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MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP EDUCATION IN THE MINORITY CONTEXT: THE ROLE OF NALEEMIAH INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC STUDIES

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Abstract

This paper studies the role of the Naleemiah Institute of Islamic Studies as a mediator in empowering Muslim religious leaders through proper Islamic education in Sri Lanka. Considerable criticism is directed towards traditional Islamic educational institutions for not exhibiting contemporary and contextually designed features regarding regional aspects such as the local social-cultural context. Thus, the paper attempts to elaborate on the role of NIIS in empowering Sri Lankan Muslim religious leadership by adopting proper educational philosophy and objectives. It explores its emerging context, development of its curriculum-making process, academic strategy, and recent trajectories and discourses to realise the objectives. The qualitative methodology uses descriptive and analytical types. The paper's finding offers that contrary to the prevailing meta-narrative that Islamic religious institutions often resist changes, reform themselves, and evolve, the Institute's case has proven otherwise. However, it is suggested that the changing contexts and their challenges are an opportunity to broaden the institution's societal role, intellectual commitment, and religious leadership. © 2023 Hamdard Foundation Pakistan. All rights reserved.

Author Keywords

Education; Islamic Studies; Leadership; Minority; Reorientation; Sri Lanka

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