Reviving Contemporary Muslim Education through Islamic-Based Teachings and Evaluation Methods

Pemulihan Pendidikan Moden Melalui Pengajaran Berdasarkan Islam dan Kaedah Penilaian

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Abstract

This paper intends to expose the degree of imitation, borrowing, and import of Western secular pedagogical principles and evaluation methods in contemporary Muslim education. The paper gives an analytical account of Islamic-based pedagogy and evaluation–as recorded in the Islamic tradition–and argues that the dominant methods of teaching and evaluation in today's Muslim schools are grossly unfaithful to Islamic educational teachings. It employs a philosophical and analytical method to articulate deficiencies and offers an Islamic alternative to the dominant teaching and evaluation methods present in contemporary Muslim societies. The paper concludes that principles and methods can adequately serve the pedagogical and evaluation needs of the Muslims only when grounded on the primary sources of Islamic tradition.

Key Words: Muslim Education, Teacher Education, Evaluation, Teaching Methods, Islamic-Based Model of Teaching.

Abstrak

Kertas ini bercadang menyingkap sejauh manakah peniruan, peminjaman , dan pengambilan kaedah-kaedah pengajaran dan penilaian Barat dalam pendidikan Islam kontemporari. Kertas ini memberikan satu analisa tentang konsep pengajaran dan penilaian yang berlandaskan Islam –sebagaimana yang direkodkan di dalam warisan Islam–dan mencadangkan bahawa kaedah mengajar dan penilaian yang dominan pada hari ini di sekolah-sekolah Islam secara kasarnya tidak mengikut ajaran-ajaran pendidikan Islam. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah analisis dan falsafah untuk menyatakan kekurangan-kekurangan yang berkaitan dan menawarkan satu alternatif Islamik untuk diguna pakai di dalam pengajaran dan kaedah penilaian yang terdapat dalam masyarakat-masyarakat Islam kontemporari. Kertas ini menyimpulkan bahawa prinsip dan kaedah-kaedah yang Islamik tersebut didapati boleh disesuaikan untuk mencapai tujuan-tujuan pengajaran dan penilaian untuk masyarakat Islam hanya apabila ia didasarkan kepada sumber-sumber utama warisan tradisi Islam.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Islam, Pendidikan Guru, Penilaian, Cara-cara Mengajar, Model Pengajaran Berdasarkan Islam.

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1. Introduction

There is a growing impression that the Western educational tradition has offered the contemporary world a universal educational blueprint through the educational stipulation that "Four fundamental questions must be answered in developing any curriculum and plan of instruction."[1] These fundamental questions are identified by Tyler as follows:

1. What educational purposes should schools seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences are needed to attain these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?[2]

It should be noted however, that educational purposes are not expected to be uniformed across the world, as they are normally "determined by students and societal needs".[3] Similarly, cannot there be a uniformity of educational experiences across the globe; as they are expectedly determined by educational purposes.[4] Again, this is why Tyler's contribution cannot be regarded as final and absolute. However, one may not rule out some degree of imitation, borrowing or importation of pedagogy concerning the procedures through which learning experiences–planned and organized for instruction-are directed in the classroom. In the same vein, one cannot rule out such a possibility in evaluation which is primarily concerned with the appraisal of the degree to which educational purposes have been met. Notwithstanding, the degree of such a possible imitation, borrowing or importation needs to be assessed in order to determine the extent to which such a borrowing is permissible within the contemporary educational context.

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[1]Ralph Tyler, *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* (Chicago& London: The University of Chicago Press, 1949), pp. 1-3.

[2]Ibid.

[3]See R. S. Peters, *Education and Education of Teachers* (London: Routedge & Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 199.

[4]See P. Hall, *Curriculum and Needs Assessment* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1991), p. 98; see also. R. McCormick & M. James, *Curriculum Evaluation in Schools* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 160.

2. Teaching Methods

Teaching methods are the procedures through which the teacher–after planning and organizing for instruction–proceeds to direct the student's experiences in the classroom.[5] It is on record that the 1970s and 1980s witnessed an increased proliferation of research on effective teaching which supported common sense principles, to the effect that "students learn more if teachers expect them to learn, focus on the content to be covered, keep them on task, provide adequate practice, monitor their performance, and care about whether they succeed."[6] There is no strain in deducing from such an experience that teaching methods are a product of the teacher's professional competence and creativity; which are central to student's learning. Due to teaching methods being a way of imparting knowledge of the subject matter as contained in the curriculum into students, such methods deserve adequate attention during curriculum design. The complexity of teaching and the importance of teaching methods are readily evident in the roles expected of the teacher, as argued by various scholars in the area of education.[7] Such scholars view the teacher as an organizer, communicator, motivator, manager, innovator, counsellor, and ethicist as well as an individual fulfilling professional, political and legal roles. This shows that the success of a curriculum depends largely on the teacher whose knowledge and skills are among the major determinants of the degree to which educational goals may be realized. It also follows that the teacher's creativity, versatility and resourcefulness–among other qualities–are major determinants of success in the area of teaching methodology.

3. Evaluation

Evaluation is the process of adducing value to an outcome of educational accountability. It is often misconstrued as being synonymous with 'assessment', which is an educational term used interchangeably with 'evaluation', 'measurement', 'testing' and 'accountability', which denotes the general process of appraisal.

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[5] J. B. Conant, *The Education of American Teachers* (New York. McGraw-Hill, 1963), p. 87.

[6] See J. I. Goodlad, *Teachers for Our Nations Schools* (Oxford: Jossey-Bass, 1990) p. 56.

[7] See, for instance, A. Ornstein, & F. Hunkins, *Curriculum Foundations, Principles and Issues (*Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1993); see also R. S. Peters, *Education and Education of Teachers* (London: Routedge & Kegan Paul, 1977); and E. D. Prothro, *The Developing World: With or Without the Liberal Tradition* (Beirut: AUB Press, 1977).

Nonetheless, it should be pointed out that measurement and testing are subsumed under the general classifications of evaluation and assessment. It is on the basis of such descriptions that Peters (2001) concludes that measurement and testing are ways of gathering evaluational and assessmental data.[8] Whereas such a conclusion is sustainable, it is worth noting that such a generalization often makes it difficult for students to distinguish some related concepts from others. In specific terms, measurement is a means of determining the degree of achievement of a particular competency, while testing is the use of instruments for measuring achievement. Assessment, as noted earlier, is more comprehensive because it covers the general process of appraisal, while evaluation is the process of adducing value to an outcome of educational accountability. This is the last of the four components of curriculum as identified by Tyler and further articulated by following curricularists after him.[9]

4. Teaching Methodology in Early Islam

In the early period of Islam, the teacher's methods of instruction usually comprised of lectures, dictation, memorization, *munāẓarah* (disputation) and *jadal* (argumentation).[10] The lecturing method required the teacher to read out loud lessons committed to memory for the students.[11] This was the most advanced method of instruction. However, students were not allowed to take notes during a teacher's presentation.[12] This created the need for teachers to hold other sessions with a view towards dictating.[13] Another dimension to this method was for the teacher to allow one of the students to take notes during his presentation and later ask the student to dictate the notes to the rest of the class in the teacher's presence. This was technically referred to as '*arḍ;* meaning, play-back.[14] The appropriateness or suitability of such a method which allowed one student to take notes for onward transmission to his colleagues will probably remain an issue of great concern to scholars

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[8]See Peters, *Education and Education of Teachers*, p. 97.

[9]See McCormick & James, *Curriculum evaluation in Schools,* p. 60.

[10]See M. Nakosteen, M. *History of Islamic Origins of Western Education AD 800-1350* (Boulder: Shambalaha Publication, 1978), pp. 78-99.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid. p. 89.

and researchers in teacher education. A trained teacher may be tempted to ask how far such an effective method would help the teacher realize the objectives of teaching.

Nonetheless, most teachers favoured the dictation method as the best of the trio of lecturing: delivery, dictation, and disputation.[15] Teaching sessions were normally held on a Friday and teacher read from either the heart or from a book. In a situation where the congregation was large, scholars were appointed to assist in dictating the teacher's notes.[16] These scholars were named assistants (*mu'īd)*, i.e. teachers charged with the task of re-echoing the teachers' words for the backbenchers to hear. It was the size of the congregation that determined how many assistants were needed. These assistants were required to be highly audible, have a thorough understanding of the subject involved, and have a good command of the language with correct pronunciation.[17] They were also expected to be patient and approachable as some of the students could request them to repeat the dictation. It was within the teacher's jurisdiction to appoint such teaching assistants. There were even some individuals whose job was to assist in such exercises and be remunerated. The teacher would also ask some of his students to assist him in dictating notes in a situation where these assistants were not available.[18] It should be noted however, that unlike teachers and students, a dictating student or teaching assistant (*al-mu'īd)* normally stood on their feet. He (the teaching assistant) could however sit when he could make use of a raised vantage point that would ensure that he be more visible and audible.[19] We should therefore conclude that the role of the dictator or teaching assistant is similar to that fulfilled by a student taking down notes for onward transmission to colleagues. The implication of this is that current research literature attempts to draw bold lines of demarcation between these two practices, whereas they are both of identical nature.

However, Muslim teachers were aware of the distinction between assimilation and retention. The latter is termed '*hifz*' (i.e. safe keeping)

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[15]K. A. Totah, *The Contribution of the Arabs to Education* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1926), pp. 23-29.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid.

[19]George Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), p .89.

and the former '*malakah*' (i.e. grasp or faculty).[20] Teachers cultivated the practice of speaking slowly, meaningfully and deliberately "in order to facilitate thinking on the part of speakers and listeners."[21] They strongly believed that it was not sufficient for a student to have a good memory without a good mastery; the lack of which would expose his deficiency in debates. Through teaching, teachers encouraged reasoning, reflection and thought. They discouraged learning by rote and instead favoured a good grasp of the subject matter. Al-Zarnūjī–himself a front liner among traditional Muslim educationists–emphasized the significance of a student's reflection by saying: "…even when dealing with the smallest points of knowledge; for it is said 'reflect and you will comprehend."[22] To buttress the view that Muslim teachers were accustomed to reflexive and intelligent teaching, one may draw attention to various parts of the *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldūn which contains illustrations and indications to that effect.[23] One may also observe a clear picture of the methodology involved in teaching in the early days of Islam, given as follows:

> An old man was seated in the great colonnade with his back to a pillar. Round him was a little circle of half a dozen students, each with book in hand, to whom he was reading and explaining a text. The lesson closed and they rose up, one by one, picked up their shoes and went away. But, first they each kissed the hand of their old teacher, and he was left sitting at his pillar and reading.[24]

According to the tradition described above, the lecturer would sit on a platform or lean against a pillar, concentric circles of serious students sitting before him, and would normally begin with a brief religious exercise.[25] He would then proceed with his lecture. He would read from the textbook or manuscript and explain it while students listened attentively. Students asked questions. The discussion was not only allowed but encouraged.[26] Besides that, professors used dictation and slowly dictated their lecture to students. Students sat on the matted floor and held the notebook in the left hand. Because of the tedious

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[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid., p. 91.

[22]Burhānuddīn al-Zarnūjī, *Ta'līm al-Muta'allim-Ṭarīq at-Ta'allum* (Cairo: Wahbah Press, 1975), p. 67.

[23]See, Totah, *The Contribution of the Arabs to Education*, p. 34.

[24]Ibid., p. 29.

[25]Nakosteen, M., *History of Islamic Origins of Western Education,* p. 90.

[26]Ibid., p. 59.

nature of dictation, professors often kept a *muʿīd* (repeater) for help.[27] There was also the memory-reliant method where students relied excessively on their memory. This method continues to flourish in Muslim schools up to the present day.[28] Scholars have identified what they describe as the reasoning method which requires teachers to speak slowly to facilitate thinking, retention, assimilation and reflection for students. Such a practice is an extension of the memory method, not a different one.[29]

Scholars' various descriptions of used teaching methods in the Islamic tradition are unanimous except for some who incorporate principles of teaching into included teaching methods such as freedom from anxiety, motivation, encouragement and praise for good work; all of which stimulate further learning.[30] In addition, the use of physical punishment was considered "necessary as a last resort."[31] In ways similar to some scholars' classification of the methodology of learning, others have identified memorization, repetition, understanding, *mudhākarah* (revision) and note-taking as part of the methodology discussed above. These methods were peculiar to students only.[32] Additions made by some to the list of teaching methods include *munāẓarah* (disputation) and the *taʾlīqah* (report or rejoinder to a disputation).[33] The above opinions of various scholars on teaching methods appear to have found a concise expression in the words of Stanton,[34] who alludes to Tritton[35] by saying:

> The teacher read and recited from a manuscript. The student copied a text as dictated to him. The student then read and recited from a manuscript. The relationship between the teacher and students was primarily a caring and

[27]Ibid.

[28]Totah, *The Contribution of the Arabs to Education*, p. 38.

[29]Ibid.

[30]See Nakosteen, M., *History of Islamic Origins of Western Education,* p. 108; see also Totah, *The Contribution of the Arabs to Education*, pp. 27-29.

[31]Nakosteen, M., *History of Islamic Origins of Western Education,* p. 56.

[32]See Nakosteen, M., in *History of Islamic Origins of Western Education;* Totah, in his *The Contribution of the Arabs to Education*; and Makdisi, in *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West.*

[33]Ibid.

[34]C. M. Stanton, *Higher Learning in Islam:The Classical Period AD 700-1300.* (Savage: M D: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, 1990), p. 91.

[35]A. S. Tritton, *Materials on Muslim Education in the Middle Ages* (London: Lucas, 1957), p. 132.

parental one. Teaching was approached with great humility. A basic outline that the students could understand was given to them, and was then embellished upon and added to in detail through the course of a study. The mistakes of students were corrected, but never harshly. No evidence comes forth that teachers in Islamic schools physically or verbally abused their students for either laziness or failure to learn.

With the exception of Makdisi however, virtually all earlier enumerated views on teaching methodologies are represented in Stanton's statement which gives a clear understanding of the various instructional strategies known to Muslim teachers at the time. It is obvious that at that time, teaching was not heavily dependent on the use of instructional aides or materials. If any such thing was ever employed, it probably did not exceed the practice of illustrating a point with one's bodily anatomy or drawing images in the sand; which falls far below the sophisticated use of instructional materials in modern teaching. Yet, the strength of the methods known to the Islamic tradition lays in their effective improvisation of aids for various teaching subjects.

5. *Ethics of Students and Teachers*

Closely related to teaching methods was the school etiquette which involved a "code of manners, customs, and general etiquette." Teachers displayed a caring, supportive, parental relationship towards students while retaining great humility. Teachers corrected students' mistakes without resorting to harshness or toughness. It was noted earlier that no evidence existed that teachers in Muslim schools abused students either physically or verbally for laziness or failure to learn.[36] This account may not necessarily be altogether true, for there are other scholars suggesting the contrary.[37] Their supporting account is of a student who failed to attend some of his Shaykh's lectures "because of the news of the death of some of his relatives."[38] When the student appeared in class, the Shaykh angrily asked him about the reason for his absence. When the student gave the reason, the teacher told him: "You should have attended the lecture and indulged in your mourning afterwards."[39] It is reported that the teacher was tough on him for a while, although he won his approval at a later time, and even offered to him his daughter for

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[36]Tritton, *Materials on Muslim Education in the Middle Ages*, p. 67.

[37]Nakosteen, M, *History of Islamic Origins of Western Education,* p. 79.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Ibid.

marriage in order to express his satisfaction with him (the student).[40] Al-Ghazālī[41] enjoins the teacher to have sympathy for students and to treat them as if they were his own children, and to exhort them and rebuke them for misconduct. These show how al-Ghazālī offered an enduring educational principle whose relevance may not easily be put to the question at any time or space.

Shalaby[42] relies on authorities such as al-Qalqashandī (d.1913), Ibn al-Muqaffa', al-Zarnūjī (d.1292 A.H.), Ibn Jamā'ah (d.1353 A.H.), Ibn Suḥnūn (1348 A.H.), al-Ghazālī (a.1306 A.H.) and others to identify the teacher's etiquette in the following:

1- To show kindness towards students as though they were his own children.

2- To emulate the Prophet's example of spreading knowledge without expecting any worldly reward.

3- To advise students on learning and guide them to the best of his ability.

4- To pay attention to students' morals and their intellectual development.

5- To encourage students to study as many branches of knowledge as they possibly can.

6- To support principles through practice and by leading through example.[43]

The ideas mentioned above found a better form of expression in the words of another scholar who articulated the school etiquette in the words of Totah (1926:64) who says:

> …the manners, *'ādāb*, suitable to the mosques are different from those needed at the *madrasah*. The work of the *madrasah*…is too sacred to be interrupted by anything. Even the attendance of a funeral, which has religious merit for the Muslim is denied by the lecturer during school hours. In case the professor did leave his *ḥalaqah* (class) to attend a funeral he should forfeit a part of his salary, *ma'lūm*, accordingly. It was deemed inadvisable for the teacher to laugh or joke

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[40]Ibid.

[41]Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī, *'Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Turāth, 1306AH), vol. 1, p. 47.

[42]Ahmad Shalaby, *History of Muslim Education* (Beirut: Dār al-Kashshāf, 1954), pp. 145-146.

[43]It is conspicuous that Shalaby's opinion here is indebted to al-Ghazālī's in his *'Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* than to any other Muslim educationist. In both the *'Ihya'* and the *Fātiḥat 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, al-Ghazālī itemizes the very same points made by Shalaby. It is also clear that some aspects of this enumerated etiquette as pointed out by Shalaby, concern the learning methodology.

with the boys. He should be very dignified and also married. Presents of foodstuffs from the students should be rejected by him. And most interesting of all is the injunction against advertising for pupils.[44]

Students were also expected to imbibe endurance and perseverance in their pursuit of learning. They were not expected to sleep in the day-time, and were encouraged to embrace "simplicity in the matters of clothing, plain food, and physical exercise, such as walking, running, and playing after school."[45] The fact that Islamic educational principles have stipulations for students' feeding, clothing and even play after school shows that the Islamic educational system is all-embracing.

6. Accreditation of Teachers

Teachers normally authorized their students to teach and give opinions after examination. This marks the meeting point between authorization and evaluation. Examination was essentially oral and covered specific areas or particular books taught by teachers. For instance, after examination on many questions on a variety of areas of learning, two different professors authorized Ibrāhīm Makram al-Shīrāzī (d.874AH/1470CE) to teach law and give legal opinions.[46] Following his examination on particular books, other professors authorized him to teach those books.[47] Of great relevance to the essence and method of evaluation in Muslim tradition is an experience recorded by al-Maghrāwī (d. 820/1417) in a disputation session held by the jurist Ibn 'Arafah who once said to his disciples after giving them a *taqrīr* (the determination) after a disputation: 'Who will offer to oppose this determination and do justice to it?' The incident is further detailed as follows:

The professor was inviting his disciples to oppose him, the master, with all their intellectual skill, treating him as their equal. One of them was entrusted with the task by his classmates. The disputation between master and disciple went on for three days during which the professor did his best to unnerve the disciple, going as far as to use rude and abusive language, but the disciple held his ground firmly, saying: "Such language will not refute me; you might try some other way'. Finally, the professor, giving up the struggle, said: 'You were right in all

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[44]Totah, *The Contribution of the Arabs to Education*, p. 64.

[45]Ibid., p. 65.

[46]Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges,* p. 151.

[47]Ibid., p. 153.

that you said', and gave him the authorization to issue legal opinions. One of the disciples attending the three day disputation complained to the professor that he could have given the authorization on the first day, sparing them the loss of time. The professor's answer was that he simply wanted to ascertain whether the disputing disciple would remain firm, or waver, in his argumentation.[48]

It has also been reported that when there would be a vacancy for the position of a professor of law, the disciple in question was recommended by his teacher, as a scholar who "stood alone as the candidate most worthy of the post."[49] The candidate was consequently appointed, and his master and other jurists all attended his 'inaugural lesson'.[50] The disputation is described as the final examination stage through which a student would fulfill his licence and pass.[51] Students who won disputations that then became certificates qualified them for a teaching post in a field they chose.[52] A seasoned scholar of education will most probably be tempted to embrace this method as an effective way of accrediting new teachers or professors; a method owing essentially to the freedom from any unscrupulous manipulation that may lead to certifying a quack as qualified, as is the case with some modern documentary certificates.

Documentary certificates were not known to Muslims during the early days of Islam. It was up to the student himself to decide whether or not he was truly competent enough to hold a new circle in which he would sit as a master. Nevertheless, many students were often hesitant to do so in view of the technical nature of the discussions and arguments between the teacher and students, which required the teacher to prove him as worthy of his teaching position. For instance, Abū Ḥanīfah once felt capable and therefore left Ḥammād's circle and sat as a teacher. When he was asked some questions he could not answer, he immediately dissolved his circle and rejoined his master.[53] This shows his sincerity and true scholarship. It is noteworthy to report that contrary to Abū Ḥanīfah's experience, Wāṣil bin 'Aṭā' (d.181 A.H.) "departed from the circle of al-Baṣrī (110 A.H. /728 AD) when the subject of the commission of crime was discussed. He then formed a new circle in

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[48]Ibid., p. 152.
[49]Ibid.
[50]Ibid.
[51]Ibid.
[52]Ibid.
[53]Shalaby, *History of Muslim Education*, p. 83.

which he proved himself a remarkable thinker."[54] It was owing to the significant place of the traditions of the Prophet Muḥammad that the *Muḥaddithūn* (scholars of *Ḥadīth*) initiated the tradition of issuing students' certificates. The objective of certification was for the teacher to qualify students to recite traditions taken through his instruction.[55] This practice later passed into other subjects whereby "the master would grant a recognized certificate to those students who satisfactorily passed the prescribed course of study under him, and such a certificate was usually written upon the fly-leaf of the book studied."[56] With the passage of time, such a practice metamorphosed into the *'ijāzah*.[57]

The *'ijāzah* method represents the teacher's authorization of students to disseminate knowledge. Six different types of exercises were identified. One is *al-Munāwalah* in which a Shaykh gave all or some of his books to his students or any other scholar.[58] In such a situation, the teacher would instruct students to assure his own students that this authorization bore the handwriting of his Shaykh. Another approach to the *Munāwalah*, was for the Shaykh to grant his student permission to use of all the books in his library. Again, another approach was to authorize others to quote him in reference to all the books read by him or experiences recorded by him. This seems unacceptable to many scholars. The third form of *Munāwalah* was for the Shaykh to send in writing some *ḥadīths* or portions of some *ḥadīth* books with an authorization for the bearer. The fourth form was the authorization of an individual to narrate authentic *ḥadīths* in certain books. The lack of identification of the individual's specific *ḥadiths* or areas of competence earned this form of authorization some opposition. The fifth form was self authorization of which an endorsement was secured by the Shaykh. The sixth form and last was an authorization issued by a Shaykh to another scholar.[59]

Nevertheless, in the teaching of law, the accreditation of a new teacher or professor was not based entirely on authorization acquired after disputation.[60] Rather, appointment was accompanied by a ceremony during which the deed of investiture (*'ahd*) was read

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[54]Ibid., p. 147.
[55]Ibid., p. 148.
[56]Ibid.
[57]Ibid.
[58]Ibid., p. 150.
[59]Ibid.
[60]Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges,* p. 143.

publicly.[61] Such a ceremony was attended by the grandees and notables of the dynasty as well as leading law scholars who would all listen to a presentation by the newly-made professor of law. Attendance at the inaugural lecture of a new professor of Law was the greatest honour one could do to him.[62] Such attendance was of great value to him because it marked the acceptance and recognition that accorded him a scholarly position in society.

7. Teacher's Pedagogy for Contemporary Muslim Settings

Many novice and prospective teachers entering teaching education see the central purpose of professional education as being "to show them how to convey bodies of subject matter to the young."[63] This preconception is understandably a product of teacher candidates' wide exposure to a variety of teaching methods as teacher's pedagogy during their training or initiation into teaching. In this context, teacher's pedagogy concerns the devices, procedures or means used to impart and transmit knowledge to the learner. This has always been an important aspect of teaching in the Islamic tradition. The Holy Qur'ān is replete with injunctions giving hints to the need for the teacher to master a variety of instructional strategies. Among the teaching methods the Holy Qur'ān espouses is teaching through using examples, story-telling, illustrations through nature, excursions and field visits. Examples of teaching through the use of examples in the Qur'ān include the following verses:

> The likeness of those who take (false) deities as protectors other than Allah is similar to the likeness of a spider who builds a house; but verily the frailest (weakest) of houses is the spider's house if they but knew. (Q. 29: 41).

> See you not how Allah sets forth a parable? A goodly word as a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches (reach) to the sky (i.e. very high). Giving its fruit at all times, by the leave of its lord, and Allah sets forth parables for mankind in order that they may remember. (Q. 29: 24-25).

> O mankind: A similitude has been coined, so listen to it (carefully): Verily those on whom you call besides Allah, cannot create (even) a fly, even though they combine together for the purpose. And if the fly snatches away a thing from them, they will have no power to release it from the fly. So weak are (both) the seeker and the sought.(Q. 22: 73).

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[61]Ibid.

[62]Ibid.

[63] McCormick & James, *Curriculum Evaluation in Schools*, p. 156.

The Qur'ānic stand on the method of using parables in teaching is akin to its attitude regarding story telling. It is lamentable that some contemporary Muslim educationists promote and encourage the use of pictures, films and even dramatic clips to aid the realization of educational objectives. For instance, the use of Qur'ānic teaching methods facilitates a better understating of the subject being taught. More importantly is that each of the Qur'ānic methods has the potential of achieving its purpose without any negative effect on the learner.[64] The strength of story-telling methods for instance, lays in the fact that Qur'ānic stories are pure facts and totally non-fictional. They include stories of the Prophets of Allah and some of the earliest generations, as well as experiences informing humanity about the calamity of the Day of Judgment. All these are stories that would instil faith and enhance spiritual development. They are different from literary plays or stories normally fabricated or heavily diluted with lies. Bal'us and al-Saldan identify some of the characteristics of Qur'ānic stories as follows:

a. Teaching that revelation and Divine messages came from Allah. Through Muhammad's stories, the unlettered Prophet who never had access to schooling yet received and preserved in his heart lengthy revelation, detailed and comprehensive; the teacher would be instilling into the learner the belief that only Allah is responsible for revelation of such an incredible Divine message. In support of the potential of the Qur'ān, and before telling the story of Prophet Yusuf, Allah *ta'ālā* says: "We relate unto you (Muḥammad) the best of stories through Our Revelations unto you, of this Qur'ān. And before this, you were not among those who knew" (Q. 12: 2). There is also another injunction following the story of Prophet Nūḥ: "This is of the news of the Unseen which We reveal unto you" (Q. 11: 49).

b. Assurances and reassurances to the Prophet and his Muslim followers: An example of this is the following verse: "And all that We relate to you of the news of the Messengers is in order that We may make strong and firm your heart thereby" (Q. 11: 120).

c. Warnings for the children of Adam against *Shayṭān*'s temptations and the illustration of the enmity between the devil and their fathers: This explains why the story of Prophet Adam is repeated in many parts of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān says in this regard:

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[64]Ibn Saḥnūn, *'Ādāb-al-Mu'allimīn* (Tunis: n. p., n. d.), p. 54.

O children of Ādam! Let not *Shayṭān* (Satan) deceive you, as he did your parents (Ādam and Ḥawwā’) out of Paradise, stripping them of their raiment, to show them their private parts. Verily, he and his soldiers (from the jinn or his tribe) see you from where you cannot see them. Verily, We made the *Shayāṭīn* (devils) protectors and helpers for those who believe not (Q. 7: 27).

d. The Qur’ān also uses illustration through nature as another encouraged teaching method. Nature in this context refers to all of Allah’s creatures including humanity, souls, animals, birds, mountains and insects. The Holy Qur’ān attests to the effectiveness of such a method when it says: "And also in your own selves, will you not then see?" (Q. 51: 21). And in another injunction where it says: "We will show them Our signs in the universe, and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth. It is not sufficient in regard to your Lord that He is a Witness over all things" (Q. 42: 53). [65]

Practical illustrations represent yet another method that ought to be given consideration in teaching methodologies in an Islamic setting. This refers to the practical demonstration of an experience, an idea or a reality. This could be systematically developed for proper incorporation into teachers’ educational programmes. An example of this method can be found in the story of two of Ādam’s children, in which Hābīl, after killing his brother Qābil, stood confused and disturbed before the lifeless body, not knowing what to do until Allah sent a crow to teach him what to do. The Qur’ān narrates this experience extensively in the thirty first *āyah* of *Sūrat al-Mā’idah*.

Excursions or educational trips are another Qur’ānic method of teaching. This is emphasised in many verses of the Qur’ān especially in the tenth *āyah* of *Sūrat Muḥammad*. Excursions to sites of Islamic interest have significant roles in playing in fostering direct acquisition of knowledge on the spot. For instance, the trip of Prophet Moses to Khiḍr falls under this category.[66] The nocturnal journey of the holy Prophet could also belong to this category.[67] There are clear indications in the first ’*āyahs* of *Surat al-’Isrā‘* that the objective of the Prophet’s journey was to show him some of Allah’s signs. One may even argue that the application of this *āyah* to teaching and teacher’s education does not

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[65]Al-Sadan, "Preparing Teachers for Islamic Religious Education," *Muslim* Education *Quarterly* (17, 1999), 1:25-42.
[66]See Chapter al-Kahf: 60-81.
[67]See Chapter al-’Isra‘:1.

require sophisticated learning in Arabic because the meaning of 'linuriyahū' (i.e. to show him) is direct and unambiguous.

Field visits represent another method of teaching encouraged by the Qur'ān. The difference from other educational trips as described earlier is that while educational trips may be arranged with a view of getting exposures to new things, field visits are intended to acquire insight into a particular historical occurrence. Examples of this include Allah's reference to the people of 'Ād and Thamūd where He says:

> And 'Ād and Thamūd (people)! And indeed (their destruction) is clearly apparent to you from their (ruined) dwellings. *Shayṭān* made their deeds fair-seeing to them, and turned them away from the Right Path, though they were intelligent. (Q. 29: 38).

There is another injunction supporting this point: "Is it not guidance for them (to know) how many generations We have destroyed before them, in whose dwellings they walk? Verily, in this are signs indeed for men of understanding". (Q. 20: 128).

8. Lessons from the Prophetic Teaching Methodology

There is a long list of techniques that may be used by a trained teacher in imparting knowledge into his students. The classroom situation is central to a student's learning. It involves an array of activities on the part of the teacher in which he is expected to demonstrate her/his teaching professional skills. Such activities involve in-classroom movement, cross-classroom interaction, teaching style or styles, materials and resources used in teaching, time control and management, grouping and motivating the pupils in addition to being positive with them.[68] The teacher's ability to "pose the right question in the right manner is very important given the fact that questions are the tools of communicating between the two agents in the teaching and learning process."[69] Like any other trained teacher, the Prophet Muḥammad employed various teaching methods in preaching and teaching Islam to his followers. This is not a surprise to those aware of the many Qur'ānic confirmations of the Prophet being raised as a teacher and a purifier of the soul.[70] The Prophet's mastery of the Qur'ānic methodology of teaching was demonstrated in his approaches to

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[68]M. I. Sha'ban, "Teacher Training Programmes: A Model for Producing a Successful Teacher," *Muslim Education Quarterly (14, 1997), 3: 37-57.*

[69]Ibid., p.56.

[70]See Chapter Al-'Imrān: 164, Chapter Al-Baqarah: 151.

answering questions, correcting mistakes, or imparting knowledge needed by his companions.

Notwithstanding the importance attached to the teaching methodology in the Islamic tradition, as evident in the Qur'ān and practices of the Prophet, the teaching methods in Muslim education have been often described as poor and ineffective because they leave most of the participants with the impression that teachers have not made the best use of their opportunities. The implication of an experience where religious education is presented in such a way is that there will always be a failure to create a relationship between its subject matter and the daily life of the students.[71] It may also be argued that Muslim teachers are expected to be the most excellent teachers of faith and that is why "the issue of effectiveness in pedagogy is of vital importance from this perspective as the whole communication of faith ultimately depends on the way in which it is taught."[72] Some of the methods the Prophet Muḥammad used to teach his companions involve stories, parables or examples, teaching aides, lecturing methods and the question and answer method.

a. Stories

Prophet Muḥammad used stories to draw the attention of his listeners and to instil in them a particular belief. An example would be the case in which he says:

> Allah is more pleased with the repentance of his servant than one of you would be if you had lost your riding camel, carrying your food and drink in the desert. Now, if you were to lie down in the shade of a tree, having lost all hope of finding it, and were suddenly to find it standing nearby, exclaim and then in your happiness shout out 'O Allah: Thou art my servant and I am thy Lord! (thus committing a slip of tongue due to immense happiness), you would show your penitence by asking God's forgiveness. Allah would then be much more pleased with this penitence than you would be at receiving your camel back.[73]

Prophet Muḥammad obviously used this story to teach a lesson, which is that Allah's forgiveness is all-encompassing, which is why Allah is more pleased to forgive the mistake of that servant than he himself was with the camel.

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[71] Al-Sadan, "Preparing Teachers for Islamic Religious Education", p. 39.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Quoted from Al-Nawawi's *Riyāḍ al-Ṣélihīn*.

Another example of the Prophet's use of story as a vehicle in transmitting knowledge is narrated by al-Nawawī as follows:

> A man was walking along a path when he felt very thirsty. Finding a well, he entered and went down to drink water to his fill. When he came out, he saw a dog with its tongue bulging out, desperately trying to lick the mud to quench its thirst. Seeing that the dog was feeling the same extreme thirst that he had felt so recently, the man descended once more into the well, filled a vessel with water, and gave the dog a drink. Allah appreciated this act and forgave the man his sins.[74]

This parable easily achieved its objective because after telling the story, one of the prophet's companions asked this question: "Oh Messenger of Allah, are we rewarded for kindness towards animals then?" The Prophet Muḥammad, as reported in the same tradition, answered, "There is a reward for kindness done to everything."

There is no strain in detecting the potential of this teaching method which can be systematically developed for the purpose of education.

b. Questions and Answers

The Prophet Muḥammad was accustomed to stimulating the intellectual curiosity of his companions by using questions to open their minds to thought. Ibn 'Abbās reported that the Messenger of Allah had asked his congregation after delivering his sermon on the day of *Naḥr*, "Tell me, what is the day of today?" they replied, "It is the sacred day." He then asked again, "What town is this?" they replied, "It is Makkah, the holy city." He asked again, "Which month is it?" And they replied, "It is the month of Al-Ḥajj." He then said, "As your lives, your properties and your honour are sacred to you, so also is this day holy in this holy month." Ibn 'Abbās said the Prophet made this same statement repeatedly.[75] The strength of such a method lies in the ability to make the listener attentive and responsive as he will always want to know why such a question has been asked.

c. The Use of Teaching Aids

In order to make him more intelligible, the Prophet Muḥammad is reported to have employed various aids in teaching his companions. It is reported by Ibn Jābir that the Prophet Muḥammad employed visual aid in his teaching. He wrote: "As we sat down before the Messenger, he drew a straight line on the sand and said: 'This is the straight path shown

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[74]Ibid.
[75]Ibid.

by Allah.'[76] Then he drew several other lines on the right and left sides of the straight line and said 'these are the paths to the *Shayṭān*' (pointing to the crooked lines he drew) while narrating the Qur'ānic verse:

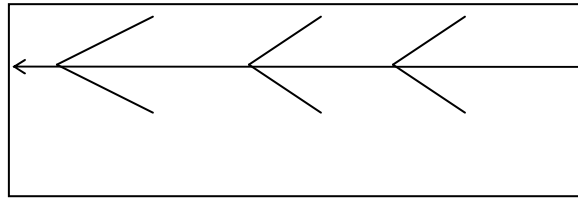"And verily follow the straight path and do not take the path that misleads you" (Q. 6: 53).

Table 1: A graphic illustration of the lines drawn by the Holy Prophet.

d- Practical Demonstrations

There are many instances of practical demonstrations in the Prophet's teaching. An example of such would be when he performed ablution before a group of people and asked, "Who does *wudū'* like me" before praying two *rak'ahs*? *'Alwān* observes that the Prophet Muḥammad surely did what he did to show people how they should pray. 'Alwān relates this to another occasion when the Prophet led the people in prayers while standing on the pulpit, and then turned to the people and said, "My people, I only did this so that you can follow me and that you can see how I pray."[77]

In his study on the pedagogy of the Prophet, al-Sadan[78] identifies other teaching methods used by the Prophet, such as lecturing, using aids and examples. However, all the examples given by the author fit perfectly into the three types of methods identified in our discussion. The Prophet Muḥammad would always take into account the individual differences between learners, which explain why he dealt with his companions according to their abilities and skills.

For instance, the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) chose Khālid and 'Abū 'Ubaydah to lead Muslims in battle due to their skill in military strategy,

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[76]Quoted in Che Noraini, "The Teaching and Learning Approaches of Prophet Muhammad," Paper presented at the International Conference "On *Teacher Education in the Muslim World (ICTEM*) held in Malaysia, 14-16, June, 2008.

[77]'Alwān, p. 99.

[78]Al-Sadan, "Preparing Teachers for Islamic Religious Education," p. 31.

leadership and ability. Similarly, he appointed Mu'ādh bin Jabal to teach the lawful and unlawful to Muslims in order to preach the message of Islam. 'Abū Dharr, one of the Prophet's companions known for his weak judgment, is reported to have asked the Prophet: "Why would you not appoint me as office administrator?" The Prophet patted him on the shoulder and said:

> Abū Dharr, you are weak, and this office requires trust. If I give the task to you, it could become the cause of humiliation and sorrow to you on the Day of Judgment. Nobody can be given an office with justification, especially one who cannot fulfill its obligations.[79]

It becomes clear from the prophet's response that he varied his methods in line with the strengths and weaknesses of the individuals involved.

The method of repetition is another approach used by the Prophet Muḥammad.[80] The Prophet would want everyone to understand him and would often repeat interpretations so that the meaning of his message would get through. 'Ā'ishah is reported to have said that the Prophet used to speak very clearly and distinctly so that his audience understand him. He would sometimes repeat a word or sentence many times so as to ensure comprehension. There is no contradiction however, in the fact that many of the prophet's teaching methods are capable of forming the core principles of a teaching methodology in an Islamic-based teacher preparation model.

In their various contributions to teachers' education, Muslim educational thinkers have attached much importance to the area of teaching methodology. Al-Fārābī[81] for example opines that the method of instruction must be appropriate to the level of learners, depending on whether people belong to the commoners or elites. What Al-Fārābī seems to offer is common knowledge among teachers.

Ibn Sīnā[82] on the other hand, does not restrict himself to any teaching method. He

> Sometime dictated his lessons to students, sometimes held discussions with them, and most times, gave them explanations, composed treatises or books to present his point of view or replied to some epistle. He would also advise his

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[79]Ibid.

[80]Ibid.

[81]See 'Ammār al-Ṭalbī, *Al-Farabi* (Paris: UNESCO, 2000), p. 1.

[82]See 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ṭalbī, *Avicenna,* (Paris: UNESCO, 2000), p. 1.

students to read, investigate and study, indicating to them particular reference books for every branch of learning.[83]

This shows the need for creativity in the teacher's selection of methods, and is considered a mark of strength in Ibn Sīnā's methodology.

Miskawayh[84] is another Muslim thinker deriving his methods from the methodology of the Qur'ān to include praising the student for his good things acceptable to adults, encouraging abstinence from such things that could hinder the attainment of laudable goals; training the student to admire generous characteristics, such as selflessness, warning the learner of punishment and instilling in him the fear of such punishment for any evil deed he may demonstrate. What Miskaway contributes in this regard revolves around the educational and psychological concept of motivation or reinforcement. Therefore, this is of central importance to teachers.

As for al-Ghazālī,[85] his prominent methods included the practice of linking teaching to concrete situations. The central theme of his contribution was the use of appropriate teaching methods and instructional aides in order to simplify and demystify the subject of teaching to students. This is in fact a significant contribution to the Islamic scholarship of teaching. According to Ibn Khaldūn's view[86] on teaching methodologies, teachers are enjoined to present their students with teaching material suited to their capacities. This is also a meet point addressed by al-Ghazālī and Ibn Khaldūn.

The specific principles derived above represent the Islamic description of a teaching methodology in an Islamic-based teachers' education program that would be used to produce teachers who will ultimately implement Islamic curricula.

9. Evaluation

Evaluation has been described as judgment which regards how good, useful or successful a thing is.[87] In the curriculum parlance, it is

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[83]Ibid.

[84]See Nadia Jamal al-Dīn, *Miskawayh* (Paris: UNESCO, 2000) p. 5.

[85]Al-Ghazālī, *'Ihyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn,* vol.1: p. 43.

[86]Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah,* vol. 3, p. 1248.

[87]See Longman's Dictionary, 2003.

seen as a kind of review of an educational experience with a view to adducing value.[88] It has been observed however, that

> Various theories of evaluation offered by different scholars, though convening on the aspiration to appraise the practicability, strengths and limitations of educational programs, serve various purposes and reflect the diverse practices from which the evaluators perceive curriculum, education and experience in general.[89]

Approaches to evaluation have been classified under different models including the "goal-setting" model, the "product" model, the "clinical supervision" model, and the "artistic or naturalistic" model.[90] The relevance of this classification to the present discourse lies in the fact that they all share a common feature. They assume that teachers do what they do because they possess aims of one sort or another. Evaluation has two amiable allies, namely measurement and assessment. Notwithstanding the interrelatedness of the three educational concepts, curricularists have been able to set down clear distinctions and differentiations between them. For instance, measurement is described as

> The application of preset criteria or psychometric instruments to determine to what extent a subject (student) displays a specific characteristic or masters a skill (objectives). Examples of such measurements are the retention rate (memorisation) of a multiplication table (mathematics) or the ability to identify the various species of frogs (biology).[91]

Assessment is merely the appraisal of achievement at the individual (student) level, whereas evaluation, on the other hand, "starts when we make inferences from the date recorded" and make judgmental statements in order to express the value of the achievements recorded. For instance, an attempt to see or know how far a student has gone in learning the subject matter is a kind of assessment, the product of which may only be made intelligible through a statement such as '80%' which itself is merely a value-free measurement. It is only when such a learner has been declared as having passed with distinction, on account of her/his high grade (i.e. 80%) that evaluation could be said to have taken

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[88]James MacDonald, and Dwight Clark, *A radical Conception of the Role of Values in Curriculum,* p. 89

[89]Hamadi Dhaou, *Analysis and Evaluation of the Islamabad Curriculum Design: Implications to Educational Theory and Practice in the Muslim World.* Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, International Islamic University Malaysia, p. 78.

[90]Ibid.

[91]Ibid.

place. The centrality of educational goals to the concept of evaluation has been clearly articulated by Tyler when he wrote:

> If efforts for continued improvement are to be made, it is very necessary to have some conception of the goals that are being aimed at. These educational objectives become the criteria by which materials are selected, content is outlined, instructional procedures are developed and tests and examination prepared. [92]

Tyler seems to have given a direction to those who were later concerned with teacher's evaluation. Most of them subscribed to his view by emphasising in their various evaluation models of the need for the formation of personal and pedagogical aims. For instance, Iwanicki,[93] who advocates a goal-setting evaluational model, urges "teachers to conduct self-evaluation, identify respects in which they need to improve so as to help students and develop a 'contract' specifying their goals for improvement." This implies that there is a need for the statement of specific tasks that are expected of the learner after the learning experience. In a similar vein, Jones,[94] an advocate of the product model, lays great stress on the "detailed identification of goals for student's performance." It is obvious that this position is in many respects a further articulation of Iwanicki; as demonstrated earlier. Gall,[95] in representing the clinical-supervision model of evaluation, attaches importance to planning and post-observational sessions in which the intentions of the teachers are examined and modified if necessary by the supervisor. Gall advocates a post-evaluation feedback system from stakeholders in education. Yet Sergiovanni,[96] an advocate of the artistic model takes a step further in his treatment of possible pedagogical aims by listing certain types of outcomes that teachers may anticipate. The unique feature of Sergiovanni's view in this respect is his emphasis on the need to classify and typify educational outcomes for effective administration. Yet, one thing which seems common in all the evaluation models identified so far is the correlation between educational aims and teacher's evaluation. One does not need to ask why this is so; in consideration of the fact that unless there is a statement of aims, goals, or purposes; there will be nothing to evaluate. This has been

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[92]Tyler, *Basic principles of Curriculum and Instruction*, p. 9.
[93]W. Doyle and K. Carter, "Academic Tasks in Classrooms," *Curriculum Inquiry,* 14: 129-49.
[94]Ibid.
[95]Ibid.
[96]Ibid.

accepted as a truism in educational vernacular all over the world; not being restricted to any section of the globe.

10. Implications for the Contemporary Muslim World

In the contemporary Muslim world, Muslim educators have often called attention to the inconsistency of learning experiences with educational objectives; especially with respect to spiritual and moral development. For instance, Rosnani identifies "the way we teach and evaluate educational objectives as the root of the problem of education in the Muslim world." She observes that educational objectives among Muslims are "not screened" by their own educational philosophy but rather "by the Western, secular, and liberal philosophy of education." She emphasizes the need for Muslim teachers to "dispel the notion that evaluation is synonymous with giving the 'paper and pencil'" test and to make the evaluational procedure more consistent with the educational objectives of the curriculum in order to avoid making the evaluational procedure "the focus of the students' attention and even that of the teachers" rather than the curriculum objectives that have been set up. She laments the undesirable situation and offers an ameliorative proposal:

> We should expect some changes in student's behaviour since these are the objectives but unfortunately, students will often score highly on paper and pencil tests but not exhibit the expected moral behaviour. Thus the curriculum ought to be revised with respect to the learning experiences offered to them, the instructional method, and the kind of evaluation administered. [97]

Here, Rosnani speaks about the significance of educational goals, teaching strategies and modes of evaluation in a curriculum. Evaluation, as she has mentioned, should not be synonymous with giving a "paper and pencil" test. Rosnani strongly believes that for an Islamic-based evaluation to evolve, we should justify our choices with our own educational philosophy with respect to the objectives, before using those objectives as criteria to evaluate the success of our choices. However, her ameliorative proposal falls short of giving practical, specific details on which the situation should be addressed. Notwithstanding, to derive the core principles of such an evaluational method to serve the Islamic purposes–as suggested by Rosnani–this study feels the need to examine the concept of evaluation in the Islamic tradition as espoused by the

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[97]Rosnani Hashim, The Reconstruction of an Islamic-Based Teacher Education Programme, in Ashraf, A (ed) *Muslim Education Quarterly*, (vol. 14), No. 2.

Qur'ān. It therefore becomes imperative to turn first to the Holy Qur'ān which is replete with injunctions on *thawāb* (reward) and *'iqāb* (punishment); both related to *hisāb* (judgment) which is a product of accountability and evaluation.

In a tradition by Nu'man bin Sa'd, the Prophet Muḥammad gives a clear picture of Divine reward and punishment. He says: "When the Almighty Allah says in the Qur'ān: "The Day We shall gather the pious and righteous persons to the Most Gracious (Allah), like a delegation (presented before a king for honour)," (Q. 19: 85), the honour talked about will be in various dimensions. They will not be allowed to walk on legs but rather carried on horseback; the horses too will be of a worthy stock the likes of which have never been seen by mankind. At the gate of al-Jannah, they will be received by Allah's angels as Allah has said: (And the Angels will meet them, (with the greeting): "This is your Day which you were promised" (Q. 21: 103).

As far as sinners are concerned, Allah Almighty says: "And We shall drive the disbelievers to Hell, in a thirsty state (like a thirsty herd driven down to water)" (Q. 19: 87), and in another injunction, explains their plight saying: "Those who will be gathered to Hell (prone) on their faces, such will be in an evil state, and most astray from the Straight Path" (Q. 25: 34). The relevance of the Qur'ānic illustrations to the educational concept of evaluation can be better appreciated in light of another Qur'ānic injunction which says:

> And say: Work (righteousness), soon will Allah observe your work, and His messenger, and the Believers, soon will ye be brought back to the Knower of what is hidden and what is open, then will He show you the truth of all that ye did. (Q. 9: 105).

The "truth of all that ye did", as mentioned in the above injunction, refers to the outcome of accountability or evaluation which is either success or failure. That the outcome or result of human accountability is determined by their actions and efforts are clearly articulated in another injunction of the Qur'ān, as follows: "So whoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it. And whoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it" (Q. 100: 7-8).

The message contained in the various verses of the Qur'ān should be studied with a specific intent for the systematic application of the verses as part of the core principles of an Islamic-based evaluational method. The common denominators in all the verses imply that good deeds are justly rewarded and that evil deeds are appropriately punished.

The implication of this is that a student's ability to demonstrate a good mastery of the subject matter should be rewarded accordingly, while failure to do so must not be encouraged.

Yet, along the path of the foregoing, Muslim thinkers have contributed significantly to the discourse on teacher evaluation. Al-Fārābī [98] for instance, argues that the aim of examination is to find out a learner's level in the field being studied. According to him, the questions asked could either have an educational or experimental character. The latter concerns questions asked by a student expected to know something so as to demonstrate that knowledge, while the former has to do with a person testing herself/himself to ascertain if he has made a quantitative or methodological mistake. In his *'Iḥṣā al-'Ulūm*, al-Fārābī, enumerates available instruments to help check the compass, the ruler, the scales, the abacus, and the astronomic summary tables which are few in number yet applicable to many things. [99] Al-Fārābī also asserts that evaluation should not only be restricted to a test of knowledge, and that intelligence can also be tested. He identifies the ability to discriminate in addition to the capacity for deductive and critical reasoning and the ability to understand the relationship between isolated pieces of information and grasp the links between them to belong to the "family" of intelligence. He further emphasizes that one of the most important ways to recognize intelligence would be through mathematical ability. [100] Al-Fārābī's efforts would have been complemented if he had developed a specific instrument for the evaluation of the various domains he himself identified. His failure to take a further step constitutes a major lacuna in his contribution.

Furthermore, it may be observed that as meaningful as al-Fārābī's treatment of evaluation is, no aspect of it seems to have been directly grounded on the Holy Qur'ān or *Ḥadith*. Its Islamic-based nature may not be easily established, though one may not be able to easily dismiss it as non-Islamic either. As regards to Ibn Sīnā [101] who is reputed for his original thinking and distinctive educational view in addition to being "the leader of a philosophical school which influenced education both in the Islamic East and the Christian West," evaluation should be accompanied with either reward or disapproval as the ease may be. Ibn

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[98]'Ammār Ṭalbi, *Al-Farābī*, p. 7.
[99]Ibid.
[100]Ibid.
[101]'Abd al-Rahmān al-Naqib, *Avicenna*, p. 9.

Sīnā believes that when a learner is rewarded, he will see his "potential as having been recognised and will have esteem for it, and be all the more motivated to excel in it and to explore all its secrets." There is no gainsay that one can easily feel the influence of the holy Qur'ān in Ibn Sīnā's approach to evaluation as demonstrated in his views here especially with respect to the concepts of reward and disapproval. For al-Ghazālī however, evaluation of prospective teachers should not be restricted to knowledge but also character and practical application of the subject of learning.[102] This shows that al-Ghazālī's view on evaluation covers all domains of learning, and is adequate and all-embracing. Yet what matters most in this respect is the Islamic nature of the contributions made by various Muslim scholars and thinkers. These views constitute a catalogue of what Islam has to offer in the field of evaluation and to show why Muslims should not continue to train their teachers along Western educational lines. These are scholarly contributions made by Muslim thinkers grounded on the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, consisting of core principles for an Islamic-based teachers' preparation program. In fact, they offer the much needed ingredients for the evolution of a truly Islamic-based teaching and evaluational method capable of fulfilling the role of an effective alternative to the dominant Western teacher's educational methodology.

11. Conclusion

This paper has exposed the degree of imitation, borrowing, and importation of Western, secular pedagogical principles and evaluational methods in the contemporary Muslim education. The paper has provided an analytical account of the Islamic-based pedagogy and evaluation as recorded in the Islamic tradition. It argues that the dominant methods of teaching and evaluation in today's Muslim schools are grossly unfaithful to Islamic educational teachings. The paper has established that there has always existed an important aspect of teaching in the Islamic tradition and buttressed the said position with illustrations from the Qur'ān. It has argued that evaluation should not be synonymous with the giving of the "paper and pencil" test. It also has argued that for an Islamic-based evaluation to evolve, we should justify our own educational philosophy with our choices with respect to the objectives before using them as criteria to evaluate success. The paper has derived the core principles of such an evaluational method that will be able to serve the Islamic

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[102]Al-Ghazālī, *'Ihyā,* vol.3: p. 199.

purposes as suggested in the examination of the concept of evaluation in the Islamic tradition and as espoused by the Qur'ān. The paper moreover has articulated the implications of evaluation of Qur'ānic concepts such as *thawāb and 'iqāb* (Divine reward and punishment) both of which are contingent upon *ḥisāb* (i.e. judgment), which itself is a product of accountability and evaluation. Likewise, it has established that evaluation should not only be restricted to the test of knowledge, but rather argued that intelligence and morals may also be tested. The paper has concluded that only principles and methods grounded on the primary sources of Islamic tradition are adequate in serving the pedagogical and evaluational needs of the Muslims, and also has offered an ameliorative proposal in the form of an Islamic-based teaching and evaluational method.