



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT



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ISSN: 2226-6348

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Abdul Muqaddas Opeyemi Ishaq El-Mubarak, Isyaku Hassan

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v10-i3/10748>

DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v10-i3/10748

Received: 21 June 2021, Revised: 23 July 2021, Accepted: 17 August 2021

Published Online: 29 August 2021

In-Text Citation: (El-Mubarak & Hassan, 2021)

To Cite this Article: El-Mubarak, A. M. O. I., & Hassan, I. (2021). Challenges of Islamic Education in the Era of Globalization: A Proposed Holistic Solution. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 10(3), 337–349.

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Vol. 10(3) 2021, Pg. 337 - 349

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ISSN: 2226-6348

Challenges of Islamic Education in the Era of Globalization: A Proposed Holistic Solution

Abdul Muqaddas Opeyemi Ishaq El-Mubarak

LL.M Candidate, Faculty of Law and International Relations, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin,
Malaysia

Isyaku Hassan

Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Malaysia

Abstract

Islamic education has not been constructively structured and developed to be in the logic of international interest and transnational emblem. Also, the system of Islamic education is increasingly losing its quality, efficacy, and functionality in many societies as its curriculum addresses lesser contemporary issues. The curriculum largely prepares its scholars for mere religious activities which in turn downgrades Islamic scholars to just informal participators rather than active formal and informal contributors in society. Islamic educational syllabus trivializes its scholars in a non-religious environment. A functional educational curriculum is scholarly and pedagogically described as that which concentrates and emphasizes technological growth, self-employment, self-reliance, job satisfaction, employment skills, life skills, exposure opportunities, and lifelong awareness. Islamic curriculum is supposed to effectively respond to contemporary changes and challenges, such as terrorism-related issues. It is, therefore, crucial to ensure that the methodology of Islamic education becomes relevant to modernity and globalization. As such, this paper aims to explore the challenges of Islamic education in the era of globalization and suggest a holistic solution. It was envisaged that the outcomes of this paper could contribute to the development of Islamic education, particularly its curriculum, in contemporary society.

Keywords: Contemporary Society, Holistic Scheme, Islamic Curriculum, Islamic Education, Globalization

Introduction

Broad areas of influence that can be considered to determine national development are designed in the educational syllabus and curriculum (Callan, 1997; Hashim, 2004). Commitment to the educational curriculum is seen in the growth of national sectors. Islamic education tends to misplace its quality contents since the opponents to the system despised the structure and culture of the pedagogical settings. It is clear to faithful readers that the effort to shift from authoritarianism to democracy in certain Arab countries is yet to be

achieved despite several attempts. Authoritarianism is longstanding in most Islamic institutions and educational administrations across the Arab world.

Most Arabic textbooks acknowledge democracy as a concept, yet insist to declare it as a political system. It was revealed that countries such as Algeria, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia recognize the democratic political system but ignore this recognition in their respective textbooks. In most Islamic settings, civil liberties and political rights are rarely defined and considered (Badawi, 2004; Dia, Hugon, & d'Aiglepierre, 2016; Rosnani, 2005). Authoritarian educational systems discourage creativity and innovation. Perhaps, international achievements and contributions are significantly demonstrating the strengths of the Islamic educational curriculum alongside other educational systems. Islamic education is fashioned in such a way that students memorize facts and information without meditating on contemporary issues and trends. Students of Islamic studies are not critically trained and encouraged to think outside the box (Al-Gumaei, Alzouebi, & Abdelaziz, 2019).

Islamic curriculum is supposed to develop creative graduates, instrumental citizens, and committed reformers. The goals are assumed to be productive of surplus values rather than being a remodeling of outdated ideas. Islamic educationalists need to measure the quality of Islamic education by reviewing its governance, climate, status, teachers' qualification, and subjects' relevancy. The absence of political commitment, efficient supervisory units, and competent human resources are disquieting Islamic education from producing consistent and productive standards (Quamar, 2021; Suwitri & Larasati, 2021).

Islamic education remains unaddressed and understudied among curriculum planners (Stambach, 2010). The educational structure is mostly undervalued for national recognition and disregarded by governments and international organizations (Dia et al., 2016). With the rise of globalization and hyper-competition, the Islamic curriculum is expected to react to modernity challenges in theory and application. The contemporary needs are supposed to be presented and represented per global age. Stagnant principles and inoperative ideas are progressively retrograding the relevancy of Islamic courses. The current situation of Arabic-Islamic graduates indicates the failure of the Islamic curriculum towards producing creative graduates to compete with contemporary challenges and unemployment. Rosnani (2005) & Ramadan (2004) linked this failure to the incapacity of Islamic education to foster creative and critical thinkers.

The establishment of the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) was proposed by some Muslim scholars following the Mecca 1977 conference, nevertheless, this resolution is yet to switch the motionless status-quo in Islamic education. An educational curriculum is considered integral to national development. There is a need for considering national and international issues in the development of educational curriculum. Educational planners must design productive, realistic, and practicable courses that will reduce the unemployment rate in the country. An international standard should be considered in a curriculum by including the relevance of international communities. The factors needed for the development of the global labor force likewise represent a standard and futuristic curriculum (Motlow State Community College, 2006). A standardized curriculum considers graduate attributes and professional development. As such, it may be deduced from the above features that trivial attention is diverted to national development, national contribution, international qualification, relevant disciplines, job-creation, professional development, graduate attributes, and skilled areas of expertise in the Islamic curriculum.

As Islamic countries gradually escape from their colonial bondage, it is essential to extend, reform, and strengthen the Islamic curriculum to all aspects of modern challenges. The curriculum ignores maintaining and benefitting from a socio-political and economic advantage. The curriculum lacks the structure to create modern branches of knowledge important to modern societies and answerable to global contemporary problems. The research perceives that poor priority arrangements negatively influence the mindset of Arabic and Islamic studies graduates. This Islamic curriculum gradually ruins the resources in Islamic countries through substandard managers and management as they inflexibly diversify their major resources. As such, it is crucial to ensure that the curriculum of Islamic education becomes relevant to modernity and globalization. Against this background, the research attempts to propose how the Islamic curriculum can become relevant in all centuries toward improvement, economic participation, creativity contribution, poverty alleviation, and job creation.

The Emergence of Islamic Education

Tradition and modernity represent the objectives of Islamic education. These two factors respectively develop stable identity and flexibility in the history of Islamic education. Niyozov and Memon (2011) reported that Islamic education went through five different historical phases and periods such as the revelation and promise period, the medieval period, the colonial period, the post-colonial period, and the Islamization period. In the revelation period, Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him) was considered as the main reference of knowledge. While prophet's residence, *Masajid* (mosques), and *Halaqat* (centers of learning) were regarded as learning centers, social transformation of the tribal culture, destruction of tribal racism, unification of Arabs, and reconceptualization of existing concepts and practices (Niyozov & Memon, 2011). Additional branches of knowledge such as swimming, horsemanship, Arab proverbs, poetry, *Nahw* (grammar), *Fiqh* (jurisprudence), Qur'an, and hadith textual studies were also included in the curriculum during the era of Umar bin Khattab.

The medieval period placed Islamic education on the spirit and promises of revelation. The learning centers that protect and produce knowledge during this period include Dar al-Hikmah, Nizamiyyah in Iraq and Persia, Al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco, and Al-Azhar in Egypt. Court and ordinary centers constitute learning centers at this moment. While elites children and royal families occupy courts with competent teachers, children of ordinary citizens engage the normal learning centers. The colonial period as the third historical phase of Islamic education focuses on surviving challenges. The challenges that emanate from the West encompass rationalism, humanism, secularism, modernization, and nation-state. Children were sent to Western countries for the sake of confronting colonial challenges. The Western way of school dominates traditional learning centers at this period (Hilgendorf, 2003).

Moreover, traditional and Western system of education emerges and constitutes educational dualism (Niyozov & Memon, 2011). Although, the conflict between modern and traditional educational systems gradually vanishes the traditional system during the long run. The post-colonial era (1940-1970) in the fourth stage of Islamic education reacted to the colonial challenges by rejecting or accepting the Western educational system. During this weighing process of adopting and neglecting Western education, Islamization which was the final stage came into existence and complement the emergence of Islamic education.

The Concept of Islamic Education

Islamic education is an alternative system for formal education in the Gulf and many African countries (Ware, 2014). Arabic-Islamic institutions mostly offer courses like Arabic literature, Quranic studies, Islamic studies, theology, Islamic law, Islamic legislative history, and so on, and partially adopt subjects including mathematics, geography, physics, official languages, to mention a few. It would have been better if this claim of practice is accurate, however, the combination of religious and secular structures is relatively scarce in several countries. The sole religious structure of Arabic and Islamic schools is typically underestimated by states and international organizations.

Islamic education develops a healthy, positive, spiritual, and ethical society (Hanson, 2001). It guides and trains the mind, soul, and body by following Islamic revelations and values (Lubis, Mustapha, & Lampoh, 2009). The educational structure produces pious individuals discharging lifelong learning, developing potential souls, minds, and bodies capable of fulfilling religious duties in the spirit of serving Allah (Langgulung, 1990).

Additionally, Islamic education establishes overreaching culture and civilization across Muslim countries. It creates scholars and scientists who generate discoveries in geometry, astronomy, geography, medicine, optics, physics, theosophy, philosophy, and encyclopedic compilations (Hilgendorf, 2003). Islamic education perfects and complements conventional and Western curriculum through the translation of Muslim texts on science, philosophy, and other fields into Latin language (Al-Attas, 1977). The educational system contributes to the experimental method of science, methods of teaching, and methods of manufacturing food in Europe.

Objectives and Approaches of Islamic Education

Islamic education mainly employs superficial and theoretical methods while conveying knowledge and information (Zaki Badawi, 2004). The system is far from critical thinking and near to superficial approaches (Siddek, 2004). It was discovered that dualism renders Islamic education inactive in the Malaysian context. Madrasas often approach education traditionally following its memorization and subject-centered method of study (Rosnani, 2005). The educational system trains and produces individuals who act according to religious commandments. Even though deep analysis of Islamic knowledge has disappeared in modern Western-Islamic schools, it is, however, essential to state that the traditional settings of Islamic education lack instruments, policies, and approaches for combating contemporary challenges.

Furthermore, Islamic education is holistic in the sense that it touches mind, heart, and soul, and equally serves unity and divine purpose. The educational system transports knowledge through instruction and teaching, nurtures spiritual and ethical principles, and refines people's social behavior (Al-Attas, 1979). Similarly, Islamic education processes people's rational, feelings, spiritual and social dimensions. Islam encourages the equalization of intellectual and spiritual knowledge. Islamic principles and justifications had been largely delineated against rational inquiry and independent judgment (Mehmet, 1990). Imitation, *Taqlid* (blind acceptance), and unquestionable submission are highly reinforced in Islamic education (Gil'adi, 1992). By assumption, these objectives and approaches would merely manage traditional and outdated matters in recent times.

Islamic Philosophy of Education

Islamic education disappreciates the duplicity of Allah and the world (Hashim, 2004). The philosophy provides tools for promoting neutral values, unity, cultural identity, moral and spiritual realms (Niyozov & Memon, 2011). One of the Islamic features in Islamic education is that it purifies souls and nurtures ideal character. Similarly, it safeguards the universe and works for social justice. The educational system strengthens the relationship between Allah and His servants and equally focuses on the internalization of Islamic values (Rosnani, 2005). Despite that Muslim youngsters are increasingly falling into the tricks and traps of Western culture, it is however theorized that Islamic education is primarily aimed at conveying cultural baggage and stimulating wisdom, heart, and mind.

Contrary to Westerners' interpretation of education as schooling, teaching, training, instruction, and upbringing, the Muslim philosophy of education is aimed at developing knowledgeable, committed, and religious individuals. Islamic education derails from encouraging liberty thought and personal autonomy. It governs an individual approach to knowledge with the ethical values of Islam. The educational system is dispassionate about material worldly benefits and concentrates on building righteous, spiritual, moral, and pious beings. The system discourages the opponent of moral code (Husain & Ashraf, 1979). Revealed religion (Islam) undoubtedly designs the goals of Islamic education.

Islamic education is largely associated with the attainment of justice (Al-Attas, 1991). Ijtihad (rationality) as one of the acts of justice aspires for improving the application of the rational mind in deliberations. Ikhtilaf (diversity, pluralism, disagreement) which appears as the second form of justice attempts to facilitate the attainment of justice (Alibasic, 1999). Islam broadly values consensus and interdependence in the course of achieving shared compromise (Callan, 1997) and exploring shared commonalities (Benhabib, 2002). By and large, Islamic education is strongly supported by a philosophical basis.

Scope of Western and Islamic Educational Systems

Islamic education covers physical training, intellectual training (poet), character, respect for elders, and promotion of cultural heritage. Truth is ascertained through faith, intuition, and revelatory experience (Al-Attas, 1985). Islamic education emphasizes relativism and the unity of material and spiritual energies (Hirst, 1974). Islamic education follows unchanging norms, cultures, and approaches (Ashraf, 1987). The educational style stresses traditions, social contexts, and the consensus of the community. It nourishes the human soul, enriches human life with love, service, and sacrifice.

Western philosophies of education contradict Islamic education from a religious perspective. Western education largely values liberalism and secularism in the course of distancing man from religious principles and mindset (Al-Attas, 1985). It depends on rational faculties at the time of detecting the truth. Reality is limited to scientific procedure, sensual experience, and logic processes. The educational pattern develops an individual's logical life (Halstead, 1995). Secular science verifies reality with empirical information. Western education accommodates continuous changes (Ashraf, 1987). Individualism and freedom of individual choice are widely permitted in the educational system (Bailey, 1984). Intellectual and moral autonomy is highly valued in the Western pedagogical structure. While reason and social values guide individuals in Western education, it is significant to state that the secularist educational style likewise creates doubt and skepticism for individuals (Ashraf, 1987). From

the highlighted features, it is apparent that both educational systems have contrasting principles, goals, ambitions, and instruments.

Role of Muslim Scholars and Educators

Muslim scholars and educators own the responsibility of spreading the teaching of Islam in all diversities, changes, and developments (Meerangani, 2019). This set of people are accountable to those challenging Islamic traditionalism. Orientalist works of falsifying and degrading Islam require an active and constructive response from these respected scholars. Reasons for governmental and religious modern approaches, ideas, products, processes, and policies fall under their portfolio. Public awareness about these approaches, ideas, products, processes, and policies should be communicated by educators and religious scholars in curriculum and religious gatherings respectively. Social progress and national economic activities require uninterrupted contributions from religious scholars and curriculum organizers. National policies demand painstaking discussion and considerations of elites and religious leaders.

Religious scholars need to be a mechanism for impacting positive ideas, cultural values, societal benefits, and national developments. They are supposed to appear as enablers of building societal capacities, resolving problems, and simplifying welfares. Advocating for government or traditional rulers rather than the masses may open a floodgate of abuse to religious scholars. It is a progressive assumption that religious scholars are supposed to highlight and promulgate the implications of insecurity, unemployment, and economic-onesided policies (Islahi & Jeddah, 2005; Meerangani, 2019). Scholars' sermon is expected to address mismanagements, societal deviations, and government incompetence. They need to represent needy and substandard people towards advocating for fundamental rights and liberties. Attempts to speak for the masses should have a commanding influence on the personal interest of religious scholars. Development should be recommended by scholars to the authorities in such a way that inspires the utilization of human potential in acquiring greater results and achievements.

Additionally, people's talents are crucial among Muslim professionals (Ali & Kasim, 2019). People's talent should be liberated from ethnic background toward ethical dimension, positive economic and social transformation. Governmental satisfactory procedures need to be addressed and distinguished from unsatisfactory conditions. Scholars and educators have the task of ensuring a friendly relationship between government programs and citizens' wellbeing. Scholars' sermons should be in the spirit of strengthening peace and progress across communities. Pedagogical and methodological contributions of scholars require modern and updated approaches. Educators and religious scholars need to combine personal knowledge with current situations.

In a search of causal mechanism that explains the ineffectiveness of Islamic curriculum alongside global development, it is necessary to establish that the lack of connection between the above roles and contemporary Islamic scholars are undeniably important in revealing reasons behind the inoperative contents of Islamic curriculum. The existing scholars are not trained by the curriculum to confront modern issues and technological challenges. The absence of contributions from educators and religious scholars raises a larger negative influence in Muslim communities. Learners of Islamic education can positively contribute to society if they are independent of financial challenges, administrative support, and governmental control.

Challenges of Islamic Education

Islamic education is allegedly discouraging innovation and creativity. The lecture, dictation, and memorization approach is often applied while analyzing theory, elucidating facts, and demonstrating ritual practices. It has been identified that the educational system is incapacitated of producing scholars and solutions to modern challenges (Rosnani, 2005). The lack instigates the accusation leveled against Islamic education as producing militants and terrorists following the 9/11 attack (Mohd, Yunus, & Hassan, 2020; Hassan, Azmi, & Abubakar, 2017). The drawbacks are linked with failure to accommodate diversities, encourage critical alternatives, and move beyond the arts of rhetoric.

The educational system fails to move further over the level of commanding Arabic languages (Rahman, 1988). The system is unsuccessful in overcoming the formidable barriers of people's political, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Negative and inactive attention is given to how infrastructural issues endemic in majority Islamic countries could be managed. Disagreement exists among Islamic educators toward pragmatic matters of organization, administration, and curriculum development (Cook, 1999).

Productive employment is an unaddressed matter in the Islamic curriculum. Usable skills and experiences are broadly adopted in the educational system. It is distantly behind in tackling the challenges of the twenty-first century (Rosnani, 2005). Modern trends and situations are increasingly lacking constructive review and reformation. Muslim-dressing demands modern attention, decision, and consideration in the curriculum. Yet, not much attention has been paid to the aforementioned highlighted features.

Expectations in Islamic Curriculum

Among the major contributions of Islamic education is to develop spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual individuals capable of providing a dynamic, creative, and progressive generation (Aziz, 2021; Hashim, 2007). It is necessary to consider the detail and practical aspects toward ensuring actions, feelings, and thinking revolution. Employment interest, human development, intellectual energy, and economic contribution are supposed to be the source of concern in Islamic education. The Islamic pedagogical system requires constant review in conformity with modern challenges and development.

The curriculum of Islamic education requires effective structure (Alhashmi, 2021; Tolchah & Mu'ammam, 2019) to prepare technocrats, bureaucrats, scientists, economists, and efficiently skilled professionals, since the set of experts determines the development of the economy, businesses, policies, trade, to mention few. Excessive concentration on academic and communicative competencies in Islamic education is irrelevant and unproductive. A growing number of components in the Islamic academic environment is contemporarily inconsequential with the rise of globalization and technological development. It is an erroneous notion for the Islamic curriculum to solely focus on producing translators, interpreters, educators, and preachers in a progressing epoch.

The growing demand for creative skills and ideas is indicative of inventive and innovative courses and solutions in the Islamic curriculum (Ulum, Mispani, Jaenullah, & Thohir, 2021). Pedagogical subjects that create perceptions, concepts, ideas, theories, inventions, and procedures embellish and smarten up the Islamic syllabus. Modern issues and contemporary information are thoughtfully needed in academic and institutional texts. Curriculum may appear reasonable if it develops an individual for political engagement, socio-economic mobility, and national development. An educational syllabus needs to go beyond

spiritual, religious, and cultural achievements. An inclusive curriculum respect diversities, hearten assessment and encourage critical thinking following situations and circumstances. Provision for environmental imaginaries and social changes contribute to the effectiveness of an Islamic curriculum. Creative courses can facilitate logical opinions and decisions. Ethical reasoning courses may efficiently control radicalism in society. All the afore-stated areas will boost the effectiveness of the Islamic curriculum.

Proposed Courses for Islamic Curriculum

As mentioned in previous sections, poor motivational courses and low functional subjects discredit the significance of Islamic education. Thus, relevant and productive courses project effective outcomes in educational programs. Hence, among several features, the proposed courses can maximize the progressive performances of the Islamic curriculum as depicted in the following table.

Table 1: Proposed courses Courses	Usefulness
Logic and reasoning skills	Sharpen rational thinking
Thinking skills	Help to solve problems
Critical thinking skills	Assist to logically identify fallacies and construct an effective argument
Analytic skills	Help to develop effective information for investigative assessments
Career awareness	Facilitate employment search
Strategic thinking courses	Help to make a better decision and tackle huge challenges
Problem analysis skills	Identify tools, methods, and techniques to solve problems
Management skills	Analyze problems, master management consulting tools, techniques, and frameworks
Time management courses	Improve productivity
Goal setting courses	Comprehend the psychology of what creates long-term success
Transformation courses	Enable personal development, personal transformation, and time management
Project management courses	Teach how to manage a project
Business management courses	Identify the areas that will grow business
Financial management courses	Guide on how to manage money and properties
Resource management courses	Guide on how to diversify resources.

The proposed courses presented in Table 1 are crucial as the weaknesses in Islamic education could be perceived through the situations and contributions of Islamic countries in the era of globalization (Kaspullah & Suriadi, 2020; Tolchah & Mu'ammam, 2019; Wahib, 2021). For example, the gross misrepresentation of Islamic identity contributes in no small to the

perception of Islam as a brutal and terrorist religion (Hassan & Azmi, 2018). Particular emphasis should be placed on the issue of protecting morals and uprightness in the curriculum. It can be proved and established that Islamic education needs a comprehensive curriculum that can progressively advance communities. Modern branches of knowledge that address societal and global challenges are an important pillar in the development of standardized Islamic curriculum. A significant feature trivially handled by Islamic educators is the introduction of inventive and innovative courses and solutions. Theories, facts, and ritual practices should be presented and demonstrated in a modernized way in lecture rooms.

Conclusion

This study explored the challenges facing Islamic education in the globalization era and proposed a holistic solution. While contemporary issues are left unaddressed in the Islamic curriculum, the sources of information that disperse false perceptions about Muslims and Islam remain uncontrollable. The study, therefore, recommends that futuristic amendments of the Islamic curriculum should address the Western media impression against Islam. The real identity of Muslims and Islam as against the dramatization of the Hollywood movie industry needs corrective measures. The improper use of the sacred word "Allah Akbar" in the commission of terrorist-act in movies should be included in the curriculum since the spreading of this false information is growing immeasurably among ignorant individuals. Humanity should accurately be prioritized before religion in every relationship. Outlining the importance of unity among Muslims is likewise a hopeful step toward guaranteeing a brighter future for Islamic societies.

Furthermore, diversities and critical alternatives approach are required to enhance and transform Islamic education. Proficiency in religious language should be brought to a lower position in the high priorities of the Islamic curriculum. Barriers in cultural and political structures should be represented in the syllabus. Practical courses are needed to overcome administrative challenges, while sustainable and managerial skills are worth stressing in Islamic education. Additionally, the educational structure should be amended and extended to make provision for employment opportunities.

Values of national, natural, mineral, and human resources are undoubtedly an attempt to respond to contemporary concerns. Modern techniques that are instrumental to modern issues require careful thought in the Islamic curriculum. Objectives of Islamic education should be distanced from extremism and personal interest. It is more preferable to create a flexible mechanism that works for all centuries in the Islamic curriculum. Modern trends and situations recommend constructive review and reformation in Islamic education. All immoral activities require attention and specific content in the curriculum. Sensitive matters need thorough concern against incorrect conclusions. In response to globalization threats, Islamic scholars need to update their knowledge in conformity with national development.

Additionally, an attempt that should be especially considered in the curriculum adjustment is the inclusion of the proposed courses. This situation points toward the fact that the proposed courses could remodel the structure of the Islamic curriculum from a traditional look. Islamic curriculum is among the major platforms for adjusting deviant practices in the modern world. It must have the capacity of preventing misconceptions and misdirections for Muslims. Therefore, thorough amendment and comprehensive updates are extremely needed in the curriculum. This study, therefore, provides useful information that could help

Islamic governments and relevant authorities to develop effective solutions to the challenges facing Islamic education.

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