Shah Wali Allah's Philosophy of Education with Reference to Modern System of Education

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Islam is a din that covers all aspects of life, religious and temporal, and discovers every secret of life even the entire universe. This approach towards life and universe can be justified and satisfied only through a certain level of knowledge. And, this level can be achieved only through education. In Islam greatest emphasis has been laid upon getting education. Even the revelation from God started in a pattern of educational lesson, as is manifested from this verse.

آفر ایاسورِ اَللّٰهِ خَلَقَ

(Read in the name of your God Who created)

Following the same Divine tradition, the Holy Prophet Muhammad made his mosque (known as Masjid-i Nabawi) as the first centre of Islamic learning in which thousands of people were educated and trained by him. In fact, the basic duty of every Prophet has been to educate the people and make clear the difference between good and bad in the universe. As regards importance of knowledge and education, the Muslim philosophers have presented their view towards the education, its purpose, nature, teaching, methodology, etc. Famous educational theorist Dr. Syed Abdullah is of the opinion that the ideas of only a few can be called milestone in the History of education. Bu Ali Sina

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being the first and then, respectively Ibn-i Miskawaiyah, Al-Ghazali, Ibn-i Khaldun, and last person is Shah Wali Allah. Bu Ali Sina's importance in his view is due to the reason that he presented the discipline of education as a science and questioned the abilities of a teacher and a student. He called it a game of pondering and experience. Ibn-i Miskawaiyah’s emphasis remained over the external and spiritual basis of education. Al-Ghazali presented the idea that the purpose of knowledge is the achievement of knowledge through revelation. Ibn-i Khaldun gave importance to external and Physical elements and environment in Education. But Shah Wali Allah's importance lies in the way that he harmonized temporal and religious life and declared both necessary for the totality of life. He tried to present the same in his educational theory. His educational theory represents both din and dunya. Wali Allah also presented the importance of personality in a positive manner. Accordingly the syllabus which Shah Wali Allah proposed for the madaris contains both religious and temporal subjects on the pattern of Dars-i Nizami and also advised the parents to make their children learn arts and crafts. On the other hand he stresses upon the pupils to get the knowledge of the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. Thus using the personality of the Prophet in a positively symbolic way he tried to achieve his reformist aims through education.

Shah Wali Allah is of the opinion that human being resembles animals and trees in many ways. But man has some peculiarities, which distinguishes him from other animate and inanimate beings. The most important among them are human ability to talk and understand, seek knowledge through experience or intellect and seeking knowledge through the organization of these matters that he thinks well. Men have peculiarity of feelings and movement and they accept the natural revelations and Physical sciences. Along with all that they hold intellect and have ability of getting knowledge. Therefore the most important thing that distinguishes

man from animals is his quest for knowledge. It is necessary that the knowledge should be in an organized form for some particular purposes. That organized form is called sciences and seeking knowledge through these organized disciplines is called education that is concerned with respective study.

In his book *Al-Khayr al-Kathir*, Shah Wali Allah has pointed out four kinds of knowledge in respect of sources. In *The Fourth Khazanah*, he wrote that the meaning of knowledge in general has been restricted to four kinds and they are as under:

- The Feeling (*ihsas*), acquired by means of one of the five senses. It is connected with the bodily faculty, *latifah-i qalbiyyah*).
- The thinking (*al-takhayyul*). It has connection with the thinking faculty. Its function is to consider the absent objects possessing colour and shape.
- The Imagination (*tawahham*). It is connected with the imaginative faculty. Its function is to understand the particular meanings, bearing relations to the senses and then to retain and preserve them.
- The Intellect (*tawaggal*). It has connection with the faculty of the rational soul (*nafs-i natiqah*). Its function is to understand the natural conceptions and the non-material things.

We, on our part, refuse to take this intellect as connected with the rational soul. It is rather connected with a perceptive faculty (*idrakiyah*) that is an agent to the rational soul in the world of space, and is nearest to the bodies towards it (perceptive faculty).

Though each one of these four has a particular seat reserved for its investigation shows that they are a complete dress that has covered the whole of Rational Soul (*nafs-i natiqah*). 4

In another treatise *al-Sirr al-Maktum fi Asbab-i Tadween-i Ulum*, Shah Wali Allah has presented his views about the development of sciences among the Muslim masses. In this treatise Shah Wali Allah has divided the sciences into four types in

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accordance with their nature: ‘Arabic Sciences, Divine Sciences, Natural Sciences and Philosophy.

Following the traditional Muslim theorists, Shah Wali Allah condemns philosophy although he includes it in the syllabus of Madrassah-i Rahimiyah but urged upon the scholars to keep them away from it. His emphasis remained over the education of the Qur’an and the Hadith.  

In Tafhimat-i Ilahiyyah, addressing the scholars, Shah Wali Allah wrote:

I address the seekers of knowledge who have named themselves ulema. O! You are caught in the Greek techniques in over-indulgence of studying Grammar and philosophy. This you call knowledge whereas the knowledge is the word of God or the word or deeds of the Prophet. But you are sunk in the propositions induced by the jurists of yore. Do you not know that only the word of God and Word of the Prophet are taken as commands? But the pity is that most of you decline to accept a hadith. Whenever a hadith is quoted you say. "I do not act upon hadith, I conform to this or that school of jurists. The pretext you make for not conforming to the hadith is equally silly. You say the job of understanding hadith and to extract prediction from it can only be performed by expert jurists. And then you contend that Imams of Islamic law were not the persons who could have ignored a hadith. If they have ignored a hadith they must have done so for some reason. Let it be known to all of you that religion does not recommend this attitude. If you believe in it you ought to obey your Prophet irrespective of the consideration that his command goes against or in favour of a school of thought. The Will of God is that you should follow the Qur’an and the hadith in all matters. If you find some difficulty in understanding them you can seek help from the ulama whose rulings are nearest to the hadith, and hence, are more authentic and correct. Do you not remember that God has made it compulsory that you should spread knowledge among the masses so that Islam dominates over the lands of God? But, instead of doing so, you have plunged into the study of superfluities and by your practices you have made the acquiring of Islamic knowledge so big a thing that it has become almost impossible to follow Islam. Do you not see that—all the big cities are becoming empty of righteous ulama and if per chance there are any, they are unable to give currency to the Islamic symbols?"  

5. Hafeez Malik, III.
Thus Shah Wali Allah condemns the study of philosophy and grammar. Instead, he stresses upon the study of the Qur’an and the Hadith. But in general, the language has an important place in Shah Wali Allah's Philosophy. He knows its importance. According to him, it is a peculiarity of men from animals that they can talk and understand not only their species but also others. Shah Wali Allah thinks it very necessary. It is the element and tool through which men can learn and understand. So Shah Wali Allah advises to teach a student first the language. In this regard Shah Wali Allah stresses upon the education in Arabic language. In his Wasiyat Namah he advises:

Fortunate is that person among us, who acquires proficiency in Arabic, its syntax and etymology, and its literary works and develops comprehension of the Qur’an and the Hadith. Familiarity with Persian and Hindi books and endeavours in the composition and recitation of poetry and the study of speculative Rationalism affairs of state and kings etc. lead only to the blind valley of ignorance. If the exigencies of the day require their knowledge and practice then at least this much is necessary that their practitioners should regard them as worldly knowledge and then looking down upon them express their regrets. It is necessary for us to reach the sacred shrines of Islam and then rub our foreheads on thresholds therein lay blessing for us and turning away from them amounts to bad luck for us.7

Shah Wali Allah's time presents a very crucial stage in our history. The whole structure of society had been shattered. The Muslims were going away from their culmination period. The decline was evident in every aspect of life. Every class of society had become corrupt including the ulema, mashaykh, politicians, kings and princes. The religion was amended by so many local wills and there was tussle between every class of society. In this atmosphere of decline, Shah Wali Allah wanted to reform the society. All the efforts of Shah Wali Allah were directed in this perspective. Shah Wali Allah's educational thoughts also hold a great deal with this spirit of reform. And all his reform movements were connected with the revival of the Qur’anic and the Hadith studies.

Shah Wali Allah was of the opinion that in Islam, din and dunya are not separated from each other. The Qur’an and the

Sunnah are the basis of Islam and cover all aspects of human life. For this he believed that the Prophet was the only person whose taqlid was righteous. The understanding of four or five schools of fiqh was necessary but their taqlid was not essential for the ulema; the taqlid of the Holy Prophet alone was binding on them. That is why he wanted to reform the Islamic principles and practices from sinful innovations and polytheism that had crept into Islamic history during the classical age. This was possible only through reviving education of the Qur’an and the Hadith through an understanding of ‘Arabic language.

Explaining the general approach of Shah Wali Allah, an author has pointed out the following aims of education:

- Development of the qualities of human species.
- The fulfilment of biological necessities of individual.
- The satisfaction of individual’s Psychological necessities i.e. the attributes of self-respect and confidence.
- The intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical and passionate development of individual in balance.
- Preservation of individual and society against necessary dangers.
- Organization of welfare in respect of family, social and political matters.
- Development of friendship and harmony among the different classes of society.
- Development of quest for creativity and fresh inquiry among the students instead of conformity or imitation.
- The revival of religious sciences.
- Harmonization of Divine Sciences and Rational Sciences.  

Islamic educational system does not bind a student to continue special organized studies for a long time. The age of five for a young student is considered satisfactory for the beginning of education; Shah Wali Allah himself started education at that age.  

9. In the old syllabus, the age of completion of education was very less than today’s. In India Faizi completed his education at the age of 14, and Shah Wali Allah himself at the age of fifteen. Shah Wali Allah believes in the view that a student should
Instructions, Qualities and Duties of Teacher

Teacher has a key status in the system of education. The Prophet of Islam himself was a great teacher and educator. Although Muslim thinkers have their own method and view about education but it is basically concerned with the nature and purpose of learning and education. The Muslim scholars like Al-Farabi, Al-Ghazali and Ibn-i Khaldun have discussed the qualities and duties of a good teacher. Qazi Ibn-i Jama has also touched the matter. He has discussed the characteristics of a good teacher, but these characteristics deal basically with the personal qualities of a teacher and his attitude towards the students. Only a little touch has been given to the method of teaching. That method itself revolves around the teachers' attitude towards teaching, but not towards the technique of teaching. It is Shah Wali Allah who has dealt with the method of teaching. He has not only discussed basic characteristics of a good teacher, but has also dealt with the question how a teacher could teach and how a teacher can teach well to his students.

In one of his famous treatises i.e. Fun-i Danishmandi (the Art of wisdom or intellectualism) he deals with that subject. By Fun-i Danishmandi Shah Wali Allah meant the art of Kitab Dani (the Art of the perception of books). It is a direction for the teacher that how he should read and teach the book. His expectations and instructions show that to him, a teacher firstly should know the art of wisdom to which we can call the art of education. In Wali Allah's age, the course books tell about the educational system, so Shah Wali Allah's principle of Kitab Dani, in fact are his principles of educational methodology.

The importance of textbooks is still there and different aspects of education can be guided by these principles. In this regard Shah Wali Allah offers two requirements for a teacher:

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10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
• He should have the Art of wisdom and intellectualism called *Fun-i Danishmandi*.

• He himself should have studied the syllabus up to a level so that he should know the text with a research oriented approach"  

In this way, Shah Wali Allah has pointed out fifteen principles for book reading and writing:

1. He should highlight the difficult and problematic words in the reading and should explain the suspicions in the names, acts and even of points of words so that one could be saved from the mistakes of words and script.

2. If there is any unknown word and that word belongs to any other language, should be commented upon and explained. It means if any word is used very little and it’s meaning is not clear to the pupils then a teacher should explain its diction and content.

3. If there is any problematic structure in the structure of text or difficult grammatical and compositional tense and it is hard to understand for the student, teacher should solve it according to the Grammar and composition.

4. The problem of under-discussion should be understood or explained through exemplification or by presenting synonyms. For example, there is a reference of any principle or method in the book and students are unable to understand it, then the teacher should describe it clearly with exemplification so that the pupils can get an access to the real purpose.

5. If argumentation is applied to any problem in the book, the teacher should explain its secret prolegomena’s in such a way that required result that lay in the relation of different prolegomena’s can be achieved.

6. While interpreting the definitions, their limitations with merits and advantages and boundaries (scope) should be described concisely and precisely.

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7. The principles of formula should be explained in such a way that it describes the advantages, divisions (Properties) and examples of limitations of definition, along with the reality of derivation of principle or formula.

8. The explanation of divisions and their causes. Description of the properties processed and of causes of the order processed by a thing.

9. If two things collaborate or confront each other, it is the duty of the teacher to describe the differences between them.

10. Harmonization between two different things or two confronting religions. If there are differences in the writing of author on two different places, the teacher should solve it by argumentation — generalized or specialized.

11. (related to ninth and tenth) The scholar should remove the visible or invisible suspicions. If reasoning of author is not in accordance with the topic under-discussion, then it is the duty of teacher that he should remove all kinds of misgivings.

12. The references, commentaries and criticisms should be explained along with the unexplained questions in the reading.

13. The translation of book into the language of students so that students can easily perceive its recovering.

14. If there are different explanations of one act or writing, the scholar should explain all and select the suitable one by duly emphasising it through the force of his intellect based on logic and argumentation.

15. The description and speech of scholar should be so simple that the above fourteen mentioned principles can be clear and appealing to mind and intellect. It should be precise and concise. The teacher should combine the text of author in such a way that both should have harmonization.13

Shah Wali Allah expects that only by obeying and using these fifteen principles, the teacher would be able to have a skill in

teaching and interpretation and commentary on the book(s). For the purpose of higher education, Shah Wali Allah advised that the students at advanced level should be made aware of these five principles!

1. The teacher should tell his pupils briefly about these principles of book reading.
2. He should tell them the reality of differences during the application of these principles.
3. He should tell them the parameters of their study along with the fields of study.
4. He should compare the study of the pupils with his own study and should emphasise in such a way that the pupil could be able to keep it in mind forever.
5. The teacher should ask his student to write notes and comments on the text of book for the purpose of reviewing different works so that the ability of student could be evaluated and enhanced.14

Although Shah Wali Allah did not give direct comment on the personal character of a teacher, yet he wants to see him as a good Muslim. To become a good teacher, it is necessary that one should be a good Muslim possessing the following characteristics:

- **Taharah**: (cleanliness in thinking): It means that he should be good in nature and should remain away even from lexicon thinking.
- **Akhabat**: He should have pondering over the verses and attributes of God with full consideration.
- **Samahat**: He should not be the follower of beastliness. It means that he should have control over his animal nature.
- **Adalah**: It means that he should try to do every thing with a sense of justice and fair play.

Shah Wali Allah believes that by having these qualities a man can be able to achieve sayadah (good fortune).15

In the introduction of Hujjatullah al-Balighah, Shah Wali Allah has put three more conditions while discussing the qualities of an expert scholar:

23. He should be expert in religious sciences and Divine Arts.
24. His heart should be brimful with the secrets of God.
25. His nature and mental approach should be faster and fluent.
26. He should know the method of derivation of principles through intellectual and comparative arguments.16

Shah Wali Allah wants to see a teacher having all qualities of kindness. While exemplifying his Fun-i Danishmandi, he calls a teacher shafique ushman (a kind-hearted teacher).

In Tafhimat-i Ilahiyyah Shah Wali Allah advises the teacher to remain away from the study of philosophy and concentrate more on the studies of the Qur’an and the Hadith. He writes:

‘O’ you are caught in the Greek teachings and in over-indulgence of studying Grammar and philosophy. This you call knowledge whereas the knowledge is the word of God and deeds of the Prophet.17

Syllabus for Study

Shah Wali Allah’s views towards the syllabus for education can be derived from three primary sources: the syllabus of Rahimiyah College; 18 a certificate 19 issued by Shah Wali Allah to one of his students Sheikh Jaia Allah of Punjab; his last testament Al-Maqala al-Wadiyyah-fi-al-Nasiqah wal- Wasiyah’s fourth and last precept that deals with the question that what syllabus and with what classification and order should it be taught.20

Unity is the inner spirit of Islam and according to Hisham Nasbi that spirit is reflected in Islamic education. In Islam all

17. A.D.Muztar, Shah Wali Allah: A Saint Scholar of Muslim India (Islamabad: National Commission on History and Culture), 405-408.
18. Muhammad Sarwar, 405-408.
unified in Him, so there is not any prohibition of any subject and knowledge for learning and teaching. On that basis the Muslim education was based on generalized studies including all subjects.

As a part of traditional faculty of Muslim (religious) thinkers and educational theorists, Shah Wali Allah also believes in the general discipline of study for educating the peoples. To Shah Wali Allah there are four types of sciences among the Muslims containing every aspect of universe. The subjects, sub-subjects, purpose and development of these four types are discussed by Shah Wali Allah in one of his treaties Al-Sirr al-Maktum Fi Asbab-i Tadween al-‘Ilm. These four types are:

- **Arabic Science**: To have a skill in Arabic literature which is the basis of Islamic Sciences.

- **Science of Religious Law**: The skill in those matters that are in the words of the Prophet Muhammad.

- **Philosophical Sciences**: are divided into two:
  a. Philosophy
  b. Natural Sciences

  Philosophy aims at expounding the mysteries and secrets of all that which is difficult to prove by material arguments. And natural Sciences deal with the materialistic aspect of the world.\(^{21}\)

It is important to note that all these four types of sciences have been included in Shah Wali Allah's syllabi which is as follows:

- Tradition.
- Commentary.
- Holy Qur'an.
- Jurisprudence.
- Logic.
- Fundamentals of Law.
- Scholasticism.
- Mysticism.
- Realities.

\(^{21}\) Hafeez Malik, 106-107.
• Properties of words and verses.
• Medicine.
• Philosophy.
• Grammar.
• Dictionary.
• Mathematics:
  a. Mathematics.
  b. Geometry.
  c. Al-Gebra.

To Shah Wali Allah these subjects should be taught to all the students in general and research study should be left to the student independently in any one of the branches of knowledge.

The following books were included into the syllabus for different subjects and sciences. The general material is taken from Rahimiyah College's syllabus.

Tradition

Mishkat (Except two chapters kitab al-Baya and kitab al-Adab.
Sahih Bukhari (up to the chapter on kitab al-Taharah).
Shamai'īl al-Nabi.

But the certificate issued to Sheikh Jai' Allah indicates that Shah Wali Allah also taught the following books on Hadith:
• Sunnan-i Abu Daud.
• Jamey' Tirmizi.
• Sunan Ibn-i Majah.
• Masnad-al Darmi.
• Musnad-i Imam Ahmad waAbdullah bin 'Umar.
• Al-Musawwa of Shah Wali Allah: a selection from Al-Mawwatta of Imam Malik.
• Al-Nukhba and its commentary In his Wasiyat Namah, Shah Wali Allah also includes the commentary of al-Mawwatta by Yahya bin Yahya of Andalus and Commentary of Mishkat by Tiybi.

The above books are prescribed for the teaching of Hadith.
The Holy Qur'an and its Commentary

- Al-Qur'an with a great stress on verbal translation.
- Al-Baizawi: a commentary: only a part of it.
- Mudavic: a commentary: only a part of it.
- In Wasiyat Nama sixth precept he also refers Tafsir-i Jalalain of Sheikh Jalal al-Din Abd al-Rehman bin Abi Bakr al-Suyuti.

Jurisprudence

Sharh Waqaya (Except a little part of it which was not included in the syllabus).

Hidayah also mentioned in the certificate except a little part).

Logic

Sharh Shamsiyyah.
Sharh Mutali (only a part of it).

Fundamentals of Law

Husami.
Tuzih-o Talmih.

Scholasticism

Sharh 'Aqa'id.
Khayali (only a part of it).
Sharh Muwafiq (only a part of it).

Mysticism

Awarif al-Ma'arif (Only a part of it).
Rasai'i'l Naqshbandiyah (both mentioned in the Wasiyat Namah).

Realities

Sharh Raua'iyyah of Mawlama Jami.
Lawa'ih.
Muqaddamah Sharh Lam'at.
Muqaddamah Naqd al-Nasus.

Properties of words and verses

A book of Shah Abdul Rahim (title not mentioned).
Medicine
Mu'jaz al-Qanun.

Philosophy
Sharh Hidayat al-Hikmah.
In the certificate al-Gazali's Ihya-i 'Ulam al-din is also mentioned.

Grammar
Kifayah.
Sharh Mulla Jami.

Philology
Mutawwwal.
Mukhtasir al-Ma'ani.

Mathematics.
Some books giving a concise study of the subject were taught (books not mentioned). Shah Wali Allah also taught his own treatises and books, some of which have been mentioned in the certificate.

- Hujjatallah al-Balighah (Science of the secrets of Divine Law).
- Al-Insaf fi-Bayan-i Sabab al-ikhtilaf.
- Al-Qawl al-Jamil.
- Al-Fawz al-Kabir.

The syllabus is basically developed as general study, having a main stress on religious sciences.

Technical education;
Although technical education is not mentioned any where in all these sources but Shah Wali Allah was of the view that students should be skilled in any technical work or crafts to meet the financial and economic needs.

Sa'adat Yar Khan Rangin's Tasnif-i Rangin deals with Shah Wali Allah's concept of Islamization in which some ideas presented in the Wasiyat Nama also have been verified. Ranging claims that his Tasnif-i Rangin was developed on the basis of a Risalah which he obtained, devoted exclusively to the Islamization
of the Muslim's moves from the time of birth to death. The eleventh title of Tasnif-i-Rangin exhorts parents to help their children learn crafts and earn their livelihood by honest means.²²

How the syllabus should be taught at different levels

In Maqal al-Wasiyya's sixth precept, Shah Wali Allah has given a view that how the syllabus should be taught at different levels. He calls it the method of instruction. It shows what order should be adopted for different levels of education. Here we are quoting the sixth precept indicating different levels.

First level: language

The method of instruction that has proved to be most effective suggests that a young student should be taught three or four small traits on Grammar and syntax. Subsequently he should be introduced to books on history and political economy (Hikmat-i ‘amali), using Arabic text. Moreover, he should be familiarized with the works on the Lexicon so that he may be able to understand difficult portions (of the Arabic and Persian languages).

Second level: Hadith

When a student has acquired proficiency in Arabic he should be taught the Mawatta of Imam Malik and its commentary by Yahya b. Yahya of Andlus (d.234/848). This study should not be abandoned because it contains the essence of the science of tradition (Hadith). Their study offers many blessings and has attended these recitations uninterruptedly.

Third level: Qur'an

Then the Qur’an should be taught with translation but without commentaries. This difficulty is encountered in matter of syntax on the occasion of revelation or different passages of chapters of the Qur’an.

Fourth level: Tafsir

After learning Qur’an, Tafsir-i Jalalayn should be learned according to the established syllabus. This method is most useful.

Fifth level: Fiqh (theology and mysticism)

²² Al-Tafhimat-i Ilahiyyah, 282-83.
Subsequently, the student should be taught the books of tradition, i.e. from the sound six works of tradition and books on jurisprudence, dogmatic theology and sufism.

Then the time should be reserved for the study of works on logic, including Sharh-i Mulla and Qutbi and anything else for which God may grant a student some strength.

If it is possible one should study a portion of Mishkat-al Masabih one day and its commentary by Tiybi, the next day. This practice is very useful.

Training of the Students

Shah Wali Allah has not presented his views about the training of students in an organized form. As already discussed his educational thoughts basically depend upon his Risalah-i-Danishmandi which is the only treatise directly related to his educational theory. But it is evident that he wanted to reform all the classes of society without any distinction of classes. To him the students were the source for reformation of the society. So he basically tried to train a number of students who could continue and disperse his reform movement and his thoughts.

Shah Wali Allah in this respect wanted to spread the knowledge of Hadith. To Shah Wali Allah the main cause of the decline, which had been continued during his period fastly, was that the Muslims had become ignorant of Hadith. So his remedy for the revival and reform of the Muslim society was the diffusion and spread of the teaching of the Qur’an and the Hadith. For that purpose Shah Wali Allah not only wrote Forty Ahadith but also stressed on the study of Mawatta of Imam Malik and his commentaries. He himself wrote commentary on Mawatta not only in Arabic but also in Persian respectively under the title of Al-Mussawa and Al-Mussaffa that was Shah Wali Allah's first direction for the students. It is important to note that the Holy Qur’an is the basic source of our whole life structure and deals with all aspects of life as a Holy Book of the Divine religion: Islam. In this respect Shah Wali Allah wanted to train a student wholly on the principles and doctrines of Islam. The importance of the study of Hadith can hardly be over emphasized. Addressing the scholars in this respect he wrote:
Do you not know that only the word of God and words of the Prophet are taken as commands? But the pity is that most of you decline to accept a Hadith. Whenever a Hadith is quoted, you say: "I do not act upon hadith, I conform to this or that school". The pretext you make for not conforming to the Hadith is equally silly. You say the job of understanding and to extract predictions from it can only be performed by expert jurists. And then you contented that the Imams of Islamic law were not the persons, who could have a hadith. If they had ignored a Hadith they might have done so for some reason. Let it be known to all of you that religion does not recommend this attitude. If you ought to obey your Prophet irrespective of the consideration that this command goes against or in favour of a school of thought, the Will of God is that you should follow the Qur’an and the Hadith in all matters. If you find some difficulty in understanding them you can seek help from the ulema, whose rulings are nearest to the Hadith and hence are more authentic and correct. Do you not remember that God has made it compulsory that you should spread knowledge among the masses so that Islam dominates over the lands of Islam? But, instead of doing so, you have plunged into the study of superfluities and by your practice you have made the acquiring of Islamic knowledge so big a thing that it has become almost impossible to follow Islam.

In the First Precept of Wasiyyat Namah Shah Wali Allah, while advising in general, stresses upon the study of the Qur’an and Hadith, stressed the harmonization of taqlid (conformity or imitation) and ijtihad (to make fresh inquiries). In this respect he advised that a student should observe all the five basic pillars of the religion. Shah Wali Allah wrote in the first precept of Wasiyyat Namah:

In matters of faith and action, this humble person believes that one should strictly adhere to the Qur’an and Sunnah. One should always ponder over them and should study a portion daily from each. If one is unable to read them then he should listen to the translation of a portion from either one of them.

In matters of faith one should follow the Sunni classical authorities (of law i.e. madhab-i qudama ahl-i Sunnah) except those matters that have remained unexplained and uninvestigated by the classical authorities and also avoid the immature scepticism created by speculative rationalists. Regarding the issues of positive law one should follow in the footsteps of the scholarly

23. Hafeez Malik, First Precept.
traditionalists who have comprehensive knowledge of *fiqh* and *Hadith*. Also one should constantly compare the expositions of jurists with the Qur'an and the Sunnah and accept those, which conform to them. Similarly, in rejecting some of their interpretations, a constant comparison with the Qur'an and Sunnah is indispensable. In matters of speculation, the Muslim community can never be indifferent to Qur'an and Sunnah. One should disregard the polemical statements of Jurists who have committed themselves to the *taqlid* of a scholar and have discarded the *Sunnah* altogether; one should seek closeness to God by staying away from them. 24

In the third precept Shah Wali Allah stressed upon the study of the Qur'an and the Hadith. Shah Wali Allah advised the student to have a teacher. While discussing mysticism he advised that one should study the Kitab Awarif al-Ma'arif and Risa'il-i Naqshbandi. He also advised the people and especially the students that they should remain away from the contemporary Sufis, busy in Miracles and *bida'* (sinful innovations).

At the same time he recommended that one must have a Shaykh for having an authentic position. He wrote:

If the Shaykh generally affects the spiritual conditions of the people then one should constantly remain in this Shaykh's company in order to achieve the desired condition. Subsequently, one may go into seclusion in order to remain in the state of bliss. 25

Shah Wali Allah believes that a student should acquire knowledge and education from a person who should be perfect in his field. He wrote:

In the contemporary period, however, there is no Shaykh commanding perfection in all matters. If he is perfect in one aspect he is deficient in another. Consequently one should learn from him things in which he has attained perfection and in other matters his counsel should be disregarded. One should accept what is clean and discard every thing that is covered with dust. 26

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25. *Ibid*.
Along with these, Shah Wali Allah declared the duty of a student to write a commentary or remark on the book, as a third part of Fun-i Danishmandi and his studies should be examined. 27

The other aspect of students' training, which Shah Wali Allah's certificate indicates is that to him a student, should raise questions and should enquire about the confused matters with a curiosity. He should discuss all matters openly. 28

From the above discussion, we can derive the following guidelines from Shah Wali Allah for a student:

- He should have a teacher and should spend time with him.
- He should follow the teacher only in those matters in which he is expert.
- He should study his syllabus carefully and with complete consideration.
- He should remain away from the miraculous contemporary sufis and rigidity.
- He should adopt a way in between taqlid and ijtihad.
- He should get a skill in "Fan-i Danishmandi".
- He should write comment on the book studied and should appear in the examining process created and developed by his teacher.
- He should raise questions; develop arguments and discussions relating to the matters under discussion.

The last two can be called the most emphasized by Shah Wali Allah. First is that the student should be the true observer of all the Five pillars of Islam and last one is that he should learn the Qur'an and the Hadith through every available source.

These conditions and instructions point-out that Shah Wali Allah had a close eye on the matter. He guided the student not only with his syllabus and method of learning, but also warned them against the prevailing social phenomenon. In fact, Shah Wali Allah

27. Ibid.
seems to be applying here his programme of reformation of society that could stop.

**Conceptual approach of Shah Wali Allah’s Philosophy of Education.**

Main concepts, which constitute the core of Shah Wali Allah’s Philosophy of education, which we also find in almost all modern Philosophies of the world and relevant to our modern system, can be categorised as: 1) Institutionalisation of education and 2) Categorization of knowledge into selected specialities.

He divided the knowledge into two main groups (i) Revealed and (ii) Acquired.

Revealed knowledge takes care of moral and human developments including the spiritual aspects of life whereas the acquired knowledge meets the requirements and necessities of human life.

**Methodology.**

In his last treatise he outlines his educational philosophy in the following categories:

**Daily routine:**

A student should be taught:

- 3-4 grammar tracts and syntax/world making.
- History and politics with economics.
- Lexicon (dictionary).
- *Hadith* with science of tradition.
- Qur’an with significance translation without commentaries.
- Investigative resource.
- Tafsir.
- Books on traditions, jurisprudence, dogmatic theology and Sufism.
- Logic.

**Training of Students**

- Writing commentary on books and critical notes.
- Raising questions.
- Discussion all matter openly.
Wali Allah tried to apply his programme through education.

It was first training school where students were not only guided about the syllabus but also warned about prevailing evils.

Principles for guidance of students.

Principles of studies.

Qualities of a Teacher

- He should know the Arts of Wisdom.
- He should have studied the syllabus with a critical approach.

Training of Teachers

- He should know skills of learning and interpretation.
- Characteristics of good teacher also include: (1) Taharah (2) Akhbat (3) Addala (4) Sama'at).
- He should be an expert in religions sciences.

Expert/Scholar Qualification

- Heart brimful with secrets of God.
- *Mertah*: approach factor and fluent.
- Know method of derivation of principles through intellectual and comparative argument.
- Syllabus.

15 Subjects to be offered

- Specialization.
- Level of teaching syllabus:
- Daily programme.

Conceptual approach followed in Modern system of Education

After reviewing various modern systems and philosophies of education, it can be concluded that objects and concepts of these philosophies in fact inherit the spirit of the philosophy of Shah Wali Allah. We find in him, the conceptual base for development
of any modern educational philosophy. The roots the above are available in Wali Allah’s Philosophy of education.

- Appreciation of ethical, moral and religious values, as well as truth and goodness.
- Equal access to education for all segments of society.
- Providing opportunity to learn knowledge and skill occupational training required for future life.
- Provide type of education best suited to the capacities and interest of the pupil.
- Preparing youth for critical and innovatory skills.
- Continuing and life long education.
- Learning various languages.
- To improve economics, social and political life through education.
- Promote national unity through social, cultural, economic and political developments.

Further the present concept of the institutionalisation of education, the standards for imparting education and its division into various stages and level of knowledge, selected to be imparted resemble more or less the Wali Allah Philosophy with minor variations, to suit local requirements.

The modern approach towards education and training of the children and the youth relates of Wali Allah philosophy’s basic role to prepare the children to become useful citizens of the country and to lead a full and productive life, to play an intelligent and constructive roles in the working and development of the nation in future.