

# **An Overview of the Life and Philosophy of Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain**

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of the research paper is to throw some light on Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain's life and his philosophy. Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain was India's most respected academician and educational planner for whom education was a passion. He was the only educationist who devoted his entire life to the development of education and spent almost the last two decades of his life formulating and developing new ideas and policies for Indian education. He followed a practical approach to education. He always worked and focused on the progressive educational environment and mainly stressed on better social integration.*

**Keywords:** Academician, educationist, policies, integration

## **I. Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain's Early Life**

Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain popularly known as K. G. Saiyidain was born on 16 October 1904 in a reputed and highly educated family of historical city of Panipat, Haryana. Saiyidain's father Khwaja Ghulam-us -Saqlain was an eminent lawyer and a renowned writer. Saiyidain inherited the qualities of hard work, dignity of labour, integrity and honesty from his father. His mother's name was Mushtaq Fatima. Saiyidain was very attached to her besides that he got various qualities like desire to serve, gentleness, warmth and ability to work hard. Saiyidain's mother was a very pious lady and was accountable for his education. His upbringings have a great influence on Saiyidain's whole life. Saiyidain has dedicated the first work to her mother which clearly reflects her imprints on his mind and at the same time signifies the ideal role played by her in Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain's up brining. Saiyidain writes:

*"I refer these pages to my late mother in whose shadow I first and foremost saw the manifestation of the attributes on which the culture of the soul depends and whose example enlightens me to the fact that human life is not only the name of struggle of selfishness and narcissism but beyond that even higher than anything."*

He also learned moral lessons from his mother and continued to follow them throughout his life. Saiyidain's family was a prosperous and civilised family where it was mandatory for every member to uphold the traditions and shun ignorant rituals. Saiyidain spent his early life under the shadow of loving and wisely educated elders of his family. Saiyidain's maternal great-grandfather was the renowned poet and main architect of the Muslim Renaissance, Khwaja Altaf Hussain Hali. His paternal grandfather Khwaja Ghulam Abbas was a religious personality, a devout and pious

Muslim with a strong commitment to his faith who had full belief in his religion. It is believed that when he heard the news of birth of his grandson, he was offering his pre-dawn prayers in a local mosque, he took off all his clothes and offered them to a needy person and came back home wrapped his body in a blanket. Saiyidain's family was a distinguished, prominent family of Panipat. Some family members were cultivators while others were teachers, lawyers and small businessmen, but they were all social reformers. Saiyidain's mother and other family members looked after him and his brothers during his early years. He was a decent child who never got into fights with his brothers. He treated his parents and other family members with respect and sincerity. At the age of eleven, Saiyidain's father passed away, and his mother assumed full responsibility for raising her children and her family. He absorbed the best values from his family at an early age and was a source of pride for them

## **II. Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain's Educational Journey**

Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain received his early education at the Municipal School of Panipat and then at the Hali Muslim School in Panipat, which was founded by his grandfather Khwaja Sajjad Hussain in memory of his father, Khwaja Altaf Hussain Hali. At that time there was no high school in Panipat; therefore, his grandfather took early retirement and came back to Panipat and devoted himself to running this school. Saiyidain was a brilliant, perceptive student who consistently made his family proud by achieving first in his exams. His academic record was extra-ordinarily brilliant and rewarding. Saiyidain graduated from Hali Muslim High School in 1919 with a first-class grade and was given a scholarship, but only if he agreed to attend Punjab University or an affiliated college. However, Saiyidain opted to attend Aligarh Muslim University, where his family had previously studied. Saiyidain was admitted into Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College, which subsequently evolved into Aligarh Muslim University. There, he received his F.A. and B.A. with distinction and ascended to the position of editor of the university journal. He was given the scholarship as a result of his extraordinary performance in his B.A. In Aligarh, he had the opportunity to meet notable people of the time. At Aligarh, he first heard Gandhiji's appeal for sovereignty. He also interacted with Dr. Zakir Hussain and Sir Ross Masood, establishing enduring friendships with both of them. Saiyidain's life and thoughts were greatly influenced by the academic, literary, and life-giving milieu of Aligarh. After completing his B.A. degree, there was great pressure on him to join the Indian Civil Service, but he didn't want to join the British services. Therefore, he refused and continued with his M.A. and LLB at Aligarh Muslim University. Saiyidain received a scholarship and pursued his education in England. He lived in England for two years, received his diploma, joined the Masters programme, and once again emerged at the top of his class. He completed his M. Ed. at Leeds University in the UK with a thesis on contemporary educational trends in Europe and America. He also completed his diploma in Education with distinction, from Leeds University U.K. His areas of expertise included education at all levels, social and cultural issues, value issues, and Islam. Urdu, Persian, Arabic, and French were among the languages that K.G. Saiyidain was competent in.

### III. Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain's Philosophy of Life

K.G. Saiyidain was one of the leading intellectualists of United India who simultaneously demonstrated his intelligence knowledge and management skills at the National and International levels. His writings prevail his in-depth study and understanding not only the academic sources of the eastern, but his discourses rather speak his deep study of western knowledge. He was highly influenced by the educational thought and philosophy of John Dewey and he worked with Mahatma Gandhi on Wardha Scheme and also with Dr Zakir Hussain in promoting basic education across India. K.G. Saiyidain was highly influenced by his home environment in his early age and with the Greek philosopher Socrates story of drinking poison taught him intellectual curiosity and search for knowledge. He strongly emphasized that education is fundamentally a social endure, and that Schools are accountable for teaching and raring children in order to prepare them to make a significant contribution to the lives of the groups to which they belong. Education should provide children the chance to realize their full potential and become self-reliant. He stated that ultimate goal of human life is to respect for human kind. The main elements of Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain's Philosophy are belief in one God, truth, justice and equality.

**1. Belief in God:** As a staunch believer of Islam, he believed in one God the creator of the whole universe. He is the creator of all things and is all knowing.

**2. Truth:** Another important feature of K. G. Saiyidain's philosophy is truth. He considered it as an important principle besides value of life. He believed Truth or Haqq a universal value and has stressed that, this value must be in -built in all men and women. For achieving this in order to live a peaceful and decent life, one has to walk on the straight path, *Sirat-il-Mustaqeem* and refrain from reprehensive and in human activities. Saiyidain held that a life of truthfulness has its own value and if a person or an individual's character is weak and poor, is therefore evident that his values are defective. He also stated that the essence of greatness is not wealth or power or even knowledge but it is how true and lovable you are. If your life is unable to strengthened you, it means your life is not based on truthfulness.

**3. JUSTICE:** Justice was paramount to Saiyidain, and it is clear from his ideology that he always saw it as a cornerstone of any nation's prosperity. He never supported the caste system and thought it is a disgraceful feature of the lower castes. He was not in favour of the exploitation and was against the colour discrimination. He contended that if social justice is more than a catchy campaign slogan, it means that all people should have access to the good things in life, both material and cultural, such as food, clothing, and basic necessities, as well as accommodating work and leisure activities, individual liberty, and opportunities for creative enjoyment. According to him, the principles of equality, fraternity, and compassion must serve as the foundation for social justice.

**4. Equality:** According to Saiyidain equality is necessary in order to maintain harmony between man and society. Saiyidain as a great proponent of equality believed that every individual should be given equal respect and consideration because almighty has created them equal. Saiyidain focuses most on social equality and sees it as the basis of justice and freedom. He considers social equality as a key to development of nation and believed that man and women should be given equal rights

and opportunities in every field. He had also suggested that no individual should be deprived from basic rights on the basis of who they are, what they are?

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The contribution of K.G. Saiyidain towards Indian education is remarkable. He was a cultured personality, a sensitive person with compassion for others, passionate about knowledge and life time values. It is very difficult to describe the life of such great educationist in few words. He conceived of the programme of social education in India. He stated that ultimate goal of human life is to respect for human kind. The principles of his philosophy serve as the foundation for his philosophy of humanity.

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