his niece. The news of the first laureateship was acclaimed by *Allahu Akbar* [Allah is the greatest] by female students. Zahraa Jaffur is also a memoriser of the *Qur'ān* [four siparah - portions]. There are also several students who had been ranked after the laureates.

In regards to the school culture, Doha wishes to remain one of the best schools that promotes educational welfare in a holistic manner. Many students emerging from the institution have pursued their tertiary studies, and many are already working in the public and private sectors as professionals. The manager's son is an example of a student who refused another star school in order to brighten at the Doha Academy. After having obtained his Higher School Certificate, he received a bursary to study at the Carnegie Mellon University of Pennsylvania, United States, which is as prestigious as Harvard University. He obtained his BSc First Class, and works for a reputed company in the United States. There are many boys and girls who have become medical doctors, engineers, and teachers among other jobs. The latest examination results at the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate indicate that many students have been ranked among the ten best candidates at the national level.

There are also some extracurricular activities that are held during the year, such as sports day, Science exhibition, blood donation, fund raising lunch and prize-giving

ceremonies. Students also participate in the month of Ramadan to help the poor and the needy. In 2016, some students acted in an ICAC (The Independent Commission Against Corruption) film competition. <sup>4</sup>

It has been found that some teachers do not necessarily agree with the religious and cultural aspects of the schools but their motivation is inclined towards their educational roles and they are satisfied with the academic approach of their rector. There are also some parents who are only interested with the academic approach of the school and they do not encourage their kids to pay attention to Islamic classes and Arabic. This aspect can be viewed as a dysfunction to the entire effort made by educators who are confronted with some parents and students who are religiously illiterate and who do not manifest any interest in Religious subjects such as moral values, *ādāb*, *fiqh* etc. Basically, these classes are given much importance because they concern the religious formation of the child. In fact, these classes on moral values contribute enormously to the formation of the personality of each student and in extension, to the school culture. Though the school maintains its integrative religious activities, there have been some changes concerning the religious approach to allow some students to integrate and to adapt to the rules and regulations of the school.

In a nutshell, the school wants to create students with high academic profiles and Islamic personalities. Polin is convinced that Doha has the potential to achieve both levels successfully.

### **5.5 THE ICC OF PORT-LOUIS – A MUSLIMS' HERITAGE**

The particularity of the Islamic Cultural College of Port-Louis [ICCPL] is that it has served many generations of Muslim boys. Many of them have remained faithful to their schools. Indeed, the institution has been the pride of the Muslim community for many years. It was established on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 1949 in Chasteauneuf, Curepipe and counts 70 years of service to the young generations of Muslims. The ICCPL is considered as a Muslim heritage for boys. It was the first among the five institutions to operate in Mauritius. The school is managed by a board of intellectual Muslims and it is a non-profit institution.

During the early years of operation, the ICCPL was widely recognised for its endeavour and many Muslims had emerged successfully from this institution. To this effect, Rashid Baganee, ex-teacher of ICCPL and now rector at the ICCVDP confirms this fact. -Plaine-Verte which has long been a Muslim bastion was well-known for its beauty and peace. The best brains would happily enrolled at the institution and complete their secondary education (Baganee, 2017).

According to Emrith, M. (1994:169), the school offered both academic subjects in Arts and Sciences as well as courses in Islamic Studies, Arabic and Urdu languages. The course of Islamic Studies was based mainly on *-deeneeyat* (the elementary principles of Islamic way of life). In 1952, a decision was taken to convert the Islamic Boarding School into a non-profit institution open to all Mauritian male students irrespective of religion and ethnicity. Since 1954, the school had been moved to Plaine Verte. It is a three-storeyed, concrete building situated in the heart of the City of Port-Louis on an area of approximately one acre (cited by Abdool Moonib Heera, 2009). The classrooms are expansive and the laboratory counts several species that can hardly be found in any other laboratories in the island. However, the only challenge is the school yard which is very narrow and students can hardly play during recess time. More to this is the fact that the school does not have a canteen and during several years, students were allowed to leave the school premises in order to buy their lunch from street hawkers.

In its immediate surroundings are the garden of Plaine-Verte, the Madad UI Islam secondary school, a public swimming pool, a football ground, the khadafi square, a police station, shops, banks, a clinic, pharmacies and houses. Within walking distance stands the Islamic Cultural Centre, whose main mission is to establish Muslim cultural events in the country and to take the responsibility of pilgrimage to Makkah [*Hajj* committee].

The founders of these schools have spent their entire youth maintaining these institutions and catering for the education of Muslim boys at a time where Islamic institutions were scarce and access to education was a privilege. Heera states that in the seventies, the school was still renowned for its best performance in all academic subjects. It was graded status A by the PSEA [then known as the PSSA]. Many affluent

parents were ready to affiliate with the school and high achievers from primary schools were enrolled at the ICC. Many of its students have emerged as professionals and elites, occupying key posts in the country. Science subjects were taught with pride and the school, to this day has well-equipped and advanced furnished laboratories which attract students of science. However, the school performance suffered some set-backs when the government decided to create public regional schools now known as State secondary schools. Heera narrates that with the creation of government regional schools, a ranking system was established whereby the first 2000 pupils, including both genders, were admitted to these state schools. Since 50% of students are allocated by the ministry of education, students with lower academic performance were sent to the ICC Port-Louis. Due to the policy of the government, there has been a substantial decline in the performance of Islamic Cultural College. Added to this was the lack of qualified teachers in Islamic Studies. Heerah is of the opinion that those Islamic teachers lacked qualification in the field of religion in order to guide students academically and religiously. Added to this was the shortage of text-books. All these factors have contributed to reduce the performances of students and Muslim parents were no longer a interested in sending their children to the ICC as they used to (Abdool Moonib Heera, 2009).

As if it was not sufficient as challenges, Plaine Verte and its surrounding were soon invaded with social epidemics such as drugs. The garden of Plaine Verte is now filled with homeless men and women who entertain themselves with harmful substances. Students admitted to this school come mostly from such areas with either broken and/or poor families. Such children suffer from their immediate environment and they can be mentally disturbed. Interviewed teachers claim that the attitudes of such children are often disturbing for their school mates and staff. They are sometimes aggressive, they bully others, and present symptoms of mental disturbances. For the teachers, such problems are enhanced by the lack of parental care and assistance. This has fuelled their inabilities to study and to take their studies at hand. For Faizal Jeeroburkhan, ex-lecturer at the Mauritius Institute of Education (2017), the problem will be solved in the future when -parents, teachers and schools will work as a digital community for the benefit of studentsll.

However, in the meantime, with all of the social disturbances, many Muslim parents prefer to send their children to other school types. When questioned about the reasons why students are not interested with learning, participative students claimed that there are two kinds of students: those who are not interested to learn and those who are good, obedient and studious. They confirm the fact that some students are in dire problems; students come to school early morning with the face reddened, either because they have taken drugs or they have witnessed violence in the home. They cannot pay attention to the class. They are emotionally disturbed and during recess time, they bully the boys especially from lower classes. One boy said: -almost all the boys smoke cigarettes at the age of 11, 12. Some were good but they have been corrupted by their friends. Another teenager said that the school should let go of such students because they are destroying the image of the school. In a few years nobody would want to attend this school unless something positive happens. For another teenager: -Of course, those naughty kids won't change! When they have been reported by other students or teachers, those in charge of discipline will simply say to him: -forgive him, forgive him. Having said this, as if he was recalling some past events, he smiled; half annoyed, half offended, then concludes: -Do you think this is a solution?

It appears that there are some cases of bullying and violence due to family disturbances and home environment. To that, the rector argues that -cases of violence may occur because it is the nature of children to fight over petty things; to get angry and to sort out their frustration. But Yanis, our usher is here to put things in order, he confesses.

In order to revamp the school image, the new rector, Abdool Abdouramane, has come with some strict policies. Students with high negative profiles are not accepted because they present a threat to the other students. Moreover, in an attempt to protect young students, the rector has decided to forbid them from leaving the school premises during the short break in order to avoid mixing with ill-famed people. Various activities have been put in place in order to keep students busy with activities and sports. The new rector is determined to help the new generation survive in an environment where synthetic drugs are current.

Interventions are done to bring awareness upon the danger of drug, tobacco and HIV issues. Such interventions are held at least once a year by one of the police branches, known as the *Brigade des mineurs*,“ to provide students with appropriate knowledge. However, it has been observed that despite various activities performed and effort made to include all students, it is always a group of students that take interest in them and profit from them (Abdool Abdouramane, interview October 2017).

Before initiating any outdoor activity, the school has to weigh the pros and cons based on the personality of some students. Nevertheless, students participate in many intra- and inter-college activities. They have won many medals in various competitions such as swimming and football. Recently, there have been more activities in terms of sports in order to help students cope with their routine life situations. This has been very helpful and much appreciated. From feedbacks of students, they are all very attached to their school and are proud to form part of the ICC family. Still from feedbacks of students, despite all the troubles, they are emotionally attached and they enjoyed the fact that they all come from a homogeneous group and they can have fun together. Many students who successfully pass their School Certificate join the ICC FORM VI for their higher education classes.

Despite the previous developments and reforms made by the ministry of education, the new rector is full of hope that the ICCPL will survive as it has been operating during the past sixty-eight years. He confides proudly that the ICC is a Muslim legacy and that Muslim students will continue to enroll at the institution as it is the only Muslim school for boys in the vicinity of Port-Louis. Many Muslims prefer to send their children to a Muslim school to protect them from outside influences and to live within the limits prescribed by Almighty Allah. He says that the ICC is a school for boys, so there is no mixing with girls as in some secondary schools. Some parents are reluctant to send their boys to mixed schools, so the ICC is catering for these types of students. Besides which, parents fear for their children and do not want them to turn out bad.

Some students, who had been in some public or other private schools, often decide to leave in the course of the year and enroll at ICC. The main reasons advanced are (1) inability to cope with a diverse student population where there is ongoing violence,

bullying and racism, (2) at the ICC, students know each other and they are immediately accepted by other boys, (3) the sense of belonging among students, (4) Lack of adaptation and moral support in other schools and (5) religious and cultural appurtenances at the ICC.

Hence, among the intake of students are those who have enrolled of their own free will because (a) they cannot get any other secondary school due to their low aggregates at the PSAC examination; (b) because of its proximity to their homeland; (c) because they cannot adapt to another school, and (d) because it is a Muslim school.

The new rector states that he is trying to create a positive environment and to support students by promoting some school activities. However, the problem cannot be fully tackled since many students are influenced by their immediate environment and their parents. Since, there is no in-house training and no training is offered to teachers prior employment, teachers can only count on their patience and their number of years of experience within the institution. In some cases, it seems that some staff remain in their comfort zone and they may not be willing to change or see the changes that need to be done. However, for the rector, senior teachers are more equipped to handle difficult students because they are mature and they are experienced. New-comers will have to make their own ways. -Research shows that the teachers who leave are likely to be replaced by even less experienced teachers|| (The Conversation, January 2016).

Since many of the members of the non-teaching staff have been offered employment as a means of social rehabilitation, they often lack professional skills and training and they are in dire need of positive and transformative education. It can be suggested that the dress code, the language style and the use of slang words portray a negative school culture. For students, the main challenge is the fact that many of their school mates are narrow minded, whom they call *\_ti l'esprit*.

While the government has suggested the use of innovative tools, old methods and old pedagogies are still in use in many schools. The availability of the internet is practically non-existent for both educators and students. There are two types of students: those who prefer activities and those who prefer classroom lessons. Consequently, it is a

challenge for educators to deal with such situations. The rector strongly believes that his staff has to be devoted and committed due to the reality of students who encounter various personal problems; most of them come from broken families and have difficulties coping with studies and real life situations. He is convinced that those who can stay in that post for long are there because they love their job, they love to work with children, and they care for them and want to help them get a better future. Those who are here only for a monthly salary cannot survive because working with intellectual disabilities and emotional pain requires sincerity, patience and devotion. He states that young people need love. They need mentors. They need guides. They need adults who care for them. They have personal problems and they need role models and constant support; so, beyond the role of an educator, there is the role of an elder brother or a father; in other words, educators act as social leaders.

Discipline is maintained at school level in order to prepare teens for their adult life. For example, boys have no right to wear shorts and to uncover their knees. There are criteria to be respected concerning haircuts; hair that is shaven with parting lines or has been teased to get excessive height are considered unacceptable by the school discipline master. The wearing of the uniform is part of school discipline and everyone must adhere strictly to it. However, staff members are often confronted with parents who are not supportive of the disciplinary program.

Regarding reconciliation, the rector says, -As a school, we contribute through avoiding any kind of discrimination against students. There are a small percentage of non-Muslims at the school and he feels it is his duty to make them feel safe. He proudly states that the Muslim community always likes to welcome other communities wholeheartedly. His opinion is that non-Muslims [students and staff] are happy to be with Muslims and they adapt easily. Despite the school having a high percentage of Muslims, the rector says that Muslims are always happy to open their doors to non-Muslims. Every non-Muslim student as well as staff forms a part of the ICC and they are treated equally.

The establishment holds many activities that connect students with each other, with the teaching and non-teaching staff, so there is a sense of 'familiness' within the school

which helps to build the conditions for reconciliation. He says that there are some religious activities that are held during the year such as the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad and the *Shab-e-barat*.

He declares that the ICC has developed a culture of respect for adults, whereas at public schools students do not respect adults. They have more freedom because when a student misbehaves there are so many procedures before taking action against him/her. At the ICC, things are easier since the rector acts as a social/spiritual leader and he is habilitated to take immediate action, and most of the time, there is communication between students and the staff. The help of the usher, a Yemenite man who has some 40 years of continuous service, is of immense help for the school. Section leaders as well as the committed team of staff help to run the school on a daily basis.

Henceforth, the school acts as *in loco parentis*. All students interviewed are unanimous in saying that their school is the best institution, there is lot of fun to stay among friends, teachers are very devoted, and they enjoy being among their own cultures and friends.

### **5.5.1 CHALLENGING FACTORS AT THE ICC PORT-LOUIS**

Abdouramane says that the technique used in education should be innovative but to reach this agreement there is a need for human resources. The government wants some subjects to be taught at the secondary level; subjects such as Food and Textile Studies will be offered to all Grade 7 to Grade 9 learners in all secondary schools, in both the normal and extended streams. The aim behind this is to achieve gender equality in the basic continuous education, which is in line with the current educational practices in developed countries. Therefore these subjects have now become compulsory.

In terms of development, he understands that if he wants to help the society, there is a need to use science. This is why the school, for example, has invested in laboratories and the Information Technology section, so that students may change their lives and their societies through the skills they gain at school. Despite much effort, some students cannot cross the School Certificate boundary and have to abandon school at the age of

16. Hyleen Mariaye, Associate Professor at the Mauritius Institute of Education (2008), points out that it appears that -students are rarely able to make up for their earlier difficulties and that the number of students in the higher achievement brackets dwindles systematically as the educational ladder is moved up.

The rector agrees that a lot of teaching is based on memorisation, which is called rote education. It is difficult for them to develop critical thinking, though teachers are working on ways to help develop their talents. One of the main problems lies in the fact that most of the students are either average or weak in terms of academics and whatever the motivations of teachers, students have difficulty in crossing the line since they lack a basic academic understanding. For example, there has been automatic promotion in lower classes despite the fact that students cannot cope academically. When students reach higher classes, the barrier is even greater. Another factor that appears to be a hindrance for educational advancement is the fact that pupils make the minimum effort to reach the pass rate. Students confess that they work only for the minimum and that private tuition teachers work on past papers because, according to them, the same questions occur repeatedly over the years. Such attitudes have been raised by Hyleen Mariaye (2008), who speaks about CPE [old method of examination which has been replaced by the PSAC] students. She says that -Pupils are not encouraged to make any additional efforts because they know that they will obtain their CPE with a minimum amount of work. Pupils have devised means to beat the system and this is a hindrance to attaining the aim of the curriculum which is to equip our students with sound reading, speaking and writing skills (Hyleen Mariaye, 2008). Though her statement concerns the CPE students, it is nevertheless relevant to the students of Grade 11. However, he is proud to mention that there are some students who pursue their higher school classes and are considered to be among successful adults; among them are teachers. There are many teachers and non-teaching staff who were previously schooled at the ICC Port-Louis.

According to the teachers, most of the students do not come to school to learn and achieve a considerable level of success. Their main priority is to meet their peers and to distract the teacher in class. Many students bunk classes and stay outside [leave

school] after the short break. The reason advanced is that there is no school canteen and students are not allowed to roam outside the school yard which is very small. Most of the time, they wander in the garden of Plaine Verte to play with their friends. Unfortunately, such a place is dangerous for innocent and vulnerable kids. For Cosden, -students who spent more unstructured time (e.g., hanging out with peers) were at greater risk of performing poorly in school (Meredith Cosden et al).

Another challenge is the type of children who come to the establishment. Many students live with a single parent. To better understand this reality, the researchers take the example of a youngster of 19 years old who is interested with school but has many personal problems and lives in the heart of a high-crime neighbourhood. He said that his father died when he was only fourteen years old. His father died of drugs but he gave his son various advice concerning Islam. He also asked his son never to take drugs. He confided that he did not immediately feel his father's absence and it was after some days, when all of the ceremonies were over and the near relatives had stopped coming that he felt desperation. Nobody encouraged him and nobody took care of him and he had to strive to help his mother and his little sister. He was forced to take a job at the age of fourteen to support the household, as though his mother was working in a family business she did not earn much. His mother has performed the 'nikkah' with a man who comes and goes because he has another wife. He said that everybody tells him that he is talented and charismatic but says that he is conscious that he needs encouragement and help. In order to break his monotonous life, he makes fun of, intimidates and bullies his friends. His friend listens to him and fears him. According to the National Health Center of Statistics (1994), researchers had observed that violent crime, among both teenagers and adults, is concentrated most heavily in urban neighbourhoods characterised by a very high proportion of single-parent families. Chris Konnester and Dana Haynie (2005) confirms that this statement remains true in the present society.

Aspects such as peer pressure, bullying and violence exist at the ICCPL. In some cases, good students can turn bad because of bad companionship. -All children,

especially during their teenage years, gravitate toward the influence of their peers. (Raymond Pasternoster, 1988)

Most of the students come from slum areas and their parents are problematic adults with disruptive lives. Sometimes, their sons follow their trends and at school, they may have violent attitudes, disobedient towards elders and bully their school mates who are from lower classes. Despite much effort led by the section leaders and the Usher, the problem is recurrent. Prem Saddul, pedagogue claims in an interview with L'express.mu (May 2007). -The development of a pupil should be done along two lines: instruction and education. While instruction should be provided by schools, education is a responsibility shared by schools and parents. Education includes complementary competences like affective, social and cultural skills. School can't assume this function alone and collaboration with parents is largely recognised throughout the world as one of the main conditions for success. In fact, it should be an informative and interactive partnership to bring added value to the education a school offers.

Nevertheless, the school board is working towards finding new ways to increase intake. Activities are conducted to help them get out of their problems because they believe that these children are 'controllable'. Many of them get out of their problem after they realise that they have to strive for their future with brilliance (Abdouramane, 2017).

#### **5.6 MADAD-UL-ISLAM SECONDARY SCHOOL – ONCE A MUSLIM GIRLS' PRIDE**

The Madad-UI-Islam is another Muslim heritage. It has more than sixty years of existence. It is located some walking distance to the ICCPL. It is administrated by a lady rector, Mrs Nessimah Banon Casseem. Madad-UI-Islam commonly known as Madad is proud to serve Muslim girls ranging from 11 to 18 years old for more than 60 years. Most of them live within the vicinity of Port-Louis. The school faces the problem of quality wise students. Most of the students enrolled at Madad are weakly aggregated and come from disruptive areas. The level of learning of these students is abysmal.

Casseem explains that it is a fact that students passing their Certificate of primary Education with difficulties often meet more difficulties in secondary classes. This is so because they need specific learning adjustments and orientation. Unfortunately, there is

no teaching method designed for slow learners except one geared towards rote learning. In research done by Burrin (2011) about the quality of education at secondary education in Mauritius, she states that 73,3% of educator-respondents wish different curricula for low and high performers. What has been observed is that students do not participate in active and associative learning. Moreover, educators are recruited on the mere basis of being a degree holder or having PGCE but the question which needs to be asked is whether a degree at a university or a PGCE is relevant to these cases. Again Burrin (2011) claims that the main reason provided by educator-respondents is that education is too content driven and does not leave enough space for creativity and emotional development of students. As a matter of fact, those students at Madad UI Islam are unable to cope with the curriculum and they rely heavily on their teachers to pass their School Certificates. This explains why educators have opted for a system of memorisation and notes copying in the absence of a more elaborated methodology and pedagogy. -In the case of Muslim social, economic and political development, scholars admit that Islamic principles play a crucial role but require some reinventing in methodology (Armstrong, 2000; Donohue & Esposito, 2007; Esposito, 1992; Ibrahim, 1996).

However, Heera who is educator at the ICCPL, firmly believes that the old methods should be replaced by more interesting ones in order to attract students to appreciate Islamic Studies and of course this can be extended towards other subjects. Heera suggests that teachers should embrace more interactive strategies. -This, in itself, will destroy the disinterestedness and boredom of the students and lead to more class participation and interest; they will willingly go on a merry go round trip of discovering the blatant, inherent, multi-faceted beauty and ennobling qualities of Islamic Studies (Heera, 2009). Hence, students do not develop any forms of psychomotor and emotional intelligence.

As stated by the rector, many of these students do not have any objectives for the future and there are early drop-outs. This is one of the reasons why there is a low percentage of passes at the School Certificate level and this explains the reason why students are not promoted to higher classes. Teachers explain that such students are unable to

interact in class as they lack the basics of education. Critical thinking and performance in languages are also poor. During several years, the school has been cut off from school activities such as having school clubs, outings, and interactive seminars.

The teaching language used by most teachers is Creole. The methodology of instruction is mostly based on note copying. The situation of these teachers can be collated by the claim of Anand D. Awootar (Oct 2018), who states that: -As things stand, schools in socially-deprived areas spend vast amounts of time patching up the consequences of poverty (widespread disaffection, family breakdown, poor health, neighbourhood torn apart by alcohol, drug abuse and crime).

Jahangeer and Jahangeer claim that ‘some colleges are classified as ‘star schools’ and others are regarded as ‘low-performing schools’, and this definitely plays an important role in the development of the adolescents who very often tend to identify themselves with the image of the collegell (Shamim Ajaheb-Jahangeer and Abdul Cayum Jahangeer, 2004).

Both the rector and the participative teachers confirm the fact that the majority of students are not interested in pursuing their studies to the School Certificate level. Casseem mentions several reasons for this lack of interest. Among them, she claims, are the fact that parents do not contribute morally to their success and that students do not have role models in their immediate environment and hence, they cannot conceive what a bright future looks like. This has been further explained by a participative teacher who says that many students believe that their lives can be radically changed if they have a good marriage proposal.

After they leave school, a grand majority of these children are found lacking literacy and numeracy skills; children are not able to socialise and to communicate with elders with respect because they have not been raised by responsible and well-mannered adults. Barnett and Coate (2005) criticise higher education for its preoccupation with a knowledge and skills agenda, while ignoring the fact that what really matters is an individual’s will to get themselves out of bed in the morning to tackle the challenges the day will bring and have the confidence to do something useful with their knowledge and

skills. As for Surendra Bissoondoyal (2017), Chairman of the Board of the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) -children with skills and abilities in other fields than academics are not given the opportunity to grow and shine. He argues that school does not inculcate values to children; such values -that will help them differentiate between good and evil in a world that is becoming hostage to materialism and drug abuse. In the same line of thought, Faizal Jeeroburkhan (2017) underlines that the curriculum -should also develop personal values such as integrity, discipline, effort, patience, perseverance, etc. as well as citizenship qualities to enable them to promote patriotism, democracy, good governance, meritocracy, teamwork, etc. and to fight corruption, pollution, drug abuse.

Casseem is of the opinion that administering a school requires experience, good health, a strong personality, support from other staff and a natural love for children. She started duty as an educator in the year 1982 and 15 years ago was promoted to the post of rectorship. Casseem says that she has been a witness of societal change over the years. She explains how girls used to be obedient, shy and girlish some thirty years ago. This transformation made its way through various agencies such as media exposure, peer pressure and social disintegration.

Casseem confesses that Madad Ul Islam had been the school par excellence for Muslim girls for many years and girls at that time were reserved, kind, and God fearing. It was a pleasure to guide them and to teach them so that they could better serve their family and become responsible mothers. The school has served mostly Muslim girls in order to help them in their various needs as young adolescents. The goal was and is still to improve development outcomes for girls, breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty and mindsets and providing a catalyst for change, the returns of which will ripple through wider society.

She believes that the present day situation for Mauritian girls is quite alarming. The promotion of values has decreased considerably. Even though the Mauritian society is a small one, social decadence is high. She explains that modern adolescent girls want to imitate boys and challenge them. According to her, identity crisis is due to modernisation and technology. She explains that there is a breakdown in the social

structure resulting in a widespread decadence, delinquency, loss of identity, apathy and social conflict; including bullying, promiscuity, sexual deviation, alcoholism and drug addiction.

Another reason advanced by Casseem concerning the tragedy of the Mauritian youth is a consequence of the lack of monitoring from adults. There are more cases of single parenting. The disintegration of many families is due to poverty, lack of proper education, drug addiction and other social vices. The maladjustment of family life may result in emotional stress, violence, juvenile delinquency, promiscuity and early dating. Many children are raised by a single parent; some grow up with an irresponsible father; there may be many cases of drug addiction in the family and thus frequent domestic violence. Societal issues and especially lack of parental care have given rise to troublesome students. This view is echoed by Mariaye, who states that -mounting discipline problems culminating in violent outbursts, alarming rates of teenage pregnancy and drug abuse are phenomena often explained by the breakdown of the family or are generally situated in the aftermath of industrialisation (Marie Hyleen Sandra Mariaye, 2009). According to Oscar Lewis (1959,1961,1966), such families are to be found in urban slums and are characterised by wife battering, applying physical violence when correcting children, high prevalence of alcoholism and abandonment of children and mothers. Lewis also describes the culture of poverty as a way of life. People also develop an adaptation to poverty in a capitalist system and from then, it is passed on to future generations; thus creating several generations of poverty. Lewis believes that the culture of poverty is a design for living. On the individual level, it is characterised by a strong feeling of marginality, dependence and inferiority, helplessness, a relatively little ability to defer gratification and a sense of resignation and fatalism.

Casseem posits that with time, students were less and less cooperative and in the last few years, there have been difficult cases to manage. Having a boyfriend in the current time is a natural thing among Muslim girls who are not aware of the various dangers belying such attitudes. Girls are enthralled by what they see on television but they are soon disillusioned. Many boys are there just for fun, since those boys have no future

and they can offer none. Of course, she observes that the school can count on some well-mannered and pious girls who perpetrate the good education received at home. When parents live in harmony and care for their children, there are greater chances for them to be good and balanced. However, the locality of Plaine Verte as well as its surroundings is experiencing some difficult moments and life is difficult for many adolescents. They come from disruptive backgrounds where parents face dire needs; broken families, poverty and bad environment are the main criteria for drugs, adultery, fornication and so forth. When children lack proper love and affection, they become attention seekers and they express this lack through violence. Bullying is a common aspect though it is less visible than in public schools.

Among the new school trends is that girls fight among themselves for boys. It often happens that boys play with their feelings and leave them after some time for another girl within the same institution or starts dating one their own friends. Since boyfriends are their pivotal interest, rivalry is therefore created among groups of girls and this may be a reason for violence and fights. However, the danger lies further. It may happen that among these boys, some are drug addicts, vagabonds and early school leavers. This violent climate is a drawback to achievement. This has been stated by both teachers and students.

The wish to bring students towards Islamic values is rather hampered by the characteristics of students. Though there are a few students who are obedient, respectful and hardworking, the majority of students are academically weak and do not show interest in religious studies and their applications. Consequently, she believes that due to their lack of motivation in their academic and religious studies, their development is slow and it is a big challenge for educators to assist them so that they can pass their exams. However, educators are very helpful and supportive in assisting students in their various subjects. While some students prefer to leave school before Grade 11, many of them cannot go above Grade 11. There are various reasons for this. One of them is the lack of motivation of parents to send their daughters to school and assist them or advise them about the necessity to be educated. Some are not even aware if their kids bunk

school because they leave home earlier for work and come back several hours after school ends.

-By the time they come back home, they believe that their daughters have attended school and already back home; unless the administration phone them, they continue to be unaware of the whereabouts of their children! Absences are more frequent on Fridays because school ends early. Students feel they can stay have a break. The school has set a system of SMS [private messages] to send messages to responsible parties whenever there are frequent absences. This is how the administration learns that many parents are not aware that their daughters do not come to school. In such cases, there are follow-ups.

The rector speaks about the child's home environment as a threat to their development. Girls are not supported by adults and are surrounded by unschooled girls who are slightly above their age; such girls may be married, divorced, immoral and careless. Another reason is the child's intellectual ability to cope with studies. -Some children want to make an effort and the teacher tries her best to help her, but she is academically weak and cannot do more. Since most of our students are average and some less than average, we cannot do much. We have to concentrate on the curriculum in order to help them pass their exams. According to her, due to academically weak students, introducing more activities is a waste of time because students need more emphasis on core subjects. A system of spoon feeding is essential to help them achieve their School Certificate, and many of them also stop school prior to Grade 11 which is the penultimate stage of secondary school. This aspect is taken by Burrin who mentions the fact that the curricula for both SC and HSC examinations have to be reviewed. -The curriculum for high achievers can enable them to pursue scholarships because of its degree of difficulty. The curriculum for low achievers can have the same content than that of the high achievers, but instead of completing it in two years' time, they can complete it over three years. The streaming process will permit the identification of high and low achievers in the lower classes. The school must also permit a certain degree of flexibility in which low achievers, based on good performance, can move to the high achievers' class (Burrin, 2011). In fact, one of the

main loopholes of the educational system in Mauritius is that most of the -education systems are geared towards results and certificate at the detriment of other skills development and most importantly towards future job skills (Defimedia.info, January 2017).

Casseem is of the opinion that the culture of violence is being perpetrated on television, newspapers and magazines. Bullying and the mocking of others are forms of violence. Adolescents are prone to imitate elders because they are not ripe enough to make up their own minds. They adopt thrill seeking behaviours and fall easy prey of unscrupulous people. Cigarettes, drugs, pre-marital relationships and corrupted friends may jeopardise their youth forever. They need moral support as well as a sound environment. Many girls have become quite aggressive because they come from broken families and they are confused. It may happen that some girls are unable to express their frustration and they may even not understand their own needs and the emptiness of their heart.

Opportunities are offered to students in the form of continuous assistance. There is constant intervention program at the school. In order to tackle the drug and cigarette problem, the 'Brigade des mineurs' [police for youth under 18] often comes to deliver speeches on drugs and other social evils. The 'Brigade des mineurs' are often called upon to talk to students. This is an awareness program to support students and to get them out of their problems. The first-timers [those who take illicit substances] are easily taken in charge and this is how the administration helps students; it is not only academic, it is about social care. In case of major issues, students are rusticated from the school.

These schools have been institutionalised in order to secure a cultural background for Muslim youths; a background which offers various advantages such as the wearing of Islamic uniforms for girls; morning prayers, facilities for ablution and prayers. Religious activities such as *Mawlid* and *Eid* remind students of their religious duties and culture. In some cases, they may offer moral values as non-core classes. The culture of Muslim students and teachers is distinguished by their way of dressing, food they eat, language

they speak and rites and rituals they observe. The culture at Madad is mostly influenced by Muslims from India.

Among the Islamic rituals that are held at Madad is the Morning Prayer which starts with *surah Al Fatiha* [first chapter of the Quran]. This is considered to be a blessing because students start the day praying to Allah, asking for protection and making dua. This gives them a sense of belonging and makes them aware of Allah as their Creator and Sustainer. However, it appears that children do not understand what is being read as the recitation is done in English and during prayer time, they are more interested to chat.

Various forms of discipline and rules have been set to control students. For example, no mobile phones are allowed during school time. This policy protects students from bunking schools or flirting during school hours. Students must adhere strictly to the uniform. Muslim girls wear a 'chuss', a kind of pants [under their uniform] to show their modesty. Nail polishing, henna and hair colour are not allowed because students come to school for a purpose and they need to learn about respect, obedience, punctuality, discipline and the like; otherwise school serves only the purpose of instruction and not education. She considers that low performers must prepare for their future as even though they are academically weak, they can still dream of a bright future. If they cannot cope with studies, they do not have scopes, at least, they are aware how to run their houses, how to become good parents with good morals and this, the rector considers crucial for girls.

Casseem says parents have entrusted their kids to the school because students feel comfortable with the school culture and all the members of the staff are devoted. In a way, the school acts as a substitute to their parents. In many cases, students feel the need to talk about their frustration. They need an attentive ear to listen to their difficulties and help them out. Since teachers at Madad-UI-Islam are not transferable, they are familiar with the type of problems girls have in that particular region and they know how to handle them. When teachers are permanent, there is security, peace and wellness. Teachers who try to reprimand students are hated by both students and parents. Parents do not always understand the need for discipline and obedience. They

come to school to complain. However, there are cases where students and teachers become close to each other with time, the relationship grows better and this is how students feel supported and loved.

The staff is committed to do their job, especially those who have been there for many years; many educators have been working since their youth and they are aware of the difficulties faced by students. Know-how, devotion and commitment are key factors to remain in the school, she declares. She believes that some educators take their role seriously and they act as social and educational leaders. However, despite their constant devotion, teachers are of the opinion that they are drained out. For them, the situation is unbearable because they are not supported by the parents. Some parents have a negative attitude towards school and they do not accept the idea that discipline should be maintained. In an article written by L'express (2007), the cause of indiscipline is said to be partly attributed to parents. The article reveals that many teachers are in dire situations and they are practically unable to deal with cases of disruption because they fear the interference of parents.

The cases of absenteeism and lateness appear to be a parental issue. In some cases, students claim that sometimes parents ask them to bunk schools because they need someone to accompany them for shopping and other activities or simply because there will be no one at home and the child is asked to guard the house. Some claim that their parents believe girls should not be schooled beyond eighteen years old as it is more proper for girls to marry before their twentieth birthday.

Recently, the school policy has slightly changed to reach out to more students in order to increase the school population. Increasing student population is an important aspect because the government offers a subsidy per head. The school is presently culturally mixed with Muslims and Christians coming from the vicinity of Port-Louis. These suburban areas are commonly known as disadvantaged ones with difficult cases to handle; students are poor, disturbed by parents who may be addicted to various vices or come from broken families. Students may themselves be involved in illicit activities and may face personal problems apart from the fact that they are adolescents. Students are academically weak and disinterested with religion and adult authority.

Schooling does not mean anything to many of them. They come to school because the Mauritian law stipulates that children need to be schooled up to 16 years old. Absenteeism is a crucial problem and despite teachers' support and motivation, students show more interest in early dating.

She is convinced that many students will continue to come to Madad because its physical location lies at the heart of Port-Louis and it has an advantage over such schools that are more distant. Her opinion is that the Muslim culture has a wealth of sharing and generosity. All of the students live as a family despite the many problems encountered. Students know they can rely on the overall staff and they can seek help anytime.

Hence, Madad offers the advantage to those who want to dress islamically to do so and they are not bullied for wearing long uniforms as is often the case in other non-schools. Casseem believes that the homogeneous culture has been diversified with non-Muslim students. They voluntarily learn to socialise and integrate into the system and its culture. She does not see such diversity as a threat but believes that things are under control. Finally she says that she is proud of her school which is open to all learners irrespective of their religious creed and religious appurtenances. -Non-Muslims feel they are part of the big family of Madad-UI-Islam and this is how we like it to be. However, to the teachers interviewed, the problem is much more complex. The mixture of cultures creates unnecessary problems at the school and in the classroom because non-Muslim students as well as Muslim students come from disadvantaged areas where children are used to violence and permissive environments. As a matter of fact, they are not ready to submit to school principles and they are not motivated to study. However, from the point of view of students, being treated as young adults is a very important aspect. This can change the way they treat their teachers and their interactions with them. Students firmly assert that they do not like to be treated as children so that they can develop confidence. They want to be able to do things on their own and to participate in activities that are of interest to them.

## **5.7 Islamic Cultural College Form Vi – The Unique Pre-University School In Mauritius**

Commonly known as Islamic Cultural College of Vallée des Prêtres [ICC VDP], the Islamic Cultural College Form VI, as its name suggests, caters only for pre-university students. This is the unique feature of the school as it stands as a unique case in Mauritius that administers only Grade 12 and 13 and its students' population ranges between 17 to 20 years old. Newly seated in 2005 in the centre of Port-Louis, the school was then transferred in 2006 to Vallée des Prêtres, a suburban area of Port-Louis. Though Vallée des Prêtres could be developed into a school hub, due to the numerous schools established in the region, it is still a suburban area. Vallée des Prêtres is at the boundaries of Cité La Cure and Sainte Croix – the bastion of the general population known as Creole, African descendants. The clash of community is tangible. Nevertheless the region houses a minority of Muslims. This has been made possible with the allocation of needy families to state apartments and among them are a few Muslims.

The policy of the school was to primarily cater for those students who could not get entry to star schools due to their low School Certificate grades. At that time, when star schools would select students with a minimum of five credits, the school would accept two to three credits. Despite the fact that most of the students would come from disruptive areas of the capital, Basheer Taleb, the ex-rector and new director of the institution, had striven to offer them all of the facilities they needed and to treat them as young adults. The humane treatment offered to students and the independence of thoughts and actions led to the free participation of many children in various school activities. The staff recruited is essentially made up of Muslim men and women emerging from a variety of backgrounds such as Islamic, confessional, star and state schools. In an effort to think 'otherwise' Taleb encouraged his staff, whom he considers as part of the ICC family, to bring in new innovative ideas, to share their knowledge and know-how and to participate in extra-curricular activities.

Within a few years, the school population expanded and new teachers were recruited. The combination of subjects has widened and the building extended. Today, the school aims at an innovative and transformational program. Despite the fact that many

students come from disruptive areas and that during the next ten consecutive years, students were either average or under average, the administration built its success on the prevailing reality. In 2016, one student was ranked 31<sup>st</sup> after the laureates which goes to the credit of the school. The school population is predominantly Muslim. Its student population has noticed an insignificant number of *Shi'a*. Such number does not influence in any way the school culture and religious activities just as the insignificant number of non-Muslims does not affect the school culture.

However, among the students there are a considerable number of problems such as single parenting, depression, anger, frustration, sadness, isolation, lack of concentration, attention seeking and so forth. Though the percentage of tobacco addicts is high among boys, there are mild cases among girls. Drugs are mostly attributed to boys and there are only some mild cases. The rector claims that -our students need love but he also believes that -children take teachers as lip service and do not realise their hard work but -it will take them several years after school to finally admit that teachers were on their side to motivate them and to support them (The rector, Rashid Baganee, 2018). The list of problems also reflects gender attitude, a girls often demonstrate their problems by being excessively trendy, undisciplined, refusal to conform with the uniform [tight pants, very short dress, hair colouring, long polished nails], day dreaming, being talkative, arguing with teachers especially the matron, being indifferent, isolated and the refusal to integrate with groups for school activities (section leader, 2018). However, the usher says that the school discipline is under control and students are less aggressive than in public schools because of the family culture attitude that has been established and whenever there is a problem, -it can be solved by using a reminder from the Quran and the hadith but -students' after school life is another thing. It means that the school tries to control students within the school, but after school there are many cases of delinquencies, lack of parental monitoring and synthetic drugs. Professor David P. Farrington's Cambridge University study finds a high correlation between school adjustment problems and later delinquency: "Youths who dislike school and teachers, who do not get involved in school activities, and who are not committed to educational pursuits are more likely than others to engage in delinquent behaviour" (Patrick Fagan, March 1995).

With the new government reform, the policy is to recruit only students with four credits and the in the coming years, all colleges, private and public, will be aligned at the same level of competency and therefore the minimum aggregates will shift to five credits. It appears that such a policy would eliminate the problem of academic performance and teachers would no longer strive to work from scratch. Because the school population has decreased, the quality of students has increased, which it means less stress for educators.

The teaching staff is mainly comprised of an averagely young, dynamic, pro-active and motivated staff, fully qualified with at least a Bachelors degree in their respective subjects and ready to meet new challenges. Some of them possess a P.G.C.E or/and a Masters Degree. The rector is of the opinion that his teaching staff are not conformist teachers in the sense that both men and ladies excel in extra activities and responsibilities that are useful for the school. They count international Islamic translators, writers, Islamic preachers, professional counsellors, social consultantss, university lecturers and artists among their graduates. Hence, the school strategy is such that it has developed into a unique concept with unique features based on a group of teacher-elites. His staff voluntarily participates in the holistic formation of students and some invest their wealth so that various projects can be easily undertaken.

The vision to differentiate itself from all other schools in terms of innovation and far-sightedness is visible as its school culture and its various activities. The school is registered as a co-educational secondary institution where there are two distinctive building blocks that seat boys and girls separately. An Islamic approach was deemed appropriate for the school setting and philosophies. The school accommodates two staff rooms, one for ladies and one for men. Equally, provisions have been made for male and female students in two juxtaposed buildings. Some specialist rooms are shared by both girls and boys at different times. However, educators work with both girls and boys.

The school provides some of the most basic facilities to its students in the form of well-equipped and well-maintained laboratories for Science and Arts students to perform their respective experiments. All of the specialist rooms are "A" -graded by the PSEA. Two Art and Design rooms, Audio visual, Biology, chemistry, physics, two computer

rooms, Design and Technology, Design and Textile, Food lab and library. All are professionally replenished and styled to help students.

The school strives to prepare students for an adult life of productivity, fulfillment and service in a rapidly changing global society by enabling all of its learners to develop high self-esteem, to aspire to personal excellence and to become responsible, self-directed, contributing individuals, through creative teaching and challenging learning experiences, in partnership with the community and other resources. Adolescents are properly guided to bloom into wholesome adults. In an attempt to support students with mental and family disorders, the school seeks help with a psychologist and the *brigade des mineurs* are asked to intervene about various subjects. Other specialists are invited to talk to students about religious issues, job placements etc.

The director, Bashir Taleb believes that there are no children at the school, only adolescents who need proper guidance to bloom into wholesome adults. Since its opening in 2005, the institution has been able to face many challenges which have been turned into opportunities. Baganee has the ability to ‘think differently’ in order to bring the school into a new dimension so that it is beyond competition. He wishes to do so with the close participation of his dynamic team so that the school can turn into one of the most excellent schools in Mauritius. At the ICC Form VI, technology is widely used to set up an active public image of the school and media are regularly used for school publicity. However, internet is not connected to allow teaching staff to work in classroom.

The rector envisions creating specialist rooms for each subject, for example, a specific classroom with all of the amenities for Mathematics and a specific classroom for Islamic classes to inspire students and welcome them in an Islamic setting and environment. The school lays stress on the total development of each learner: spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, emotional and physical. Efforts are conducted to develop in young people with active and creative minds a sense of understanding and compassion for others, and the courage to act on their beliefs. In a nutshell, the school fosters a caring and creative teaching – learning environment.

Though the school does not promote religious understanding and sessions on a regular basis, it nevertheless welcomes religious activities in the month of Ramadan. Ramadan activities are an example of a highly targeted innovative event by the school. The Ramadan event is welcomed by the majority of students and the objective is to make them love Ramadan by either experiencing or by assisting to various programs performed by Islamic Studies students and to other students who want to promote their talents. Ramadan allows all stakeholders to join hands and recreate the Islamic bond. During Ramadan, the school indulges in religious and social activities to promote Islamic values. The Ramadan activity at the ICC is celebrated with great pomp and grandeur. It has been commented by students that Ramadan is a unique phenomenon which is celebrated only at ICC and nowhere else in the world. Such culture is highly appreciated by students because it allows them to express their enthusiasm, to show what they know as Muslims and how they can demonstrate their Muslimness. This auspicious event is seen by stakeholders as a time of discovery where new and hidden talents are revealed; thereby allowing students to put into practice what they have previously studied in class. Activities are not limited to recitation of the Quran as is often the case in other institutions; rather it is used as an innovative and transformational education target. The objective is to use every opportunity to help students show their talents. Students from the Art & Design department draw and paint pictures as well as calligraphy work. Students of design and textiles decorate classrooms by sewing curtains and other decorative materials for the event. Students from the Food studies department help to cook food for the poor and the needy. They are assisted by other interested parties.

Additionally, the school yard is transformed with decorated posters; the walls are filled with students' quotes; the date tree is selected to represent the *Ramadan* tree and is decorated with stars, moons and various artifacts as well as Islamic quotes. Daily activities are also operational where students voluntarily read verses of the Quran in front of the school crowd. The whole staff join together to complete the recitation of the *Qur'ān* known as the *khatmul Qur'ān*. Competitions are organised for the best reciter of the *Qur'ān*. This is open to both genders and international jurists are present on that day. The *ādhān* competition is another great moment where a panel of jurists is

selected to choose the best *ādhān* reciter. Prizes are offered to students as well as gifts and certificates. The *Hijāb* Awareness Day is an occasion where those who do not normally wear the hijab are invited to do so. Calligraphy Day is an opportunity for students to write down the names of their teachers in Arabic calligraphy. Some students are dressed as Arabs wearing the *thawb* and the *amāmah* (trust) to offer Islamic books, bookmarks and *Qur'ān* to the rest of students. This event is known as the Sheikh Day. The intention behind all of these events is to maintain a balance between academic and religious work, to remind each individual at the ICC of their covenant with the Creator Allah. During the last ten days of Ramadan, the extra school activity comprises of an *Iftār* (breaking of the fast of *Ramaḍān*) gathering which is held on a Sunday. Parents, neighbours, staff and students are all invited to prepare the pastries and *Iftār* packs and to collectively break the fast. Consequently, such an event has the objective to involve parents as a means of future partnership and to create a special bond among all the stakeholders. One Islamic teacher says that these events are important because the brotherhood and sisterhood of Muslims are re-created in order to uphold Muslim revivals. She explains that many Muslims think of *Ramaḍān* as a traditional event and some are not interested in fasting anymore while some others continue to fast even though they feel like their actions are meaningless.

Furthermore, students from Islamic classes have the opportunity to visit orphanages as well as elderly homes and stay in their companies for one two hours in order to cheer them up and make their hearts happy. Students prepare cards to decorate the rooms of the elderly. At the same time, donations are collected for them. Another important aspect is *Open Our Arms*, which is a social activity and part of the school's goal. The aim is to help the poor and the needy on a monthly basis, especially during *Ramaḍān* and *ʿĪd* (Islamic Festival). During *Ramaḍān*, close monitoring of the donations received from the staff and any interested members of the Muslim community are done. Several members of the staff are involved in the committee. Food is prepared at school and students, who are during their free periods, join hands to pack the foodstuff and accompany the members of the staff during their visits.

The rector, Baganee is convinced that these unifying moments are special for the present and future of all students. He believes that *Ramaḍān* has to be special in the hearts and minds of everyone. Since people learn through imitation, the best form of teaching is to allow students to perform and to learn from their mates. Another objective of which is to bring awareness and to create a sense of care for the society and humanity at large and this in turn may bring life-time memories in their minds and hearts. As a rector, his view on the activity is to revive education in its entirety, a concept which has long disappeared in many schools. He believes that teenagers should not only concentrate on the scoring of high marks but they should also learn to become respectful adults. Apart from the highlights of Ramadan, it is usual for the school to prepare seminars and summer escapes for girls during the summer holidays. There is a willingness to bring fun, relaxation, memories and career awareness to the minds of female students in views of dissipating poverty in the community. Baganee believes that Muslim girls should have the ability to think widely and relevantly. He is of the opinion that extracurricular activities have boosted the intellectual maturity of many students. Such participation helps in the development of the teen's communication skills and help to excel the best from them. He believes that students have great talents buried inside them. What is most often needed is a chance or an opportunity to dig out these talents. Baganee is inspired by the transformational leadership skills and promises that any student, who sincerely wants to develop their intellectual as well as personal abilities, will be given the opportunity to do so. Sustainability projects aimed at both religious and academic achievement are being implemented. The idea is to enhance the life of these students who need moral, spiritual and academic support. Another pilot project has been launched to provide early school comers with tea and bread as breakfast. Additionally, his wish is to bring students to the next level of maturity. Since the school trends towards homogeneity with students and teachers sharing almost the same culture, religion and ethnicity, it is easier for educators to understand the ummah concept [community concept] and to establish rapport with them. Taleb believes that non-transferable teachers are a unique asset to the school. This is not the case with public schools. Permanence is a huge advantage because teachers are devoted, dedicated and committed to both their jobs and pupils. The family

relationship is enhanced due to a well dedicated team of professionals, all regrouped under one umbrella as a closely-knit family.

ICCVDP is the only institution that does not provide moral values and any religious classes. Some teachers take it upon themselves to advise students and to teach them moral ethics. Arabic and/or Urdu are also taught to sensitise students about cultural languages and the ability to read the *Qur'ān* in Arabic.

Taleb maintains that the school has its own culture which he refers to as 'Islamic culture'. By this, Taleb assumes that the management always maintains a balance between academic, religious and social aspects. This aspect is echoed by Baganee, who gave the example of noon prayer. He says that everybody is invited to perform *ṣalāt-ul-ẓuhr* [noon prayer] every day during their recess time and read the *Qur'ān* but no one is forced to do it. As well, there is no specific school of thought advocated by the management. He believes that the school has opened its door to every Muslim irrespective of their schools of thought and their religious affiliations. However, he explains that '*aqīdah*' (Islamic beliefs) should not be made an issue, especially in the school context, because the objective is to collaborate for the students' welfare. Nevertheless, it appears that the school has two Islamic cultures which are highly influenced by the student population and the staff. Some of them are motivated by the Indian culture while others are motivated by the Saudi Arabian culture.

One of the most important aspects highlighted by Baganee is the special relationship that is created. Since students come to the ICC for a period of two years, there is a special motivation to integrate them into the ICC family. They come as strangers and they leave with enriched values, love and support. -After two years a positive change can be noticed in students. We have some upcoming activities for the near future and we are working enthusiastically to bring more students to our schools and we are confident about it. As I said, we have powerful, devoted and enthusiastic human resources and this is one of our strengths.

The school *masjid* has been built to serve all stakeholders and it houses both genders. Since there are male attendees at the school, girls [Muslims and non-Muslims] are

commanded to abide to the uniform policy which consists of a blouse, a dress and leggings to show respect and decency. Girls should avoid keeping private company with boys to keep temptation at bay which is conducive to learning and to the cultural environment of Muslims. Some male students take it upon themselves to recite the azhan, to lead the noon prayer in congregation. Some female students voluntarily join in.

The ICC highly regards the notion that it is more important for the individual to be engaged in competition with oneself first, then with others. The policy is to diligently live up to the highest goals; to envision the best for oneself, while remaining informed of national, regional and global standards and staying within the bounds dictated by ethics and morality. This value is reflected in the institutional policies and practices and integrated in the lives of learners whose success at self-fulfillment have always been celebrated by the school. The ICC promotes a culture of service among those who work and study in its midst, not only for their own advancement but also for the benefit of society at large, especially for the less privileged members of the community. The staff endeavours to assist those who are ready to help themselves in order to build a more humane, just and sustainable world.

As a Grade 12/13 college, the school has the responsibility to ensure a smooth transition for students from secondary education to the tertiary level. Provision has been made to live up to this mission at all levels. At the pedagogical level, educators attempt to use teaching methods that instigate students to become independent learners. Research work, presentation in front of peers and project-based assignments are integrated in the knowledge transmission process. This is confirmed by Anand D. Awootar, Chairperson, Education Commission (2018) -Real learning takes place when the process of education is engaging, exploring and explaining, and makes room for valorisation of multiple competencies – literacy, numeracy, mastery over basic skills, music, drawing, communication skills, sports, social and emotional development as well as student motivation for learning and progress. ||

At the administrative level, management of student behaviour focuses on communication and introspection. An attempt is always made to lead youngsters to

understand their own motives and encourage them to reflect on the quality of their decisions. Hence, positive behaviour is prioritised. Hence, the researchers argue that the ICC Form VI has been able to take up the challenge of transforming the educational background into an innovative futuristic one. Hence, the ICCVDP's strength and motivation is based on the transformational education and the treatment of students as young adults.

However, there are several issues that have been mentioned by the participative educators as well as students that reflect a negative culture in the school. Students are allowed to use their mobile phones at school during break and recess time. However, the use of mobile phones are not limited to such purposes and during classes, students answer phone calls and pretend to go to the toilet in order to send messages and to make calls. They use the internet for WhatsApp, Facebook and other things during school hours. Disciplinary measures are poor and this leads to a chaotic situation where law and order is compromised. Many teaching and non-teaching members use their mobile phone during working hours to chat. Some teachers leave the classroom in order to chat on their mobile phones.

The school does not provide clear-cut rules and regulations for the staff and the pupils. For one educator, the school is heading towards a 'no culture' because there is too much freedom and the *laissez faire* attitude is detrimental to both the school and the students. In her opinion, teenagers are unable to differentiate between right and wrong and when they are left to themselves to decide, they may make the wrong decision. She believes that it is the role of adults to accompany students, but in many cases staff members do not act as role models; the non-teaching staff is either too young or too immature to perform their jobs seriously. All of these together create a negative environment and a lack of true collaboration among adults. She claims that those who are less motivated tend to focus only on the curriculum while those who are ambitious remain focused on learning. Another educator claims that students do not come to school to become better people because the school has forgotten its initial objective. Those who are already religiously literate come to school with the same mindset and

those who lack religious awareness leave school with the same weakness. Only a few teachers are voluntarily involved in the religious education of students.

In short, problems of indiscipline such as inappropriate school uniform, improper body language and communication, excessive use of mobile phones, flirting, mild cases of disobedience to teachers and mild cases of bullying are caused by the *laissez-faire* attitude of some teachers and the administration.

Another fact is that academic progress is also linked with funding. The government subsidy granted to the school is never enough to undertake various activities. Students who have project work often do not have the means to present quality work due to financial drawbacks. To address these issues, teachers and students prepare food and sell them to other students in a way of obtaining funds for their school projects. It has been found that many students do not own a computer, and if their parents do own a computer, they may be forbidden to use it for research work. Students know how to use social media such as *Instagram* and *Facebook* but they do not know how to use the internet for research work and they depend mostly upon teachers to provide them with notes. With all of the facilities provided to students, only a small group shows interest in them and take the opportunity to change, adjust and move ahead.

## **5.8 ANALYSIS OF THE FIVE SCHOOLS**

Arthur (1993) underlines that Islamic texts such as the *Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth* are vitally significant to the Islamic tradition. These two sources have become a major factor that creates cultural unity.

Islamic education has a deep imprint on students, firstly because students are religiously and/or culturally Muslims. They have been born and raised up in a Muslim environment and it appears that they like to evolve within a homogeneous community. Islamic education takes various forms: academic, cultural, social and religious. Such forms are conveyed to students verbally, in actions as well as a set of intangible ways known as the hidden curriculum. Both the tangible and the intangible ways of delivering education have a serious impact on the students as well as the public image of the school and finally their image at the national level. It stands that a large majority of

Muslims do not choose Islamic schools and those who are admitted to these schools do not fully benefit from Islamic education.

Aspects such as discipline, punctuality, noble use of languages, communication skills, interactions among peers and adults, respect and gratitude to teachers, community services, mosques, prayers, fasting during the month of Ramadan etc, are highly held among the themes of Islamic education. Islamic education forms part of the school culture and it comprises of the quality of teachers, their attitudes towards Islamic education, their knowledge and skills, the pedagogy used to teach Islam and so forth.

DUM and Doha are considered faith schools since they have integrated curricula based on religious aspects in view of shaping students' character and understanding of Islam. Both schools share the culture of Saudi Arabia. Both share many similarities in terms of discipline, religious insights, visions and school climate. Both schools show strict discipline in terms of social networks like *Facebook* and *Instagram*. Children are required to hold a personal copy book about their religious progression. Their aim in engaging students in such activities is to \_induct' them into the religious practice of their faiths and at the same time these activities provide an opportunity to discuss and share values.

Religious cultural activities are demonstrated daily in the morning assembly. In many schools, the first chapter of the Quran known as *Surah Fatiha* is recited in English followed by some supplications. Nevertheless, the pedagogy remains void because students talk during prayer time and are not able to understand the benefits and welfare of religious talks and prayers.

The hidden curriculum may be seen as part of the educational pathways. It is expressed by the teachers' personalities, their cultural and academic backgrounds as well as their religious inclinations and personal development. In class, teachers are the commanders of their classrooms. They command students and guide them in specific fields of studies as well as in attitudes, behaviour and construction of the self.

Another factor that is common in all Islamic schools to varying degrees is a brotherhood approach and respect towards elders. Mutual support is rather common among

students and adults. This can be explained by the fact that religion and culture create a sense of belonging. Another factor is that there is a tendency to recruit ex-students as part of the staff; husbands and wives or family members work in the schools and this creates a rather peculiar mood and school culture. Next is the culture of students, which perpetuates itself from parents to children. While the 'big' family meets after school hours at places such as mosques for afternoon or evening prayers, they also meet for other activities such as sports, celebrations and other events. Eating together as well as the sharing of food is part of the Islamic culture.

Hence the objective of Islamic schools is built on a specific culture in view of educating the Muslim citizens. In order to attain such goals, focus is maintained on the religious and socio-cultural realities of Muslim students and their immediate environments. While all schools are trying their best to overcome various reforms in the educational curriculum and policies, there are also other important challenges that these schools face. Findings show that there is a wish to develop aptitudes and increase pass rates but the problems of these students are much more ingrained in their socio-cultural and religious understanding and their applications in their daily lives.

To the exception of Madad Ul Islam, whose student population counts a substantial number of Christians, all of the other schools have either a 100% Muslim population or an insignificant number of non-Muslims. Findings show that most of these students live in disruptive areas where parents are religiously illiterate, academically weak, socially disturbed and financially poor or needy. Many parents live in high poverty and are single parenting as they strive to earn a living. Children are often left to themselves and girls have dreams of a happy marriage that can change their situations. Many parents encourage their daughters to marry early. However, neither the school nor the curriculum suits the needs of such category of students who are struggling in their daily lives. In order to meet the present and tomorrow's challenges, measures should be taken in a clear-cut manner. However, as of now, despite many efforts from policy makers, there has been no clear decision about how to educate the students of tomorrow.

The system of mixed abilities at the Islamic secondary school creates another complexity. Low, average and high performers follow the same curriculum within the same time frame to complete the syllabus. It obligates educators to focus on banking knowledge in order to meet their deadlines. In the process, the students focus only on the material and do not understand how such knowledge can benefit them in the future. Secondly, the syllabus is academic and there is hardly any relationship between learning instruments and after school lives. Since the culture of female students is based on early marriage, no courses are offered to support them. The internet and the media have become the main source of knowledge and entertainment but schools have opted either to forbid students to use them or to let them free. In one institution, the use of mobile phones is permissible and students use the mobile phones for other purposes even during school hours. -Younger teenagers' healthy mobile phone habits became more problematic as they advanced through high school (Elle Hunt, May 2017).

### **5.8.1 SCHOOL CULTURES**

In a 1915 book titled -Schools of Tomorrow, the educator John Dewey complained that the conventional public school -is arranged to make things easy for the teacher who wishes quick and tangible results.¶<sup>1</sup> Rather than fostering personal growth, he argued, -the ordinary school impresse[s] the little one into a narrow area, into a melancholy silence, into a forced attitude of mind and body.¶ With this in mind, the researchers intend to analysis several cultures and sub-cultures that are predominant in these institutions.

In regards to the needs and requirements of students, should be noted that there are no clear guidelines about their needs and rights. In many institutions, there are no well-defined rules that can guide teachers in their conducts, attitudes, manners, dress codes and teaching habits. Teachers follow the national syllabus to guide students and use past papers to prepare them for the final examinations. For many years, students have been used to these methods and thus they do not question them. As explained by some teachers, -it is only when they want to introduce some new pedagogies that they are confronted with difficulties because the rectors do not understand what is good and what is bad.¶ Put simply, the old methods of getting students through the exams are

applied since it has worked many years without questioning its effectiveness in terms of holistic development. At the same time, the priority of rectors is the percentage of pass rates. In clear definitions, when the school has a high pass rate, with students being ranked after laureates, they are very satisfied because it increases the public image of the school and the admission of students to their schools.

### **5.8.2 Religious And Social Engagement**

Religion is an institution in itself that permeates the Mauritian society. One religion may have various ways of celebrations and understanding. This is the case with the five schools where religion is integrated within the school syllabus and/or as a hidden curriculum.

The islamicate is visible through ladies' dress code such as *churidhars*, *kurtees* and *jilbabs* as well as a modern style resembling the European style of Islamic dresses, *mehendi* application and *mehendi* nail decoration. The habit of using either Arabic words or Urdu as insertions to the Creole language is also visible such as *namaz*, *qasidah*, *fatihah*, *Khuda hafiz*, etc.

There is also the fact that the grand majority of students are identified as Muslims, and it remains that many of them are cultural Muslims because they do not attach importance to religious beliefs and its practices. For many, the wearing of *hijab* is religious and for others it is a cultural practice. Religious culture is broadly divided between those who merge the Indian practices and those who practise Islam based on the Saudi Arabian culture.

It appears that religion has been affected by social change due to changes in habits and the wide use of internet. However, there are some clear demarcations between schools that are referred to Cultural Islamic and those schools which are classified as faith schools. While both categories aim at offering a Muslim cultural environment to their pupils, faith schools are more inclined towards religious studies in the form of Qur'anic recitation, its understanding and application in their day-to-day life. Clear injunctions for all staff and students are visible in their dress codes, their attitudes and manners as well as their advice to students. Schools that support religious integrative subjects have

demonstrated a continuous effort in their application and this is reflected in students' behaviour and awareness.

Despite the fact that all schools have Islamic infrastructures that support prayer rooms or mosques in order to cater for the religious needs of students and staff, the approach to religious practices vary. In some cases, prayer is imposed upon both students and the staff, and in other institutions the onus is on the students and staff to pray or not to pray. Good conduct is not always emphasised by the rectors, and the rectors of many institutions complain about the abuse of some members of the staff in terms of conduct, lateness and lack of professionalism.

All schools are engaged in social work. The *ummah* [community] concept is more deeply felt in some institutions than others, though the idea of togetherness is ever present in speeches and celebrations. Opportunities are sought to create awareness among students so that they can follow the precepts of their predecessors. Visits to orphanages and to disruptive areas are encouraged, especially during Ramadan.

### **5.8.3 Socio-Cultural And Spiritual Awareness**

Schools are environmentally inspired by the cultural Islamic background. In all institutions, there are artifacts that describe the school culture. Socio-cultural awareness takes the form of eating habits. Despite the repetitive warnings that some foods should not be sold on school premises or that some foods are responsible for various diseases and sicknesses, findings show that these foodstuffs are available at the canteen to cater for the demands of students and adults. The famous *'gateau de l'huile'* [oily cake] such as the *tikka poulet*, *samoussas* and *gateau piment* are eaten on a daily basis and at least twice a day. In some institutions, the *biryani*, the *halim* and fried rice are sold alternatively once a week. There is a correlation between food and Islamic awareness. In the researcher's book titled, *'La Sagesse Alimentaire'*, the author claims that food has an impact on academic and spiritual health. She claims that the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah* have mentioned the benefits of healthy food so that mankind can be free from worries and avoid many fatigues and sicknesses thus resulting in a healthier, more clear-headed and more productive human being. She states that Muslims should follow the *Sunnah* in terms of cooking and eating habits (Ammaara Uddeen, 2003, p.11).

Simply said, eating habits form part of Islamic education. Besides which, such habits create many health problems. One of them is anaemia, as many students, especially girls, suffer from it and thus are unable to concentrate in class and suffer from various symptoms. Even though *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* provide important guidance toward health promotion, much of these insights and such knowledge seem hardly applied (Leeuw & Hussein, 1999, p.350).

Cultural barriers also pose problems to learning languages such as English and French. Students are entrenched in speaking Creole and there is a refusal to speak English and especially French, which is not practised by the majority of students in all schools. One of the reasons is that educators do not promote French as an academic language, but rather French is seen as the language of the Franco-Mauritians.

Muslims act as one homogeneous community even though their cultural lives are mainly connected with their ancestral traditions and customs as well as their religious sub-groups such as *Sunnat-e-jamaat*, *Tabligh jamaat*, *tawhid*, *salafi* and *shia-e-Ali*. However, the visible population of non-Muslims in one institution, especially Christians, is affecting the socio-cultural trend of the school.

Spirituality is not often understood by teenagers because they are brought up in a materialistic and secular world (Cehl Meeah, 2018). Laura Jones (2005), a health and wellness teacher, claims that the state of mind is responsible for all human behaviours, decisions, and relationships. She affirms that: -The underpinnings of being that we tend to call -spiritualll- our most authentic relationships to self, others, the universe, and the transcendent - influence our personal health on all levels - and, domino-like, the health of our communities, our nations, and the world, as we interact with others and with the planetll. Thus it can be argued that in the absence of spirituality at school, students are left to their negative emotions, despair and frustration and the inability to know their true selves.

#### **5.8.4 Language Written And Spoken**

At school, all Muslims share two languages in common: Arabic and Creole. Arabic is unanimously known to be the language per excellence because it represents the

language of the *Qur'ān* and Muslims believe that Arabic is the language of the people of paradise. Their attachment to the Arabic language is emotional as well as religious. Though Arabic is taught in all schools, its importance is prioritised at the DUM and Doha in an attempt to motivate all students to learn Arabic, to speak it, to understand it and to participate in Arabic competitions. Thus, Arabic is used as a means to understand the Qur'anic literature.

Creole can be considered the unifying language as it unites all Muslims irrespective of their socio-cultural and religious group appurtenances. Creole is excessively used in activities, celebrations, interactions and conversation. In many cases, teachers make use of Creole in classrooms and for classroom instructions. Students speak Creole among themselves and with teachers to formulate answers during classroom interactions. In a few cases, English and French are used during staff meetings and interactions between teaching staff and the rector. However, all written documents are in English. French can be seen as a foreign language to the majority of students and staff members who prefer English over French. There is a category of educators who are neither conversant with any of these two languages and lessons are conducted in Creole. The outcome is that many Islamic students are weak at essay writing and they fail their exams due to the inability to write correct English, which is the medium of instruction at Cambridge. In doing so, Muslims are marginalised in the society and one of the reasons for homogeneity preference is the embarrassment of communication barriers. For Hollup (2004), -The complex language situation in Mauritius with English as the official language, French as a language more widely used in the media and among the resident white elite, and the teaching of several Asian languages is often held as responsible for the differences in achievement in schools. Mahadeo has a different version on the matter. His claim is that he suspects a -hidden agenda' to push for the introduction of Creole as a medium in government schools so as to promote French-medium schools in the private sector. -There will be a huge demand for both English-medium and French-medium education if the Ministry succumbs to the demands of the so-called 'language activists' (Mauritius Times, citing Satish Mahadeo, 2010).

It appears that being refractory to change and advancement is contrary to the essence of Islamic education. Restricting the ability of students to one to two languages while they have the ability to learn more, especially in a multi-cultural society, appears contradictory to what Muslim ancestors have been able to achieve. -Ignorance may, in various situations, mask itself with a veil; in many such cases, the veil was disguised as religion and that is where the danger lies. (Ali Ahmad Al Rabai, 2014). -The ability to communicate effectively is necessary to carry out thoughts and visions to people (Syed Kazim, April 2013). -Ignorance that is disguising itself behind the mask of Religion, Faith, Identity, Nationalism and Patriotism is what causes all pains to language teachers, language learners and the nations world-wide (Ali Ahmad Al Rabai, 2014).

Specifically, in two schools, some students who come from disruptive areas have taken control of their classrooms. They are unruly and aggressive. According to the participative educators, these students have not been used to discipline and parental guidance and due to the fact that there is no law concerning teachers' rights, the latter are abused by such children. There is a correlation between the reality of some students and the reality of some staff members. Since some staff members were previous students of the same institutions and the fact that they come from the same disruptive environment have moulded them into the same frame of mind and attitudes. It can be argued that the strong emphasis of Creole has created a second class citizen based on the fact that private paid schools are motivating their students to learn both English and French and to speak them. -The better off a person status and finance, the better his opportunity would be to join some private and advanced schools where English language is emphasised. This has also been directly related to the parents' education level, the income, the neighbourhood and the communicative social needs. (Ali Ahmad Al Rabai, 2014).

### **5.9.5 Other Challenges**

- (1) Most of the teachers interviewed claim that the negative culture is related to foul languages that have become a trend among young people. They believe that such misuse of words is not inclusive of the Muslim community, but rather that it has become part of the Mauritian culture to swear, to use foul words and to exhibit vulgar attitudes. Some teachers claim that French has become a disparate language among the majority of students and teachers because both adults and students are refractory to learning French.
- (2) In almost all Islamic schools, the school classes and yard does not reflect cleanliness either because the attendants do not pay enough attention to cleaning or because students throw their litter everywhere. After break and recess time, the classroom and the yard are filled with rubbish. This demonstrates a lack of Islamic awareness related to cleanliness, discipline and manners.

In Mauritius, culture and religion are inextricably linked (Alber, 1990:5-32). -Religion as cultural identity is believed to remain and persist. Although modernisation or development is associated with secularisation, current trends suggest religion is still framing the cultural contextll (Mohd Khairie Ahmad & John Harrison, n.d). Based on the functionalist approach, both culture and religion have the ability to unite like-minded people. Based on the concept of functionalism, the research shows that some institutions are dysfunctional in regards to the holistic development of young Muslims whose mindset may be considered as too narrowed and many of them present various symptoms of illiteracy.

### **5.9 CONCLUSION**

Education is important for all citizens and the government subsidises private schools, which also invest money for the welfare of students. Islamic education significantly promotes academic achievement and drives to the holistic development of students. In fact, any factor that constructs young people and protects them from social perversion is important to the common good as long as such factors do not go against their religious and cultural identities.

Despite the fact that all of the participative schools share many cultural and religious similarities, in terms of school culture, there are visible and tangible differences that add to the functionality or dysfunctionality of these schools. Some of the schools have set high motivations for the academic and religious endeavours of their students, some have set its religious goals as the highest station followed by its academic performances, and another has struck a balance between academic and school activities while two of them are striving to uplift students to pass their exams at the School Certificate level. To this effect, Jahangeer and Jahangeer (2004) claim that some schools are classified as ‘star schools’ and others are regarded as ‘low-performing schools’; both researchers believe that such classifications play a definitive role in the development of the adolescents who very often tend to identify themselves with the image of the college. This aspect will be dealt with in the chapter titled ‘Findings’, when looking at the various schools and the future motivations of students as well as their self-image in the various Islamic institutions. For Jahangeer and Jahangeer (2004), the culture of a school is very often a crucial factor in determining its effectiveness. The next chapter will show the results.

### Footnotes

- (1) To strive for wealth is known as *-fi sabil Allah bi-l-amall* and to strive for one’s self is known as *-jihad-un-nafsil*. Several verses aim at these. *-And Those Who strive For us - We Will Surely Guide Them To our ways. And, Indeed, Allah Is with the Doers of Good [Al-Ankaboot: 69].*
- (2) Quran chapter 51 verse 56
- (3) ....<sup>3</sup>
- (4) The *Qur’ān* says: *Are they equal those who know and those who do not know?* (39:9)
- (5) RIPHAH international university, Islamabad is a private University, chartered by the Federal Government of Pakistan in 2002. The University was established with a view to produce professionals with Islamic moral and ethical values. It is sponsored by a not-for-profit trust; namely Islamic International Medical College Trust (IIMCT), created in 1995, <https://www.riphah.edu.pk/>
- (6) ICAC film competition [O] Available at:

(7) <https://youtu.be/r6SbtkSiPbo> Accessed: 25/06/2018

(8) The first laureate at Doha, the niece of the manager of Doha.  
<https://youtu.be/J1QAp7EaBoE>

**Laureate:** a student who has been competing for the Cambridge Higher School Certificate and has been honoured with an award for outstanding intellectual achievement.

## **CHAPTER 6 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter shows the results of the study. In particular it answers the research questions and the various issues related to them. Results show that the two types of Islamic Secondary Schools, notably (1) Parochial schools and (2) Cultural schools do not share the same objectives in regards to Islamic education and the holistic development of teenagers. As a matter of fact, their school cultures differ considerably from one another. Based on the functionalist view point, there are dysfunctions at various levels of education and these will be further explained.

### **6.2 BACKGROUND**

Muslims tend to regard Islam as a holistic program aimed at bringing peace for individuals and society. Religion is also used as a means to protect students from falling easy prey to drugs, tobacco, sexual promiscuity and so forth. "For at-risk youth, religious practice reduces socially deviant behaviour" (Richard B. Freeman, 1985). Therefore, religion acts as a barrier to social evil and is a motivation to stay within the limits of societal norms such as good manners, generosity, togetherness, brotherhood and sisterhood, love etc. Thus, religion is seen to help society, via education, to function effectively. For Functionalist Durkheim (1912), "Religion performs the key function of providing social solidarity within a society. The rituals, the worship of icons, and the belief in supernatural beings "excite, maintain or recreate certain mental states" thus bringing people together and unifying them. Such an idea is recurrent in the functionalist perspective as it is based on the necessary function that religion serves the society, which is to unify it rather than divide it. However, findings show that religion *per se* does not always help young people to become better but it requires religious principles, rigorous reminders, mentorship and a supportive environment among other things. Religious schools play a crucial part in providing such a framework.

Having noted the theoretical background, the findings and analysis of the results follows.

### 6.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to demonstrate the results uncovered during research, the research questions will be taken one by one.

- (5) How does Islamic education impact on the holistic achievements of students such as the construction of the self, the ability to integrate the society without jeopardising their Islamic values and identities and finally the ability to be a functional Muslim in the socio-economic context?

Patrick F. Fagan, PHD. (September 2010), outlines that the effects of religious practice have been extended to the areas of health, overcoming addictions, reducing crime and reforming criminals. Fagan insists that "one of the most important potential effects of religious practice is educational attainment". In his opinion, education is a -powerful tool to raise individuals out of poverty. Poverty can be extended to mean both internal and external poverty. Al Attas speaks about the internal dilemma as being the loss of *adab*. He refers to the discipline of body, mind, and soul that assures the recognition and acknowledgement of one's proper place in relation to one's self, society and Community. (Sayyid Naquib Al Attas, n.d). Indeed, such poverty can have dire consequences on the lives of students, as shall be seen later. It is within such a functional approach to religious beliefs and practices, as proposed by Fagan amongst others, that the researchers intend to look at the performances of Islamic schools.

Before proceeding with the above question, it is important to mention that among the subjects which are unanimously used to promote Islamic education, are Islamic Studies and Arabic language. However, both subjects are run in conformity with the national syllabus and time frame which is jointly set by the Cambridge Examination board and the Mauritius Examination Syndicate. [A copy of the syllabus Paper II is found in the appendix].

In general, Islamic Studies are run as an academic subject with an exam-oriented purpose. This has been argued by Majwer, who states that -the role of Islamic Education Curriculum is restricted to an emphasis on passing on the information of the

text book to the students, who in turn memorise it in order to pass their exams, without any attention being given to the benefit that may arise from itll (Majwer 1984, p. 33).

Since Islamic Studies are not offered at the University of Mauritius, most of the Mauritian educators are graduates from South Africa, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia among others. Referring to the graduates from UNISA, Belall Maudarbux (n.d) claims that -generally, their level of English is satisfactory and they are good up to Grade eleven School Certificate level, at blindly following every letter of the syllabus and producing uniform essay-type answers, which all their students regurgitate during the exams". Since there are no textbooks for Grade 12 and 13, teachers are not able to handle the syllabus properly. Maudarbux adds that -each one tries to come up with erratic explanation due to the fact that there has not been any training or staff development program prior to teachingll (The Urgency of Revamping the 'Islamic Studies' Syllabuses, n.d).

The problem of the absence of textbooks has been confirmed by Islamic teachers, who claim that policy makers have not delved into the matter since the introduction of Islamic Studies and the precarious situation still prevails to the disadvantage of students and mentors. Besides which, the curriculum is said to be stagnant since it has not changed for several years and its content does not suit the needs of contemporary students. Al-Shafee argues that Islamic education is not like any other subject because its aim is to generate changes in all aspects of the student's personality. He maintains that other social institutions like the mass media must play their role in accomplishing these aims (Al-Shafee, 1984. p. 52). Teachers of Islamic Studies complain that the curriculum does not allow them to develop their own intellectual potential and does not excite them to research more. This aspect has been commented upon by an international participant concerning the curriculum of Islamic education: -The education system is a social institution. It would be more surprising, not to say disturbing if the education system were to stand still while all else changed (Kelly 1989, p. 1).

In cultural schools, Arabic is generally taught as an exam-oriented subject and does not intend to promote religious beliefs in comparison to parochial schools where Arabic is

given primary importance aimed at both academic and religious attainments. Findings demonstrate that in various institutions, both Arabic and Islamic Studies are taught by teachers who are not necessarily trained in teen development and religious inclinations, and some of them take their post without prior teaching experiences. Findings show that teachers of Islamic Studies share two different views about the curriculum of Islamic Studies. One view claims that the syllabus does not prepare students for their holistic development as well as their holistic needs. Because of the fact that the time frame is limited, teachers claim that they have to focus on the syllabus. One teacher states that it is frustrating to work on the same syllabus for many years and to teach students things that are of no interest to students.

Various chapters that form part of the Higher School Certificate [Paper II] are foreign to students, and despite various efforts made during classroom explanations, teachers say that students are not interested in various topics and every year, students complain over the same matters as well as the workload. Many students, especially those who are academically slow, are discouraged and stressed. Apart from Islamic Studies, they have to concentrate on other subjects which each contain large amounts of content. When students have to submit project work in other subjects, they often neglect their studies in Islamic education and they may ask permission to unattend Islamic education classes to focus on more secular academic modules.

However, some teachers agree that aspects of the syllabus such as the pillars of Islam, the articles of faith and the explanation of the Quran are essential to guide teenagers towards the fundamentals of Islam. Proponents of such views believe that the syllabus provides many alternatives for teachers as well as students in the sense that it opens the door to various scenarios, discussions, and interactions. One teacher says that the allocation of time is very important because a proper pedagogy has to be established. She believes that it is a waste of time and resources to commit students within the classroom area and to ask them to copy notes throughout the year. "Establishing rapport is very important", she says and "children can freely ask questions of interest when they feel they are understood and loved". She believes that Islamic Studies can develop teenagers into their holistic roles at the personal and community level as well

as in society. Thus, her claim is in relation to what Jean Delors suggests to be the four pillars of education: (1) learning to know, (2) learning to do, (3) learning to be and (4) learning to live together. She further claims that rectors should be more comprehensive and should allow students to make visits at least once every semester. Since contemporary Mauritius does not in any way resemble the places of the companions of the Prophet and the more rustic past, students should be able to visit public gardens such as the Pamplémousses garden, which is found in the district of Pamplémousses in the north of Mauritius, in order to spend time in nature surrounded with trees and flowers; being among birds and animals in a silent setting so that they may at least understand the tranquillity of the desert, the meditation of the companions of the Prophet, etc. She demonstrates the creativity in learning Islamic Studies through various situations but has to accept that the time frame is limited, especially for A level students who often learn essays by heart because such topics are irrelevant to their contemporary needs and challenges. For Gilroy, "a teaching style which concentrates upon passing knowledge to learners as a finished product runs the risk of learners not accepting that knowledge because they cannot see its relevance to them" (Gilroy 1996, p. 3).

As for the Arabic language, students of Grade 11, 12 and 13 complain that the syllabus is uninteresting and bulky. It only targets the cognitive aspect of the child and in many cases students do not have the opportunity to develop their oral communication skills. Students from lower to upper classes claim that they do not have the opportunity to evolve within an Arabic environment and it is difficult for them to master the Arabic language. However, some of them are motivated to learn because they are convinced that Arabic is the language of the *Qur'ān* and some have the intention to further their studies in Arabic countries.

Results show that the basic knowledge of Islam is fundamental and determinant in the lives of young Muslims. Despite the fact that faith schools put more emphasis on theoretical knowledge rather than hands-on activities and interactions with people, results show that faith schools can better guide students towards religious awareness due to their integrative syllabus, the enforcement of regular prayer, the discipline and

the school environment as well as the human resources that are deployed to help and motivate students. Mark Regnerus (2008) found that -youth religious affiliation in combination with religious families and friends serves to integrate youth into the broader society and shapes their aspirations for education and achievement and he suggests that religious affiliation had more of an impact on educational attainment for African-Americans residing in a high-risk neighbourhood, even when controlling for family structure, although its effect was strongest for youths living in two-parent families (Diane Brown and Lawrence Gary, 1991).

In order to better understand the various situations, each school will now be analysed separately.

### **6.3.1 ISLAMIC CULTURAL COLLEGE FORM VI**

Islamic Studies and Arabic are not compulsory subjects. Students who opt for Islamic Studies have the choice to either add Arabic or to drop it. Very few students take Arabic and it may happen that in an academic year, there may be no candidates for Arabic classes. The Arabic-Islamic department is composed of five educators and though the syllabus is exam-oriented, freedom is given to use innovative tools as well as innovative ideas to motivate students into loving the subject and to bring awareness towards Islamic practices. Despite the fact that traditional methods are ever present, such as heavy note taking, some teachers try to offer life advice to students and guide them towards Islamic understanding. One teacher says that students better understand when they are confronted with real-life situations. Findings show that various methods have been used to demonstrate the above. For instance, the topic of brotherhood and sisterhood is demonstrated by a "thank you jar." Students design their own stickers [such as a heart] and cards and write a word of thanks to their teachers. All the cards are placed in a jar as well as sweets or chocolates and during the Islamic period, all students gather to meet their teachers individually. The rector says that "these moments are memorable both for the teachers and the students and they are powerful ways to express their gratitude." At times, students come to the front of the class individually to express their feelings about what Islamic information was useful for them and why. Students are also offered the opportunity to create their own project such as "hijab day."

Outings are sometimes organised to visit mosques, to pray at the mosque and to visit an orphanage or meet elders; students also eat together at restaurants and go on beach outings. However, visits may happen only once in a year including the above places.

In some teachers' opinions, the pedagogical approach is important as well as the rapport that is established between the learners and the teacher. Topics such as the pillars of Islam and the pillars of faith offer opportunities to emphasise the importance of praying and to link Islamic practices to happiness, peace and inner bliss. One teacher says that she has witnessed important changes in her students after she explained to them the importance of prayer in regards to their needs. She believes that students like to know the rewards behind performing an action.

ICCVDP is the only Islamic institution that does not offer optional moral value classes. It means that those who do not choose Islamic Studies are disconnected from Islamic education unless they have other means to learn Islam. For example, a previous student of Dar Ul Ma'arif, who scored a Grade A in Islamic Studies at the School Certificate, said that she was very sad that she could not take Islamic Studies at Grades 12 and 13 due to the fact that she was competing for the laureateship at her new school, the ICCVDP. The state combination [not to be confused with the school combinations] does not allow her to take Islamic Studies, rather she had to opt for Economics. Thus, she feels disconnected from Islamic education and its values.

However, the ICCVDP offers other facilities to non-Islamic Studies students. For illustration, male students organise themselves to perform *Zuhr* prayer, to recite the *adhān* in the microphone and to make congregational supplications after prayer. Girls, on their side, either pray in congregation following the student-imam or pray on their own. The freedom that is offered at the school to pray at the mosque has helped many students to demonstrate their 'Muslimness' and to keep their faith strong. Among the teaching and non-teaching staff, there are some who voluntarily indulge in *dawah*. They advise, they inform, they share their knowledge and they encourage others to do good deeds and to shun evil. At the ICCVDP, some teachers, on a voluntary basis, try to stimulate students through the use of rewards, compliments, and encouragement.

Moreover, the month of Ramadan offers the opportunity to all students to demonstrate their cultural and religious talents and their assertiveness as described in the previous chapter. Certificates of excellence are offered to teenagers so that they can carry on with their performances even after they leave school.

In general, participating students believe that Islamic education should be conducted in a way that reflects their real-life situation. They believe that the syllabus does not relate to their needs and curiosity about life. Students say that they would prefer that teachers use the internet as part of teaching aids and allow them to use the internet in the classroom.

The other side of the coin is that many students come to the ICCVDP without any religious formation and they leave the institution without having acquired any. There are various cases of social breakdowns among girls and boys. For instance, a memoriser of the Quran admits that he takes synthetic drugs. The reason he advances is that his father is too strict and there is no freedom for communication and exchange. Apart from the fact that he has mastered the Quran, he felt inwardly ‘poor’ and emotionally weak. Two such identical examples have been identified within the same school. There are a few cases of *Ḥafīẓ al-Qur’ān* [full memoriser of the *Qur’ān*] which do not reflect positivity in terms of behaviour and attitudes towards life. They are in dire need to communicate with adults who understand them and listen to them without prejudice.

There are many students among the boys and girls who suffer from various relational and emotional problems that are linked to low self-esteem and lack of adult guidance. Prinstein, Boegers, and Vernberg (2001) claim that low self-esteem is linked to depressive symptoms, health problems and antisocial behaviours as well as other aspects of social-psychological maladjustment. This is relevant to many students who have lost one of their parents or who live with grandparents due to broken families.

Findings show that the school website and Facebook page focus on academic and school activities rather than Islamic education. Participative students in the survey criticise, what in their view, is a lack of Islamic practices, the excessive use of pop music during school activities and the *laissez-faire* attitude that incites promiscuous attitudes

between boys and girls. They criticise the school culture, which in their view neither reflects a cultural nor an Islamic school. Both participative teachers and students are of the opinion that the school displays a lax culture that is not coherent with its appellation.

### **6.3.2 MADAD UL ISLAM**

Al Shafee believes that the most significant reason for the lack of interest in Islamic education is the fact that the curriculum does not deal with the real-life situation of students and the issues that they were most concerned with (Al-Shafee 1984, p. 108). This is often the case for Islamic and Arabic classes. Some students from lower classes ask permission to drop out of these compulsory subjects.

At Madad, the age of students ranges on average from 11 to 17 years old. In the researchers' view, the teenagers tend not to be habituated to interpersonal dialogue as part of educational purposes. Many students are rather shy to voice their opinions. They tend to internalise their feelings. They demonstrate signs of an inferiority complex and need constant encouragement to advance in life. -Parents could also benefit from better understanding the cause of relational aggression. If parents understand that it is their children's low self-esteem that is leading them to behave in a relationally aggressive way, then parents can better address the behavior. Parents may be more encouraging of their children as a way to increase their self-esteem or enroll their children in sports or other activities that may have a positive influence on self-esteem (Danielle C. Sclafani, May 2008).

Various factors are linked to their attitudes and their disinterest in studies as seen in the previous chapter. Early drop outs are related to environmental difficulties as well as a curriculum which does not suit their reality. Referring to Islamic education, one teacher states that -girls are no more interested with Islam and they have only a Muslim identity, that's all and their parents are often to blame because they do not exhort their daughters to practise. Despite all the effort and devotion put into classroom instructions to help students, findings show that the pedagogy does not correspond to their needs and their interests. The same teacher underlines that homework is often not done and when asked the reasons, she exclaims: -how do you think they will be able to do their homework when they are already dating and boyfriends sit for long hours with them at

home?|| She says that parents are at fault because they entertain such ideas in their daughters' mind and the latter can occasionally be absent from school. When they miss classes, it becomes difficult for them to catch up. Fagan (2010) believes that -certain habits correlate with good school performance, such as attending school regularly and spending more time on homework.||

Moral classes are offered to Muslims as well as non-Muslims in an attempt to upgrade their quality of life. Aspects such as cleanliness, discipline, respect, proper language and positive behaviour are dealt with. She states that the Creole language has known a shift downwards and students, in her opinion, are increasingly prone to vulgarity, foul words, and disrespect. Despite many efforts, vulgarity, violence, and aggressiveness persist and there is often negative behaviour towards teachers who try to enforce discipline. Many students have a negative vision of life and they attribute discipline, obedience, and respect to adults as a form of punishment. According to the teacher, teenagers cannot be totally blamed in these matters, they only reflect their parents in attitudes and manners. Whenever a problem arises, the reaction of parents can be unpredictable. They come to school without warning, sometimes insulting and swearing.

However, one teacher claims that moral value classes allow students to speak their minds and to talk about subjects that are of interest to them. Students are attentive when they hear things that directly concern them. However, she confides that it takes time for a child to change their habits and contemporary youth has developed a culture of forgetfulness and indifference. She adds that, in her view, Muslim students lack proper behaviour and manners and even though non-Muslims are bad-mouthed, they display better respect towards adults. Words like 'thank you', 'please' and 'may I' are characteristic of the Christian population but are absent from most of the Muslims' mouths according to this teacher.

It appears that there is a correlation between students' routine home life and their lack of interest in school. Many students are either poor or needy. They are confronted with harsh realities where parents are not habilitated to take care of them. There are many cases where girls are in a hurry to marry, believing that a comfortable partner can take them out of misery. This may explain early drop outs. Since the law stipulates that

students should be schooled up to the age sixteen years old, they stay at school until the end of their 'contract' and go back to their own routines. One teacher says -it is sad to see that all our efforts have gone to waste because once they leave us, they go back to their reality. According to Maudarbux (n.d), who is a previous teacher of Islamic Studies, -the overtly *passéiste* outlook of such anachronistic aims of the syllabus are an ideal recipe for societal fragmentation and disintegration and the resultant - as you might expect - is the production of successive generations of schizophrenic and confused adolescents trapped in between a rapidly moving society and a crystallised utopian ideal, mirrored as the only way to salvation.

As a passing remark, advice by teachers does not pay because young people are forgetful. Teenagers are more prone to listen to their friends and peer pressure comes from various forms: at school, on the road, and in the home environment.

### **6.3.3 ISLAMIC CULTURAL COLLEGE PORT-LOUIS**

Islamic Studies and Arabic are taught in traditional ways. Students learn their text by heart in order to pass their exams. Students confide that teachers predict exam questions and they learn answers by heart since they are unable to produce essay-type answers on their own. When asked about how moral classes are conducted, students are confused in their answers. Some say that there are no moral classes and others say that occasionally teachers advise them about certain matters regarding good conduct. One student says: "Teachers do their best but students are to blame because they are narrow-minded and they do not have the capacity to reflect and to analyse things in a positive way." Just as as Madad Ul Islam, there are many early drop outs. Students prefer to leave school in order to look for a job, to take a course at the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development [known as the MITD] or elsewhere. They claim that having proper training is better for their future than staying at school. Referring to some of their school mates, they maintain that craft pays "*ti métier paye bien zordi jour*." Those who obtain their School Certificates enroll at the ICCVDP. Since students are surrounded by all kinds of social evils in their immediate vicinity, their main conversations tend to be around drugs, violence and the like.

#### **6.3.4 DAR UL MAARIF**

Findings show that uniformity in dress code among female students and staff members offers a supportive environment to students' spiritual and academic attainment. One teacher comments that the dress code protects students from distractions. She claims that if the members of the staff come in different styles and wear thick cosmetics, they may provoke students to do the same as happens in many schools.

At the DUM, faith is even more prioritised due to the fact that there is only one leader, one order, one methodology, and one religious authority. Because authority is so centralised, less religious conflict could be found among adults, parents, and students since all of them have consciously abided by the religious principles of the movement on which the school is based. Students appear determined to learn and to follow in the footsteps of their community and school leader, Cehl Meeah. Many male students, in an attempt to succeed on religious grounds, even imitate their leader in their mannerisms and methods of speech.

This unique homogeneous religious environment allows students to unite together and to share many commonalities together. Whatever other disadvantages, this homogeneity is particularly effective for students' mental and academic attainment.

Islamic Studies and Arabic are backed up with other religious subjects. The ethos is put on high discipline and on the importance of acquiring good habits in view of developing Islamic awareness. All adults, irrespective of their roles at the school, demonstrate positive attitudes towards Islam and its practices. All adults are equally responsible in reminding students whenever there are some mishaps in conduct and attitude. The school strives to ensure that every student who leaves the institution is religiously literate and that they all read the Quran in Arabic and learn the explanation of the Quran.

However, most of them are not fully conversant in the Arabic language. Islamic Arabic expressions are used in their everyday conversation such as "*Mā shā' Allāh*", "*Bismillāh*", "*Alḥamdulillāh*" -*Subḥān Allāh*" etc. During the conversation, students can make use of

a verse of the *Qur'ān* or a *Ḥadīth* which they recite in Arabic. They are also very swift in looking for references in the *Qur'ān* and to learn them by heart.

Cases of indiscipline are treated urgently and parents are called upon in order to avoid any mishap. It appears that many students feel proud to belong to the Dar Ul Ma'arif, which they consider to be a privilege that only few can afford. For example, one student says that she is conscious that she is not wasting her time because time is precious and at her age, she believes that she has acquired both academic and religious knowledge. She claims that all teachers are sincerely devoted and they do not come to school as mere employees.

The *Markaz* has added a new dimension to students' holistic development as expressed in interviews. Students claim that they are happy to stay overnight among their friends and mentors. The night environment is different from the day and at night, they feel peace in their hearts and they are conscious that such opportunities are not given to many teenagers. For teachers, the *Markaz* has multi-fold objectives; to humanise education and to act as a boarding school in order to protect students from the home environment. The supportive environment offered by DUM is spiritual, academic and social. Since adolescents like to be among friends, the *markaz* offers the opportunity to socialise in a safe environment far from peer pressure and negative influences of society. Tutors work with learners beyond school hours. It can be argued that Islamic awareness has a locus of control over students and they try to work harder to perform well at school as well as in their lives. Fagan (2010) -Values also help form an internal locus of controll and is believed to be -the presence of established habits of discipline and balance in matters of work and initiativell. Muller and Ellison (2001: 155-183) claim that -adolescents' religious involvement is positively associated with a sense of control over their livesll.

Night prayers known as *tahajjud* act as -learning to doll and -learning to bell. Students staying at the *markaz* state that the night is particularly beneficial and it is even more auspicious when other members of the *Jama'at-Ul-Muslimeen* come once a week to listen to their community leaders preach. One student says: -The speech is not centered

on religion *per se* but the focuses are on understanding the challenges of the world and their consequences.

According to the students, such moments are memorable because their time table is monitored and they have time to pray, play and study. Still, in their opinion, religion does not necessarily have to be strict and stern; it can be pleasurable, especially when it is done in a group.

Findings show that the level of ambitions of students remains attached to religious beliefs and practices and the idea of marriage is ever present in their minds. This aspect of marriage and/or love is also present within the five institutions. Elder and Conger (2000) demonstrate that -religious values influence youths' perception of their friends and that, even at this stage of their lives, they develop future marriage plans in light of their religious beliefs. One teacher says: -At school, many young couples are naturally formed but they do not cross the limit that many young girls and boys do. Once they realise that they are in love, they inform their parents about their decisions. For them, it is normal to be engaged because their future motivations are limited. This is confirmed by the answers of students who claim that after school they will take over their parents' businesses or their parents will create a company for them. One girl of 18 years old says that she has fallen in love with a school boy of 17. Both parents have agreed because they share the same religious beliefs and practices; the boy is already working with his father during school holidays and he is in the position for a bright financial future. She comments that the age factor is readily acceptable by the in-laws since they maintain that Prophet Muhammad married a woman much older than him. This situation has been narrated here to show that the lives of many Muslims have already been framed since adolescence. In contrast to young people from mainstream society, it appears that many young Muslims intend to be traders after leaving secondary school. This aspect has been found in all five institutions. It demonstrates a wish to be independent and free from societal norms and pressures.

However, this may not be the unbending rule as there are also few cases of boys and girls who want to pursue their tertiary education and who want to compete for a bursary [laureateship]. To exemplify, one girl of fifteen years old is engaged with a boy of the

same Islamic group. Nevertheless, her intention is to pursue her tertiary studies in Malaysia and after having obtained a degree, she may consider marriage. At DUM, the emphasis is put on the regularity of religious performances and academic achievements. " Increased religious attendance is correlated with higher grades" (David Zern, 1989).

### **6.3.5 DOHA**

Since their creation, faith schools have added religious studies to their curriculum in order to balance the academic and the religious (Saad Buxoo, Sadeck Polin 2017). At Doha, books have been prepared and printed in an attempt to establish uniform Islamic teaching and to help educators in their tasks. Subjects such as *adaab* and *akhlaq* [everything that concern moral ethics and good manners] are offered to all students. Such subjects have the objective to prepare students for their future and their afterlife. Teachers are scrupulously chosen for such tasks and follow-ups are made on a regular basis. Parents are contacted if there is any laxity in conduct and homework. Any religious misconduct is closely and quickly monitored by specific members of the staff. However, since Doha has become a non-fee school, it has become part-and-parcel of the PSEA and the types of students sent by the government are from various Muslim groups such as the *Sunnat-e-jama`at*, the *Tabligh*, the *Şalafīs* and the *Tawhīd* among others. According to participative teachers, it has become difficult to standardise Islamic education because some parents have stated that they do not want their kids to follow *fiqh* classes, believing that such lessons may compromise their initial understanding of *fiqh* and their *madhahs*. In order to compromise on the matter, such students are allowed to remain free during *fiqh* classes. There are also some changes in terms of congregational prayers and *Jumu`ah* prayer. All the issues are related to *fiqh* issues which are definitely respected by the board. However, according to one participating teacher, there are some teachers who do not respect students' religious choices such as differences in prayer, etc. She is of the opinion that the role of parents has been detrimental for the implementation of Islamic education. Still according to her opinion, before the school was affiliated with the PSEA, parents would send their kids to Doha based on the belief that their children would become religiously and academically literate. The fact that the school is a subsidised school and parents do not pay for the

education of their children means that they may become indifferent and careless. Their only motivation is that their children are academically successful. Some parents are just satisfied with the idea that their children have obtained entry into a secondary school and they are not concerned with disciplinary matters and religious performance. This has given rise to two types of students: those who apparently do not care about Islamic values and who are religiously illiterate, and those who maintain comparatively high Islamic values.

Findings based on the interviews of teachers show that dysfunction commenced once the school became a subsidised school. The government was then allowed to send students to Doha irrespective to their affiliation with the school's philosophy. Once these children were enrolled, some of them did not want to follow religious formations such as *fiqh*. They believe that *fiqh* classes are not in line with their religious concepts. Various minor factors were included such as the manner of performing *ṣalāt*, *jumu`ah* prayer, etc. Some students who are in favour of religious education and its policy claim that Doha has lost its religious appeal and that it is no longer the same. One teacher summarises the present situation at Doha as such: "two factors that are out of our control are parents and the society." Due to the variety of religious groups among students, it has been difficult for teachers to guide students towards one line of thought and conduct. She says that students know their rights and they rebel whenever there are some types of pressure exerted against them to comply with religious rules and regulations. She claims that many girls pretend that they are physically indisposed in order to escape noon prayer or they want to perform their prayer in a rush in order to have enough time to socialise with their friends.

This aspect is confirmed by students. They claim that the school policy has changed in regards to Islamic rules and regulations. According to their say, the policy has become less strict and the Islamic fervour has diminished. For some students, having to pray during recess time is hard because they have several things to do. Sometimes, they are hungry and they have to go to the canteen where the line is long and they have to wait to buy something. Because of this they do not have enough time to socialise with friends. Some say that they wear a hijab only when they come to school but in general,

they do not wear a *ḥijāb*. There are also a few cases where parents are too strict with their children and the latter tend to over-exhibit when they are out of parental control.

However, the school can count on students who are academically brilliant, religiously motivated and literate. Both girls and boys are motivated to learn Arabic, to understand the *Qur'ān* in Arabic and to speak Arabic. To achieve this, rewards are also offered to the best candidates in a manner to stimulate their ambitions. Findings show that behavioural intervention in the form of appraisal and rewards have been helpful for the holistic development of children.

The time allocated to learning religious studies is also conducive to the making of the student. Some students have been enrolled at Doha since pre-primary or primary levels. -A growing body of research has consistently indicated that the frequency of religious practice is significantly and directly related to academic outcomes and educational attainment. Religious involvement is directly related to academic achievement. Religious students spend more time on their homework, work harder in school, (Muller and Ellison, 2001) and as a result achieve more (Donahue and Benson, 1995).

#### **(6) Do Islamic Secondary schools cater to the overall needs of students?**

In order to better understand if the school's overall curriculum works at satisfying the needs of students, the researchers look at the hierarchy of needs as stipulated by Abraham Maslow (1943), mentioned in chapter one, to underpin the needs of students.

At the physiological level, there are many students who are either poor or needy and all the institutions ensure that students do not come to school empty stomached and that their basic needs are met. However, different institutions care for the welfare of students to varying degrees. For instance, the ICCVDP had indulged in a pilot project to offer bread and tea to all early comers who do not have time to have a decent breakfast. The 'Open Our Arms' project aims at helping the poor and the needy within the Muslim community and prioritises its own students.

**The safety and security levels:** Once the basic needs are met, Maslow believes that individuals move on to the next level of needs such as safety and security. While some

schools offer a high level of physical and moral safety for students, in others the physical environment can jeopardise the lives of young students who are vulnerable to temptation and influences. For instance, the neighbourhood of Plaine Verte is a constant threat to students' mental and physical health due to the fact that they can be attacked by drug addicts or assaulted and harassed by dealers.

The quality of students is also a threat to teenagers' security since there are cases of mental disturbances, bullying, fights, and violence. At times, when the usher or the teacher tries to discipline them, students report to their parents and the next day parents come to fight with the usher. One student says that fighting among boys occurs because some boys like to fight for no reason. This is confirmed by his school mates. He claims that some boys, when they are admitted in Grade 7, are naïve and innocent but due to mingling with school comrades, they start smoking cigarettes and often they are driven to more vices. After some time they are addicted to them and become vagabonds.

In other words, the school environment is not conducive to learning and does not inspire students to achieve. -If schools have a better understanding of the reason why bullies relationally aggress then they can tailor interventions to a known cause of the behaviour. (Danielle C. Sclafani, May 2008).

In addition, Madad UI Islam and ICCPL have limited playground spaces and greenery that prevent students from playing and de-stressing during recess. "Scientific inquiry has demonstrated the positive effects of green spaces on physical health, mental well-being, social connectivity, and human behaviours (Byoung-Suk Kweon et al, February 2017). Hence, all educational leaders firmly believe that children should be able to grow in a safe and sustainable environment, though not all of them are able to implement such rules.

In contrast, DUM offers a safe environment free from early promiscuity, drugs, alcohol and cigarette smoking. Such a healthy environment impacts positively on the mental and physical health of students. -All individuals have the right to aspire toward their own personal goals and desires. At times, mental health conditions and problem behaviours,

such as aggression or property destruction, can create barriers to reaching those goals (Amy Van Wynsberghe, 2018). The physical location of the school presents some positive aspects. It is far from many forms of pollution and is conducive to learning and creativity.

Findings show that separation of gender at Doha, DUM, and ICCVDP is a blessing because it is a preventive measure against sexual assault, promiscuity, fornication, rape, and so forth for those who cannot respect boundaries. It is a well-known fact that children from eleven years old to twenty years old need some kind of adult supervision as a form of guidance. This should not presuppose that girls and boys are held in complete seclusion. Students are authorised to interact in the presence of tutors. This is believed to prepare students for their after school life which is coherent with the Islamic culture and its education based on the belief that men and women should have proper interaction in society and should not act deliberately against their nature and affect the purity of the self. This is in line with what was mentioned by Bauman (1990) in chapter one.

However, due to the fact that students at ICCVDP are essentially late teenagers, they have some freedoms such as walking to the next bus stop instead of taking the school bus.

**Love and belonging:** The third step of the pyramid becomes increasingly psychological and social such as the need for love, friendship and a sense of belonging. Teenagers have a strong need to be surrounded by friends of the same age. Jenn Director Knudsen (2017) explains that -Being among peers during times of stress may offer adolescents an open, supportive and rewarding space which may help dampen the emotional turbulence that adolescence can bring. School is often served as a place of meeting and exchanging ideas and meeting new friends. There is a natural interest in others. Studies consistently report that positive relationships between students and school staff, particularly teachers, are likely to be crucial to creating a healthy school environment (Astor RA, 1999, 36:3–42; Cousins LH, 1997, 24:41–63; Hosie A, 1999, 36:3–42).

Most of the rectors are conscious that adolescents need love because their parents are not able to offer them quality time due to various hardships. It happens that parents are asked to come to school for disciplinary matters in relation to their children. When teachers report the negative behaviour of their children to them, some parents ask teachers to *-gate mo zenfant un peull* [meaning to demonstrate love and affection towards their kids] and they believe that this method will work better instead of showing authority. Unfortunately, teachers are not professionally trained to respond to such needs. While some of them voluntarily care for their students, there are others who are harsh in their approach with learners. Students claim that at times, teachers lose patience and they do not understand personal problems, thus students feel shy to express their difficulties. One male teen of 19 years old who confides that his father died when he was only 14, says that "Some teachers come in class without a smile." It can be argued that a smile on a face can emotionally gratify a teenager. Teenagers have various ways to demonstrate their stress, sadness, and expectations towards adults. For example, one teacher says that "nowadays, we cannot be too far from our students. They have needs. They like to share their photos; they like to share their sadness as well as their joys with the teacher. In the same way, some students confide that some teachers like to narrate their whole lives, even their personal problems with them. This particularly happens when teachers have few students in the classroom and it develops into a close relationship. One teacher says that "Teens are more and more emotional. The least reprimand is taken as a drama." This confirms the fact that contemporary teens need affection and care as an encouragement to their academic attainment.

For Meeah (DUM), knowing each student individually and showing love towards them has helped maintain a disciplinary habit and getting the support of each student. The hidden curriculum, which is expressed in attitudes, individual behaviour, and expressions – all based on a positive line – has enhanced the quality of life of students. This aspect has been confirmed by many students who heartily said that *-we love our ameer* [leader] Cehl. He is always in our hearts. Whatever he asks us to learn etc, we do it with our heart. In

**Personal esteem:** -High self-esteem is characterised as having a general fondness for oneself, whereas people with low self-esteem view themselves ambivalently or mildly positively (Brown & Dutton, 1995). According to Werner and Crick (1999) and Crick and Grotpeter (1995), high self-esteem is linked to healthy social relationships, academic achievement, positive perceptions by peers, persistence in the face of failure, and good coping skills. Many students from participative institutions which are not surrounded by parents who are caring and students rely on teachers to congratulate and reward them. In order to achieve this, teachers should be aware of what is expected from them and as they have not been trained to perceive the social needs of students, they often enter into a conflictual relationship with students, especially attention seekers who disturb the peace of the classroom. Briefly, in all institutions, there are teachers who play the role of *in loco parentis* and there are teachers who are not interested in interacting with pupils beyond the classroom instructions.

There is a correlation between gratifying students and their interest in learning. Their self-esteem is aroused and this motivates them to do better and to achieve success. Self-esteem can help students with their holistic development as well as their ability to socialise with other peers and adults.

**Self-actualisation:** This can be compared to self-transformation, whereby transformational education aims at the holistic development of teenagers. Finally, self-actualisation is a process of growing and developing as a person in order to achieve individual potential. In the Islamic context, this is what Islamic education is supposed to produce within learners. At school, it is supposed to be done through teaching aids such as school activities, speech, interventions, workshops and the like. Moreover, to achieve self-actualisation in terms of education, students require basic academic learning. Unfortunately, many students from Madad and ICCPL experience academic weaknesses that mar their abilities to reach levels of self-actualisation. In all schools, there are students who are high flyers and others who remain at the low or average levels.

Due to the fact that there is no curriculum alignment for low performers, students' interest in learning is shattered and this is extended to their various ways of

demonstrating it such as looseness in attitude, indiscipline, lack of attention of the class, disrespect, etc. Research shows that students' learning is built upon their previous knowledge. After students have learned the wrong concept, it is difficult for them to unlearn it.

At the ICCVDP, many school activities take place within one academic year; these may be activities that are not necessarily in line with the academic and religious development of teens. However, there is a group of students and teachers who are against such activities because they disturb classroom instruction and jeopardise the completion of their syllabi. For example, when asked whether they like to take part in school activities, one student said: *-Faudrer gagne le temps! Zotte trouve dimoune gagne le temps pou perdi! Zotte fine guette sa syllabus la? qui sane la pour apprane ça?!* [Meaning that he does not have time to lose with such activities because he has to take care of his studies and in his opinion, the syllabus is too bulky]. The same teen confided that he has lost his mother when he was a young boy. He likes to live in his own world but is convinced that he has to take his destiny in hand. He understands that his father does not have the financial means to take care of him, and his elder sister who has been blessed by a good job in the United States regularly sends money for household expenses. Therefore he is motivated to complete his final year and to successfully pass his exams so that he may fly with his own wings. Other participants claim that the school has deprived them of a library period, Physical Education and an activity period. They feel that they work too much and they would prefer to have an activity period to indulge in other skills.

At the Doha Academy, self-actualisation takes the form of academic performances. Students want to compete at the highest level in order to obtain a bursary which can guarantee them access to a good university. Despite the lack of school activities, the school produces a high quality of academic achievers. Self-actualisation has been made possible due to the system of streaming. Streaming is based on the academic sorting of students. Such a system has allowed many students to successfully pass their exams because the teacher can better monitor the classroom. In comparison to mixed academic abilities, streaming allows high performers to excel in their subjects.

At DUM, though most of the students succeed at their holistic development, they present an atypical facet of career ambitions that are foreign to many young Mauritians. Many of the girls expect to complete their studies either after having obtained their higher school certificates or post-tertiary levels and to then marry. They believe that successful marriages will complete their faiths because they aspire to become *ummul muqimeen* [faithful mothers] and to pursue lifelong religious education. Some of them wish to work as pre-primary or primary teachers at the DUM. As for the boys, many of them are financially well-off and they intend to enter the trade market. They believe that sole trading is a blessing. They relate their lives to the companions of the prophet who used to work in the morning and use the rest of their time for *dawah* purposes. In other words, they aspire to live a life free from the burden of having to wake up in the morning and to work long hours for their boss or companies, which they consider to be a waste of time and energy. They would like to imitate the lives of the companions of the Prophet known as *sahabas*.

Thus, the school culture acts upon the holistic development of students.

#### **6.4 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

(1) Findings show that the school environment plays a vital role in students' behaviour and attitude to learning. Recently, the rector of the ICCPL has taken the initiative to forbid students from leaving the school during school hours and in order to protect students and provide them with an incentive, a gym has been set up to allow students to spend their energy in sports. This has been applauded by many students. With the recent policies, many students say that they feel safer and they are confident that the new rector has come up with good initiatives. The thrill of going out and bunking classes has thus been replaced by a practice which is very current in Mauritius.

(2) Since many students lack self-esteem, love and a sense of belonging, they need adults who are committed and trained in the psychology of teenagers and their development. Findings show that teachers, as well as educational leaders, cannot completely fulfill such roles because they either lack Islamic knowledge to guide students or they lack the psychological and pedagogical approach. It has been found that some teachers believe that Islamic education is about 'knowledge banking' and that

the same approach that is taken for adults is applied to students. The notion of play and of experimentation is definitely lacking in Islamic education. Teachers should understand that teenagers are not fulfilled adults and therefore the methods of teaching adults are unsuitable for them.

(3) Findings show that in general students do not have any problem in merging with the general society. However, most students who have been interviewed claim that they prefer to live in a homogeneous [religious and cultural] group. They maintain that there is more fun to be among 'our own' because when they are among other cultural or religious groups, they need to make additional efforts in order not to hurt their feelings or to act in a way that may not be understood by them.

Nevertheless, at Madad-UI-Islam, the culture clash is evident between Muslims and Christians. With the new school policy, many non-Muslims, especially Christians coming from disruptive areas of Port-Louis, have been enrolled. Participant teachers claim that there is a wide gap between both cultures. The types of food, dress code, conduct, and attitude vary enormously. The culture of the general population known as Creole contrasts largely with Muslim culture and has given rise to a new form of culture. It appears that many adults have not been trained to monitor such differences. In such cases, they appear to be overwhelmed by a situation which was already critical.

A school that is founded on the affiliation of the religious community appears to have many advantages. Being anchored in the *Jama`at ul Muslimeen* and its various religious practices have positive effects on the students and promotes a positive relationship among young teens. This is based on a study that found that "the greater a high school student's engagement in church activities, the stronger his or her peer competence" (Valarie King et al, 1997).

(4) The school culture in cultural Islamic schools is related to the surrounding environment, which negatively impacts upon these schools in various respects. In addition, it is believed by some participants in the study that school management has also been problematic, although the latter shows signs of change in the future. Apart

from the outer development of students, religious awareness has not been tackled as a primary duty except during the month of Ramadan.

DUM carries a well-defined school culture where apprenticeship is based primarily on Islamic education and religious awareness. At DUM, the level of discipline is set very high and every adult acts as a role model and as a disciplinary master. The school culture is relevant to the effectiveness of the school and is conducive to learning. At Doha, the school culture has been found to be positive by both teachers and students. The highest concentration is put on academic achievements and students are well-motivated. Everything is done to achieve academic success. However, religious motivation is threatened by some students and parents who are not interested in the religious approach of the school.

(5) Hence, findings show that dysfunction is produced due to different factors: (a) the academic level of students is too poor to meet the exigencies of the national syllabus, (b) they are admitted to an Islamic school but they are unwilling to take part in religious education, (c) they are not interested in school but they go to school because of the law (Madad and ICCPL), (d) Drug takers tarnish the image of the school and its environment, (e) teachers and educational leaders need added training in a number of cases and (f) a lack of clear aims and vision of the school. These create confusion in the minds of the members of staff as well as students.

(6) At the academic level, results show that some students are very good in all schools. However, in some schools, the academic pass rate is below 50% (see appendices).

(7) Interviews with students in all schools show that many students have a natural hatred for French and they consider French to be a very difficult and inaccessible language except for students who have been transferred from Christian confessional schools. But once they join Islamic schools, they have to adapt to the culture of the school and speak Creole. Students or teachers who speak French are often mocked or criticised as "*faire gestell*" and this can demonstrate a regressive culture which is backed up by the home environment, the Muslim culture and the portrayal of Creole from the media. Political platforms to accept Creole as part of the curriculum have a long way to

go because it lacks vocabulary and uniformity. Findings show that this aspect is detrimental to societal integration as there is a large segment of the population that speaks French [see appendix]. The table also indicates that Muslims neither speak Urdu nor Arabic at home. In other words, contemporary Muslims who are admitted in Islamic schools show a regressive attitude towards language culture because they have not been trained to think otherwise and they are not aware of the advantages of language as an enhancement to their career.

(8) Since Islamic teachers are not trained by professionals in the development of adolescents and the curriculum, it means that teachers are left to themselves to decide the Islamic pathways of teenagers. This may also lead to ideological confusion and conflict between parents and teachers, especially when the syllabus deals with different schools of Islamic thought and practice.

(9) It is a well-known fact that adolescents need mentorship even though they must be entrusted tasks. However, generally teenagers are more emotional than spiritual and they are at a stage where they are vulnerable to life and its various challenges; therefore, some topics in Islamic Studies are found to be useful in this regard and the time allocated for discussion and advice is indeed valuable. In the end, the relationship between teachers and students is consolidated and students are spiritually and emotionally nourished. In contrast, when students are forced into the subject without any psychological approach, the end-result is destructive rather than productive. Furthermore, little attention has been paid to the actual needs and interests of the students. There has been a lack of research related to the educational dimension of Islam and many teachers are limited in ideas, resources, and pedagogy.

(10) In regards to the functionalist theory, society is composed of various institutions and the school is one of them. The analysis of data reveals that the students cannot rely solely upon one institution [the school] for their holistic achievements. This is because secondary education is mostly cognitive and academic. Besides which, the time frame is limited to engage students in a holistic transformation. Several Islamic schools have not created partnerships with two main institutions: the family and the community. Due

to the fact that several institutions do not work with parental involvement programs, there are many clashes between parents and members of the staff.

(11) In general, there is a lack of modern teaching methods to encourage students to take an active role in the learning process. In addition, there is a clear lack of modern educational aids which may be due to financial restraints. Audio visual rooms are used for other classes and therefore students do not have the possibility to watch documentaries on Islam that can add interest to their subjects. Assessment of Islamic education is mostly traditional and is aimed at measuring the students' knowledge, without paying attention to measuring other aspects of student achievement. There are some weaknesses in the Islamic education curriculum in secondary schools. One of the most important is the absence of any explanation of the way in which students should live in a multi-cultural and multi-religious society without compromising their faiths and identities.

(12) When it comes to monitoring students about subjects such as English, French literature, etc, teachers are unanimous in saying that they must have a pedagogical approach to learning, but when it comes to Islamic Studies many Islamic teachers do not propose a sound pedagogy for students. Passive learning is a dangerous approach that has no foundation in Islam. Passive learning is dangerous for any learner but also for the mentor because it is dysfunctional in regards to the holistic development of the learner and it restrains the capacity of the teacher to develop their pedagogical approach to learning. Such a restrictive method does not promote any positive aspect because it only gives the student the impression that they are working but in fact, the student is required to read a text several times until they memorises the major part of it and feels ready to write the exams.

#### **6.4.1 CONCLUSION**

As all educators know, the school, as a social institution, should play a positive role in the development of the individual and society. Hamilton, for instance, comments that a school is a social tool, an instrument that can be employed to change human life-styles, and that curricula can be an agent of social prediction as much as they are agents of social reproduction (Hamilton 1990, p. 48). Educationists should reflect on what type of society they wish to create for the young generation. The school acts as a miniature

society and educational leaders are responsible to maintain law and order in their 'society' of staff and students. According to Farhad Ali (1982), the aim of teaching the Islamic education curriculum is to mould a good Muslim in a good Muslim society; that is, a society which is subservient to the needs of the healthy self and of others. In his views, the aim of Islamic education should be the most important subject in school as it is related to the behaviour, morals, and values of society. He believes that the school can play a major role in countering social and psychological problems in society.

Delors' proposition of an educational society (2013) is relevant to the present thesis. It allows educational leaders to reflect on the kind of society they wish to create for the younger generations. The functional society requires holistic education by using both theory and experimentation. It should indulge in various aspects that collectively create a holistic human being known as *Al insann-ul-kaamil*, which was first mentioned in chapter one. Indeed, Islamic education should be at the centre of learning in order to cement and bolster the Islamic identity of Muslim teenagers. To conclude, Delors (2013) mentions that "In some countries where there are problems with schooling or social problems, too much is being asked of schools, because alongside schools, families, and society must also play their part". His theory is in line with functionalism as Durkheim believes that education is functional when success is assessed to the global whole.

Jean Lebrun's curriculum mentioned in chapter two illustrates socio-cultural-religious and educational cohesion. His systematic analysis of Christian youths led Lebrun to write a curriculum to fit their various needs. It acts as a blueprint for the Christian community. This is how he proposed to help wandering youths. Likewise, the Quran acts as a comprehensive blueprint for the educational pathways of Muslims for all time

and for all generations. From its inception, Islam has placed a high premium on education and past Muslim luminaries have embarked on the same innovative project.

In the researchers' opinion, such a curriculum framework should be hinged around the three aspects: knowing, acting and being so that students are able to connect within the Muslim community and the wider world without feeling perplexed, unprepared and 'influenced' by the other ways of life that negate the *in situ* [which in Arabic is called the 'fitra'] aspects. A noble example in this regard would be the early Muslims who continued their tasks after the Prophet's demise; in words, actions and character. The development of the healthy self which integrates these three dimensions is the true goal of Islamic education. It is also at the root of a functional, as opposed to dysfunctional, society.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Apravasi, G. (2010-2017). *The Gateway to Immigration in Mauritius*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.mauritius-holidays-discovery.com/aapravasi-ghat.html> [Accessed on: 21 November 2018].

Abul Aynayn, A. (1988). *Islamic Education Philosophy in the Holy Quran*. unpublished M. A. Egypt, Halabi Press.

Addison, J. & Hazareesingh, K. (1984). *A new history of Mauritius*. Rose-Hill: Editions de L'Océan Indien.

Akhtar, M. & Rawat, K. (1988). *A Historiography of the Educational System of the Muslims during the Umayyad's and the Abbasid's Period*. New Delhi. Atlantic Publishers. 2-3. [O]. Available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c33e/c21bd0970dee87154de5fe31fdcd65c7051c.pdf> [Accessed on: 25 May 2018].

Ahmad, M.K. & Dr. Harrison, J. *Untapped Potential: Cultural Sensitivity-Islamic Persuasive Communication in Health Promotion Programs*. [O]. Available at: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/15073326.pdf> [Accessed on: 21 February 2019].

Ajaheb-Jahangeer, S and Jahangeer, A.C. (2004). *School Culture in a Private Secondary Institution in Mauritius*. Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ903852.pdf> [Accessed on: 15 October 2017].

Al Aqsa Masjid. [O]. Available at <http://www.alaqsamasjid.net/about-us/>. [Accessed on: 23 May 2017].

Al-Attas, S.M.A. (1979). *Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education*. Jeddah, Saudi Arabia: Hodder and Stoughton. Ashraf, S.A. *The Aims of Education*. [O] Available at: <http://cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk/download-papers/CMCPapers2-Education.pdf> [Accessed on: 04 May 2018].

Alber, J.C. (1990). 5-32 *Vivre au Pluriel*. Université de la Réunion. Saint Denis. CNRS. Available at: <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/1657/02bibliography.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y> [Accessed on: 21 July 2018].

Ali, F. and Bagley, C. Vol.8, no.2, (2013). *Islamic Education And Multiculturalism: Engaging With The Canadian Experience*. [O]. Available at: <https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/jcie/index.php/JCIE/article/view/21525> [Accessed on: 25 February 2018].

Ali, S.A. (1951). *A Short History of the Saracens*. London: Macmillan. 278.

Al-Shafie, A. (1984). *Islamic Education Curriculum and Its Teaching Method*. Kuwait, Al-Falah Press.

Ameli, S. R., Azam, A., & Merali, A. (2005). *Secular or Islamic? What schools do British Muslims want for their children?* Wembley, England. Islamic Human Rights Commission.

Anand, D. (2018). *Valorising Students In Mauritian Education System*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.lemauricien.com/article/valorising-students-in-mauritian-education-system/> [Accessed on: 21 January 2019].

Anderson, C. (1815-53). *Indian Convicts in Mauritius*. [O]. Available at <https://ira.le.ac.uk/.../2381/.../vagrant%20depot%20project%20convicts%20chapter.pd...> [Accessed on : 21 June 2017].

Arigatou international. All for children: (2014). *Learning to Live Together Facilitator Training Workshop in Mauritius*. [O]. Available at: <https://gnrc.net/en/news/in-the-news/1996-learning-to-live-together-facilitator-training-workshop-in-mauritius> [Accessed on: 21 November 2018].

Armstrong, K. (2000). *Islam: A short history*. New York: Modern Library.

Arthur, C. (Ed.). (1993). *Religion and the media: An introductory reader*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Aslantürk, H. (2010). *Ph.D. Imitation or Role Model?* [O]. Available at: <http://www.lastprophet.info/imitation-or-role-model> [Accessed on: 14 November 2018].

Assad Buglah. *Evolution of Urdu Language in Mauritius*. [O]. Available at:

<https://www.centuryassociation.org/assad-bhuglah-toc/2832-evolution-of-urdu-language-in-mauritius> [Accessed: 15 August 2017].

Assad Buglah. (1805-2005). *Mosquee Al Aqsa*. p. 182. *The trajectory of the lascars – from Al idrissi to Tipu Sultan*.

Astor, R.A., Meyer H.A. & Behre, W.J. (1999). *Unowned places and times: Maps and interviews about violence in high schools*. *Am Educ Res J*. 36:3–42.

Athar, S. (2011). *Ramadan fasting and Muslim patients*.

Azemi, F.K. (2000). *The Islamic Education Curriculum in Kuwaiti Secondary Schools*. [O]. Available at: <http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/4204/1/324456.pdf> [Accessed on: 15 May 2018].

Barnett, R. & Coate, K. (2005). *Engaging the Curriculum in Higher Education*. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Basir, A. et al. *Pedagogy in Life-Long Learning in the Perspective of Islam*. Doi:10.5901/ajjs.2015.v4n1p51. [O]. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282530322\\_Pedagogy\\_in\\_Life-Long\\_Learning\\_in\\_the\\_Perspective\\_of\\_Islam/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282530322_Pedagogy_in_Life-Long_Learning_in_the_Perspective_of_Islam/download) [Accessed on: 21 May 2019].

Bauman, Z. (1990). *Thinking sociologically*, Oxford: Blackwell.

BBC News. (2018). *Luton Islamic school complains over critical Ofsted report*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-42733563> [Accessed on: 15 May 2018].

Beamish, P and Morey, P. (2013). "School Choice: What Parents Choose" [O]. Available at: <https://research.avondale.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1199&context=teach>. [Accessed on: 20 August 2018].

Beaton, P. *Creoles and coolies, or, Five years in Mauritius*.

Belgium Population 2019. (2019). [O]. Available at: <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/belgium-population/> [Accessed on: 25 May 2019].

Benedict, D. (1966). *Le Monde Diplomatique, L'Ile Maurice connait deux graves problèmes*. p.22. [O]. Available at <https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/1966/04/BENEDICT/2721> [Accessed on: 15 November 2018].

Berkey, J. (2004). "Education". In Richard C. Martin (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Islam and*

*the Muslim World*. MacMillan Reference USA.

Bilton, T., Bonnett, K., Jones, P., Lawson, T., Skinner, D., Stanworth, M and Webster, W. *Introductory Sociology*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition, p.386.

Black, K. (2010). -Business Statistics: Contemporary Decision Makingll 6<sup>th</sup> edition. John Wiley & Sons.

Borhan, L. (2004). Teaching Islam: A look inside an Islamic preschool in Malaysia. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood Education*, 5(3), 378-390.

Boyle, C.J. (1867). *14 Far away; or sketches of scenery and society in Mauritius*.

Available at:

[https://archive.org/stream/farawayorsketch01boylgoog/farawayorsketch01boylgoog\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/farawayorsketch01boylgoog/farawayorsketch01boylgoog_djvu.txt). [Accessed on: 15 November 2018].

Boyle, H. (2002). *Quranic School Strategy and Mini Needs Assessment*. Trip Report to Nigeria.

Brooks, L. (2000). *An island where girls now fly high*. [O]. Available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2000/feb/29/news2> [Accessed on: 10 November 2018].

Brown, D. and. Gary, L.E. (1991). -Religious Socialization and Educational Attainment Among African Americans: An Empirical Assessment,ll *Journal of Negro Education*. 60, no. 3 411–426.

Brown, J.D. & Dutton, K.A. (1995). The thrill of victory, the complexity of defeat: Self esteem and people's emotional reactions to success and failure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68, 712-722.

Brown, J.D. & Mankowski, T.A. (1993). Self-esteem, mood, and self-evaluation: Changes in mood and the way you see you. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 64, 421- 430.

Bush, T. (1995). *Theories of Educational Management*. London: Paul Chapman.

Business Mega. (2012). *The Golden Age Of Cinema*. [O]. Available at:

<https://business.mega.mu/2012/09/03/golden-age-cinema/>. [Accessed on: 10 October 2018].

Buxoo, S. *Finance and Advisory Officer at Dar UIMa"arif, interview 15/11/2017*.

Byfield, C. (2008). -The Impact of Religion on the Educational Achievement of Black Boys: A UK and USA Study.ll *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 29, no. 2. 189-199.

Cader, K. *Jean Lebrun, L.M.S missionary in Mauritius, as Pedagogue*. [O]. Available at: [http://www.academia.edu/8224416/Le\\_Brun\\_L.M.S\\_missionary\\_in\\_Mauritius\\_as\\_Pedagogue](http://www.academia.edu/8224416/Le_Brun_L.M.S_missionary_in_Mauritius_as_Pedagogue) [Accessed on: 24 August 2018].

Cader, K. *The career of Rev. Jean Lebrun (1814-1865): Missionary Education and the Fashion*. (2017). [O]. Available at: [http://www.academia.edu/30836731/The\\_career\\_of\\_Rev.\\_Jean\\_Lebrun\\_1814-1865\\_Missionary\\_Education\\_and\\_the\\_Fashioning\\_of\\_the\\_gens\\_de\\_couleur\\_in\\_Mauritius](http://www.academia.edu/30836731/The_career_of_Rev._Jean_Lebrun_1814-1865_Missionary_Education_and_the_Fashioning_of_the_gens_de_couleur_in_Mauritius). [Accessed on: 14 July 2018].

Caldwell, B. & Keating, J. (2004). *Adding value to public education: an examination of the possibilities for public-private partnerships*. Australian Council of Deans of Education.

Calvini, C. (2006). Université de la Réunion. *Île Maurice Évolution sociétale et Structures du mouvement sportif entre Communautés et Communalisme. (1945-1985)*. [O]. Available at : <https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/file/index/docid/459001/filename/2006lare0019-calvini.pdf> [Accessed on: 21 November 2018].

Cambridge International Examinations. *Syllabus O level, Islamic Studies 2068, for examination 2017, 2018, 2019*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/Images/204721-2017-2019-syllabus.pdf> [Accessed on: 21 January 2019].

CDI Mauritius. (2017). *Islam ene deen complete Part 2*, by Parvez Kureemun. [O]. Available at <https://youtu.be/9flHUAWNxjs>. [Accessed on: 10 October 2018].

Cehl Meeah. Interview. 20 November 2017.

Cehl Meeah. interview. 10 June 2018.

Central Statistical Office. -Population Census of Mauritius. || L.I.C. building: Port-Louis.

Chazan-Gillig, S. *Ethnicity and free exchange in Mauritian society*. [O]. Available at: [http://horizon.documentation.ird.fr/exl-doc/pleins\\_textes/pleins\\_textes\\_7/b\\_fdi\\_57-58/010023796.pdf](http://horizon.documentation.ird.fr/exl-doc/pleins_textes/pleins_textes_7/b_fdi_57-58/010023796.pdf) [Accessed on: 21 October 2018].

Cliffnotes. *Theories of education: Talcott Parsons*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/study-guides/sociology/education/theories-of-education> [Accessed: 23 August 2018].

Cline, A. updated January (2019). *Karl Marx on religion as the opium of the people*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.learnreligions.com/karl-marx-on-religion-251019> [Accessed on: 21 May 2019].

Cinar, A. (2005). *Modernity, Islam and Secularism in Turkey*, University of Minnesota Press. p 14 Darul Arqam. Available at : <https://www.islamiclandmarks.com/makkah-haram-sharief/daarul-arqam> [Accessed on: 25 May 2019].

Cinar, A. Modernity, Islam, and Secularism in Turkey. *Bodies, Places, and Time*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/modernity-islam-and-secularism-in-turkey> [Accessed on: 21 May 2019].

Cooley, C. (2001). Charles Horton Cooley - Looking Glass Self. [O]. D.umn.edu. Available at:

<http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/jhamlin/4111/Blumer/Charles%20Horton%20Cooley%20-%20Looking%20Glass%20Self.htm> [Accessed 28 July 2018].

Cooley, C. *Sociological Theory, The Looking-Glass Self*. [O]. Available at: <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/jhamlin/4111/Blumer/Charles%20Horton%20Cooley%20-%20Looking%20Glass%20Self.htm> [Accessed 23 August 2018].

Cope, B. (1993). 'Schooling in the World's Best Muslim Country.' *Education Australia*. 20–23. [O]. Available at: <http://newlearningonline.com/new-learning/chapter-4/schooling-in-the-worlds-best-muslim-country> [Accessed on: 15 October 2018].

Cosden, M., Morrison, G., Gutierrez, L. & Brown, M. (2004). -The Effects of Homework Programs and After-School Activities on School Success,|| *Theory Into Practice* 43, no. 3 220-226.

Coughlan, S. -Ofsted warns of Muslim school staff gender segregation|| [O]. Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/education-36150082> [Accessed on: 25 August 2018].

Cousins, L.H. (1997). *Toward a socio-cultural context for understanding violence and disruption in black urban schools and communities*. J Soc Welf 24:41–63.

Crick, N.R. & Grotpeter, J. (1995). Relational aggression, gender and social-psychological adjustment. *Development and Psychopathology*. 8, 367-380.

Cultural Atlas. (2019). *Mauritian culture*, Available at: <https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/mauritian-culture/religion-b4e24c51-e7ed-4604-9e2a-a9fd624bd30b> [Accessed on: 20 May 2019].

Dalais. *La Clef des Champs Restaurant*. [O]. available at <http://la-clef-des-champs.restaurant.mu/en> [Accessed on: 22 November 2018].

Dauguet, K. *Understanding the „mixed ability“ program in Catholic secondary schools in Mauritius perceptions of educators for best practice in the middle years of schooling*.

[O]. Available at:

<http://researchbank.acu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=HYPERLINK>

"<http://researchbank.acu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1206&context=theses>"1206

HYPERLINK [Accessed on: 01 May 2018].

Defimedia.org. (2017). *Interview with Surrendra Bissoondoyal Educating for the future: are we failing our kids?* [O] Available at: Defimedia.org <https://defimedia.info/educating-future-are-we-failing-our-kids> [Accessed on: 20 May 2018].

Defimedia.org. (2017). *Interview with Faizal Jeeroburkhan. -Students should be prepared for future jobs* Available at: <https://defimedia.info/educating-future-are-we-failing-our-kids>. [Accessed on: 20 May 2018].

DéfiMédia. (2017). *-Paradise island marred by soaring crimes* written by Jameela Jadoo, NafissahFakun and Raj Bissessur. Online newspaper. [O]. Available at: <https://defimedia.info/paradise-island-marred-soaring-crimes> [Accessed on: 18 April 2018].

Delors, J. (1998). *Learning: The Treasure Within. Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century*. Paris: United Nations.

Delors, J. (2013). *The treasure within: Learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. What is the value of that treasure 15 years after its publication?* [O]. Available at: [http://www.oosci-mena.org/uploads/1/wysiwyg/Delors\\_article\\_review\\_of\\_education\\_2013.pdf](http://www.oosci-mena.org/uploads/1/wysiwyg/Delors_article_review_of_education_2013.pdf) [Accessed on: 23 November 2018].

Denzin, N. K. (1989). *Interpretive interactionism*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Donohue, J.J. & Esposito, J. L. (Eds.) (2007). *Islam in transition: Muslim perspectives* (2nd. ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Donahue, M.J & Benson, P.L. (1995). *-Religion and the Well-Being of Adolescents*. *Journal of Social Issues*. 51, 145-160.

Dookun-Luchoomun, L.D. *Explaining the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education [NYCBE] REFORM - The Secondary Sector*. Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research. [O]. Available at: [http://ministry-education.govmu.org/English/educationsector/nys/Documents/NYS%20Brochure%20Secondary%20English%20\(Viewing\)%20FINAL%20121217.pdf](http://ministry-education.govmu.org/English/educationsector/nys/Documents/NYS%20Brochure%20Secondary%20English%20(Viewing)%20FINAL%20121217.pdf) [Accessed on: 30 November 2018].

Dukhira, C. (2002). *History of Mauritius – Experiments in Democracy*. New Delhi. Brijbasi Art Press. p. 170.

Durkheim, E. A Functionalist Analysis. *Education and social solidarity*, [O]. Available at: [http://vcampus.uom.ac.mu/soci1101/841\\_a\\_functionalist\\_analysis.html](http://vcampus.uom.ac.mu/soci1101/841_a_functionalist_analysis.html) [Accessed on: 25 August 2018].

Durkheim, E. (1986). *An Introduction to Four Major Works*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. Pp.115-155.

Durkheim, E. (2018). *Durkheim's Line Of Thought And Vision*. [O]. Available at <http://www.emiledurkheim.org/> [Accessed on: 15 November 2018].

Durkheim, E. (2018). Emile Durkheim Quotes - Emile Durkheim. [O]. Available at: <http://www.emiledurkheim.org/emile-durkheim-quotes/> [Accessed on: 11 September 2018].

Durkheim, E. *Functionalism*. [O]. Available at <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/study-guides/sociology/education/theories-of-education> [Accessed on: 18 October 2017].

Durkheim, E. (1973). On Morality and Society, Heritage of sociology Series, Edited and with an Introduction by Robert N. Bellah. [O]. Available at: <https://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/E/bo3627098.html> [Accessed on: 10 November 2018].

Durkheim, E. the functionalist perspective. [O]. Available at: "[http://vcampus.uom.ac.mu/soci1101/271functionalist\\_perspectives.html](http://vcampus.uom.ac.mu/soci1101/271functionalist_perspectives.html)"1101HYPERLINK NK "[http://vcampus.uom.ac.mu/soci1101/271functionalist\\_perspectives.html](http://vcampus.uom.ac.mu/soci1101/271functionalist_perspectives.html)"functionalist\_perspectives.html [Accessed on: 25 August 2018].

Driessen, G. and Merry, M.S. (2006). *Islamic Schools in the Netherlands: Expansion or Marginalization?* [O]. Available at <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10780-006-9001-0> [Accessed on: 06 September 2018].

Dwyer, C. & Meyer, A. (1996). *The establishment of Islamic schools: a controversial phenomenon in three European societies*, in: W. Shadid & P. van Koningsveld (Eds) *Muslims in the margin*. Kampen: Pharos. 233-238.

Educational System In the time of the Holy Prophet, Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah. [O]. Available at: [https://archive.org/stream/EducationalSystemInTheTimeOfProphet/Educational%20System%20in%20the%20Time%20of%20Prophet\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/EducationalSystemInTheTimeOfProphet/Educational%20System%20in%20the%20Time%20of%20Prophet_djvu.txt) [Accessed on: 12 November 2018].

Eisenlohr, P. *Cosmopolitanism, globalization, and Islamic piety movements in Mauritius*. [O]. Available at: [https://www.academia.edu/3420026/Cosmopolitanism\\_globalization\\_and\\_Islamic\\_piety\\_movements\\_in\\_Mauritius](https://www.academia.edu/3420026/Cosmopolitanism_globalization_and_Islamic_piety_movements_in_Mauritius). [Accessed on: 22 May 2018].

Elder, G.H. & Conger, R.D. (2000). *Children of the land: Adversity and Success in Rural America* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 158.

Emrith, M. (1994). *History of the Muslims in Mauritius*. Mauritius: Editions Le Printemps. p. 169.

Eriksen, T. (1990). Linguistic Diversity and the Quest for National Identity: the Case of Mauritius. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 13, 1-24.

Eriksen, T. (1988). *Communicating Cultural Difference and Identity. Ethnicity and Nationalism in Mauritius*. Oslo: Department of Social Anthropology. Occasional Papers in Social Anthropology.

Esposito, J.L. (1992). *The Islamic threat : myth or reality*. New York: Oxford University Press. Ezzeldine, O. *Why Islamic Schools?* [O]. Available at [http://www.isna.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/omar\\_ezzeldine\\_-\\_why\\_islamic\\_schools.pdf](http://www.isna.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/omar_ezzeldine_-_why_islamic_schools.pdf). [Accessed on: 20 July 2017].

Fagan, P. (1995). *The Real Root Causes of Violent Crime: The Breakdown of Marriage, Family, and Community*. Available at: <https://www.heritage.org/crime-and-justice/report/the-real-root-causes-violent-crime-the-breakdown-marriage-family>.

Fagan, P.F. (2010). -Religious Practice and Educational Attainment, || Marriage and Religion Research Institute. [O]. Available at: <http://marri.us/wp-content/uploads/Religious-Practice-and-Educational-Attainment.pdf>. [Accessed 24 January 2019].

Fahmi, *Mabadi' al-Tarbiya al-Islamiyya*, A. (1366). Lajnat al-Ta'lif wal-Tarjama wal-Nashr. Cairo. H, p. 148-50.

Fahmi, *Mabadi' al-Tarbiya al-Islamiyya*. (1366). Cairo. Lajnat al-Ta'lif wal-Tarjamawal-Nashr. H, p. 148-50.

Fakun, N. and Jadoo, J. *Drug trafficking: The economic impacts*. [O]. Available at: <https://defimedia.info/drug-trafficking-economic-impacts> [Accessed on: 12 July 2018].

Fakun, N. & Jadoo, J. (2017). *Educating for the Future: Are we failing our kids?* Available at: <https://defimedia.info/educating-future-are-we-failing-our-kids>. [Accessed on: 20 May 2018].

Farhan, I. (1982). *Islamic Education Curriculum Between Originality and Modernity*, Jordan. Dar Alfurkan Press.

Ferguson, C. (1959). Diglossia. *Word*, 15, 325-340.

Fidler. B., Russell, S. and Simkins, T. (Eds) (1997). *Choices for Self-Managing Schools: Autonomy and Accountability*. London: Paul Chapman.

Freeman, R.B. (1985). *“Who Escapes? The Relation of Church-Going and Other Background Factors to the Socio-Economic Performance of Black Male Youths from Inner-City Poverty Tracts.”* NBER Working Paper, no. 1656 11. As cited in Patrick F. Fagan, *–Religious Practice and Educational Attainment, Marriage and Religion* Research Institute (2010). [O]. Available at <http://marri.us/wp-content/uploads/Religious-Practice-and-Educational-Attainment.pdf>. [Accessed on: 24 January 2019].

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. First published by the Continuum Publishing Company. *Functionalist youth culture*. Available at: [https://prezi.com/yeonxollq\\_mx/functionalist-views-of-youth-culture/](https://prezi.com/yeonxollq_mx/functionalist-views-of-youth-culture/) [Accessed on: 21 July 2018].

Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change*. Routledge, New York.

Gaither, M. (2008). Why homeschooling happened. *Educational Horizons*. 86, 226-237.

Gardener, H. (2011). *The theory of multiple intelligences, Frame of Mind*.

Ghayyur, T. *Muslim schools vs. Public schools*. [O]. Available at: <http://www.quranfocus.com/blog/tag/islamic-school/> [Accessed on: 15 October 2017].

Gilroy, P. (1996). *Teaching and Learning*, Sheffield, Sheffield University Press.

Glanville, J.L., Sikkink, D. & Hernández, E.I. *“Religious Involvement and Educational Outcomes: The Role of Social Capital and Extracurricular Participation,”* *Sociological Quarterly* 49. (2008). (105-137), 122.

Gorder, C. (1987). *Home Schools: An Alternative*. *United States: Library of Congress*. Cataloguing in Publication Data.

Gordon, M. (1964). *Assimilation in American Life: The role of Race, Religion, and National Origins*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Government of Mauritius. (2018). *National unity and solidarity are key to defining the multicultural landscape of Mauritius, says Prime Minister*. [O]. Available at: <http://www.govmu.org/English/News/Pages/National-unity-and-solidarity-are-key-to-defining-the-multicultural-landscape-of-Mauritius,-says-Prime-Minister.aspx>. [Accessed on: 03 July 2018].

Gutmann, A. (1996). "Democracy, philosophy, and justification." In Seyla Benhabib (Ed.). *Democracy and difference: Contesting the boundaries of the political* (pp. 340–347). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Hadith, based on Sunan al-Tirmidhī 2416.

Hadith Bukhari. Volume 1, Book 2, Number 49. *Part of the Hadith* Narrated by An-Nu'man bin Bashir.

Haekel, J. Encyclopedia Britannica: *totemism Religion, Durkheim to Radcliffe-Brown*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/totemism-religion> [Accessed on: 23 October 2018].

Halliday. (1993). *What Is Academic Language?* [O]. Available at: [https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/62622\\_Pages\\_from\\_Gottlieb\\_Academic\\_Language\\_in\\_Diverse\\_Classrooms%2C\\_Definitions\\_and\\_Contexts\\_2.pdf](https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/62622_Pages_from_Gottlieb_Academic_Language_in_Diverse_Classrooms%2C_Definitions_and_Contexts_2.pdf) [Accessed on: 17 September 2018].

Halstead, M. (1992). "Muslims perspective on the teaching of Christianity in British schools." *British Journal of Education*. 15 (2), 43-54 Geert Driessen Radboud university Nijmegen Michael S. Merry Beloit College, int06-driessenmerry-islamicschools.pdf.

Hamidullah, M. (1939). Educational System in the Time of the Prophet. *Islamic Culture*. Hyderabad. Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 51-59.

Hamidullah, M. citing Ibn Qutaibah. 'Uyunul-Akhbariv. 103 (cf. Amthal of al-Maidaniy ii, 60). [O]. Available at: [https://archive.org/stream/EducationalSystemInTheTimeOfProphet/Educational%20System%20in%20the%20Time%20of%20Prophet\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/EducationalSystemInTheTimeOfProphet/Educational%20System%20in%20the%20Time%20of%20Prophet_djvu.txt) [Accessed on: 12 November 2018].

Hammudah Abdalati. Islam in focus. p.201.

Hanson, S.L. & Ginsburg, A.L. (1988). -Gaining Ground: Values and High School Success, *American Educational Research Journal* 25, no. 3. 356.

Haralambos and Holborn. *Emile Durkheim – the Division of Labour in society – a functionalist view*. p.186. sociology: themes and perspective, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition.

Haralambos and Holborn. 7<sup>th</sup> edition. *Sociology themes and perspectives*. p.8

Haralambos & Holborn. p.8 *ibid*.

Haralambos & Holborn. Culture – functionalist perspectives. p. 666, 7<sup>th</sup> edition. *Sociology: themes and perspectives*. Collins.

Haralambos & Holborn. Robert K. Merton: (1968). p. 861, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, *Sociology: themes and perspectives*. Collins.

Haralambos & Holborn. Alpert. (1939). 7<sup>th</sup> edition, *Sociology: themes and perspectives*, Collins.

Haralambos & Holborn. p.871. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. *Sociology: themes and perspectives*, Collins.

Haralambos & Holborn. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, *Emile Durkheim – Education and social solidarity*, p.726.

Haralambos & Holborn, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. [see discussion on] *Norms and values* pp.5-6.

Haralambos and Holborn. p. 397

Harmon, J. (2007). L'Express.Mu. *Kreol Morisien matters*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.lexpress.mu/article/kreol-morisien-matters> [Accessed on: 21 May 2018].

Harmon, J. Revue Internationale d'éducation de Sèvres, Le système éducatif de l'île Maurice. pp.22-30. [O]. Available at: <https://journals.openedition.org/ries/2050?lang=en> [Accessed on: 15 November 2018].

HazroBeast. (2011). *Darood Sharif Farhan Ali Qadri Mauritius Naat.flv*. [O]. Available at <https://youtu.be/HeovgicZ3lY> [Accessed on: 17 September 2018].

Heera, A.M. (2009). *The teaching of Islamic Studies in Mauritius; Master Degree dissertation at the University of South Africa*. Available at: <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/3656> [Accessed on: 27 July 2018].

Heera, A.M. (2009). *The teaching of Islamic Studies in Mauritius*. Available at: [uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/3656/dissertation\\_heera\\_a.pdf?sequence...](http://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/3656/dissertation_heera_a.pdf?sequence...) [Accessed on: 10 October 2017].

Hitti, P.K. (1960). *The History of Arabs*, 7th edition. London: Macmillan. p.465.

Hollup, O. (2004). Educational policies, reforms and the role of teachers' unions in Mauritius, [O]. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/37686886\\_Educational\\_policies\\_reforms\\_and\\_the\\_role\\_of\\_teachers\\_unions\\_in\\_Mauritius](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/37686886_Educational_policies_reforms_and_the_role_of_teachers_unions_in_Mauritius) [Accessed on: 25 October 2018].

Hollup, O. "*Educational policies, reforms and the role of teachers unions in Mauritius*." Department of Health and Social Studies. Porsgrunn. [O]. Available at: [https://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2439162/skrift2004\\_8.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2439162/skrift2004_8.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) [Accessed on: 25 May 2018].

Hollup, O. *Islamic revivalism and political opposition among minority Muslims in Mauritius*. [O]. Available at: <http://sunnirazvi.net/society/mauritius.htm>, [Accessed on: 20 April 2018].

Hosie, A. (2007). -I hated everything about school: an examination of the relationship between dislike of school, teenage pregnancy and educational disengagement. *Social Policy and Society*. 6:333–347.

Hossanee, Z. *Muslims in Mauritius*. [O]. Available at: [https://www.academia.edu/34517002/Muslims\\_in\\_Mauritius](https://www.academia.edu/34517002/Muslims_in_Mauritius) [Accessed on: 10 May 2018]. Ibid. *Introductory sociology*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, p.471

Hunt, E. (2017). *Teenagers' sleep quality and mental health at risk over late-night mobile phone use*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/may/30/teenagers-sleep-quality-and-mental-health-at-risk-over-late-night-mobile-phone-use> [Accessed on: 30 March 2019].

Huntington, S.P. (1996). *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. N.Y. Simon and Schuster.

Hyleen, M. and Mariaye, S. (2008). *Report by MIE lecturer recommends overhaul of system*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.lexpress.mu/article/report-mie-lecturer-recommends-overhaul-system> [Accessed on: 21 July 2018].

Hyleen, M. and Mariaye, S. (2009). *The role of the school in providing moral education in a multicultural society: the case of Mauritius*. [O]. Available at: <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/1657> [Accessed on: 29 April 2018].

Ibrahim, A. (1996). *The Asian renaissance*. Singapore: Times Editions.

II&E Brochure Series; No. 5. (published by The Institute of Islamic Information and Education (II&E)): *Concept of worship in Islam*. [O]. Available at: <http://www.iupui.edu/~msaiupui/conceptofworship.html> [Accessed on: 21 May 2019].

IISS & Port-Louis High school. (2017). Available at: <https://www.iiss.cloud/about> [Accessed 10 August 2018].

Islamic Schools in the Netherlands. Expansion or Marginalization? Geert Driessen Radboud University Nijmegen Michael S. Merry Beloit College. [O]. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227016929\\_Islamic\\_Schools\\_in\\_the\\_Netherlands\\_Expansion\\_or\\_Marginalization/](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227016929_Islamic_Schools_in_the_Netherlands_Expansion_or_Marginalization/) [Accessed on: 25 May 2019].

Islamic Studies UNISA. *Socio-Cultural life, Ethics, and Education in Islam*. Module Two -ICS 202-5/101. p.21.

-Islam in Belgium. Euro-Islam.info. [O]. Available at: <http://www.euro-islam.info/country-profiles/belgium> [Accessed on: 21 May 2019].

Ismail, H., Md.Yunus, A. S. A., Ali, W. W.Z., Hamzah, R., Abu, R., Nawawi, H. (2009). Belief in God based on the national philosophy of education amongst Malaysian secondary school teachers. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(1), 160-170.

Jahangeer-Chojoo, A. (2010). *From Minority to Mainstream Politics: The Case of Mauritian Muslims* © Kamla-Raj. Available at: <http://krepublishers.com/02-Journals/JSS/JSS-25-0-000-10-Web/JSS-25-1-2-3-000-10-Abst-PDF/JSS-25-1-3-121-10-1156-Jahangeer-C-A/JSS-25-1-3-121-10-1156-Jahangeer-C-A-Tt.pdf>. [Accessed on 23 May 2018].

Jahangeer-Chojoo, A. (2002). Internationales Asien forum, Vol. 33 No. 1- 2, p. 115-126. *Islamisation Processes among Mauritian Muslims*. [O]. Available at: [crossasia-journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/iaf/article/viewFile/951/929](http://crossasia-journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/iaf/article/viewFile/951/929). [Accessed on: 22 May 2018]

Jahangeer-Chojoo, A. (2010). *From Minority to Mainstream Politics: The Case of Mauritian Muslims*. [O]. Available at: <http://krepublishers.com/02-Journals/JSS/JSS-25-0-000-10-Web/JSS-25-1-2-3-000-10-Abst-PDF/JSS-25-1-3-121-10-1156-Jahangeer-C-A/JSS-25-1-3-121-10-1156-Jahangeer-C-A-Tt.pdf>. [Accessed on: 25 May 2017].

Jaumeer Musleem. (1999). « Les Indo-Mauriciens de foi islamique à l'île Maurice ». in, Rencontre avec l'Inde, La diaspora indienne à Maurice. t. 28, n° 2, Conseil Indien pour les Relations Culturelles. p. 106.

Jaunboccus, O. (2018). *Doha Academy*. «La séparation homme-femme est une coutume» [O]. Available at: <https://www.lexpress.mu/article/334838/doha-academy-separation-homme-femme-est-une-coutume> [Accessed on: 21 August 2018].

Jencks, C. (1993) -The definition of culturell. P. 663, Haralambos & Holborn, 7<sup>th</sup> edition. *Sociology: themes and perspectives*, Collins.

Jenn Director Knudsen. (2017). *When Teens Need Their Friends More Than Their Parents*. [O]. Available at: [https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/when\\_teens\\_need\\_their\\_friends\\_more\\_than\\_their\\_parents](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/when_teens_need_their_friends_more_than_their_parents) [Accessed 24 January 2019].

Jordan, W.J. & Nettles, S.M. (2000). -How Students Invest Their Time Outside of School: Effects on School-related Outcomes, *Social Psychology of Education* 3, 217-243.

Jumma Masjid. *Muslims in Mauritius*. [O]. available at: <http://jumma Masjid.org/musliminmauritius/> [Accessed on: 25 September 2018].

Kabdan, R (1992). 'Op Weg naar Maatschappelijke Spanningen op Religieuze Gronden. Islamitische Scholen in Nederland zijn Onwenselijk'. *Vernieuwing* 51 (9), 4-8.

Kandari, K.M. (2004). *Islamic School: Challenges and potentials in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A case study of Al-Amal, a private bilingual school in Kuwait*. [O]. Available at: <https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/handle/10919/27896> [Accessed on: 28 July 2017].

Kant. (1803). *Werke*, vol ix, p.450. [O]. Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED381352.pdf> [Accessed on: 20 August 2018].

Kazim, S. (2013). *The concept of communication in Islam*. Available at: <https://muslimvillage.com/2013/04/15/38313/the-concept-of-communication-in-islam/> [Accessed on: 25 May 2018].

Kelly, A. (1989). *The Curriculum, Theory and Practice*. London. Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd.

Kern, S. (2014). -The Islamization of Belgium and the Netherlands in 2013. II Gatestone Institute. [O]. Available at <http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/4129/islamization-belgium-netherlands> [Accessed on: 21 May 2019].

Kilp, A. *Secularization of society after communism: Ten catholic-protestant societies*. [O]. Available at [http://www.ksk.edu.ee/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/KVUOA\\_Toimetised\\_12-Kilp.pdf](http://www.ksk.edu.ee/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/KVUOA_Toimetised_12-Kilp.pdf) [Accessed on: 21 October 2017].

King, V., Elder, G.H. & Whitbeck, B. (1997). -Religious Involvement Among Rural Youth: An Ecological and Life-Course Perspective, II *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 7, no. 4 431-456, 447.

Kisto, M. (2014). *Education secular International Journal of Recent Research in Interdisciplinary Sciences (IJRRIS)*. Vol. 1, Issue 3. pp: (1-8). Month: October - December 2014. [O]. Available at: [www.paperpublications.org](http://www.paperpublications.org) Page | 1 Paper Publications Discouraged Youth in Mauritius.

Knapp, P. (1994). *One World – Many Worlds: Contemporary Sociological Theory*. pp. 191-192. New York. Harper-Collins

Knoester, C. and. Haynie, D.L. (2005). -Community Context, Social Integration into Family, and Youth Violence, II *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67, no 3. 767-780.

Koop, K. (2004). *L'Île Maurice à l'ère de la mondialisation. Un modèle d'un développement de rattrapage?* [O]. Available at: [http://horizon.documentation.ird.fr/exl-doc/pleins\\_textes/autrep/2/010035403.pdf](http://horizon.documentation.ird.fr/exl-doc/pleins_textes/autrep/2/010035403.pdf) [Accessed on: 15 October 2018].

Kroeber, A. L. (1948). *Anthropology: Race, Language, Culture, Psychology, Prehistory*. New York and Burlingame. Harcourt. Brace & World, Inc.

Kucukcan, T. (1998). -Community, identity, institutionalism of Islamic education: the case of Ikra Primary school in North London. *British Journal of Islamic Education*. 21 (1), 32-43.

Kumar, A. (2007). Personal, *Academic and Career Development in Higher Education*. [O]. Available at: <http://cw.routledge.com/textbooks/professional/9780415423601/data/Kumar-Chapter1.pdf> [Accessed on 2 July 2018].

Kumar, S & Ahmad, S. citing -Secondary Education Commission. 1951-52ll. [O]. [https://www.academia.edu/7686933/LESSON\\_1\\_MEANING\\_AIMS\\_AND\\_PROCESS\\_OF\\_EDUCATION\\_-Satish\\_Kumar](https://www.academia.edu/7686933/LESSON_1_MEANING_AIMS_AND_PROCESS_OF_EDUCATION_-Satish_Kumar).

Kumar, S. & Ahmad, S. *Meaning, Aims And Process Of Education* [O]. Available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/1146/1167f80224e937ae5d5231320f729a29681a.pdf>. [Accessed on: 25 May 2018].

Kweon, B., Ellis, C., Lee, J. & Jacobs, K. *The link between school environments and student academic performance*. [O]. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313316009\\_The\\_link\\_between\\_school\\_environments\\_and\\_student\\_academic\\_performance](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313316009_The_link_between_school_environments_and_student_academic_performance) [Accessed on 21 March 2019].

Lateef, Y. (2014). *An over-view of western and Islamic education. Doctoral Dissertations 1896 - February 2014* [O]." (1975). Doctoral Dissertations 1896 - February 2014. 3822. [O]. Available at: [https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations\\_1/3822](https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_1/3822) [Accessed on: 21 July 2018].

Leeuw, E.D. & Hussein, A.A. (1999). *Islamic health promotion and interculturalization*. Health Promotion International. 14(4). 347-353.

Le Mauricien. (2012). *Education, Le Kreol Maurisien au primaire*. [O]. Available at : <https://www.lemauricien.com/article/%C3%A9ducation-kreol-morisien-au-primaire/> [Accessed on: 20 May 2019].

Le Mauricien. *En octobre, à Phoenix: La veuve joyeuse nous revient enfin !* 9 September. [O]. Available at: <https://www.lemauricien.com/article/en-octobre-a-phoenix-la-veuve-joyeuse-nous-revient-enfin/> [Accessed on: 14 October 2018].

Lessa, William and Vogt, Evon (editors), *Reader in comparative religion* (4<sup>th</sup> edition) New York, Harper and Row, 1979 [O] Available at: [https://yale.imodules.com/s/1667/images/gid6/editor\\_documents/flick\\_readings/flick\\_su](https://yale.imodules.com/s/1667/images/gid6/editor_documents/flick_readings/flick_su)

p\_readings/durkheim-the\_elementary\_forms\_of\_religious\_life.pdf?sessionid=21733b19-5b4b-4120-bd73-9893a100d9c8&cc=1 [Accessed on: 10 June 2019].

LiseMestry, A. (2018). cited in L'Express. *50 ansMoris: la femme, épinedorsale de l'économie*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.lexpress.mu/article/327637/50ansmoris-femme-epine-dorsale-leconomie> [Accessed on: 21 November 2018].

Livesey, C. (1939). Cambridge international AS and A level. *Sociology Course book*. Cultural deprivation. p. 170.

Livesey, C. (1939). Cambridge International AS and A Level. *Sociology Coursebook*. p.233.

Livesey, C. (1939). Cambridge International AS and A Level. *Sociology Course book*. Alpert chapter 9: religion, p. 293.

Livesey, C. *Secularisation*. [O]. Available at: <http://www.sociology.org.uk/notes/comsec1.pdf>. [Accessed on: 24 March 2018].

Ly Tio Fane, H. (1993). *Ile de France*. (1746-1750). L'émergence de Port-Louis. Mauritius: Mahatma Gandhi Institute.

Maniacara, M. (2015). *A Da'wah (Invitation of people towards Islam) movement in Mauritius*. [O]. Available at: <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/18263> [Accessed on: 08 October 2018].

Mabud, A. 1992; Haw. 1994; Parker-Jenkins. 1991. *Islamic Schools in the Netherlands: Expansion or Marginalization*. Act (NMECS, 2005) cited in: Islamic schools of the Netherlands. [O]. Available at: <https://www.slideshare.net/gdries/geert-driessen-michale-merry-2006-islamic-schools-in-the-netherlands-expansion-or-marginalization> [Accessed on: 21 May 2019].

Macky, A. *Drug Abuse: Save Mauritius And Our Children!* [O]. Available at <https://defimedia.info/paradise-island-marred-soaring-crimes> [Accessed on: 14 October 2018].

Mahadeo, S.K. (2004). *History of English and French languages in Mauritius: A study in language and power*.

Mahadeo, S.K. (2010). Mauritius Times. *Implementation of literacy in Kreol will paradoxically lead to a **segregationist and elitist model of education***. [O]. Available at: <http://www.mauritiustimes.com/mt/satish-mahadeo/> [Accessed on: 18 August 2018].

Marshall, B. (1983). *All that is solid Melts into Air*. London. Verso.

Martiniello, M. and Rea, A. (2003). -*Belgium's Immigration Policy Brings Renewal and Challenges.*" Migration Policy Institute. [O]. Available at: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/belgiums-immigration-policy-brings-renewal-and-challenges> [Accessed on: 10 May 2019].

Maslow, A. *The hierarchy of needs.* [O]. Available at: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-maslows-hierarchy-of-needs-4136760> [Accessed on: 12 November 2018].

Massialas, B.E. and Jarrar, S.A. (1983). *Education in the Arab World.* New York: Praeger Publishers.

Maudarbux, B. (2018). A seminar on interreligious education in Mauritius.

Maudarbux, B. *Education Reforms: The Urgency of Revamping the 'Islamic Studies' Syllabuses.* [O]. Available at: <https://www.centuryassociation.org/belall-maudarbux-toc/81-education-reforms-the-urgency-of-revamping-the-islamic-studies-syllabuses> [Accessed on: 10 September 2017].

Maudarbux, B. (2018). Seminar hosted at ICC Form VI.

Maudarbux, B. *What is wrong with Islamic Schools?* [O]. Available at: <https://www.centuryassociation.org> [Accessed on: 21 August 2017].

Mauritian Hinduism. (2015). *Pluralism project.* [O]. Available at: <http://pluralism.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/report.pdf> [Accessed on: 21 November 2018].

*Mauritian Muslims.* [O]. Available at: <http://www.mauritianmuslim.co.uk/mauritius.asp>. [Accessed on: 20 April 2018].

Mauritius 2016 International Religious Freedom Report. State.gov. (2018). [O] Available at: <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/268918.pdf> [Accessed on: 17 June 2018].

*Mauritius 2017 Crime & Safety Report.* [O]. Available at <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=21803> [Accessed on: 28 October 2018].

Mauritius. (2013). *Mauritian youngsters are fond of drinking.* [O]. Available at: <https://www.safocanindien.org/mauritian-youngsters-drinking/> [Accessed on: 11 October 2018].

Mauritius Times *Interview: Dr. Satish Kumar Mahadeo, Associate Professor in English.* [O]. Available at: <http://www.mauritiustimes.com/mt/dr-satish-k-mahadeo/> [Accessed on: 11 October 2018].

McGivern, R. *Introduction to Sociology, chapter 5: Religion*. [O]. Available at: <https://opentextbc.ca/introductiontosociology/chapter/chapter-15-religion/>. [Accessed on: 10 August 2018].

McGivern, R. Religion Chapter 15. *Classical Sociology: Émile Durkheim*. [O]. Available at: <https://opentextbc.ca/introductiontosociology/chapter/chapter-15-religion/> [accessed on: 25 November 2018].

McKinnon, M. (2016). *Teachers are leaving the profession – here's how to make them stay*. Available at: <http://theconversation.com/teachers-are-leaving-the-profession-heres-how-to-make-them-stay-52697> [Accessed on: 10 October 2018].

McLeod, S. (2014). Carl Rogers | Simply Psychology. [O]. [Simplypsychology.org](http://simplypsychology.org). Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/carl-rogers.html> [Accessed on: 8 June 2018].

Mead, G.H. (2016). *The Self, Social theory re-wired*. [O]. Available at: <http://routledgesoc.com/category/profile-tags/self>. [Accessed on: 24 October 2017].

Medine Master plan, 2005-2025. (2005). [O]. Available at: <https://www.medine.com/images/Brochure/MedineMasterplan.pdf> [Accessed on: 20 November 2018].

Menk, M.I. *Building bridges with Mufti Menk in Mauritius*. (2018). [O]. Available at: <http://knowislam.com.ng/building-bridges-with-mufti-ismail-menk-in-port-louis-mauritius/> [Accessed on: 30 August 2018].

Menon, N. " *The Pedagogical Divide: Toward an Islamic pedagogy*." [O]. Available at: [https://farooq.files.wordpress.com/2007/05/nadeem\\_memon\\_and\\_qaiser\\_ahmad\\_2006\\_-\\_the\\_pedagogical\\_divide.pdf](https://farooq.files.wordpress.com/2007/05/nadeem_memon_and_qaiser_ahmad_2006_-_the_pedagogical_divide.pdf). [Accessed on: 16 July 2018].

Metz, H.C. (ed.) (1994). *Mauritius: A Country Study*. Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress. Ethnicity, Religion, and Language. [O]. Available at: <http://countrystudies.us/mauritius/10.htm>. [Accessed on: 23 May 2017].

Meyer. (1993). *Islamic Schools in the Netherlands: Expansion or Marginalization?*

Miller, A. *Kreol in Mauritian Schools: Mother Tongue Language Education and Public Opinion*. Available at: <https://ling.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/AllisonMillerSeniorEssay.pdf> [Accessed on: 24 May 2018].

Miller, J.P. (2007). *The holistic curriculum*. University of Toronto Press.

Miller, J.P. (2010). *Whole child education*. University of Toronto Press.

Ministry of Education. *Inspiring every child, the nine continuous basic schooling*. [O]. Available at: <http://ministry-education.govmu.org/English/educationsector/nys/Documents/NYCBE%20Booklet.pdf> [Accessed on: 14 October 2018].

Ministry of Education. *Nine-year continuous basic education*. [O]. Available at: [http://ministry-education.govmu.org/English/educationsector/nys/Documents/Presentation\\_PRESS\\_NN\\_19August2015pdf.pdf](http://ministry-education.govmu.org/English/educationsector/nys/Documents/Presentation_PRESS_NN_19August2015pdf.pdf) [Accessed 21 August 2018].

Ministry of Education. *the Nine-year continuous schooling*. [O]. Available at: [http://ministry-education.govmu.org/English/educationsector/nys/Documents/NYS%20Brochure%20Secondary%20English%20\(Viewing\)%20FINAL%20121217.pdf](http://ministry-education.govmu.org/English/educationsector/nys/Documents/NYS%20Brochure%20Secondary%20English%20(Viewing)%20FINAL%20121217.pdf) [Accessed on: 14/10/2018].

Ministry of Social Security. *National Solidarity and Environment and Sustainable Development, Allowance under social aid*. [O]. Available at: <http://socialsecurity.govmu.org/English/Department/Social%20Aid/Pages/Allowance-under-Social-Aid.aspx> [Accessed on: 23 November 2018].

Mohd Nor, R., Ibrahim, A.Z.B., Yusof, A., Zakaria, M.F. & Ramli, M.F. (2012). *Early History of Islamic Education and its Expansion in the State of Kelantan*. Malaysia. [O]. Available at: [https://umexpert.um.edu.my/file/publication/00009616\\_83966.pdf](https://umexpert.um.edu.my/file/publication/00009616_83966.pdf) [Accessed on: 21 May 2019].

Momen, M. (1999). *The phenomenon of religion, a thematic approach*.

Moore, C. (2013). *Tell the truth: Muslim faith schools must be scrutinised more than Christian ones*. Available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/islamic-state/12048591/Muslim-faith-schools-must-be-looked-at-differently.html> [Accessed on: 15 September 2018].

Moore, S., Chapman, S. and Aiken, D. (2001). *Sociology for As-level @ Collins*. P.7.

Moore, S., Chapman, S. and Aiken, D. (2001). *Sociology for As-level @ Collins*. p.38.

Mortimer, C. (2005). *-Muslim boarding school rated 'good' by Ofsted threatens to expel pupils for mixing with 'outsiders'*" [O]. Available at <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/muslim-boarding-school-rated-good-by-ofsted-threatens-to-expel-pupils-for-mixing-with-outsiders-10415952.html> [Accessed on: 10 March 2018].

Moryani, R. (1977). *The first world conference on Muslim Education*.  
[http://www.academia.edu/3880469/THE\\_FIRST\\_WORLD\\_CONFERENCE\\_ON\\_MUSLIM\\_EDUCATION\\_1977](http://www.academia.edu/3880469/THE_FIRST_WORLD_CONFERENCE_ON_MUSLIM_EDUCATION_1977). [Accessed on 12 April 2018].

Moyser, G. (ed.) (1991). *Politics and Religion in the Modern World*, London, Routledge.

Muller, C. & Ellison, C.G. (2001). -Religious Involvement, Social Capital, and Adolescents' Academic Progress: Evidence from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988. *Sociological Focus* 34. 155-183.

Mungly, J.N. (2011). *Case study of main potential improvements to madrasah education in Mauritius*. Port Louis: unpublished.

Munisamy, R.L. *We love Mauritius; Kreol in Schools*. [O]. Available at:  
<http://welovemauritius.org/node/36> [Accessed on: 10 May 2018].

Munisamy, R. *Kreol*. [O]. Available at: <http://welovemauritius.org/node/36>. [Accessed on: 24 March 2017].

Muslim Council of Britain. *"Towards Greater Understanding, Meeting the needs of Muslim pupils in state schools"*. [O]. Available at  
<http://www.religionlaw.co.uk/MCBSchoolsreport07.pdf> [Accessed on: 27 January 2018].

National Center for Health Statistics. (1994). -Vital Statistics of the United States 1990. *Natality* 1. 194-236. Tables 185 and 186.

Naqib, A.A. (1993). *Ibn Sina on education, the quarterly review of comparative education*. (Paris, UNESCO: International Bureau of Education). vol. 23, N° 1/2p. 53-69. ©UNESCO: International Bureau of Education, 2000. [O]. Available at:  
<http://muslimheritage.com/article/ibn-sina-education> [Accessed on: 14 August 2018].

Nath, R.H. (2010). Religion and liberty, volume 1 number 4. *The myth of a value-free education*. [O]. Available at: <https://acton.org/pub/religion-liberty/volume-1-number-4/myth-value-free-education> [Accessed on: 21 October 2018].

Nofal, N. (2000). AL-GHAZALI (A.D. 1058-1111; A.H. 450-505). [O]. Available at:  
<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ghazalie.pdf>. [Accessed on: 20 October 2018].

O'Beirne, M. (2004). *Religion in England and Wales: Findings from the 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey*. Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate.

Owadally, A.M.A. (2013). *Language, education, and identities in plural Mauritius: a study of the Kreol, Hindi, and Urdu Standard 1 textbooks*. [O]. Available at:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09500782.2013.857349?src=recsys&>  
[Accessed on: 22 August 2018].

Padela, A. (2015). A Grounded Theory Study of the Prophet Muhammad's Leadership Behaviors: A Model for Islamic School Principals. [O]. Available at: [https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.mu/&httpsredir=1&article=1245&context=education\\_etd](https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.mu/&httpsredir=1&article=1245&context=education_etd) [Accessed: 27 September 2017].

Parsons, T. (Knapp, pp. 191-192).

Parsons, T. A Functionalist Analysis. *Education and Universalistic Values*. [O]. Available at: [http://vcampus.uom.ac.mu/soci1101/841\\_a\\_functionalist\\_analysis.html](http://vcampus.uom.ac.mu/soci1101/841_a_functionalist_analysis.html) [Accessed on: 25 August 2018].

Paternoster, R. (1988). -Examining Three Wave Deterrence Models: A Question of Temporal Order and Specification. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 79. 135-179 [Accessed on: 21 March 2019].

Piaget. (1999). Constructivism; Ramful. cited: Wool. Available at: <http://www.iteachnet.org/node/107> [Accessed on: 25 July 2018].

Piaget, J. (2018). Jean Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development, cited by Saul McLeod. [O]. Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/piaget.html> [Accessed on: 25 May 2019].

Prime Minister's Office Port Louis. (2017). General Notice No 737 OF 2017, Republic Of Mauritius Public Holidays—2018. [O]. Available at: <http://pmo.govmu.org/English/Documents/Communiqu%C3%A9%20and%20Reports/Public%20holidays%20-%202018.pdf> [Accessed on: 11 October 2018].

Prinstein, M.J., Boergers, J., & Vernberg, E.M. (2001). Overt and relational aggression in adolescents: Social-psychological adjustment of aggressors and victims. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 30, 479-491.

Qutb, M. Cited by Rafiu Adebayo in -Islamization of the Curriculum....ll. Qutb, M. (1979). -*Religion, Knowledge and Education*" in M.N. Al-Attas (Ed.). Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education. Jeddah: King Abdul-Aziz University and Hodder and Stoughton, pp: 55.

Rabai, A. (2014). *Teaching English in the Arab World: A Future in Turmoil*. *Education* 4(5): 126-1332014, [O]. Available at: <file:///C:/Users/home/Downloads/10.5923.j.edu.20140405.04.pdf> [Accessed on: 21 June 2018].

Rahman, M.M. (2018). Education, Teaching Methods and Techniques in the Early Years of Islam During the Era of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). *IJRDO - Journal of Educational Research*. (ISSN: 2456-2947), 3(3). Available at: <https://ijrdo.org/index.php/er/article/view/1876> [Accessed on: 25 July 2017].

Rajah-Carrim, A. (2010). *Choosing a spelling system for Mauritian Creole*. [O]. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/scientific-contributions/2027066152\\_Aaliya\\_Rajah-Carrim](https://www.researchgate.net/scientific-contributions/2027066152_Aaliya_Rajah-Carrim). [Accessed on: 15 September 2017].

Rajah-Carim, A. *The role of Mauritian Creole in the religious practices of Mauritian Muslims*. [O]. Available at: [http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/~pgc/archive/2003/proc03/Aaliya%20\\_Rajah-Carrim03.pdf](http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/~pgc/archive/2003/proc03/Aaliya%20_Rajah-Carrim03.pdf). [Accessed on: 05 January 2018].

Ramdoyal, R. *History of schooling*. [O]. Available at: [http://vcampus.uom.ac.mu/soci1101/83history\\_of\\_schooling\\_in\\_mauritius.html](http://vcampus.uom.ac.mu/soci1101/83history_of_schooling_in_mauritius.html). [Accessed on: 20 March 2017].

Ramdoyal, R. (1977). *The Development of Education in Mauritius 1710-1976*. Réduit: Mauritius Institute of Education. A story of a colonial family in the Indian Ocean.

Rather, N.Q. & Daniel, M. *Islamic Socio-Ethics for a Just Society: An overview*. *International Interdisciplinary Research Journal*. {Bi-Monthly}. ISSN 2249-9598, Volume-VI, Issue-V, Sept-Oct 2016 Issue. [O]. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307607395\\_Islamic\\_Socio-Ethics\\_for\\_a\\_Just\\_Society\\_An\\_Overview/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307607395_Islamic_Socio-Ethics_for_a_Just_Society_An_Overview/download) [Accessed on: 21 May 2019].

Regnerus, M.D. (2001). *Making the Grade: The Influence of Religion upon the Academic Performance of Youth in Disadvantaged Communities*. University of Pennsylvania. Center for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society, no. 3.

Regnerus, M.D. (2000). -Shaping Schooling Success: Religious Socialization and Educational Outcomes in Metropolitan Public Schools. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. 39, no. 3. 363-370.

Reitz, J. (2012). -*The distinctiveness of Canadian immigration experience. Patterns of Prejudice*". 46(5), 518–838.

Renaerts, M. (1999). Processes of homogenization in the Muslim educational world in Brussels. *International Journal of Educational Research*. 31, 283-2.

Republic of Mauritius. *History*. [O]. Available at: <http://www.govmu.org/English/ExploreMauritius/Pages/History.aspx> [Accessed on: 10 August 2018].

Revise Sociology, A Level Sociology revision. [O] Available at:  
<https://revisesociology.com/2017/09/05/taclott-parsons-perspective-on-education/>  
[Accessed on: 21 May 2019].

Revise Sociology. (2017). *Durkheim's perspective on education*. [O]. Available at:  
<https://revisesociology.com/2017/08/22/functionalist-durkheim-role-education/>  
[Accessed on: 25 April 2019].

Revolv. *Abdool-Razack Mohamed*. [O]. Available at:  
<https://www.revolv.com/page/Abdool-Razack-Mohamed> [Accessed on: 11 November 2018].

Rogers, C. updated (2014). *Carl Rogers, by Saul McLeod*. [O]. Available at:  
<https://www.simplypsychology.org/carl-rogers.html>. [Accessed on: 10 May 2018].

Rosabelle, B. (2006). *Le malaise créole. Ethnic Identity in Mauritius*. New York-Oxford. Berghahn Books.

Rosemay, J. (2018). *Katherine Mansfield Presentation*. [O]. Slideshare.net. Available at:  
<https://www.slideshare.net/jessrosemay/katherine-mansfield-presentation> [Accessed on: 6 May 2018].

Royal College Curepipe. *School History*. [O]. Available at:  
<http://rcc.edu.govmu.org/English/AboutUs/Pages/School-History.aspx> [Accessed on: 16 October 2018].

Saghir, A. (2008). *An introduction to homeschooling for Muslim parents*. Thesis. [O]. Available at: <http://csus-dspace.calstate.edu/bitstream/handle/10211.9/1252/FINAL%20FINAL%20THESIS.pdf?sequence=1> [Accessed on: 20 November 2018].

Sahih International translation of the Quran: [O] Available at: <https://quran.com/1>

Al Baqara 2:2; Al Baqara 2:31-33; Al Baqara 2:102;

Al Imran 3:159. Al Maidah 5:110; Al An'am, 6:162;

An naml, 27:40; Az Zumar 39:9

Al Ahzab 33:21; Al Ahzab 33:35;

Al Alaq 96:1-5;

Al Furqan 25:53; Al Mulk 67:2-3; 67:5;

Qaf, Qaf, 50:1-2; 50:9; Qaf, 50:11;

Ta Ha, 20:55; Ta Ha 20:114;

Saleh, Z. (1959). *Al-Usus al-nafsiyya li-l-ta'lim al-thanawi*, Cairo: al-Nahda al-Misriyya, pp. 401-402.

Salverda, T. (2015). Mauritius Times: „*Franco-Mauritians have realised that their economic power is best served by staying away from politics.*“ [O]. Available at: <http://www.mauritiustimes.com/mt/interview-dr-tijo-salverda/>. [Accessed on: 20 March 2018].

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2012). *“Research Methods for Business Students”*. 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Pearson Education Limited.

Sayyid, N. -The Loss of Adab and the Fall of the Muslim World. II [O]. Available at: <https://allahcentric.wordpress.com/2010/09/25/the-loss-of-adab-and-the-fall-of-the-muslim-world-sayyid-naquib-al-attas/> [Accessed on: 10 August 2018].

Sclafani, D. (2008). [O]. Available at: [https://academics.hamilton.edu/documents/Thesis\\_Final\\_Sclafani.pdf](https://academics.hamilton.edu/documents/Thesis_Final_Sclafani.pdf) [Accessed on: 24 March 2019].

Sebastopol State Secondary Schools. *Urdu*. [O]. Available at: <http://sebsss.edu.govmu.org/English/Pages/Departments/Urdu.aspx> [Accessed on: 11 October 2018].

Selvon, S. (ed). (2005). *A comprehensive history of Mauritius*. Rose-Hill: Mauritius Printing Specialists.

Sentini, A. University of Mauritius, slightly adapted by Daniel K. Schneider. (2007). [O]. Available at: [http://edutechwiki.unige.ch/en/Transformative\\_pedagogy](http://edutechwiki.unige.ch/en/Transformative_pedagogy) [Accessed on: 12 October 2018].

Shadid, W. & van Koningsveld, P. (1991). Institutionalization and integration of Islam in the Netherlands. In W. Shadid, & P. van Koningsveld (Eds.), *The integration of Islam and Hinduism in Western Europe*. (pp. 87-121). Kampen: Kok Pharos.

Shakoor, M.A. *Pre-Islamic Arab poetry: a prologue*. [O]. Available at: [https://www.academia.edu/30963696/Pre-Islamic\\_Arabic\\_Poetry\\_A\\_Prologue?auto=download](https://www.academia.edu/30963696/Pre-Islamic_Arabic_Poetry_A_Prologue?auto=download) [Accessed on: 10 December 2018].

Sham'ah Md-Yunus (Associate Professor, Eastern Illinois University). (2015). *Muslim Immigrant Children in the United States: Practical Suggestions for Teachers*. [O].

Available at: [https://www.childresearch.net/papers/multi/2015\\_01.html](https://www.childresearch.net/papers/multi/2015_01.html) [Accessed on: 20 November 2017].

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Salih al-Uthaymin. (2017). *The Ruling on Learning the English Language*. [O]. Available at <http://dusunnah.com/video/the-ruling-on-learning-the-english-language-shaykh-muhammad-ibn-salih-al-uthaymin/> [Accessed on: 20 November 2018].

Siddiqui, S. *Muslim schools Vs Public schools*. [O]. Available at: <http://www.themodernreligion.com/teens/skool.html> [Accessed on: 11 May 2019].

Sina, I. (1906). *Kitab al-siyasa*. ed. by Louis Ma'luf, *Majallat al-Sharq*. p. 1074. Cairo.

Sister Clara Muhammad School. *About our foundation*. [O] Available at: <https://www.claramuhammadfoundation.org/about-us/> [Accessed on: 15 May 2019].

Smart, T. (2011). -*The Dark Side of a Paradise Island*" dd. [O]. Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk › News › World> [Accessed on: 15 October 2018].

Spiecker and Steutel. (2001). [O]. Available at: Education's Epistemology: Rationality, Diversity, and Critical Thinking [Accessed on: 21 May 2019].

Steffens, B. Critical Acclaim for Ibn al Haytham - First Scientist. [O]. Available at: <http://www.firstscientist.net/customf78c.html?pid=571860> [Accessed on: 28 October 2018].

Stiglitz, J. (2011). cited in Defi Media: *The Mauritius miracle, or how to make a big success of a small economy*. [O]. Available at: <https://business.mega.mu/2011/03/09/mauritius-miracle-joseph-e-stiglitz/> [Accessed on: 15 October 2017].

Straight Answers. (2007). Prem Saddul. *Pedagogue: "School is like a fortress"*. Available at: <https://www.lexpress.mu/article/how-far-are-parents-blame> [Accessed on: 25 October 2018].

Street, B. (2018). Sir Edward Burnett Tylor | British anthropologist. [O]. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Edward-Burnett-Tylor> [Accessed on: 14 May 2018].

Sunday Times. (2017). *Parwez Kureemun n'est plus*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.sundaytimesmauritius.com/parwez-kureemun-nest-plus/> [Accessed on: 25 October 2018].

Sunday Times. (2017). *Drug trafficking: The economic impacts*. [O]. Available at: <https://www.sundaytimesmauritius.com/drug-abuse-save-mauritius-and-our-children/> [Accessed on: 28 October 2018].

Suntoo, R. and Chitto Hemant, B. (2012). *Managing multi-ethnic Mauritius*. [O]. Available at: [https://globaljournals.org/GJHSS\\_Volume12/6-Managing-Multi-Ethnic-Mauritius.pdf](https://globaljournals.org/GJHSS_Volume12/6-Managing-Multi-Ethnic-Mauritius.pdf). [Accessed on: 15 November 2018].

Suntoo, R. and Chitto Hemant, B. (2011). *Youth Culture and Development in Mauritius*. [O] Available at: [http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Mauritius\\_2011\\_Youth\\_Policy\\_Briefing.pdf](http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Mauritius_2011_Youth_Policy_Briefing.pdf). [Accessed on: 18 April 2018].

Tamimi, A. (2000). "The Origins of Arab Secularism." In *Islam and Secularism in the Middle East*. edited by Espasito, Jon L. and Tamimi, A. 13-28. New York: New York University Press. 17.

Thanatassa. n.d. *What were some intellectual achievements of the Umayyad dynasty?* [O]. Available at: <https://www.enotes.com/homework-help/what-were-some-intellectual-achievements-umayyad-217797> [Accessed on: 12 October 2018].

The Local. (2016). *State-funded Danish Muslim school tells girls, not to date*. [O]. Available at <http://www.thelocal.dk/20160222/state-funded-danish-muslim-school-bans-dating> [Accessed on: 17 August 2017].

The Milli Gazette. (2016). *Urdu in Mauritius*. [O]. Available at: <http://www.milligazette.com/news/13599-urdu-in-mauritius> [Accessed on: 20 October 2018]

The U.S library of Congress. *Ethnicity, Religion, and Language*. [O]. Available at: <http://countrystudies.us/mauritius/10.htm> [Accessed on: 15 November 2018].

Thurston, A. *Inside US Islamic Schools*. [O]. Available at: <http://www.bu.edu/today/2016/inside-us-islamic-schools/> [Accessed on: 10 October 2018].

Tibawi, A.L. (1972). *Islamic Education: It's Traditional and Modernization in Arab National System*. London: Luzac.

Timani, H. (2015). *Islamic Schools in America: Islam's Vehicle to the Future?* [O]. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237817673\\_Islamic\\_Schools\\_in\\_America\\_Islams\\_Vehicle\\_to\\_the\\_Future](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237817673_Islamic_Schools_in_America_Islams_Vehicle_to_the_Future). [Accessed on: 27 August 2017].

Tinker, C. *State Funded Muslim Schools? Equality, Identity and Community in Multi-faith Britain*. [O]. Available at: <http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/10936/2/430518.pdf>. [Accessed on: 25 October 2018].

Toorawa, S. (2007). *The medieval Waqwaq islands and the Mascarenes*. Hassam Toorawa Trust. Port Louis, Mauritius.

Toth, A. (1995). 'Mauritius', in Metz, H (ed) *Indian Ocean. Five Island Countries*, Washington: Area Handbook Series: 89-137.

Tylor, E. (1871). *Edward Burnett Tylor, the founder of cultural anthropology*[O]. Available at: [https://ocw.mit.edu/courses/anthropology/21a-01-how-culture-works-fall-2012/readings/MIT21A\\_01F12\\_Sir\\_Edwr\\_d\\_cul.pdf](https://ocw.mit.edu/courses/anthropology/21a-01-how-culture-works-fall-2012/readings/MIT21A_01F12_Sir_Edwr_d_cul.pdf) [Accessed on: 25 August 2018].

Umari, A. *Madinan society at the time of the prophet, Volume I, its characteristics and organisation*. pp.64-65.

Umari, A. *Madinan society at the time of the prophet, Volume I, its characteristics and organisation*. p.79.

UNESCO. EDUCATION ACT 39 of 1957 – 28 December 1957. [O]. Available at: <http://www.unesco.org/education/edurights/media/docs/0d81d3ea8d232a709c68e41224e1b358f7978b99.pdf> [Accessed on: 21 July 2018].

UNESCO. (2006). *Initiating and conducting an experimental peer review exercise in education in Africa Mauritius 2000–2005 educational reform*. Guinea: Ibrahima Bahlalya. WGESA.

UNESCO. WORLD data on education, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, 2006/7. Mauritius. [O]. Available at: [http://www.ibe.unesco.org/Countries/WDE/2006/SUB-SAHARAN\\_AFRICA/Mauritius/Mauritius.pdf](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/Countries/WDE/2006/SUB-SAHARAN_AFRICA/Mauritius/Mauritius.pdf) [Accessed on: 24 October 2018].

U.S Department of State. *International Religious Freedom Report 2002*. Bureau Of Democracy, Human Rights, And Labor. [O]. Available at: <HTTPS://WWW.STATE.GOV/J/DRL/RLS/IRF/2002/13846.HTM> [accessed on: 25 November 2018].

Vasant, B. *Education reform 2008-2014*. [O]. Available at: <http://ministry-education.govmu.org/English/Documents/EDUCATION%20REPORT%20in%20Action%202002.9.14.pdf> [Accessed on: 30 October 2017].

Van Wynsberghe, A. (2018). *The Benefits of Positive Behaviour Support*. [O]. Available at: <https://psychcentral.com/blog/the-benefits-of-positive-behavior-support/> [accessed on: 21 March 2019].

- Versteegh, K. (1997). *Arabic in the Pre-Islamic Period*. [O]. Available at: [https://acc.teachmideast.org/texts.php?module\\_id=1&reading\\_id=36](https://acc.teachmideast.org/texts.php?module_id=1&reading_id=36) [Accessed on: 21 August 2018].
- Von Glasersfeld, E. (1995:184). *Radical Constructivism: A Way of Knowing and Learning*. [O]. Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED381352.pdf>. [Accessed on: 22 May 2017].
- WaThiong'o, N. (1986). *Decolonising the Mind: The politics of language in African Literature*. London: James Currey. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Webb, P. (2017). -Excellence of the Arabs|. *Ibn Qutaybah and the Cultural Authority of Poetry*. [O]. Available at: <http://www.libraryofarabicliterature.org/2017/excellence-of-the-arabs-ibn-qutaybah-and-the-cultural-authority-of-poetry/> [Accessed on: 21 May 2018].
- Werner, N.E. & Crick, N.R. (1999). Relational aggression and social-psychological adjustment in a college sample. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 108, 615-623.
- What Is Culture? | Definition of Culture. [O]. Available at: <https://www.livescience.com/21478-what-is-culture-definition-of-culture.html>. [Accessed on: 30 July 2018].
- Wilson, B. (1982). *Religion in Sociological Perspective*. Oxford University Press.
- Winston, R. (2005). *Child of our time*. The Open University.
- Winthrop, R.H. (1991). *Dictionary of Concepts in Cultural Anthropology*. New York: Greenwood.
- World Bank. *Implementation of education reform in Mauritius*. [O]. Available at: [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFRREGTOPEducation/Resources/444659-1232743000972/Implementation\\_Education\\_Reform\\_Mauritius.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFRREGTOPEducation/Resources/444659-1232743000972/Implementation_Education_Reform_Mauritius.pdf) [Accessed on: 22 November 2018].
- World Civilisation. *The Rise and Spread of Islam*, Ch. 7. [O]. Available at: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldcivilization/chapter/culture-and-religion-in-pre-islamic-arabia/> [Accessed on: 10 October 2018].
- Yahya, E. (1997). -Working in Muslim Schools" [O]. Available at <http://yahiyaemerick.blogspot.com/2018/01/working-in-muslim-schools.html> [Accessed on: 15 May 2018].
- Yahya, R. (2017). *Taqwa and good character*. [O]. Available at <https://www.seekersguidance.org/show/30-content-of-character/> [Accessed on: 10 October 2018].

Yannick, B. Université de Maurice. *Pratiques ségréatives dans la structuration de l'espace mauricien* Dans Cahiers internationaux de sociolinguistique 2013/1 (N° 3). pages 13 à 39. [O]. Available at: <https://www.cairn.info/revue-cahiers-internationaux-de-sociolinguistique-2013-1-page-13.htm?contenu=article> [Accessed on: 21 November 2018].

Young, M.F.D. (ed.) (1971). *Knowledge and Control*. Collier-Macmillan.

Zaidan, J. *Tareekh-e-Tamaddun Islam, trans. Maulwi Abdul Halim Ansari*. Volume II (Karachi: Sheikh Shaukat Ali & Sons, 1964). 142-143.

Zern, D. (1989). -Some Connections Between Increasing Religiousness and Academic Accomplishment in a College Population. *Adolescence* 24. no. 93 152.

Ziauddin Alavi, S.M. (1988). *Muslim Educational Thought in The Middle Ages*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers. p.3.

Zimmermann, K.A. (2017). *Live Science Contributor*. July 12. Cristina De Rossi.

## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED AT FIVE ISLAMIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAURITIUS**

- 1) ISLAMIC CULTURAL COLLEGE FORM VI private grant-aided secondary school [CO EDUCATION]
- 2) DAR UL MA'ARIF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOL [CO EDUCATION]
- 3) MADAD UL ISLAM SECONDARY SCHOOL [GIRLS]
- 4) ISLAMIC CULTURAL COLLEGE Port-Louis private grant-aided [BOYS]
- 5) DOHA SECONDARY SCHOOL CUREPIPE [CO-EDUCATION]

---

### **ISLAMIC CULTURAL COLLEGE FORM VI (VALLEE DES PRETRES)**

The director of the school is Basheer Hussain Taleb, director of the Islamic Cultural College. Taleb has successively been the rector of the Islamic Cultural College Port-Louis and that of Vallée des Prêtres. He is the president of the Federation of managers of the Private Secondary schools in Mauritius.

Rector: Mr. Abdool Rashid Napoor Baganee. Baganee has been the deputy rector of the Islamic Cultural College Form VI since 2005.

Number of teaching and non-teaching staff members: 93

Foundation of the ICC: January 2005

Address: Sophia Road, Vallée des Prêtres, Port-Louis

Official facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/iccf6/>

Official internet page: <http://iccpuni.org/>

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

The school has been in existence for 14 years. It is rather young and modern with a new building and new infrastructure. In comparison to the other secondary schools starting with Grade 7, the ICC houses only Grade 12 and 13 students, both girls and

boys. It means that the population ranges from 17-20 years old. It is an opportunity to deal with teenagers who are in the process of becoming young adults.

The school also tries to create a Muslim environment to suit the needs of students. Provisions have been made for male and female students, in two juxtaposed buildings to prevent mixing between girls and boys. There are also two staff rooms; one for ladies and one for men. Some specialist rooms are shared by both girls and boys at different times because it is costly and unnecessary to have separate facilities. However, the educators work with both girls and boys.

The ICC acts as a pre-University college and offers the opportunity to any student coming from any secondary school to join. The intake criteria is less strict than in Public schools. Up to January 2017, the school has accepted students with a minimum of 2 to 3 credits at the School Certificate level instead of 5/6 credits. So, many weak students have the opportunity to further their studies up to Grade 13. There are 28 subjects that are taught at the school, which means that the school offers a wide range of combinations that is not possible in many other schools. Students can choose the state combinations or the school combinations. The state combinations allow students to compete for the laureate. Those who cannot abide to the full HSC program may take two main subjects instead of three.

What are the facilities that are offered by the school?

The school provides some of the most basic facilities to its students in the form of well-equipped and well-maintained laboratories for Science and Arts students to perform their respective experiments. All of the specialist rooms are A graded by the PSEA. These include two Art and Design rooms, Audiovisual, Biology, chemistry, physics, two computer rooms, Design and Technology, Design and Textile, Food lab and library. (<http://iccpreuni.org/>)

**Question: What are the subjects taught at the ICC?**

Among the subjects taught are: English, French, Maths, Islamic Studies, Urdu, Biology and Science subjects. Modern subjects include Sociology, Psychology, Environmental

Management, Travel and Tourism, Design and Technology, Design and Dressmaking and Food Studies. Subjects such as Islamic studies, Urdu and Arabic are not taught in many secondary schools but are available here.

The above-mentioned criteria are indeed an opportunity offered to less brilliant students who are not accepted at the state schools. The ICC staff has been working hard to help them pass their exams, to develop their academic skills and to obtain their Higher School Certificates at the ICC. Many students have been able to get good jobs, to pursue their studies at university level or to follow other tertiary courses. At the ICC, students are treated as young adults and the focus is placed on the importance of school activities in order to prepare students for their careers as well as their after school life; to develop their skills and other forms of intelligence rather than to focus exclusively on the cognitive intelligence. Students are empowered through continuous non-core activities and regular interventions designed specifically for young adults. They participate in debates, quizzes, sports competitions, and workshops/seminars. Innovative teaching and innovative tools are used to develop creative learning and academic skills.

**Question: How do you propose to help the various needs of your students?**

-The school runs as a normal school and I want to say that our school is an Islamic cultural school and has nothing to do with an Islamic faith school. By this, I want to say that we offer a Muslim environment to our staff and students but we do not impose anything. We can invite people to pray but we cannot force them to pray. Do you see the difference?

The school provides for the academic, social and religious needs of students. At the academic level, I am proud to say that we have some of the best teachers here. Many parents want to enrol their kids because they trust our services. They know they can rely on us.

During the month of Ramadan, the school indulges in religious and social activities to promote values. Broadly, there are two main activities: one is the Open Our Arms project which is a social project aims at helping the needy members of our Muslim

community. Several members of the staff have joined hands to make this project an ongoing and interesting one. With the money we received from donations, we prepare Ramadan food and packs to send to our beneficiaries. I want to emphasise that the project involves our students because the objective is to pass on this noble act to our successors.

A few days before *Eid*, we prepare the *Eid* packs so that all the Muslims may be blessed with decent food that cheers their hearts. Also, we donate food and delicacies that we value; that is, we like to offer to our brothers and sisters such food that we enjoy during *Eid* days to cheer their hearts. This is a unique aspect that is highly appreciated by students. The objective of this is to bring awareness and to create a sense of care for society and humanity at large and this, in turn, will bring lifetime memories in their minds and hearts. The objective is not simply to instruct but to educate, a concept which is disappearing in many schools. For example, in Public schools, children are 'programmed' to compete, to score high marks and to get an entry in the market place. But as human beings, they do not learn to respect adults and do not respect teachers as well. As I always say, I am blessed by Allah to have a dedicated team of teachers and also, I have to say that my students are good. They are very helpful.

The Ramadan activity is headed by the Islamic department. There are some creative and pedagogical approaches to Ramadan that are very interesting. The objective is to show to students that Ramadan is not a burden upon them and that it does not require from anyone that they stop eating from morning to evening; we want to show to students that Ramadan is a month of joy, of celebrating the glory of Allah with the additional emphasis of going without food and drink during a specific period of time. So, every Ramadan, it has become a culture to organise activities for students where various competitions take place: *Azan* competition [boys] and Quranic competition for girls and boys; *Hijab* Awareness Day, Calligraphy Day, Islamic Arts, *Sheikh* Day where boys are dressed in *thawb* and donate books, magazines, Islamic gadgets, and Quran to students. We are proud to have many *hafiz* in our schools. Students also recite the Quran during the short break and all the students sit under the veranda to listen to the recitation. During Ramadan, every school day is an opportunity to allow students to

express themselves and exert their various talents. We believe it is a unique aspect of Mauritius and may be in the world. Students are allowed to visit an orphanage and elderly homes, to prepare *Eid Mubarak* cards for the grannies, to sit with them, talk to them in order to cheer their hearts. I like to believe that children are blessed because they can naturally bring joy to the hearts of the elderly.

Once in a year, our students, staff and some parents join hands together to prepare the 'Ramadan *iftar* gathering'. The ICC relies on its dynamic team of teachers - fully qualified with at least a Bachelor degree in their respective subjects. Many educators have either a P.G.C.E or a Master Degree and some have both. What is 'unique' is that our teachers are not transferable as is the case with public schools. Our teachers are permanent and this is a huge advantage because they are devoted, dedicated and committed to both their jobs and to the pupils. They can establish rapport with students. Both the pupils and the staff work as a big family. Whenever there is an extra activity, there are always volunteers and that's powerful. We are a team of dedicated professionals who are all regrouped under one umbrella as a closely-knit family.

As I said, our college also encourages students to participate in other extracurricular activities. Such participation helps to the development of the child's communication skills and helps to excel the best from them. Students have great talents buried inside them. What is most often needed is a chance or an opportunity to dig out these talents.¶

**Question: What is the culture of the school?**

-As I say, here we have our own culture. Every school has a culture. Here, it is an Islamic culture. We provide students with Islamic culture. We are always maintaining a balance between the academic, religious and social. To illustrate, both the students and the staff are invited to perform *salat-ul-zohr* every day during the recess time and to read the Quran. The school *masjid* serves boys and girls as well as the members of the staff. Since there are male attendees at the school, girls must wear a 'chuss' under the uniform to show respect and decency. Non-Muslim girls abide by the uniform without any problem. There are girls who come here and who wear the *niqab* and who want to

wear a long uniform. They are allowed to do so because we respect everyone and we want everyone to feel that they are part of the school.

All of our students are here at least for two years unless they repeat Grade 12 and/or Grade 13. What is amazing is that these students come here as strangers and after a few months, they form part of our big family – the ICC family. We make it a must to create ‘family-ness’.

After two years with us, we notice a positive change in our students. We have some upcoming activities for the near future and we are working enthusiastically to bring more students to our schools and we are confident about it. As I said, we have powerful, devoted and enthusiastic human resources and this is one of our features.

The ICC holds high the notion that it is more important for the individual to be engaged in competition with oneself first, then with others. We endeavour with diligence to live up to the highest goals we can envision for ourselves while remaining informed of national, regional and global standards and staying within the bounds dictated by ethics and morality. This value is reflected in our institutional policies and practices and integrated into the lives of our learners whose success at self-fulfilment we have always celebrated (<http://iccpreuni.org/>).

The ICC FVI promotes a culture of service among those who work and study in its midst not only for their own advancement but also for the benefit of society at large and especially for the less privileged members of the community. We endeavour to assist those who are ready to help themselves in order to build a more humane, just and sustainable world (Basheer Taleb, <http://iccpreuni.org/>).

The Way Forward: As a Form Six college, we have the responsibility to ensure a smooth transition for our students from secondary education to the tertiary level. We have made provision to live up to this mission at all levels. (Basheer Taleb,)

At the pedagogical level, our educators attempt to use teaching methods that instigate students to become independent learners. Research work, presentation in front of peers and project-based assignments are integrated into the knowledge transmission process.

At the administrative level, our management of student behaviour focuses on communication and introspection. An attempt is always made to lead youngsters to understand their own motives and encourage them to reflect on the quality of their decisions. Positive behaviour is prioritised (http://iccpreuni.org/)

### **The History of Islamic Cultural College Form Six**

The Islamic Cultural College Form Six was established in 2005 following the request of the government for almost all colleges to promote the -Form Six College project. For its launch, the college started with an average of 150 students at Rabita Hall, Port-Louis. In 2006, the college was gifted with a brand new building at Vallée Des Prêtres in an enchanting atmosphere suited for learning. Today, they have more than 30 classes along with 10 specialist rooms like the computer room, the art rooms, the chemistry, physics and biology laboratories, the food and nutrition laboratory, dress and textile laboratories, the design and technology workshop, the audio-visual room and a nice and interesting library. Wi-Fi is available at the computer room. The school also comprises of standard sports facilities such as a football pitch, volleyball, and handball pitches and, last but not least, a sophisticated gymnasium. The college can accommodate more than 600 students and is also used as an examination centre by the MES. (http://iccpreuni.org/)

### **Mission Statement**

-To strive to prepare students for an adult life of productivity, fulfilment and service in a rapidly changing global society by enabling all of its learners to develop high self-esteem, to aspire to personal excellence and to become responsible, self-directed, contributing individuals, through creative teaching and challenging learning experiences, in partnership with community and other resources.

We stress the total development of each child: spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, emotional and physical. We put our efforts to develop young men with active and creative minds, a sense of understanding and compassion for others, and the courage to act on their beliefs. We foster a caring and creative teaching-learning environment. (http://iccpreuni.org/)

## **Respect**

-The basis of integrity is respect for oneself and for others. As a self-respecting institution, we display respect at all levels of our activities, be it in the process by which we seek truth and share it with others as in the way we welcome differences and engage in open exchange about ideas and decisions. Respect is the prerequisite for the expressions of truth and honesty which are also values we cherish. (http://iccpuni.org/)

## **CHALLENGES**

### **Question: What are the challenges faced by your institution?**

-Challenges are not forcibly negative aspects. It is the way we look at things. We can turn a negative aspect for our own benefits. So, the first challenge can be the nine-year schooling. It may signify that in the future, we will have less students coming to our school due to the reform in the education system. Moreover, if the entry requirement for Grade 12 is 5 credits instead of 2, of course, the intake will be less next year. We depend on average students who often cannot obtain entry at a public school or any star school. If there are fewer intakes, there is a risk of redundancy in our school in the future. It may be we don't get any students for some specialised subjects...

The next challenge comes from the variety of our students. Some come from star schools, some from public schools, some from Christian faith schools, and Islamic schools such as Doha, Cassis, ICC Port-Louis, Madad-UI-Islam and in some cases, we have students from Dar-UI-Ma'arif. The variety of cultures is interesting because it becomes a learning process for each and every one. However, we try to accommodate everyone. The problem lies with those coming from public schools. Some of them, not all, may be unruly, [and] disrespectful towards elders. Even [though] the large majority of students are Muslims, they differ in attitudes. It takes time to guide them and we should not forget that they are here only for two years. However, things are under control. The matron and the usher together with all the personnel, we try our best to advise them and have awareness programs that are designed to help them out and act as preventive measures. There are regular talks on drugs; we invite the *Brigade des*

*mineurs*“ [work force who protects the rights of the minors] etc. We believe that awareness programs can help them to reflect on the reality of life and its traps. Lastly, we had a workshop on values and respect where girls were asked to draw what represents their inner self, and their aspirations.

The ICC provides an Islamic cultural environment where students are safe. Some parents prefer to send their students to Islamic based schools rather than Islamic cultural schools because there is definitely a difference between both concepts. Here, we celebrate the Independence Day and we are open to everyone. We have invited the President of Mauritius, Mrs. Ameenah Gurib Fakim to our school. We also invited the Minister of Education, Mrs. Leela Devi Dookun Lutchoomun.

However, we are fully convinced that the ICC is up-to-date, innovative, modern and far-sighted. Students should not be illusioned about state schools and look down upon private schools. At the ICC, we believe that students do not stay forever adolescents and the school is only a passage in time towards the greater goal which is life. Therefore, we train our students for the after school-life and once they come to our school, they are treated as young adults.¶

---

## **INTERVIEW CONDUCTED AT DAR UL MA'ARIF WITH THE RECTOR**

Director: Cehl Meeah [Islamic preacher and spiritual advisor]

Rector: Mohamed Reza Jauffur

Saad Buxoo: Educator and finance officer

School type: private school, non-aided [boys and girls]

Address: Octave Adam Street, Eau Coulee, Curepipe

Review: Dar-UI-Ma'arif Islamic Educational Institute is a full-fledged institution consisting of Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Schools, providing both academic and Islamic education, and catering for about 500 students.

### **BRIEF HISTORY OF DAR-UL-MA'ARIF**

#### **What was the main motivation for the creation of an Islamic school?**

-The main objective in establishing an Islamic school was motivated by the lack of religion and ethics in public schools. The Ameer wanted our children to grow within the boundaries prescribed by the Almighty and produce generations imbued with the true Islamic concepts and values; the need to set up our own school was imperative. To meet this challenge and become part of the Islamic resurgence that is taking place in the world, the Dar-UI-Ma'arif Islamic Educational Institute was founded to provide, in a humble manner, an alternative to the prevailing system.

In December 1994, the managing committee, with the determination and zeal of some parents, started to operate a boarding primary school at Mont Blanc. It started with seven pupils in Standard I and by the Grace of Allah the number of pupils increases consecutively in the succeeding years. In 1997, the school was transferred to Curepipe in order to render it more accessible for all those opting for an Islamic education system.

We are forever grateful for our committed team who has been sincere to the cause of Islam since the beginning. It is Allah who has brought us together while we did not know each other. Today, we have students who come here because their parents form part of

our community but we also have kids who come because their parents are satisfied with our service. They know that their kids are safe with us.¶

**Question: how do you address the various needs of your students?**

1. -We know that kids have various needs and one of them is the nourishment of the soul. At this age, kids are in a developing process. Mentally, spiritually and physically, they are in need of something that can provide them peace, security, affection, love and understanding. So, we believe that Islamic education is the solution to take them out of darkness to light.¶
2. -The reason we have established an Islamic school is to help students develop a strong positive Islamic identity as they grow up. An Islamic personality which is based on wellness, uprightness and self-confidence is very important.¶
3. -Just as we have a moral responsibility towards our pupils, we need to transmit such responsibility to them in such a way that they become the torch bearers of their generation. -
4. -Assist students to distinguish right from wrong [*Wal amr bil ma'ruf wa anil munkar*].¶
5. -To strike a balance between academic and secular. The aim is to cater to the academic and spiritual welfare of students. We want our students to become complete beings; not a product of this materialistic world whose concerns and aims are to become successful only for this world. This world is worthless but if we use it as a means to please Allah, then we hope to be successful here and in the next world.¶
6. -We are aiming for educational excellence because we want our students to excel in both worlds. We are aware that educated Muslims will promote better living in society and excel in various fields such as doctors, engineers, and educators. There is a lack of women gynecologists and medical doctors in Mauritius; so our aim is to strike a balance in the society.¶
7. -Our aim is to nurture and encourage Mauritian's youth to develop their innate creativity and inquisitive nature in the pursuance of academic excellence while awakening their hearts and souls in a moral framework of a God-centered life.¶

8. -We are empowering girls to become responsible women and fulfill their various roles in the society such as being a pious and good spouse, to be role models for Muslims and non-Muslims, to be a caring mother who can take care of their children and pass on Islamic knowledge and moral ethics to them and to the society at large; to work in scarcity fields which requires professional women.¶
9. -Yes, we believe that our school is innovative, not the way the majority of people see it but from the perspective of a believer. Looking back at how it all begins: today we have pre-primary, primary and secondary schools and *in sha Allah* we are aiming at a tertiary institution. We put our full trust in Allah. We are helping our students in the best way we can. We have a group of believers who are helping us to promote the school. Brother Ubaydah is qualified from Saudi Arabia and brother Saad is qualified from Pakistan. He has a BA in Islamic Finance and an MA in Islamic Studies.¶
10. -Ameer Cehl occupies an important place in society as he is in charge of a national movement. One of them is education. He is in charge of Islamic classes: morality and *Akhlaq*. He is loved by all the kids and his presence is a light for us. During the whole month of Ramadan, we recite and complete the Quran.¶
11. -What makes us special is that on top of this we have a very rich Islamic curriculum which includes *Hifz-ul-Qur'an*, *Tajweed*, Islamic Studies (Allah & His attributes, good manners, the life of Muhammad (s) and the life of other Prophets of Allah which are taught in class. Children also perform their *Zohr* prayer on a daily basis in *Jama'at* and attend full Friday prayers. They are also taught all Islamic manners which are put into practice and have become part of their daily lives (for e.g, greetings, respect for others, good manners and *du'a*).¶
12. -Recently, we have worked on a few projects. We have also introduced a few activities for students. We intend to do so in the future because we are aware that education should be participative. Students like it and we are also happy that they can express themselves through these activities. For Ramadan, we wish to do more in the future years *in sha Allah*.¶
13. -Members of the movement donate because they understand the need for an Islamic school. Recently, we have received some donations from the Arabs and we

have been able to construct this wing, as you can see [classrooms and staff rooms]. Food fairs are organised to collect funds. We do have some financial difficulties but everything is under control now.¶

14. -A *Markaz* has been built after deep reflection. It offers various advantages for students as well as parents. The *Markaz* allows students to stay over from Monday to Friday and visit their parents during weekends. The Islamic environment and the supervision of the elders, allow students to strike a balance between studies, religious activities and the leisure time. When they stay together, there is natural affection, love, and unity which are created. This is important for the society as today we notice social disintegration, lack of commitment and jealousy are replacing the real *muhabbat* [love]. Many of our youth are now at a lost. So, we wish to create a better tomorrow for these children.¶
15. -Our school culture is based on Islamic awareness. Islamic teaching is the heart of every field. We believe that someone who is learned and excelled in many fields of studies but ignorant about Islamic knowledge is, in fact, an ignorant person. The Glorious Book of Allah is the criterion upon which every single human being will be judged on Judgment Day.¶
16. -We tend to teach students morality because morality [*Al ihsan*] is at the heart of everything. We believe that morality can connect us with Muslims as well as non-Muslims because as human beings, we all believe in some values such as cleanliness, discipline, respect for the elders etc.¶
17. -Dar-UI-Ma'arif Islamic Educational Institute is committed to offer and promote a high standard of education in a nurturing Islamic environment; fostering self-discipline and the best behaviour amongst our students.¶
18. -Many of our students have become successful in their respective fields. We have excellent results at the primary level and some excel in Arabic and Islamic Studies at the secondary level. We work in unity with educators as well as parents in order to help these students acquire the best academic level and a sound Islamic background so that they may become balanced adults who will later cater to the Islamic society of Mauritius and elsewhere *in sha Allah*.¶

19. -Among the activities that our students excel in, are sketches, public plays and dramas. We intend to perform in front of the grand public, *in sha Allah* for the next *Eid* and our students will definitely participate. They act very well and of course, they do well in *nasheed* [Islamic songs]...||
20. -Discipline: no mobile phone at school. Students have no right to use their mobile phones during school hours. However, they can bring their mobile phones and leave them at the office and take them back after the bell. Using phones is a craze nowadays and this brings some kinds of laxity where the child is compulsively attracted by their phones and do not pay attention to classes.||
21. -No Facebook. Pupils are not allowed to bring any cellular phones, MP3, or any such accessories at school. Students are advised not to create any Facebook account because using Facebook can lead students in many traps as we can see on the media. There are many publications and advertisements on Facebook. It is a free and dangerous zone especially for kids who are still on a probation process and are therefore vulnerable. Besides, it is a distraction that prevents them from studying.||
22. -A pupil must wear the school uniform on all occasions when he/she is attending a school or any school function. The uniform for Secondary Girls: plain black *jilbaab* and white plain hijab. Secondary Boys: green trousers, white shirt with long sleeves and white *thawb*. Responsible parties should ensure that their ward wears the proper school uniform when coming to school. A pupil failing to wear the proper school uniform may expect to be sent home immediately to get properly dressed. Excuses such as -Uniform is wet, torn or dirty|| are not tolerated.||
23. -School van – this is the safest way for parents and schools to protect students from erring. By travelling by van, they do not have to stand at the bus station and be exposed to different situations and be among all kinds of people. The school takes the responsibility to look after the child from home to school and back again. Once the child reaches home, he is under the custody of his parents.||
24. “*Salah*: The purpose of the school is to help the student stay in close relationship with Allah. Every day children pray *Zohr* at the school. One Friday, *jummah* is performed at the school this is why the school does not close at 12.30.||

25. -Everyone must stick to the *wazifa* [protection of Allah] in order to nourish the soul and to protect them from *shaytan*. *Shaytan* is the real enemy of humankind. He creates division, despair and frustration. We must know how to deal with his tricks when we work in the path of Allah and we are committed people.¶
26. -The school offers an Islamic environment. Anyone can feel it. We are against music but we accept *nasheed* [Islamic songs] on special occasions.¶
27. -The school is fully equipped according to the norms of the PSEA. It is nationally recognised and approved by the Government.¶
28. -As you are aware, the Islamic learning space encompasses all the sights, the sounds and even the smells of the classroom that serve to create an engaging Islamic learning environment. Once you enter the school vicinity, you can feel the aura. An Islamic environment is an ideal place for innocent kids. Children are born sinless and innocent. A bad environment creates confusion in the mind and stains the heart. By promoting values and moral ethics on a daily basis, our learners are islamically structured. After a few months, they develop insight and awareness about who a believer is supposed to be.¶
29. -The Quran is recited and memorised, and children are proud when they are able to memorise and excel in this field. In turn, they guide their parents and become agents of change in society. The memorisation of the Quran is the practice of our noble messenger and this must be extended to the whole community. Besides, these *hafiz* [memorisers] act as role models and are the pride of their family as well as the whole community.¶
30. :In 2014, the Dar Ul Maarif has extended its services to accommodate both Grade 11 and Grade 12 students and have published our school magazines.¶
31. -We continue to innovate in order to provide the best services to our students and to satisfy the holistic needs of this young generation. We trust that Allah will help us.¶

## CHALLENGES

**Question: What are the challenges that you meet with the school and the students?**

1. -We consider that everyone is a leader. First, he must lead himself towards what is right and shun what is wrong. He participates positively in the society by advising others. To achieve this, there is a heavy preparation. We must form our staff to become role models and to understand what is required of them.¶
2. -Our youths today live in contradiction between the home and the school. What we teach them, and what they see, in various cases, creates tensions and this is why we want our students to stay at the *Markaz*.¶
3. -Some parents come to us only after having tried all types of schools. They realise that their sons and daughters have taken the wrong path or are pressured by friends to stay out after school hours etc. So, once they come to us, we need to help them adapt to their new environment and we need to show them love in a way that they are happy with us. As I say, here we use a humane approach to learning.¶
4. -In fact, there are very few cases of disruptive students. To put an end to disruptive behaviour once and for all, we try to identify students' unmet needs and there is communication. Communication is very important. *Alhamdulillah*, we do not have such things as synthetic drugs which are now common in many schools. Parents are immediately called upon whenever there are disciplinary cases.¶
5. -We help students feel successful in the classroom through the proper attitudes of the teachers. There is good communication between the staff and learners. Students that come to us are of two types: average students and qualified students. We need to strike a balance to help average students to perform and to get better results. At the same time, we need to motivate those students who know better to have interest in the class so that they do not lose interest. We motivate students to work hard and apply themselves instead of getting frustrated.¶
6. Our school is not perfect; we still address mild disciplinary issues on a regular basis. However, our school can be considered as one of the most disciplined

schools in the country and we are blessed to have students with high moral values. Our students are helpful, understanding and they all respect elders and greet with *'salam'*.||

7. -Many parents decide to send their children to us after they witnessed that they do not conform to Islamic values or have become unruly. This proves that they trust our discipline and Islamic environment. Many students left after the primary level but come back after a few years. They could make the difference between public schools and Islamic schools. Some left because they prefer to enroll in a grant-aided school. Some parents are not satisfied because they want the school to be much more Islamic. They have many personal expectations. *Unfortunately, we cannot abide by each and every proposal.*||
8. -Our school is in line with government policy. All core subjects are taught except that we have added a few Islamic subjects to cater for Muslims' needs. We are aware that being a good Muslim means serving Allah and the society, so, we need to address these issues in such a way that teens understand their roles in the multi-cultural and multi-religious society.||
9. -We are also looking for activities that are entertaining to our students as well as educative but at the same time we need to address more important issues such as completing the syllabus. Time is scarce as you can see.||
10. -The school yard is rather small, however our building is new and we have all the required materials and specialised rooms as specify by the PSEA. We hope that in the near future we will provide our students with more materials.||
11. -We are all grounded and integrated. We are an Islamic movement, nationally recognised with one leader. We educate kids, adolescents, and adults. Children who come to our school are not necessarily members of our movement. Some of our educators are not members of our movement but we offer them the opportunity to teach and to have experience. There is no contract. They are free to leave or move to public schools. We do not have any problem with that. Our objective is to help them because many degree holders are unemployed. In a way, we are helping them and the society.||

12. -Finance is a problem for every institution that is non-profitable and non-subsidised. But, we believe that things are moving and we have some devoted people who are ready to teach and to be among us for the sole pleasure of Allah. Recently, we had a young and all-rounded Pakistani brother who joined us for the sake of Allah. He is very devoted and passionate about his work. He is an Arabic teacher and of course, speaks Urdu and English very well.¶
13. -So, challenges are not challenges when we take it as a positive step to purify us from our shortcomings and Allah is always with those who strive and who trust Him. This is my message. Love grows with hardship and it stays in the heart permanently. Nothing is lost. Our rewards are with Allah and everything will happen at its prescribed time. Our time will come *in sha Allah*. Our children are witnesses of our devotion and they will stand up as true believers and they will bring unity among all brothers and sisters, in peace and submission.¶

---

### **Madad UI Islam College (Girls) Grade 7-11**

Rector: Mrs Nessimah Banon Casseem

Address: 70 Sir Edgar Laurent Street, Port Louis

Mrs. Casseem is the rector of Madad-UI-Islam. Previously she worked as an educator in the same institution. She started in the year 1982 and she has some fifteen years of experience as a rector. Her school runs Grade 7 to 11. The intake for Grade 7 turns around 55-60 students. The government sends a batch of students irrespective of their religious affiliations, based mostly on their C.P.E results. The Government sends average students to the Madad UI Islam. Other categories of students who come to Madad are those who live in the neighbourhood and Muslim girls whose parents want them to be in a Muslim environment. Mrs. Casseem is of the opinion that the school will not close down whatever the decision of the government for the next intake. She says that the nine-year schooling is definitely a challenge for private schools but Madad is complying with all the new regulations

imposed by the government. Though the school is relatively small, the amenities are there.

**Researcher: I would like you to talk about the opportunities and challenges that you meet as a rector**

1. -I want to start with the challenges first. You know, girls are no more like those who were there some ten years ago. Students are becoming less and less engaged in education. As the year goes by, girls become unruly and unmanageable. In all schools, there is bullying but this aspect is new at Madad. Before they used to be a big family but nowadays they fight, there is violence... They fight for boys. Since early adolescence, girls are interested to flirt with boys, and to have boyfriends and they are no more interested in their academic subjects. Not all of them!!
2. -Consequently, their academic development is slow and it is a big challenge for educators to assist them so that they can pass their exams. Many students prefer to leave school before Grade 11. There are various reasons for this. One of them is the lack of motivation of parents to send their daughters to school and assist them and advise them about the necessity of education and a certificate. Many of the students feel they cannot cope with Grade 11 and they prefer to leave school as they reach 16 years old. And as I said, they believe that a boyfriend is the solution to all their problems.!!
3. -Some parents are not even aware if their kids have not come to school because they leave home earlier for work and come back several hours after school ends. So by the time they come back, they believe that their daughters have been to school and already back home; unless we phone them! Absences are more frequent on Fridays because school ends early every Friday, students feel they can stay at home. However, the school has set a system of SMS [private messages] to send messages to responsible parties whenever there are frequent absences. This is how we learn that many parents are not aware that their wards do not come to school. In such cases, there are follow-ups.!!

4. -We want to establish more contacts with parents for the welfare of their children though we are aware this is not always possible.¶
5. -Some parents need to cooperate so that we can find solutions for the challenges and crises faced by students.¶
6. -Another reason is the child's environment. She does not get enough support and she is surrounded by girls of her age who do not go to school, who is already married or careless. In this case, what can we do? Another reason is the child's intellectual ability to cope with studies. Some children want to make an effort and the teacher tries her best to help them, but they lack cognitive skills and they have been deprived of correct coaching at primary levels. Since most of our students are average and some less than average, we cannot do concentrate on activities. We have to concentrate on the curriculum in order to help them pass their exams. Many students fail at the national exam and some cannot continue Grade 11. They are intellectually and academically weak. Of course, we would have loved to introduce several activities but this cannot be done because the emphasis has to be put on their education.¶
7. -The culture of violence is being perpetrated on television, newspapers, and magazines. Bullying and mocking at others are forms of violence. Adolescents are prone to imitate elders because they are not ripe enough to make [up] their own mind. They easily fall prey to any kind of evil and this happens outside of the school premises. Of course, we do have school buses but we cannot control everyone. Outside, the environment is polluted with cigarettes, drugs, corrupted friends and boys who are ready to manipulate innocent girls. They need moral support from their parents as well as a sound environment. Many girls have become quite aggressive because they come from broken families and they are confused.¶
8. -With the nine-year schooling, there is a risk that many students may fail the national exam at Grade 9. If they fail they may opt for technical schools, so what will happen to us? I mean we will be left with few students. So, we will have to work on new solutions for the next intake.¶

9. -The courtyard is too small, I agree with that. There are only a basketball playground and a few greeneries. So, kids cannot indulge in more activities and that's a problem. So, it is true that students cannot practise much sport and cannot use their recess time to practise many activities. At the same time, during recess time, they eat and perform their *Zohr* prayer. I mean those who want to do it because we do not impose anything. They like to chat with their friends.¶
10. -Many girls are more interested in adult life. It is due to a lack of love, communication, and parental supervision. Alhamdulillah, we have very few cases of these and they are under control. There is constant communication at the school. In order to tackle drug and cigarette problems, the members of the '*Brigade des mineurs*' often come to deliver speeches on drugs and other social evils. They are often called upon to talk to students. This is an awareness program to support students and to get them out of their problems. The first-timers, that is, those who take cigarettes or drugs for the first time, are easily taken in charge and this is how we help our students. At school, we do not focus only on the academic aspect; we also devote ourselves to the social needs of our students. In the case of major issues, students are rusticated from the school.¶
11. -In order to help students, discipline is important. No mobile phone is allowed during school time. Some parents do not understand this but we know why we have to do it. Students must adhere strictly to the uniforms. Muslim girls wear a '*chuss*', a kind of pants to show their modesty. Nail polishing, *mehendi* and hair colour are not allowed because students come here for a purpose and they need to learn about respect, obedience, punctuality and the like; otherwise, the school serves only the purpose of instruction and not education. Such girls who are average performers must be prepared to have a bright future after leaving school. If they cannot cope with studies, they do not have scopes. At least, they are aware of how to run their houses, how to become good parents with good morals and this is very important.¶

## OPPORTUNITIES

1. -The school is a Muslim school and most of our staff is Muslim. We are 100 % women. We understand girls and we are close to them. We are committed to our jobs, especially those who are here for many years. There are several educators who are here since their youths and they are aware of the difficulties faced by our students. Know-how, devotion, patience, and commitment are key factors to stay in service.¶
2. -I want to say that parents have entrusted their kids to the school because the school has a Muslim culture and most of the staff is Muslim. Students need love. In a way, the school acts as a substitute to their parents. In many cases, students feel the need to talk about their frustration.¶
3. -We care for our pupils and we listen to their difficulties. They need to talk about their frustration. Some of them are very aggressive. They need to voice out what is in their hearts and look for solutions. We act as a substitute for their parents.¶
4. -Our teachers are not transferable so they are familiar with the type of problems we have and they know how to handle them. When teachers are permanent, there is security, peace, and wellness. Both students and teachers feel closer and with time, the relationship grows better and this is how students feel supported and loved.¶
5. -In the morning, we read *Surah Al Fatiha*. This is a blessing because students start the day praying Allah and making *dua*. This gives them a sense of belonging. They feel protected and are aware of the Creator, Allah.¶
6. -Many students will continue to come here because of the physical settings of the school. There are many students who come from Plaine Verte, Vallée Pitot, Roche-Bois etc, who prefer to come here rather than to travel long distances.¶
7. -We live as a family. I know all my students. I care for them and I am always looking for ways to help them. Our students know they can rely on our staff and me and they can seek help anytime. We are always here to help. This is our commitment.¶
8. -Education helps to produce better citizens and we have no doubts that our students can make a change in the society. We are dealing especially with girls so

it is important to prepare them so that they are well-rounded and useful in society. Even though the majority is under average, that is, they are academically weak, we make an effort to prepare them for their adult life.¶

9. -We maintain discipline and we support them academically and socially. So, parents want their daughters here because it is not a mixed college. We are 100 % ladies here. Parents feel their daughters are safe in an Islamic environment with Islamic values.¶
10. -Students are not bullied because they wear a long uniform or „*chuss*’ [legging]. In some schools, girls are not allowed to wear the „*chuss*’ and the Islamic scarf. Here, it is an advantage because they are free to dress islamically. Girls who wear traditional Islamic scarf may be bullied/offensively touched in schools where there are different cultures and religions but here, students share the same culture and religion.¶
11. - As you know bullying is quite common in other schools where girls are laughed at if their uniform is below their knees. Consequently, these girls are frustrated and do not want to go to school. But here, the culture is the same for everyone, except we have few students who are non-Muslims and *Al hamdulillah*, they have well integrated the school and its culture. There is no problem with that. We are open to all and we respect them all.¶
12. -Some students may experience discrimination but here there is no discrimination. Muslims and non-Muslims are treated alike.¶
13. -It is the Muslim culture to welcome everyone and we do it sincerely with our heart.¶
14. -We are always ready to improve. We are in line with stakeholders. Whatever the government and the PSEA advise us to do, we are ready to conform¶

---

## **ISLAMIC CULTURAL COLLEGE Port-Louis**

Rector: Mr. Abdool Abdouramane

School Grade 7-11

Grant-aided Private Secondary School, under the aegis of the PSEA

Address: 60 Sir Edgar Laurent Street, Port Louis

Facebook link: [https://www.facebook.com/IslamicCulturalCollegePL/?ref=py\\_c](https://www.facebook.com/IslamicCulturalCollegePL/?ref=py_c)

Short review

ICC Port-Louis will celebrate 70 years of service in January 2019. The rector has 40 years of experience at the ICCPL and was recently appointed. He believes that the ICC is a Muslim heritage which cannot be replaced. Despite some government policies that may negatively impact on the 2018 intake, managerial committees will be set to establish new strategies to market the school and bring more intakes.

### **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

#### **Question: What are the opportunities of coming to the ICC PL?**

-The school is a Muslim heritage run by a group of devoted and committed Muslims. The main objective is to have a college for Muslim boys living in the vicinity of Port-Louis. We cater for students who are weak and average, who cannot have the opportunity to be enrolled at a star school or any public school.

We are convinced that children living in the vicinity will always come to us. It is a privilege. There are only a few schools in Port-Louis for boys and many students as well as parents prefer to have their children here, in Plaine Verte, because we provide them the care and attention that they cannot have elsewhere. What I mean is that we have a different approach with our pupils. We have been working with pupils who suffer from

disruptive environment and absent parents for many years. We know what they need and we are here for them.

Many Muslims prefer to send their children to a Muslim school to protect them from outside influences and to live within the limits prescribed by Almighty Allah.

This is a boy school, so there is no mixing with girls like in some secondary schools. Some parents are reluctant to send their boys in mixed schools, so the ICC is catering to these types of students. Besides, parents fear for their children. They don't want their children to turn out bad.

Many parents want their sons here because it is an Islamic environment with Islamic values and there are students who deliberately want to join the ICC. The school environment is appropriate for any student who wants to pray their noon prayer and attend Friday prayer. Every Friday, school closes at 12.30 instead of 14.30 to allow students to attend *Jum'ah* prayer. As you know, missing three consecutive *Jum'ah* is a grave sin. Those who attend public schools cannot benefit from such an opportunity.

There are a few students who did well during the CPE [PSAC] but they have refused to attend the state schools and they are here with us. Some students were previously at the confessional school but they could not adapt, and they are here with us.

Another opportunity is that, from Monday to Thursday, students may perform the *Zohr* prayer during their recess time. As you see recess time coincides with *Zohr* prayer. This is so to allow students and the staff to pray on time.

When I speak about Islamic culture, I mean the school respects some Islamic principles. For example, every morning, *Surah Fatiha* is recited in the morning assembly as well as some invocations. During Ramadan, we are flexible and we take into consideration some Islamic festivals. We celebrate the birthday of Prophet Muhammad [pbuh].

We have the opportunity to coach students at three levels: academic, social and religious. It is a challenge and at the same time, it is rewarding both for the children and the teachers. We believe that we have a duty towards our community. By caring for our

students, we are preparing them for their future and we are helping our community to bring out respectful adults.

Islamic subjects such as Arabic and Islamic Studies are essential for nurturing kids and teens. There is discipline at the school and discipline is part of the formation of the teens. For example, boys have no right to wear shorts and to uncover their knees. There are criteria to be respected concerning hair cut; wearing the uniform is part of school discipline so anyone must adhere strictly to it.

At the ICC, we need committed staff. Those who are here because they love their job, they love to work with children, and they care for them and want to help them get a better future, are naturally blessed. Whereas those who are here only for a monthly salary can't survive because working here requires sincerity and devotion. Young people need mentors. They need positive relationships with adults. Many children can't cope with their studies because they come from broken families. They have personal problems and they need role models and support; so beyond the role of an educator, there is the role of an elder brother or a father; in other words, we are social workers.

Regarding reconciliation, as a school, we contribute through avoiding any kind of discrimination against students. There are a small percentage of non-Muslims here and it is our duty to make them feel safe. They are also happy to be with us and they adapt easily. We hold many activities that connect the students with each other, with the teaching and non-teaching staff, so there is a sense of a family within the school that can also connect it to the community surrounding it. This, I think really helps in building the conditions for reconciliation.

Here, we have a culture of respect for adults whereas at public schools students do not respect adults. The focus here is about respect and discipline. At public schools, students have more freedom because when a student misbehaves there are many procedures before taking action against him. Here, things are easier. We can take immediate actions and most of the time, there is communication between students and the staff. We have the help of the usher, a Yemenite, who is here with us for some 40 years. We have the section leaders and we can count on our trusted staff.

Cases of violence may occur because it is the nature of children to fight over petty things; to get angry and to sort out their frustration. But Yanis, our usher is here to put things in order.

Students enjoy the Islamic environment. The majority of students are Muslims so they share the same values and culture. That does not mean that we do not cater for non-Muslims, rather we are happy to open our doors to non-Muslims. They are always welcome and we do have some non-Muslims here. They form part of the ICC and they are treated equally.

Our students are our advertisement for other students. We market through existing students. Indirectly, they are selling the school. We provide them with what they cannot get outside so, they are bound to come here. Their friends decide to come here because they know already what they can expect from us.

We are a big family. Everyone knows everyone. There are educators who have been working for more than 25 and 30 years...I have been working here for 40 years. You imagine 40 years of devoted service here! So, we are used to children with different kinds of problems. We know how to tackle these difficult situations and how to make the child feel at home. Imagine, five days out of seven, the child is with us and we train him to become a better person.

We want to tell parents not to look down upon the name ICC and the region of Plaine Verte. They should think about the future of their kids who are here to learn.

To get the most out of life, one must be both mentally and physically fit. Constantly there are talks on drugs and other social evils. Students participate in various activities. They have won several prizes and medals at the national level. Among future plans, I would like to introduce scouting, create school clubs like we had a swimming club lifesaver already. We also participate in sports day, cross competition, academic [quiz] to develop skills and remove shyness. We have our Facebook page. Why scouting? Scouting programs may instill in our youth the values relevant in helping them grow to their full potential. Scouting helps youth develop academic skills, self-confidence, ethics, leadership skills, and citizenship skills that influence their adult lives. One of our section

leaders has leadership skills and has been a chief scout. He is resourceful and he can help out. We want our youth to try new things that can build self-confidence and reinforce ethical standards. Scouting goes beyond that and encourages youth to achieve a deeper appreciation for service to others in their community.

Next year our internet site will be official. It is very important that our teens can identify themselves with positive education and take part in various activities. Our students are average students and some are weak students, however, there are prospects for them. Many activities are organised. They participate in sports and many have been rewarded with medals offered by the national youth council and by the MYS.

Our staff is not transferable, so they are committed and that is precious. In public schools, the staff has to transfer from school to school, so they do not have time to build rapport with students, or they start building rapport then it is time to leave. Or, they can start a class and in the same year, they are transferred to another school. Students must constantly adapt and this creates frustration, emptiness, and insecurity for the children. This is why they often lack this sense of belonging and they do not respect elders. For them, elders are mere strangers who come and go. This is not the case with our teachers. There is no political backing. Most of them are here because they enjoy being here. There are some who have had the opportunity to move elsewhere but have decided to stay simply because they feel home, they feel they are serving a purpose. Yes, I can say that there is continuity, transparency, and dedication from the part of educators.

Our philosophy is never to impose on anyone. Everyone is free. We don't want to frustrate anyone who may not have the same version of Islamic concept [aqeedah], so we let the door open and we concentrate on the most important things and we leave the rest so that everyone feels at ease. Anyway, as a rector, I have to accommodate everyone and I have to advise anyone who needs advice. I personally feel that religion is inside and is personal to me.

Here, our superior is the manager who is a good person. Whenever we need something, it is easy for us to ask whereas, in public schools, there are lots of procedures even to change a window pane or to replace something broken.¶

## **CHALLENGES**

-The nine-year schooling is a challenge. It is a government policy for all schools. It is a national curriculum framework. The new government policy aims at keeping students up to grade 9, then a national examination will take place. We can wonder if there is a hidden agenda to eliminate private schools because many schools especially profit-making schools will have to close down soon. We will survive because our school is a heritage. It has a long time story. But at the same time, there may be changes. There can be three possibilities:

- A) In 2020, those students reaching grade 9 will have the possibility to stay at the ICC, or
- B) They will move to technical school if they do not meet the national examination requirement or
- C) They may join the Academy if they have excelled in their exams.

My question is: what if they choose options B and C? What will happen to our school? It means that all of our students may leave us either for technical schools or for the academy. I mean there is a risk! And if we are left without students, what will happen to us? And we get our school license from the PSEA.

The technique used in education should be innovative but we need human resources to introduce new subjects. The government wants some subjects to be taught at the secondary level. Subjects such as Design and Textile are now compulsory. So, here it is a boy school and we do not teach design and textile but we have to comply with the law. It is very difficult to find a male teacher who is a degree holder in this field. As you know, we are strict here, we have our own principles. We cannot recruit a female educator to teach that subject. This is against our policy. For example, many parents may not agree to such changes; many members from the male staff may not find it 'Islamically' correct to have a lady among them in the staff room. What about the use of the toilet? We will

have to make provision for a female toilet. I mean, I will have to accommodate many changes and that is not possible; so there is a big question mark where to get a male teacher to teach this subject. What I have heard so far, there is only one male teacher who has a degree in this field.

Education starts at home. Today many parents don't have the time to dedicate their time and to listen to the needs of their kids, to educate them or they do not know how to educate them; to teach them good behaviours, to discipline them and to show them the right path. Many children are growing up with a negative mindset. They do not accept any adult control and this is a problem to discipline them. So, very often we prefer not to bring our students outside because we fear their reactions. There is always a risk of misbehaviour.

Our school has a very old infrastructure and the classrooms are big. The yard is very small. Normally, people are impressed by modern architecture and new classrooms and its equipment, however, ours are still strong and we are proud to have all our specialist rooms well-equipped. Of course, they are not newly furnished as we can have in public schools, yet we abide by the PSEA rules and requirements. We are also proud of our science lab. In the biology lab, you can see many species that cannot be found anywhere in Mauritius. I will take you there and you will see with your own eyes.

In terms of development, we understand that if we want to help our society, we need to use science. This is why the school, for example, invested in laboratories and the IT section, so the students will be ready in very practical ways change their lives and their societies through the skills they gain at school.

Some people may argue that a major concern about the education here, is that it is based on memorisation. We know children should develop critical thinking and we are working both ways to help develop the talents and faculties of students but as I said, most of the children are either average or below average. These students who come from broken families, often cannot concentrate on their school work so they leave school at Grade 11 and some earlier.

With the nine-year schooling, many challenges are ahead as school intake depends partly on the Government. So, the problem of closing down does not concern the ICC. It is the government who sends an average number of students to the school. The government takes the best students and leaves the average to the ICC. Before January 2018, we will try to find new ways of increasing our intake.

Another challenge is the type of children who come to our school. Most of them live nearby Plaine-Verte and Vallée Pitot which is well-known for social disintegration, where many families are more and come from slum areas. Many students come from broken families and they misbehave. This problem has to be sorted out by our colleagues, especially the section leaders and the Usher. Activities are conducted to help them get out of their problems but these children are 'controllable'.

### **Doha Secondary school – interview with the manager, Mr. Sadek Polin**

---

Official site of Doha: <http://www.doha.ac.mu/>

Doha is the latest addition to the list of Islamic secondary schools in Mauritius. It is comprised of primary, secondary and tertiary education institutions, and is a project partly funded by the State of Qatar.

Doha Secondary school is commonly known as Doha Academy or simply Doha. The school consists of four separated building blocks of three storeys each, housing the pre-primary and primary department, administrative department, boy's secondary department, and girl's secondary department. The tertiary level is active after school hours at the boy's department and offers a joint degree in Islamic studies and Arabic. It is affiliated with the RIPHAH international university of Pakistan. <sup>1</sup>

Located in the high Plaine Wilhems, the school is registered as a co-educational one. It has all the facilities of a modern school, with well-furnished and ventilated classrooms, laboratories, and a big library with a large collection of books, a vast playground and an impressive entrance path lined with a few date trees.

## What are the opportunities and strengths of your school?

- (1) -The culture of the school is expressed by its goals which are well defined. First, it sets and maintains a good academic level. Secondly, it seeks to provide the possibility for each child to develop their potential in the specific area of their interests and abilities.¶
- (2) -The school regulation lays considerable stress on the uniform. The uniform represents the equal status of students regardless of their social class. Uniforms are prescribed for both boys and girls. The wearing of *hijab* and *jilbab* are parts of girls' uniforms as well as female employees' dress code. All school girls wear black *jilbab* and a white Islamic scarf on the head. The correct dress code for women and girls is not meant to discriminate [against] them. Allah invites both men and women to show modesty and respect. By respecting our own selves and being respected in return, is certainly an aspect of freedom and peace. Peace of mind, body, and soul is obtained through the principle of submission to the Creator.¶
- (3) -Stress is laid essentially on the quality of education, the personal development, moral formation of the individual and discipline. This culture is the bedrock for the effective running of the institution.¶
- (4) -Osman Jaunbocus is an experienced rector whose main concern is to work for the betterment of all the students and to monitor the staff. All the members of the staff work together to create a synergy around students. Parents, pupils, and the staff are invited to work together in harmony. We believe that teachers should be professional in their approach. They must be willing to improve for their own accomplishment and also to help the young generation.¶
- (5) -Pupils are supported by remedial measures, psychological care, and counseling that closely involves the home and school. Those who want to achieve excellent results are closely monitored by their teachers. Staff is very helpful and devoted to their work. Everything is done on a voluntary basis and this creates a strong bond among the pupils and the staff.¶

- (6) -Throughout the years, the name Doha has become a symbol of pride for the pupils and the college. Parents are proud to send their kids to Doha for two main reasons: its discipline and its academic achievements.¶
- (7) -The college usually follows the curriculum set up by the Government but the system is a little decentralised, especially for Private Schools. There is a more open curriculum whereby religious subjects are taught such as moral values, *adaab*, *fiqh* etc. The school is considered as a faith school and provision is made for both secular and religious studies. Basically, these classes are given much importance because they concern the religious formation of the child. In fact, these classes on moral values contribute enormously to the formation of the personality of each individual student. Students participate in various extra curriculum activities. For example, in 2016, some students acted in an ICAC film competition.¶ <sup>2</sup>
- (8) -It is to be noted that Doha exists since January 2003 and ever since there have been some brightest minds who have emerged from the school. In 2016, the school witnessed one laureate at the Higher School Certificate. The first laureate at Doha is Zahra Khan Jaffur, the manager's niece. In 2017, students brilliantly succeeded at their School Certificate.¶
- (9) -We are thankful to our committed staff and they know they can count on us.¶
- (10) -During Ramadan, the school offers activities such as the collect of foodstuff to help the poor and the needy, the visit to the orphanage and Qiraat competition. Every day, students are requested to perform their noon prayer [*Zohr*] and recess time is prolonged up to 55 minutes to allow students to take their lunch, perform their ablution and pray together. On Fridays, the same rituals are accomplished except that students have to listen to the sermon and attend the *jummah* prayer. School ends at three o'clock in the afternoon.¶
- (11) -The policy of the school is to discourage tuition though it is not disallowed. Students are encouraged to do their maximum by following attentively during sessions and to be present at school. The motto is that hardworking pays. Teachers are devoted to their mission and they offer help to anyone in need. In that way, both teachers and students work as a team.¶

## CHALLENGES

- (12) -The nine-year schooling is a challenge for all private schools, not only for Doha. Here, we are well prepared to face any change. In exceptional cases, a female teacher may be asked to teach boys and vice versa. So, with the new curriculum, a female teacher may be required to teach Food studies at the boys' department.¶
- (13) -There is no problem with recruiting students. In fact, the number of students was highly superior to the official demand. Before the school formed part of the PSEA, the number of students was above 1,400. Since 2017, the number had to be reduced to match the requirement of the PSEA. We have some five hundred students on the waiting list. So, we do not have any fear that the number of students will decrease! Among his students, 90% are Muslims. Non-Muslims are keen to join the school for two main reasons: discipline and hardworking staff. His teaching staff are all degree holders, some have a PGCE and others a Master degree. Teachers have several years of experience. Some clerical workers have a Master degree and even a PhD. The reason is due to unemployment which is a big problem in Mauritius.¶
- (14) Polin explains that non-Muslims have respect towards the administration and the management but often the problem lies within the Muslim community where everyone thinks he is the brother of the other and no effort is made to respect and to comply with rules and regulations. He says that this does not apply to all Muslims, but to some of them, among the staff and parents. They have no sense of respect and commitment. They believe everything should be done according to their will and desires. For example, a child may be weak and if they are asked to repeat a class, the parent may vehemently oppose this decision. However, their gratitude should go to Allah, who has gifted them with the right attitude and the personality to maintain order. Hence, in his point of view, this is the greatest challenge: to manage people.
- (15) -I have never worked in an Islamic school before joining Doha and since I had worked in the public sector and had managed human resources, I was convinced that I would be able to manage the present institution. However, I agree to say that it is very challenging and more difficult to handle because of the Muslim culture. I believe that many Muslims have a cultural problem. They are ingrained in some

traditional ignorance that needs to be sorted out. Some parents or employees may have some irrational behaviours concerning discipline or lateness. Parents do not take an appointment to come to my office and insist to meet me even if I have deadlines. They believe that all Muslims are one family, so they allow themselves to cross the line of conduct.¶

(16) -Another challenge is to care for the disruptive and confused children. Some students are known as difficult cases and in this case, they are followed by a psychologist-teacher at Doha who offers her free time to voluntarily help such pupils.¶

(17) -Another challenge is the mixed ability policy. Polin is of the opinion that such a system is not viable. First and foremost, teachers have not been trained to handle multi-leveled 'brains'. Secondly, it is time-consuming and energy consuming for both students and teachers. At Doha, the streaming system is prioritised for personal assistance and care thereby meeting various school and examination exigencies. In the same line of thought, streaming allows high performers to compete for the higher school certificate. Teachers are grateful for that because they can better manage their classes and this explains the high quality of the Doha education system and the high intake demand.¶

When asked about the school's religious inclination, Polin rejects any association with the *Salafist* or any sect. His answer is firm: he does not belong to any sect nor is his school inclined towards any sect. The school's concept is based on the Quran and the *Sunnah*. He declares that he is against any controversial issues at Doha and explains that the majority of his students come from the *Sunnah jamaat*, around 20% are *tabligh jamaat*, then *Tawhid jamaat*, and the rest are not following anything. He says his institution is open to anyone who wants to learn and there is nothing excessive about how the school is ruled. He believes that open-mindedness is very important to bring people together as well as *adab*. *Adab*, as he sees it, is essential for the reformation of the self. Children are taught the correct attitude so that they may grow up spiritually and mentally healthy. He believes that integrity and patience usually pay their fruits; he is conscious that he has to remain calm in all situations and respect others in order to be

respected. He believes that Doha is the best institution in Mauritius that serves youth interests.

Moreover, gender discrimination is against the policy of Islam, and is thus condemned at the Doha Academy. Women enjoy their freedom by having their own building. During free time, they may cook and share food among colleagues. Men neither intervene nor intrude in their activities. He says that as a manager, he rarely goes to the girls' department [to show that he respects their rights]. Concerning the nomination of heads of department, he says that if a woman is senior, she is eligible to be head of the department.

He explains that full segregation is not possible. During staff meetings, men and women have to attend. He says that some Muslims consider him a laic and are against his methods because he is open-minded. But for him, open-mindedness does not contradict Islamic principles. He is against indecency, the smoking of cigarettes and those who refuse to pray *salah* five times a day. He is convinced that discipline has to be maintained at school as well as in society. It is the duty of each responsible individual to care for others. This is why he is convinced that *salah* has to be imposed at the Doha.

He does not agree that *salah* is an invitation to pray, but rather -*Salah* should be imposed." He considers such an act of indulgence to be incorrect because *salah* is an enforced act which needs to be fulfilled. -If a Muslim has the authority in hand, he should use it to save his brothers and sisters from hellfire otherwise they would be answerable for their acts. Moreover, he declares that -All those who work at the school must be role models for students and they have to pray five times daily even if they are guardians, attendance, etc., it is their duties to remind their brothers and sisters of faith. If ever they see anything wrong with anybody, it is their duty and right to tell them. For example, I am the manager here, it means I am above in hierarchy over my employees but still we are all Muslims within one community of believers; if ever they perceive that I am not conforming to the rules of Islam, they have the right to tell me and I will not be offended with that. All the staff and the students form one brotherhood and each one is responsible for each other. He extends his ideas by saying that every Muslim is a

leader at varying levels and they should be responsible for one another. Allah orders Muslims to forbid evil on Earth and to enjoin good deeds. This is a fundamental command which must be implemented in order to find peace on Earth.

-My son was schooled at Doha since the first year. He had refused a star school to remain at Doha because of me. He has obtained a bursary from the University of Carnegie in America. It has the same academic level as Harvard and he was blessed with a BSc first class. After having obtained his master degree, he was recruited to a big company in America. As you see, hard work is important. The devotion of the staff is highly motivational for our students. Many students have become doctors, engineers or are working in the government sector, some are teachers... by this, I totally reject the idea that students of Doha live in seclusion and are unable to fit in the Mauritian society or the global societyll.

In the same line of thought, Polin is convinced that Doha is the best opportunity for any student who wants a balanced life. He claims that opportunities are wide. One of them is to guide children towards the right objective of life and at the same time motivate them towards social and economic goals. Being himself farsighted, he envisions the best for his students.

Doha is the first computerised school in Mauritius. The school uses Cloud-based technologies and offers the facility to members of the staff to access many documents as well as time-tables. This facility has been available since 2003. Everything is managed through computers. Polin also relates to an incident which is well-known among the locals, where a twelve-year-old boy had monitored a Facebook page on behalf of a well-known political man during the last general election. The political man is presently a minister and this event was highly broadcast. Polin confides that the child is a student of Doha. "This example proves that students of the Academy are not left behind; they are modern and well groomed. So, anyone who says that Doha has an extremist or terrorist tendency or is backward has an analytical problemll. Hence, he claims that Doha is ahead of the curve compared to the other schools.

The school offers an e-learning platform. Students use smart phones as well as Facebook. "I came from Grand Bel Air at Mahebourg. I studied at Hamilton College then I went to Saudi Arabia to study at Ryad University. I speak three languages fluently, English, French, and Arabic. So, we are not uncivilised people or people who want our brothers and sisters to remain illiterate and backward".

-Indeed, the atmosphere is conducive to learning Islam; it is peaceful and Islamic. There is nothing backward about Islam. People need to appreciate the good service Doha offers to hundreds of students every year. Children have to evolve in a naturally pure environment. I think the difference is visible and felt.

-When the first laureate<sup>3</sup> was known, all the girls chanted *-Allahu Akbar!* with heartfelt love and admiration. They represent the pride of Muslim girls in the modern world. Among them, there are talented girls who perform well in Calligraphy, Arts and other academic subjects. Many of them are fluent in Arabic and Quranic recitation as well as its memorisation. Everything is referred to as the Creator, Allah, which is the basis of success. Bursaries are offered to outstanding students to countries such as Arabia and Qatar. Incentives are given in the form of rewards.

All students and the staff are united as one family. There is a good relationship between the staff and the students. There is no such thing as old girls bullying younger ones. Anyone who comes to Doha is welcomed as a friend, a sister/a brother and a family member. On both sides, integration is quick and welcoming. You may ask anyone here.

---

## Foot notes

1. RIPHAH international university, Islamabad is a private University, chartered by the Federal Government of Pakistan in 2002. The University was established with a view to produce professionals with Islamic moral and ethical values. It is sponsored by a not-for-profit trust; namely Islamic International Medical College Trust (IIMCT), created in 1995, <https://www.riphah.edu.pk/>
2. ICAC film competition

<https://youtu.be/r6SbtkSiPbo>

3. The first laureate at Doha, the niece of the manager of Doha.  
<https://youtu.be/J1QAp7EaBoE>

## **APPENDIX B: SEMI STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE**

Hereunder the questionnaires outline the variables to be collected for all interviewees.

They have been divided into three distinct parts. Since the interview is based on a semi-structured questionnaire, loose questions were given to interviewees which are excluded from the proposed questionnaire.

### **(1) Semi structured questionnaire for students**

#### **A: Personal data of students**

First name:

Age:

Grade [should be 11/12/13]:

Name of school[s] attended:

Home district:

#### **B: Religious knowledge before and after having been admitted to Islamic Secondary Schools**

What are your primary motivations for enrolling at the Islamic Secondary schools?

Has your school contributed in providing you with Islamic knowledge and values?

#### **C: Opportunities that the school offers to students**

What, according to you, are the various facilities offered at your school?

[Students should think of school infrastructure, activities, donations, fee exemption, advice etc]

Is Islamic education of any help to you? Elaborate

#### **D: Hindrances to the students' educational pathways**

[Students should think of financial and personal problems, curricula, peer pressures, violence at home and at school, location of schools, types of school mates etc]

## **E: Solutions proposed by students to eradicate those problems**

What do you think would be the ideal curriculum for students of your age?

What do you expect from schools?

(1) How do you propose to eradicate all the problems you mentioned earlier? What are the activities that are done in your school? Please put a tick ( ) in the box which indicates the degree of your participation in Islamic Education Curriculum activities during this school year: (1) Always (2) Often (3) Seldom (4) Never

(2) Are students encouraged to attend religious competitions, to read the newspaper and magazine articles that can bring awareness about social disintegration and how to cope with them?

(3) Do school interventions help to change your views about drugs and other problems?

## **(2) Semi structured questionnaire concerning educators**

### **A: Personal data** First

name: Telephone/wattsapp

number: School name:

Subject taught:

### **B: Challenges met by them**

What, according to you, are the various challenges you have to operate within a multi-cultural multi-religious country?

As educators, what are your daily challenges to work with teens?

Do you find that the aims of Islamic Education Curriculum are relevant to teens' lives?

Do you think that the Islamic Studies and Arabic curriculum need revising? If yes, why?

What do you think of the young Muslim situation in Mauritius?

Do you find the aims of Islamic Education Curriculum relevant to students' actual life and the problems of society?

What suggestions would you like to make in order to improve misbehaviour, lack of discipline and other social evils in your institutions?

How would you grade the school culture: Positive or negative?

**C: Types of students that enroll in the particular institution**

What types of students normally enroll at your institution?

[Answers imply financial means, Muslim sub-groups such as Sunni, Tawheed etc, home location].

**D: Types of problems students face in their educational pathways**

How do educationists work to meet the needs of students?

[Answers should include: socio-cultural and religious hindrances, financial hindrances among others].

**E.** How do you propose to help students?

[Answers should include types of teaching and other activity-based projects or advices]

**(3) Semi-structured questionnaire for educational leaders such as rectors/directors/managers**

Name of school and position held:

Question: What are the challenges that your schools are facing?

Question: How do you envisage facing these challenges?

Question: What is the academic level of students that are enrolled in your institution?

Question: Why should students come to your school?

Question: What are the strategies that are used to attract future students in your school?

Question: What are the extra curricular subjects that are promoted in your school?

Question: How do you promote Islamic education including activities at school?

Question: what are the overall opportunities for your school?

## **APPENDIX C: THE EDUCATIONAL REFORM**

### The Educational Reform

- 1) The policy of compulsory education until age 16. A student will legally not leave the education system before the age of 16 which theoretically corresponds to eleven years of schooling.
- 2) The previous educational system was based on the old British system, with six years at the primary level and seven years at the secondary level. The new reform aims at nine continuous years of schooling from Grade 1 to Grade 9. The national examinations will decide whether students are able to continue their next educational level, to retrieve, or to attend a vocational school known as the TVET.
- 3) The overall goals of NYCBE reform [nine continuous years of schooling] can thus be summarised as ensuring that ALL of the children (a) complete 9 years of quality basic education and achieve relevant learning outcomes; and (b) successfully complete the secondary education cycle, whether General or Technical.
- 4) Currently, school population has been officially capped at a maximum of 1,400 per secondary school. This ceiling is called upon to be further lowered to 1100 in the medium term.
- 5) The last three years of basic education (Grades 7-9) will be taught in secondary schools and correspond to lower secondary education. Grades 10-11 will be taught in secondary schools. Grades 12-13 will be taught in secondary schools.
- 6) Post-Basic Education/ Upper Secondary - duration 4 years (ages 14-18 years).  
Post-Secondary and Higher Education: duration at least two years (above 18 years).
- 7) Eight learning areas have been defined in the National Curriculum Framework for Grades 7 to 9, to wit, Languages, Mathematics, Scientific and Environmental Education, The Arts, Health and Physical Education, Commercial Studies (Accounting, Management and Enterprise Education), Technology/ICT and Social/Modern Studies. Components of Life Skills, Intercultural Education,

Citizenship Education, Sexuality Education and Values Education will cut across these eight learning areas while ICT will be integrated across the curriculum as depicted in Figure 2.

8) Subjects to be taught in Grades 7 to 9 are as follows:

Core subjects: (1) English - including oral skills and literature, (2) Mathematics, (3) French - including oral skills and literature, (4) Science - Chemistry, Physics and Biology, (5) Information and Communications Technology (ICT), (6) Technology Studies (TS), - Design & Technology and Food & Textile Studies, (7) Business and Entrepreneurship Education (BEE) - Entrepreneurship, Economics and Accounts, (8) Social and Modern Studies (SMS) - History, Geography and Sociology, (9) Art & Design and (10) Optional language - An Asian Language or Arabic or Kreol Morisien

Non-core subjects are (1) Performing Arts, (2) Physical Education and (3) Life Skills and Values

9) Criteria for Admission to Regional Secondary Schools: Transition to Grade 7 will be based on the following criteria: Parental choice; Grade aggregate at the Primary School Achievement Certificate; and Proximity of residence to the secondary school.

10) Schools will be encouraged to identify training needs at their level and facilitate school based in-service training (SBIT);

Extracts taken from: <http://ministry-education.govmu.org/English/educationsector/nys/Documents/NYCBE%20Booklet.pdf>

## APPENDIX D: SCHOOL CERTIFICATE AND HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE PASSES

The tables below show the HSC performances of Doha, DUM and ICCVDP during 2015-2018

Table 1 HSC passes for 2018: Cambridge Higher School Certificate 2018 Performance

NAME OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL EXAMINED 2018	HSC PASSED	% PASS
DOHA	87	83	95.40
Dar UI Ma'arif	6	3	50
ICC VDP	147	107	72.79

Table 2 passes for HSC 2017

NAME OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL EXAMINED	HSC PASSED	% PASS
DOHA	64	65	96.88
Dar UL Ma'arif	9	8	88.89
ICC VDP	114	68	59.65

Table 3 passes HSC 2016

NAME OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL EXAMINED	HSC PASSED	% PASS
Doha	42	38	90.48
DUM	-	-	-
ICCVDP	158	97	61.39

Table 4 passes HSC 2015

NAME OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL EXAMINED	HSC PASSED	% PASS
-----------------	----------------	------------	--------

Doha	44	43	97.73
DUM	8	5	62.50
ICCVDP	154	83	53.90

#### Cambridge School Certificate performance 2018

NAME OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL EXAMINED	SC PASSED	% PASS
Dar UL Ma'arif	11	9	81.82
Doha	194	171	88.14
ICCVDP	3	3	100
ICCVPL	50	23	46
Madad UI Islam	41	14	34.15

#### Cambridge School Certificate performance 2017

NAME OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL EXAMINED	SC PASSED	% PASS
Dar UI Ma'arif	8	6	75
doha	207	190	91.79
ICCPL	52	25	48.08
ICCVDP	7	7	100
Madad UI Islam	43	12	27.91

#### Cambridge School Certificate performance 2016

NAME OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL EXAMINED	SC PASSED	% PASS
Dar UI Ma'arif	6	6	100

Doha	168	153	91.07
ICCPL	80	32	40
ICCVDP	2	2	100
Madad UI Islam	54	13	24.07

**Cambridge School Certificate performance by school 2015**

<b>NAME OF SCHOOLS</b>	<b>TOTAL EXAMINED</b>	<b>SC PASSED</b>	<b>% PASS</b>
Dar UI Ma'arif	17	15	88.24
Doha	59	57	96.61
ICCPL	59	31	32.54
ICCVDP	1	1	100
Madad UI Islam	56	17	30.36

## APPENDIX E: ISLAMIC STUDIES PAPER 2 FOR CAMBRIDGE A LEVEL

There are four sections.

Candidates answer five questions, choosing at least one from each section:

A: The Early Dynasties of Islam

B: Religious Thought in Early Islam

C: Variety in Islamic Beliefs

D: Islam in the World Today

There will be a choice of at least three questions in each section.

### Paper 2

Section A: The Early Dynasties of Islam • The Umayyads: the establishment of the dynasty, the main events of their rule, their decline and collapse • A special study of the following caliphs: Mu<sub>aw</sub>iyah (661–80), Abd al-Malik (685–705), Umar II (717–20), Marwan II (744–50) • The early Abbasids: their seizure of the caliphate, the changes to administration of the state under their rule, their decline and weakness after 850 • A special study of the following caliphs: Abu al-Abbas al-Saffah (750–54), Abu Ja<sub>far</sub> al Mansur (754–75), al-Mahdi (775–85), Harun al-Rashid (786–809), al-Ma'mun (813–33), al-Mutawakkil (847–61)

Section B: Religious Thought in Early Islam • The early development of the Shari<sub>ah</sub>; the contributions of Malik b. Anas, Abu Hanifah, al Shafi<sub>i</sub> and Ahmad b. Hanbal; their legal methods • The compilation of the Sunnah of the Prophet culminating in the Six Canonical Collections (the Sahih Sittah), and the methods employed by the major collectors of Hadith • The debate over reason and revelation, the main principles of the Mu<sub>tazilah</sub> and their attitude towards knowledge, their theological opponents, the contribution of Abu al-Hasan al-Ash<sub>ari</sub>

Section C: Variety in Islamic Beliefs • The early history of Shi<sub>i</sub> Islam, the role of the Imams, questions of religious authority between Sunnis and Shi<sub>is</sub>, Shi<sub>i</sub> Islam and politics • Sufism with special reference to early mystics and particularly Abu Hamid al-Ghazali; its principle teachings and relationship to orthodox beliefs • Islamic philosophy and its relationship to religious thinking

Section D: Islam in the World Today • Early modern intellectual movements in Islam, including the Salafis, Muhammad Abduh and Hasan al-Banna', Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Muhammad Iqbal,

Abu Aḥmad al-Mawdūdī • The relation between Islam and other faiths, especially Judaism and Christianity • The place of women in Islam • Muslims living as minorities, their part in the wider community and adherence to Islamic principles

## APPENDIX F: LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME

Table 1: A quantitative representation of the Mauritian population by the language spoken at home for the year 2000

LANGUAGE	NUMBER OF PEOPLE
Creole	826, 152
Bhojpuri	142, 387
French	39, 953
English	3, 512
Creole and French	33, 795
Creole and Bhojpuri	64, 105

*Source: Mauritius Ministry of Economic Development, Financial Services and Corporate Affairs (2001: 84).*

## APPENDIX G: FUNCTIONAL LEARNING THROUGH A MINIATURE IDEAL SOCIETY

