AL-SHAJARAH

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THE CONCEPT OF *MURABBI* IN MUSLIM EDUCATION WITH REFERENCE TO SELECTED TEACHING METHODS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (ﷺ)

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Abstract

The concept of education in Islam is markedly different from that seen from a secular Western viewpoint. For Muslims, teaching is considered as the noblest of professions, while the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is known to be the greatest educator of all time. The focus of this paper is to explore the meaning of the concept of murabbī (Muslim educator) and then to consider some selected pedagogical practices of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) which were used to guide and educate the early Muslim community. It is hoped that the pragmatic and spiritual nature of the Holy Prophet's pedagogical practices will serve as a role model and an inspiration and for both Muslim and non-Muslim teachers and educators in today's world and the the world of the future, inshallah.

Keywords: *Murabbi;* Muslim education; teaching methods.

INTRODUCTION

Allah Almighty, the Creator of the universe, outlined clearly in His revealed book, the Holy Qur'ān, the mission of His Messengers in a verse about the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in Sūrah *Al-Jumuᶜah*, 'It is He Who has sent amongst the Unlettered an apostle from among themselves, to rehearse to them His Signs, to sanctify them, and to instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom, although they had been, before, in manifest error" (Qur'ān 62:2). This verse outlines the noble educational task entrusted to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ); to teach what is good, to purify man from evil and to instill positivity towards the Creator and to all mankind. This task was assigned, not only to the Prophets, but to all those in positions of authority or responsibility. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, in a well-known hadith (tradition) that was narrated by Ibn ᶜUmar:

> I heard Allah's Apostle saying, 'All of you are guardians and responsible for your wards and the things under your care. The Imam (i.e., ruler) is the guardian of his subjects and is responsible for them and a man is the guardian of his family and is responsible for them. A woman is the guardian of her husband's house and is responsible for it. A servant is the guardian of his master's belongings and is responsible for them.' I thought that he also said, 'a man is the guardian of his father's property and is responsible for it. All of you are guardians and responsible for your wards and the things under your care.[1]

This concept of guardianship extends to all those entrusted with any kind of responsibility, such as leaders, parents and especially teachers, who rather than being seen as mere employees whose job it is to transfer knowledge and information to their students, are required to oversee the well-being of their wards and take care of them like a shepherd watches over his flock, by night and by day, protecting them from harm and guiding them to good.

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[1] Muḥammad bin Ismāʾīl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Taḥqīq: Muḥib al-Dīn al-khaṭīb* (Cairo: Al-Maktabah al-Salafiyyah, 1ˢᵗ Edition, 1400 A.H.) Hadīth No.7138.

The aforementioned Ḥadīth clearly points out the great trust shouldered by people in positions of power and authority who will be answerable to Allah (ﷻ) on the Day of Judgment about their responsibilities and duties and how they performed them.

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is also reported to have said, "There is no Muslim whom Allah places in a position of authority over people and is not sincere towards them that will smell the fragrance of Paradise."[2] This hadith clearly indicates how negligence and lack of commitment on the part of guardians can lead one to hellfire, because of the enormity of the harm caused to the individuals concerned, as well as to society. These sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) highlight the noble task entrusted to educators. Far from being a nine-to-five occupation, Muslim teachers are required to be committed to each individual student, taking on the role of parent, mentor and guardian in an effort to ensure that all students' needs are catered for, whether they be physical, intellectual, emotional or spiritual. Moreover, teaching in Islam is not simply a matter of imparting intellectual knowledge in the classroom, but requires the application of this knowledge both inside and outside the classroom, by means of good behavior (*akhlāq*), a healthy lifestyle, moral values, strong faith and a positive attitude in all one's dealings and interactions with others. Teaching in Islam is indeed a lofty calling.

For Muslims, the reason that teaching is seen as a noble profession is because teachers, particularly at the elementary level, are required to instill '*adab*' (morality) into young children. This is illustrated by the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), "There is no gift that a father gives his son more virtuous than good manners."[3] In another hadith, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) explained how raising righteous daughters serves as a means of protection for parents from the hellfire. It was narrated by Jabir bin Abdullah (r.a.) that the messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Anyone who has three

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[2] Muḥammad ibn ʾĪsā al-Tirmidhī. *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*. Taḥqīq: Aḥmad bin Muḥammad Shākir (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʾIlmiyyah. P. 1952. Ḥadīth No. 13509. 2ⁿᵈ Edition. 1395 A.H., 1975 A.C.) Ḥadīth No: 7150.

[3] Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī. *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*. (Maktabah al-Tarbiyah al-ʾArabiyyah Li Duwal al-Khalīj. 1ˢᵗ Edition. 1408 A.H.), 266. Ḥadīth No. 977.

daughters and provides for them, clothes them and shows mercy to them will definitely enter the Garden." A man from the people said, "And two daughters, Messenger of Allah?" He said, and two."[4] One might ask, why this focus on *adab* (morality) over other aims of education such as education for work or citizenship? The answer may be that knowledge-transfer is relatively simple compared to instilling values. Designing and delivering effective lessons that are cognitively and affectively engaging for students require the teacher to plan and deliver a variety of resources, tasks and activities in a variety of learning environments to satisfy a list of behavioral objectives that make up a syllabus. However, molding students' characters, faith and behavior requires time, effort and a great deal of wisdom and patience on the part of the teacher. Such is the task of the Muslim teacher who strives to deliver effective lessons as well as develop moral character in students. Like the prophets of the past, the Muslim teachers must endeavor to impart knowledge and guide students in every aspect of their lives. This is in contrast to some modern secular views of education where knowledge is seen as a commodity and faith and values are considered relegated to the personal domain. On the current trend towards the commodification of education, Yedullah Kazmi[5] has this to say:

> When education takes its cues from economic imperatives, the body of knowledge to be taught is viewed as a commodity the value of which is determined by the needs of the market on the one hand, and students as human capital resource to fuel the engine of economic growth on the other. The old ideals of nurturing ethical integrity and intellectual maturity among students, although occasionally paid lip service to, yet in actual fact are sacrificed to the gods of economic development.

Another example taken from the life of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

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[4] Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Adab al-Mufrad Li al-Imām al- Bukhārī*. (Dār al-Ṣiddīq. 1ˢᵗ Edition. 1414 A.H.), 58. Hadīth No. 2463.

[5] Kazmi, Yedullah. "The Notion of Murabbi in Islam: An Islamic Critique of Trends in Contemporary Education." *Islamic Studies* 38, no. 2 (1999): 209–33.

that shows him guiding a young man to the right path was narrated by Abdullah Ibn Abbas (r.a.) who reported,

> One day, I was riding behind the Prophet (ﷺ) when he said, "O boy! I will instruct you in some matters. Be watchful of Allah (Commandments of Allah), He will preserve you. Safeguard His Rights, He will be ever with you. If you beg, beg of Him Alone; and if you need assistance, supplicate to Allah Alone for help. And remember that if all the people gather to benefit you, they will not be able to benefit you except that which Allah had foreordained (for you); and if all of them gather to do harm to you, they will not be able to afflict you with anything other than that which Allah had pre-destined against you. The pens had been lifted and the ink had dried up.[6]

We see here a lesson for Muslim educators on the importance of instilling deep faith and reliance on God into the hearts of the youth i.e., that nothing can help or benefit one besides Allah (ﷻ). This is very liberating and empowering concept, yet one which is challenging to convey to young people.

The following Qur'ānic verse acclaims the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to be the best of leaders and role models among mankind: 'Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah' (Qur'ān 33: 21). The above verses and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) are a testimony to the pivotal role played by Muslim educators who also need to be role models and leaders of society. Michael H. Hart, in his book, '*The 100 Most Influential Persons in History*' ranked the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in number one place for spiritual leadership and as a role model of virtuous living[7]. It is for these reasons and more, that the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was successful in guiding

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[6] Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī. *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*. (Maktabah al-Tarbiyah al-ʾArabiyyah Li Duwal al-Khalīj. 1ˢᵗ Edition. 1408 A.H.), 266. Ḥadīth No. 977.

[7] Michael H. Hart, *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History* (Carol Publishing Group, 1978).

and educating the first Muslim *ummah* (nation), making him the best exemplifier of the concept of *murabbī*.

   In the light of this, the paper applies an analytical research methodology to present firstly, the concept of education in Islam, followed by a comparison of the views of Islam and the West on education. After this, the concept of Murabbi is elaborated before presenting selected pedagogical practices of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The paper concludes by urging teachers, students and educators to apply the teaching practices from both Western and Islamic sources in order to achieve a more balanced and comprehensive approach to education.

EDUCATION IN ISLAM

There is no one word in the Arabic language that encompasses the full meaning of education as presented by Islam. The word 'education' is often translated as *'tarbiyah'*, deriving from the verb *'rabbā'* (to grow). This in turn originated from the word *al-rab* (The Lord) a name that refers only to the Almighty Allah. Other names of Allah that are associated with the word *tarbiyah* are *mālik al-mulk* (The Owner), *al-qayyum* (The Guardian), and *al-munᶜim* (The Granter).[8] It could be seen that *tarbiyah* is mainly about reform, making amendments and removing harm. *Tarbiyah* also implies 'creating something gradually until complete,[9] which suggests that it is something that happens gradually. Another interpretation of the word *tarbiyah* is a process of psychological development through progressive training. The expression, in Arabic, '*rabbaytu al-walad* (I educated the child) means that the child's aptitudes and behavior were strengthened, disciplined and made righteous (*sāliḥ*) within a particular context.'[10] Cook associates three Arabic terms with the concept of 'education'. Firstly, *taᶜlīm* which is derived from the root word '*ʾalima*' (to know); secondly, *tarbiyah* from the root word

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[8] Ibrāhīm Anīs, *Al-Muʿjam Al-Wasīt (Al-Wasīt Dictionary)*, vol. 1 (Dār al-Daʿwah, 1968), 321.

[9] Al-Raghib al-Asfahānī, *Mufradāt Fī Gharīb Al-Qurʾān (Explain the Strange Vocabulary in the Qur'an)*, 1 ed. (Bayrūt: Dār al-Maʿrifah, 1998), 190.

[10] Jamīl Salībā, *Al-Muʿjam Al-Falsafī (Philosophical Lexicon)* (al-Sharikah al-ʿAlamiyah Lilkitāb, 1994), 30.

rabbā (to increase or grow) spiritually and ethically and thirdly
ta'dīb, which comes from the root word *aduba* (to be well-mannered
socially) [11]. Halstead reiterates Cook's three terms for education
explaining *tarbiyah* as the nurturing and guiding of a child to
maturity. *ta'dīb* therefore represents moral-social development, while
taᶜlīm means to impart knowledge. Cook considers all three to be
fundamental components of Islamic education. [12]

For the purpose of defining education in Islam, this paper
referred to four main Islamic sources: Al-Ghazzāli, an influential
Muslim scholar of the eleventh century CE; the Meccan conference
on Muslim Education in 1977, Syed Naquib al-Attas and Rosnani
Hashim, two contemporary Muslim scholars who have written
extensively on Islamic philosophy of education.

Al-Ghazzāli asserts that the main goal of education is to
nurture man to follow the teachings of religion (in this case Islam) for
the achievement of salvation in the hereafter. He puts less emphasis
on worldly gain which he refers to as the temporary or 'transient'
world [13].

During the Meccan conference on Muslim Education in 1977,
Muslim scholars concurred that the purpose of education in Islam
relates to three levels: the individual, the community and humanity at
large. The goal of Education, they maintained, should be, "the growth
of man in all his aspects: spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, physical,
scientific, linguistic, both individually and collectively, and that all
these dimensions should be oriented toward goodness and the
attainment of perfection." [14]

According to Al-Attas, the major aim of education is to
produce what he calls a "good man", both materially and spiritually

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[11] Cook, Bradley J. "Islamic Versus Western Conceptions of Education: Reflections
on Egypt." *International Review of Education* 45, no. 3-4 (1999), 339-58.

[12] Halstead, Mark. "An Islamic Concept of Education." *Comparative education* 40,
no. 4 (2004): 517-29.

[13] Nabil Nofal, "Al-Ghazali's Theory of Education. Foundation of Science and
Technology and Civilization". Accessed July 15, 2016, http://www.muslimheritage.
com/article/al-ghazalis-theory-education.

[14] Ghulam Nabi Saqeb "Some Reflections on Islamization of Education since 1977
Makkah Conference: Accomplishments, Failures and Tasks Ahead." *Intellectual
discourse* 8, no. 1 (2013), 40.

virtuous. He claims that this is in contrast with the main aim of secular Western education which is to produce individuals who will become "good citizens". Al-Attas goes on to define education as, "the recognition and acknowledgement progressively instilled into man, of the proper places of things in the order of creation, such that it leads to the recognition and acknowledgement of the proper place of God in order of being and existence." Another essential element of the 'educated man', for Al-Attas, is the cultivation of *adab* (good manners) which can be equated with the discipline of mind, body and soul. He supports this stance by citing the Prophet Muhammad's saying (ﷺ), "My lord educated me (taught me *adab*), and made my education (*ta'dīb*) most excellent." [15]

In the opinion of Rosnani Hashim, education in Islam affirms the importance of reason (*ᶜaql*) when interpreting divine texts.[16] Rather than having blind faith, Muslims, she holds, are encouraged to use their faculty of reasoning to question and explore new meanings and understandings within the framework of Qur'ān and hadīth. Rosnani Hashim supports Al-Attas claim that education in Islam seeks to produce 'good men' who recognize their role as God's vicegerents (*khalīfah*) on earth; to instill moral values into man as a social being; and to guide man to use knowledge for the betterment of self, society and the *ummah* (nation). Put it another way, education should not be solely for the purpose of political or material gain, but for personal and spiritual growth and development too. Lastly, Rosnani Hashim emphasizes that to attain such noble aims, the curriculum delivered to Muslim learners needs to integrate both revealed and acquired knowledge,[17] meaning that the teaching and learning of religious and scientific knowledge need to be balanced harmoniously.

> Rational sciences strengthen faith in God through the
> study of His creation and the discovery of its law which

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[15] Al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naquib. 1991. *The concept of Education in Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: International Islamic Thought of Civilization (ISTAC).

[16] Rosnani Hashim. *Educational Dualism in Malaysia: Implications for Theory and Practice*. (Oxford University Press, 2004).

[17] These terms were coined at the 'First World Conference on Muslim Education 1977'.

enables men to produce better technology. On the other hand, religious sciences inculcate faith directly through reflection on the Qur'ān and provide moral guidance for man to conduct his affairs in society. The intellect ability is needed to make use for both sciences to achieve the balance in man life.[18]

ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND SECULAR WESTERN EDUCATION

The definition and purpose of education in Islam and the West varies considerably. The first of these differences is an epistemological one. The main sources of education for Muslims are the Holy Qur'ān and the *sunnah* (lifestyle) of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). These two sources are *rabbāni* in nature, meaning that they are believed by Muslims to be divinely inspired and are thus devoid of errors or deficiencies. Allah (ﷺ) says in the Holy Qur'ān: "Should He not know, He that created? And He is the One that understands the finest mysteries (and) is well-acquainted (with them)" (Qur'ān 67:14). Consequently, the Islamic concept of education is holistic in nature, catering for all aspects of human development in a balanced way, i.e., man's physical, spiritual, intellectual and emotional well-being. No prejudice should be given to any one faculty at the expense of another, since this would lead to disharmony. In contrast, there is a tendency in modern Western education to emphasize the faculty of reason (ᶜ*aql*) over spirituality, resulting in a more materialistic view of life and education. This has resulted in a separation between religion and state, between worldly life and the life of the soul. Whilst being open to Western ideas and theories, Muslim educators add the proviso that such culture and ideas must be regulated to make them compatible with the two great texts of Islam, the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*.

The second important difference between education in Islam and the West lies in goal of education. As stated earlier, Western education seeks to produce individuals who will become productive

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[18] Rosnani Hashim, *Educational Dualism in Malaysia. : Implications for Theory and Practice.*

members of society, whereas Islam emphasizes the production of balanced men, who will become virtuous members of society. The meaning of balance here refers *al-ʿubūdiyah* (servitude to the Almighty) derived from the Quranic verse: "I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me." (Qur'ān 51: 56). Thus, the primary goal of human existence, for Muslims, is to worship Allah in everything they do, becoming His vicegerents (*khalīfahs)*. Yet, *al-ʿubūdiyah* is not limited to the performance of religious rituals alone; it encompasses all actions that are pleasing to God, i.e., good words, deeds and thoughts. In this way, instilling *al-ʿubūdiyah* in the truest sense of the word embodies the real purpose of acquiring knowledge in Islam, which is to live a fruitful and virtuous life. In contrast, secular Western education upholds some assumptions that are contrary to the Islamic worldview, in particular, the beliefs about man's origin and purpose:

> (a)Human beings owe their origin to an evolutionary process that began with inert matter. This negates the existence of a spirit or soul or a divine Creator; (b) human reason is supreme and reason alone is the ultimate means for achieving truth; (c) the sole source of moral values is social interaction and all values are relative to one's historical period and social situation; and lastly (d) the only type of human progress or development is physical or materialistic.[19]

MURABBĪ

An important term of central importance in Islamic education is the concept of *murabbī*. It is an umbrella term denoting the true role of a Muslim educator who attempts to impart "holistic development" of learners in accordance with Islamic educational philosophy. We have already seen how education in Islam covers the development of all aspects of the human being i.e., physical, intellectual, social, moral and spiritual. Thus, an educated Muslim should be an enlightened individual who practices Islam in all his dealings and endeavors. We have also seen how the goals and purpose of education differs from

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[19] Ibid.

the Islamic and Western perspective. Such differences are hardly surprising when one considers that even Muslim educators differ on matters of content and pedagogy, considering variations in environments and context. That is, the needs and motivations of learners and teachers vary greatly with time and place. For this reason, *tarbiyah* (education) requires a multitude of approaches on the part of the *murabbī*. Mohamad Johdi Salleh and Abdul Karnaen Nil explain that the concept of *murabbī* encompasses seven key roles that include '*mudarris*' (instructor), '*muᶜallim*' (expert-teacher), '*mu'addib*' (disciplinarian) and '*murshid*' (guide), to name but a few.[20] Let us now look at these different terms to reveal their differences in relation to the concept of *murabbī*.

The first term, *mudarris,* is defined by Mohamad Johdi and Abdul Karnaen as an instructor who encourages students to read, repeat and remember information. The word *mudarris* here is associated with the word '*madrasah*' (a religious school), where young Muslims traditionally studied Islamic education. A *mudarris* seeks to impart basic knowledge to the minds and hearts of students usually by direct instruction. Such kind of teaching may be associated with the lower levels of Bloom's cognitive domain, as students engage in a lot of memorization and repetition, to acquire the facts and skills quickly.

The second term, '*muᶜallim*', in the view of Mohamad Johdi and Abdul Karnaen, refers to an expert-teacher who has mastered the techniques of instruction such that students study a range of subjects in a variety of ways.[21] An experienced *muᶜallim* is able to organise information and learning activities using a variety of instructional strategies, some of which may be teacher-centered while others may be learner-centered. The result is an engaging learning experience in which students are stimulated and motivated through effective pedagogy and attractive learning environments. This kind of teaching tends to target the upper levels of Bloom's cognitive domain as it

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[20] Mohd Johdi Salleh and Abdul Karnaen Nil, "Analysis of 7M-Hierarchy of Teacher-Leader from Islamic Perspective" (Seminar Kebangsaan Dekan-Dekan Pendidikan Universiti Awam, University Tun Hussein Onn, Batu Pahat: Unpublished, 2015).

[21] Ibid, 5.

stimulates higher order thinking skills including application, analysis, evaluation and creation etc. So far, there is nothing unusual about the roles of *muᶜallim* or *mudarris* in relation to a Western perspective on education that comprises mastering content delivery, classroom management, materials design, record keeping and assessment. However, the term*'mu'addib'* (disciplinarian) brings a new dimension to the equation, namely, the issue of 'good' behavior or '*akhlāq'*. Unlike the *muᶜallim* or *mudarris, a mu'addib* seeks to train students in terms of *akhlāq* (good behavior) and '*adab'* (good manners) by means of setting a good example as well as by disciplining them through the use of positive and negative reinforcement. The challenge here, as with teaching morality in a Western context, lies in the fact that it is difficult to achieve. Getting children to follow orders for rewards and punishments is for some controversial and even questionable. In other words, allowing students to internalize values and apply them in good behavior is challenging, because there is a tendency for students to behave well in front of the *mu'addib,* but when the teacher is absent it may be a completely different thing. [22] Kohlberg's levels of moral development suggests that individuals move through three levels, as their awareness and understanding of morality grows.[23] Yet what is unclear is *how* this happens. After all, good behavior is a social skill that can only really happen in the presence of others. This may explain why some secular Western societies steer clear of moral education, believing it is up to each individual to decide what morality means and how it should be implemented.[24] This is in stark contrast to some Eastern societies that are more group-oriented and where conformity and duty to one's family and nation are given a high level of importance. The latter may explain why Muslim teachers are so concerned with *adab* and *akhlāq* compared to their Western counterparts, particularly at lower levels of education. Another possible reason for the shying away of most modern

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[22] Roger Straughan, *Can We Teach Children To Be Good? Basic Issues in Moral, Personal, and Social Education* (McGraw-Hill Education (UK), 1988).

[23] Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Philosophy of Moral Development, Moral Stages and the Idea of Justice* (Harper & Row, 1981).

[24] Often called moral relativism.

Western educators from the direct teaching of morality is that it is difficult to assess. After all, how can school teachers measure students' practice of moral values and virtues in their daily lives? To do so, would appear to some, to be almost self-defeating.

Moving on, we consider the term *'murshid'* which originates from the Arabic word *rashada* (to guide). Guidance is a common term in the Holy Qur'ān; the most famous example being the story of Moses and Al-Khidr *(John the Baptist)* where the latter shows Moses the spiritual realities behind life's events. Al-Ghazzāli, as cited by Mohamad Johdi and Abdul Karnaen, upholds that the real purpose of gaining knowledge is to achieve success in this world and the next.[25] This is a marked departure from the secular pursuit of knowledge for the citizenship, employment or productivity.

For some Muslims, the term *murshid* is associated with *sūfi* masters, who guides their followers (*murīds*) on a spiritual journey known as *'tarīqa'* (the path) through *'suluk'* (spiritual wayfaring). In this view, *suluk* necessitates *'suhbah'* (companionship) of the *murshid* (master) with the *murid* (devotee); the former of whom not only embodies good behavior, but transforms his devotee by means of 'spiritual transmission' and purification of the heart. To achieve this, the *murīd* must perform supererogatory acts of worship such as fasting, prayer and *zikir* (invocation) as outlined by the famous hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ):

> On the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), who said that the Messenger of Allah said: Allah (mighty and sublime be He) said: Whosoever shows enmity to someone devoted to Me, I shall be at war with him. My servant draws not near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory works so that I shall love him. When I love him I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks.

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[25] Salleh and Nil, "Analysis of 7M-Hierarchy of Teacher-Leader from Islamic Perspectives," 6.

> Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it. I do not hesitate about anything as much as I hesitate about [seizing] the soul of My faithful servant: he hates death and I hate hurting him. It was related by al-Bukhari.[26]

In this way, the disciple achieves a deeper level of '*īmān*' (faith), '*iḥsān*' (God consciousness) and '*qurb*' nearness to God. It is easy to see how this form of education goes far beyond the learning described by secular Western theorists like Vygotsky, Piaget or Bloom who define learning in terms of cognitive, affective or psychomotor domains.

Returning to the concept of *murabbī*, we see from the terms mentioned above that it comprises a number of characteristics and qualities that combine social, moral and spiritual development. For this reason it is a very challenging concept to implement. Another problem lies in the fact that a *murabbī* must aspire to embody the knowledge being taught, i.e., he should not only master the subject matter but must be able to impart it with good *akhlaq* and a high level of spirituality. Yedullah Kazmi considers a *murabbī* to be the perfect person to learn from because he not only teaches facts, but shows the learners how to behave, believe and put into practice their knowledge[27]; knowledge here being divided into two types - theoretical and personal. For theoretical knowledge, he argues, the text is not related to the author, while for personal knowledge, the text is the author himself. For Kazmi, the only way to understand the concept of *murabbī* is to live it. A *murabbī's* life is a text that puts theory into practice through a life of learning and virtue. The crisis with modern education systems, he argues, is that educational institutions are set up to teach only theoretical knowledge. Personal knowledge, Kazmi argues, cannot be taught in the classroom, where everything is scientific and measurable. In current education system, teachers may embody some of the qualities of a *murabbī*, when they endeavour to impart both theoretical and personal knowledge, yet it

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[26]   *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Book 1, Hadith 95.

[27]   Yedullah Kazmi, "The Notion of Murabbi in Islam: An Islamic Critique of Trends in Contemporary Education," *Islamic Studies* 38, no. 2 (1999): 209–33.

is extremely challenging for them to become true *murabbīs*. In sum, teachers need to be exemplary human beings, like the Prophets of the past, who personified what they taught in their everyday lives, as seen in the famous hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah (r.a.) in which the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is reported to have said: "I was sent to perfect good character."[28]

SELECTED TEACHING METHODS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (ﷺ)

The pedagogical methods derived from the life and dealings of the Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) with his family, friends, followers and even adversaries not only gained him universal recognition as one of the best teachers of all time, but also exalted him to the level of a true exemplar of the concept of *murabbī*. In an attempt to illustrate the comprehensiveness of the Prophet's role as a teacher and *murabbi*, Table 1 shows selected examples of the Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) teaching methods (on the right) alongside four main families of teaching methods identified by Joyce, Weil and Calhoun[29] and Petrina[30] representing a modern Western view of pedagogy.

It is evident that some of the strategies employed by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) are less common in modern Western pedagogy, in spite of the fact that he lived more than fourteen hundred years ago, in particular, those relating to *akhlāq*[31] and spirituality. After Table 1, follows a brief explanation of some selected prophetic pedagogical strategies along with examples (Abu Ghudda, 2003[32]; Che Nor Aini, 2014[33]).

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[28] Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (n.d.). *Musnad Aḥmad*. (Cairo: Mu'assasah Qurtubah).

[29] B. R. Joyce, M. Weil, & E. Calhoun, *Models of teaching* (7th Ed), (Boston: Allyn and Bacon 2004).

[30] Petrina, S. (in press). "Curriculum and Instruction For Technology Teachers", http://bit.do/dGySx

[31] A lack of faith and spirituality in Western Educational Philosophy is an overriding theme in the writings of Syed Naquib Al-Attas (1999) who argues for the acknowledgement of God as a primary goal of Muslim education.

[32] Abd al-Fattah Ghuddah, "Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) - The Perfect Teacher and His Teachings," (2003)   http://bit.do/dGCdt

[33] Che Noraini Hashim, *Issues in Values-Based Education in Malaysia*. (IIUM Press, 2014).

Table 1: Four Families of Teaching Methods & Selected Prophetic Pedagogical Strategies/Techniques

1) Social Interaction
   i. Partner & Group Collaboration
   ii. Role play
   iii. Jurisprudential Inquiry
	• Giving lectures & public speeches (1)
	• Using non-verbal communication (1)
	• Attracting students' attention
	• Practicing leadership with wisdom (*Hikmah*) (ii)
	• Applying Consultation techniques (*Shūra*) (ii & iii)
	• Applying study circle method (*halaqah*) (i)
	• Engaging in discussion & debate (i & iii)
	• Taking advantage of teaching moments (1)
	• Using storytelling with morals (i & ii)

2) Information Processing
   i. Inductive investigation & inquiry
   ii. Deductive investigation & inquiry
   iii. Memorization
   iv. Synectics (Techniques for creativity)
   v. Design & problem solving
   vi. Projects & Reports
	• Encouraging critical thinking (i & ii)
	• Applying problem solving techniques (i, ii & v)
	• Explaining with reasons and evidence (i & ii)
	• Using a step by step approach (iii)
	• Teaching using learning resources & analogies (i)
	• Using drawings and figures (iii, iv & v)
	• Using tangible examples (i, iii, iv)
	• Preparing the learner for the lesson (i & ii)
	• Repetition to facilitate understanding (iii)
	• Dividing materials into topics (i, ii, iii & iv)
	• Questioning techniques (i & ii):
	   o Encouraging questions
	   o Adding to students' answers
	   o Commenting on students' answers
	   o Allowing 'wait time' for students' answers
	   o Answering questions before being asked
	   o Deriving more benefit from questions

3) Personal
 	
   i. Indirect teaching
   ii. Awareness training & values clarification
   iii. Role modeling
	Inculcating Good Akhlaq (Behavior & Values)
	• Being a good role model (*uswatan hasanah*) by demonstrating good behavior (*Akhlāq*) e.g. honesty, humility, bravery, practicing what you preach, justice, avoiding bad language: labels, sarcasm etc. (ii & iii)

iv. Self-reflection	• Sharing fun & jokes with learners (i) • Calling out and remaining silent (i) • Giving examples without mentioning names (i) • Giving good advice (ii) • Applying fairness in assessment of learning (ii)
	Spirituality & Metaphysics • Making correct intentions e.g. sincerity to Allah (s.w.t) (ii & iv) • Inculcating faith (*Īmān*) (ii & iv) • Engaging in reflection (*Tafakkur*) (ii & iv) • Greeting by giving *salām* (iii)

4) Behavioral Modification
  i. Direct instruction (Demonstration & Presentation)
  ii. Anxiety reduction
  iii. Programmed instruction
  iv. Simulations
	• Using demonstration for practical skills e.g. prayer & *wudhū* etc. (i)
	• Using gestures (i)
	• Using physical contact when speaking (4)
	• Sensitivity to students' needs (ii)
	• Choosing suitable times for activities (ii)
	• Being sympathetic to learners (ii)
	• Not ovderbudening learners (ii)

Leadership & Advice

The methodologies adopted by the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) for teaching were relevant for all. Indeed, when his adversaries approached him to negotiate a peace treaty, they were astonished by his method of communication with his followers. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was the frontrunner of amity, exhibiting a plethora of techniques and skills used to deliver the message of Islam, the mastery of which assisted him in achieving his goals.

Al Ghazzāli and Ibn Taimiyyah assert that the ultimate objective of leadership is to prohibit wrongdoing and command to good. The prophet played the role of teacher and leader providing an exceptional model of guidance for his comrades. The following example is reported by Al Ghazzāli about a young Muslim named Muʿādh, who lived with the Prophet (ﷺ):

"O Muʿādh, I advise you: fear Allah, speak the truth, fulfil promise, pay up trust, give up breach of trust, save your neighbour, show kindness to orphans, be modest in talk, spread peace, do good deeds, stick to faith, earn knowledge about the Qur'an, love the next world, fear rendering of accounts...", O Muʿādh, I give you instruction: Fear Allah while passing by each stone, tree, and heaps of earth. Make repentance anew after committing any sin. Repent secretly for secret sin and openly for open sin."[34]

Study circle (*ḥalaqah*)

A traditional teaching technique which has been utilised since the time of the Prophet's (ﷺ) is the 'study circle', also known as '*ḥalaqah'*.   People learnt about Qur'an and Hadith sitting in a circle, usually on the floor, allows them to interact as a dynamic study group. The focus of such *Halaqas* is usually on issues and difficulties faced in everyday life, tending to be more informal. After the congregational prayers, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) regularly utilised the *Halaqah* teaching method where his followers would sit around him to learn from his teachings. In this way, there is a high likelihood that the teacher will be endeared to the students and vice versa, due to the informal in nature of the *halaqah* method. It also enhances learning and solidifies the ties of brotherhood.

The Prophet (ﷺ) used the *Halaqah* method when he began his mission to deliver the message of Islam to his close relatives and companions. In them, he always highlighted belief in one God and the Day of Judgement, advising them never to associate partners with Allah (ﷻ) but to worship Allah alone. The Prophet used *halaqahs* to reassure and preach to his companies with the result that faith and Islam were implemented successfully into the hearts and minds of his family and companions, granting them high momentum to perform *daʿwah* (Islamic preaching).

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[34] Bayhqī. *Kitāb al-Zuhd*. vol.2, 472. Hadith No. 962

Shūrā (consultation)

Every so often, teachers may need assistance from others to make
decisions or find solutions to problems related to teaching and
learning. In such cases, they may feel the need to discuss with
colleagues or sometimes even students in order to gain feedback and
suggestions. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) called this *shūrā*
(consultation), "...and consult them in affairs (of moment)" (Qur'an
3:159). According to Abdu Ghudda, *shūrā* not only helps the teacher,
but it also enhances students' confidence and sense of responsibility
without undermining the status of the teacher. Rather than indicating
weakness, it shows humility on the part of the teacher and also
empowers students and colleagues who feel that their opinions and
ideas are valued[35].

Discussion, debate and critical thinking

Inevitably, students ask many questions that require further
discussion in order for them to understand and take appropriate
action. For this reason, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) encouraged
open discussion promoting thinking and allowing his companions to
give share their ideas and draw conclusions. For example, a young
man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and asked permission to commit *Zinā*
(fornication). The people surrounded them and the Prophet conducted
a debate with the young man enquiring whether he would allow
others to commit *zinā* with his mother, his sister or his aunt? Once
the young man had understood the gravity of his error, the Prophet
placed his hand upon him saying: "O Allah, forgive his sin, purify his
heart and guard his chastity."[36] The Prophet's allowing the young
man to think and discuss in front of others was a successful strategy
resulting in the young man refraining from such immoral behavior in
the future.

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[35] Abd al-Fattah Ghuddah, "Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) - *The Perfect Teacher and
His Teachings*,"
[36] *Musnad Ahmed*. Vol. 5, 256. No. 22265.

Assessment

Like other effective teachers, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) evaluated the impact of his teaching on his followers, being mindful that questioning oneself is an effective method of self-evaluation. Once the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) tested Muʿādh ibn Jabal, whom he had appointed as a governor of Yemen. He asked Muʿādh: "In what manner would you punish transgression?" Muʿādh replied, "According to Allah's Book". He then enquired, "But what if the Book was not clear on a point?" Muʿādh replied, "I shall judge by the teachings (sunnah) of His Prophet. "And if you find nothing therein?" asked the Prophet (ﷺ). "Then I will exert myself to form my own judgment." The Prophet (ﷺ) was pleased with this reply and said: "Clearly Allah has selected the correct representative of His Messenger. Praise be to Allah who has guided the messenger of the Prophet (ﷺ) to that which pleases the Prophet (ﷺ)."[37]

In another instance, Abū Bakar al Ṣiddīq (r.a.), one of the Prophet's closest companions, was tested by the Prophet when he asked him whether Abū Bakar believed in the Prophet's ascent to the Heavens (*al-isra wal maʿraj*). Abū Bakar replied, "If Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) had told him of an even more fantastic journey, he would have believed without the slightest doubt."[38]

Problem Solving

Even before the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) had become a messenger, he gained the admiration and trust of many as a problem solver. This historical fact illustrates the character and problem-solving abilities of the Muhammad (ﷺ) before he was chosen by Allah to be a prophet. Once, a serious dispute between the tribes of the Quraish occurred during the time of the rebuilding of the *Ka'abah* (The Holy shrine in Mecca). Each tribe wanted the honour of lifting up the sacred black stone (*al-Ḥajar al-Aswad*) to be re-installed into the wall of the Ka'abah and this lead to a serious dispute. The dispute intensified and nearly resulted in physical altercation, upon which the

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[37] *Musnad Ahmed*. Vol. 5, 242. No. 22153.
[38] Byhaqī. *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah*. Hadith No. 680. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʾIlmiyyah).

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) devised an ingenious solution. He obtained
a piece of cloth and lay it on the ground.   He then ordered the black
stone to be place in the centre of the cloth and requested a member
from each of the four tribes to grasp a corner of the cloth. In this way,
each tribe was able to share in the honor of carrying the black stone
to the location where the stone was to be fitted. At this point, the
Prophet made the decision that he alone would lift the stone with his
two hands into its mounting. He did this knowing that had he allowed
any of the tribal representatives to place the stone into its mounting,
then conflict and disagreement would occur all over again.

Step by Step Approach

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) taught fundamental Islamic doctrines,
beliefs and guidelines to his followers using a 'step by step'
approach, known today as a 'problem solving' approach. He used this
method especially for teaching acts of worship, as it allows for steady
yet incremental learning. This is illustrated by a famous tradition
narrated by Imam Ahmad and Al Tirmidhī where the Prophet (ﷺ)
advised the individuals he had appointed as governors to take a step
by step approach when teaching Islam. For example, he advised
Muᶜādh ibn Jabal, the governor of Yemen, to call people to Islam first
by teaching the articles of faith (*shahādah*). Then if the people
obeyed him Muᶜādh should prescribe the five daily prayers. After
this, he advised Muᶜādh to explain the obligations of charity and so
on and so forth (See also Sahīh Bukhāri). In this way, the people
would not feel overburdened or confused but would be able to
understand and practice Islam more readily.

Sensitivity

The teaching methods adopted by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) took
into consideration the differing abilities and capacities of his
followers. In addition, he always selected the most suitable time and
duration of teaching for his 'students'. ᶜAbdullah ibn Masᶜud (r.a.)
narrates that, "the Prophet used to take care of us in preaching by
selecting the most suitable time, so that we might not be bored"[39]

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[39] *Bukahri*. Hadith 7146.

Moreover, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The lengthening of prayer by a man and the shortening of the sermon is a sign of his understanding (of faith). So lengthen the prayer and shorten the sermon, for there is a charm in (precise) expression".[40]

Using Drawings and Figures

The different learning styles and attention spans of students dictate that teachers should avoid lecturing for too long to avoid boredom. It also requires that teachers use a variety of resources to help learners understand. The following hadith is an example of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) explaining to his companions the reality of life and its troubles in graphic terms.

Abdullah Bin Masoud (r.a.) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) drew a square and then drew a line in the middle of it and let it extend outside the square. He then drew several small lines attached to that central line, saying, "This is the human being, and this, (the square) is his lease of life, encircling him from all sides, and this (line), which is outside (the square), is his hope, and these small lines are the calamities and troubles (which may befall him), and if one (calamity) misses him, another will snap (i.e., overtake) him, and if the other misses him, a third will snap (i.e., overtake) him."[41]

Repetition

It is narrated that the Prophet (s.a.w) sometimes repeated certain information three times. Abu Bakrah (r.a.) reported that: "We were with the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, when he asked, 'Shall I not narrate to you about the worst of the major sins?" They said: "Of course O Messenger of Allah!" He said: "Associating others with Allah and disobeying the parents." He said: "And he sat reclining and said: 'The false testimony.' Or he said: 'The false statement.'" He said: "So the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w) would not stop saying it until we said (to ourselves): 'If he would only stop."[42] In this hadith, the Prophet repeated the information to catch

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[40] *Saḥīḥ Muslim*. Vol. 3, 2. Hadith No. 2046. (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl).

[41] *Saḥīḥ al- Bukhārī*. Vol. 8. Book. 76. Hadith No. 426.

[42] *Sahih Bukhari,* 2511; *Sahih Muslim,* 87

the listener's' attention and emphasize the enormity of the sin. In the case of teachers, by adopting this approach of repeating words, phrases or sentences, they will gain the attention of students and drive the point home.

Questioning

Questioning is a common technique used by teachers everywhere to engage students and urge them to participate and think. The Prophet (ﷺ) often raised questions in a variety of ways i.e., he would ask a question and then allow the listener time to answer. For example, "It was reported by Mu'adh bin Jabal: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, 'O Mu'adh, do you know what is the right of Allah upon His servants?' I (Mu'adh) said, 'Allah and His Messenger know best' The Prophet said, 'to worship Him alone and to associate none in worship with Him. And do you know what is their right upon Him?' I (Mu'adh) said, 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' The Prophet said, 'Not to punish them if they do so."[43] On another occasion, the Prophet (ﷺ) asked a series of questions encouraging the listeners to think about the answers: "The people said, "O Allah's Messenger! Shall we see our Lord on the Day of Resurrection?" He replied, "Do you have any doubt in seeing the full moon on a clear (not cloudy) night?" They replied, "No, O Allah's Messenger!" He said, "Do you have any doubt in seeing the sun when there are no clouds?" They replied in the negative. He said, "You will see Allah (your Lord) in the same way."[44] In this narration we observe the listeners discussing and figuring out the answers to the Prophet's questions. A third example is when the Prophet asked a question as a kind of riddle to provoke creative thinking. Ibn Umar narrated that the Prophet said, "Amongst the trees, there is a tree, the leaves of which do not fall and it is like a Muslim. Tell me the name of that tree." Everybody started thinking about the trees of the desert areas. And I thought of the date-palm tree but felt shy to answer. The others then asked, "What is that tree, O Allah's Messenger?" He replied, "It is the date-palm tree".[45] In these example we see how the Prophet

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[43] *Sahih Bukhari* 6938, *Sahih Muslim* 30.
[44] *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Hadith7437, 7438.
[45] *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Hadith 159.

used questions to promote deep thinking and reflection on the part of the listeners.

Using Teaching & Learning Resources

Ibn Jābir in a Hadith records that the Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) used visual aids in his teaching. [46] He writes: "As we sat down before the Messenger, he drew a straight line on the sand and said: This is the straight path shown to Allah". Then he drew several other lines on the right and left sides of the straight line and said, "these are the paths to the Shaytān," (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."   (Qur'an 6: 53)

Using analogies

The Prophet (ﷺ) utilised examples adeptly to illustrate his points. An example of this was when he likened the relationship between Muslims to an ailing human body. He clarified that if one area of the body was suffering, the other parts of the body would feel pain and discomfort too. Other examples can be found in the Chapter of the Holy Qur'ān entitled 'The Dwellers of the Cave' (As-hābul Kahf). This story is a parallel for the acts of God, which at times seem unfathomable and enigmatic when viewed from the human perspective. However, as the story unfolds, the wisdom of these acts is discovered, yet only at a later stage.

Warnings and reprimands from Allah (s.w.t) to mankind are repeated in the Holy Qur'ān, and were recited by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as an example and a lesson for later generations. The severe punishments that befell nations of the past were a recompense for their wrongdoing and their denial of the teachings of their respective prophets. The Qur'ānic story of Moses and Pharaoh is such a story that highlights the struggle between good and evil and between truth and falsehood.

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[46] *Sunan Ibn Majah*- Arabic/English book reference : Vol. 1, Book 1, Hadith 11, in the *Book of the Sunnah*

Role Model

The Prophet (ﷺ) was an ideal role model in all circumstances and at all times. His deep desire to implement the ideology and ethics of the Qur'an required him to live by its teachings and in so doing, conveyed the message that lessons are best learnt through action or by *uswah* (role-modeling). In a well-known hadith, the wife of the Prophet, Saidatina ʿĀishah (r.a), was asked about the Prophet's character to which she replied: "His manners were the Qur'an."[47] It was understood to mean that the Prophet embodied all the teachings of the Qur'an in all his daily routines, making it clear that he was divinely guided as the ultimate role model for mankind.

Other examples of the Prophet's (ﷺ) kindness and mercy not only to humans, but to animals as well, were narrated by An-Nawawī in his Forty Hadith.[48] These include the Prophet rebuking a woman who abused a cat by tying it up until it starved to death. Such an actions, he warned will make one deserving of Hellfire. In another story a woman who gave water to a thirsty dog and persons who remove obstacles from the pathway of others are permitted to enter Paradise.

The Prophet (ﷺ) assisted with laying the foundations of the Mosque at Quba. He was first person to carry the bricks on his back to construct the mosque. Despite being able to instruct his followers to conduct this task, it was his preference to lead and teach by example. It is clear that this approach had a significant influence on his initial followers.

The Holy Qur'an confirms the excellence of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) as a role model for mankind in the following verse: "Verily in the Messenger are examples to those who seek Allah's mercy and good reward in the hereafter and to those who are in constant state of remembrance. (Qur'an 33: 21)

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[47] *Saḥīḥ Muslim*. Hadith No. 746.

[48] See Badi, Jamal. *Commentary of Forty Hadiths of an Nawawi, 2001 http://bit.do/dYpEf.*

Demonstrating Virtues & *Akhlaq*

The character and personality of teachers can have a profound effect on students affect. For example, if a teacher smiles then students will feel comfortable and relaxed. In addition, treating students kindly gives them a sense of security and motivation to study. Allah (ﷻ) described the personality of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as 'exalted': "And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character." (Qur'an 68:4). That is, the *akhlāq* (behavior) of the Prophet (s.a.w) was such that it qualified him to lead people to the right path. In another verse, Allah (s.w.t) describes the prophet as being kind and merciful: "Now hath come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves... most kind and merciful." (Qur'an 9:128); and in another place: "...Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee... (Qur'an 159:3). Thus, teachers need to possess good character and noble *akhlāq* in order to exemplify their teaching and educate students properly.

Playfulness and fun

In today's world, students are stimulated by so many types technology that they become easily bored with conventional teaching resources. Therefore, teachers must find new ways to stimulate students and make classes interesting and motivating. To this end, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) shared anecdotes and 'true' jokes, as a way of attracting his audience. In the following hadith, reported by Abu Hurairah, indicates that behind the sense of humour of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) there was a serious message, "O Messenger of Allah, do you joke with us?" The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Verily, I do not say anything but the truth."[49]

Giving Examples without Mentioning Names

It is common for teachers to remind students about their behavior both inside and outside the classroom. However, teachers need to be tactful when selecting ways to correct students' mistakes. An

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[49] *Sunan At-Tirmidhi* ,1990.

effective strategy exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was the idea of commenting on a particular type of misbehavior without mentioning the name of the perpetrator. In this way, the person concerned would know that he or she is being talked about, but without feeling humiliated, as in the following hadith narrated by Malik bin Anas (r.a.); "A group of three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet asking how the Prophet worshipped (Allah), and when they were informed about that, they considered their worship insufficient and said, "Where are we from the Prophet as his past and future sins have been forgiven." Then one of them said, "I will offer the prayer throughout the night forever." The other said, "I will fast throughout the year and will not break my fast." The third said, "I will keep away from the women and will not marry forever." Allah's Messenger came to them and said, "What do you think about people who say (I will pray all night, I will fast every day and I will not marry)? By Allah, I am more submissive to Allah and more afraid of Him than you; yet I fast and break my fast, I do sleep and I also marry women. So he who does not follow my tradition in religion, is not from me (not one of my followers).[50]

Tafakkur (Reflection)

The Holy Qur'an is replete with examples urging mankind to reflect. The main purpose of such reflection or '*tafakkur*' in the opinion of Malik Badri[51] is to elevate our thinking from the created to the Creator. According to him, by reading the signs (*ayat*) in the creation, one's faith and conviction are deepened, since the complex and systematic nature of the universe suggests that there must be a 'Master Architect'. Qur'an supports this idea in the following verse, "Soon will We show them our Signs in the (furthest) regions (of the earth), and in their own souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the Truth. Is it not enough that thy Lord doth witness all things?" (Qur'an, 41:31). In another place, Allah (s.w.t) says in Qur'an: "Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the

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[50]   *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Book 67, Hadith 1

[51]   Malik Badri. "Contemplation: an Islamic Psychospiritual Study", *Human Behavior Academy,* 2000.

alternation of night and day,- there are indeed Signs for men of understanding." (Qur'an 3:190).

Storytelling with a Moral

It is well-known that the pre-Islamic Arabs revered poetry and storytelling such that poets and storytellers were given a special status in the Arab community. Storytelling greatly enhances the learning process for all ages and abilities, making the information contained in it memorable and enjoyable. This is something that the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) appreciated and is the reason that Qur'ān contains many stories of past events, prophets and peoples. Through the stories of the Qur'ān, the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) was able to share the miracles displayed by previous prophets, their messages and the methods they used for *da'wah* (preaching), as well as the fate that befell them for opposing their messengers. These events serve as a stark reminder of the punishments prepared for unbelievers and the rewards promised to believers. Among the stories mentioned in Qur'ān are those of: Nūh (Noah), Ibrahīm (Abraham), Mūsā (Moses), ʿĪsā (Jesus) to mention but a few. No doubt, the moral lessons contained in them will fill the heart of the listener with fear and love.

The Qur'an also mentions the stories of pious individuals who were not prophets but were men or women of wisdom, such as: 'The People Who Were Burnt in the Pit' (*as-habul ukhdud*), *Ṭālut*, The Dwellers of the Cave (As-hāb al-kahf), *Jālut* (Goliath), *Dhul Qarnayn (Alexander)*, *Maryam* (Mary) and *Āsiya* (Pharaoh's wife). In addition, there are stories relating to events that occurred during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), namely: The Ascension to Heaven (*al-isra' wal-maᶜraj'*), The Night Journey to Jerusalem and his migration to Madinah (*al-hijrah*) and the notorious battles of *Badr*, *Uḥud*, *Ḥunayn* amongst others.

Lecture and Public Speech Method

It was a practice of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) to use the method of lecturing, in the form of sermons and public speeches, after congregational prayers and at gatherings or special events. He piqued the interest of his audience and inspired them by employing techniques such as: voice projection, varying facial expressions and

methodical organization. The message disseminated by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is still treasured by Muslims all over the world, irrespective of race or religious sect. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) emphasised the importance of conveying the message to the entire *ummah* (nation), and delivering it from generation to generation and from location to location. The most famous example of this was in his 'Farewell Speech', where he praised and thanked Allah (s.w.t) before summarizing eloquently the most important principles of Islam. He began his speech by saying, "O People! Lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore, listen carefully to what I am saying and take these words to those who could not be present here today."[52] It is noteworthy that this speech was not only directed to the local community of Muslims, but to the whole of humanity, irrespective of race, religion or time. For this reason, he used the expressions "O People" or "O Mankind' several times in his speech and omitted the words "O Muslims" or "O Believers".

The Qur'an confirms that the Prophet's teachings are applicable to all people in all locations by saying: "We have not sent you but as a universal (Messenger) to mankind, giving them glad tidings, and warning them, but most understand not." (Qur'an 34:28)

Demonstration

There are some topics or skills that are best learned by demonstration. An example of this is the second pillar of Islam after faith i.e., the performance of prayer. The Qur'ān commands Muslims to pray, but it does not provide any explanation of the detailed steps of the prayer. The Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) is reported to have said, "Perform your prayers in the same manner as you have seen me doing."[53] The same is true of other acts of worship like ablution, which was taught by the Prophet (s.a.w) himself to his followers.

Another example of teaching by demonstration is the performance of Hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca. Indeed the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Learn your rituals (by seeing me performing them), for I do not

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[52] *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. Hadith No. 1905.

[53] *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Hadith 6008.

know whether I would be performing Hajj after this Hajj of mine."[54] The Prophet's companions were able to be with the Prophet during the entire performance of Hajj, learning morals, rituals and spiritual lessons from the Prophet's example. Thousands travelled in droves to Mecca for the opportunity to accompany him and learn from him. After which they disseminated what they had learnt to others, who in turn passed it on to others, enabling the Prophet's teachings to be transmitted from generation to generation up to today.

These Hadiths support the idea that teachers sometimes need to demonstrate their lessons through actions, if they want their students to learn easily and effectively.

CONCLUSION

Education is such a broad concept that it is difficult, in a single paper, to do justice to the wide variety of views and positions held on what it means and how best it should be accomplished. Indeed, the conceptions of education held by Muslims and non-Muslims are by no means monolithic. There exist many groups and schools of thought among both who differ on the aims, methods and ways of assessing learning. Having said this, in recent times, there appears to be a general shift, particularly on the part of Western educationists, towards secularism; while in the case of Muslim educators, a polarization seems to have occurred - a phenomenon Rosnani Hashim calls 'educational dualism'. Educational dualism has manifested itself in Muslim countries as either an adherence to the secular Western model, or a focus almost entirely on Islamic studies i.e., the teaching of Qur'ān, *Hadith*, *sīrah*, *fiqh* and Arabic etc. to the exclusion of other subjects of the curriculum. A pertinent question to ask at this point is, can these two approaches be combined?

Opponents of the adoption of the Prophet Muhammad's (s.a.w) pedagogical methods may argue that during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), life was simple and knowledge of science and technology was very limited. In contrast, life today is becoming increasingly complex and the knowledge of science and technology

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[54] *Ṣunan al- Nasāī*. Vol.3, book 24. Hadith 3064.

is expanding exponentially. The problem therefore appears to be, should Muslims look forwards or backwards for their sources of knowledge and education?

Advocates of the 'Islamization of knowledge' (IOK) argue that an integrated approach drawing upon both acquired knowledge and revealed truth may hold the solution. A well-known IOK exponent, Al-Attas, calls for the integration of Western and Islamic knowledge through a process of isolation and integration i.e., isolation of un-Islamic elements from secular Western knowledge and integration of Islamic values and faith to Western secular knowledge. He believes this will enable Muslim educators to have the best of both worlds. If correct, then both Muslim and non-Muslim educators will be able to benefit from the pedagogical practices of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) and his emphasis on faith, *akhlaq* and spirituality (revealed truth) along with the theories and practices of modern Western education, many of which were in fact practiced by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) himself over fourteen hundred years ago. Ideally, this synthesis would provide a combined approach to education that has the potential to produce a generation of Muslims who not only possess deep faith and strong moral character, but who are knowledgeable in a variety of Islamic and Western fields. However, this will require teachers to acknowledge that their role is much more than mere transferors of information.[55] They will need to aspire to becoming true *murabbis* who embody what they teach and work hard to engage and inspire students cognitively, affectively, socially and spiritually, with the aim of transforming them into enlightened individuals. This is indeed a tall order; but one which is worth working for, as we have seen it achieved through the example of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) who successfully built the first community of Muslims who were arguably the best people that ever walked on the earth as acknowledged by the famous Qur'ānic verse: "You are the best Ummah (people) ever raised up for mankind, you enjoin right and forbid wrong and you believe in Allah" (Qur'ān 3: 110).

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[55] This also has implications for learners who need to be active and apply their knowledge practically; and for assessment which needs to reflect the holistic nature of learning and education in Islam.

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

CONSONANTS

Ar=Arabic, Pr=Persian, OT=Ottoman Turkish, Ur=Urdu

	Ar	Pr	OT	UR		Ar	Pr	OT	UR		Ar	Pr	OT	UR
ء	'	'	'	'	ز	z	z	z	z	گ	–	g	g	g
ب	b	b	b	b	ڑ	–	–	–	ṛ	ل	l	l	l	l
پ	–	p	p	p	ژ	–	zh	j	zh	م	m	m	m	m
ت	t	t	t	t	س	s	s	s	s	ن	n	n	n	n
ٹ	–	–	–	ṭ	ش	sh	sh	ş	sh	ه	h	h	h¹	h¹
ث	th	th	th	th	ص	ṣ	ṣ	ṣ	ṣ	و	w	v/u	v	v/u
ج	j	j	c	j	ض	ḍ	ẓ	ż	ż	ى	y	y	y	y
چ	–	ch	çh	ch	ط	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ	ة	-ah			-a²
ح	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ظ	ẓ	ẓ	ẓ	ẓ	ال	al³			
خ	kh	kh	kh	kh	ع	'	'	'	'					
د	d	d	d	d	غ	gh	gh	ğ	gh					
ڈ	–	–	–	d	ف	f	f	f	f					
ذ	dh	dh	dh	dh	ق	q	q	k	q					
ر	r	r	r	r	ك	k	k/g	k/ñ	k					

¹ – when not final
² – at in construct state
³ – (article) al - or 1-

VOWELS

		Arabic and Persian	Urdu	Ottoman Turkish
Long	ا	ā	ā	ā
	آ	Ā	Ā	–
	و ى	ū	ū	ū
	ي	ī	ī	ī
Doubled	يّ	iyy (final form ī)	iy (final form ī)	iyy (final form ī)
	وّ	uww (final form ū) uvv (for Persian)	uv	uvv
Diphthongs	و	au or aw	au	ev
	ى	ai or ay	ay	ey
Short	َ	a	a	a or e
	ُ	u	u	u or ü o or ö
	ِ	i	i	i

URDU ASPIRATED SOUNDS

For aspirated sounds not used in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish add h after the letter and underline both the letters e.g. جھ jh   گھ gh

For Ottoman Turkish, modern Turkish orthography may be used.

AL-SHAJARAH
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