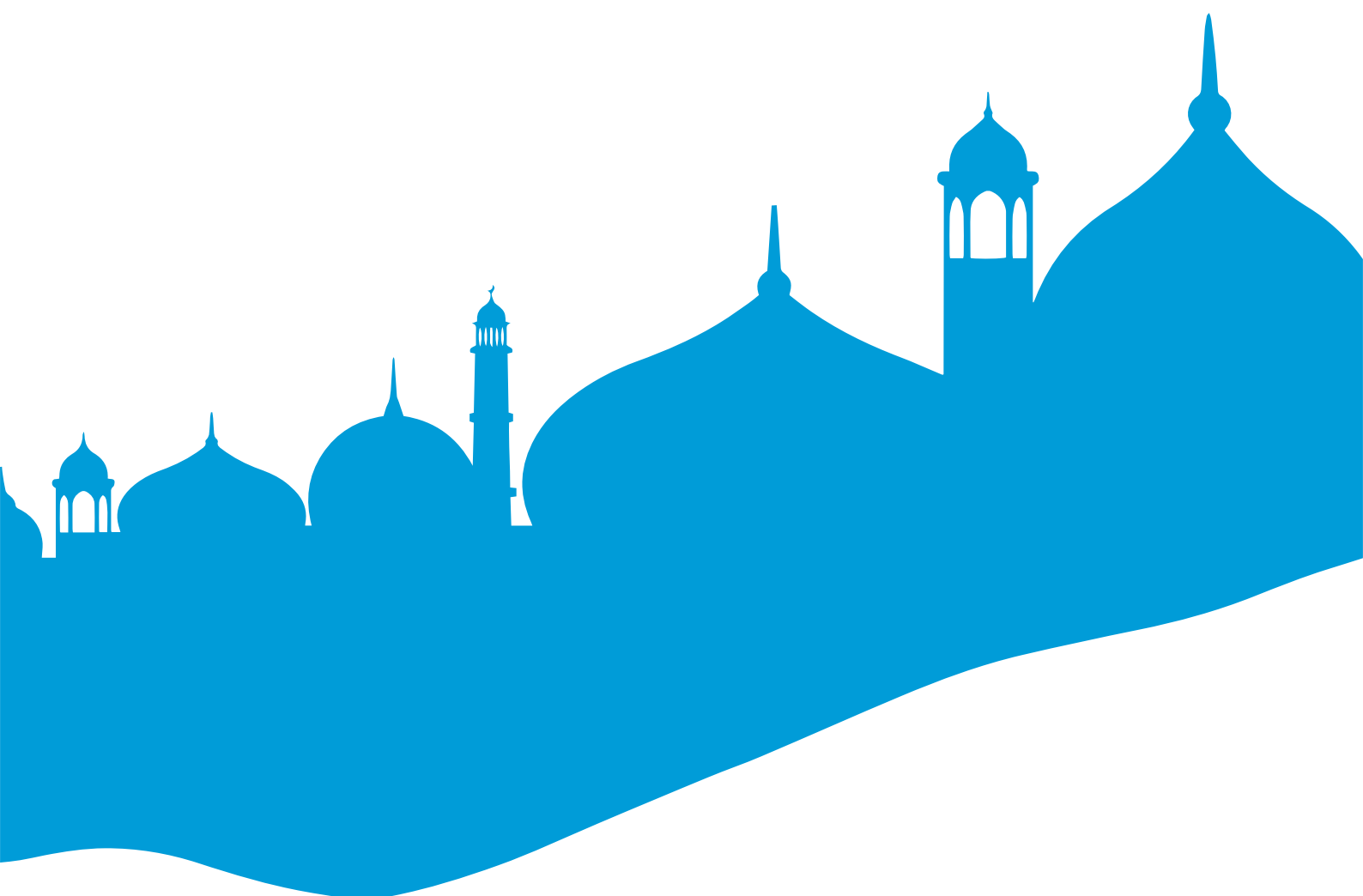


Religious Education in Bahrain:
Discrimination against Shiites



Denying Shi'a their Right to Religious Education
**Systematic Persecution Implemented by
the Authorities in Bahrain**

Preface

Education is an inherent human right, guaranteed and protected by all international treaties and conventions, for all human beings without discrimination on the premise of ethnicity, race, color, language, religion, etc. In the context of religious education, we can clearly notice that this right and the freedom of religion are highly relevant.

Hence, there is no scope for any discussion of the freedom of religious education except by realizing both rights. “Bahrain continued to question, detain, and arrest Shia clerics, community members, and opposition politicians “, as stated in the US Department of states’ report on International Religious Freedom for 2015.

The most serious crisis lies in this phenomenon that it has permeated the educational sector, where approximately %65 of the Shiites population are deprived of their right to Jaafari religious education’, in public and private schools, in clear contrast to the International Covenants on civil, political, cultural and educational rights. However, it should be noted that %99 of the demographic population in Bahrain are Muslims, whilst Jews, Christians, Hindus and Baha’is constitute %1.

Objective of the report

In this brief report, we attempt to highlight what is going on in Bahrain, where the right of Shiites parents to teach their children the Jaafari jurisprudence is systematically infringed upon, by a broad cross-segment of Bahraini society.

The purpose of this report is to give a vivid demonstration of the situation concerning religious education in Bahrain, in terms of persecution and discrimination practiced against Shiites, in order to urge the international community including the most influential countries, human rights organizations, civil society organizations and human rights activists to exert an effective effort to halt the sectarian persecution, and to fulfill this due right.

Introduction:

The concept of human rights has been well developed in the aftermath of the Second World War, and the emergence of the Charter of the United Nations, which stress on fostering respect for the freedoms and fundamental rights without distinction based on race, sex, language or religion. This Charter was followed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued on December 1984 ,10, which provides in detail the types of rights and freedoms, and enforces obligations on the state parties to insure their implementation.

Lawmakers define human rights as universal legal guarantees that protect individuals and groups from any act or neglect that violates fundamental freedoms. These laws lay down generic obligations on the signatory governments, which are spilt into three actions: to respect, to protect and to fulfill these obligations.

These rights apply to everyone, without discrimination, and are inalienable, for which no derogation is permitted. In most countries, however, these rights are arbitrarily violated, without taking into account the most basic standards of justice.

Civil freedoms are among the main important rights endorsed by most governments and regimes. They recognize the freedom to express beliefs, in teaching or in practice, and thus ensure freedom of opinion, expression, religion and assembly.

On Religious Freedom

Article 18 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.”

This right is designed to the right of an individual to embrace the religion he choose, and to freely profess and practice his beliefs, without an attempt to impose another religion on him, or to be forced to participate rituals other than those of his religion. Laws include provisions for punishing anyone for terming another religious group, either through the abuse of religion or vandalism of religious rituals.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states in this regard:

1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.
2. No one shall be subject to coercion, which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.
3. Freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.
4. The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.

Part One
The Right to Religious Education in Law,
International Treaties and Covenants

In Bahrain, legislations do not guarantee the non-dominance of a sect over others, which facilitates privileging a particular religious group over the others, and giving it access to the highest positions in power. While in other countries, despite the religious preference, the rest of the religious groups are safeguarded and equal citizenship is guaranteed, despite the religious diversity, including minorities.

The authorities in Bahrain exercise all possible powers to implement the policy of discrimination against Shiite citizens. The Ministry of Education is but one of the most important authorities. This policy of discrimination is pervasive in all educational departments, at the level of: administration, curricula, educational expeditions and teaching plans. As illustrated by the organizational structure of the ministry, Shiites do not occupy any senior positions, starting from the rank of minister to the rank of director and heads of departments.

In addition to the proactive recruitment system, as in most cases, teachers from different Arab countries such as Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Egypt are hired, in spite of the availability of adequate competencies of the local Shiites.

According to statistics of the Ministry of Education, approximately 129,000 Bahraini students attend governmental schools, of whom about %60 are Shiites students, due to several reasons, particularly the drastic living conditions, which makes them unable to afford private education.

The religious persecution does not exist at this level only, as high school graduates and high-achieving students of Shiites are excluded from scholarships, and denied from local and foreign scholarships. At the University of Bahrain, Shiites occupy only a fractional percentage of senior academic and administrative positions. The demands of Shiites to complete postgraduate

studies such as Masters and PhD are being obstructed.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) categorized Bahrain as countries of “particular concern”, in its annual report for 2017, noting that “despite officials often making public statements condemning sectarian hatred and violence”; the policy of sectarian discrimination is clearly noticed. The report also noted that the government has not complied with the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) report that would improve conditions of religious freedom in Bahrain, especially for the majority of Shiites.

“According to human rights groups, members of the Shi’a community still cannot serve in the active military, only in administrative positions, and there are no Shi’a Muslims in the upper levels of the Bahraini government security apparatus, including the military and police. In addition, UN experts have found that patterns of cultural, economic, educational, and social discrimination exist against the Shi’a Muslim community, including in the education system, media, public sector employment, and other government social policies such as housing and welfare programs”, the report read.

Local laws and regional and international treaties which are ratified by Bahrain have guaranteed the right to religious education.

Below are a number of laws that Bahrain has ratified and guaranteed:

Bahrain Constitution

The Constitution states that Islam is the religion of the state, and that Islamic Sharia’a (law) is the main source of legislation. With regard to religious freedom. Article 22 of the Constitution affirms that “Freedom of conscience is absolute. The State guarantees the inviolability of worship and the freedom to perform religious rites and hold religious parades and meetings in accordance

with the customs observed in the country”.

Arab Covenants

The Government of Bahrain has signed the Arab Charter on Human Rights, in which Article 25 stipulates: “Persons belonging to minorities shall not be denied the right to enjoy their own culture, to use their own language and to practice their own religion. The exercise of these rights shall be governed by law.”

International Agreements

Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: “In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language.”

The Government of Bahrain has ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) on 24 February 1990 by an Amiral Decree No. 1990/8. Article 7 of the Convention states: “States Parties undertake to adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information, with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination”

Article 29 (c) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states: “Children have a particular responsibility to respect the rights their parents, and education should aim to develop respect for the values and culture of their parents”

In addition to articles 2 and 4 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, Article 4.2 in particular urges: “States shall take measures to create favourable conditions to enable persons belonging to minorities to express their characteristics and to develop their culture, language, religion, traditions and customs...”

Part II:
The Reality of Religious Education
in Bahrain

First:

An Overview of the History of Religious Education in Bahrain

Prior to the establishment of regular schools, religious education in Bahrain in the early 20th century was held in the “Kuttābs”, which are small public institutions to teach Arabic language, mathematics, Quran, and other religious sciences related to the Islamic religion. At that time, each sect had its own institution, and the learner used to receive only his own religious teachings.

This was followed by the establishment of regular schools such as Jaafariyah School in Manama, Al-Hidaya Al-Khalifiya Boys School and Khadija Al-Kubra Girls School in Muharraq Island.

In ‘Souq Al Khamis’ site, one of the oldest markets in Bahrain, ‘Almubarak Alawiya’ school was founded in 1927. It was the second governmental school after ‘Alhedaya AlKhalifa’ school. The school opened its doors to students from all villages of Bahrain.

Like other schools, a group of educated merchants from the Shiites community who wanted to teach their children Jaafari jurisprudence, along with other sciences incorporated and established the school, which was overseen by a Shiites religious committee.

In the early 1970s, after the enactment of the new constitution, the Authority introduced educational curricula in public and private schools. The religious curriculum did not take into consideration the diverse sectarian affiliations in Bahrain, which requires various religious curricula in accordance to the

doctrines of the student. The authority even went to impose the teachings of the Sunni-Maliki school on everyone.

Second: Religious Education Today

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain states that Islam is the official religion, and Shari'a is the main source of legislation. Article 22 of the Constitution guarantees the freedom of conscience, the inviolability of worship, and the freedom to perform religious rites. However, the Bahraini Government has placed some restrictions on the exercise of this right.

Indeed, religious education is linked to two other basic rights: the right to education and religious freedom. Therefore, the individual has the right to receive religious courses, within the curriculum, based on the principles and beliefs of his religion. In some countries, students receive classes for religious dialogue and tolerance.

Religion is an essential part of the compulsory curriculum in public schools, but the curriculum does not include teaching the Jaafari jurisprudence (Shiites theory). For this reason, the Ministry of Education, backed by the Government of Bahrain, are both involved in violating their international obligations, for political and sectarian reasons. They, in fact, violate the religious freedoms of the Jaafari sect's followers, a great national component in the Bahraini community.

It should be noted that the requirements of the religious education's subject rely on the teachings of the Maliki doctrine in Sunni jurisprudence. More often, these teachings greatly contravene Shiite teachings and beliefs, and are even more radical and regard Shiite as infidels (kaffir).

Consequently, Jaafari jurisprudence is prohibited in public and private schools in Bahrain, which is part of the ongoing policy of sectarian discrimination to marginalize Shiites and deprive them from educational rights, whilst minorities are allowed to freely exercise their entire freedoms. According to the Washington Post, Bahrain's Shi'a Muslims account for 75 percent of the total population, but are denied their religious education.

The head of the Religious Freedoms Unit at the Bahrain Observatory for Human Rights, Sheikh Dr. Maitham Al-Salman, during a seminar at the United Nations on March 2014 ,11, has filed to the UNESCO a complaint on ethnic and religious discrimination because of the authorities' embargo on the teaching of Jaafari jurisprudence.

"There is a multiplicity of sects in the country, which requires to teach the doctrine's beliefs to which each student belongs. What is happening in Bahrain clearly contradicts the international covenants of civil, political, cultural and educational rights," according to Salman.

Third:

Obstacles to religious education

A - Censorship and Restrictions

The High Council for Islamic Affairs belonging to the Ministry of Justice and Islamic Endowments (Awqaf) monitors citizens studying religious sciences abroad, such as Shiite students studying in the seminaries of Qom and Najaf.

The Council, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, develops religious education curricula based on the views of

Sunni scholars and clerks. The Government of Bahrain insists that these curricula “include the convictions of all Islamic sects,” after repeatedly refusing to allow the teaching of Jaafari doctrine. The government also imposes restrictions on religious books imported from abroad or published locally. While minorities are allowed to practice their rituals freely and without interference.

B- The Contents of the Religious Curriculum

The religious curriculum covers several branches of religious sciences, such as the interpretation of the verses of the Quran, interpretation of the hadiths (sayings), the biography of the prophets and the companions, the Islamic creed, etc.

Of course, Shiites Muslims differ in understanding and interpreting these matters. Sunnis and Shiites have different orientations; nevertheless, Shiites are obliged to study according to the Sunnis’ teachings. These differences are often fundamental, and are largely related to what the Shiites hold as unquestionable premises. This often leads to intense debates between students and teachers, especially at higher classes.

Reportedly, Shiites students claim that their beliefs and religious symbols are being claimed by some teachers, particularly by those who are Wahhabis, who deliberately incite hatred against Shiites, and insult their beliefs. Another group of students report that teachers, who are originally Shiites, draw their attention to the differences between the two schools of thoughts, however they emphasize on them to take care during the exams by answering the questions according to the Sunni beliefs.

C- Lack of Justice

Parents complain of the absence of this right to teach their

children the teachings of the Shiite doctrine, which is very different from the provisions of the Sunni-Maliki doctrine, particularly the teachings of jurisprudence, biography, history, creed, worship and the Sharia laws. On their part, students feel aggrieved because of the denial of this right.

The other targets are the Shiite teachers, although they are Shiites, they are forced to teach this subject as it is, and they are obliged to use various means to clarify the lessons, without taking into account their opinion.

More still, the coordinators and the specialists of the religious prepare curricula and programs without the participation of Shiites teachers, in any way. It should be noted that most of the religious education's teachers are from the naturalized persons of Saudi, Egyptian and Jordanian origins.

This violation comes in the context of what the Shiites call "systematic marginalization" against their sect, and amid the government's disregard of their demands for the due right to decide the curriculum of religious education.

"Much of the kingdom's opposition has historically been led by the country's 70 percent Shia population, which has long suffered from economic deprivation, unemployment, and discrimination in the public sector", report by Frederic Wehrey read.

Fourth:

Religious Education in Educational Institutions

1) Pre-School Education

In Nurseries and kindergartens, there is a sizable space of freedom, but it is subjected to constant censorship and inspection by the government. Religious ceremonies and activities are allowed for all sect, such as the celebration of Shiites Muslims on their own occasions.

Nurseries and Kindergartens are run by the private sector. The Ministry of Social Affairs supervises Nurseries, while the kindergartens are under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, which periodically alerts these institutions of “irregularities”, as a pretext for closing them, based on data related to Shiites religious activities.

2) Governmental Education

The government of Bahrain adopts the Sunni-Maliki doctrine and teaches its beliefs in both public and private schools at the primary, the intermediate and the secondary levels, from the age of six to the age of eighteen.

According to the Ministry of Education, the number of public schools were 207, while the number of private schools were 225, in the academic year 2015-2014.

In this context, it should be taken into account that the majority of students in governmental schools are Shiites affiliate to public schools for several reasons, first and foremost because of their parents’ extremely poor living conditions, and the inability to pay the fees of private education.

Educational Level	No. of Schools
Primary	113
Intermediate	57
Secondary	37

Statistics of Governmental Schools 2015-2014

The Jaafari Religious Institute

According to the Ministry of Education in Bahrain, "Religious education takes place at a specialized institute that follows the Ministry of Education. It is for boys only. The system of this type of education is the same as that of general Basic Education and Secondary Education in terms of duration of study and admission age, but it emphasizes on Islamic studies aiming at the preparation of men with an appropriate background in religious affairs."

However, there are only three religious institutions in Bahrain, only available to boys, including the Jaafari Religious Institute for the teaching of Jurisprudence Sciences of in accordance to the Jaafari doctrine, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. However, the Institute has a specific absorptive capacity, in addition to its location in a specific geographical area. Therefore, the opportunity is not available to all Shiites. "Religious education takes place at a specialized institute that follows the Ministry of Education. It is for boys only. . . The curriculum in this institute is similar to the one applied in public schools, except for the Islamic Education, where an Islamic Law (Sharia), according to the Jaafari Doctrine has been added." the MoE states.

The Arabic language Al-Wasat newspaper, in an article published on September 2002 ,17, titled The Religious Institute and the Problems of Teaching the Jaafari Doctrine, stated that

the resolution to teach the Jaafari jurisprudence, at the religious institute had faced “doctrinal difficulties due to the institute’s foundational document.”

In these institutes, the same curricula of the regular schools are taught, with additional religious subjects, specific to each sect. In the first three classes, the Holy Quran, Monotheism (Tawheed), Jurisprudence (Fiqh), and Biography (Sirah) are taught. Later, in the intermediate level (Grades 5, 4 and 6), the ‘Hadith’ course is added.

3) Private Education

Foreign communities in Bahrain establish their own schools to educate their children. They follow special educational curricula, prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, which has the right to reject any curricula that contradict the religious and national values of the country. In the same context, The Directorate of Private education is responsible for supervising the curriculum of Islamic education, and is committed to the Government’s Islamic Education textbook for Bahraini and Arab students in all classes and in all private schools (National Private Schools, Foreign Private Schools, and Foreign Community Schools). These schools are committed to teach one period weekly for Islamic education for Muslim students at all levels.

Therefore, the vast majority of the population are deprived of their due right to learn their own beliefs, and they are obliged to learn the curriculum subjected by the Ministry of Education, in accordance with the beliefs of the Sunni-Maliki doctrine. Contradictorily, the minorities, who compose %1 of the demographic population, can freely teach their beliefs in schools.

For instance, at least five private schools teach the Christian Catholic beliefs, among the others: The British School of

Bahrain, the Indian School, the American Evangelical School, the Sacred Heart School, and St. Christopher School. Besides, there are many Indian schools, where Hindu beliefs are taught.

Moreover, Christian students are allowed to celebrate their religious festivals, such as Christmas and Easter, and are allowed to hold special events and activities. Nevertheless, Shiites students are prohibited from engaging in any religious activity, whatsoever. Shiites students, by contrast, would be classified as guilty of “school offenses”, and they would be punished with imprisonment.

In other public and private schools frequented by Arab Muslims, they are obliged to teach the religious curriculum imposed by the Ministry of Education, regardless of their differences of opinion, and the desire of the parents to teach their children their own beliefs.

This reality constitutes a flagrant violation of the right to education, guaranteed by international covenants and legislation, and ratified by the governments, which affirms the right and freedom of parents to ensure the religious education of their children.

Fifth:

Civil Society’s Religious Education Institutions

A- The Establishment

The dilemma of religious education in Bahrain has arose since the very emergence of regular governmental schools. In order to avoid the old but ongoing de facto dilemma, the religious scholars have taken the initiative to teach Shiites in accordance

to the provisions of their religion. Lessons are being taught in the Islamic centers (Ma'tam/ Hussainiyya), buildings where Shiites practice their own rituals. These centers set up a series of religious programs, seminars and workshops.

For instance, 'AL Salat Project', which is a prominent religious project, run by one of the Hussainiyya center in Bahrain, in addition to several other projects for both boys and girls.

The Scholars also founded the 'Islamic Scholars Council', on October 2002 ,21. It was regarded as the largest religious educational body interested in teaching Jaafari doctrine.

In addition, the Islamic Enlightenment Society, which played an important role in spreading the teachings of the Jaafari doctrine. It was founded by the spiritual leader of the Shiites in Bahrain, Ayatollah Shiekh Isa Ahmad Qassim, the largest Shiite religious authority in Bahrain and the Gulf. The Society was promoting religious and social awareness among the members of the Shiite community in particular, and among all Bahrainis, in general. The association had been established for the first time in the early seventies, and had developed its activities by opening a school for girls in the primary, intermediate and secondary stages. Then, it additionally opened classes for men and women to qualify them for Islamic religious education.

B- Organization:

The government supervise the official Islamic religious institutions, including Shiite and Sunni mosques, as well as the religious assembly centers, Sunni and Jaafariyah / Shiites endowments, and Shari'a courts. The High Council for Islamic Affairs is responsible for approving religious events. However, civil society organizations (CSOs), which are affiliated with religious activities, are subjected to strict and absolute restrictions by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, which has the

authority to dissolve any association, and which often issues arbitrary decisions, and unfair judgments, in reaction to events in the country.

C- Role:

These educational edifices provided moderate and tolerant religious teachings. Due to the discrimination policy against the Shiites, and depriving them of their legitimate right, and since official institutions are not engaged in the development of religious and jurisprudential education of the Shiites community members, the civil society institutions; especially religious ones, hold their selves responsible of providing this educational essentials.

Furthermore, due to the national unity among citizens; their determination to achieve academic and scientific excellence; the strong belief of the independent civil society institutions that religious education is a source of tolerance and dialogue; and the concerned stakeholders' adoption of various projects to promote equal citizenship in Bahrain regardless the sectarian frameworks, these civil educational institutions have succeeded in bridging the rift.

D- Clampdown on the Religious Education Activism

The Islamic Scholar Council, which worked to provide adequate education to the Shiites community, was dissolved on January 2014 ,29, on charges of “practicing religious activities under religious cover”, as alleged by the local authorities.

In 2013, the Council had issued the ‘Islamic Unity Document’, and it exerted tremendous efforts to promote and reaffirm it. The resolution came at a time when some religious figures in Bahrain incite sectarian incitement and hatred, freely without impunity, on Friday prayer’s platforms, and on social media.

Following the popular protests in the early nineties, the 'Islamic Enlightenment Society' was closed and its building was burnt. The tension between the government and the Shiites, at that time, had reached its peak, after a popular protest movement erupted calling for reform and equal rights. After twenty years of closure, the 'Islamic Enlightenment Society' was re-established. Then again, it was dissolved, in June 2016, six years after the re-establishment, as one of the persecution measures taken by the government of Bahrain to tighten the grip on the Shiite citizen community.

Chapter Three: Abstract

The government of Bahrain systematically violates the right of Shiites citizens to the freedom of belief and the freedom of opinion and expression, which are guaranteed by articles 18 and 19 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

It contravenes the right of parents to choose religious education in accordance with their own convictions, contrary to article 13, paragraph 3, of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The article states, "The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to choose for their children schools, other than those established by the public authorities, which conform to such minimum educational standards as may be laid down or approved by the State and to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions".

Bahrain also violates article 4 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states in paragraph 1, which stipulates, "States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion."

These deliberate violations come within the context of the

government of Bahrain's policy, and its denial of the Shiites right to religious education, according to their beliefs. This denial is nothing but a collective punishment against the Shiites citizens and their constant demand for reform, democracy and legitimate rights. Undoubtedly, the policy of systematic discrimination and repression of the right to freedom of expression and religious freedom undermines the political solution to the unrest in Bahrain, which has been deteriorating, since February 2011.

Section IV: Conclusions and Recommendations

Results

- 1) Shiites in Bahrain are denied of teaching their own religious teaching; jurisprudence in public and private schools in Bahrain;
- 2) Discrimination against Shiites is thoroughly prevalent in educational departments, at the level of management, curricula, missions and educational plans;
- 3) Denying Shiites of their educational rights drives from the sectarian mentality that seeks to sort out citizens and exclude them, on the premise of their ethnic and religious background;
- 4) Religious education in Bahrain has failed to promote dialogue, tolerance and mutual understanding among the Bahraini community components, and has failed to strengthen social and political security;
- 5) The Government of Bahrain continues to violate its international obligations, by virtue of its ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which unequivocally states in Article 18, "Everyone shall have the

right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.“

6) The Government of Bahrain, despite its ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CERD) on 24 February 1990 by Amiri Decree No. 1990/8, it was clearly implicated in practicing racial discrimination against Shi'a citizens.

Recommendations

1) The Government of Bahrain is obliged to implement the international conventions and treaties it has signed, which guarantee the freedom of opinion and expression and the freedom to practice religious rites.

2) The Government of Bahrain needs to comply with international conventions to eliminate discrimination at all levels, especially education, because it is widespread in all educational departments, at the level of administration, curricula, missions and educational plans.

3) The Government of Bahrain is obliged to allow and facilitate the visit of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression at the United Nations to identify the violations against the Shiites citizens.

4) The Government of Bahrain is responsible for disrupting the work of the educational civil society organizations, foremost among which is the Islamic Scholar Council, and the Islamic Enlightenment Society. Dissolving these societies represent a

disruption to the right of the Shiites students to learn according to what they believe, thoughts, beliefs and practices.

5) The Ministry of Education is obliged to protect public and private education in Bahrain from ethnic and sectarian discrimination.

6) UNESCO and the UN Human Rights Council are asked to effectively lobby the government of Bahrain to allow the teaching and learning of the Jaafari jurisprudence, in public and private schools.

7) The International community and the relevant human rights organizations are urged to act quickly to stop all violations against Shiites citizens, and their right to educate their children according to their own beliefs.


8) Bahraini, diaspora and local, human rights organizations are required to work hard to submit files and reports to the competent authorities of the United Nations, on a permanent basis, and to communicate with members of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination in Bahrain.



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Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights (GIDHR), is a civil non-governmental and non-profit organization aiming to promote the respect for democratic principles, as well as establishing the human rights and social justice principles, and stopping the human rights violations in the Gulf Region in general and in Bahrain in particular. Headquartered in Sydney, Australia GIDHR has the right to open branches in other regions, has legal character and independent financial disclosure. GIDHR is seeking to be in the ranks of the major organizations defending democratic and human rights principles and values through contributing to achieve peace and justice for all in the Gulf States.

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