

Q. The Ulama of Nadwa attempted to make a synthesis of Aligarh and the conservation of Deoband in their syllabus.
Discuss.

1) Introduction

The beginning of the 18th century saw the political and cultural dominance of European civilization in the subcontinent. As a natural reaction a number of movements were launched to strengthen the faith of the Muslims. One of the significant movements was Nadwatul Ulama. The Aligarh movement initiated by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan aimed to modernize Muslim community in India through education. On the other hand Deoband Movement, founded by Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi, preserving traditional Islamic teachings. The Ulama of Nadwa attempted to blend both movements, incorporating Islamic values and modern subjects. This approach aimed to produce Muslims to compete British and Hindus without compromising their faith. Nadwa graduates went on to play influential roles in various institutions and fields including education, law and politics, maintaining their Islamic Identity.

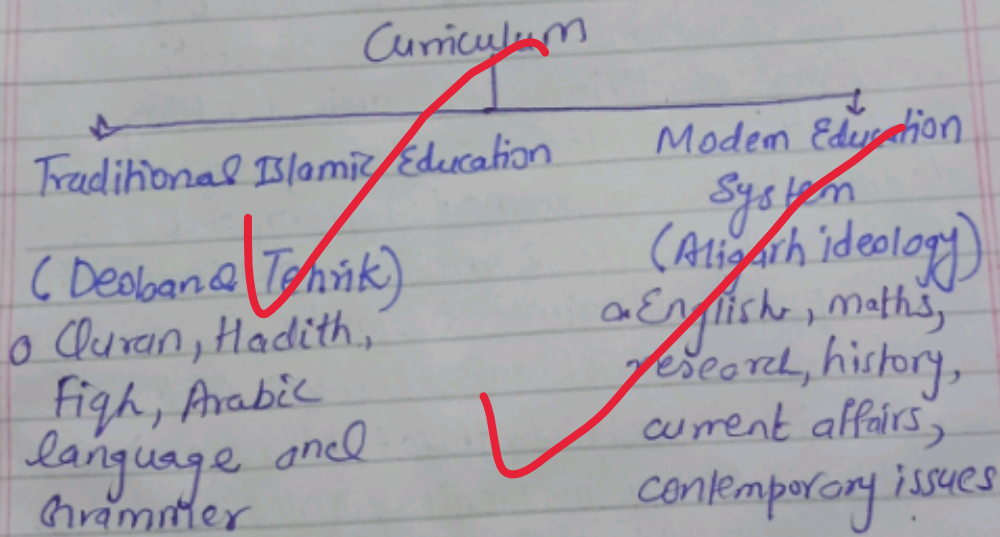
2) Objectives of Nadwatul Ulama

A permanent council of intellectuals and scholars was created by Moulana

Muhammaed Ali Mungeri. The aim of this council was to brood over the drawbacks, flaws appeared among the muslims especially in their educational system. Following were the aims and objectives set before this new institution.

- 1) Introduction of far-reaching reforms in the syllabi of Islamic studies and preparation of new syllabus.
- 2) Propagation of Islamic teachings and making non-muslims aware of the merits of these teachings.
- 3) Promoting the feelings of unity and brotherhood among muslims.

3) Overview of Nadwa's Curriculum



To preserve muslim Identity, Hadith and Fiqh were added to Nadwa curriculum to induce the Islamic Juriprudence system. Arabic language and grammar were made part of Nadwa to make understanding of Quran

easy and made muslims efficient in Arabic language. On the other hand, the introduction of modern sciences was a dire need to match standards of British. Mathematics and English were made the part of curriculum to ameliorate the aptitude levels of muslims as they were only hired for low paying jobs. The Ulema of Nadwa acknowledged the significance of knowledge of contemporary issues to introduce political well-being of muslims and to bring them out of misunderstandings and superstitions.

4) Nadwa Syllabus : Synthesis of Aligarh Ideology

The following points explained how the Nadwa syllabus reflects elements of Aligarh Ideology

Western education → Rational and Critical thinking → Co-education → Nationalist Ideas → Modernisation and Social Reform → English language → Secular education → Professional education → Liberalism and Progressive thoughts.

1) Modern education: Nadwa recognized the importance of modern education to empower muslim community. It has two main objectives: 1- To bridge the gap between muslims and British. 2- To improve

Personality and socioeconomic conditions of Muslims of Subcontinent.

o English Language Proficiency: The Aligarh movement stressed the significance of English language skills for communication with British colonial administration. The Nadwa aligned the curriculum with English language to keep pace with multi-dimensional challenges ahead of Muslims.

o Approach to Modernization: The Aligarh movement adopted a pragmatic approach to modernization. Nadwa aimed to strike a balance between Islamic teachings and modern subjects, promoting the harmonious coexistence of both streams of knowledge.

o Intellectual and Cultural Awareness:

Both the Aligarh movement and Nadwa recognized the importance of intellectual and cultural awareness.

The Nadwa syllabus included the study of Islamic history and civilization, providing students with a sense of pride in their heritage and cultural contributions.

o Emphasis on Rationalism and Critical Thinking

The Aligarh movement promoted rationalism and critical thinking as essential components of education.

Similarly, Nadwa encouraged students to engage in critical analysis and independent thinking while studying subjects including Islamic Jurisprudence, history and theology.

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- o Global outlook: The Aligarh movement cultivated a global outlook among Muslims, emphasizing the importance of being aware of international affairs. Nadwa's curriculum encouraged students to have a broader perspective on world affairs.
- o Vocational skills: The Aligarh movement highlighted the significance of practical skills for community development. Nadwa aimed to equip students with vocational skills, allowing them to be self-reliant and contribute positively to society.

5) Nadwa's Syllabus: In synthesis of Deoband Conservatism

The following points explained how Nadwa's syllabus reflects elements of Deoband Conservatism.

- Traditional Quran education → Fiqh and Hadith
- Ijtihad → Taqleed → Arabic language.
- Gender segregation → Islamic revivalism
- Moral/Ethic training

o Elevation of traditional Islamic studies:

Just like the Deoband movement, Nadwa's curriculum places a strong emphasis on traditional Islamic studies, including Quranic recitation (Tajweed), memorization (Hifz), Tafsir (exegesis). Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh) and Hadith studies are given special attention, grouping students in the foundational sources of Islamic law. This step was taken to keep Muslims close to their Muslim

culture and identity to prevent western cultural impact on muslim society as it was already facing British oppression as well as Hindu atrocities in the subcontinent.

o Focus on Arabic language.
Deoband Conservatism Preferece Arabic as language of Quran and Islamic Scholarship. Similarly, Nadwa placed significant emphasis on Arabic language to enable students to access Islamic texts in their original form.

o Preservation of Islamic Identity:
Both the Deoband movement and Nadwa seek to preserve and promote Islamic identity and cultural heritage. The Nadwa syllabus includes courses that foster an appreciation for Islamic history, civilization and contribution to various fields of knowledge.

o Conservatism in Islamic Jurisprudence:
The Nadwa Syllabus reflects conservatism in Islamic Jurisprudence, adhering to the teachings of specific traditional school of thought (Madhabs). Students are exposed to various legal opinions within those schools, fostering a comprehensive understanding of Islamic law.

o Preservation of Classical Islamic Texts and Scholarly Tradition:

Deoband's conservative approach involves the preservation of Classical Islamic texts written by renowned scholars throughout history. The Nadwa Syllabus incorporates

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lessons of on methodology of Islamic Scholarship (Usul al-Fiqh), allowing students to understand the process of deriving legal rulings from primary sources. Similarly, the Nadwa syllabus places a significant focus on study of Hadith, teaching students to critically analyze and apply Hadith in legal matters.

o Islamic morals and ethics:

Deoband's conservative values include an emphasis on Islamic morals (Akhlak) and ethical conduct. Similarly, Nadwa syllabus includes teachings on ethical behaviour and development of strong moral character. Nadwa syllabus is designed to produce scholars who can continue the legacy of Islamic learning and contribute to intellectual growth of Muslim community.

o Focus on community leadership:

Deoband conservatism stresses the importance of producing scholars who can lead and guide the Muslim community. Similarly, the Nadwa syllabus fosters the development of leadership qualities, encouraging students to play active role in their communities.

6) Conclusion

In a conclusion, the efforts made by Nadwa to create a synthesis between the Aligarh movement's modern approach and conservatism of Deoband movement in their educational syllabus

are remarkable. Nadwa tried its best to bridge the gap between Deoband movement and Aligarh movement. Recognizing the strength and weakness of both movements, the Ulema of Nadwa incorporated elements of both modernity and tradition. Critics argue that the synthesis might have led to a superficial blending of two ideologies rather than a genuine integration, but Nadwa produced the graduates who became influential figures in various fields. The quest for harmony between the Aligarh and Deoband ideologies in Nadwa's syllabus symbolizes the broader pursuit of balance and cohesion in ever-changing world, where the preservation of cultural identity and religious values can coexist with progressive learning and engagement with modernity.

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