

MUSICAL PROGRAMMES AND ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ROLE OF MEDIA AND ITS ETHICAL LIMITATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Carlyle once said that music is the speech of angels. In fact, sweet and soft words and music has its effects and it can be called one of the important art of fine arts, which is as old as human race itself. People have been engaged in making music, and it has got the recognition to be used in religious rituals, wars and in socio-cultural events. Nowadays, whether singing, playing instruments or dancing in religious rituals, family festivals, Theatrical spectacles, political events, musical concert and social gatherings. An enormous variety of musical expression and a plethora of musical beliefs, customs and traditions exeunt throughout the world. Islamic teaching says that poetry and music should have some ethical limitations and should not present unethical and vulgar ideas. Modern music with high sound and fast beat and vulgar poetry creates unrest and sexual provocation; such music cannot be the speech of angels. Although the music industry is considered one of the most sophisticated and developed industry of the world, in which so many singers, musicians, poets, media organizations and advertising agencies are engaged. Media is the main source, presenting and promoting fast music and vulgar poetry. In this paper, the role of mass media has been discussed in the light of Islamic teachings regarding the presentation of musical programs.

Keywords: Music, Media, Islamic teachings, Islamic ethics

INTRODUCTION

Music, which has got significant position in modern societies, is believed to be the soul of modern culture and life. Moreover, the invention of electronic instruments music industry has made its progress day & night. The services of poets, singers, dancers, musicians, models and advertising agencies are called to promote this stuff. In countries like Britain, France, Germany America, India, China and Russia, music fever is always in its peak. In restaurant, outdoor festival, shopping center, swimming pool, many work places, celebrations, religious and entertainment ceremonies, music, in one way or the other, is the prime factor to support some important social and cultural causes.

Maxwade (2002) memorably said that music is the universal language of mankind. Truly, nowadays no one can image about film, theatre, drama and advertisements without music and singing. Music has become an art and essential entertainment items in various societies of the world. People have been making music whether singing. Playing instruments or dancing in religious rituals, family festival, theatrical spectacles, political events, music concerts or hosting other social occasions. An enormous variety of musical expressions and tradition exist throughout the world. (Estelle, 1997). Globalization of music and the rise of monolithic global music culture are strongly influenced by the western music and life style. There are

number of musical channels, Started by different media organizations. They present musical programs of mix gathering, mix dancing, and singing of male and female singers.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN PROMOTING MUSICAL PROGRAMMES

The media are known to be playing an effective role not only in informing the people but also in influencing their thinking and shaping their attitude. The media have four basic purposes; a) to inform, b) to educate, and c.) To influence and to entertain. Some are used essentially for one purpose, some for other, but the most to some extent are used to serve all four.

Television and Radio are the fast media of communication; FM radio is considered the most effective medium to broadcast different programmes for the people living in the remote and far-flung areas. Radio and Television emphasis on information and entertainment and operate mainly on commercial purposes. Both offer a much wider and richer variety of entertainment programmes. Television has been proved the most effective and attractive source of communication, as it has its effects both on eyes and ears. Moreover, it is beneficial for educated and illiterate people. Shahid (1994) writes that the “mass media have not just one public but many publics, depending on the sex, age, race, nationality, education, political affiliation, religious affiliation and geographical location of those who receive the messages.” Television and radio are the media who present musical programmes for their audience, there is some TV. Channels that day and night produce musical programmes such as, MTV, V channel, NTM, Ritmo, Aag, Vibe, B4U, Filmasia and Ptv National. Here are some musical programmes presenting on TV and radio weekly. Young Tarang, Her Taan hey Deepak, Sur Kinaray, Saray Gain, Must Must Sathio, Raag Rung, Meri Pasnd, Aabshabar, Ghazal ka Safar, Salma Aagha Show, Farmaishi Khatut, Top-ten, Sur Sagar, Aangan Aangan Tarey, Music Challenge, Top of Pops. (Nazar, 2001)

In fact media especially television is playing a vital role in promoting such concerts and musical programs. But the question is that are there any limitations on listening music in Islam and whether the present modern music is according to the Islamic teachings which is being promoted by mass media.

What Is Music And Its Definition?

All kinds of sound is not music, many sound like roar of the traffic in the streets, loud shouting or crying are simply noises. Music is a combined and composed sound. According to English dictionary, music is the art of producing beauty in sound (Feroz Sons, 1989).

Moeen cited Jereson (1999) Peter Pother in his book “Music Definition & Scope” writes comprehensive instruments or both in a pleasing sequence or combination. Moeen cited Jereson (1999) “what about music” defined music as, instrumental performance to the exclusion of singing the science underlying it, the performance of musical composition.” Maxwade (2002) quoted the American composer John Cage in which he believed that “the mechanical background, of everyday life could be described as music.” The creation and performance of music in a basic human process, it exists everywhere. Music is a means of communication and as such it is a symbolic language. (Marykear & Callaway, 2000). There has always been a hot debate in the history whether music has any role in the development of human personality or not. Some educationists suggest that music and singing are essential for the proper brought up and training of the children. Nayab (1998) quotes Aristotle sayings that “music is a mathematical science. “Plato and Aristotle suggested that education should be included in educational system they said that music education is essential to transfer culture to new generation” (Keith, 1998). “It is well known that although there have been frequent references to social activities in educational programs ever since Greek times; opinion has

often been sharply divided about their value and significance. Some educators have regarded music as a supreme moral force other has condemned it as a thoroughly undesirable and time pursuit (Charles, 1991)

One group says, music often has wonderful effects upon the feelings of even ignorant people. Soft and sweet music soothes the worried. It is also said that music is food for soul. After the world war second, the sophisticated musical instruments widely used in concerts and with the passage of time music has become the soul of modern theatre, films and television. Pop music is a modern trend in the history of singing. It is being popular in young generation. Music fever is increasing day by day. Now a days, American, Indian and western media are presenting so many musical channels for their viewers. MTV represents commercially oriented business approach to music education. Estelle (1997) cited Serge that “the company’s objective was to provide music targeted at a specific group the “rock culture” or the television babies who grow up on TV and rock ‘n ‘roll. One of senior executive and architect of MTV stated, the strongest appeal you can get their emotions. If you can get their emotions going, forget their logic, you have got them, MTV fits in with all of this because music deals with mood not continuity or plot.”

On the other hand second group says that modern musician with vulgar poetry are creating and expanding cheap taste in the society. Fast high music with break dance and rock & roll disturbs the human sentiments and peace of mind. Sober class of society does not like such type of music which creates noise pollution and disturbs peaceful atmosphere of the society.

Music and Islamic Limitations

Islam suggests some limitations of fair and unfair (Halal/Haram) so that humanity being may not be misguided. We face so many limitations in eating, drinking, speaking, watching, listening, and in relationship. A good Muslim adopts and follows these principles and obligations. The purpose of these limitations is to save the society’s peace and tranquility. Islam wants to control sexual licentiousness in society which is the result of mix society. Music is an important branch of fine arts, but it should not shatter the peace of mind and should not spread indecency and obscenity in the society. “Fine Arts and aesthetics are valuables which should be preserved and promoted but the life of society and collective development is more valuable. So art and aesthetics should develop itself with the coordination of collective life of the society. The art and aesthetic, which leads towards FITNA (Evil), should not be promoted” (Maudoodi, 1998).

Following are the limitations of listening music:

a) Islam has recommended some limitations on watching, eating, drinking and listening. Islam provides guidance in every act of human being. Its suggests to control eyes, tongue and hearing because hearing also leaves profound impression on human feelings and emotions. Music and singing should highlight the positive aspects of human thinking, ethical values and spiritual development of human being otherwise it will be unfair and “HARAM.” Islam does not allow purposeless poetry, vulgar singing and stimulus music because all these are unethical, wastage of precious time and devilment. This impression can be harmful or beneficial. It is the aim of good law to clarify the lines of loss and gain. Hence, Islam lays down the rules that a Muslim can hear any beautiful song for the satisfaction of his interest. However, it prohibits the kind of hearing which leads to sexual incitement and immorality, because Islam wants a man to be of finest character.

b) In this regard Quranic point of view is important; it terms vulgar music as idle activity which leads toward the wastage of time, it restricts to follow the right path.

Arabic Text

English Translation: and of making is he who payeth for more pastime of discourse that the ways mislead from Allah's ways without knowledge, and maketh it the butt of mockery. For such there is a shameful doom. (Al – Qur'an 31 – 06). Holy Qur'an termed it as "deceptive talk" which leads towards wrong path and people when one call people to Al – mighty Allah's massage they consider it as a gossip. So, "Lahwal Hadis" means, idle talk, gossip and singing when asked by famous companion of Muhammad (SAW), Abdullah bin Masood, he said thrice that this meant singing. Marmaduke (1978)

In different verses of Holy Quraan, it is clearly told that Shaitan is the biggest enemy of human being and wants to waste his time in purposeless activities. Shaitan tries to engage him in idle talk, back-biting, gossip and other wasteful activities. So human being should be very much careful about shaitan,s activities.

Arabic Text

English Translation, And exite any of them whom thou canst with they voice, and urge thy horse and foot against them, and be a partner, in their wealth and children, and promise them, Satan promiseth them only a deceive. (Al-quran 15—64), Marmaduke (1978)

In this Quraic verse, ASTAGHZARZ mean to deceive and to snub any body while considering him weak. Shaitan through his voice tries to deceive the human being.

c) There is no doubt that music and songs about Haram activities are not allowed in Islam. But before we make a judgment on singing and instruments for Islamic purposes one must look at the arguments for and against the use of Instruments.

Abu 'Amir or Abu Malik Al-Ash'ari narrated that he heard the Prophet saying, "From among my followers there will be some people who will consider illegal sexual intercourse, the wearing of silk, the drinking of alcoholic drinks and the use of musical instruments, as lawful. And there will be some people who will stay near the side of a mountain and in the evening their shepherd will come to them with their sheep and ask them for something, but they will say to him, 'Return to us tomorrow.' Allah will destroy them during the night and will let the mountain fall on them, and He will transform the rest of them into monkeys and pigs and they will remain so till the Day of Resurrection." Al Bukhari (V-7)

d) However, the use of Daff during weddings is passable because of the following Hadith in Bukhari:

The Two Festivals (Eids) - Narrated Aisha: Abu Bakr came to my house while two small Ansari girls were singing beside me the stories of the Ansar concerning the Day of Biath. And they were not singers. Abu Bakr said protesting, "Musical instruments of Satan in the house of Allah's Apostle!" It happened on the 'Id day and Allah's Apostle said, "O Abu Bakr! There is an 'Id for every nation and this is our 'Id." Further it quotes that "there is no forbidden action that is permitted merely for pleasure and enjoyment only at certain times. The Hadith that is quoted above mentions things that are definitely known to be haram, namely Zina and alcohol. Even silk which the Prophet wore himself for a short period before violently taking it off the prophet did not allow it on the Eids." Al Bukhari (English Translation)

Ghazali said in Ihya Ulum Al-Din that "the Revival Of The Religious Sciences: The musical instruments and songs which are typically associated with drunkards are prohibited as they remind of prohibited things and promote the prohibited, such as the consumption of wine and other intoxicants. These prohibited instruments include the Majamir, (musical instruments)

but not the Daff, the flute and other musical instruments. “The majority of schools of thoughts including Maliki, Shafii, Hanbali and Hanafi say that music is Haram but there are some other reliable schools that say it is Halal, if it is used for Halal purposes.” Sheikh (2007)

e) Islam is not only a set of beliefs but also a perfect code of life and continuous and consistent program of action. The beliefs do not confine to mere rituals but transform human psyche for the purpose of attitudes and norms of behavior, which are in consonance with human nature. Thus it cultivates a vision and outlook towards all the forms and shapes of behavior and social interaction. What is in accordance with human nature is considered to be the virtue and which negates or corrupts human nature is considered to be vice. It is human nature to extol and appreciate beauty and hate what is ugly. This underline philosophy of human nature is universal. Music is the food for thought and arouses emotions. We know emotions play very important role in motivation and action. In this regard Islam takes very positive aspects towards music and appreciates music in all its natural forms, structure and performance.

f) It is imperative to study that the Holy prophet (SAW) himself appreciated and also exhorted upon his followers to recite the holy Qur’an as sweet and soft tongue as is possible. The holy Qur’an says:

Arabic Text:

English Translation: Oradd (a little) thereto--And chant the Quran in measures. (Marmaduk, 1997).

The “Qaris” had prominent distinction in this regard and were promoted to lead the congregational prayers. But, it never meant the application of music techniques to recitation as according To Mustafa Sabri "If music is to be applied with its rules and techniques to the recitation it would violate the rules of Tajweed,(Learning Quraan with its origin). So, this kind of music with notes and rules, like composed pieces, is not allowed in the recitation.

However, if a person recites the Qur’an, associated with the beauty of his natural tunes, this is commendable. This way is very reasonable considering the fact that an abuse of the Qur’an with music must be avoided. That is why a piece of music is listened to for appreciation of its musical value, without necessarily understanding its words, for the most part. Although the meaning of the words in some pieces of music can be realized to some extent, the composers usually have to fill the gaps with "la la"s to balance the piece of music. Obviously, such a practice in the Quranic recitation is out of the question” (Sabri, 1910).

g) The poetic diction was also appreciated and the poets like Hassaan Bin Sibit were given due recognition. The music or soft symphony is echo of the heart and gives full vent to the gushing emotions.

“This was particularly done to give direction to human trait of character particularly where music was used to arouse animal sentiments leading to waywardness and debauchery. Human were reduced to the level of animals and dumb driven cattle. This form of music was responsible in destroying the structure of society. But the new direction promoted positive and natural form of music. Even at the marriage ceremonies songs of love, attraction and closeness of human hearts in the positive and lawful methods were promoted on September, 24, 662, when Muhammad (SAW) entered in Medina, small children, at the top of their houses, welcomed the holy prophet by singing songs and playing upon their own instrument called “Daff” was appreciated by the benefactors of humanity (SAW)” (Din, 1996).

h) So music was not completely banned; it was given direction and the specific form according to human nature. During the period of right guided caliphate, music was also encouraged because it was feature of inter cultural behavior, on the other hand promoting vice and baser feeling was completely banned and unlawful, so that the believer are educated to know about the nature of music and its impact on human mind. Some Sufia ,also used Music for the preaciing of Islam. In this respect, Hazrat Nizam-uddin Oliya says about the listening of SAMA, (Pious poetry) that there are four conditioned / limitations for listening music or SAMA, a vocalist should be a man, not a boy or woman. B, the listener should be the person who has fear of God, c, the poetry should not be unfair or vulgar, d, Musical instruments should not be used while singing (Akbar, 2003).

i) Under the present scenario of media explosion, music is the very breath of all channels. There is no discrimination. There is no research on media effects. The music on media asserts the attention and plays upon the feelings of the listeners. It is necessary to have such channels, which promote music of the order, and form prescribed, encouraged and promoted by Islam. This will provide the listener an alternative, which give pleasure, entertainment in a positive manner.

j) Actually it is the content of the music which has primary impacts on the minds. Akbar (2003) writes that “modern music with high sound and fast beats creates unrest and sexual provocation. Such type of music put negative impacts on human heart and brain” The people who like music and singing they always remain restless, they move their fingers, shoulders, feet and sometimes cry (Siddiqui, 2000). So it is necessary that poetry should be pious and the message must be clear and positive.

k) Similarly the female voices are prohibited because these may excite and arouse baser feelings and may lead to violation of the norms of society. Dance and singing particularly of female banned to be demonstrated in the open society. Sheikh (1997) writes that “with the same purpose of keeping human psyche in equilibrium and stability. Most of the violations of social norms are created due to inner distribution of the youth through music and dance which play upon emotion and sentiments.”

CONCLUSION

In the light of above discussion we can say that there is nothing wrong in listening to sweet melody but it is a sin to listen anything that is morally harmful. Therefore musical instruments are not allowed in Islam. The reasons for the banned are explained in the best way by Hafiz Ibn Jauzi (R.A). It should be known that there are two kinds of harms in listening to the music; the one is that it makes man negligent in his duty towards Allah and secondly it inclines his thinking towards the worldly pleasures only. He strives to satisfy his material wants only, particularly the sexual desire which is on the top. And it is not possible to satisfy these wants without having new contacts. Such possibilities could not be found in the lawful area of life. “Music is food for soul; the sexual pleasure is the food for body. It is related in a Hadith that music leads to sexual pleasure” (Sheikh,1997).

We can infer this responsibility on Media to produce uncontaminated and value added programs, in addition, being Muslims and being an ideological Islamic state,it is the responsibility of our mass media to promote decent and valuable programmes. Our mass media should not follow American, European or Indian musical programmes because such programmes are against our social and religious norms. Our channels had to be selective in a music which is transmitted with the purpose of communicating the messages of good behavior, excellent manners and purposeful entertainment.

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