

Behavior of teachers with their students in Islamic perspective

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Abstract

This paper is an effort to let the teachers, especially school teachers, know the Islamic ways of behaving their students. In Pakistan, mostly, the dropouts are concerned with the teachers' behavior with their students. Teachers use harshness instead softness and they punish instead rewarding. There are plenty of examples we can give from the glorious Quran and Hadiths of the holy prophet (PBUH) in the regard of behavior.

A Muslim teacher must know how the holy prophet (PBUH) has behaved with the companions and how Allah almighty has treated his messengers, so the students can be motivated and they keep their interest in the studies and also the dropouts can be reduced.

Key words: teaching, behavior, students, companio

Background of the study

After seeing and observing the teachers' behavior with their students in our educational institutions, one can easily say, that the teachers are just pretending to be teachers, while they are not absolute teachers, for their behavior. Our teachers are always hard, Punishers, having no control on their anger, not friendly and mostly not liked by their students. Now the questions are:

1. Can't they be soft?
2. Can't they be giving rewards instead of punishment?
3. Can't they control their anger?
4. Can't they be friendly to their students?
5. Can't they be liked by their students?

Being Muslims, the teachers must be more responsible and careful about all these. They should know about what was the behavior of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) with the companions who were also the students of him (PBUH). They should also know about how Allah Almighty treated his messengers.

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This paper is to make the teachers aware about the Islamic way of teaching and facing students, specifically, in the behavioral terms.

After studying this paper, it is expected from the teachers that they will be absolute and real Muslim teachers. This paper will motivate the teachers towards softness, being lean with the students and being the best moral personalities.

Literature Review:

Annette Breaux and Todd Whitaker (Whitaker, 2010) have worked on the improvement of the students behavior from the first meeting and beginning of the class till to the moral and character level. Hence the work is not been islamized or exemplified from the Quran or Hadiths.

Method and procedures

At first, the term “Behavior” is defined and then the importance of teachers’ behavior is given in a few sentences along with some modern thoughts. Finally, these thoughts were exemplified using verses of the glorious Quran as well as by the Hadiths of the holy prophet (PBUH) with a bit of explanation where needed.

Presentation, analysis and interpretation of data

The Google search engine defines behavior as “the way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others”. (Google, 2016)

Behavior reflects as, ‘what u do, the same will be done to you’. Almost all students want to hear something good about their selves and, particularly, they are more curious for hearing such words from their parents. Praising students can be directly, in the front of the entire class, or indirectly, by sending happy notes to their parents. Two things are very important in this aspect which are; to let others (especially parents) know about the good behavior of the student and to let the student him/herself know that the teacher is noticing his/her good deeds. The first one is through “happy notes to the parents” and last one is by “praising inside the classroom.” (Whitaker 2010)

Small kids and students needs to be dealt with softness and to be encouraged for their good deeds. One word of praise can change lives. One word of encouragement before failure is worth than a thousand advices after failure. Punishment is the

worst thing ever for students and not only punishment, but, let them know about your anger is also worst.

If a student makes a mistake or do something wrong, then, the teacher should forgive and guide that student in a polite way. In a serious case, what did the prophet (PBUH) do? Let's read the following Hadith narrated by Anas ibn Malik (R.A):

جاء اعرابي فيال في طائفة المسجد فزجره الناس فنهاهم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فلما قضى بوله امر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بذنوب من ماء فاهريق عليه

(Al-Bukhari, 2002)

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

"A Bedouin came and passed urine in one corner of the mosque. The people shouted at him but the Prophet stopped them till he finished urinating. The Prophet ordered them to spill a bucket of water over that place and they did so".

The main problem with our institutions is that they punish on a bad deed but do not encourage and appreciate on a good one. Some teachers believe that punishment works and they do punish, instead rewarding, when they get angry. Experience has shown that punishment is not needed and, if needed, then there must also be a reward system. Students must be appreciated by awarding them with courageous sentences, as Allah Almighty praises his messengers in the glorious Quran:

Al-Isra 17/03 دُرَّةٌ مَنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ نُوحٍ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَبْدًا شَكُورًا

"O ye that are sprung from those whom we carried (in the Ark) with Noah! Verily He was a devotee Most grateful."
(Taufiq 2005)

In the above verse, Allah almighty praises Noah (A.S) for his patience for all his people were drowned in the stormy water except some who he had carried into his boat. The praise encouraged him more and he lived a good life afterwards. There could be more than one words or sentences for praise, as in the following verse.

Hud 11/75 إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُنِيبٌ

"For Abraham was, without doubt, forbearing (of faults), compassionate, and given to look to Allah." (Taufiq 2005)

In the above verse, there are three words for praise used for Ibrahim (A.S), forbearing, compassionate, and given to look to Allah. Some extra words can be used in praising related to the responsibility and duty work for more motivation towards

duty or designation. An example of such is the following verse. We may praise a student for his characteristics and skills as; he is hardworking, patient and a good at reading.

Maryam19/54 *وَأَذْكُرُ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صَادِقَ الْوَعْدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَبِيًّا*

"Also mention In the Book (the story of) Isma'il: He was (strictly) true to what He promised, and He was an apostle (and) a prophet." (Taufiq 2005)

Here, being true to the promise is a praising word and being a prophet and apostle is words of designation and duty. A principal can use such praise for a teacher that he is true to his word and know teaching methods and is a teacher. We can also use a phrase or one or two in praising students. The following verse contains many phrases in the praise of Ayyub (A.S).

وَلَخَذَ بِيَدِكَ ضِعْفًا فَاضْرِبْ بِهِ وَلَا تَحْنُتْ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ

Saad 38/44

"Truly we found Him (Ayyub) full of patience and constancy. How excellent In Our service! ever did He turn (to Us)! "(Taufiq 2005)

And just like Allah almighty, the holy prophet (PBUH), also praised the companions. On many occasions he (PBUH) had appreciated their talents, strengths, conduct and character, which had motivated them in the different walks of their lives. He (PBUH) gave special titles to his companions to make them happy.

For example, Khalid ibn al-waleed who was a great warrior was given the title of "Saifullah", "The Sword of Allah" and this title is still remembered and is being added with their names by Muslims till today.

On the occasion of the war of Tabuk the Prophet (PBUH) made a call to the people to spend generously in the cause of Allah. A poor companion of the Prophet brought a few dates, which he earned as his wages for laboring whole night in the fields of dates. The Prophet (PBUH) acknowledged his sacrifice, spaced the dates on top of all the things that were heaped over there and made the poor man happy. (method of motivation, 2016)

This also proves that appreciation is not only words spoken but it can be in many shapes such as the above wordless appreciation.

Not only in the world of education, but also in other fields, is Appreciation the best medicine. He (PBUH) made

appreciation on different occasions and in different shapes. For example, on an occasion, the holy prophet (PBUH) praised Abu Musa for his beautiful voice and said:

(Al-Bukhari 2002) يا ابا موسى لقد اوتيت مزمارا من مزمار آل داود

O Abu Musa! You have been given one of the musical wind instruments of the family of Dawood (A.S).

In linguistics i.e Urdu, English some students can read poems in a very beautiful voice, so we also should appreciate them for their voice. The above is not the only hadith in which he (PBUH) has praised for a best voice, there is another one narrated by Alqama (R.A) about Ibni-Masud (R.A) while they both were at "hams" city and Ibni-Masud (R.A) recited Surat Yousaf. A man said that it was not revealed in this way. Then Ibni-Masud (R.A) said that:

(Al-Bukhari 2002) قرأت على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: احسنت

"I recited this Surat in this way before Allah's Apostle and he confirmed my recitation by saying, 'Well done!'

The point here is the sayings 'Well done!' that are words of appreciation for his (R.A) recitation of Surat Yousaf. There are a lot more examples in the Quran and Hadith for praising someone on his good performance but these examples are well enough here.

Behavior effects and touches hearts. Good behavior makes the learning environment friendly and more suitable for learning. Students do not feel any hesitation while they have any conclusion or question to ask from teacher, only, if the teacher's behavior with his/her students is good and friendly enough.

Our Holy Prophet (PBUH) behaved with people in such a way that he (PBUH) never uttered any bad word and had never used bad language. Politeness in speaking is believed to be very effective and is considered a key step for good manners. The following hadith is about the politeness and good behavior of our holy prophet (PBUH) with a bad person of his tribe. Aisha (R.A) narrated that a man came and ask permission to enter upon the holy prophet (PBUH). When the prophet (PBUH) saw him, he said, what an evil brother and son of his tribe. (But) when the man sat down,

(Al-Bukhari 2002) تطلق النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في وجهه وانيسط إليه

The Prophet behaved with him in a nice and polite manner and was completely at ease with him. When that person had left, Aisha said to the Prophet (PBUH)

"O Allah's Apostle! When you saw that man, you said so-and-so about him, then you treated him politely, and you enjoyed his company? "

The prophet (PBUH) asked Aisha (R.A) that have you ever seen me speaking a bad and dirty language? The worst people to Allah on the Day of judgment will be those whom the people avoid for their evil (deeds/behavior).

He (PBUH) had such perfect manners that anyone could talk to him freely. On an occasion when he found an old lady at a distance who wanted to speak to the prophet (PBUH) but was afraid to come near him, the prophet (PBUH) went to her, held her by the shoulders and said, "Mother, who are you afraid of? I am the son of that Quraishi woman who used to milk sheep." (Shariati n.d.)

Same is the case with our teachers. Students want to share their feelings and needs with their caregivers, and the caregivers must provide them opportunity by encouraging for sharing and only then, a strong relation among teachers and students will be created. Once this relation is created, both will feel love for each other and learning will take place desirably. It has come to the researcher's experience, that students accept and believe in a matter (even false or incorrect) from their teacher and when this comes to the parents at home, they try a lot to correct it but the students say that it was thought to them by the teacher and is correct. And this is because of the beliefs and relation with the teacher.

The behavior of the prophet (PBUH) had made him easily accessible/available to all people and he had encouraged them to come freely and ask whatever they want to ask, seek advice, guidance and consultations. And this is what a teacher has to be. Because a teacher is a friend, a guide and a consultant too. In Pakistan, especially in public sector schools, students are made afraid by having a stick in hand and students run away wherever they see the teacher coming. All we need is to follow the teacher of the Ummah. Teachers need to make themselves available for the students for any consultancy at any time. Teachers should not write on the door of their offices NO

ENTRY or such other words, for their work and duty is to serve the students at any time.

The teacher of the Ummah (PBUH) was at the highest level of character, as the Quran says:

Al-Qalam 68/04 وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

"And Thou (standest) on an Exalted standard of character." (Taufiq 2005)

And for a good character, it is must to have an exalted standard of character and behavior with people and especially verbal communication must be in a pleasant and friendly way. Pleasant and friendly speech is a charity in our religion. While teaching, a teacher's speech must be pleasant for it is beneficial for both teaching-learning purpose and for reward from Allah almighty. The following hadith, narrated by Adi Bin Hatim, shows that pleasant and friendly speech is a charity.

Adi bin hatim said that the prophet (PBUH) talked about hell fire and sought refuge from it, and turned his face to other side (for showing discomfort) and then again he (PBUH) talked about hell fire and turned his face aside and the prophet (PBUH) then said:

(Al-Bukhari 2002) اتقوا النار ولو بشق تمره فان لم تجد فيكلمة طيبة (O people!) Save yourselves from the Hell Fire even if with one half of a date (given in charity), and if you find it not, then (save yourselves) by saying a good pleasant friendly word.

The above hadith is mentioned in the Bukhari's Book of: GOOD MANNERS, chapter: PLEASANT FRIENDLY SPEECH. We should develop such politeness, good manners and standards of character for becoming a real teacher.

Summary, conclusion and recommendations

Islam, the perfect religion, guides us the ways in which we can better deal with all kinds of students. Day to day behavior problems can be solved through the Islamic teaching ways. After the above mentioned verses and Hadiths, we come to know that students are to be dealt with softness, peacefully and in polite manners.

It is, therefore, recommended that all Pakistani Teachers, especially Muslim teachers should deal their students in such ways where students feel welcomed and motivated towards achieving their goals instead of lifting their schools just

because of the teachers' harshness. While corporal punishment is strictly prohibited by the government of Pakistan, we can only become good citizen as well as best teachers only if we follow the ways of Allah almighty and the rules of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which was came into being by the name of Kalma and Islam.

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