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Are we ready to education for uncertain times? Towards a new vision for education

Uncertainty, unpredictability, chaos, and complexity have always been the features of humans' natural realities and social lives. The current robust acknowledgement of uncertainty and complexity, and hence the commendable initiative of the Oxford's June 2017 Symposium, are, one may say, a small but significant triumph of the long-standing tradition of thought that has always highlighted complexity, contradictions, multiplicity, un-predictability, contestations, non-linearity and non-rational aspects of human life and work. Historically and even now, these aspects and their foregrounding have been marginalized and subdued by religious, scientific and other teleological narratives, which have tried to predict, control, and direct the multiple dimensions of human life, promising progress and prosperity. The revival of religious, nationalist, populist, as well as the persistence of neoliberal and market based dogmas continue to extend the life of these discourses of control, certainty and prediction.

These theories and discourses are, however, being contested by the explosion of knowledge and proliferation of multiple perspectives because of the failure of ideologies of certainty and due to technological globalization, which in turn allowed marginalized and multiple voices to rise. If controlling and predicting what students learn any more impossible, what should our new pedagogies of engagement be and what outcomes provides us with satisfaction that our students are productive, happy and constrictive? How do we know that our students and children are equipped to handle the multiple "truths", and the choices they make are the correct ones?

Nowhere these tensions and subversions are more obvious than in education. Given the unpredictable connection between teaching and learning and between taught, enacted and received curricula what kind of content, pedagogies and assessment tools should we chose in our education for future.

Accountability, standardization, outcome-based education, assessment and evaluation, textbooks and inspections are all geared to promote particular regimes of truth and mold our minds, bodies and souls in certain ways. How are these and other "best global practices" performing in the context of countries such as Canada, Pakistan and Tajikistan? I will engage these dilemmas of education in uncertain times and their theoretical underpinnings from my three personal experiences:

- (i) the paradigmatic failures of Soviet Union' collapse and its effects on teachers' identity and sureness, including those of my own;
- (ii) engagement with *Youth Radicalization Project* at OISE, University of Toronto(2013-present), which addresses the question of why some Muslim youth, born and educated though liberal arts, multicultural education chose violent paths of engaging current global order, and,

- (iii) leadership of the AKU-IED in Pakistan, an institution where these dilemmas and tensions between uncertain realities and certainty discourses are being increasingly acknowledged and addressed.

I end my presentation with arguing for a vision of education for uncertainty, and highlight possible implications for education in uncertain times in the context developing and Muslim majority societies.