Cultural Transition, Social Change, Democratic and Islamic Citizen Approaches on Social Training

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Abstract: In this paper we discuss three approaches of cultural transition, democratic citizen, and social change in social training. Some of training implications of the approaches are also mentioned. Islamic approach on social training is described and some considerable verses of Quran are also stated.


Keywords: Cultural transition, democratic citizen, social change, social training

1. Introduction

Social training is one of the most significant aspects of training which have specific place in learning and training processes. Social training is not only one of the objectives of teaching and training, but also is one of the dominant principals of teaching and training (Asqarian, 1989). In another respect, it’s one of the main responsibilities of teaching and training (Shariatmadari, 1987).

In addition to the significant role of social training in learning and training, we can also consider its important function in cultural, social and economic development, and put emphasis on its relationship with development process in every society (Edalat Nejad, 1994).

Social training depends on a clear image of the concept of socialization; based on what entity or characteristics are defined for socialization, we will have special methods and principals for social training. In contrast, any principal or social training methods are dependent on certain presuppositions of nature of socialization (Bagheri, 1995).

Social science and education experts have different orientations about the whole concept of training and consequently on social training. John Lock, for instance, describes the responsibility of teaching and training as educating individuals according to their socialization methods (Naqib Zadeh, 1996), or Durkheim defines the function of social training as methodical socialization of young generation (Durkheim, 1997), in another word, they believe that teaching and training has conservative role and function in maintenance and strengthening of the current situation. This approach can also be called cultural transition and Functionalism. In contrast to the above mentioned theories, we can consider conflict theory or critical theory of Paulo Freire. These theories consider teaching and training as a tool to create fundamental changes in the society. In another word, in this approach teaching and training demonstrates its transformative power in society by training critics and reformers (Abd elazeem, 2011). The other approach is Democratic Citizen. Central issue in this approach is developing group work knowledge, to enable individual to participate in a democratic society (Miller, 1983).

In this paper, we will explain three approaches of social transition, democratic citizen, and social changes in social training context and illustrate some training implications of these approaches. Afterward we will discuss Islamic approach on social training.

2. Methods

2.1. Social transition approach

This approach is one of the primitive social approaches. Based on this approach, the school should lead the students toward appropriate social ways. Some of sociologists believe that school make the students familiar with social culture and the roles students will play in the society. Emile Durkheim describes teaching and training as the way of internalization of social facts or social being, not emphasize on individual growth, called individual being. Social life becomes a moral authority after confirming in the individuals (Durkheim, 1956).

Talcott Parsons also defines teaching and training as cultural transition; he believes schools have dual role, one is to socialize, which describes social roles of people and expectations of the others from a person, and the other one is human source distribution institute, which pays attention to training man-power (Parsons, 1964, Hsiangchi, 2011).

Other sociologists, who believe on functional learning and training school, represent analysis similar to Parson’s. Cultural anthropologist, Udi Cohen, for example, illustrates the effect of school on students. Cohen makes difference between socialization and learning and training. Socialization is learning different behaviors by dealing with parents, relatives and members of society. On the
other hand, teaching and training can transfer the values and skills in more standard ways (Cohen, 1971).

Cohen states: “the country needs loyalty of citizens, and acquires this loyalty by pledging to a national world view. Flags, pictures, singing national anthem in schools is used to incorporate with this national loyalty. Since schools are entities under control of government, the government teaches its values, biases and honors to country like other things to students (Cohen, 1971, pp. 41-42).

Recently, the idea of socializing students through schools attracts the attention. Neil Postman, for instance, follows this theory in his book “Teaching as Conserving Activity”. He states: “schools must consider manner education, which is standards of civilized interaction requires its students to follow motivations and interests.”

Postman changes his idea in the book “Teaching as Subversive Activity” and believes schools have repressive manner and prevents individual development. This view support programs such as technical and professional teaching and behavioral plans such as cultural transition (Postman, 1997).

2.2. Democratic Citizen Approach

Central subject of this approach is to develop group work knowledge to enable individual to participate in a democratic society.

One of the main defenders of this approach is James Shaver, first working with Don Oliver and Fred Newman. Shaver, in association with William Strong authored a book named “Facing Value Decisions: Rationale Building for Teachers” and represented an approach toward social decisions based on democratic perception (Shaver, 1976).

Shaver believes democracy is composed of basic values such as individual dignity, self-representation, intelligence, pluralism and society. Self-representation means that within a society, democratic people have selection right especially is what effects their life. Relying on people’s intelligence is also significant in democracy. Teaching and training should rely on deciding power by investigating the truth by taking various value statuses into consideration. The other value of democracy is pluralism; it means to value various values and life styles. Sometimes these values and methods conflict with each other, and people should make critical decisions. All of the above mentioned values evolve in certain values such as freedom of speech, freedom of assembling, and equality of opportunities. The role of teacher is to transfer democratic values in a way to improve intelligence of the students (Scheffler, 1960).

One aspect of democratic citizen process is to analyze conflict values within the situation. American creed is being taught to students to generate their mental concepts to democratic citizen concept, for example, to relate their own justice concept with the justice of equal behavior of law with people. This is called Label Generalization (Miller, 1983, p 61).

Teaching citizenship in a democratic situation mostly considers Analysis of value conflict. Harvard public issue, for example, considers this issue by proposing different case studies about moral, legal and social issues (Donald, 1974).

Jon Eisenberg et al, in Canada, focused on a case study method. Conceptual framework of Canadian is different from Shaver approach. Canadian project has two main objectives:

1. Developing social understanding of Canadian society about important issues and conflicts.
2. Developing discussion skills and making necessary decision to confront moral issues (Miller, 1983, 64).

Some of the programs relates to critical issues of Quebec, foreign ownership, cultural differences, urbanism issues, strikes, women right, etc. (Miller, 1983, 65)

2.3. Social Change approach

In this approach, the role of school is to change the society. The approach itself has three other approaches include: Social Reconstruction, Social literary action, and Social action.

a) Social Reconstruction: George Counts is one of the main speakers of this approach. He believes that teachers should actively engage in social changes and volunteer in political responsibilities. In his book “Dare the schools build a new social order?” he states: “teachers should cooperate with other groups in developing social changes.” Today, his theories are followed by defenders of social reconstruction. Theodore Brameled, for instance, wants teachers to play more important role in social changes. He introduces Ralph Nader and Saul Alinsky as teachers who struggle social injustice and inequality: Social reconstruction theory requires teachers to pioneer in social changes (Miller, 1983, 65-66).

b) Social Literacy Action: Paulo Freire has a significant role in necessity of interference of schools in social change approach. His first book “The Pedagogy of the Oppressed” deals with describing his theories about literacy of Brazilian farmers. He codified the method to teach basic literacy skills of Brazilian students. His method is based on explaining cruelty. Cruelty or exploitation prevents people growth to reach
human perfection. Using sources such as marks, punishment, etc. to control students is also cruel.

Alfred Alschuler states: “the origin of discipline conflicts in schools is teachers who behave cruelly with their students and don’t consider them as human.

Freire explains stages that people can pass to overcome the cruelty. People, in the first stage, named magical conforming, are passive and don’t feel oppression. In second stage, Naïve Reforming, problems are considered as individual issues and there is no need to concentrate on social aspects. In third stage, critical transforming, people analyze their own culture and play an active role in changing their status (Miller, 1983, 66-71).

c) Social Activity: the other approach in social approaches is Fred Newman’s social activity model. This model is much closed to social changes ideal, since the model encourages students to involve in social activities. This model not only support participating in social activities, but also tries to make changes by political and social activities.

Newman doesn’t only focus on the activity itself to overcome student’s passivity, but the main objective is environmental ability. Environmental ability emphasizes on the activity that brings special environmental outcomes. Newman believes citizenship training mostly focuses on self-oriented activities such as personal value clearness than development of abilities. He believes achieving environmental ability should be recognized as one of the important objectives of the school, but other abilities should not be ignored (Miller, 1983, 71-77).

Training implications of cultural transition, democratic citizen and social change approaches

In introduction, we stated that after explaining the approaches we will refer to some of training implications, here we will discuss it in the following aspects: **Training objectives**, **learning**, **training process**, **learner**, **learning environment**, **teacher’s role** and **evaluation**.

- **Cultural transition approach**
  1- **Training objectives**: value induction and significant cultural roles
  2- **Learning**: process of self-adaptation with expectations of school and society, it means the students learn whatever needed to fulfill expectations of the society.
  3- **Learner**: learner is a passive person, because information and values transfer to him.
  4- **Training process**: teacher controls training process. Training methods include practicing and repeating other direct methods.
  5- **Learning environment**: personal environment to have the control of the teacher.
  6- **Teacher’s role**: teacher is the pure dominant person and is responsible to transfer knowledge, value and roles to students
  7- **Evaluation**: evaluation is to clarifying knowledge and value transferring to students (Miller, 1983, 77-78)

- **Democratic citizen approach**
  1- **Training objectives**: valuing democratic values, analyzing skills, value conflict analysis skills of speech skills and adopting role and knowledge of democratic processes.
  2- **Learning concept**: include interactive process among learner and environment. Learning is done by involving in general problems and conflicts.
  3- **Learner**: learner is the one who can use his intelligence in participating in general affairs.
  4- **Training process**: a) teacher proposes case studies or general affairs; b) value conflicts are specified and real information is collected; c) students involve in different issues; d) teacher uses Socratic conversation to discover student’s position in the issue. Teacher uses comparison to encourage students to state their ideas and reform it; e) student uses Socratic conversation to investigate the issues and may adapt new theories.
  5- **Learning environment**: materials such as case study, movie and papers which focus on general issues are used.
  6- **Teacher’s role**: teacher should be responsible to different roles; first he should make a sentimental and supporting environment to prepare students to participate, then he should use Socratic methods and parables to investigate student’s position. Teacher should be able to interact and analyze different social issues.
  7- **Evaluation**: focuses on general conflict analysis and participating in political discussion skills. Evaluation is done about students skills in presenting oral and written ideas (Miller, 1983, 78-79)

- **Social change approach**
  1- **Training objectives**: student’s participation in social issues and development of effective skills on social changes.
  2- **Learning concept**: relates to direct contact with social issues. Learning is done through social problem, social changes, and environmental interaction and trying to affect the interaction.
  3- **Learner**: learner is the one who can actively involve in social changes. Learner is considered as a change factor.
4- **Training process:** a) student clarifies the problem; b) student experiences different practical methods; c) investigates different roles related to moral, social and legal functions; d) he selects one solution; e) he practices the solution in school and society; f) student analyzes the issue by investigating effectiveness of the project and clarifying what he has learned.

5- **Teacher’s role:** teacher tries to make the student’s activity clear. Makes necessary sources available. Teacher should participate in social issues and form necessary relations between school and society.

6- **Evaluation:** it is done in different dimensions. Student’s writing assesses the knowledge of a special case. It can be student’s observation during his work (Miller, 1983, 79-80).

### Comparing cultural transition, democratic citizen and social change approaches

When comparing these three approaches, we first discuss the main point of each approach. It is evident that democratic citizen and social change approaches are more conform to democratic society. Cultural transition has a passive approach toward students that is appropriate for absolute societies, but teaching some of the values and cultures is necessary even in free countries. Key point in orienting democratic citizen approach is freedom and selection right of students to analyze the issues.

Student’s learning in democratic citizen and social change approach is different with each other. Democratic citizen focuses on cognitive skills and oral interactions. Social changes approach goes beyond oral interaction and focuses on student’s participation in social and school issues. Although there is political analysis in class activities, the focus of main social change is on immediate environmental change of school (in social literary approach) or on society (social approach). Cultural transition and social change approaches are against each other, democratic citizen approach is in between of these approaches (Miller, 1983, 80-81).

### Islamic approach on social training

At first it must be mentioned that in every training system, human is described as the base, since every element of training system including concepts, objectives, principals, levels and training methods observes human’s status. In this regard Quran defines human as a creature with spirit, ego, nature, intelligence, will, authority, group identity and limitations and deficiencies. In the other word, analytic view of Quran about human is based on above mentioned anthropological resources, each of which should be analyzed separately (Baqeri, 1995).

First, it must be mentioned that human is from God and return to God (Baqare, 156), it means, nature, entity, thoughts and deeds of individual in personal and social concept, should be analyzed in the context of origin and destination. Second, in a structural view by compiling above mentioned anthropological resources, it can be stated that human is described in Quran in a way with deep inside knowledge and appeal for God (mould), or having recognition (wisdom) and emotional (heart) factors, with owning power to determine its wills (authority and will), with group impressive and impressing the groups, with limitations and deficiencies from birth, with passion that will provoke in him. The significant aspect of human will appear in his endeavor and function (Bagheri, 1995). Third, the object of Islamic teaching and training, away from different objectives that are mentioned, is worship, the main aim of creation. Forth, human need to communicate with others because it’s impossible to obviate needs alone. In one hand, tendency to obviate the needs and in the other hand tendency to eminence, are two strong motivations that make him to communicate in different levels. Furthermore, human has social responsibility along with personal responsibilities. In this regard, Quran states:

> لکل امہ انجی کا جا کی جا جا انجی سے عالمہ تھا اور لکمہ تھا

**(Yunus, 49)**

For every nation there is an appointed time, when their time cometh, then they cannot put it off an hour, nor hasten (it).

Or it says:

> ان الآل لاخیر مایقوم حق یخیر ما بانفسهم

**(Al-Ra’d, 11).**

Lo! Allah changed not the condition of a folk until they (first) change that which is on their hearts.

We can summarize that Quran believes human is a creatures in the path of origin and destination, have endeavor and justice, ultimate objectives like achieving God, wisdom, authority and social responsibilities. This believe about human observes an objective, conscious and practical training. In this regard we can say that Islamic training in general and in social and political concept should have religious and divine orientation, and should also be free, consciously and voluntary, since Quran disavows following those “whereof thou has not knowledge” (Al-Isra, 36) and focuses on authority of the people (Al-Kahf, 30). Also, the result of training should be represented in behavior of the people, as the consequent of all his endeavors (Marzoughi, 1377).

In this part we represent a group of training and prophecy principals of prophets related to social and individual issues. These principals constitute the base of prophet’s invitation and their prophecy.

So these principals are scale for recognizing real prophecies and use them for recognition of bad and
good. They also present theoretical and practical basis of social training.

A- Establishing justice among people

We verily sent our messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance, than mankind may observe right measure.

We have sent you upholding the Truth as a Messenger of Allah to all mankind, that ye judge justly between men, and if ye judge between orphans, marry of the women, who seem good to you, in equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you.

O ye who believe! Be ye staunch in justice.

And if ye fear that ye will not deal fairly by the orphans, marry of the women, who seem good to you, and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many) then one.

O ye who believe! Be ye witnesses for Allah with equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you.

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And if ye fear that ye will not deal fairly by the orphans, marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four; and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many) then one.

Inviting to deal social justice is another important privilege of messenger’s duty. Continuous effort to expand justice and make it practical among people and expanding social justice in human society, and to make people to accept justice is the most significant base that every creature depends on. Everyone who knows little about religious thought can recognize that Islam depends highly on social justice, and straight path is paced with it. Therefore, if there is no justice, there is no religion, and if social justice doesn’t work and expanded, religious duty will not be satisfied (Hakimi, 1989).

B- Social justice

And if thou judgest, judge between them with equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly.

Give full measure and full weight, in justice, and do not add unto the weight and measure anything filthy.

Says: My Lord enjoineth justice and kindness in equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you.

And if ye fear that ye will not deal fairly by the orphans, marry of the women, who seem good to you, and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many) then one.

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C- Rescuing mankind

Lo! Allah commandeth you that ye restore deposits to their owners, and, if ye judge between mankind, that ye judge justly.

An-Nisa, 58 (.)

And if ye fear that ye will not deal fairly by the orphans, marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four; and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many) then one.

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And verily we have raised in every nation a messenger, (proclaiming): Serve Allah and shun false gods. Then some of them whom Allah guided and some of them (there were) upon whom error had just followed. And such were Aa'd. They denied the revelations of their Lord and flouted His messengers and their Lord. So let the People of the Children of Israel go with us, and do not torment them not. (Al-Hud, 59-60)

And when there came to them a noble messenger, when a curse was made to follow them in the world and their doom had followed the command of every forward potentate. Would he command you to disbelieve after ye had surrendered (to Allah)? (Al-Baqarah, 1129)

And we verily gave Moses and Aaron the Criterion and the Command and the Prophethood, though heretofore they were indeed in error manifest. And a curse was made to follow them in the world and their doom had followed the command of every forward potentate. (Al-Imran, 79-80)

Prophets employ their entire effort to do this, and make it their goal, because they are sent to free people from misery and calamity, and free them from the slavery of the others by worshiping God, to acquire their own freedom and not to obey any oppressors and know that he is mankind that has human munificence and freedom and is equal with other people (Hakimi, 1989).

And verily we have raised in every nation a messenger, (proclaiming): Serve Allah and shun false gods. Then some of them whom Allah guided and some of them (there were) upon whom error had just followed. And such were Aa'd. They denied the revelations of their Lord and flouted His messengers and their Lord. So let the People of the Children of Israel go with us, and do not torment them not. (Al-Hud, 59-60)

Our Lord! and raise up in their midst a messenger from among them who shall recite unto them Thy revelations, and shall instruct them in the Scripture and in wisdom and shall make them grow. Lo! Thou, only Thou, art the Mighty, Wise.

And we verily gave Moses and Aaron the Criterion and the Command and the Prophethood, though heretofore they were indeed in error manifest. And a curse was made to follow them in the world and their doom had followed the command of every forward potentate. Would he command you to disbelieve after ye had surrendered (to Allah)? (Al-Baqarah, 1129)

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And verily we gave the Children of Israel the Scripture and the Command and the Prophethood, and provided them with good things and favored them above all people.

A messenger reciting unto you the revelations of Allah made plain, that He may bring forth those who believe and do good works from darkness unto light. (Al-Talaq, 11)

And verily we gave Moses and Aaron the Criterion and the Command and the Prophethood, though heretofore they were indeed in error manifest. And a curse was made to follow them in the world and their doom had followed the command of every forward potentate. Would he command you to disbelieve after ye had surrendered (to Allah)? (Al-Baqarah, 1129)

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people without trying to improve their life quality and strengthening their social relations, since this is incomplete and has no general effect on training. It’s obvious that evolutionary movement of mankind and achieving God is done only by cooperation of body and mind, and this is achievable through good life and good social system, which is the aim of prophets.

E- Equality and brotherhood among people

And hold fast, all of you together, to the cable of Allah, and do not separate. And remember Allah’s favor unto you: how ye were enemies and He made peace between you; for Allah is a witness between you. And be ye not as those who separated and disputed after the clear proofs had come unto them. And hold fast, all of you together, to the cable of Allah, and do not separate. And remember Allah’s favor unto you: how ye were enemies and He made peace between you; for Allah is a witness between you.

F- Grading improvement paths

And be ye not as those who separated and disputed after the clear proofs had come unto them. And still his chieftains, who despite the being unbalanced in their life, however, were equal to others in their life rights, and every people from everywhere and every skin color are as a family member.

3. Conclusion

In this paper we review four approaches on social training. In comparison with the other approaches, cultural transition approach prescribes submission. In another word, this approach considers unilateral communication of parents or preceptors with children. What happens to social training is providing solutions to form the children, in order to make them adaptable with social environment.

Contrary to this approach is social change approach which considers teaching and training as a mean to make fundamental social-political changes by informing deprived and oppressed people, and believes that teaching and training should be evolutionary power by growing up social critics. In another word, it signifies disharmony with current social order.

Democratic citizen approach, compare to two extravagant and wastage approaches, offers more balanced view and considers school as a place of...
improving and training critical thinking, group work and other life-related skill in a democratic society.

The logic of Quran about social training is that prophets were instructors who had responsibilities. By expressing these responsibilities, we can perceive a Quran-based training system. The main concepts of this duty related to social and human issues include:

1) Establishing justice among people
2) Social justice
3) Making people free
4) Moral and living reformation
5) Equality and brotherhood among people
6) Grading improvement

In fact, what we mentioned here about Quran was a concise view on Quran; the other aspects of it can be characterized by deep thinking.

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