

Q3: Discuss the Contemporary challenges of Muslims Ummah & their solutions according to the teachings of Islam.

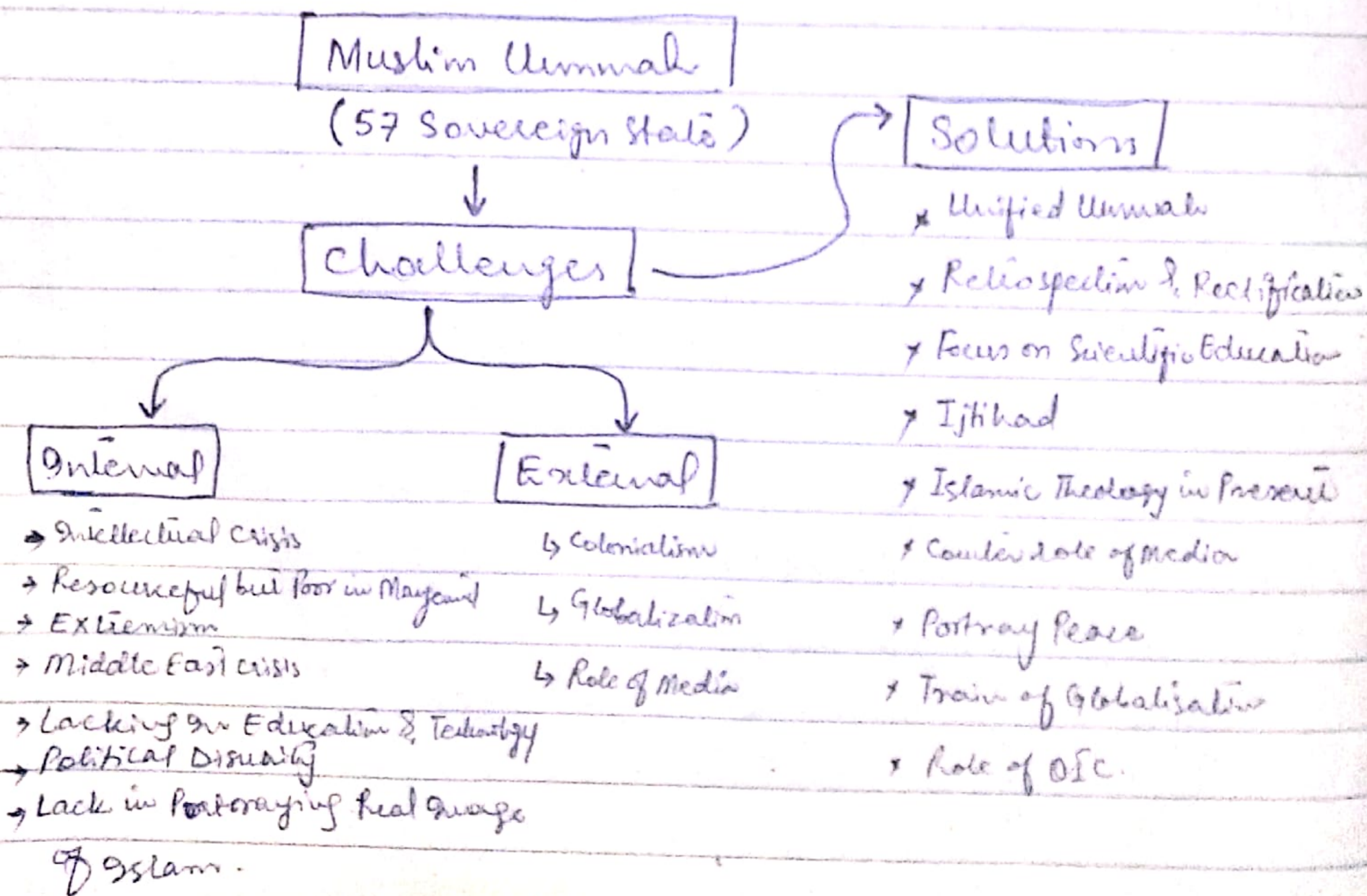
I. Introduction

The Muslim world, also known as the Muslim Ummah, refers to the global community of Muslims, who share a common faith, culture, & history. The term "Ummah" is an Arabic word for "Nation or Community".

Currently, it consists of 57 Sovereign States, that is 1/3rd of the total membership of UN (United Nations).

It has vast territories, 4 ~~most~~ International Highways, Major share in natural resources such as Oil, Tin, Rubber, Coal, Jute, Natural gas, phosphate & Rock salt. The concept of Muslim Ummah emphasizes the importance of unity & Mutual support among Muslims worldwide.

However, currently Muslim Ummah is facing a lot of Internal & External challenges.



A. Internal Challenges.

1) Intellectual Crisis & Stagnation:

The looming challenge for the Muslim world is not the weakness of the commitment to the faith, but intellectual stagnation by Political instability, conflicts, social & cultural conditions created by colonialism, authoritarianism & neo-colonialism.

For instance * Muslim-majority countries spend less than 1% of their GDP on research & development, compared to the global average of 2.2%.

* The Muslim-majority countries produce fewer scientific papers per capita compared to other regions

.but

2) Rich In Resources, Poor In Management:

Many Muslim countries are blessed with rich resources, yet they are unable to the optimal usage in serving Islam & Muslims. Their spending in Education, Science & social sector development is negligible.

* The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said,

“If you have a seedling & the Day of Judgement is upon you, plant it.”

(Musnad Ahmed)

The hadith emphasizes the importance of utilizing resources wisely & efficiently

* A/c to Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan,

“The Muslim Ummah is like a sleeping giant, rich in resources but poor in Management!”

3) Fundamentalism & Rise of Extremism?

Muslim world facing another challenge is Fundamentalism, mostly associated with Extremism. Nowadays, fundamentalists are described as far away from following of Islamic teachings.

Examples include:

- Violence & Terrorism in the name of Islam
- Rejection of Modernity (diversity) & progressive values.
- Extremist groups: Al-Qaeda, Taliban, ISIS (Islamic State)

× Prophet (P.B.U.H) said,

“The merciful ones will be shown mercy by the All-Merciful. Have mercy on those who are on earth, & He who is in Heaven will have mercy on you.” (Tirmidhi).

4) Middle Eastern Crisis:

The Middle Eastern Crisis is a significant challenge for the Muslim Ummah, encompassing various conflicts, humanitarian issues & political instability.

For Example:

Syria is bleeding, Iraq is under the hegemony of ISIS, Saudi Arabia attacking the Yemen, Israel committing the genocide in the Palestine, Libyan crisis & so the Muslim Ummah needs the to promote peace, prosperity, tolerance & diplomatic efforts to address these challenges.

“And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together & don't become divided.”

(3:103)

Stressing the importance of unity

5) Lagging Behind In Scientific Advancement:

Muslim world is facing a key challenge of lack of a culture of research, enquiry & indifference to modern education, despite the fact that Faith ordained in the Quran was meant to establish a culture of learning & education.

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said,

“Acquiring knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim.”

He also said:

“The ink of the scholar is more sacred than the blood of the martyr.”

(Tirmidhi).

6) Lacking In Education, Science & Technology:

Unfortunately, Muslim world is badly lacking in Education, Science & Technology. Due to gender disparity, literacy rates in the Muslim world range between 40% among males & 65% among females.

For technological, military & IT requirements, the Muslim world is dependent on the US, China, Germany, Japan etc. There are only 178 universities in PAK, while over 1000 universities in India & ^{about / around} 5000 in America.

The # of recipients of Noble prizes in science & technological contribution is insignificant. However, Turkey is showing some sort of progress in this regard.

7) Political Disunity of the Muslim World:

The major internal challenge that Muslim world is plagued with is disunity. Now a days, disappointingly, quarrels b/w Muslim sects & nations also ambitions for power struggle in Muslim world, eventually disrupt govt. administration & are incapable of addressing the needs of the people. As a result, Muslim nations remain largely underdeveloped, poor, unskilled, uneducated & incapable of contributing positively towards the well-being of the Muslim

8) Failure To Portray Real, Pro-Civilization & Pro-development image of Islam:

Islam is a diverse religion. Unfortunately, negative stereotypes & misconceptions about Islam have led to a distorted public image due to Global Politics & conflicts, lack of education, biased media coverage of Islamic issues, actions of extremist groups & cultural & social barriers etc. This is serious issue that Muslims & Islam may be projected favourably through their strides in education, science & tolerance.

[B]. External Challenges

1) Colonialism / Baggage of Western Domination:

The legacy of colonialism & western domination poses significant challenges for the Muslim Ummah. Like imposition of Western values & beliefs ~~which~~ to erode Islamic cultural identity. Moreover, Exploitation of natural resources by foreign corporations, ultimately, creating economic dependence on western powers, Political instability via external interference in domestic affairs, Promotion of Secularism & Liberalism over Islamic values. In a nutshell, Muslim Ummah have limited control over their own affairs, resources etc due to Maintenance of Western hegemony & dominance.

2) Globalization: Modern Form of Colonization:

A/c to western perspective, globalization is defined as:

"A process of increasing economic, political & social interdependence & integration among countries."

But some Muslim scholars criticized this view, as it threatens cultural identity, economic autonomy, & political independence. It is the irony that Muslims despite being rich in resources are playing the hands of west (eg: IMF, WB, WTO) are fleeing the resources of Muslim countries like free flow of capital across borders in the developed countries, instead of Muslims should take advantage of it, west is benefiting due to perpetuating its (Western) hegemony.

3) IT, Media Warfare & Cultural onslaught of West:
Of material resources were what represented wealth & power in the past, now communication & computer technologies becomes the most valuable currency of the age. This new technology may affect in two opposite way. Firstly, the technology might make the gap b/w Muslims & Industrial world more difficult to bridge. However, if we take it positively, the same opportunities would free the Muslims from cultural & economic influence of the west, if we know how to exploit this technology to gain our objectives.

□. Needed Pragmatic Measures OR Solutions:

i- Unified Response of Ummah:

There is need to ^{united} respond intellectually to emerging challenges faced by Muslims, particularly the sectarian divide among Muslims & to address some issues in collaboration such as Extremism, Sectarianism & terrorism.

ii- Retrospection, Self-Inspection & Rectification:

It is crucial for Muslims to stop finding faults in others to their failures & start evaluating their inner selves, to diagnose their problems & iron out their pragmatic solutions.

iii - Focusing on Scientific Education & IT:

Muslims lag far behind in every field of modern education so they should develop educational systems to cater their religious & spiritual needs as well as the contemporary requirements.

iv - Need For Ijtihad:

There is a growing need for Ijtihad & renewal of understanding of new methods of progressing according to Islam in modern times. The institution of Ijma can also play an important role in the socio-economic & political life of the Ummah.

v - Reinterpreting The Whole Edifice of Islamic Theology:

The Muslims must look for guidance from the teachings of Quran & Hadiths in the present context, to eradicate the misunderstandings & resolve our own quarrels to present a united Ummah.

vi - Media To Counter Cultural Onslaught of the West:

Collaborate with alternative media (media outlets, platforms & channels) to share Muslim perspectives & narratives, promoting Islamic values, culture & success stories to counter negative stereotypes. Fostering media literacy ensure accurate Islamic representation & amplify Muslim voices.

vii - Muslims Should Do away with Militant Terrorism
& Portray Peaceful Image of Islam:

Islam emphasizes good deeds as part of the faith. Muslims need to effectively propagate that violence had no place in Islam.

viii - Train of Globalisation:

If the Muslim States like to survive this deluge, they must build an Islamic bridge to the train of Globalisation, because if they failed to do so, the train will leave without them.

ix - OIC Needs To Play An Effective Role:

OIC is an organization that can bring Muslim countries together on common platform. OIC is facing severe constraints in its vision & in taking decisions ^{& lacks public-effective relations mechanism.}. A collective will of whole Ummah can overcome these constraints. Therefore, then, OIC can play an effective role in bringing solutions to problems of Muslim Ummah.

□. Conclusion:

The Muslim Ummah facing contemporary challenges can be solved according to the teachings of Islam by unified response of Ummah, Retrospection, Self-Inspection & Rectification, focusing on Scientific Education & IT, Need for Ijtihad, Reinterpreting the whole Edifice of Islamic Theology, Media to counter cultural onslaught of the west, Eradicating violence, Train of Globalisation & OIC's role.