

Muslim Schools in the United States and the Question of Citizenship

By

Hassan Elannani

Knowledge and Human Development Authority
P.O. Box 500008, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Abstract

This study sought to describe how Muslim schools provide an educational experience that conformed to Islamic teachings, and at the same time prepared students to be contributing individuals to the common good of the American society. The purpose of this research was to determine how a Muslim school simultaneously addressed these two important goals: namely to educate students to be good Muslims and good American citizens. A sample of three schools in the Midwest was selected for the study based on their years of operation, grade levels, diversity, accreditation, and access. The author used interviewing techniques, observations and archival data to find answers to five main research questions. The findings of the study provided evidence that Muslim schools were one more chapter in the history of religious diversity and pluralism in America. Muslim schools brought together many immigrants from different countries of the world and connected families, students, and teachers to a common religious identity and a common aspiration to be full members of a modern society and citizens in a democracy. These schools represented a special blend of practical educational achievement and spiritual enrichment in an atmosphere that was tolerant and open to the larger society.

Keywords: *Muslim schools, citizenship, common good, educational goals*