

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Thoughts and Our Rights based Human Development Approach: Compliances and Differences

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Abstract

Man is the best creation of Almighty Allah. He has created everything for the betterment of the man. Allah the High says-“Do you not see that Allah has made subject to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth and amply bestowed upon you His favors, [both] apparent and unapparent? But of the people is he who disputes about Allah without knowledge or guidance or an enlightening Book.” (31:20) But now man is deprived from their fundamental rights. There is violence everywhere. People are suffering from hunger, losing their homes. Sick children are waiting for death. On the other hand rich people are getting richer and the poor is getting poorer. Our environment is being polluted due to the difference between the rich and the poor. Especially the condition of the Muslims is getting worse. Once the Muslims ruled the world but now their children are upbringing on the mercy of others. The great Turkish scholar Bediuzzaman Said Nursi predicted this long ago. He experienced two world wars and witnessed the degradation of the Muslims. but why are the Muslims facing the situation? This spiritual doctor Nursi detected the disease and also prescribed the medicine. He setup moral virtues and emphasized the reformation and transformation of the individual and the society. We will discuss in this article his thoughts on how to develop human morally so that man can enjoy their fundamental rights and it will also help in developing personality and creativity.

Keywords: Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, faith, human rights, morality, human development

Introduction

Human Development is one of the most talked topics of the modern world. This development basically means the assurance of Such an environment where people will enjoy their human rights and their capabilities and creativities will be in encouraged that will lead to a happy prosperous society. for that many theories, agenda, rules and regulations are adopted but nothing brings the cherished Human Development. The great Turkish scholar Bediuzzaman Said Nursi dreamt of such a society. In this paper we will discuss the compliances and the differences of these two types of human development program which will lead us to the integral human development.

What is Human Development?

The 1990 Human Development Report gave the clear and fundamental articulation of the concept of human development. It was the only report to date to focus on the concepts and measures of Human Development, hence provides the richest introduction of any of the reports. The first Chapter of that report, entitled “Defining and Measuring Human Development”, opens with these now-famous words: People are the real wealth of a nation. The basic objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to live long, healthy and creative lives. This may appear to be a simple truth. But it is often forgotten in the immediate concern with the accumulation of commodities and financial wealth.[1]

The 1990 paragraph read: Human development is a process of enlarging people’s choices. The most critical ones are to lead a long and healthy life, to be educated and to enjoy a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and self-respect – what Adam Smith called the ability to mix with others without being “ashamed to appear in public.”[2]

The term human development here mentions both the process of widening people’s choices and the level of their achieved well-being. But a definition of human development that called for an ‘expansion of capabilities’ and ‘process freedoms’ could not set priorities

For human development many principles have been set up: human rights, equity, efficiency, participation, responsibility, sustainability across time, care for the environment, political stability, empowerment and so on.

Can these ensure human development?

40 million people are now internally displaced people. Refugees become 1% of global population. 57% of refugees worldwide came from the three countries South Sudan, Afghanistan, Syria. 6.3 million serials are played from their homes due to seven years conflict Afghanistan 2.6 million and South Sudan about 85% of the worlds displaced people are hosted in developing countries. Germany is the only European country to host them in the top list. 2.4 million Refugees 1.2 million from Myanmar among whom 700000 thousands took shelter in Bangladesh. 10 million people are stateless people. 44400 people in a day Forced to flee their

homes because of conflict and persecution .But only 102800 resettled. (UNHCR report ,june 2018) 1.15 million are vulnerable refugees according to Amnesty International. According to WHO, 1 billion children are suffering due to maltreatment.(February 2018)

Violence and conflict are making the worst effect on the economy.Syria's Economy affected by violence costing country 68% GDP and violence costs Afghanistan nearly two third percent of its GDP. (Global peace Index 2018)thus people are getting poorer.

Peace level is deteriorated in 92 countries in 2017. in 2016 38 crises are deemed highly violent which was five fewer than 2015 over the decade medium- intensity conflict or violent crises experienced the greatest increase rising from 83 in 2006 to 188 in 2016 (World Humanitarian Data and Trends report)

These data show that only material growth does not ensure integral Human Development. Then what is the solution?

Reasons of Degradation according to Nursi:

The great Turkish scholar Bediuzzaman Said Nursi had experienced two world wars he has seen the fall of great Ottoman Empire and the rise of secularism and atheism. he observed the Global changes of modern world. he realised the policies of the modern world and had foreseen the fate of the Muslim world. He understood that under the cover of globalisation and industrialisation Europe basically was seizing the mind of people. The great discoveries and invention of modern science are making life easy and comfortable. democracy and capitalism are showing the path of being rich. the flourishing of Europe has mesmerized the Muslims. For achieving that development they are imitating Western world blindly. Thus they are forgetting their roots, compromise with their beliefs, ignore their tradition and culture after all they are losing their identity. Nursi locates the Emptiness of the present Civilization

The principles of present-day civilization are negative. Its foundations and values are five negative principles. Its machinery is based on these. Its point of support is force instead of right, and the mark of force is aggression and hostility, and their result is treachery. Its goal is mean self-interest instead of virtue, and the mark of self-interest is rivalry and dispute, and their result, crime. Its law of life is conflict instead of co-operation, and the mark of conflict is this:

contention and mutual repulsion, and their result, poverty. Its principle for relations between peoples is racialism, which flourishes through harming others and is nourished through devouring others. The mark of negative nationalism and racialism is ghastly clashes, disastrous collisions, and their result, annihilation. The fifth is this: its alluring service is to excite lust and the appetites of the soul and facilitate the gratification of whims, and their result is vice. The mark of lust and passion is always this: they transform man into a beast, changing his character; they deform him, perverting his humanity. If most of these civilized people were turned inside out, you would see their characters in the form of apes and foxes, snakes, bears, and swine. [3]

the great intellectual Bediuzzaman Said Nursi had identified the basic problems of Muslim backwardness. this imitation and the forgetting of their roots are the main cause. their belief is not a strong. they do not research the Quran and don't try to find out new discoveries. they are ignorant and failure to fulfill the demand of modern world made them poor but they are blind to this and blaming each other for this fate .so they are losing their unity and trust.

Nursi identified three problems -

Our enemies are ignorance poverty and internal conflict, but we shall fight the enemies with weapons of education, industry, and unity”[4]

Human Development : Nursi's thoughts

. Prof. Dr. Marcia Hermansen presented Mardin's analysis. Mardin analyzes the notion of society according to Nursi's view as constituting a network of personal relationships rather than as an entity in itself. So, Nursi's main focus is on personal development rather than on direct social or political action.[5]

his special emphasis on changing man's inner world as the touchstone of a revitalized Islam. Here again, two forces worked concurrently: the mobilized self was one of the requirements that had been brought about by the modernization of the social structure, but the best way to implement the mobilization was to anchor it in persons by making faith something that was cultivated by truly autonomous individuals.[6] Moreover, Nursi thought "This nation's heart disease is weakness in religion; it will regain its health through strengthening it".[7] The meaning of the above saying is that internal change will be effective for an external change.

Analyzing the effect of the imitation Nursi said:

"The world is going through a moral crisis. A pestilential disease has been born in Western society, whose moral foundations have been shaken, and it will spread all over the world in the course of time. By what means will Muslim society oppose this contagious evil? I see the leaders are negligent. The fortress of the Faith cannot be supported by decayed columns of infidelity. I have, therefore, concentrated all my efforts on the cause of the Faith, emphasizing the inner life. Moral existence, conscience, and belief system of the nations based only on the oneness of God and other principles of the Faith shown by the Qur'an make up the foundation stone of Islam." [8]

Nursi affirms traditional belief as a response to tackle the threat of modernity, secularism, materialism, and alienation, and so on. according to Nursi, "With the light of belief, man ascends to the highest of the high and attains a value that qualifies him for Paradise... Just as belief illumines man with its light and reads all letters inscribed on him by the Eternal One, so too it illuminates the universe, and takes the past and the future out of darkness." [9]

Nursi tried to interpret the Qur'an contextually to fulfill the needs of the Muslim community feeling the spiritual void due to the crisis of faith. Belief is vital for mankind than mere rationality or ordinary materialistic approaches. According to Said Nursi: "We Muslims, who are students of the Qur'an, follow proof; we approach the truths of belief through reason, thought, and our hearts. We do not abandon proof in favor of blind obedience and imitation of the clergy like some adherents of other religions. [10]

Nursi emphasized peaceful struggle through positive actions in the form of moral-spiritual jihad to instill, maintain, and at the same time to strengthen Islamic faith, thoughts, feelings, and the hearts of the people of Turkey. With a morally peaceful jihad, through spreading Risalah an-Nur, Nursi also fought to preserve the tranquility, peace, and stability in the country in the face of moral and spiritual degradation due to the strength of atheism which seeks to destroy the stability of society and create anarchy. [11]

From Nursi's perspective, the positive action strategy that may be described as a social scientific term was seen to be a pragmatic positive principle; one that acts as a pivotal sociomoral code to tackle and wrestles with immoral behaviour and related characteristics that undermine Turkey's Muslim communities.

TASK	Purpose	Conditions
Act Positively	Out of love	Sidestep enmity and criticisms
Make unity	In the fold of Islam	Remember ties of unity
Adopt just rule conduct	To repulse repugnant and false views	Assume that ‘My view alone is good’ and not ‘my view alone is true.’
Unite with people of truth	For Divine favour	(Counter untruths and disunity)
Realize that unity defeats disunity (and chaos)	Stand up against followers of misguidance	(Be firm and unwavering against falsehood)
Preserve truth	Preserve truth	(Circumvent untruths)
Abandon egoism	(Restrain oneself and the community from being vain glorious and conceited)	(Resign oneself personally and communally to act humbly)
Give up self-pride	(Reject notions of superiority and immodesty)	(Encourage modesty)
Rid oneself (and the community) of petty feelings	(Counter personal, communal, tribal, and ethnic rivalry)	(Inspire healthy competition and evade jealous opposition)

Table 1: Nursi's Positive Action: The Nine Rules (Nursi 1998:12-13) [12]

Nursi's idea of transcending self-interest for the betterment of society. This commitment to betterment of the external society for Nursi represents a component of maturity,[13] or if you will the implementation of the prophetic legacy in the Islamic tradition. Individual moral and spiritual improvement is, however, the foundation for service to others. According to Osman Nuri sincere service is the result of a sound heart. Success in servitude requires knowledge, wisdom, efficiency, equanimity and a responsible character and personality. [14]

Social Development

for Said Nursi the Quran is primarily a means of placing restraints on the dangerous appetites of man. As he put: "The aims of the Quran are to provide a barrier against the appetites of man (Hevesat-i Nefsaniye) thus encouraging him to engage in higher pursuits, giving satisfaction to his higher aspirations and directing him towards the achievements of human perfection." [15]

In the sermon, he pointed out the reasons of the decline of Muslim community in the form of six terrible sicknesses and also prescribed the remedies accordingly through the pharmacy of the Quran.

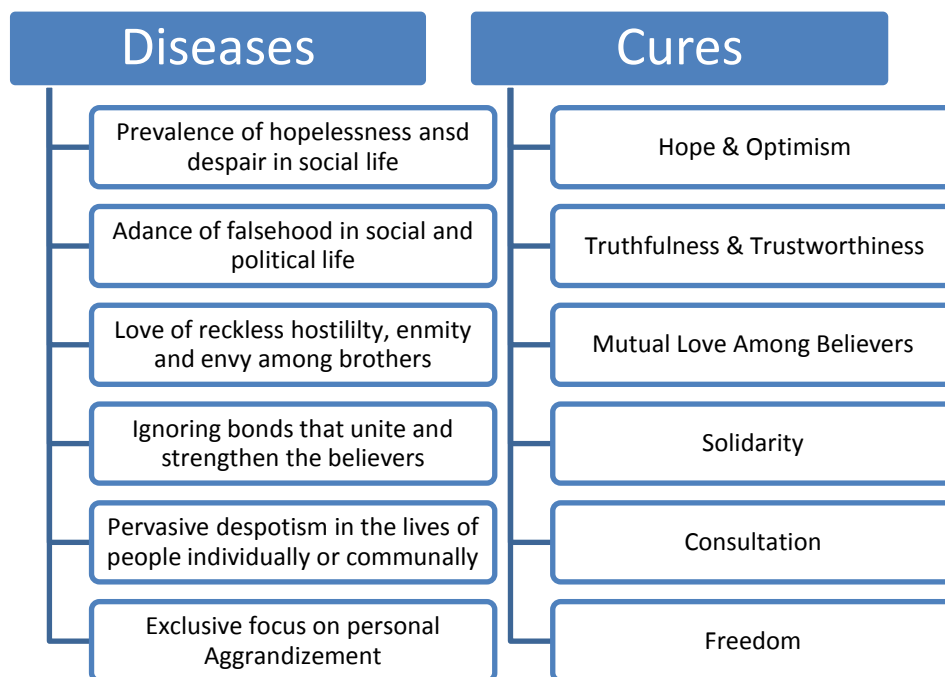


Table 2: Damaskas Sermon

For the material growth he mentions five strengths of Islam. He identifies five unbreakable strengths of Islam which involves unity, need for civilization and industry, competition for exalted things, fearlessness and belief in God as prerequisite to true civilization. He was of the view that by virtue of civilization having no iniquities and other evils, the society will flourish materially.[16]

He thus directs the mind set of people from disbelief to belief, from despair to hope, from lying to truthfulness, from love for enmity to love for brotherhood and from personal interests to mutual interests.

Eradicating ignorance

He states "The light of conscience is religious sciences (ulûm-u diniye). The light of the mind is civilized sciences (fî'nûn-u medeniye). Reconciliation of both manifests the truth. The student's skills develop further with these two (sciences). When they are separated, from the former superstition and from the latter corruption and skepticism is born." [17]

"Bediuzzaman did not believe in partial knowledge, considering it to be the result of a defective human reason. We may say that if a Muslim scholar acquires knowledge of one science or very limited learning, or becomes absorbed in only one of the Divine mysteries, doubtless he will be unable to attain a comprehensive knowledge or grasp the laws which bind the universe." [18] Whereas for Nursi, Islam is the master and guide of the sciences, and the chief and father of all true knowledges "Islam is a teacher and mentor of various sciences, and the leader and the mother of all true knowledges". [19]

Nursi proposed a model institute where students graduated from would be fully equipped with religious knowledge as well as fully aware of the Modern age sciences and developments. In addition his education system has the capability of training human heart, mind and conscience simultaneously. Therefore his proposed Medresetu "Z-Zehra is highly concerned with the training of all three by representing "the most superior mekteb by the reason, the very best medrese by the heart, and the most sacred zawiye by the conscience." [20]

Establishing unity

This system could produce multiple benefits. It would “open the door to spreading the beneficial aspects of constitutionalism”. Nursi wished for Islam to function like a consultative council, that is to say, through the mutual consultation (sura) of “the three divisions of the army of Islamic education”—those of the medreses, the mektebs, and the tekkes—so that “each would complete the deficiencies of the order”. His aim was for the Medresetu’z- Zehra be an embodiment of this. According to Nursi, this transforming the medreses from being “single faculty” institutions into being “multifaculty” and putting into practice “the rule of division of labor” was in accordance with wisdom and the laws of creation.[21]

The expected output of holistic education as such will bear the figure of integrative educators, scientists, scholars, or ulama: master various fields of general science and religion and at the same time have a clear conscience so that they can educate others as well as a prime example above sciences which they teach, because they are the first to practice all the knowledge they voice.[22]

Nursi states: “I want preachers to be both searching scholars, so that they can prove what they claim, and subtle philosophers so that they do not spoil the balance of the Shari'a, and to be eloquent and convincing. It is essential that they are thus.”[23]

Conclusion:

To sum up we can say that to Bediuzzaman Said Nursi material development is never the measurement of Human Development. To him development means the moral spiritual development by which people will create such a society where people enjoy the rights set by the Holy Quran and people can earn the qualities which are desired and exalted of all the time. And implement these qualities for the betterment of the society .with this individual -communal development theory He covered the development of every sector and the integral Human Development can be achieved.

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