

## EDUCATING ABOUT THE UPRIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARDS NON-MUSLIMS; AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE SINGLE NATIONAL CURRICULUM OF ISLAMIC STUDIES

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### Abstract

*This study examines how Pakistan's Single National Curriculum (SNC) for Islamic Studies accommodates and fosters acceptance for non-Muslims. Developing a harmonic and inclusive society depends on promoting the need to teach children about reasonable and respectful interactions with non-Muslims. Beginning with a historical overview of Pakistan's educational policy, the study assesses the mandatory inclusion of Islamic studies and the role of the SNC in advancing religious tolerance and national unity. The study evaluates Islamic Studies textbooks from elementary to high school levels using qualitative and quantitative approaches and student questionnaires ranging in grades six to twelve. Statistics disclose that although the SNC upholds the rights and polite treatment of non-Muslims, it is also very brief and lacks practical implications for students. Primary school texts lacked practical application, and a sizable portion of the student's lacked knowledge of the lessons on respectful behaviour of non-Muslims, such as visiting sick non-Muslims and dining with them. High school textbooks were also found lacking in depth and valuable guidance; many of the students were confused about how to interact with non-Muslims. To close this gap between theory and practice, the study underlines the need to include these ideas more thoroughly and practically in the curriculum. The paper ends with suggestions for curricular enhancements to better teach children the ideas of justice, compassion, and respect for non-Muslims, fostering a more inclusive and tolerant society. Recommendations for curriculum modifications to enhance learning concepts of justice, compassion, and respect for non-Muslims will contribute to advancing a more inclusive and tolerant society.*

**Keywords:** Single National Curriculum, educational policies, textbook analysis, religious tolerance, curriculum.

Pakistan is the only country in the world whose primary reason for founding was Islam. An ideal state built based on the ideals of Islam, where divine law serves as the fundamental law, ensuring that future generations can live their lives following the Islamic religion. Education is necessary for humans and is just behind the basic needs of breathing and food. One of the critical elements of education is learning. The curriculum serves as a framework that organizes and guides the learning process, enabling students to enhance their thoughts and actions. The state declared that Islamic Studies is obligatory in education, starting from primary school and continuing up to university. The purpose is to enable students to understand Islam's fundamental principles and practices and educate society in morality and spirituality through the teachings of renowned theologians.

Several Pakistani legislatures have regularly created strategies to establish the curriculum per this objective sufficiently. Examining the present Islamic Studies textbooks from the perspective of this need, this study gives suggestions for future development. Muslims are generally obligated in an Islamic state to value and protect the life and property of non-Muslim minorities. In Islamic states, non-Muslims have basic equal rights just as Muslims. Their primary right from the government and society is to be free from internal and outside persecution and injustice, enabling people to lead peaceful and secure lives.

People of many religions lived in the Pakistani region before partition; Muslims were in the majority. Pakistan emerged based on this. While some minorities stay and reside in today's Pakistan to enjoy all civil rights assured by Article 36 of the Pakistani Constitution,

others traveled to India during the time of Pakistan's founding. These minorities include Hindus, Christians, Baha'is, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Jews, and Jains. As a result, people of different religions must interact and build relationships with one another.

The federal government adopted a Single National Curriculum (SNC) in April 2021 to promote national harmony, togetherness, and solidarity. All society's objectives are set by its curriculum, so SNC has been applied in line with these priorities. The curriculum for Islamic Studies is constructed considering the Prophet's Sirah (life) to foster positive relationships with non-Muslims at the middle, secondary, and intermediate levels. This aims to promote harmony and national sentiments in society.

### **Research Objectives**

To assess the content of the upright behaviour towards non-Muslims in the SNC.

To demonstrate practical examples of upright behaviour towards non-Muslims for the curriculum.

### **Research Question**

What role can the SNC (Islamic Studies) play in promoting upright behaviour towards non-Muslims?

### **Problem Statement**

The concept of upright behaviour towards non-Muslims is either rarely covered or presented very briefly in the SNC for Islamic Studies at all levels of education. Furthermore, wherever it is discussed, there is no practical implementation for students, thereby leaving an obvious distinction separating Muslims from non-Muslims in society.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Naureen Durrani & Máiréad Dunne (2010) - "Curriculum and National Identity: Exploring the Links between Religion and Nation in Pakistan" Investigates the relationship between curriculum, national identity, and religion in Pakistan. Likely explores how educational materials contribute to the construction of a shared national identity, with a focus on the representation of religion, particularly Islam, in the curriculum. Ahmad Saeed, R., Saghir, I., & Ahmad, W. (2023) - "Academic Research on Non-Muslim Religious Minorities: Content analysis of the Research papers from a Pakistani Perspective" Conducts a content analysis of research papers related to non-Muslim religious minorities in Pakistan. Likely examines the themes, methodologies, and perspectives found in academic research on non-Muslim religious minorities within a Pakistani context. Muhammad Azeem Ashraf (2019) - "Exploring the Potential of Religious Literacy in Pakistani Education", Explores the potential and significance of religious literacy in the context of Pakistani education. Likely discusses the role of religious literacy in fostering understanding and tolerance in a diverse cultural and religious landscape. M. Habib Qazi (2023) - "Construction of students' religious national identities in Pakistani state schools and its implications for minorities", Investigates the construction of students' religious national identities in Pakistani state schools. Likely explores how this construction impacts religious minorities and the broader educational landscape. Zaheer Ali & Utsa Mukherjee

(2022) - "“We are not equal citizens in any respect”": citizenship education and the routinization of violence in the everyday lives of religious minority youth in Pakistan" Explores citizenship education and the routine experiences of violence among religious minority youth in Pakistan. Likely discusses the implications of these experiences for the broader understanding of citizenship and equality.

### **Research Methodology**

This research employs analytical and deductive methodology. A mixed-method approach has been taken. The first part involved qualitative research, which included the evaluation of Islamic Studies textbooks that included the first to intermediate level. The second step included a survey conducted using a quantitative research method.

### **The population of the Research**

The target demographic for this study is all students in grades six to twelve.

### **Sampling**

The quantitative study applied stratified sampling. Two groups were formed from the population (middle and matric), and forty individuals from each group were polled.

### **Tools for Data Collection**

A questionnaire was developed for quantitative investigation. The analysis of quantitative data implies the use of SPSS-24, Statistical Program for Quantitative Data Analysis.

### **Meaning of Curriculum**

#### **Lexical meaning of curriculum**

“Curriculum” (Nisab in Urdu) is a path or course. The Latin word “currier” means a straight road on which someone runs to achieve their destination.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Arabic**

The term “Nisab” in Arabic refers to the curriculum, and its definition is consistent across several dictionaries.

A curriculum generally encompasses the diverse range of subjects that are taught within an educational institution. Nevertheless, there is ongoing debate regarding whether extracurricular activities, which take place within schools, can be considered part of the curriculum. This lack of clarity hinders a thorough comprehension of the phrase “curriculum.” To gain a comprehensive understanding of the term, it includes all aspects of the school, such as the setting, subjects taught, and teaching methods.

Terminologically, the term “curriculum” denotes the official educational program taught within an academic institution. These courses are specifically designed to ensure that individuals become highly skilled in their respective fields upon graduation.<sup>2</sup>

### **Religious Freedom and Tolerance in Islam**

Information on non-Muslims’ religious liberties in an Islamic framework, such as the right to worship and preserve their places of worship. Include activities that encourage dialogue and critical thinking on religious freedom and coexistence. Allah says:

<sup>1</sup> Amīnah Sayyid, Oxford University Press, No. 3, Sector 15, Korangi Industrial Area, Pakistan, 2003, p. 215.

<sup>2</sup> Marriam-Webster

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ۗ لَقَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ<sup>3</sup>

“There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path.”

In contrast to other religions, Islam delivers its message to others in a unique way. Historically, conquerors frequently imposed their religion on the conquered, such as in the fourth century, when Christians persecuted Jews following the conquest of Rome. Similarly, in the sixth century, when Palestinian Jews overcame Christians, they demolished churches and forced Christians into pits of fire,<sup>4</sup> a scenario mentioned in the Quran:

قُتِلَ أَصْحَابُ الْأُخْدُودِ<sup>5</sup>

“Cursed were the People of the Trench.”

Islamic law establishes and sustains social peace and security by providing non-Muslims maximum religious freedom. It also commands the Islamic state to grant non-Muslims complete freedom in belief and worship, as well as accommodations for their religious rituals.

This religious freedom can be observed in Medina’s first charter, known as the “Misaq-e-Madina,” which provided individuals the right to religious liberty in sections 25–35. These clauses guaranteed that every tribe had the freedom to practice their own beliefs, as indicated by the words: “للّٰه د دینهم وللمسلمین دینهم.” “The Jews have their religion, and the Muslims have their religion.”<sup>6</sup> This clearly shows Islam’s stance that Muslims do not have the right to interfere in the religious matters of others. Numerous other instances from the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ demonstrate this principle. For example, the written agreements sent to the rulers of Himyar, Hamdan, the Bani Harith bin Ka’b, and Najran included explicit commands regarding religious freedom. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

ومن كان على نصرانية أو يهودية فانه لا يبرء عنها

“Whoever remains on his Judaism or Christianity, he shall not be forced to abandon it.”<sup>7</sup>

There are two sections in the ninth-grade course: one thematic on a topic and the other known as “Translation of the Quran.” The thematic section highlights the belief in the Prophethood, but it discusses past prophets only tangentially. Including a part of the respect and honor of every Prophet into this one can help to increase harmony significantly. Similarly, the chapter on the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ mentions the “Year of Delegations.” Representatives from many countries and religions came to meet the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ during this period, and this subject should be presented gracefully as ideas for interfaith communication. Apart from making arrangements for their stay, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ allowed them to perform their religious rituals. Thus, offering this chapter as concepts and guidelines for interfaith discourse will be somewhat helpful in leading society.

The remaining half of the ninth-grade curriculum, titled “Translation of the Quran,” covers Surah Maryam to Surah Al-Ahqaf. However, this section does not emphasize developing harmony with non-Muslims or outlining the form of a multi-religious society. Notably, it does not highlight teachings from other Abrahamic or religious traditions in these Surahs. Important Surahs like Maryam, Anbiya, Naml, Rum, and Luqman, which include essential teachings regarding other religions, are not emphasized with this objective in consideration.

<sup>3</sup> al-Baqarah, 2:256

<sup>4</sup> Huqūq al-Insān wa Ḥurīyyah al-Asāsīyyah, al-Ṭaḥīmāt, Hānī Sulaymān, 1st ed., Dār al-Shurūq, 2001, p. 176

<sup>5</sup> al-Burūj, 85:4.

<sup>6</sup> Mithāq al-Madīnah, Article No. 25

<sup>7</sup> Majmū’ah al-Wathā’iq al-Siyāsīyyah, Documents No. 98, 110, 111, 113

Incorporating the “Translation of the Quran” into the strategy is essential to promote societal harmony and Islamic viewpoints about other religions. When the main ideas and themes are discussed in each Surah, one goal should be to clarify students’ Islamic views about different faiths and societal harmony.

### The right to upright behaviour towards non-Muslims

The Quran has offered an excellent and essential guideline in this matter: the basic rule in handling non-Muslims is to adopt an attitude of honest behaviour and to keep doing good and giving kindness to them until they demonstrate obvious hostility or breach agreements. Allah Almighty said:

لَا يَنْهَىكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَ لَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَ تُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَنْهَىكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَ ظَهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَن تَوَلَّوهُمْ ۗ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ<sup>8</sup>

“Allah does not forbid you as regards those who did not fight you on account of faith and did not expel you from your homes, that you do good to them, and deal justly with them. Surely, Allah loves those who maintain justice. Allah forbids you only about those who fought you on account of faith, and expelled you from your homes, and helped (others) in expelling you, that you have friendship with them. Those who develop friendships with them are the wrongdoers.”

The word بَرَّ (goodness) in the above line has more connotations than only upright behaviour. It also carries other meanings.

Imam Qarafi says, “Be gentle to their weaker ones,” and respond to their needs of poverty. Cater to their needs. Give them clothes for their bare. Talk softly to them. Do not treat them with humiliation or terror. If damage occurs due to living as neighbours, bear it with patience and tolerance. Wish them well in everything related to faith and worldly affairs. If someone tries to hurt their family, business, or reputation while they are not there, protect them. Protect their rights and interests and keep them from being harmed in any way. Make sure that all of their rights are brought to them. This view of divine speech is not just a theory or something that can only be read. There is an impressive past of how it has been applied in real life.

Abu Qatadah said that when a group of Christians from Abyssinia came to Medina, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ made them feel welcome in his mosque and made sure they had everything they needed. This act of kindness was a gesture of gratitude for the hospitality shown to the Muslim refugees in Abyssinia. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

إنهم كانوا لأصحابنا مكرمين فأحب أن أكرمهم بنفسي

“They honoured our companions, so I want to honour them myself.”<sup>9</sup>

In addition, he taught his companions how to behave in a good way. People who grew up hearing stories about wars of revenge, like the wars of Buas, Dahis, and Fijar, saw the Prophet Muhammad as someone who was patient and tolerant.

Information about the religious rights of non-Muslims in an Islamic context, including activities that help students think about helping each other. Examining upright behaviour toward non-Muslims and social cohesiveness emphasizes the idea of helping every member of society, regardless of religious background. The fourth-grade SNC (Islamic Studies) textbook covers “Rights of people” (Huqooq ul Ibad), which needs to be more thoroughly taught. This idea applies not only to non-Muslims but also to the underprivileged sections of society, including

<sup>8</sup> al-Mumtahinah, 60:8-9

<sup>9</sup> Mu'jam al-Shuyūkh, p. 971

cobblers and street sweepers (Khakrub). The basic principles of help and encouragement should be based on broad humanity and fair treatment for all individuals regardless of religious affiliations. Incorporating these principles into the curriculum will contribute to the development of a society in which individuals from diverse backgrounds have a more common set of acknowledged values.

### **The upright behaviour towards non-Muslim neighbours**

In Islamic history, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ's attitude towards non-Muslims is an example of perfection. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ always behaved with virtue and straight behaviour towards his non-Muslim neighbours. He would present them with gifts and welcome their invites. Stories on moral behaviour towards neighbours are common. Therefore, the directions for upright behaviour cover both Muslim and non-Muslim neighbours. As Abdullah bin Umar narrated, he asked his family twice whether they had sent some meat to his Jewish neighbour after a sheep was slaughtered in his house. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Jibreel kept guiding me about the neighbour until I thought he would make him an heir."<sup>10</sup>

Allama Rashid Rida mentions that this indicates that Abdullah bin Umar understood the broad directions for upright behaviour towards neighbours to cover Muslims and non-Muslims. His knowledge and experience should be enough for you.<sup>11</sup>

The Quran employs the phrase "al-jar al-junub" (الجار الجنب) to refer to neighbours. Some academics understand this to include Jews and Christians, indicating that Islam's moral principles are global. These principles apply not only to Muslims, but also to followers of other faiths.

According to Imam Qurtubi, it is commendable and praiseworthy to follow the instructions for being kind to neighbours, regardless of whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim.<sup>12</sup>

To encourage respectful behaviour toward non-Muslims and promote social inclusion, we must incorporate an idea for information perspective into primary-level curricula. There is a great potential to elaborate on the text "Excellence in behaviour". The necessity of polite conduct toward non-Muslim neighbors should be mentioned in the paragraph discussing appropriate behaviour with neighbors and friends, even if only in one sentence. The book mentions Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) and his son Ishaq (AS). It is also essential to recognize that all of Bani Israels' Prophets were descended from Ishaq (AS). Adding the names of well-known prophets can help students develop an inclusive mindset.

Children can relate to the easy stories and pictures that show them being kind and respectful to their non-Muslim neighbours. Kindness is easy for kids to learn and use because it is something they perceive and carry out every day. One activity option is to help a neighbour by giving them food, especially on holidays or other important days. Families can send everyday things through their children. These acts help young students develop empathy, kindness, and a sense of community. Extending the curriculum this way can reinforce the fundamental principles of compassion and respect. This method ensures that educational frameworks instil ethical behaviour, a sense of unity, and empathy in all members of society.

<sup>10</sup> Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl, Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Bāb al-Waṣāyah bil-Jār, Ḥadīth 5151

<sup>11</sup> Riḍā, Muḥammad Rashīd, Tafsīr al-Manār, al-Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-'Āmmah lil-Kitāb, 1990, 5/96

<sup>12</sup> Qurtubī, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abū Bakr, al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān, Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah, 5/184

### Accepting invitations from non-Muslims

Creating a good social life depends greatly on visiting and accepting invitations. Islam dislikes refusal without any valid reason and encourages its followers to accept such invitations and invite each other. Likewise, given some specified guidelines and rules, eating and drinking with non-Muslims is allowed. They can be invited, and their invitation can be accepted. History remembers the incident during the conquest of Khaybar where a Jewish woman called the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for dinner and sought to poison him by injecting poison into the meat of a lamb. Jewish lady brought the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ a poisoned lamb. He ate some of it and found out about the poison. The woman said, during interrogation, that she planned to kill him. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, “Allah will never give you power over me”. The companions asked, “Should we not kill her?” He replied, “No.” Still, the poison affected the Prophets gums right until his death.<sup>13</sup>

Explain how kids can politely react in different scenarios, such as if invited to a friend's house or an event hosted by someone who is not Muslim. Children can practice acting appropriately in a variety of contexts and politely accepting invitations through different scenarios. Practical examples of interacting with non-Muslims by sharing, helping, and playing. Practical experiences can be included in group activities to encourage students to be kind to their friends of different faiths. For example, they can exchange lunch boxes and school supplies like pencils and erasers. Inviting students to participate in these events fosters mutual respect among students and helps them develop social skills like empathy and friendship. Children learn the value of being nice and respectful to others from every aspect of life through these learning experiences.

### Visiting non-Muslims when they are ill

To visit and check on a sick person is an important social norm. In Islam, visiting the sick is seen as a very good thing to do. In this case, family and friends have more rights than others, but anyone can visit someone who is sick. It is the ideal thing to do from a religious, moral, and humanitarian point of view.

عَنْ أَنَسٍ ، قَالَ : كَانَ غُلَامٌ يَهُودِيٌّ يَخْدُمُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَمَرِضَ ، فَأَتَاهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَعُودُهُ ، فَقَعَدَ عِنْدَ رَأْسِهِ فَقَالَ لَهُ : أَسْلَمَ ، فَنَظَرَ إِلَى أَبِيهِ ، وَهُوَ عِنْدَهُ ، فَقَالَ لَهُ : أَطِيعِ أَبَا الْقَاسِمِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَاسْلَمْ ، فَخَرَجَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ : الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْقَذَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ

Anas bin Malik (RA) narrated that a Jewish youth (Abd al-Qudus) pursued serving the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ until one day he became ill. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came to inquire about his mood and sat at his head, saying, “Become a Muslim.” He gazed at his father; the father was there. He asked, “What is the harm?” So, he introduced the child to Islam. When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ came out, he said, “Thanks to Allah, who saved this child from hell.”<sup>14</sup> Atta bin Abi Rabah says that if a non-Muslim becomes unwell, a Muslim relative should visit him.<sup>15</sup>

Clear explanations on the permissibility and importance of visiting sick non-Muslims, including manners and what Islam teaches about empathy. Real-life examples can demonstrate

<sup>13</sup> Abū Dāwūd, Sulaymān ibn al-Ash‘ath, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Kitāb al-Diyāt, Bāb fī man Saqā Rajulan Sammān aw Aṭ‘amahu fa-Māt Ayyuqād Minhu, Ḥadīth No. 4508

<sup>14</sup> Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl, Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Bāb Idhā Aslama al-Ṣabī fa-Māt, Hal Yuṣallā ‘alayhi, wa Hal Yu‘raq ‘alā al-Ṣabī al-Islām, Ḥadīth 1356

<sup>15</sup> ‘Abd al-Razzāq, Muṣannaf, 6/135

how polite such visits can be conducted. Highlighting this issue in matriculation and high-level texts is essential. Students at this age might develop close bonds and realize the need for empathy and help among different communities. Encouraging students to visit their non-Muslim classmates when they are sick, this activity can help to build empathy and respect among them. Teachers should also actively involve their students by asking whether anyone has visited a sick friend. Later, they should gently pose the same question to underline the point without making them feel pressured. Students may grow aware and eager to create inclusive, loving relationships through this consistent, moderate encouragement.

### Financial assistance to non-Muslims

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ provided financial assistance to non-Muslim individuals and engaged in trade with them. He also gives financial assistance to a Jewish household, which still receives support even after his time.

According to Imam Ibn Kathir, a Jew called Zaid bin Sanah came to collect his due from the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He grasped the Prophet's collar and robe, pulled them hard, and insulted him, saying, "O Muhammad! Will you not repay my debt? You Abdul Muttalib descendants have a history of delaying obligations!" His actions were incredibly impolite and disrespectful. Umar Farooq (RA) looked at the Jew, his eyes circling his head like a ship in a whirlpool. Umar declared, "O enemy of Allah! Do you speak to Allah Messenger ﷺ like this? By Allah, if I were not afraid of his anger, I would hit your head with my sword!" The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ calmly smiled at Umar and said:

أنا وهو يا عمر كنا أحوج إلى غير هذا منك يا عمر: أن تأمرني بحسن الأداء وتأمره بحسن التقاضي اذهب به يا عمر فاقضه حقه وزده عشرين صاعاً من تمر

"We expected from you something different than this, Umar. You need to advise me to repay the debt well and teach him to ask for his debt politely. Go with him, Umar, and pay back his loan; give him twenty additional dates. Seeing this prophetic conduct, the Jew said:

أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وأشهد أن محمداً عبده ورسوله

"I bear witness that there is no deity except Allah, and I testify that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is His bondman and Messenger."<sup>16</sup>

Unmatched in any other history exists this perfect model of tolerance and patience. Following his footsteps in treating non-Muslims with compassion and tolerance, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ's friends Umar Farooq (RA) from the treasury set aside a stipend for a poor Jew he noticed begging for his family. Quoting Allah's instructions, he defended his behaviour:

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغُرْمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ - فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ<sup>17</sup>

"Zakat is only for the poor and the needy, for those employed to administer it, for those whose hearts are attracted "to the faith", for "freeing" slaves, for those in debt, for Allah's cause, and for "needy" travellers. This is an obligation from Allah. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

Umar (RA) entitled the poor people of the Book (Jews and Christians) to Zakat and charity by including them under the category of the needy.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, p. 5073

<sup>17</sup> al-Tawbah, 9:60.

<sup>18</sup> Ghayr al-Muslimīn fī al-Mujtama' al-Islāmī, p. 51



Details on when and how non-Muslims should be given financial assistance, including traditional examples. Questions that inspire students, regardless of their faith, to consider how they may serve others in need.

Islam offers excellent guidance on spending and helping others. According to the Holy Qurans verse Al-Birr, Allah first advocates general spending without regard for religion, mentioning families, orphans, the needy, travelers, beggars, and releasing enslaved people. Following this, there is an emphasis on paying the obligatory Zakat. Islamic teachings clarify that some expenses are required as Allah prescribes; many others are encouraged acts of kindness targeted just at helping and benefiting people living in society. It should also be mentioned that in volunteer spending, both Muslims and non-Muslims are included without any religious distinction. Still, this needs to be taught in the curriculum.

The chapter on keeping family ties in the tenth-grade curriculum highlights the value and virtues of kindness and the need to maintain relationships with relatives. Adding examples of keeping relationships with non-Muslim relatives into this chapter would make the discussion more compelling. For example, consider the famous incident of Hazrat Asma bint Abi Bakr, who asked the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, “My mother came to me hoping (I would be dutiful). I asked the Prophet, Do I have to treat her well? He said Yes. “Incorporating such examples under those concepts would assist in attaining those objectives more effectively.

### Rights of non-Muslims in an Islamic state

After migration from Mecca in 622 CE, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ founded a state in Medina. Built on ideas of justice, equality, and mutual respect, this new state, known as the Medina State, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ instituted the Charter of Medina to guarantee peace and coexistence among his diverse people, which comprised Muslims, Jews, and other tribes. Regardless of their creed, this charter functioned as a constitution ensuring the rights of every person. It underlined group security, discussed obligations and responsibilities, and advanced peaceful coexistence. Using this charter, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ intended to establish a community where everyone can live peacefully and obtain fair treatment.

Once, a Muslim killed a non-Muslim during the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ's time. Declared the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ “The Muslim be executed in retribution and said,

أنا أحق من أوفي بدمته.

“My main responsibility is the protection of non-Muslims rights.”<sup>19</sup>

وعن أسامة بن زيد، رضي الله عنهما، قال: بعثنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، إلى الحرقة من جهينة، فصبحنا القوم على مياههم، ولحقت أنا ورجل من الأنصار رجلاً منهم، فلما غشينا قال: لا إله إلا الله، فكف عنه الأنصاري، وطعنته برمحي حتى قتلته، فلما قدمنا المدينة بلغ ذلك النبي، صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال لي: “يا أسامة أقتلته بعد ما قال لا إله إلا الله؟! قلت يا رسول الله إنما كان متعوذاً فقال “أقتلته بعد ما قال لا إله إلا الله؟! فما زال يكررها على حتى تمنيت أني لم أكن أسلمت قبل ذلك اليوم. وفي رواية: فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم “أقال: لا إله إلا الله وقتلته؟! قلت: يا رسول الله، إنما قالها خوفاً من السلاح، قال: “أفلا شققت عن قلبه حتى تعلم أقالها أم لا؟! “فما زال يكررها حتى تمنيت أني أسلمت يومئذ.

Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent us to Huraqat, a tribe of Juhainah. We attacked that tribe early in the morning and defeated them, (then) a man from the Ansar, and I caught hold of a man (of the defeated tribe). When we overcame him, he said: لا إله إلا الله at that moment, the Ansari spared him, but I attacked him with my spear and killed him. By the time we went back to Al-Madinah, news had already reached the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He said to me, “O Usamah, did you kill him after he professed لا إله إلا الله?” I said, “O Messenger of Allah! He professed it only to save

<sup>19</sup> Al-Bayhaqī, al-Sunan al-Kubrā, 8:30; Al-Shāfi‘ī, al-Musnad, 1:343; Ibn Rushd, Bidāyat al-Mujtahid, 2:299

his life.” Messenger of Allah ﷺ repeated, “Did you kill him after he had professed لا إله إلا الله?” He went on repeating this to me until I wished I had not embraced Islam before that day (so that I would not have committed this sin). Another narration is: Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Did you kill him in spite of his professing لا إله إلا الله?” I said, “O Messenger of Allah! He said out of fear of our arms.” He ﷺ said, “Why did you not cut his heart open to find out whether he had done so sincerely or not?” He continued repeating it until I wished that I had embraced Islam only that day.<sup>20</sup>

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also stated, “Whoever kills a non-Muslim (ذمي), (non-Muslim citizen) without reason, Allah will forbid them from entering Paradise.”<sup>21</sup>

The most crucial and delicate problem in society is that of human connections. When individuals with many ideas, beliefs, and faiths live together, and their lifestyles and cultures differ from one another, their relevance and sensitivity grow. Under such circumstances, intellectual prejudices, personal and national behavioural patterns, and societal elements become roadblocks in the path of justice and the fulfilment of rights; possibilities of oppression, injustice, and unfairness also grow more likely. The main need of every civilized and moral society is overcoming these challenges.

Morality and legality have links to human interactions. Morality seeks to balance and improve these interactions. Law serves to maintain people within reasonable bounds and forbids anyone from deviating or exceeding them. Should morality and law carry out their roles, society will be at peace; otherwise, the rule of the jungle will take the front stage, rights will be infringed, and the weak will suffer under the oppression and persecution of the strong.

Islam is a universal religion, so it has developed not only the values of relationships among Muslims but also a thorough code of conduct for interactions with non-Muslims. Islam builds its contacts with non-Muslims based on the values of human dignity, respect for humanity, justice, peace and cooperation, completion of promises, freedom of thought, non-coercion, and impartiality. Muslims should consequently embrace Islamic ideas in social interactions and treat non-Muslims with respect. This will enable genuine Islamic teachings to be introduced to enemies and oppose movements like Islamophobia.

Comprehensive sections describe non-Muslims rights in an Islamic state, using examples from history and Islamic principles. Encourage students to relate these rights to current human rights discussions.

In educational settings, the Pact of Medina should be presented as a historical document and a timeless example of exemplary practices in interfaith relations and civic participation. By studying and comprehending its concepts, students learn about the basis of Islamic ethics, social justice, and the importance of peaceful interactions with non-Muslims. The background of the Pact of Medina regarding its establishment of the state of Medina is presented in a very precise style in class 6. In contrast, it should be given in the best possible way in terms of connections and agreements with non-Muslims. Similarly, when it comes to the establishment of Medinan society, tough language is used while dealing with non-Muslims. It should be presented as best it can be.

Under this section on the Islamic State in the syllabus, the rights of non-Muslims are mentioned, underlining that the Islamic State is in charge of safeguarding their social and religious rights.

<sup>20</sup> Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith number 4269:

<sup>21</sup> Sunan Abī Dāwūd, 2760; Al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr, 8913; Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi' (al-Albānī), 6456

Under this theme, a quick passage from the life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is used, similar to the example of Hazrat Umar (RA) given before.

### Survey Form for Collecting Data on the Upright Behaviour Towards Non-Muslims and SNC

1	Gender	
2	Education	
3	Field	
4	Age	
5	Educational Level	

S. No	Questions	Yes	No	Not Know
1	Do you know that non-Muslims should be treated well?			
2	Are textbooks sufficient for teaching good treatment of non-Muslims?			
3	Have you received education about the rights of non-Muslims from home?			
4	Have you received education about the rights of non-Muslims from society?			
5	Have you received education about the rights of non-Muslims from the Friday sermon?			
6	Do you know that if a non-Muslim is sick, they can be cared for?			
7	Have you ever cared for a sick non-Muslim?			
8	Do you know that it is permissible to eat with non-Muslims (Ahl al-Kitab)?			
9	Have you ever shared a meal with a non-Muslim?			
10	Have you ever given a gift to a non-Muslim?			

### Survey Findings

#### Primary School Students Awareness and Behaviour Towards Non-Muslims

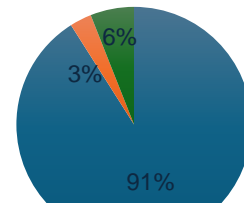
##### 1. Awareness of Treating Non-Muslims Well

Yes: 91%

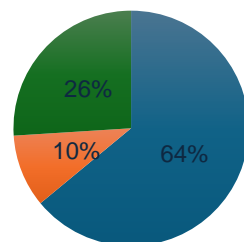
No: 3%

Not Know: 6%

Most primary school students (91%) comprehend the importance of treating non-Muslims with respect. This high level of awareness indicates that the fundamental principles of respect and compassion are effectively communicated.



##### 2. Sufficiency of Textbooks in Teaching Good Treatment of Non-Muslims



Yes: 64%

No: 10%

Not Know: 26%

64 % of students believe their textbooks give enough guidance on treating non-Muslims respectfully. However, some (10%) believe textbooks are insufficient, and a noteworthy quarter (26%) are unsure, implying that more clarity could be required.

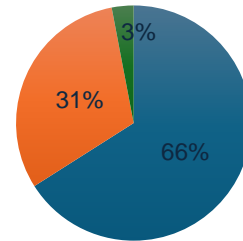
### 3. Education from Home about the Rights of Non-Muslims

Yes: 66%

No: 31%

Not Know: 3%

Most (66%) have heard of non-Muslim rights from their families. Still, 31% of respondents had not received this instruction at home, indicating certain families might not address this subject as frequently.



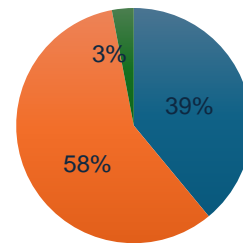
### 4. Education from Society about the Rights of Non-Muslims

Yes: 39%

No: 58%

Not Know: 3%

Less than half (39%) believe society educates them on non-Muslim rights. Most (58%) believe they do not receive this knowledge from society, suggesting a likely lack of societal focus on this issue.



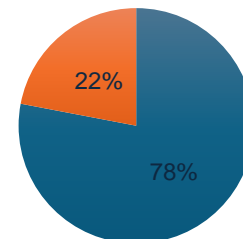
### 5. Education from Friday Sermons about the Rights of Non-Muslims

Yes: 78%

No: 22%

Not Know: 0%

Friday sermons have helped many (78%) learn about the rights of non-Muslims. This implies that young children learn a lot from religious events, which are a major source.



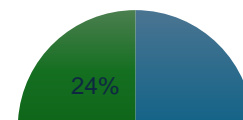
### 6. Awareness of Permissibility to Care for Sick Non-Muslims

Yes: 70%

No: 6%

Not Know: 24%

Although 24% of students are unclear, most (70%) understand it is acceptable to look after sick non-Muslims. This ambiguity points to the need for more consistent and clear knowledge on this side.

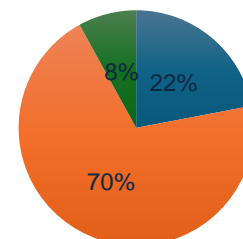


### 7. Experience in Caring for a Sick Non-Muslim

Yes: 22%

No: 70%

Not Know: 8%

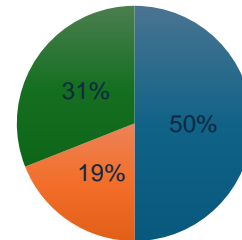


22 % of them have looked after a sick non-Muslim. Most (70%) have not had this experience.

### 8. Awareness of Permissibility to Eat with Non-Muslims (Ahl al-Kitab)

Yes: 50%  
No: 19%  
Not Know: 31%

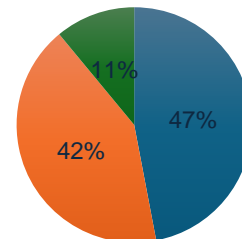
While many (31%) are unclear, half (50%) know they can eat with non-Muslims. This indicates a need for clearer instruction in this discipline.



### 9. Experience of Sharing a Meal with a Non-Muslim

Yes: 47%  
No: 42%  
Not knowing: 11%.

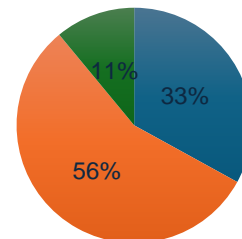
Students are almost evenly divided on whether they have eaten a meal with a non-Muslim, indicating that many have had this experience.



### 10. Experience of Giving a Gift to a Non-Muslim

Yes: 33%  
No: 56%  
Not Know: 11%

One-third (33%) have given a gift to a non-Muslim, demonstrating some kindness. However, more than half (56%) have not done so, indicating that this act of kindness may be less normal.

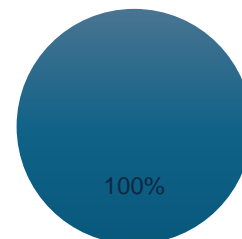


## High School Students Awareness and Behaviour Towards Non-Muslims

### 1. Awareness of Treating Non-Muslims Well

Yes: 100%  
No: 0%  
Not Know: 0%

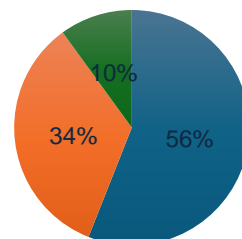
100% of high school students know they need to show kindness to non-Muslims. This full understanding demonstrates how deeply ingrained the values of kindness and respect for non-Muslims are among them.



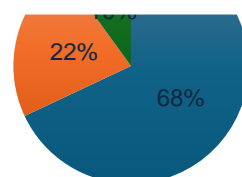
### 2. Sufficiency of Textbooks in Teaching Good Treatment of Non-Muslims

Yes: 56%  
No: 34%  
Not Know: 10%

Although a considerable proportion (34%) disagree and 10% are unclear, over half (56%) feel textbooks are sufficient to teach the correct behaviour of non-Muslims. This implies that textbooks must be comprehensive or backed by practical educational resources.



### 3. Education from Home about the Rights of Non-



### Muslims

Yes: 68%

No: 22%

Not Know: 10%

Most (68%) had heard of non-Muslim rights from their homes. 22% of respondents, meanwhile, had not received this instruction at home, suggesting there are imperfections in family conversations on this subject.

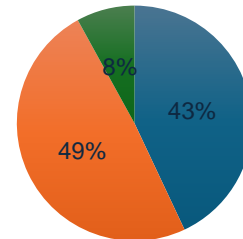
### 4. Education from Society about the Rights of Non-Muslims

Yes: 43%

No: 49%

Not Know: 8%

While over half (49%) believe they do not obtain this knowledge from society, less than half (43%) say society educates them about non-Muslim rights.



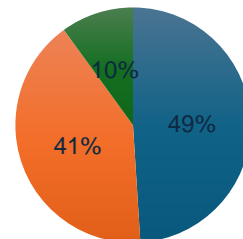
### 5. Education from Friday Sermons about the Rights of Non-Muslims

Yes: 49%

No: 41%

Not Know: 10%

Friday sermons have helped around half (49%) of them learn about the rights of non-Muslims; an important portion (41%) have not.



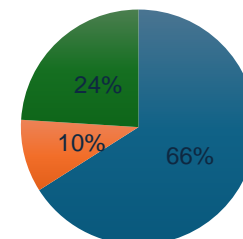
### 6. Awareness of Permissibility to Care for Sick Non-Muslims

Yes: 66%

No: 10%

Not Know: 24%

Although most students (66%) know it is acceptable to look after sick non-Muslims, a surprising 24% are unsure. This shows that instruction on this point has to be improved.



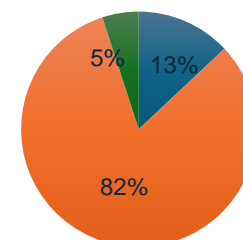
### 7. Experience in Caring for a Sick Non-Muslim

Yes: 13%

No: 82%

Not Know: 5%

13% or less have taken care of a sick non-Muslim. Most (82%) have not personally experienced this. This indicates that instruction on this technique should be clearer and more consistent.

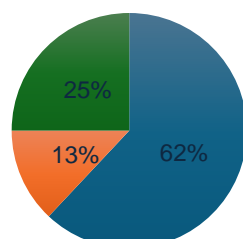


### 8. Awareness of Permissibility to Eat with Non-Muslims (Ahl al-Kitab)

Yes: 62%

No: 13%

Not Know: 25%



While a good number (25%) are unsure, most (62%) know they can eat with non-Muslims. This indicates that instruction on this technique should be clearer and more continuous.

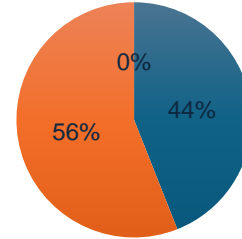
### 9. Experience of Sharing a Meal with a Non-Muslim

Yes: 44%

No: 56%

Not Know: 0%

Regarding sharing a meal with a non-Muslim, students are practically split exactly. This indicates that this technique has clearer, more consistent instructional materials needed.



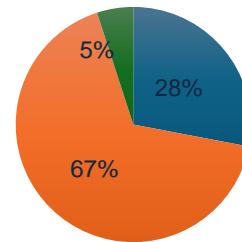
### 10. Experience of Giving a Gift to a Non-Muslim

Yes: 28%

No: 67%

Not Know: 5%

Just 28% of respondents have presented a gift to someone non-Muslim. Most (67%) have not done so, indicating that this gesture may be less frequent or emphasized. Practical experience and a clear definition of particular activities should help in this regard.



### Research Findings:

1. The SNC for Islamic Studies describes the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ visiting a Jewish child as an example of kindness towards non-Muslims.
2. The seventh-grade Islamic Studies curriculum includes a sentence about kindness towards non-Muslims within the chapter of حقوق العباد (people rights) only.
3. The argument regarding the protection of social and religious rights of non-Muslims in the chapter 'Islami Riyasat' are devoid of examples
4. The eleventh-grade curriculum includes an entire page on the rights of non-Muslims.
5. The usage of vocabulary in the chapter titled 'Madani Society' is too difficult for the 6<sup>th</sup> class.
6. There is no example regarding the non-Muslim relative in the chapter of "Benevolence" for class 10<sup>th</sup>.
7. The rule of dialogue between the other religions is not discussed in the 'Aa'am-ul-Wafood' chapter.
8. The discussion regarding the protection of social and religious rights of non-Muslims is discussed in the chapter 'Islami Riyasat' but the example is not mentioned.
9. The Relations, commonalities and Rules with non-muslims are not highlighted in the part titled 'Tarjuma-tul-Quran' in the syllabus of the 9th and 10th class
10. According to the survey there is information about harmony with non-Muslims but very few people practice it.

### Recommendations

1. According to the above-mentioned results NCC should upgrade the syllabus of Islamiyat.
2. Need to add practical examples from the Seerat-ul-Nabi specifically the chapters that include the rights of Human beings.
3. The behaviour of Hazrat Asma bint e Abi Bakr with her infidel mother needs to add to the Husn-e-Salook with parents.
4. Keeping the mental level of children in mind there is a requirement to add simple and sleazy words

5. In addition to the syllabus the training for the teachers needs to be arranged.
6. Practical activities regarding harmony with non-Muslims need to be arranged at the primary level every month
7. The Islamic Studies curriculum at the university level has to pay more attention to teaching compassion towards non-Muslims.
8. University students should include every field of society within their CSP (Community Support Program) hours and work on generating results from these interactions.
9. All level textbooks should thoroughly illustrate good contact between Muslims and non-Muslims. These illustrations of mutual respect and cooperation could be taken from ancient and contemporary contexts.

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