

An Evaluative Study of Handling Disciplinary Issues of College Students: Guidelines from the Seerah of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

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ABSTRACT:

Education is a process, which attempts to positively change the behavior of individuals and group of people, so that they can better perform in their lives. Education ought to bring changes in human behavior in all aspects: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. The prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), 14 centuries ago brought a marvelous change in human behavior through his teaching strategies. But in this 21st century, education has not been fully able to change student behavior. Several researches show that college students exhibit high social problems including deviation from society's norms. This problem can be resolved by modelling and the perfect example to imitate is the personality of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as a professional teacher. The present study aims to assess teacher's attitude towards disciplinary problems of college students. Quantitative methodology has been adopted as a tool for this research study. Objective of this research study is to investigate the perception of teachers towards characteristics and causes of discipline problems of college students and strategies used to tackle them. The target population comprises of female teachers of government girls colleges in Islamabad Pakistan. The sample of the study consists of randomly selected 70 teachers of government girls colleges in Islamabad Pakistan. Findings of the study showed that students demonstrate following disciplinary problems: lack of motivation, sense of ingratitude, disrespect, defiance. Reasons of these problems are family issues, lack of education of parents, lack of religious knowledge, effect of social media and lack of true practicing of guidelines from the Seerat-Un-Nabi (ﷺ). It is recommended that all disciplinary issues can be resolved by following the personality traits of the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Keyword:

Seerat-Un-Nabi, College students, disciplinary problem, aggression, defiance, ingratitude, religious knowledge.

Introduction

Education is a process, which attempts to positively change the behavior of individuals and group of people, so that they can better perform in their lives. Education ought to bring changes in human behavior in all aspects: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. A nation can prosper only when the individuals will be educated properly both academically and morally. Today the world has made progress due to advanced technologies but on the other side behavior issues and dissatisfaction with life has also increased tremendously. The human beings are flourishing materialistically but declining spiritually. Everyone is seeking the ways to get stronger materialistically and getting stronger spiritually is being ignored. And same practice can also be seen in education systems where all efforts are being put to make the student academically sound but moral training is getting less attention. That's why education has not been fully able to change student behavior. Several researches show that college students exhibit high social problems including deviation from society's norms. The prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), 14 centuries ago brought a marvelous change in human behavior through his teaching strategies. Since Pakistan is a Muslim country and majority of teachers are Muslims so we need to take guidelines from the Seerah of the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) for resolving different issues faced by teachers in educational institutions. This can be done by modelling, and the perfect example to imitate is the personality of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as a professional teacher. The present study aims to assess teacher's attitude towards disciplinary problems of college students.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) sent down to stimulate a good character. He is a role model for the humanity from each aspect of life. However, being a teacher, his role is very significant and pivotal because it may influence every corner of human life, as teachers are nation builders Teachers of the day may acquire guidance from his teaching methodologies and mend their teaching techniques. A good teacher is capable of upbringing young generation in a way that lead them towards success, either in this world or hereafter. Now days, in our society most of the teachers work in a set and pre-defined pattern, which consist of ancient techniques, covering old syllabi. Students of the day want each and everything updated, it is related

to either studies or something else. Looking at old syllabus and old techniques, they go far beyond their studies.

Status of a Teacher in Islam

Teachers are commonly known as educators. Etymologically, the word "teacher" is taken from the verb "to teach or teaching", which means to teach so teacher means the person who teaches in school (Octavia, 2019). In Islamic education literature, several terms have been found related to teachers, such as murabbi, mudarris, mu'allim, mu'addib and mursyid. And all terms actually show different characteristics of a teacher.

Siskandar & Suhendri (2020) view that Murabbi is a person who teaches, guides or educates ,so a teacher as a Murabbi should exhibit characteristics of being compassionate, knowledgeable responsible ,wise and creative. Mudarris is a person who shows deep concern for the intellect, always seeks knowledge, and keeps himself/herself updated (Fadilatul Kasmar et al., 2019). Thus, a teacher gives importance to intellectual and innovative development in seeking and developing knowledge. Muslimin & M. (2019) state that Mu'alim means the pilot, a religious expert or religious teacher .So Mu'alim is a person who possess knowledge and has ability to teach it to others (Rahmadani, 2019).The word mu'addib gives the meaning of forming morals or characters (Lubis, 2020). Thus, the role of s teacher is not only to make the student academically strong but also to guide them to develop good morals. The word mursyid means to guide, direct, show, and lead (Sifa, 2020). Thus in Islamic context mursyid means that the teacher guides and give instructions to students. So this shows that teachers are not only supposed to transfer knowledge, skills, and experiences to students but also to guide them to exhibit good moral characteristics (Rasyidi et al., 2020).

To become a professional teacher a person needs to possess several competencies. Ramaliya (2018) is of view that these competencies include knowledge, attitude and professional skills, whether related to personal, social or academic. Pianda, (2018) is of opinion that a teacher should possess at least two competencies: personal competence and professional competence. Personal competence means a teacher should have good attitude and personality, and professional competence means a teacher should have knowledge of content to be taught and strong pedagogical skills.

Tari (2020) says in addition of mastering professional competence a teacher should possess mental, moral, social, spiritual, intellectual, physical and psychological standards. Akip (2020) is of view that teachers must have noble morals and noble character. Teachers should have spiritual standards such as being loyal, truthful, pious and honest in performing religious deeds and obligations in the light of religious guidance. (Victorynie, 2018).

Attributes of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

From the life of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) we get guidelines for each field of life. It is stated in sura Al-Ahzab verse no.21:

“Surely there is in the person of Allah's messenger an excellent example for you-for every person who has hope in Allah and the Hereafter and remember, Allah, reciting His name many times”. (Ahzab: 21)

Similarly, The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, apart from being an apostle, was also a good and successful teacher. He possessed high moral values and his personal religious competence was derived from the Holy Quran. As it is stated in Sura Al-Qalam verse no. 4:

“And indeed you are of a great moral character”.

Qatadah reported: I said to Aisha:

“O mother of the believers, tell me about the character of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him.” Aisha said, “Have you not read the Quran?” I said, “O course.” Aisha said, “Verily, the character of the Prophet of Allah was the Quran.” (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: 746)

One of the companions of the prophet reported:

“We were sitting in the presence of the Messenger of Allah so quietly as if birds were perched on our heads. Nobody had the courage to open his mouth. In the meanwhile, some people came and asked: “Amongst the slaves of God who is the dearest to Him”. The Prophet replied: “One who has the best moral character”. (Ibn Haban)

Abdullah Ibn Amar says:

“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) was neither ill-mannered nor rude. He used to say that the better people among you are those who are best in their moral character”. (Bukhari)

The companion of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) Hazrat Anas (RA) says:

“I served the holy Prophet for ten years. He never said ‘Uf’ (expressing dissatisfaction), nor did he ever ask me why I did this or did not do that.” (Muslim)

The high moral values possessed by the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) were kindness, generosity, patience, forgiveness, politeness, humbleness and gratefulness (Arsyad, 2016). He was compassionate, trustworthy, honest, courageous, fair, sincere, truthful, graceful, having good associations, peace-lover, persistent in trying, loving and committed to work (Alip & Putri, 2018). All of these qualities must be owned by the teacher, because the teacher not only transmits knowledge but also inculcates moral values to students for their character building.

All of these qualities are stated in Quran. In Surah Al Imran, verse no. 159 it is mentioned as:

“The Prophet Muhammad saw has a gentle attitude towards others...”

In Sura Al-Taubah verse no.128 it is stated that:

“The Prophet Muhammad SAW has compassion towards others (Al-Taubah: 128)”

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said:

“He is not of us who does not respect our elderly, is merciful to our youth, and knows the rights of those who teach us”.

No doubt Islam gives high status to teachers in the society but at the same time some responsibilities has also been assigned to the them, which they need to consider while performing their duties. The Holy Quran and the Hadiths give number of instructions to the teachers, which show that a teacher should deal the student softly and gently, because teachers are role models for their students and they behave the way teachers do .As it has been stated in the Holy Quran:

“As part of the mercy of God, you deal with them gently; if you were severed and hardhearted, they would have broken away from you.” (Al-Imran, 3:159)

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said,

"Use leniency to those whom you teach and those who learn you."

So this verse and hadith illustrates that harshness gives rise to harshness and which leads to behavior issues, so teachers have heavy responsibility of training their students by following the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Hazrat Anas has narrated:

“I was walking with the Prophet. He had wrapped a thick chadar round his body. One Arab pulled the chadar so forcefully that I could see a part of his shoulder, and this forceful pulling of the chadar perturbed me.

The Arab then said:

“O Muhammad! Give me some of my share from the property which Allah has given you.’ The Prophet turned towards him and laughed, and gave orders for a donation being given to him.” (Bukhari)

Hazrat Ayesha has reported that Allah's Messenger has said:

“Allah is Gentle and He loves gentleness and the rewards for gentleness what He does not reward for harshness or for anything else.”(Muslim 2593)

Hazrat Jarir narrates that the Prophet has said:

“The reward which Allah gives for soft- heartedness He does not give it for folly; and when Allah makes any slave His favorite, He gives him softness. Those families that are devoid of softness become deprived of every virtue. (Tabrani)

In Sura Al-Baqara verse no.83, it is written:

“And speak nicely to people.” (Qur’an, 2:83)

It is written in the Sura Al-Araf verse no.199 that:

“Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolishness.” (Qur’an, 7:199)

It was narrated on authority of Abu Hurairah (May Allah Be Pleased with him) that:

“A Bedouin stood up and started urinating in the mosque. The people caught him but the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered them to leave him and to pour a bucket or a tumbler of water over the place where he had passed the urine.” (Al-Bukhari 220).

So it is depicted in the light of Quran and Hadith that the Muslims or the believers should forgive others. It is clear from the Seerah of the Messenger of Allah that he used to take wise decisions over wrong actions of people whom he taught. But sometimes teachers become too harsh towards their students when they commit some mistake. A teacher needs to remain composed on encountering such situations because these are the moments when students learn behaviors. So they should follow the Sunnah of the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and forgive their students and train them. They should lead by example and practice all that what they teach. This is the way they can equip them with problem solving skills.

In Sura Ash-Shura, verse no.43 it is mentioned that:

“And verily, whosoever shows patience and forgives that would truly be from the things recommended by Allah” (Qur’an, 42:43)

Sura Al-Furqan verse no. states that:

“The true servants of the Most Merciful are those who behave gently and with humility on earth, and whenever the foolish quarrel with them, that reply with (words of) peace.” (Al-Furqan)

Sura Al-Anfal verse no. 46 it is mentioned that:

“...and be patient. Indeed, Allah is with the patient.” (Al-Anfal 8:46)

So this states that patience and forgiveness are the high moral values, which we need to exhibit and verily these are signs of good conduct.

Since it is stated in sura Al-Mulk verse no. 1 & 2:

“Blessed is He in whose hands are the Kingdom – who is powerful over everything – who has created death and life, so that He might test you as to which among you is good in conduct.” (Quran 67: 1-2)

So to get favors or blessings of Almighty Allah our conduct should be very good and obligation increases for teachers because students imitate them. Surely, a nation will not develop or make progress in the world if teachers will not show good conduct. In some cases when even trying hard and practicing above-mentioned values in Quran and hadith, if students persistently show behavior issues then we can seek help again from Quran and the Seerah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). So in sura Al-Baqara the Almighty Allah says:

“And seek assistance through patience and prayer...” (Al-Baqara 2:45)

From the life of the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) we find that he used to offer salat (pray) in difficult situations. So if a teacher faces any difficulty in practical life he/she should follow this Sunnah. They should pray and seek Allah’s helps for the amendment of the inappropriate behavior of their students. No doubt, it is a difficult task but this is the only way to success as it is mentioned in Sura Al-Asr:

“By time, indeed, mankind is in loss, Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience.” (Al-Asr 103:1)

As it is stated in sura Az-Zumar verse no. 10 that:

“Only those who are patient shall receive their reward in full, without reckoning.” (39:10)

Gratitude is such a good quality that not only increases faith in God but it also multiplies their blessings. It also builds patience, makes a person confident, determined, and bold and thus leads to a strong character.

In Sura Ibrahim verse no.7, Al-Mighty Allah says:

“And (recall) when your Lord proclaimed: ‘If you are thankful, I shall certainly increase (My blessings on) you, and if you are ungrateful, then my torment is surely severe.’ (Ibrahim, 14: 7)

Hazrat Jabir reported:

The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Whoever is not grateful for small things will not be grateful for large things. Whoever does not thank people has not thanked Allah Almighty.”

Procedure and Methodology

This was a descriptive research which aimed is to investigate teacher’s attitude towards disciplinary problems of college students, in the light of the Seerah of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The sample of the study consisted of randomly selected, 70 female teachers of government girls colleges of Islamabad Pakistan.

Objectives of the study

The study was intended to be carried out keeping in view the following objectives:

- 1- To evaluate perception of teachers about causes of disciplinary problems of the college students.
- 2- To assess whether teachers use strategies given by the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) for dealing with disciplinary issues.
- 3- To assess suggestions of teachers to resolve disciplinary problems of students in the light of Seerah of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Research Questions

- 1- What is perception of teachers about causes of disciplinary problems of the college students?
- 2- Do teachers use strategies given by the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) for dealing with disciplinary issues?
- 3- What are suggestions of teachers to resolve disciplinary problems of students?

Delimitation of the study:

The sample of the study was delimited to female teachers of government girl's colleges of Islamabad Pakistan. The study was delimited to 6 causes of disciplinary issues: ingratitude, disrespect, intolerance, lack of motivation, defiance, and lack of religious knowledge.

Significance of the study:

This study would be helpful for teachers, parents, researchers, organizations and teacher educators.

Analysis and interpretation of data

A structured questionnaire based upon 5 point Likert Scale was used. The data were collected via google forms. Data were scored and means and percentages were calculated.

Table 1- Demographic characteristics of the sample

Variables	N	Frequency	Percentage
Designation	70		
Lecturer		39	56 %
Assistant Professor		22	31 %
Associate Professor		9	13 %
Total		70	100%

Teaching Experience	70		
5years		25	36%
10 years		21	30%
15 years		12	17%
20 years		9	13%
25 years		3	4%
Total		70	100%

The results indicated that 39 (56%) respondents were lectures, 22 (31%) were assistant professors and 9(13%) were associate professors. The table illustrates that 25 (36%) respondents were having teaching experience of 5 years, 21(30%) were having teaching experience of 10 years, 12 (17%) respondents were having teaching experience of 15 years, 9 (13%) respondents were having teaching experience of 20 years, and 3 (4%) respondents were having teaching experience of 25 year.

Table 2- Mean scores on different causes of disciplinary issues:

N	Disrespect	Intolerance	Lack of Motivation	Ingratitude	Defiance	Lack of Religious Knowledge	Lack of Religious Knowledge of parents
70	33	61	56	46	53	48	49

This table is showing mean scores on different causes of disciplinary issues.

Table 3- Percentages of scores on different causes of disciplinary issues:

N	Disrespect	Intolerance	Lack of Motivation	Ingratitude	Defiance	Lack of Religious Knowledge	Lack of Religious Knowledge Of parents
70	47%	87%	80%	66%	75%	68%	70%

This table shows percentages of scores on different causes of disciplinary issues.

Table 4- Mean scores on indicators of practices of teachers:

N	Following strategies from Seerah	Sessions attended on Seerah	Seerah studied	Discussion of Seerah in class
70	46	34	55	49

This table is showing mean scores on indicators of practices of teachers.

Table 5- Percentages of scores on indicators of practices of teachers:

N	Following strategies from Seerah	Sessions attended on Seerah	Seerah studied	Discussion of Seerah in class
70	65%	49%	78%	70%

This table is showing percentage of scores on indicators of practices of teachers.

Table 6- Mean scores on indicators of overcoming disciplinary issues:

N	Sessions needed for skill development	Counselling of students in the light of Seerah
70	63	55

This table is showing mean scores on indicators of overcoming disciplinary issues.

Table 7- Percentages of scores on indicators of overcoming disciplinary issues:

N	Sessions needed for skill development	Counselling of students in the light of Seerah
70	90%	78%

This table is showing percentage of scores on indicators of overcoming disciplinary issues

Results and Discussion

The results show that mean scores on different causes of disciplinary issues are: Disrespect 33, Intolerance 61, Lack of Motivation 56, Ingratitude 46, Defiance 53, Lack of Religious Knowledge 48, and Lack of Religious Knowledge of parents 49. Similarly mean scores on indicators of practices of teachers are: Following strategies from Seerah 46, Sessions attended on Seerah 34, Seerah studied 55, Discussion of Seerah in class 49. And mean scores on indicators of overcoming

Disciplinary issues are Sessions needed for skill development 63, Counselling of students in the light of Seerah 55.

Percentages of scores on different causes of disciplinary issues indicate that 47% respondents agreed that disrespect, 87% Intolerance, 80% Lack of Motivation, 66% Ingratitude, 75% Defiance, 68% Lack of Religious Knowledge, and 70% respondents agreed that Lack of Religious Knowledge of parents is cause of disciplinary issues in students. Similarly percentage of scores on indicators of practices of teachers show that 65% respondents follow strategies from Seerah to deal with disruptive behaviors of their students, 49% respondents had attended sessions on Seerah, 78% had studied books on Seerah and 70% respondents discuss Seerah of the prophet (ﷺ) in their classes.

Percentages of scores on indicators of overcoming disciplinary issues indicate that 90% respondents agreed that they need sessions on Seerah for skill development to handle disruptive behavior of students and 78% agreed that counselling of students in the light of Seerah can reduce disciplinary issues.

Conclusion

The study was conducted with following research questions:

1. What is perception of teachers about causes of disciplinary problems of the college students?
2. Do teachers use strategies given by the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) for dealing with disciplinary issues?
3. What are suggestions of teachers to resolve disciplinary problems of students?

From the findings it was concluded that 70 % teachers perceived that disrespect, Intolerance, lack of motivation, Ingratitude, defiance, lack of

Religious Knowledge, and lack of Religious Knowledge of parents is cause of disciplinary problems of the college students. Moreover, 65% teachers used different strategies of the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) for dealing with disciplinary issues of students. And 90% teachers suggested that they need training sessions for skill development in the guidelines of Seerah of the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and 78% suggested that counselling of students in the light of the Seerah would be effective for reducing behavior issues.

So from above discussion it was concluded that disciplinary issues of college students can be handled under the guidelines of the Seerah of the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Regular sessions for teachers on different aspects of the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) should be arranged in every educational institution.
2. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is the best teacher, preacher and guide. He is the role model for everyone and contemporary Muslims and teachers should study his life properly to get guidelines.
3. Government should organize training sessions, workshops and seminar etc. for teachers, students and parents to develop their mind, behavior and good character.
4. Curriculum needs to be revised and a book of Seerat UN Nabi should be included in every class so that students should be familiar with the attributes of the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).
5. It is a general understanding in our education system that moral training of students is the responsibility of the teacher of Islamic Studies only. This fallacy needs to be vanished.

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