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Exploring Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence of Prophet Muhammad SAW

Fatimah Abdullah *

Abstract

This article highlights the importance of emotional and spiritual intelligence in human life. The capacity to express, understand, see, use, and control one's own or others' emotions is referred to as emotional intelligence. While, spiritual intelligence refers to the ability to understand deeper meanings, values, purposes, and unconscious aspects of one's self including the ability to integrate these meanings, values, and purposes in conducting more meaningful and creative lives, a positive attitude and mindset while facing hardship in any situation or circumstances. The focus of this article is on the emotional and spiritual intelligence revealed in the Prophet's leadership, including intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. The method employed for this research is qualitative, focusing on the content analysis of books and articles related to the concept of emotional and spiritual intelligence. The findings of this article are the multifaceted aspects of good character in Islamic ethics, is a vast area of behavior that cannot be constricted into a concept such as, Emotional intelligence. Emotional and spiritual intelligence from Islamic perspective is distinctive and different from emotional intelligence in secular outlook. As a key component of the Prophetic model of leadership, the acuteness of his intrapersonal and interpersonal emotional awareness and comprehension became the fundamental components that rendered to his ability to control his emotions effectively which makes him known as successful leader in the history of humanity.

Key-words: Prophets, emotional, insight, investment, intrapersonal and interpersonal.

Introduction

Today whether, in the 'East' or the 'West' the world is demanding better leadership. Through media, and society in general, there is widespread dissatisfaction with leaders who are corrupt and unjust and the breakdown of trust in many leaders and institutions. The need for good leadership is not unique to the Muslims but is a global issue. Even non-Muslims recognize

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Prophet Muḥammad SAW as the greatest leader of all time. Michael Hart named Prophet Muḥammad the best leader in history.¹

Moreover, explaining the qualities of leadership exemplified by the Prophet, the world's first professor of leadership, John Adair who wrote on the Leadership of Muhammad, identified a comprehensive list of over 50 Prophetic leadership qualities.² These abilities might be termed emotional and spiritual intelligence intertwined with virtues and principles as demonstrated in the Prophet's leadership such as integrity and trust, vision, courage, competence, justice, decisiveness, servant-leadership-by example, wisdom, patience, compassion, and warmth.³

Due to the many facets of the Prophet's leadership, we'll focus on emotional and spiritual intelligence. This article explores emotional and spiritual intelligences in the Prophet's leadership. These traits and principles were described in the sirah and the Prophet's biography (p.b.u.h). The main focus is on the emotional and spiritual intelligence shown in the Prophet's leadership, including intrapersonal and interpersonal skills such as self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship management. As technology evolves, humans lose contact with interpersonal encounters as most conversation happens behind a screen. The ability to connect with or understand others' ideas and feelings is diluted or lost. Emotional intelligence may quench and rejuvenate our need to connect with others.

Emotional intelligence, a universal form of intellect and self-awareness, has sparked a recent awakening. Emotional intelligence has stirred up the business world, education system, and personal relationships to discuss and implement it in their everyday lives, whether at work, in school, or in personal relationships. Emotional intelligence (EI) was pioneered by Daniel Goleman (1995) with the new psychological approach and findings of positively studying human emotions can be of help in Islamic ethical training; this is of value because the development of good character in Islam is mostly a process of dealing with one's emotions and with the emotions of others. Certain components of modern psychology, such as EI, can function as effective ways of emotion management that lead to self-development and interpersonal relationship skills in personality or character building. EI is regarded a relatively new

¹ Nabeel Al-Azami, "Prophetic Leadership," *The Muslim 500: The World's Most Influential Muslims*, n.d, accessed 28th December 2022, <https://themuslim500.com/guest-contributions-2019/prophetic-leadership/>.

² Ibid.,

³ Ibid.,

finding of western psychology; nevertheless, from a different world-view, it is one of the key pillars of Islamic morality and is referred to as *akhlaq* - a crucial part of establishing a healthy normal personality that serves as the backbone of leadership.¹

A very famous *hadith* of the Prophet (p.b.u.h) states that: The Prophet (p.b.u.h) has only been sent as a messenger to perfect and complete the multifaceted aspects of good character.² Thus, when we talk about Islamic ethics, we are talking about a vast area of behaviour that cannot be constricted into a concept such as, emotional intelligence. Abu Ala Maududi (d.1984) effectively differentiated between widely accepted human moral and ethical standards and those introduced by Islam by harnessing them to a right cause and higher purpose, i.e. for Allah. Every culture values mercy, patience, charity, honesty, sincerity, and diligence. When these principles are strengthened by Islam's spiritual dimension, they grow stronger, broader, and ritualized.³ One of the key reasons for the magnificence of Islamic morals is that it instils in the Muslim's heart that any deprivation he incurs while pursuing Islamic good character is for the cause of his Creator and that he would be rewarded for his good character in the next life. A Muslim is someone who practices, realizes the truth of worldly trouble, uses it to purify the self to be closer to Allah, and derives strength and support from Allah alone.

If anyone (including believers) were asked about the most brilliant person they know, they may not think of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h). We test intellect using empirical evidence, technical attainment, and physical evidence. These instruments match today's intelligence. The Prophet (p.b.u.h) existed before the IQ was established in the world, which may make some doubt that he had more knowledge and intelligence than anyone else.⁴ Emotional and social intelligence are '*aql*' essentials (reason). Revelation's '*aql*' instructs humans how to relate with others. Due to its link with '*aql*', Islamic Emotional and Social Intelligence are distinctive and different from secular. So, we shall explain the link between '*aql*' (reason) and EQ.

¹ Abdullah. F. "Mercy as Benchmark of Social Relationship: A Reflection" in Journal of Islam in Asia 2011 International Islamic University Malaysia, Spl No.3 September, 2011, p. 97.

² Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī in Al-Adab al-Mufrād (273) (Riyāḍ: Maktab al-Ma'ārif), 1998.

³ A.A. Maududi, *The Islamic Movement: Dynamics Values, Power and Change*, Ed. By Khurram Murad, (The Islamic Foundation: Leicester, 1984), p. 147.

⁴ Mikaeel Ahmed Smith, *With the Heart in the Mind; The Moral and Emotional Intelligence of the Prophet*, (U.S.A: Qalam Books, 2019), p. 56.

The concept of ‘*Aql* (reason) and Emotional Intelligence

Allah asks humans to employ reason, logic, and reflection to grasp and embrace His word. Allah tells those who reject Him to use the reason He gave them. He also encourages humanity to study the life of the Prophet (p.b.u.h) and read about his passion and drive to preach Allah's message and how he acquired the information he shared with his followers. The Qur'an teaches humans to use reason to its fullest potential and to accept that some matters are beyond our comprehension, no matter how diligently we try to decipher them. If one is relentless in doing so, it may lead to distortion of faith and every question around it.¹

Another matter to note apart from emotional intelligence is the form of moral intelligence, which resides in a part of the brain, which helps humans decide what is right, or what is wrong, in Islam, the revelation of Allah, is what helps an individual to identify the right decisions, therefore increasing his or her moral level of intelligence.²

Moral or Spiritual Intelligence from Islamic Perspective

Emotional and spiritual intelligence provide people hope and purpose. The Quran defines spiritual intelligence as a channel that generates and embodies positive conduct, thoughts, and emotions. In Islam, humanity can personify faith to live a reflective life focused on spiritual progress, which improves human life (*‘umrān*).³

When spiritual intelligence based on Islam is formed and exercised, it should symbolize a believer's conviction in decision making based on God's revelation in knowledge, belief, morality, and laws. The concept of spiritual intelligence in Islam, is guided, reserved and supported through the integration of belief (*īmān*), morality (*akhlāq*), and excellence (*ihsān*). The practice of exercising spiritual intelligence is not out of reach, in fact, it is obtainable as it is flexible, optimistic, embraced socially due to its positive elements, and morally grounded. It reflects the inward elements of man such as his/her thoughts and demonstrated through words and actions, which continuously outwardly leaves a positive influence on individuals, communities and societies, while improving man on an individual level to further enhance his/her spiritual sights (*baṣīrah*).⁴

¹ Ibid., p. 57.

² Ibid.,

³ Benaouda Bensaïd, Salah Ben Tahar Machouche, and Fadila Grine, “A Qur’anic Framework for Spiritual Intelligence,” *Religions*, V. 5, no. 1 (2014): pp. 179-198, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel5010179>.

⁴ Ibid.,

A believer's of the entire devotion to reaching spiritual enlightenment in every element of life. This investment helps one exemplify divine attributes like mercy, compassion, kindness, forgiveness, truth, generosity, justice, relief, direction, patience, and wisdom. Muslims are commanded to adopt divine paradigms and traits shown by the Prophet (p.b.u.h).¹

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence

Prophet Muḥammad's (p.b.u.h) leadership is the lofty ideal for mankind to follow. One simple and obvious truth demonstrates he was the most knowledgeable person to ever walk the earth: he spread and expanded Islam as a movement and a way of life, economically, religiously, politically, etc. until this day. We can say he impacted humanity more than anyone else. One of the *tabi' al-tābi'īn* (which refers to those who saw the companions of the Prophet) made a profound statement in regards to Prophet Muḥammad SAW and his intelligence, he said "I have studied over 70 different books, and after studying all of those books, I have come to a conclusion that from the first man to the last man, from Adam until the last man, that no one was given intellect compared to the intellect of Prophet Muḥammad SAW except that it was like one grain of sand compared to the sand of the entire world." In other words, the intellect held by mankind is small-scaled compared to the intellect of Prophet Muḥammad SAW.²

Imām al-Ghazālī said that Prophet Muḥammad SAW was the most intelligent person who ever lived. Prophet Muḥammad SAW developed emotional intelligence, knowing what to say at the correct time while communicating with the people. He knew how to navigate people's emotions after reflecting on and managing his own to achieve the desired result.³

Dimensions of Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize our own and others' feelings, motivate ourselves, and manage emotions successfully in ourselves and in our relationships. Intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptation, stress management, and mood are emotional and social intelligence components consisting of Self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, and relationship management. Emotional intelligence

¹ Ibid.,

² *With the Heart in the Mind*, p. 63.

³ Ibid.,

encompasses non-cognitive abilities, competencies, and skills that help people cope with environmental demands and pressure.¹ Well-adjusted, warm, sincere, persistent, and hopeful describe emotionally intelligent people. Emotional intelligence is also a success indicator. Inability to manage emotions is a cause of stress and conflict, especially in interpersonal or group relationships.²

Managing Relationships

Emotional intelligence includes interpersonal management. It involves regulating others' emotions and social skills. This area is important for developing effective mercy-and compassion-based leadership and interpersonal interactions. It involves listening well, being forceful rather than angry or passive, managing conflict productively, and cooperating. Those who thrive at this skill perform well at anything that requires on connecting easily with people since they are the interpersonal relations star.³

In Islam, outward expression of faith and the performance of one's religious obligations are realized in human relationships. Successful and positive interaction relies upon emotional understanding as demanded by the Prophet on every Muslim that is to be able to understand the emotional awareness. In a famous hadith the Prophet (p.b.u.h) taught us, "All of you are shepherds and all of you will be questioned about your treatment of that flock".⁴ Naturally, well treatment of the flock, be at family level, or at the societal level, it is necessary for the head or the leaders to understand their followers or subordinates well.⁵ This hadith teaches us that beyond the great Prophets, we are all shepherds, one way or the other.

Emotional comprehension and a substantial amount of emotional investment are two essential components of a healthy relationship, particularly in the context of leadership. Imām al-Ghazālī identified the Prophet SAW as the most intelligent human being in this context. He said that the Prophet was able to grasp not only his own emotions but also the emotions of others, and that he was also able to influence the emotional condition of everyone around him.⁶

¹ Goleman, D. *Emotional Intelligence*, (Bantam Books: New York, 1997).

² Ibid.,

³ Ibid.,44

⁴ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Vol 3, 1459.

⁵ *With the Heart in the Mind*, p. 56.

⁶ Ibid.,p. 57

Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Emotional Awareness and Understanding

The beautiful character traits and manners of the Prophet SAW are the most decisive elements of his leadership qualities which have been narrated in various *Aḥādīth* of the Prophet. In one occasion, it is reported that Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī said, “I asked my father about the gathering of the Messenger of Allah.” He said, the Messenger of Allah would not stand or sit except with the remembrance of Allah. When we would visit other people, he would sit down wherever there was an empty seat, and he would instruct the other guests to follow his example. He would pay the appropriate amount of attention to each participant, to the point that each participant would come to believe that the Prophet (pbuh) did not consider anyone other than themselves to be nobler than themselves in his eyes.¹

This *ḥadīth* illustrates how consistent and methodical the Prophet was in his emotional engagement, which was critical to the consolidation of his relationships with the individuals who surrounded him. This emotional investment encompasses divine characteristics and virtues such as mercy, compassion, benevolence, and patience.² The core of the art of handling relationships is first to manage one's emotions. Unless one's behaviour is tempered with mercy, love, compassion, empathy and forgiveness one is not able to manage or deal with others effectively.³

As a key component of the Prophetic model of leadership, the acuteness of his intrapersonal and interpersonal emotional awareness and comprehension became the fundamental components that rendered to his ability to control his emotions effectively. The Prophet used emotional intelligence as a tool to help those around him turn themselves into better versions of themselves. He was a kind and loving father, friend, and spouse in addition to being the leader of the country. The Prophet had demonstrated that when *‘aql* is directed by Revelation, it not only gives a person the power to peer into the depths of their own hearts and minds, but also into the depths of the hearts and minds of other people.⁴

The beautiful character traits of the Prophet were illustrated by ‘Aishah (r.a) as His character was the Qur’ān.⁵ As a result of the crucial

¹ Tirmidhi, Shamā’il al-Tirmidhi, Ḥadīth 365.

² Fatimah Abdullah, “Mercy as Benchmark of Social Relationship: A Reflection,” *Journal of Islam in Asia (JIA)* 8, no. 3 (Special Issue) (February 2011): pp. 309-323, <https://doi.org/10.31436/jia.v8i0.263>.

³ Goleman. D. *Emotional Intelligence*, (New York: Bantam Books, 1997), p. 96.

⁴ *With the Heart in the Mind*, p. 58.

⁵ Bayhaqi, *Shu‘ab al-Īmān*, vol.3, p. 23.

function that the prophet plays as the Messenger of Allah, emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in the construction of prophetic intelligence. It is impossible to consider the possibility of the prophetic mission being successful if the required information and abilities do not come as a gift from God. The character of the Prophet has been continuously perfected with knowledge and guidance granted by Allah. A glaring example in this case can be seen in verse (3:109) when Allah said: “If you (o Muḥammad) were harsh and hardhearted, then the people would flee from you.” This situation explained the dire need of emotional sensitivity, so much so, the Prophet SAW had to be aware of what would make people stay away from him. In another word, “he had to know what would create cognitive and emotional barrier to receptivity.”¹ As it has been documented in various *aḥādīth* that the Prophet SAW had achieved beyond exceptional in his ability to make people become receptive.

It is only reasonable that the Prophet SAW should have been endowed with an exceptional talent for interpersonal intelligence since, just like past Prophets, he was tasked with the weighty responsibility of conveying to mankind a message that would lead them to guidance and redemption. In this light, every Prophet SAW held a profound interpersonal understanding of his people; he was aware of and comprehended their motivations, intentions, and sentiments. In this light, every Prophet SAW possessed a profound interpersonal understanding of his people.²

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is the state of having a complete comprehension of one's own mental capacities. In terms of self-awareness, the Prophet Muḥammad SAW would always reflect and contemplate on his emotions before dealing with others; he was always alert when it came to how he had to feel and act. When we look at the life of the Prophet Muḥammad SAW, it is clear that emotional intelligence coincides and corresponds with the way he interacted with people in his time. This becomes evident when we examine the exemplary life of Prophet Muḥammad SAW.

As great leader in his family, the Prophet SAW demonstrated his love and affection to all his family members. For example, the Prophet through his emotional awareness attended to feelings of his beloved wife ‘Aishah (r.a). In a ḥādīth it was reported that with sense of humor the Prophet SAW once said to ‘Aishah (r.a): I can tell when you are please with me and when

¹ *With the Heart in the Mind*, p. 59.

² *Ibid.*, p. 73.

you annoyed with me.” She seemingly pleases with the remarks from her husband. She asked: “How can you tell? “When you are happy with me you often say ‘I swear by the Lord of Muḥammad.’ However, when you are upset you say ‘I swear by the Lord of Ibrāhīm.’ ‘Aishah (r.a) was pleased with her husband for his deep understanding of her emotion, replied: Yes, O Messenger of Allah but by Allah I only leave out your name.”¹

There is nothing greater that to know that our spouse attends to us and understand our emotional signals. That was what precisely experienced not only by ‘Aishah (r.a) but all other wives of the Prophet SAW in their blessed marital relationships. There is nothing more satisfying than being aware that our partner is paying attention to us and comprehending the cues our emotions are sending them. Not only Aishah (r.a.), but also all of the other wives of the Prophet SAW experienced this exact phenomenon within the context of their blessed marital relationships. The act of mercy stresses *mawaddah*, which translates to love. However, it does not necessarily refer to a love that is physical in nature; rather, it refers to a love that is active, continuing, and emotional and that entails the process of providing true caring care. When there is faithfulness, emotional support, good counsel, genuine regard, and consideration for the interests of others, the emotive love then manifests. When the form of love is tempered with mercy, then it becomes the noblest psycho-spiritual form of emotions, and as a result, sympathy and empathy in their purest form will be generated. It is of the utmost importance to implement love and mercy in all forms of communication, for the purpose of getting to the root of the problem and having sympathy and consideration for what others say or do. When it comes to communication that is generated under mercy, it helps provide a perspective whereby spouses may communicate in a manner that is not understandable or difficult to approve of. However, it is abundantly evident that the act of love itself might not be sufficient enough to aid with communication. This is due to the fact that without the presence of mercy in communication, it might result in a result that is both unproductive and unable to provide any beneficial resolution. As a result, some wives just had the impression that they were being neglected since their husbands failed to comprehend that a simple embrace and kiss given with awareness and presence of mind can serve as a potent kind of emotional investment and can provide consolation.

In another occasion, shortly before the demise of the Prophet there was an incident happen between the Prophet and his wife ‘Aishah (r.a.). The

¹ Ibid.,

Prophet was reported to visit the grave yard *al-Baqī'* cemetery yard in Madīnah at night time. Unaware of the intention of the Prophet, 'Aishah (r.a) was curious and followed the Prophet secretly. The Prophet knew about that. When he reached home the Prophet 'Aishah (r.a): "why do you follow me?" 'Aishah (r.a) replied: "How can a person like me not to be jealous of you and the Prophet replied was how cans a person like me not to be faithful to a person like you."¹ It was narrated in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, book 4, Ḥadīth 2127. The *ḥadīth* demonstrates that the Prophet was very capable of having emotional understanding as well as emotional awareness. He was aware of the feeling of resentment toward his wife, Aishah, and was able to name it. Nevertheless, the Prophet (p.b.u.h), in his wisdom, projected the awareness of his own emotions and was aware of the emotions of his wife, which resulted in the overall situation between them becoming less tense.²

This type of normal self-awareness entails observing oneself and recognizing one's feelings as they come up; seeing the connections between thought, feelings, and reactions; seeing the consequences of alternative choices; recognizing one's strengths and weaknesses; and viewing oneself in a positive but realistic light. In addition to this, they develop the ability to maintain awareness of their feelings as they are happening. Those who are more in tune with their emotions are better able to steer the course of their lives and deal with the challenges that they encounter.³ People who are emotionally and spiritually competent have continuous positive moods and feelings, which generate higher levels of satisfaction and well-being compared to people who experience moods and feelings such as disappointment, depression, and anger. Those who have emotional and spiritual competence are better able to manage their emotions.⁴ People who are emotionally stable and have a clear sense of who they are as a person are better able to adjust to changing circumstances and cultivate coping strategies that are more resilient. They make judicious use of their feelings in order to direct both their thinking and their actions. People who possess

¹ Islamweb, "The Prophet's Visit to Al-Baqee (Graveyard) at Night Secretly," Islamweb.net, June 17, 2004, accessed 28th December 2022.

<https://www.islamweb.net/en/fatwa/88000/the-prophets-visit-to-al-baqee-graveyard-at-night-secretly>.

² IISC Multimedia, *Emotional Intelligence in Islam (Part 3)- Examples from the Life of the Prophet Mohammad (SAW)*, YouTube (YouTube, 2019), accessed 28th August 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=979cX7p7_Ww

³ Goleman. D. *Emotional Intelligence*, Bantam Books: New York, 1997, 118-119

⁴ Abū Zayd, al-Balkhī, *Masalih al-Abdan wa al-Anfus*. Ed. Fuat Sezgin. (Federal Republic of West Germany: Ernst Printers, Stuttgart, 1984), p. 80.

this skill are more inclined to address their faults (*musībah*) in the most effective manner that is open to them.

Self-Regulation

The second component of EI is self-regulation, which is when an individual knows his or her limits in expressing or presenting their thoughts and feelings, and has the ability to accept any conclusion with a new point of view when confronted with adversity.

When it comes to self-regulation, Prophet Muḥammad SAW knew how to express his thoughts and emotions and knew where to limit them, when his son, Ibrāhīm died, he was tearful and then was asked by one of his followers about crying as a sign of disapproval towards the *Qadr* of Allah, Prophet Muḥammad SAW, even at the moment of grief, was able to graciously respond that crying is a sign of mercy from Allah, to be able to feel and express but not to go over the limits by wailing or screaming.¹

Empathy

In terms of empathy which is the core of emotional intelligence, Prophet Muḥammad SAW mastered it in all aspects, one prime example would be the time a man was found urinating in a *masjid*, the companions of the Prophet SAW were prepared to chastise him, however the Prophet SAW ordered them to stop and asked them to wait until the man finished urinating, the Prophet then approached the man and advised him not to do so, as the *masjid* is a pure place of worship, the man then responded with “May Allah have mercy on you, and onto me, and nobody else.”²

The Prophet Muḥammad had such a high level of wisdom and compassion for others that he was able to consider a number of factors before passing judgement on the man who had urinated in front of him. Firstly, the Prophet SAW reflected on the possibility that the man who urinated may have had a health concern in terms of urination that if he were to hold it in it would have caused him pain. Another factor that the Prophet took into consideration was the The Prophet SAW was able to self-regulate, have empathy for the Bedouin, and respond appropriately within the parameters of the scenario that he was presented with.³

Prophet Muḥammad SAW was sent to humanity in order to serve as a symbol of merciful compassion for all people everywhere. Those who

¹ *With the Heart in the Mind*, 94.

² heauthenticbase.wordpress.com/2010/03/04/ther-bedouin-who-urinated-in-the-masjid/

³ *With the Heart in the Mind*, 95.

follow Islam are strongly encouraged to exhibit mercy not just to themselves but also to others and to all of Allah's creations. This mercy should be extended to those who have wronged them. Thus, Prophet Muḥammad SAW said “People who show mercy to others will be shown mercy by the All-Merciful. Be merciful to those on earth, and he who is in heaven will be merciful to you.”¹ (Narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī).

When it comes to putting mercy into practice as a way of life, there is no better example than the Prophet SAW. It was his continual demonstration of unadulterated mercy that ultimately contributed to his unrivalled and painstakingly attained level of achievement.² He was able to acquire and gain the highest levels of respect even from those who loathed him and his message as a result of his emotional engagement, which is a critical component of emotional intelligence (EI). He said “The closest of you to me on the day of hereafter will be the best of you in character.”³ Through his good connections with youngsters as well as his kind humour with adults, Prophet Muḥammad SAW has bequeathed upon us an instructive and example means of displaying and practising the deed of kindness that is assuredly made possible through the Prophet Muḥammad's SAW. Additionally, he has also noted that the deed of expressing kindness should not be limited to just those who are one's companions but should instead be extended to everyone. It is imperative that mercy be shown to all, as it transcends all levels, regardless of religion, race, gender, or even species, as it is highly commendable that animals have the right to mercy and compassion. Since Muslims are not the only inhabitants of earth, it is imperative that mercy be shown to all, as it surpasses all levels.⁴

Mercy and Empathy

It is important note about the underlying significance that comes from non-verbal cues in emotional intelligence, it is the act of being sensitive and observant towards unsaid thoughts and feelings, but are detected through careful and genuine care through attentive observation, Prophet Muḥammad SAW shows a great example to this approach, an example follows a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Umama al-Bahily, where he said “that a young man came to the Prophet and said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, give me a permission to

¹ <https://islamconverts.wordpress.com/tag/allahgod-is-only-merciful-with-those-who-show-mercy-to-others/>

² Afazlur Rahman, Muhammad: *Encyclopaedia of Seerah*, The Muslim Shoos Trust: London, 1986, vol. Iv, pp.526-527.

³ Ibid.,

⁴ Ibid.,

commit adultery.’ The Companions turned to him and started rebuking him. The Prophet said: “Come closer.” When the young man drew nearer to the Prophet and sat down, the Prophet asked him: “Would you like it for your mother?” The man answered; No, by Allah. May Allah make me a protection for you! The Prophet commented, “People also do not like it for their mothers.” The Prophet added, “Would you like it for your daughter?” Again, the young man answered negatively. So, the Prophet said, “People too would not love it for their daughters.” Further, the Prophet asked, “Would you like it for your sister?” The Prophet received the same answer and made the same comment. The Prophet went on asking about the man’s paternal and maternal aunts. The young man’s answer was the same and the Prophet repeated the same comment, “People do not like that for their aunts.” The Prophet then placed his hand on the young man and prayed for him, “O Allah, forgive his sins, purify his heart, and protect his chastity.”¹

It is abundantly clear that the Prophet Muḥammad SAW was so open, accepting, and kind toward others that it made the young man feel safe and secure around him to ask him about his deepest thoughts. Despite the fact that the question was distressing, the young man knew that he could let his guard down around Prophet Muḥammad SAW due to his open, accepting, and kind nature. In addition, it is important to note that the Prophet SAW, despite the fact that it was his duty to defend the honour of Islam and all that it stands for, was able to find a way to avoid the question and was successful in his attempt to instil the young man with empathy by asking what he wanted for others and helping him to implement a reflective state of mind with regard to fornication, without passing harsh judgement or encouraging him to engage in such actions.²

Prophet Muḥammad SAW was able to leave us with a fundamental lesson when it comes to hearing others who are confronted with a difficult circumstance, and that is recognizing their problem as it is a major role to finding a solution, and the phase of assisting them to overcome their problem will automatically follow, but it is imperative that within an interaction, empathy should be present. In addition, Prophet Muḥammad SAW was able to leave us with a In the same way that he approached it when the young guy asked him the question, he applied a type of emotional understanding by acknowledging and taking into account the fact that the young man had a problem and was able to convey his spiritual battle to the Prophet SAW. The awareness of the emotions, mental states, or thoughts of

¹ *With the Heart in the Mind*, p. 69.

² *Ibid.*,

another person is what we mean when we talk about empathy. When we witness another human being or animal going through a happy or sad experience, our natural inclination is to identify with that person or animal. If the other is going through suffering, it makes us feel horrible, but if they are having happiness, it makes us happy for them. In this context, Allah explains that the time when the Prophet SAW felt the most suffering was when he was made aware of the suffering of others. He was so concerned in the lives of those around him that he felt the suffering that they went through. (9: 128).

The Prophet's emotional awareness was not restricted to only being aware of the emotional shifts that occur in humans. There is a well-known hadith that describes how the Prophet SAW showed his superior interpersonal intelligence when interacting with animals. When the camel reportedly saw the Prophet, not only did it start grunting and groaning, but it also started crying. When the Prophet SAW moved closer, he put his hand on the camel, and as soon as he did, it became quiet.¹

Social skill

The final component of emotional intelligence is social competence, which refers to the practice of being kind, accepting, and demonstrating genuine concern for the wellbeing of others, as well as the practice of being an attentive listener and providing support whenever it is asked of them. One man truly believed that he was the most loved person by Prophet Muhammad SAW, which made him ask the Prophet SAW about who he loves most, the Prophet SAW mentioned so many peoples' name, that the man was shocked that his name wasn't among the first few, which speaks volumes about how genuinely loving and caring the Prophet as well as the social skill, which Prophet SAW was remarkable in.²

¹ 'Abd Allaah bin Jafar said "The Apostle of Allah seated me behind him (on his ride) one day, and told me secretly a thing asking me not to tell it to anyone. The place for easing dearer to the Apostle of Allah was a mound or host of palm trees by which he could conceal himself. He entered the garden of a man from the Ansar (Helpers). All of a sudden when a Camel saw the Prophet SWT it wept tenderly producing yearning sound and its eyes flowed. The Prophet SAW came to it and wiped the temple of its head. So it kept silence. He then said "Who is the master of this Camel? Whose Camel is this? A young man from the Ansar came and said "This is mine, Apostle of Allah." He said "Don't you fear Allah about this beast which Allah has given in your possession. It has complained to me that you keep it hungry and load it heavily which fatigues it." (Sunan Abu Daud) see <https://islam.stackexchange.com/questions/57277/is-the-hadith-of-the-camel-that-complained-its-owner-to-the-prophet-authentic> 76.

² *With the Heart in the Mind*, p. 67.

Higher levels of compassion, such as those exemplified by the Prophet, call for a greater degree of emotional sensitivity, because such sensitivity enables the attainment of deeper levels of comprehension. People have the ability to become more sensitive through mercy, and when this occurs, those people are more likely to recognize the feelings of others in an uncomplicated manner. On the other hand, those who are not sensitive or who do not have a high level of emotional intelligence can nonetheless demonstrate sensitivity toward others by taking the necessary initiative. Being sensitive also needs us to be aware of nonverbal clues like body language and facial expressions, such as when someone is angry or frustrated. Components such as mercy, compassion, and forgiveness are essential to the integrity and veracity of acts of altruism in order for those deeds to be considered reliable and genuine. The act of altruism sends a message of caring and sharing as well as having a selfless concern for the wellbeing of others. It embodies a principle of having regard and exhibiting concern for the welfare of others, and it reflects and embodies that principle.¹

It is essential to achieve an exceptional level of self-control in order to bring about such interpersonal strength and passion. Self-control is defined as the capacity to positively direct one's impulses, anger, or frustration in an enlightened manner. In order to bring about such interpersonal strength and passion, it is important that one must reach an exceptional level of self-control. This example of self-control was prompted by psycho-spiritualism, the foundation of which is a continuous contact with Allah. Emotional intelligence is measured in part by a person's capacity to handle and control the emotions of themselves and of those around them, which can be measured in part by their ability to maintain and sustain and manage relationships. Through the practice of compassion and empathy, this sphere is of the utmost importance for the cultivation of productive relationships, whether they are interpersonal or leadership.²

A solid set of skills that helps one to perform well in anything that involves interaction includes being an active listener, being assertive, having the capacity to handle and manage conflict in a constructive manner, and understanding appropriate methods of co-operation. A lack of social and personal effectiveness in one's interpersonal skill may result in a phenomenon known as interpersonal disaster, which is known as a lack of interpersonal skill, which can cause a person to be hateful, arrogant, or

¹ Ibid.,

² Mercy as Benchmark of Social Relationship, p. 98.

insensitive towards the feelings of others. Furthermore, altruism helps a person become mindful of others and their feelings. In order to achieve this, a person should find peace and serenity within themselves, particularly patience. To achieve this, a person should find peace and serenity.¹

However, if a person does not take care of their emotional life, they are more likely to have internal conflicts that are not resolved, which will only cloud their perspective or judgement when it comes to thinking about the ideas of others. In addition, those who are unable to control their own emotions will continue to experience the same bad emotions over and over again. The condition of relationships is dependent on the state of communication, and the state of communication is dependent upon the individual's character. Nevertheless, having good character is necessary in order to develop a naturally sensitive approach towards other people. It is generally agreed that empathy is one of the most crucial factors to consider when developing an effective communication strategy. In addition, it is essential to acquire and put into practice the abilities of empathy, as well as to demonstrate a good character through the demonstration of openness, trust, respect, forgiveness, generosity, and taking responsibility for one's own actions, as was modelled by the Prophet (p.b.u.h). The term "social arts" refers to the aspects of emotional intelligence that fall under its purview.²

Mercy, Forbearance and Forgiveness

One of the most precious bounties that Allah has bestowed upon humanity is mercy, love, forbearance, and forgiveness. These qualities serve as the foundation of emotional and spiritual intelligence and are a gift from Allah to humanity. Compassion, which is closely related to mercy, is the link between mercy and the ability to forgive and pardon. Within the context of Islamic tradition and practice, mercy is understood to be having the intention of bringing good to the lives of other people and ensuring their wellbeing. The act of mercy not only helps signal a new beginning from the past, but it also only sprouts goodness and benefits to everyone. If one wishes to advance their spirituality to greater levels, they must be able to develop a strong degree of altruism in their character. Nevertheless, if a person wishes to be forgiven, they should be able to forgive others, especially if they are in desperate need of Allah's forgiveness. Only then will they be able to get forgiveness themselves. That would force them to

¹ Emotional Intelligence, p. 112.

² Emotional Intelligence, p. 111

see past the shortcomings and issues that others have. These aspects of emotional intelligence are together referred to as social arts.¹

An exemplary approach of forgiveness is the example and life of Prophet Muḥammad SAW, he stated that Allah has instructed him to fulfill 9 commandments, one of the commandments involved forgiving, he said “that I forgive those who do wrong to me.”² Prophet Muḥammad SAW was always willing to forgive his enemies and those who have wronged him. Islam encourages us to live the way of forgiveness, through having honesty about our own shortcomings, and admitting and seeking forgiveness from others, the same applies when we have been wronged by others, we should be able to look past their shortcomings wholeheartedly and genuinely forgive them.³

To free oneself from such harmful ideas and emotions, one needs to release themselves by overlooking and forgiving the faults and errors of others, as well as coming to terms with the fact that human beings are born with inherent flaws. Only then can one be cured of such poisonous ideas and emotions. Believers in Islam are instructed that the ability to forgive others is a fundamental component of Islamic virtue, and that it will win the joy and approval of Allah. It is very evident that Allah makes the point that forgiveness is the preferable path to adopt, regardless of how angry or spiteful one may feel, as it allows him or her to acquire a higher type of morality. This is true despite the fact that one may feel that they have been wronged. When it comes to extending forgiveness, believers are held to a high standard of sincerity, which is something that the Prophet highly valued and encouraged SAW. One further thing to keep in mind is the unwavering willingness to grant forgiveness once it has been requested, even when the person has been severely wronged.⁴

Conclusion

Allah has endowed humans with a level of intellect that will assist us in interacting and socializing with one another by means of our natural surroundings. This has been demonstrated in the lives of all of Allah's Prophets and is reflected in the leadership qualities that they possessed. According to the Prophet, in order for a healthy relationship to flourish, it is necessary to acquire perceptual and emotional awareness, in addition to

¹ Al-Balkhi, p. 84.

² Ibid.

³ Osman Nuri Topbas, *Muhammad Prophet of Mercy*, Istanbul: IRKAM Publishing, 2009, pp. 143-144

⁴ Ibid.

emotionally immersing oneself. When an individual is able to detect and sense the emotional state of another person through a non-verbal cue, such as expression or body language, perceptive understanding is operating. When this process takes place, it helps signal the perceptive individual to navigate around the other person's emotions in an appropriate manner. When a person is emotionally invested in another, they are aware of what the other person's emotional requirements are. For instance, if the other person is going through a difficult time, the emotionally invested person should be able to empathize with the suffering and struggle that the other person is going through. In the same way, if one person is happy, the other person needs to be happy for them and the good fortune they are having in order for them to feel genuine happiness. Emotional understanding plays an important part in emotional intelligence. It is the act of reaching towards a person's inner state of emotion and providing them with a solution. Human beings come with a wide range of emotional experiences and baggage, and not every person expresses their pain in a generic or outwardly way. People often come with misdirected anger, which can be intimidating for many to confront and deal with. However, with emotional intelligence and emotional understanding, it creates an advantage for the hurt and misunderstood individuals to finally be heard and considered rather than misjudged. In the same way that an infant or a young child cries to express their pain and discomfort, it helps caretakers identify what they're feeling in order to care for them. Prophet Muhammad's (p.b.u.h.) leadership qualities were reflected in his approach of empowering others rather than criticizing and undermining the emotions and struggles of other people. In any given circumstance, he knew the negative consequences of negatively undermining or harshly condemning any person who had an honest and genuine calamity and struggle. This approach allowed him to empower others rather than criticize and undermine the emotions and struggles of others.

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