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Different Teaching Techniques and Methods used by the last Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH): An Explorative Study

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Abstract

Effects of materialistic education system on the Muslim nation are very shocking. It has been creating uncertainties, miscalculations, imaginations, suspensions and misunderstandings in the mind of the Muslims and most significantly the teenage years. This pitiful scenario transforms and it has been causing the youths too greatly in losing their self-identity as Muslims. The inability to learn and experience the uniqueness of the educational pedagogy of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has failed many people sadly to see the beauty of Islam in its holistic approach with regards to its educational pedagogy. Different pedagogical theories that have been established by the secular educationists carried out the conception of different faith systems from the west. However, having studied the life, practices and teachings of a man who has been considered as the best exemplary and the modest for the entire humanity by the Muslim and non-Muslims alike. It has been clearly noted that there are different ways and teaching methods applied by the Prophet (PBUH) to educate the old and the young in different ways, nature, time, techniques and diverse patterns. The study is designed to revisiting different approaches adopted by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to teach and train his friends, family, companions and enemies alike. This study is carried out through exploratory research by reexamining different teaching methods and techniques of the Prophet (PBUH) from different sources such as Hadith, Sunnah and the Seerah of the last Prophet (PBUH). Investigator tried to achieve further understandings in different aspects which includes approaches, applications, stages and processes, etc. The researcher basically started with general overview about the teaching methods and techniques applied by Prophet (PBUH), in His whole methods of teaching and learning. It has been used as an instrument to recognize some critical related issues that could cover ways to different area of attentions for the more study. The tools used in this study includes documents analysis, journals, books, university record and report, interviewing Islamic educators and observation. A critical analysis is also used to shed more light on those different teaching methods and techniques applied by the last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Keywords: Teaching, Methods, Technique, Different, Explorative, Study, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

Introduction

Last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is messenger and role model for Muslims all over the world. Due to the great effect of materialistic education in the Muslim World and the separation between religious knowledge from other acquired knowledge like arts, science and social sciences many Muslim educators are incapacitated to study the Seerah of the Prophet (PBUH) in order to learn more about the pedagogical methods of the Prophet (PBUH) in the teaching and learning. By doing this, the loss of the holistic approach to education in the age of the rise of secular education has been well known. However, this can be restored while studying the pedagogical approaches of the last Prophet (PBUH). To invite society to the path of Allah was the first and foremost responsibility which was bestowed upon the last Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). To invite people to the way of Allah wants numerous methods and techniques which are to be applied for the attainment of the chosen goal. The teaching mission applied by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) started from his close family and relatives and later extended onto and beyond the whole of the Arabian Peninsula and continued through his life with enormous achievements. The methods and techniques He adopted in His invitation to Islam were organized, regular, reasonable, systematic and convincing and produced victory.

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1 Teaching by telling story

Last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) occasionally applied the technique of telling stories for answering a problem, informing about a topic or protecting from a

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subject. For example, it is perceived that He used the same method in the subjects like informing what right, good, beautiful are, guiding them, protecting them from evilness and performing prayers. Hadiths like how to pray, the importance of greeting, how to greet each other, the necessity of doing favors to mother-father, the rights of mother-father, etc. are other examples that this method was applied. However, while the Prophet Muhammad was using the method of telling, he did some implementations which were like comparing, likening, telling stories about the subject and teaching with examples which are used in learning-teaching in today in order not to distract listeners' attentions and for minimizing the rate of being bored. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) used to tell stories of the earlier Prophets and their nations and sometimes of some individuals of such nations in certain contexts in a way to teach Muslims through using interesting stories from which the companions could derive lessons and warning.

2. Teaching by demonstrations methods

The Last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) completed prayer while he was carrying his granddaughter Umama, from His daughter Zainab. When He stood up, He took her up and when He prostrated, he put her down. When His daughter Fatimah would come to visit Him, the Prophet Muhammad would stand up, take her by the hand, kiss her forehead and make her sit where The Last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sitting. He cared about women, listened them and paid attention to their education. His performing prayer while he had his granddaughter on his shoulder and in His lap in a society where daughters were not required, were hated, were deliberated as disgrace and were buried alive and with His attitude to His daughter and other women in a society where women were only seen as a instrument for meeting needs, were not given care, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) wanted to

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teach the society “Daughters and women are not created different from men, they are created equal, they are precious and they should be given what they deserve. Otherwise, it is a usurpation of rights, cruelty. Also, he showed that performing prayer while having granddaughter on shoulder and lap does not break prayer. People around him were observing, watching, taking him as a model for themselves and implementing what he did” The Prophet Muhammad asked a companion who wanted to learn times of prayer to be with them for two days so, companion learnt when and how to perform prayer by observing himself. As it is observed in the examples, the last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself would teach how to pray by showing. He would show and teach not only about prayers, good ethics and mentality, attitude change but also about some daily works that He knew. One day, He helped a boy who was skinning a sheep what he slaughtered and He showed him how to skin it by doing.

3. Teaching by observation and correction method

The last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used to pay attention to the actions, activities of people around Him so that He could teach them. A man entered the mosque and prayed, while the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was witnessing him. When he ended, he turned and greeted the last Prophet and the Prophet told him to go and pray again as he did not pray properly. When this happened for the second time the man asked the Prophet to teach him the right method of praying which the Prophet did in detail. (Bukhari, 1971, Hadith No 1759, p. 421) (Shah, 2009)

Quran notifies that the Prophet Muhammad is a great model for people (Al-Ahzab, 33/21) and wants people to take this model as an example (Al-Hashr, 59/7). The

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Prophet Muhammad was a model and guide to the people around him with his feeling, thought, speaking, behaviors and life both before he became a Prophet and after it. Companions observed this model during all of their lives and tried to learn and actualize the Religion of Islam and worldview, philosophy of life that this religion had brought. Their deep love for the Prophet Muhammad made learning and actualizing principles of the Religion of Islam easier. People of Jahiliyyah Period who had buried their daughters alive; hated weak people; encouraged blood revenge; arrogated the rights of other people; been usurer; derived improper benefits.

4. Question-Answer Method

The Question-Answer Method is as one of the typically used methods in Hadiths. Examples below display “Companions would ask questions to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) about various subjects that they wanted to learn. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stimulated companions to ask questions too. The statement below shows the significance of asking questions in the field of teaching and learning process”. “Knowledge is treasure; its key is question. Cure of ignorance is to ask. Be together with scholars, spend time with them, ask people who know, be friend with people who know and Good question is half of the knowledge”.

5. Teaching by writing method

The Holy Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the period of 23 years in parts. The Qur’an was sent by Allah through the angel of revelation called Gabriel. Companions were learning incoming revelations from the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), remembering them, and implementing them into their life. The last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had incoming revelations written and

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recorded by people whom he himself had charged for writing Qur'an and who were called "revelation clerks. or scribes."

The last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was reporting arriving revelation to revelation clerks or scribes and telling them where it was going to be written in the Qur'an which surah was going to be written as which verse before or after. Besides all these, he was telling companions to write revelations and copy what they wrote. So, the Qur'an was protected both in the minds and in a paper by writing it down. Hazrat Umar became a Muslim after he had read a written copy of the Quran. As it is seen, dictating or teaching by writing is one of the teaching methods which are peculiar to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself.

6. Teaching people according to their natures and customs

Malik 2014 said "It was also part of the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) intelligent method to speak to people and to teach them on the level of their intelligence and in a way that suited their mental faculties, their natures, and their customs; and he would impart his goodly counsel with a spirit of tolerance and ease" Anas ibn Malik (R.A) described to have wept on the character of the Prophet (PBUH) He said "During his service to the Prophet which took ten years, he had never found the Prophet (PBUH) complaining about His actions. He had never in anyways talked to him harshly or questioning for what he had done or not had been done" (Sahih al-Bukhari 5691)

7. Teaching people according to their level

There are different types of people in almost every society which includes the elite who seeks the knowledge of higher realities, the masses of ordinary people and the obstinate opponents. For each of these types of people, there is a specific way of speaking to, calling them and teaching them. The last prophet (PBUH) would speak

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to people on the level of their intelligence and His words would always be suitable to the site. He would use with each group the discourse that suited them and address them in their own language. Allah gifted His Prophet (PBUH) with a mighty and awesome presence and made Him qualified to be listened to. The Prophet (PBUH) used to bring himself down to the level of those whom he was talking to. It was narrated by Umar ibn Abu Salamah; Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) told “ Come near, my son, mention Allah’s name, eat with your right hand and eat what is next to you” (Sunan Abi Dawud 3777).

8. Teaching by character method

Prophet Muhammad’s (PBUH) silent method of teaching is through His personality and his honest and truthful nature, kindness and gentleness, purity of intention which made His mission successful. Having knowledge not most important in the teaching of Islam but presenting it is the matter. Once someone asked Aisha R.A about His conduct, “She asked him: Did you not recite the Holy Qur’an? His conduct is Qur’an.” (Alvi, K. 2000).

9. Teaching by wisdom and specialization method

Last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) deliberated the specialization of the learners in his teaching mission, for example if the companions were wise scholars, He would encourage and give them a task that matched their educations. If other companions were fluent but lacking in knowledge. He would teach them according to their talent and give them the task that fitted them best. Therefore, our contemporary teachers and preachers when conveying the message of Islam should start by presenting the obligatory deeds to newly convert Muslims. The voluntary aspects should be given later in the gradual process. They should also take into deliberation the strength and

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abilities of the individuals. They should be allowed to progress gradually because it may be difficult for them to change at once.

10. Teaching through gradualism method

Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) would not issue many orders or many bans all at once, but issued them gradually, bit by bit, so that the people would not become jaded, and so that his teachings would not be overbearing. An example: When he (PBUH) sent Mu'adh ibn Jabal to Yemen, he prepared him with sufficient instruction, and commanded him to follow the way of gradualism with the people there. (Maliki, 2014). In view of the above, there are few who will disagree that the actual duty of a qualified teacher and the significance of teaching to Islam have been severely neglected in our times when the need for it is more pronounced than ever. It is either not undertaken altogether, or if it is performed, then it is undertaken without the knowledge of the etiquette, preconditions, and general teachings that the sacred sources of Islam have provided for it. Therefore, the spirit of teaching is many times full of the results and blessings that could be attained. Actually, nothing is more needed now in making teaching and calling people to Islam by our contemporary scholars than correct knowledge, gentleness, Patience, perseverance, and wisdom.

CONCLUSION

One of the most significant goal of Islam is to determine and develop the abilities of humans who are born knowing nothing from the wombs of their mothers and self-realization. The first teacher and educator who was charged to achieve this aim was the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Even though he faced various difficulties, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) one of his major duties is teaching people the revelations that he received from Allah, informing them, spreading knowledge,

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making them learned actual things, making actualized things permanent and constant. The Prophetic era can truly be considered as the 'Golden Age' of the entire Islamic History as the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) educated and empowered the companions by touching and transforming their lives through the teaching and learning process. He did not just communicate knowledge rather he affected a complete transformation among the audience by showing them how to live by the Qur'an. In the early years of Islam, the issue of education was at the forefront in the minds of the Muslims. Education was a dynamic process that transformed and empowered the Muslims. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was a perfect teacher and instructor who enjoyed brilliant teaching methods and proved to master skillful techniques which he accomplished his goals in delivering the message of Islam. By the effective methods and techniques of teaching, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who is ranked number one by Michael Hart, a Jewish scholar, in his book 'The 100 Most Influential Persons in History', was able to unite the Arab tribes who had been destroyed by revenge, rivalry, and internal fights and produced a strong nation acquired and ruled simultaneously from His lifetime to date. It is obvious that the Prophetic methods and techniques of teaching employed many different ways of directing people to the path of light and perfection and laid the foundations for a good life in almost every single firmly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) applied many methods of teaching and preaching as Qur'an did, therefore present teachers should study such methods and make active use of each to improve their teaching and learning job.

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2. Government should inspire teachers across the fields through regular trainings, seminars, workshops, etc to use the relevant teaching methods that help to develop the audience's mind and behavior.
3. Islam inspires development and improvements in every sector of life. Hence, the present scholars and teachers as they are the ones who create the initial foundation of an individual and build character which is lasting, as well as develop society, must be well-equipped with the modern tools of teaching techniques and development, so that they can pass it on to their learners, thereby creating a generation which is ready for both the challenges of the world and the hereafter.

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