
Muslim Countries: From Regime of Aid-Dependency to Regime Self-Sufficiency

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to examine the concept of development aid as a mechanism of bilateral or multilateral relationship between developed and developing countries. It is intended to particularly explore its overall effects on sustainable development of developing Muslim countries.

An attempt is made to examine some points in this regard by an interpretive methodology within relevant theoretical framework. Previous researches have tried to answer questions why these countries' economic indices are expressions of wide imbalances in the distribution of incomes and wealth among their citizens with a view to argue that these had been the underlined causes why they have tendency for development aid. This paper reveals that traditionally, development aid used to be relatively non-intrusive. However, it has become re-branded and intensified to the extent that it is now, arguably a mechanism for interventionist global development policy. It has thus led to emergence of a culture of aid-related dependency that may not have much to do with economic or financial supports, but political goals. The consequence is that those nations economic and political agendas are subjected to uncertainty, questionable sustainability, and a tendency of top-down approaches to political and social involvement. The overall contribution of this paper is to highlight and place emphasis on some basic elements that can assist these countries to sustain their development agenda. These elements include good governance, rules of law, respect for human rights, education and culture of hard work.

1. Introduction

Economic development is a fundamental principle by which a country advances the economic, political and social status and well-being of its people. However, for economic development strategy and policy to be meaningful, it must be sustainable. Sustainable development is all about meeting the needs of the present generation without causing destruction to the need of the incoming generations (Brundtland, 1987.). In spite of many available economic development blue-prints, the Muslim countries have remained underdeveloped, poor and in social and political crises.

It has been observed that some 31 of the 57-member states of the OIC are classified among the least developed nations, including the countries that occupy the bottom five places on that list (Badawi, 2007). This paper attempts to examine the Muslim Nation's development state vis-à-vis variety of aid and technical assistants emanating from both Pan-Islamic and international levels.

2. Muslim Countries

Muslim Countries or ‘Islamic world’ is a ‘reference to the states and societies, located in different parts of the world, whose religion is Islam and who embrace its history, or those strongly influenced by this religion and history’ (Altwaijri, 2014) Thus, ‘it is a reference to countries that are predominantly peopled by Muslims spread over 86 countries with high concentrations in the Asian and African countries.’ A 2015 study shows that there are 1.8 billion Muslim adherents in the world, constituting about 24% of the world population (Lipka, and Hackett, 2017).

3. Key Elements of Economic Development

The economic and social variables that shape a country’s economic development are built around a number of elements. These elements may sound theoretical, but essentially, they are practical.

Experts have identified these elements, but for purpose of brevity, very few will be examined.

Here it is intended to examine, good governance, social justice (equitable distribution of resources), and the rule of law, and education.

3.1 Good Governance

Good governance is contextual. It implies different things in many different contexts (Agere, 2000). However, for the purpose of this paper, it connotes upholding justice and equity; rules of law and fundamental rights in the administration of human affairs. It is in reference to corporate, international, national, local governance or to the interactions between other sectors of society.

Thus, it is how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources. Governance which is the keyword connotes “the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)”. It is in reference to corporate, international, national, local governance or to the interactions between other sectors of society. In practical term, good governance is all about the responsibility of governments and governing bodies to meet the needs of the masses as opposed to select groups in society (Khan, 2004). Grindle contends that good governance emanates precisely from its relationship with the development of a country and the reduction of poverty.

3.1.1 Muslim Countries and Good Governance

The past history of Muslim Countries is replete with legacies of good governance. There were records of governments under the administration of Muslim leadership that were epitomes of justice, equity, simplicity, and respect for the rules of law and human rights. Though there were also instances of despotic and unjust rulers. ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattab, the second Caliph is one of such exemplary leadership commonly cited. For instance, it was reported that the son of ‘Amr Ibn al-‘As, the governor of Egypt struck an Egyptian common man with a whip. The matter was brought before Caliph ‘Umar. Without regard to the esteemed status of the offender’s father, he ruled that the Egyptian common man was wronged and was entitled to avenge himself for the harm done to him (Gallant, 2009). In another instance, ‘Umar was reported to have ordered strict observance of the regulations established by the Muslim jurists stipulating that the sellers should not misrepresent their goods for the qualities they do not possess, that they should disclose the exact qualities (good or bad) of their stock to prospective buyers and that they should not hide the weight

and quantity of their goods, and they should not keep their prices secret in such a way that if the buyers come to know of them they will refuse to buy the goods.

3.1.2 Ibn Khaldun's Postulate of Good Governance

Ibn Khaldun in his postulate on statecraft characterized the inter-connectivity that exists between theory and practice of good governance especially under the *Shari'ah*. This postulate was condensed into eight points namely that: the strength of the sovereign does not materialize except through the implementation of the *Shari'ah*; the *Shari'ah* cannot be implemented except by the sovereign; the sovereign cannot gain strength except through the people; the people cannot be sustained except by wealth; wealth cannot be acquired except through development; development cannot be attained except through justice; justice is the criterion by which God will evaluate mankind; and, the sovereign is charged with the responsibility of actualizing justice.

3.1.3 Muslim Countries and Good Governance in Modern Time

The golden age of Islam (for example, the Abbasid dynasty, which ruled from 750 to 1258) was a time when Europe was primarily in its dark ages and when Islamic civilization's intellectual and leadership model were second to none. Good governance underscored this remarkable historical landmark. Unfortunately, the contemporary Muslim Countries have failed to live to that landmark and had fallen short in almost every facet, from science and technology to democracy and human rights. It is noted that it fell behind the modern developed nations of the West and now trails other areas of the world, most notably many Asian nations. Critics have maintained that development indexes of the Muslim Countries from rates of illiteracy and science to its lack of military power, the Islamic world is lagging behind by world standards.

The contemporary Muslim leadership and ruling elites are fond of life of luxury associated with corruption. These were some of the factors that led the way for decline of Mughal Empire abundance of wealth, luxurious life and leisure that had made them reckless and became incompetent to rule (Khattak, 2015). As Muslim rulers indulged in immoral activities their concentration to create a viable education has diverted to leisure and luxurious life. Government officials, political elites engage in corrupt practices which ultimately weakened the foundation of rule in most countries of the Muslim Countries.

3.2 Social Justice

Social justice simply means giving each individual what he/she deserves, distribution of financial benefits in the society, providing equally for basic needs. It is also an expression of egalitarianism in opportunities, i.e., each person has a chance to climb up the social ladder (Chaudhry, 1999). It is a far-reaching concept that attracts divergent views among scholars and writers. Some experts argue that it means that "right relationship" between and among persons, communities, states, and nations (Finn, 2017)."

3.2.1 Social Justice: A Western Perspective

Patrick McCormick contends that social justice simply connotes fairness in the assignment of fundamental rights and duties, economic opportunities, and social conditions. Thus, Rawls provides two basic principles of social justice, modified from his earlier work. According to him, social justice presupposes that each person has the same infeasible claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic liberties, which scheme is compatible with the same scheme of liberties for all; and, social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions: First, they are to be attached

to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity, and second, they are to be to the greatest benefit of the least-advantaged members of society (the difference principle).

3.2.2 Social Justice: An Islamic Perspective

Islam by its moral teachings and legislation, combines both social and legal justice. Thus, it can be described as moral rightness based on ethics, rationality, law, natural law, religion, equity and fairness (Al Halwani, 2018). In Islam, justice stands for placing things in their rightful place. Sayed Qotb identified three basic elements of social justice in Islam, namely, the absolute freedom of conscience, the complete equality of all men, and the social interdependence among members of the society. Freedom of conscience as the first basic element dictates that social justice cannot be attained except in an atmosphere where human conscience is totally free with an inherent belief that there is no superior or controlling power over any individual except God, the Creator and Lawgiver. It follows that God is the ultimate authority and who does not require any mediator between Him and His Creature. In the light of this divine gift of freedom of conscience, man is liberated from fear of any creature as no one except God can benefit or harm his life, livelihood, or position. Sayyed Qotb opines that “Islam taught the unity of the human race in origin and history, in life and in death, in privileges and in responsibilities, before the law and before Allah, in this world and in the world to come.” This, according to him is the purport of the Qur’an 4 verse 1. He asserts that social independence means sense of duty and responsibility towards an individual’s community or society. It is a holistic concept which covers both the emotional sympathy and feeling towards the others as well as pragmatic actions to assist and support indigent and underprivileged people in the society with a view to take care of, at least their basic needs. To achieve this, Islam establishes the institution of Zakat and where necessary the rich are to make further contribution.

3.3 The Rule of Law

To emphasize the importance and inter-connectivity of the rule of law to economic development, the World Bank has noted that: “*Economic growth, political modernization, the protection of human rights, and other worthy objectives are all believed to hinge, at least in part, on “the rule of law”*” (Alston, 2014).

The rule of law can be described as a system that attempts to protect the rights of citizens from arbitrary and abusive use of government power. As there is no a precise definition of what is the rules of law, it has been argued that its meaning can vary from one country to another and from one legal traditions and jurisdiction to another. However, it can be said that it is a legal-political regime under which the law restrains the government by promoting certain liberties and creating order and predictability regarding how a country functions (Helen, and Guernesey, 2018).

In his ‘*The Morality of Law*’ American legal icon, Lon Fuller identified eight elements of law that are considered necessary pre-requisites for instituting principles of justice and equality among citizens in any society. He identifies eight elements of the rule of Law.

3.3.1 Rule of Law and Economic Development

Law generally and the rule of law in particular are important ingredients to economic development and specifically to the market economy because they are the common basis on which actors and stakeholders in economic development activities and parties in the market economy can

make agreements. The Supremacy of law and the rule of law provide parties with confidence that all will be treated justly and equally and disputes will be resolved efficiently and fairly.

Experts in market economy maintain that when the government is no longer having monopoly to the ownership of land, capital, and labor, the rule of law guarantees that the crucial elements of the economy will be free from arbitrary governmental policies and actions. This will give assurance to market participants that the government will maintain neutrality and adopt a hands-off approach to investments and production. This will certainly allow those participants to fully exercise their rights in relation to land, labor and capital which will engender economic growth and positive development.

3.3.2 Islam and Rule of Law

From the above analysis the question is to what extent does Islamic law conform to these principles and components of the so-called rule of law? In a comparative sense, both the rule of law as understood in modern time, and Islamic law carry different meanings and connotations to different people, cultures and legal and social backgrounds.

Fundamental Rights

Fundamental human rights principle is general and sacrosanct to every model and every variant of the rule of law. Islamic law is not an exception. Islamic law guarantees personal security and private ownership of property rights (Khadduri, 1984), Property ownership right is inherent in human nature because it has to do with survival and self-preservation. Islam is fundamentally a monotheistic religion. Everything in Islam centered on the over-lordship of God the Author of all creation. Thus, Qur'an puts property ownership rights within the framework of this fundamental belief and thus, everything is owned by God. The Qur'an says: "Unto God belongs the domain of Heaven and Earth and everything in between" It also says that: "O Allah. Master of the Dominion".

These are similar excerpts of the Qur'an is to the effect that the right of ownership in the absolute sense belongs to God and to Him alone.

However, this does not mean that human beings are not capable of having the right to own property. In other words, this omnibus framework of right is put within the broader context (Isa, 2018). This fact is acknowledged in the purport of Qur'an 9 verse 104. Here there is mention of "their" property confirming that there is no contradiction between the ownership in the absolute sense which is under the control of God and human inherent right to own property within the limits set and to dispose and use them within the restriction that God has provided. There are similar references in the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which is the second basic source of the Islamic Law which stipulate that ownership of property rights are to be acknowledged and respected.

One major objective of the Islamic notion of divine ownership of property which in all intends and purposes is to establish the equal rights of all human to those God-given properties. However, it must be admitted that Islamic history has revealed that that same notion that had been invoked to restrict property ownership privileges and deny peasants the rights to sell, for example, land or pass it onto their heirs (Kuran, 2008).

Islam and Components of Rule of Law

Islam and its legal system also recognize all the other components of the rule of law including 'Government Accountability', 'Equal Access to Justice and Political Process', 'Efficiency of the Legal and Political Systems'; Islamic law itself, is certainly known to be 'Clear and 'Stable Law'.

These components of the rule of law may not be discussed in this due to lack of space. Suffice to conclude, that the Qur'an and Sunnah which are the primary sources of Islamic law contain principles and criteria for all these that are now being talked about in modern time. Muslim Jurists and Scholars have done extensive work in expatiating those Qur'anic and Sunnah principles and criteria in the course of historical development of Islamic law.

4. Education and Development

“Investment in people, if done right... provides the firmest foundation for lasting development”

Education, is known to be the means for learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits. Methodology of education varies. It include storytelling, discussion, former and informer teachings, training, and focused research. Education usually is undertaken under the instruction and counselling of teachers or educators, but also, curious individuals may learn or acquire knowledge by themselves (*John, 1944*). Education is basic and essential for the attainment of growth and development (*King, 2011*).

Education in every sense is one of the fundamental and indispensable factors for development.

This is because, it raises people's productivity and creativity and promotes entrepreneurship and technological advances. Psychologists and education experts in a series of studies that were recently conducted on the determinants of aggregate economic growth have revealed and stressed the importance of fundamental economic institutions and the role of cognitive skills (*Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson, 2001*).

4.1 Islam, Education and Development

Islam, right from inception, placed a high value on education and has enjoyed a long and rich intellectual tradition. In demonstrating its importance, there are more than 800 references to education, knowledge (*'ilm*), and their derivatives in the Qur'an. Thus, it is repeatedly emphasized with frequent injunctions, for example, in such divine expressions as “God will exalt those of you who believe and those who have knowledge to high degrees”, “O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge”; and “As God has taught him, so let him write”. These and many others are to invigorate community to strive for education and learning.

Education, from Islamic perspective, has been described as a balanced growth of the total personality through training the spirit, intellect, rational self, feelings and bodily senses such that faith is infused into the whole personality (*Syed Muhammad, 1991*). It is also viewed as a means of preparing humankind for happiness in this life, “its ultimate goal is the abode of permanence and all education points to the permanent world of eternity” (*Sayyed Hossein, 1989*). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is reported to have said, “Verily, Allah will send for this nation at the head of every hundred years [could mean every generation] one who would revive for it (i.e., the nation) its religion” To what extent modern Muslim Countries appreciate this fact especially among Muslim families and the government policies? Answer to this question is nothing to write home about.

5. Modern Muslim Countries and Constituents of Economic Development

To what extent modern Muslim Countries observe and preserve those constituents and to what extent those constituents impact their development agenda? It is pertinent at this stage to quote Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi former Prime Minister of Malaysia who observed that:

“The Muslim landscape that stretches from Morocco to Mindanao is more diverse than western commentators often suppose. There are peaceful countries where the people are wealthy, healthy and educated. However, these are sadly outnumbered by countries and regions that are underdeveloped, poor and in turmoil. Some 31 of the 57 member-states of the Organization of Islamic Conference are classified among the least developed nations, including the countries that occupy the bottom five places on that list. Unemployment rates are double the global average, nearly one-third of the population is illiterate and women face many disadvantages. This level of backwardness and economic deprivation helps fuel a host of social ills and makes it easier for people to recruit terrorists. Poor governance is a feature of many parts of the Muslim world.

Political oppression, abuse of civil and political rights and corruption trouble many Muslim countries. Extremism and militancy also dot parts of the Muslim landscape due to factors that are largely domestic but are sometimes external. What is needed is a clear and shared commitment to eradicate poverty, illiteracy and unemployment in the Islamic world. These are the real threats to both the Muslim and western worlds. If people have a sense of economic opportunity and purpose, they are far less likely to be seduced into becoming terrorists.”

The modern Muslim Countries do not attach adequate importance to good governance, social justice and the rules of law. Contrary to a misconception that all these are values only developed and promoted by the modern Western world, they are part are parcels of Islamic system right from the inception of Muslim community of Medinah. Muslim Jurists and Scholars have confirmed this from their scholastic efforts. This has been manifested in the ideal of Maqasid al Shari’ah, that is to say, the objectives of the Shari’ah.

Politically most countries of modern Muslim Countries could not claim to have a clearly defined political system. While some claim to be applying Islamic political system, others claim to be applying the modern democracy. Some other claim to be applying a middle-course between the Islamic and democratic systems. However, all indications show that those claims are arguably superficial.

6. Development Aid

Development aid is an assistance provided by governments and other agencies in support of the economic, environmental, social, and political development of developing countries. It is known and referred to in different names. For example, it is called development cooperation, development assistance, technical assistance, international aid, overseas aid, official development assistance (ODA), or foreign aid. It is distinguished from humanitarian aid by focusing on alleviating poverty in the long term, rather than a short term response (Bräutigam, and Botchwey,1999).

Traditionally, development aid was known to be the response of richer countries to the imbalance of economic development prevalent in most part of the world and particularly the developing nations. It has hitherto remained in that traditional regime as relatively non-intrusive.

However, in the recent past, it has been ‘re-branded and intensified to the point where aid today is arguably used as a strategic force in increasingly interventionist global development policy.’ (Senge, 2015)

6.1 Development Aid: Donors

It was reported that almost two-thirds of the U.S. proposed assistance for 2012, was earmarked for Muslim nations and one-third goes to Arab countries. A report revealed that in 2012 Western

countries had continued to be the biggest suppliers of Foreign Aid, with the United States providing nearly double the investment than the next largest donor. This is graphically explained in this table:

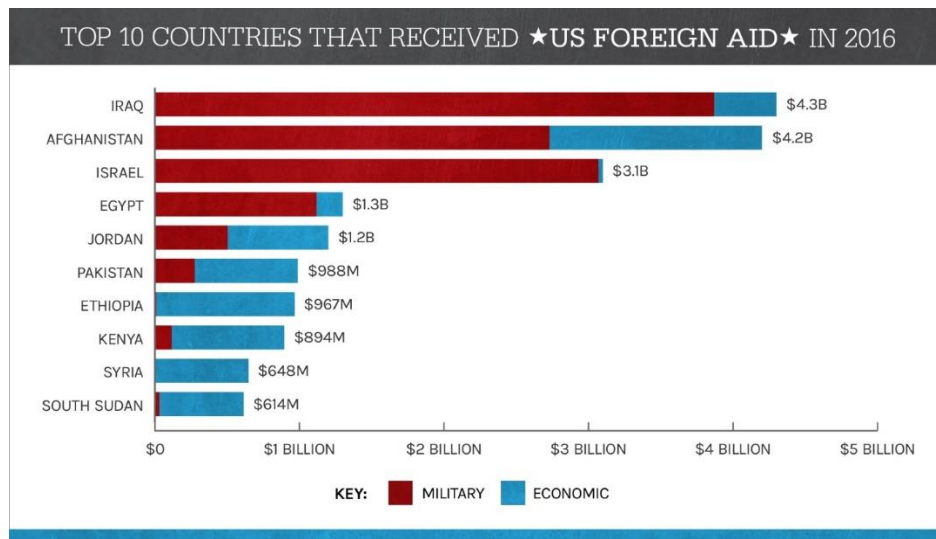
Rank	Country	Economic Aid – Donor (Billion \$)
1.	United States	23.53
2.	United Kingdom	12.46
3.	Japan	11.19
4.	France	10.60
5.	Germany	10.44
6.	Netherland	5.45
7.	United Arab Emirates	5.20
8.	Sweden	3.95
9.	Canada	3.90
10.	Spain	3.81

A 2015 report showed that the US was the largest single donor country of foreign aid in the world. The Security Assistance Economic Aid dashboard showed that the US spent \$18.25 billion in economic aid to 92 recipients, and \$18.23 billion in security aid to 143 recipients.

Meanwhile, United Arab Emirates (UAE) a supposed Muslim developing country topped donor list of development aid in 2017. Relative to its national income, according to a report released by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), UAE with a total contribution of Dh19.32 billion of developmental aid in 2017, the UAE spent 1.31 per cent of its gross national income on foreign developmental aid – almost twice the global target of 0.7 per cent set by the United Nations

6.2 Development Aid Recipients

Beneficiaries of development aid are mostly and usually developing nations and particularly Muslim Countries. These countries receive the aid essentially to finance a number of development programs which include economic, health-care, environmental, social, security and political development agenda. The table below is illustrative. It shows top 10 countries that received US foreign aid in 2016.



World Bank reports revealed that Iraq and Nigeria, two Muslim majority population countries were the top recipients of development aid in 2005. It was stated that this is due to the significant debt relief deals that were granted to these countries that year – when donor countries write off a portion of a recipient country’s debt, it is regarded as official development assistance from the donor country. OECD report also showed that in 2009 Africa received the largest amount of ODA, at \$28 billion. Of that, \$25 billion went to countries south of the Sahara, with Sudan receiving approximately \$1.9 billion and Ethiopia getting \$1.8 billion. Asia received the second largest amount at \$24 billion. The top ODA receiving countries in order were Afghanistan (\$5.1 billion), Iraq (\$2.6 billion) and Vietnam (\$2.1 billion).

Another report showed that in terms of regions, the Middle East and North Africa receive the most of the economic assistance from the US development aid budget. The Sub-Saharan Africa region receives \$US 1.2 billion – 25.32 per cent of the budget (Hayne, 2017). In terms of individual countries, the following receive the most in economic [not security] aid: Afghanistan (\$US 650,000,000); Jordan (\$US 635,800,000); Kenya (\$US 632,500,000); Tanzania (\$US 534,500,000); Uganda (\$US 435,500,000); Zambia (\$US 428,525,000); and, Nigeria (\$US 413,300,000). In terms of security aid, the countries receiving the most help are: Afghanistan (\$US 5 billion); Israel (\$US 3.2 billion); Iraq (\$US 1.3 billion); Egypt (\$US 1.3 billion); Syria (\$US 541,500,000); and, Jordan (\$US 364,200,000). These figures show that why few of the Muslim Countries are on the list of development aid donor countries, many of those on the list of the aid recipient countries are from Muslim Countries.

6.3 Development Aid: Negative Tendencies

For a number of reasons, stakeholders in development matters are expressing doubt about favorable consequences of aid. To what extent aid contributes to development of recipient countries? Some have questioned the claim that aid really bring development to the recipient countries and argue that they rather distort local institutions and thus acts as a potential obstacle to progress (Vernon, P. 2017). They note, for example, that large sums of money given as aid have not enabled Zimbabweans to achieve a better life; nor enabled ‘people in Sri Lanka or the DRC to live in peace; nor prevented political violence and mass displacement in Kenya or Georgia.’ Where there are some development indications, there also concomitant negative tendencies which include conflict of interests; and, dependency syndrome. Aid dependency is a reference to the degree or proportion of government spending that is given by foreign donors. Where the proportion is high, the tendency is also high in promoting a culture of dependency. It is noted that aid is though, not fundamentally linked to dependency, it is rather influenced by many factors, mostly length and intensity of the donation period, and 15-20% has been identified as the tipping point where aid begins to have negative effects (Clemence, 2011). Dependency is usually the result when aid is used, either intentionally or otherwise, as a long-term strategy which as a result prevents or slows down development, or even makes progress, or reform completely impossible.

Other Effects of Development Aid:

Other negative effects of development aid that may not be expatiated on include misappropriation and misapplication of development aid; interference in the internal affairs of recipient country; division among political and community leaders; fueling conflicts among different groups in the community; and, inhibiting development of intellectual potentials and capacity building.



It is on account of these effects that development policies of most of the developing Muslim Countries have not been result oriented. As shown in the above graph, aid donated by US in this case, are, apart from development agenda of the recipient countries are also to achieve certain agendas set by the donor country.

7. Visions for Change and Sustainable Development

For the Muslim Countries to face these challenges of sustainable development squarely, they have to review their steps and embark on implementing development blue-prints that have been recommended by the experts and opinion leaders. It is humbly recommended that the following steps should be taken:

1. In abiding by the teachings of Islam, the Muslim Countries must be conscious of the need to deal with the sectarian thought, doctrinal and ethnic radicalism. Individuals and groups should be allowed to express their views within the limit of the law.
2. The Muslim Countries should endeavor to implement various plans and development blue-prints that have been produced by researchers, experts and opinion leaders.
3. Develop educational system that is practical and scientific oriented. The education system of Muslim Countries must be capable of bridging the gap between the past and the present such that it will be relevant to the modern age of information technologies and thus, prepare them for future. Specific attention should be paid to modernizing curricular of education system that promote sustainable development through scientific research, creativity in sciences and technology.
4. Good governance, social justice (equitable distribution of resources), and the rule of law must be duly observed. People should be carried along in the implementation of state policy.
5. The principle of social justice must be properly rooted in the countries of the contemporary Muslim World. Citizens must be given what they deserve in terms of distribution of social, economic and political benefits in the society as well as equality in the distribution of basic needs and opportunities.

6. Efforts must be made to protect the rights of the citizens from arbitrary and abusive use of government power. Governments must be accountable. Citizens must have equal access to justice and the political process, and there must be efficient judicial and political systems, clear and stable laws, legal system, and the protection of fundamental human rights.
7. Corruption must be fought in all its ramification in the Muslim society.
8. Efforts must be made in promoting culture of productive, scientific and critical thinking in education and labor sectors of the society.

Conclusion

Development aid is part of human society. People are interdependent. However, development aid can be blessing and curse. If it is properly utilized it can bring benefit to the recipient country.

However, if it is not properly managed, it can have a spill-over effects on the society like dependency syndrome and other negative tendencies associated with it. Therefore, for the Muslim Countries, to be free from dependence on development aid and achieve sustainable development and self-sufficiency, it needs to go back to the drawing-board and abide by the golden teaching of Islam, its faith and way of life. In doing this, attention should be paid on practical education. This Countries must imbibe the culture of sincerity, hard-work, observance of the rule of law, fundamental rights and respect for others which are parts and parcel of the Islamic heritage. The overall result will be a global peace, security, mutual love and harmonious co-existence.

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