



RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Prophetic pedagogy: Methods and means of teaching and learning in the prophetic Sunnah

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify ways to strengthen the relationship between the learner and the teacher, thereby facilitating effective communication between them. It also seeks to outline the qualities that must be present in an exemplary teacher so that learners can develop their abilities and achieve their educational goals. Furthermore, it aims to benefit the learner by drawing from the teachings of the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Prophet, and the guidance of the early generations on effective learning. The research explores successful approaches to dealing with learners that enhance the teacher's ability to understand them, develop their capabilities, and direct them toward goodness, thereby modifying their behavior. Additionally, it identifies a broad range of methods that assist teachers in attracting students and encouraging them to learn. Moreover, the study highlights the methods of teaching and learning mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The research adopts an inductive approach in collecting scientific material and an analytical approach in deriving the Prophet's teaching methods, the means and techniques he used, and the ways in which educational challenges can be addressed based on the Qur'an.

KEYWORDS: prophetic pedagogy, prophetic Sunnah, teaching methods, learning methods, authentic hadith, Islamic education, pedagogical practices

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Introduction

This study derives educational and pedagogical principles from the Qur'an, the Prophetic Sunnah, and the practices of the early generations. It highlights teaching methods that may strengthen teacher–learner interaction, address individual differences, and promote active engagement in learning. The study also demonstrates the relevance of Prophetic pedagogical practices to contemporary education, particularly in encouraging flexible, effective, and innovative approaches to teaching.

Recent scholarship has highlighted the importance of linguistic, semantic, and cultural considerations in interpreting and communicating Islamic texts and values, particularly in relation to Qur'anic discourse, translation, and the representation of Islamic principles across different contexts (AbuAlkheir et al., 2024; Al-Abbas & Haider, 2020, 2023; Farghal et al., 2025; Meqdad et al., 2023). Such communication also extends to contemporary social and educational contexts, where evolving modes of interaction can influence the transmission of values, relationships, and knowledge (Darwish et al., 2025).

The study aims to identify methods for strengthening communication between teachers and learners and to examine the qualities that contribute to effective teaching. It also explores teaching and learning strategies found in the Qur'an and Sunnah that accommodate learners' different abilities and needs, encourage participation, facilitate understanding, and support teachers in developing varied and engaging instructional practices.

Teaching may become routine when insufficient attention is given to learners' different abilities, backgrounds, levels of comprehension, and educational needs. Yet teachers influence not only the acquisition of knowledge but also learners' motivation, behavior, confidence, and engagement with learning. This creates a need to examine educational approaches that are responsive to individual differences and that strengthen the relationship between teacher and learner.

Accordingly, this study examines teaching and learning methods reflected in the Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunnah, with particular attention to the methods used by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in educating his Companions. The study adopts an inductive approach to collect and classify relevant material from authentic sources and an analytical approach to identify and interpret the pedagogical principles and practices reflected in these texts.

One of the greatest aspects that distinguishes Islam from previous religions is its elevation of knowledge and its emphasis on its value. The first thing revealed by Allah to His Prophet was the command to read. Allah says:

*“Read in the name of your Lord who created * Created man from a clot of blood * Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous * Who taught by the pen * Taught man that which he knew not.”* (Al-Alaq: 1-5).

Following this, more verses were revealed encouraging knowledge, learning, reflection, thought, contemplation, understanding, and comprehension. Allah says:

“Say, ‘Are those who know equal to those who do not know? Only those of understanding will take heed.’” (Az-Zumar: 9), and He says:

“Do they not reflect upon the Qur'an, or are there locks upon their hearts?” (Muhammad: 24).

Allah also commands the application of what has been learned, and He condemns those who do not act upon their knowledge. He says:

“The example of those who were entrusted with the Torah, but did not bear it, is like that of a donkey carrying books. Wretched is the example of the people who deny the signs of Allah. And Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.” (Al-Jumu'ah: 5). Allah has created means for learning—hearing, sight, and understanding. Allah says: *“And Allah brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers, you knew nothing, and He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts that you may give thanks.”* (An-Nahl: 78).

These faculties were created to help us acquire knowledge. Allah has described His Prophet as a teacher. He

says: *“Just as We have sent among you a messenger from yourselves who recites to you Our verses and purifies you and teaches you the Book and wisdom and teaches you that which you did not know.”* (Al-Baqarah: 151).

The Prophet said:

“Indeed, Allah did not send me to be harsh or to make things difficult, but He sent me as a teacher and a facilitator.”

The effect of the Prophet’s teaching on his companions is evident, as they illuminated the world with knowledge and left behind the scholars of the successors who drank from the nectar of prophethood and were illuminated by the light of the Qur’an with knowledge, understanding, action, and character. In the Qur’an and the guidance of the Prophet, there are methods and ways of teaching and learning, and there are tools He used to establish a complementary relationship between the elements of the educational process. This complementarity formed a methodology that deserves the attention of scholars and educators who follow their example. Indeed, in the Qur’an and the Sunnah of the Prophet, there are countless treasures that call the thoughtful and discerning to extract from them methods, strategies, and models for organizing our lives, reforming them, investing our energies, benefiting from our deeds, and achieving the greatest possible benefit. Allah says:

“And We have sent down to you the Book as a clarification of all things, and as a guidance, mercy, and glad tidings for the Muslims.” (An-Nahl: 89). This means that the Qur’an was sent down as a clarification of all that people need, as Allah says: *“We have not neglected in the Book anything.”* (Al-An’am: 38).

The correct understanding of the Qur’an and the Sunnah of the Prophet provides the greatest benefit to people, as they are not mere experiments subject to error or correctness, but rather truths revealed by the One who is most knowledgeable about His creation and what is best for them. Therefore, His methodology is the most beneficial of all. Allah says:

“Does He who created not know, while He is the Most Subtle, the All-Aware?” (Al-Mulk: 14). Allah has described the Qur’an as: *“Say, ‘It is for those who believe, a guidance and a healing.’”* (Fussilat: 44), meaning guidance to the truth and healing from ignorance.

In this research, we aim to gather from the Sunnah of the Prophet the methods and tools that lead to the achievement of a harmonious relationship between the components of the educational process within the educational system, and to ensure the maximum success possible for the teacher in his mission and message, asking Allah for help and success.

Using Praise or Blame as a Means of Guidance and Motivation

First: The Style of Praise

Praise is a kind and loving style that appeals to the hearts and minds of people. When it is reasonable and accepted, praise is beneficial for the learner. However, it is important to avoid excessive praise, as we are instructed not to overpraise. The Prophet said: *“If you see those who excessively praise others, throw dirt in their faces.”* The type of praise intended here is the kind that motivates without fostering arrogance or pride in the learner. A closer look at the lives of prominent Islamic scholars reveals that many of them would praise their students, boasting of them as long as it did not lead to negative consequences. Some examples of this include:

1-Praising the learner when they perform well and rewarding them

This is an important matter for the learner as it provides psychological support, encouraging them to continue exerting effort and improving themselves. On the other hand, neglecting or ignoring the learner can lead to negative feelings, causing the learner to lose confidence in their abilities and feel that they do not excel at anything. Using praise in this manner serves as a catalyst for the learner’s potential, supporting them. The Prophet used this method with his companions, which resulted in distinguished individuals in various fields. For instance, Salama ibn al-Akwa’ narrated: *“The best of our knights today was Abu Qatada, and the best of our foot soldiers was Salama.”* The Prophet then gave me two arrows: one for the horseman and one for the

foot soldier, combining them for me. Then, the Prophet placed me behind him on the mount as we returned to Medina. This demonstrates the great effect of moral rewards, which are as valuable as material ones, especially when the learner has affection for their teacher.

Additionally, Abu Waqid al-Laythi narrated: While the Prophet was in the mosque, three people approached. Two of them came to him, while one went away. One of them found an opening in the circle and sat down, while the other sat behind them. After finishing, the Prophet said: “Shall I tell you about the three people? One of them sought refuge with Allah, and Allah granted him refuge. The second was shy, and Allah felt shy towards him. The third turned away, and Allah turned away from him.” In this narration, the Prophet praised the good actions of two individuals, emphasizing that even when someone does something bad, it may be acknowledged as part of their character. The Prophet did not mention their names because the goal was not to praise or blame individuals, but rather to praise the action itself. This indirect style of praise serves as a form of guidance, and there are many other ways to use praise effectively.

2- Guidance Mixed with Praise

Mentioning praise alongside guidance when the learner has made a mistake prevents discouragement or feelings of inadequacy, which could cause the learner to abandon their efforts or believe they are foolish or incapable. This mixed approach encourages perseverance and continued improvement. As Allah says in the Qur'an:

“And [We] gave understanding to Solomon, and to both We gave judgment and knowledge.” (Al-Anbiya: 78-80).

Here, Prophet Dawood made an error in judgment, but Allah praised his wisdom and knowledge in other matters. Prophet Solomon, on the other hand, judged correctly in this particular situation, highlighting that praise can coexist with guidance, even when mistakes are made.

3- Starting with Praise Followed by the Command Strengthens Motivation to Obey

In many verses of the Qur'an, guidance is preceded by reminders of the blessings or qualities that motivate obedience to the command. For example, Allah says:

“O Children of Israel, remember My favor that I have bestowed upon you, and fulfill My covenant, that I may fulfill your covenant, and fear only Me. And believe in what I have revealed, confirming that which is with you...” (Al-Baqarah: 40-41).

This approach uses praise to remind them of the great blessing of their ancestry and God's mercy, encouraging them to follow the right path. Similarly, in another verse:

“O descendants of those We carried with Noah, indeed he was a grateful servant.” (Al-Isra: 3).

This is a reminder of the blessings bestowed upon them by recalling their ancestry with Prophet Noah, encouraging them to emulate the good qualities of their forefathers. Such praise before instruction emphasizes the importance of following in the footsteps of righteous predecessors, which motivates the learner to follow the guidance provided.

4- Starting with Praise Before the Command in the Sunnah

It is evident in the Sunnah that starting with praise before issuing a command enhances motivation. For example, Abdullah bin Umar narrates that a man would tell the Prophet about his dreams, and one day, he expressed his desire to see a dream. He later saw a frightening vision of being taken to hell, where he saw known people suffering. After narrating the dream to Hafsa, she told the Prophet, who praised Abdullah, saying, *“What a good man Abdullah is, if only he would pray at night.”* As a result, Abdullah started praying more during the night, motivated by the Prophet's praise and guidance.

5- Praise and Encouragement to Follow the Command

Sometimes, praise is used to encourage adherence to a command. For example, Allah says: “O you *who have believed, fear Allah and give up what remains of interest if you should be believers.*” (Al-Baqarah: 278)

And: “*Indeed, it is Satan who frightens his allies. So do not fear them but fear Me, if you are believers.*” (Aali Imran: 175)

Also, the Prophet said: “*Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should not harm his neighbor. Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should honor his guest. Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak good or remain silent.*”

This emphasizes the importance of adhering to Islamic principles, illustrating that belief in Allah and the Last Day obligates certain actions such as honoring neighbors and guests. This is a form of encouragement and motivation to follow commands, as it is a sign of genuine belief. Similarly, Allah says: “O you *who have believed, enter into Islam completely and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy.*” (Al-Baqarah: 208) “O you *who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient.*” (Al-Baqarah: 153)

These verses encourage total submission to Allah’s commands, fostering a deeper commitment to righteousness.

6- Repetition of Advice and Expression of Affection in Luqman’s Counsel to His Son

Luqman, in his advice to his son, frequently repeats certain phrases, emphasizing his affection and concern for his well-being. Allah says:

“And when Luqman said to his son while he was advising him, ‘O my son, do not associate anything with Allah. Indeed, association with Him is a great injustice.’” (Luqman: 13).

The phrase “O my son” reflects the compassion and love of the speaker, whether as a father or a teacher, fostering a connection that encourages the child’s response and compliance. This affectionate language helps to motivate and guide the son to act according to the advice provided.

7- Encouragement and Motivation in Various Forms

Different strategies are used to encourage and motivate others to act in a certain way. One of the effective methods is affirming the correct actions of others, which boosts their confidence and reinforces their behavior. For example, the Prophet praised Salman’s advice to Abu Darda when he said: “*Salman has spoken the truth.*” This affirmation encouraged the receiver of the advice, making him more committed to his actions.

Another example is from the Prophet’s teaching on charity. When Zaynab, the wife of Ibn Mas’ud, approached the Prophet to ask whether she should donate her jewelry to the poor, her husband, Ibn Mas’ud, believed that the family members were more deserving. The Prophet confirmed his words, saying:

“Ibn Mas’ud spoke the truth, your husband and your children are more deserving of your charity.”

This affirmation further reinforced the importance of fulfilling family obligations, creating a sense of fulfillment in following such guidance.

Secondly: The Method of Criticism

When a teacher criticizes a specific action without directly referring to the person, it serves as a general reprimand for the individual responsible, aiming to prevent others from repeating the same behavior. This method is seen in the teachings of the Prophet, where criticism is used for guidance without targeting the individual directly. Instead, a general statement is made, such as: “*What is the matter with people who do such and such?*” For example, the Prophet said:

“What is the matter with people who raise their eyes to the sky during their prayer?” His warning grew stronger, to the point where he added: “*They must stop this, or their eyesight will be taken.*”

This form of indirect criticism motivates the group to correct their behavior without singling anyone out. Another example involves the interaction between Aisha (May Allah be pleased with her) and Barirah, when Barirah sought assistance for her manumission contract. Aisha (May Allah be pleased with her) consulted the Prophet, who advised her:

“Take it and make the condition of loyalty to them, for loyalty belongs to the one who frees the slave.”

When this matter was addressed publicly by the Prophet, he criticized the practice of setting conditions not found in the Qur’an, saying:

“What is the matter with men who set conditions that are not in the Book of Allah? Any condition that is not in the Book of Allah is invalid, even if it consists of a hundred conditions. The judgment of Allah is the most just, and the conditions of Allah are the most binding.”

Additionally, when the Prophet noticed that some people refrained from a certain act that he had permitted, he said:

“What is the matter with people who refrain from something I do? By Allah, I know them better than anyone else and fear Allah more than they do.”

This method of indirect criticism aims to encourage reflection on actions and promote adherence to the teachings without targeting individuals directly.

Section Two: The Method of Encouragement and Discouragement, and the Method of Reward and Punishment According to the Student’s Condition

Firstly: The Method of Encouragement and Discouragement

In the Qur’an, there are various ways of encouraging and discouraging behaviors, including using contrasts between a thing and its opposite. For example, Allah says:

“Is one who is on clear evidence from his Lord like one to whom the evil of his deeds is made attractive, and they follow their own desires?” (Muhammad:14)

And: *“Is he who is thrown into the Fire better, or he who comes safely on the Day of Judgment?”* (Fussilat:40)

Also: *“Is he who follows the pleasure of Allah like him who has earned Allah’s wrath and whose refuge is Hell, and wretched is the destination?”* (Aal-E-Imran:162) One of the methods of encouragement used by the Prophet was *comparison*. He encouraged reading and practicing the Qur’an by comparing the believer who reads and acts on the Qur’an to a good fruit, specifically the *at-Turjah*, which has both a pleasant fragrance and taste. On the other hand, he discouraged neglecting the Qur’an by comparing those who avoid reading or acting on it to *ḥaṇḍalah*, which has neither fragrance nor taste and is bitter. The Prophet illustrated the varying conditions in this manner. For example, he said:

“The example of the believer who recites the Qur’an is like that of the at-Turjah; its fragrance is good and its taste is sweet. And the example of the believer who does not recite the Qur’an is like that of the tamrah (date); it has no fragrance, but its taste is sweet. The example of the hypocrite who recites the Qur’an is like that of the rayḥān (basil); its fragrance is good but its taste is bitter. And the example of the hypocrite who does not recite the Qur’an is like that of ḥaṇḍalah; it has no fragrance, and its taste is bitter.” (Sahih al-Bukhari)

Furthermore, the Prophet discouraged returning a gift by comparing it to a dog’s behavior. He said: *“The one who*

returns his gift is like a dog that returns to its vomit. For us, this analogy of poor behavior is not appropriate." This example was used to emphasize the seriousness of this action, with the aim of strongly discouraging it. The *Shar'ī* tradition uses such comparisons to highlight the severity of the behavior and serve as a deterrent.

Second: The Method of Reward and Punishment According to the Student's Condition

1. Methods of Punishment

Considering the appropriateness of punishment for the error made by the learner, it is important not to impose severe punishment for minor mistakes, nor to be lenient in the case of a major error. Therefore, we must understand that punishment comes in degrees that should align with the nature of the mistake, and this includes considering the learner's age and temperament. This reflects the teacher's wisdom and understanding. The first method of punishment is:

Severity and Reprimand, which vary according to the learner's situation and the context. From *Mus'ab ibn Sa'd*, from his father, who said: "It was revealed in four verses: I struck with a sword, and I brought it to the Prophet, and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, grant me a share of it.' He said: 'Place it.' Then he stood, and the Prophet said: 'Place it where you took it from.' Then he stood again and said: 'Grant me a share of it, O Messenger of Allah.' The Prophet said: 'Place it.' He stood again and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, grant me a share of it. Should I be like one who has nothing to gain?' The Prophet said to him: 'Place it where you took it from.' Then this verse was revealed: *'They ask you about the spoils of war. Say, "The spoils are for Allah and the Messenger."*' (Al-Anfal: 1).

And from *Abd Allah ibn Amr*, who said: "The Prophet saw that I was wearing two dyed garments, and he said: 'Did your mother command you to wear these?' I said: 'I washed them.' He said: 'Rather, burn them.' The Prophet saw me wearing two dyed garments and said: 'These are the clothes of the disbelievers, do not wear them.' *Al-Nawawi* said: This was a punishment and a reprimand to deter him and others from such an act." The companions also practiced similar measures, as from *Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir*, who said: "Jabir prayed in a cloth that he had tied behind his back, and his clothes were placed on a hook. A person said to him: 'Are you praying in just one garment?' He said: 'I did this so that someone foolish like you would see me, but who among us had two garments in the time of the Prophet?'"

2. Threats of Punishment

This is a form of threatening after knowing that the two (the righteous and the wicked) are not equal, and that they must face their due consequences. The phrase "Indeed, He is Seeing of what you do" is a warning and a threat. The verse "Do as you will" means whether it is good or bad, Allah is fully aware of your deeds and He is watching all of them. Hence, He said: "Indeed, He is Seeing of what you do."

Similarly, Allah says: "And say, 'The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills — let him believe; and whoever wills — let him disbelieve. Indeed, we have prepared for the wrongdoers a Fire which its flames will encompass them. And if they cry for relief, they will be relieved with water like molten copper, which will scald their faces. Wretched is the drink, and evil is the resting place.'" (Al-Kahf: 29).

Al-Shafi'i said: "If threatening alone is sufficient, it is better to rely on that. And whenever the goal can be achieved through insinuation, one should not resort to direct action, as this could cause aversion, which contradicts the good companionship required in marriage, except when it involves disobedience to Allah." Similarly, the relationship between the teacher and the student must be based on love, affection, and respect, as punishment can lead to resentment and even hatred.

3- Physical punishment

This raises an important question: Is it permissible for a teacher to strike a student as a form of teaching?

First: There are references in the texts that permit this.

Clarification of the evidence that allows the teacher to strike the student for correction, punishment, or discipline, and the extent of this punishment:

Narration of Aisha: She said, “The first revelation that came to the Messenger of Allah was the true vision in his sleep. He would not see a vision except that it came like the dawn. Then he was fond of seclusion, so he would seclude himself in the Cave of Hira for worship during several nights before returning to his family for provisions. Then, when the truth came to him in the Cave of Hira, the angel came and said, ‘Read.’ The Prophet said, ‘I am not a reader.’ The angel took him and pressed him until he reached the point of exhaustion, then released him. He said, ‘Read.’ The Prophet replied, ‘I am not a reader.’ The angel pressed him for the second time until he reached the point of exhaustion, then released him. He said, ‘Read.’ The Prophet replied again, ‘I am not a reader.’ The angel pressed him for the third time, then released him and said, ‘Read in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clot. Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous.’ (Quran: Al-Alaq: 2) ‘The Messenger of Allah returned with it, his heart trembling.’” Some people have interpreted this narration to mean that the teacher should not strike a child more than three times, based on the idea of limiting how many times one should press or force a person.

Narration of Abu Al-Aliyyah Al-Barrā: He said, “I asked Abdullah bin Al-Samit about praying behind rulers who delay the prayer.” Abdullah struck my thigh, causing me pain, and said, “I asked Abu Dhar about this matter, and he struck my thigh.” I asked the Messenger of Allah about this, and he said, ‘Pray the prayer on time, and make your prayer with them a voluntary one.’ It was reported to me that the Prophet had struck Abu Dhar’s thigh.”

Narration of Abdullah: The Prophet said, “The best of people is my generation, then those who follow them, then those who follow them, then there will come people whose testimony will be preceded by their oath, and their oath is more important than their testimony.” Ibrahim Al-Nakha’i reported that they used to strike us regarding oaths and promises when we were young.

The term “covenant” here refers to oaths, safety, commitments, and sacredness. It seems that in this context, they used to strike the young to teach them the importance of preserving their oaths and faith.

The statement refers to the practice of teaching and correcting behavior using light punishment, especially when it pertains to important commitments, such as keeping oaths, promises, and responsibilities. The term “Ahad” here is interpreted as covering oaths, trust, and protection. The underlying principle is that such acts of discipline were meant to emphasize the importance of adhering to these responsibilities. The teacher’s role, therefore, is to help maintain a proper understanding of these commitments, guiding the learner to uphold them. One example cited is the narration in Imam Al-Shafi’i’s Musnad, which mentions a conversation between Abu Hanifa and Ibn Abi Dhieb. In this discussion, the Prophet’s ruling about punishment is discussed. The passage explains that physical punishment, when used, should be light and for the sake of correction, not excessive. The actions of the early scholars, including Abu Hanifa, in following the Prophet’s teachings were seen as an obligation, and deviation from them was not acceptable.

Another relevant narration is from Abu Mas’ud Al-Badri, who recounts a situation where he was beating his servant. He heard a voice from behind him, “Know, Abu Mas’ud,” and realized that it was the Prophet. The Prophet reminded him that Allah had more power over him than he had over his servant, leading Abu Mas’ud to stop his behavior immediately and swear never to strike a servant again. In another narration, when Abu Mas’ud declared his servant was freed for the sake of Allah, the Prophet emphasized the seriousness of the matter by saying that had he not acted with mercy, the fire of Hell would have touched him.

4. Punishment through Isolation

The act of ignoring or refusing to respond can be an effective form of punishment, particularly for students who are attached to their teachers or those with sensitive hearts and minds. For such individuals, isolation can have a greater impact than physical punishment. However, the application of this form of punishment varies depending on the nature of the learner. A teacher might choose to isolate a student to correct behavior related to temptations or distractions, which could lead to improvement in some cases, while in others, isolation may have no effect. For certain individuals, this isolation may serve as a means of correction.

We find in the narration from Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him), he said: “The Messenger of Allah sent me on an errand for him. I went, then returned after completing it. I came to the Prophet and greeted him,

but he did not respond. A feeling came into my heart, and I said to myself: Perhaps the Messenger of Allah is upset with me because I took too long. I greeted him again, but he still did not respond, and my feeling grew stronger than the first time. I greeted him a third time, and he responded to me. He said: ‘The only reason I did not respond to you was that I was praying,’ and he was on his mount, facing a direction other than the qibla.” The phrase “a feeling came into my heart, and I said to myself” means the sadness that affected him. From this, it is understood that a person, especially a leader, should express the reason for any sadness or distress they feel to prevent misunderstandings.

This story shows the emotional impact of neglect, even though the Prophet did not intend to ignore Jabir. However, when deliberate isolation or neglect occurs, the effect is stronger. A similar situation occurred when the Prophet ordered the Muslims to avoid associating with three individuals—Hilal ibn Umayyah, Ka’b ibn Malik, and Murara ibn Rabi’—who had missed participating in the Battle of Tabuk. The isolation was so severe that it felt as though the entire earth had closed in on them. In the end, Allah accepted their repentance, and the isolation led to their reform.

In the case of Ka’b ibn Malik and his companions, the punishment of isolation had a profound effect on them, as they reflected on their actions and repented for their shortcomings. Ka’b himself later narrated that during the time of his absence from the battle, he had never felt weaker or more regretful. He said, “By Allah, I had never before gathered two camels at once, but I did so for this battle...”

Thus, the story emphasizes that isolation, when used appropriately, can serve as a powerful tool for reform.

Third: Methods of Reward and Motivation

In the Sunnah of the Prophet, we find many examples of motivation and reward, even though kind words. The Prophet also refrained from reprimanding those who made mistakes if they had made sincere efforts. The rewards, whether material or moral, were diverse and suited the nature of the individuals involved.

A. Material Motivation to Strengthen People

There are instances where material rewards were given to strengthen certain individuals. For example, Sa’d ibn Abi Waqqas (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet gave gifts to a group of people, and Sa’d noticed that a particular man was left out. He asked the Prophet why the man was not given anything, saying, “By Allah, I truly believe he is a believer.” The Prophet replied, “Or a Muslim?” Sa’d hesitated, but his belief in the man led him to ask again. The Prophet then explained, “O Sa’d, I give to a man, and others are dearer to me than him, out of fear that Allah may throw him into the Hellfire.” This incident illustrates that the Prophet sometimes gave material rewards to those who needed them the most to strengthen their faith.

B. Moral Motivation to Strengthen Other People

Sometimes, moral motivation was more powerful than material incentives. For instance, Amr ibn Taghlib (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that the Prophet was given a certain amount of wealth or spoils of war to distribute. The Prophet gave gifts to some men and left others without. When it was brought to his attention that those who were left out were upset, the Prophet praised Allah and said, “I give to a man, and leave another, and the one I leave is dearer to me than the one I give. But I give to certain people because I see in their hearts fear and anxiety. I leave others to what Allah has placed in their hearts of wealth and goodness.” Amr ibn Taghlib himself was one of those left out but stated, “By Allah, I would not trade the words of the Messenger of Allah for the red camels.”

These examples show that the Prophet used both material and moral motivation as tools to inspire people, taking into account the specific needs and circumstances of individuals.

C. Reward for Success in a Task

It is narrated by Yazid bin Sharik al-Taymi, who said: “We were with Hudhayfah when a man said, ‘If I had met the Messenger of Allah, I would have fought alongside him and excelled.’ Hudhayfah replied: ‘Would you have done that? I saw us with the Messenger of Allah on the night of the Battle of the Confederates (Ahzab), and a strong wind and cold hit us. The Messenger of Allah said, “Is there not a man who will bring me news of the enemy, and Allah will make him my companion on the Day of Judgment?” We remained silent, and no one

responded. Then he repeated, “Is there not a man who will bring us news of the enemy, and Allah will make him my companion on the Day of Judgment?” Again, we remained silent. He repeated it for a third time, and then he said, “Hudhayfah, get up and bring us news of the enemy.” When he called me by name, I had no choice but to stand up. He said, “Go and bring me news of the enemy, but do not alarm them about me.” When I left him, it was as though I were walking in a sauna until I reached them. I saw Abu Sufyan about to perform his noon prayer by the fire. I placed an arrow in the bow and was about to shoot him, but I remembered the words of the Messenger of Allah, “Do not alarm them about me,” and if I had shot, I would have struck him. So I returned while walking as if I were in a sauna, and when I reached him, I told him about the enemy. I was then relieved. The Messenger of Allah gave me a robe from the extra clothing he was wearing, in which he used to pray. I slept wearing it and did not wake up until morning. When I awoke, he said, “Get up, Noman.”

Another narration by Iyass bin Al-Akwa: He said, “The Messenger of Allah said, ‘The best of our cavalry today is Abu Qatadah, and the best of our foot soldiers is Salamah.’ Then the Messenger of Allah gave me two arrows, one for the cavalry and one for the foot soldier, and combined them for me. Then the Messenger of Allah mounted me behind him on the horse, and we returned to Medina.”

Third Section: The Varied Approach According to the Ability and Condition of Each Learner, and Teaching by Example

The Varied Approach: The style used in the Quran illustrates the necessity of varying the approach according to the ability, condition, and nature of each learner. In the Quran, the style varies, sometimes becoming more intense, soft, detailed, or concise. It includes promises and warnings, encouragement and intimidation, and both brevity and elaboration, depending on the situation and the audience. This variation is part of the miraculous nature of the Quran.

Similarly, in the Sunnah of the Prophet, there is a consideration of the circumstances of the audience, and he used methods suited to their conditions and environment. An example of this is the delegation of Abd Qays. Abu Jamrah reported, “I used to translate between Ibn Abbas and the people, when a woman came to ask him about a type of fermented drink. Ibn Abbas replied, ‘When the delegation of Abd Qays came to the Messenger of Allah, the Prophet asked, “Who are these people?” They replied, “They are from the tribe of Rabi’ah.” The Prophet responded, “Welcome to the people, or to the delegation, who are neither disgraced nor regretful.” Then they said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, we come from a faraway place, and between us and you are a tribe of disbelievers from Mudar. We cannot come to you except during the sacred month, so give us a clear command by which we may inform those behind us to enter Paradise.’ The Prophet instructed them to uphold four things and avoid four others. He commanded them to believe in Allah alone, and asked, ‘Do you know what belief in Allah is?’ They replied, ‘Allah and His Messenger know best.’ The Prophet said, ‘It is the testimony that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; to establish the prayer; to give the zakat; to fast during Ramadan; and to give a fifth of the war booty.’ He prohibited them from consuming certain containers and types of vessels used for storing drink, such as the duba’, hantam, muzaffat, and possibly naqir or muqayyar. He said, ‘Memorize this, and tell those who are behind you.’”

In the narration of Abu Sa’id Al-Khudri, “... and I forbid you from four things: from al-Dubba’, al-Hantam, al-Muzaffat, and al-Naqir... the Hadith.”

From this, we see that the Prophet used multiple methods in his response, adapting the style to suit the occasion. He softened the speech, used brevity to make it easier for them to remember, and clarified certain meanings, especially regarding alcohol and its harmful effects. At the same time, he strengthened his words at certain points, complimenting one of the individuals to support and encourage him in his good traits.

The Prophet prohibited certain types of vessels like the form al-Dubba’, al-Hantam, al-Muzaffat, and al-Naqir, the delegation asked him about drinks, which were abundant in their area. He provided them with the guidance they needed, clarifying which types of drinks were permissible and which were not. Furthermore, the Prophet emphasized that giving the fifth (khums) was an essential part of their faith, as they lived near the disbelievers of Mudar and were actively involved in warfare against them.

The fact that Ibn Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him) served as a translator between the Prophet and the people highlights the importance of making knowledge accessible and clear. It is crucial for a teacher to use all means that help clarify and simplify information for the learners. In a related narration, Abu Jamrah

reported, “I used to sit with Ibn Abbas, who would seat me on his bed and say, ‘Stay with me until I give you a portion of my wealth.’ I stayed with him for two months.”

This example of Ibn Abbas demonstrates how effective teachers make the learning process easier and more personal, ensuring the student understands and gains the knowledge needed for practical application.

2. The Teaching by Example Method

Teaching by example is one of the most important teaching methods that yields good results for learners. It involves the teacher saying, doing, and embodying the qualities that they wish to see in their students, thus becoming a role model for them in speech, action, and character, leading to quick compliance. Here are some examples where the Prophet Muhammad taught his companions by example:

1. Amr ibn Dinar reported: We asked Ibn Umar about a man who performed Tawaf of the Kaaba during Umrah but did not perform the Sa'i between Safa and Marwah. Ibn Umar replied: “The Prophet performed Tawaf of the Kaaba seven times, prayed behind the Maqam Ibrahim two rak'ahs, and performed Sa'i between Safa and Marwah seven times.” He then said: “You have in the Messenger of Allah a good example” (Al-Ahzab, 21). In this instance, the Prophet set an example for his companions by his actions, and his companions followed it.
2. Anas ibn Malik narrated: The Prophet saw some sputum in the direction of the Qibla, and it distressed him so much that it showed on his face. He then removed it with his hand and said: “When one of you stands in prayer, he is speaking privately with his Lord, or his Lord is between him and the Qibla, so let no one spit towards the Qibla. Instead, let him spit to his left or under his feet.” Then the Prophet took the edge of his cloak, spat in it, and folded it back. He said: “Or he should do this.” This shows how the Prophet used his actions to teach the correct behavior.
3. Ibn Umar also reported that the Prophet once wore a gold ring, and the people followed by wearing gold rings. The Prophet then said: “I have worn a gold ring,” but then he discarded it and said: “I will never wear it again.” The people followed his example and discarded their gold rings as well.
4. Mu'awiya ibn Qurra narrated: I was with Ma'qal al-Muzani, and he removed some harmful objects from the road. I noticed something similar and rushed to remove it. Ma'qal asked me: “What made you do what you did, O son of my brother?” I said: “I saw you doing it, so I did the same.” He replied: “You did well, O son of my brother. I heard the Prophet say: ‘Whoever removes harm from the path of the Muslims will have a good deed written for him, and if a good deed is accepted, he will enter Paradise.’”

These examples demonstrate that teaching by example, through the teacher's actions, is more effective in encouraging students to follow the teachings. A sincere teacher who is precise in their interactions with students finds them eager to apply what they have learned, as they imitate the teacher's actions. This is applicable in all areas where students are expected to practice what they are taught.

Section Four: The Method of Excitement and Curiosity, and the Balance of Strictness and Gentleness

First: The Method of Excitement and Sparking Curiosity

This involves the teacher asking a question to intrigue the students and stimulate their curiosity about the answer. For example, Uqba ibn Amir reported: The Messenger of Allah came out while we were in the Suffah and said: “Who among you would like to go to Buthan or Aqiq every day and come back with two camels, without committing any sin or severing family ties?” We replied: “O Messenger of Allah, we would love that.” He then said: “Why doesn't one of you go to the mosque, or read two verses from the Book of Allah, which are better for him than two camels, three are better than three, and four are better than four, and even more than their numbers in camels.”

Another method is sparking questions and contemplation before presenting the information: For example, Abu Sa'id narrated that a man heard another man reciting Qul Huwa Allahu Ahad (Al-Ikhlās: 1) repeatedly. The man, upon hearing this, thought it trivial and mentioned it to the Prophet. The Prophet responded: “By Him in Whose hand my soul is, it is equivalent to one-third of the Quran.”

In another narration, Abu Darda reported that the Prophet asked: “Is any of you unable to read one-

third of the Quran in one night?” The companions asked: “How can one read one-third of the Quran in a night?” He replied: “Say Qul Huwa Allahu Ahad, for it is equivalent to one-third of the Quran.”

Additionally, Sa’d ibn Abi Waqqas reported: We were with the Messenger of Allah when he asked: “Is any of you unable to earn one thousand good deeds every day?” One of his companions asked: “How can one of us earn one thousand good deeds?” He replied: “Say one hundred Tasbih (SubhanAllah), and a thousand good deeds will be written for you, or one thousand sins will be removed from you.”

These examples highlight how sparking curiosity through questions, comparisons, and intriguing statements effectively motivates students to learn and engage with the lesson.

Second: The Method of Strictness and Gentleness

This approach is rooted in the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad, who demonstrated flexibility between strictness and gentleness based on the situation.

One example of gentleness is seen when an Arabian Bedouin entered the mosque and, after praying two units, asked, “O Allah, have mercy on me and Muhammad, and do not have mercy on anyone else with us.” The Prophet responded gently, saying: “You have restricted something vast.” Later, the man urinated in the corner of the mosque, prompting the companions to rush to stop him. The Prophet intervened, telling them: “You were sent as facilitators, not as those who cause hardship. Pour a container of water on it.”

Another example of gentleness comes from Muawiya ibn al-Hakam al-Sulami, who narrated: While praying with the Prophet, a man sneezed, and I said, “May Allah have mercy on you.” The people around me looked at me disapprovingly. I asked them, “What is wrong with you, why are you looking at me?” They gestured for me to be quiet, and when the Prophet finished his prayer, he addressed me in a kind and teaching manner, saying: “This prayer is not the place for speaking; it is only for glorifying, declaring the greatness of Allah, and reciting the Quran.”

On the other hand, the Prophet also showed strictness when necessary. For instance, Abd Allah ibn Amr narrated that the Prophet saw him wearing two dyed garments and asked, “Did your mother command you to wear this?” When he replied that he washed them, the Prophet said, “Rather, burn them.” This was a clear reprimand because the garment’s color resembled that of women’s clothing, which was not permissible for men. The narration by **Zayd ibn Khalid al-Juhani** reported: “A man asked the Messenger of Allah about a lost property (found object), and he said: “Identify it for a year, then recognize its rope and container, then use it. If its owner comes, return it to him.” The man then asked, “What about lost sheep?” The Prophet replied: “Take it, for it is either for you, or for your brother, or for the wolf.” The man then asked, “What about lost camels?” The Prophet became angry, and his cheeks turned red—some say his face turned red—and then said: “What do you have to do with camels? They have their shoes and their water containers until they meet their owner.” This narration exemplifies the Prophet’s anger when the man asked about the camels, indicating that such an inquiry was unnecessary or improper. In another instance, the Prophet had a different approach where he warned and reproached the individual for actions that he deemed unwise or improper.

Another narration by **Abd Allah ibn Umar** reported: “Some people say that when you relieve yourself, you should not face the **qibla** (direction of prayer) nor **Bayt al-Maqdis** (Jerusalem). **Abd Allah ibn Umar** said: “One day I climbed the roof of our house and saw the Messenger of Allah on two bricks, facing **Bayt al-Maqdis** while attending to his needs.” He then said: “Perhaps you are among those who pray sitting on their back?” I said: “I don’t know, by Allah.” Malik explained: “This refers to someone who prays while not raising himself off the ground, prostrating while his body is in contact with the earth.” When the Prophet asked whether he was among those who pray sitting without elevating themselves, it was a form of warning against such a practice, and it points to disapproval of performing prayers in that manner.

Section Five: The Use of Participation and Consultation

One of the teaching methods is the teacher’s participation in the students’ interests and interaction with them. This method has many benefits, including motivation to work and strengthening the relationship between the teacher and the students (creating a familial atmosphere). It creates a sense of unity between the teacher and the students, and among the students themselves, leading to cooperation, love, and integration, which eliminates envy and disputes that hinder work in general, and learning in particular.

Allah says: “And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in punishment.” (Al-Ma’idah: 2). Nu’man ibn Bashir said: The Messenger of Allah said: “You see the believers in their compassion, love, and empathy for one another as the example of a body; when one part of it complains, the entire body responds with restlessness and fever.”

Participation can take several forms:

1. Participation in work: Ayman al-Qurashi al-Makhzumi said: “I came to Jabir, and he said: ‘On the day of the Battle of the Trench, we were digging, and a hard rock appeared. The people came to the Prophet and said: “A rock has appeared in the trench.” He said: “I will handle it.” Then he got up, and his stomach was tied with a stone. We remained for three days without tasting any food. The Prophet took the pickaxe and struck the rock, and it became a pile of rubble.’”

Additionally, Al-Bara’ ibn ‘Azib said: “I saw the Prophet on the day of the Battle of the Trench, and he was carrying dirt until the dirt covered his chest hair, and he had thick hair. He was reciting the verse of Abd Allah: ‘O Allah, had it not been for You, we would not have been guided, nor would we have given charity or prayed.’” In another narration, it was stated: “On the day of the Battle of the Confederates, the Messenger of Allah was carrying dirt with us, and the dirt covered his stomach.”

This demonstrates the humility of the leader and his engagement in the labor to motivate the people, encouraging them to continue working. His recitation of the verse was meant to remind them of the greater purpose behind their work, highlighting that the task they were engaged in was more important than the discomfort or exhaustion they felt.

2-Participation can also be emotional

The teacher shares the feelings and challenges of the students, showing humility and addressing their problems. Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “On the day of the Battle of the Trench, we were digging... Then the Prophet stood up, and his stomach was tied with a stone. We went without eating for three days... I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, give me permission to go home.’ I said to my wife: ‘I saw something in the Prophet that I could not bear. Do you have anything to eat?’ She replied: ‘I have some barley and a goat.’ She slaughtered the goat and ground the barley until we made meat stew. Then I went to the Prophet and the dough had risen, and the stew was almost cooked. I said: ‘This food is for me, and you may come, O Messenger of Allah, and one or two men.’ He said: ‘Go ahead.’ So the emigrants and the helpers (Ansar) came, and when they entered, he said: ‘Do not crowd.’ He broke the bread and placed meat on it, and when he took some from the pot, he kept filling it, and continued feeding until everyone was satisfied. Some remained, and he said: ‘Eat this and give it as a gift, for the people are suffering from hunger.’”

3. Participation through opinion and consultation:

Consultation style: Allah says: “And consult them in the matter, and when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him].” (Aal Imran: 159). “And consult them in the matter” means the issues that require advice, consideration, and thought. Consultation has numerous benefits, both religious and worldly, which cannot be enumerated. It enlightens ideas and enhances reasoning.

Consultation often leads to correct decisions. The one who is consulted rarely makes an error, and even if something goes wrong or the desired outcome is not achieved, they are not blamed. When Allah instructed His Messenger, who was the most complete in intellect, knowledge, and judgment, to “consult them in the matter,” this shows the importance of consultation. How much more, then, should others engage in it? Qatada said: “Allah instructed His Prophet to consult his companions in matters, even though revelation was sent to him from the heavens, because it is more agreeable to the hearts of the people. When they consult each other, seeking the face of Allah, He will guide them to what is best.”

Also, when the death of Umar ibn al-Khattab approached after he was stabbed, he made the matter of succession a matter of consultation among six people: Uthman, Ali, Talhah, Zubayr, Sa’d, and Abdur Rahman ibn Awf (may Allah be pleased with them all). The consensus among the companions was to give precedence to Uthman in the leadership. Shura (consultation) is a blessing, and Umar ibn al-Khattab made the caliphate—one of the most significant issues—a matter of consultation.

Conclusion

This study highlights the continuing relevance of teaching and learning methods derived from the Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunnah and their potential application in contemporary educational contexts. Effective teaching requires more than the transmission of knowledge; it depends on meaningful interaction between teacher and learner, awareness of individual differences, and the ability to adapt teaching methods to learners' interests, needs, and abilities. Face-to-face interaction remains particularly valuable in building the teacher-learner relationship, although modern technologies and educational tools can complement traditional methods when they serve clear educational purposes or respond to particular circumstances.

The findings also emphasize the importance of teachers' continuous professional and intellectual development through learning, research, and engagement with current educational practices. Teachers should involve students actively in the learning process, encourage exploration and innovation, and recognise their broader roles as educators, mentors, and role models. Regular self-assessment can further help teachers evaluate and improve their practices rather than relying on approaches that were successful with previous groups, since each group of learners has distinct characteristics and needs.

Finally, effective teaching requires careful organisation of lesson content, avoidance of unnecessary distractions, and an approach that begins with learners' interests and gradually guides them toward the intended learning objectives. The pedagogical methods identified in the Qur'an and Sunnah therefore provide principles that can inform an interactive, adaptable, and learner-centred educational process while encouraging further research into their application across different fields of knowledge.

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