METHOD OF TEACHING IN THE ISLAMIC SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

1. Motivating the students for learning.

2. Drawing Student's attention towards the lesson.

3. Explanation and Analysis of the Content.

4. Receptivity to Instruction.

5. Gradation and Continuity in Education.

6. Conclusion of the lesson.

7. Techniques for coverage of the content:
   
   I. Repetition
   II. Questioning.
   III. Discussion.
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8. Discipline.
The Aims of Islamic education and the aims of modern education are not similar. This difference as we have seen in the preceding chapter inspires a Muslim educationist to arrange the content of education in the frame of Islamic ideology. And naturally he is justified to apply the proper means, materials and methods for having a desirable result of his endeavour. The Islamic system of education does not divorce modern disciplines from its curricula, even though as some of them are totally and some are partially in contrast with the Islamic beliefs. Thus un-Islamic and anti-Islamic elements are also accepted as parts of Islamic curricula. It is not possible to eliminate the undesirable elements totally from the curricula, for they are the part of the subjects concerned and in some cases they are the foundations on which the whole of the contents of the subject have been developed. For example take the Darwinian theory of Evolution, an anti-Islamic theory in its essence and spirit. On its basis some subjects of modern times are based and some accept it as their important parts. This undesirable element is not easy to be discarded from the subject. Islamic curricula accept it as a necessary evil and not as a desirable thing. In view of the conditions unfavourable to Islam, method of teaching is rightly emphasized and given a significant place in the Islamic system of education.¹ Every

¹ Afendi, Towards Islamic curricula, Curriculum and Teacher Education, p. 4. Also see Muhammad Qutub, The Role of Religion in Education, Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education, p. 60.
educative effort in an Islamic setting is to instil Islamic beliefs and ideals in the hearts and minds of the students. History, sociology, psychology, economics, literature and physical and natural sciences are taught to mould the thought and behavioural pattern of the students according to the ideology of life which Islam propounds. Thus the adverse influence of the anti-Islamic contents of Islamic curricula are reduced and removed to some extent by the application of proper teaching methods employed by a teacher who has firm belief in the Islamic ideals. The designer of Islamic curricula is compelled to include in it the undesirable elements also which are contrary to his faith. But the teacher under the same system of education is not bound to apply those methods of teaching which Islam does not recognise. He is free to select the method of teaching best suited to his ideas and beliefs. At the same time this fact is also accepted that modern system of education provides us many useful techniques and methods of teaching which the teacher, working under any system of education, must not shun. Islam does not underestimate the modern scientific methods of teaching which facilitate students in better learning. But certain psychological methods such as brain washing, indoctrination, subliminal perception and obliteration of personality traits

which are also used in learning process and gaining desirable results for certain causes are rejected by Islam. In fact, they harm the dignity of man whereas Islam proclaims and protects freedom of thought and conscience.  

The methods of teaching and the techniques of learning employed in the educational institutions of Islamic nature are not quite unique and entirely different from those practised in modern secular educational institutions. However there are some salient features of Islamic method of teaching which are stated as follows: (i) dividing students into groups and appointing monitors for each group. This tradition is very old as Zabbi has given in his Tabgatul Qurra, an account of the teaching method of Abu Darda, one of the distinguished companions of the Prophet. According to him Abu Darda used to sit back in the mosque after fajr prayers to give lessons in the Quran to the large crowd of eagerly waiting students. The students were divided into groups of ten each. Every group was placed under the charge and supervision of a monitor from among the students. (ii) presenting alien ideas and discussing

4. This system was after all run under the guidance of the learned teacher himself. As is reported that Abu parda himself moved about between the groups rendering individual help, wherever necessary. As soon as a student completed memorization of the whole of the Quran he was taken into his personal discipleship, apparently, for higher studies in the Quran and Islamics. It would appear that the person he appointed as monitors of his groups were those who had already completed their studies under his personal supervision. The appreciation of his teaching method of Quran may be gauged from the fact that when on the order of the distinguished teacher, students were counted, no less than 1600 were found to present. See Shibli, al-Farooque, vol. II, p. 119.
honestly the arguments behind them, although the underlying intention of the teacher is to refute those alien ideologies which are contrary to Islam. (iii) Focusing students' attention on one item of knowledge in one period and proceeding gradually towards the desired goal, (iv) Motivating and preparing students for self-education throughout his life.  

The oft-quoted Hadith, 'acquire knowledge from the cradle to the grave (تَارَثِعْنِي طَرَابِضَ النَّاسِ) is sometime interpreted in such a way that it gives a wrong notion about the entire educational system of Islam. It would appear from such interpretation that the Islamic system of education lacks the provision of time-bound set courses for the various stages of education and keeping in view the child's psychology pertaining to different stages of child development, suitable teaching techniques and learning methods are not applied and proper incentives are not provided to the students in the course of imparting a lesson. This suggests that Islam does not possess any system of education and it has only some rudimentary procedure of acquiring theological knowledge. The same misconception is evident when it is stressed


that Islamic education is nothing but a method of self-education
the details of which are apparent from the various schools of
Islamic mysticism (Tasawwuf). In mysticism a number of methods
have been introduced to intensity the process of self-education.
It is not our purpose here to discuss the various formalities,
procedures and stages of spiritual development of mysticism. It
is a separate subject of investigation and the methods of self-
education employed in every sect of Islamic mysticism are claimed
to be Islamic in their origin and spirit. It is said that through
the methods of self-education one can find the Perfect Being,
the ultimate goal of mystic effort. The Prophet of Islam is said
to have discovered this method of self-education, which is
preserved in the Quran. The fundamental steps towards self-
education are said to offer prayer daily five times, to pay poor
dues (Zakah), to observe fast in the month of Ramadhan and to
perform Hajj at least once in life. None can dare to reduce the
importance of these essential duties of Islam. But it is not at
all justified to confine Islamic education to self-education
only. Ordering of thought according to the Islamic doctrine and
shaping human behaviour accordingly is undoubtedly a very impor-
tant aspect of Islamic system of education but it should not be
said to be the whole of the system Islam proposes for education
and training.8

7. M.A. Tawfiq, A sketch of the idea of Education in Islam,
Islamic Culture, July 1943, p. 321.

8. Ibid., p. 323.
A careful study of the sources makes it clear that Islam has its own method of teaching which is not less up-to-date and scientific than that applied in any modern educational institution. It touches every aspect of teaching and suggests to the teacher to adopt different techniques at different stages as the lesson proceeds. We find in the sources instructions concerning the creation of interest and aspiration in the students and producing in them a very high degree of motivation. Sources also discuss the techniques adopted for drawing students attention towards the lesson. Useful advices to teacher regarding the presentation of the lesson can also be derived from them. Receptivity of the students and gradation and continuity in teaching are also the important items of the Islamic method of teaching. Explanation of subject-matter, conclusion of the lesson and home assignment for student are also the significant aspects of the Islamic method of teaching. Moreover we find clear indication in the sources about the methods of strengthening memory and about the enforcement of discipline throughout the education process.

Motivating the students for learning:

Before starting a lesson the teacher should try to create sincere desire and deep aspiration in the student. If
students are not mentally prepared to grasp what the teacher wants to give them, teaching would be of no avail but simply waste of time and energy. This view is apparent from the study of the very first lines of the Quran. The chapter al-Fatihah is in fact a preface to the Quran. It appears that it has been attached to the Quran with a view to creating desire and aspiration in persons who turn to take guidance from the Quran. This chapter is a prayer on behalf of the student asking for knowledge or guidance. This also suggests that learning is not possible only by external exhortations but it can be acquired by the deep inward aspiration of the student. If the student is not mentally prepared to acquire the knowledge transmitted by the teacher he would not apply his intellectual faculties at the learning of the lesson taught by the teacher. Thus without having strong desire and inclination to study the student cannot show assiduousness. The Quran inspires its readers to acquire more and more knowledge. The following of its verses are to create an urge for acquiring knowledge.

(i) Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know?  
(ii) And he to whom wisdom is granted receiveth indeed a benefit overflowing.  
(iii) God will raise up to (suitable) ranks those of you who believe and who have been granted real knowledge.

9. Zumar: 10
10. Baqara: 269
(iv) Those truly fear God, among His servants, who have knowledge. 12

The above quoted verses provide proper incentives to the students to acquire more and more knowledge. Grunebaum evaluating the educational ideas of Az-Zarnuji, the great Muslim educationalist of the Medieval period says that the pleasure which a learner gains in the acquisition of knowledge is the best incentive for him to acquire knowledge. He rules out Az-Zarnuji's view regarding the reward of knowledge in the life after death. He, however, appreciates Az-Zarnuji's idea that the learned on account of his knowledge and scholarly talents is remembered even after his death and it is also an incentive to make the students fond of knowledge. Grunebaum says that it is the realistic approach of Az-Zarnuji that to gain popularity and fame students are prompted to acquire knowledge. But such a fame is of no use for a scholar who passes away from this tangible world when Az-Zarnuji's statement is evaluated in the light of his former view, it would appear that the reward of the scholarly work left by a scholar reaches him even after his death. This is the true Islamic approach and also the correct interpretation of Az-Zarnuji's statement. 13

The above discussion makes it clear that before the lesson formally starts the teacher should give proper incentive and create:

12. Fatir: 28
13. G.E. Von Grunebaum, op. cit., p. 10. Also see Az-Zarnuji, op. cit., p. 44 and p. 42.
high aspiration and strong desire in the heart of the students to prompt them to learning. Like the Quran, the Prophet also used the same technique of imparting knowledge. As long as a learner is not inwardly ready to grasp something given by the teacher, the teacher should not start his discourse. In the following Hadith, the Prophet teaches the method of offering prayer (Salat) but before teaching, he makes the learner's mind prepared for acquisition. As long as the learner himself did not demand the Prophet did not initiate instruction. "Abu Huraira said that a man entered the mosque when God's messenger was sitting in it and prayed. He then came and said, "Peace be upon you," and God's messenger replied, "And upon you be peace. Go back and pray, for you have not prayed. He returned and prayed, and then came and said, "Peace be upon you, to which he replied, "And upon you be peace. Go back and pray, for you have not prayed." On the third and on the fourth occasions he said "Teach me, messenger of God," and he said: "When you get up to pray perform the ablution perfectly, then face the Qibla and say, "God is most great". Then recite a convenient portion from the Quran; then bow and remain quietly in that attitude, then raise yourself and stand erect; then prostrate yourself and remain quietly in that state, then raise your head and sit quietly in that state and then raise yourself
and sit at ease.  

One very common tradition among Muslims is to begin very worth with the pronouncement of the formula, Bismillah- ar-Rahman ar-Rahim (In the name of Allah the compassionate, the Merciful). This practice is very rigidly maintained in the process of teaching and learning. Its importance in the acquisition of knowledge is evident from this fact that every one of the Quranic chapters begins with this very formula. This provision is also to create an awakening and consciousness among the learners to profit from the lesson started just before. Reading in Islam must begin with the name of God. It is quite explicitly mentioned in the first verse


15. Mawdudi counts the advantages of its pronouncement as follows: * Islamic culture required a man to commence everything with the name of Allah. If this is done conscientiously and sincerely, it will surely produce three good results. First it will keep him away from the evil, because the very name of Allah will impel him to consider whether he is justified in associating His name with a wrong deed or an evil intention. Secondly, the very mention of the name of Allah will create in him the straight attitude of mind and direct him to the right direction. Thirdly, he will receive Allah’s help and blessing and will be protected from the temptation of Satan, for Allah turns to a man when he turns to Him. Tafhim, vol. I, op. cit., p. 43.

16. There is only one exception, the Quranic chapter tauba does not begin with it.
revealed to the prophet. The name of God is mentioned in the beginning of the lesson with a view to seek His help in the course of education. This is the positive approach but from the negative point of view it is expected from both the teacher and the student that they may seek refuge of God from the temptations of the Devil. This attitude would protect the learner and the learned from going astray and from making an useless mental exercise. Their teaching and learning would be in accordance with the Islamic ideals. In this way knowledge would be utilised only for good purposes and would not be misused. 17

The method of teaching, though, proper and pure would be of no use if the teacher does not prove his competence and takes students in his confidence. It is required of a teacher on the one hand to possess an extraordinary knowledge of the subject and, on the other, he should come to his students as their true well-wisher. These two preconditions concerning

17. "when thou dost read the Quran, seek God's Protection from Satan the rejected one". Nahl: 98. If a suggestion from Satan assail thy (mind) seek refuge with God; for He heareth and knoweth (all things)" Adrafi: 200. "And if (at any time) an incitement to discord is made to thee by the Evil one, seek refuge in God. He is the one who bears and knows all things," Fussilat or Ham Mim Sajda: 36 English translation by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.
the teaching process have been widely discussed in the Quran. Time and again the Quran mentions that only God has real and perfect knowledge and man should depend only on the knowledge transmitted by Him.\(^\text{18}\) Quran presents the prophet as the true well-wisher of the humanity.\(^\text{19}\) This attitude should be adopted by the teacher for his students. He must possesses a big and tender heart and show forebearance, endurance and tolerance to his students. With a heart full of these emotions and noble feeling the teacher under the Islamic system of education is expected to begin his lesson. Here it appears quite appropriate to quote a few words of Ibn Khaldun which may be used by the teacher before he starts his lesson: "You, students, should realize that I am here giving you useful (hints) for your study. If you accept them and follow them assiduously you will find a great noble treasure."\(^\text{20}\)

**Drawing Students' Attention Towards the Lesson:**

An efficient teacher before imparting a lesson and also sometimes in the course of the lesson tries to draw the attention of his students towards his teaching. Various techniques are applied to create curiosity in the students. The Quranic method of

\(^{18}\) "And God has full knowledge and well acquainted (with all things)" Hujrat: 13 "God is full of knowledge and wisdom" Nur: 18 "My Lord comprehendeth in His knowledge all things." \underline{An'am}: 80 , Eng. tr. by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

\(^{19}\) Bagara: 151

\(^{20}\) Ibn Khaldun, \underline{Muqadimah}, vol. III, p. 295.
creating curiosity appears different and distinct. Here a brief account of the Quranic techniques used for creating curiosity and drawing students attention towards the lesson appears justified. For this purpose somewhere the Quran uses Huroof-i-Muqattiyat, while at other places it raises some questions of vital importance to draw the attention of its reader. For example, take the following verses: "O ye who believe shall I lead you to a bargain that will save you from a grievous penalty" 22 and "shall we tell you of those who lose most in respect of their deeds." 23 There are many

21. Alif Lam Mim, Alif Lam Ra, Qaf, Sad, Taha, Ham Mim and Kaf Ha Ya Aain Sad are called Huroof Muqattiyat. About these words Mawdudi writes: "(They) were in common use in the Arabic literature of the period when the Quran was revealed. The poet and the rhetoricians made use of this style, and instances of this can even be found in the pre Islamic prose and Poetry which has survived. As their significance was appreciated by all concerned, none objected to or questioned about their use because it was no enigma to them. Even the bitterest opponents of the Quran, who never missed an opportunity did not raise any objection against their use, but as their use was abandoned with the passage of time, it became difficult for the commentators to determine their exact meaning and significance." Mawdudi, Tafhim, vol.I, p. 49.


chapters in the Quran which first present the scene of an occurrence and thereby divert the learner's mind to the main theme of the subject. The Quranic chapters *zilzal* and *Infitar* deal with the subject of *Akhirah* (the life after death) the description of which was initiated with the landscape of its occurrence. Sometimes the Quran quotes the questions and the objections raised by its opponents and thereby tries to divert the mind of the learner towards their answers.

Again the Quran uses the techniques to forecast something and to give all of a sudden an information about certain occurrences so that they listen to and ponder over the discourse.

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25. "A questioner asked about a penalty to befall. The unbelievers the which there is none to word off." *Ma'arij*: 1, tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali. "And said,"When we are reduced to bones and broken dust, should we really be raised up (to be) a new creation?" *Bani Israil*: 98, tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali. "What kept men back from Belief when Guidance came to them, was nothing but this; they said" Has God sent a man(Like us) to be(His)Apostle?"Say,"if there were settled on earth, angels walking about in peace and quite, we should certainly have sent them down from the heavens an angels for an apostle." *Bani Israil*: 94-95, tr. Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

26. "The Roman Empire has been defeated, in a land close by: But they even after(this) defeat of theirs will soon be victorious". *Rum*: 23,"The(Day) of Noise and clamour, what is the Day of Noise and clamour? and what will explain to thee what the(Day) of Noise and clamour is(It is)a Day whereon men will be like moths scattered about and mountain will be like carded wool." *Al-Qaria*: 1-5, tr. by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.
One of the distinctive features of early Islamic method of teaching was the seating arrangement of students. They were advised to sit in semi circles (Halqa) in the mosque and the sheikh, the revered teacher took his seat leaning against the pillar of the mosque at a point in the very circumference of the circle. Shibli refers to Tazkeratul Huffaz that the knowledge seeker used to gather in the courtyard of mosques and sit in the Halqa(Circle) to be instructed from the Fugaha (one who is well acquainted with the religious sciences). This seating arrangement appears very useful in focussing the students attention on a point that was the teacher himself.

Presentation:

After providing proper incentive to the student, by creating in them a strong desire, deep aspiration and curiosity to learn something new, the teacher proceeds towards the presentation of the lesson. In this regard the Quranic method of

presentation should be carefully noted by the teacher. As we know the Quran was revealed to the Prophet in the form of speeches. And the Prophet also used to present the Quranic message in the form of such. The Arabic speaking people in whose language the Quran was revealed were fully influenced by the oratory and rhetoric eloquence of the Quran. Even the greatest opponent of Islam accepted this fact. Being influenced of the Quranic oratory many of them embraced Islam. This suggests that teacher should impart the lesson with vim and vigour to influence the students around them. Teachers should choose for and use in their lesson appropriate and suitable words conveying the complete and true meaning of their lesson. Man has been gifted with the ability to think. His thought and ideas are expressed by means of word. The power of speech makes man a distinct animal. The Quran specially discusses the quality of man which makes it clear that the power of speech plays a very significant role in the perception of an idea. The underlying power of words pronounced by the tongue, may be imagined through the fact that by means of a pronouncement God creates everything. The Quran says that for creating anything God need not use matter and means to mould the matter. He only orders a thing to be in existence and thing comes into  

understood only when they are suitably used. A teacher must pay heed to this fact. He should properly think over his theme. The power of speech (Nutg) is closely related to thinking and contemplation. What is contemplated and conceived by mind is expressed by means of tongue. So if the conception of the teacher regarding any problem is not clear, it would be difficult for him to use appropriate words to express properly the nature of the problem.32

Explanation and Analysis:— It is a very common item of teaching that the subject under study should be fully elucidated and properly explained. But there is one limitation in the method of teaching propounded by Islam. Teachers, at any cost, are not allowed to lead the students into fallacy. Teachers are more mature and superior to their students in intellectual capacities. They have command to express themselves clearly. So they may easily delude their students, if they want. Islam forbids the teachers to have an attitude which may create delusion in the students. The Prophet of Islam prohibits to delude people by means of knowledge acquired.33


33. Mishkat, Kitabul ilm, Hadith transmitted by Muawiyah, vide Naeem Siddique, Muhsin-e-Insaniat Baha isi at Muaallim-i-Insaniat, Nahyer Taleem Number, op. cit., p. 16. Ghazali quotes the statement of Hazrat Ali that two persons have caused him pain: one who is ignorant but poses himself as a scholar and thus deceives people. The other who is scholar but due to his bad conduct people doubt him and his knowledge. See Ahyaul-ooloom, op. cit., p. 144.
Teachers of early Islamic period, in this matter displayed honesty to a considerable extent. They never hesitated to accept their ignorance, if they were not acquainted with a problem which was brought to their notice and were asked of it.  

It is evident from the study of the Quran that the Quran not only presents its message with force and vigour but also elucidates and explains its statement to instil in the mind of the learner its messages. The Quran gives arguments in support of its statement from the phenomena occurring in nature, it seeks help from human observations and experiences and also from historical events. It quotes instances from the stores of past nations and from their remains and relics. It removes doubts and misconceptions from the mind of its readers and infers to necessary conclusions from every event occurring in the society. These techniques adopted by the Quran suggest the teacher employed under Islamic system of education to clearly elucidate and fully explain the subjects under study.  

We have earlier noted that when the content of education are in conflict with Islamic ideals teacher is expected to apply proper teaching method, explaining, analysing.

34. La adri (I do not know) was very common to pronounce when teacher were not certain of any matter. See Ibn Abdul Bar.p.162.

and evaluating the content in such a way that Islamic beliefs, if nourished are at least protected from harm. In this regard the teacher's responsibility becomes significant. He is exhorted to increase his efficiency particularly when he deals with the subjects which contradict Islam. Among the modern subjects, Anthropology is one whose entire superstructure is founded on anti-Islamic ideas. It emerged from the Darwinian theory of evolution. Although it is not accepted that Darwin's theory is an admitted scientific fact, under this subject the students are taught that man emerged from Anthropoid ape, his physical, mental, and social development is due to the environmental changes and influences. It is considered that man is the child of his environment. This interpretation

36. "The Darwinian theory from its birth to the present day, has not achieved scientific absolutism. New-Darwinianism, Julian Huxley being one of its most outstanding writers, confirms the uniqueness of man mentally, psychologically and even biologically. Huxley, a devout Darwinist and a steadfast atheist has written a book entitled Man in the Modern World. He prefaces it with a lengthy chapter on "The uniqueness of Man" in which he says that the distance between man and the ape is much larger than the distance between an ant or cricket and the ape. But he goes on to say that modern science has placed man on a level not very different basically from that of the ant". Muhammad Qutub, The Role of Religion in Education, Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education, p. 52.
of man and environment is directly in conflict with the Islamic thought. To lessen the adverse influence of the anti-Islamic theories, the teacher under Islamic system of education is suggested to avoid to transmit these theories as scientific facts and is advised to teach them as scientific hypothesis and also to try his best to reject the hypothesis and prove them to be wrong. In fact, it is to expect more from a teacher than his job's requirement. How a well-arranged subject comprising of strong arguments and convincing scientific evidences can be rejected by a teacher who has been simply assigned the work to impart the lesson with the help of the text book already prescribed for it. The problem is in fact related to the reconstruction of modern sciences on Islamic principles. The role that the teaching method can play in this regard is small and insufficient. The gravity of the problem may suggest to some devout muslims to discard such subjects from Islamic curricula but would it be justified to do so? It is an important question that requires proper and satisfactory answer particularly from those who stand for Islamization of knowledge. During the instruction of psychology and sociology an Islamic approach in explanation and analysis of the content, is

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comparatively easy to be adopted by an efficient teacher of the subject concerned. In psychology experiments are made on animals and the findings are generalised to apply to human being. As Islam does not accept that man emerged from lower animals, it disapproves for human being the inferences drawn from the experiments made on animals. A teacher is quite justified if he explains and analyses that the theories which are very commonly applied in learning do not apply to human psychology. 38 An Islamic explanation and interpretation of various social institutions is expected to be necessarily made by the teacher during the instruction of sociology. All the units of Islamic society are constituted under the divine law and they function under laws considered pious and permanent. Hence the work of the teacher under the Islamic system includes to distinguish the social institutions of Islamic nature from those which man himself forms and manages to regulate them according to his own desires and likings. 39 Every branch of the social sciences wants to discuss that civilization and various of its aspect are judged in the light of the fundamental principles on which the Prophets propounded, developed and enriched the civilization. These civilizations are considered not only sacred but claimed to contain healthy attitudes and constructive approaches required for human well-being. 40

38. Ibid., p. 55
39. Ibid., p. 54
40. Mawdudi, Naya Nizam-e-Taleem, op. cit., p. 76.
In the teaching of history the teacher under Islamic system is expected to adopt a particular approach to explain and evaluates the data concerning the subject. History of nations is commonly judged on the basis of the material progress and cultural refinement represented by fine art and by the architectural advancement. Pharaonic, Greek, Roman, Babylonian and Assyrian civilizations are praised and admired on account of their materials progress and gigantic architectural monuments. The moral decay and the spiritual downfall are not considered as the basis of judging cultures and civilizations. But the teacher under Islamic system is required to explain and interpret the historical data of any civilization basing on the criterion of Divine revelation as foundations of civilization. But at the same time, he is expected to take proper care and to maintain full justice in explaining the historical facts. Facts should not be undervalued. The architectural advancement of Pharaohs, the Greek's contribution to philosophy and science, the Roman's military discipline and organizational capabilities are not ignored by the teacher.  

41. Muhammad Qutub, op.cit., p.60.
Receptivity to Instruction:

In explaining, analysing and interpreting the textual pieces, the teacher must not ignore the student's level of attainment and his receptivity to instruction. The teacher should not go beyond the general intellectual capacity of the students with whom he is involved in the task of teaching. If it is done so, it causes despair and dissatisfaction in the students. They become lazy and careless about their study and think that the acquisition of knowledge is beyond their capacity. This doubt is created only because of the wrong technique adopted by the teacher.

Abdullah bin Masood used to say to his students that if they said something that was beyond the comprehension of the people that would create discomfiture (fitna).  

Abdullah bin Abbas was of the same opinion. He apprehended of the grave consequences to those who were involved in the job of teaching to discuss only matters which people could understand.

Moreover, the Prophet, in this regard, himself received a clear Divine instruction to talk to people according to their status and speak with them according to understanding. The following Hadith of the Prophet makes it clear how he instructed

42. Ibn Abdul Bar, p.100.
43. Ibid.
44. Abu Dawud, vide Ghazali, Ahyaul oloom, p.141.
a man to grasp the teachings of the Quran. *Abdullah b. Abu Aufa relates about a man who came to the Prophet and said, “I am unable to learn of the Quran, so teach me something which would help me.” He told him to say, “Glory be to God; Praise be to God; There is no God but Allah; God is most great; There is no might and power except in God.” He said Messenger of God, this is all for God; but what is there for me? He told him to say, “O God have mercy on me, heal me, guide me, and provide for me.” In this Hadith the Prophet stated briefly the essence of the Quranic Teaching at the request of a man who expressed his inability to learn and understand the Quran. The Teacher must be cautious during his work of teaching, that the feelings of the students are not injured. Ghazali has rightly recommended to the teachers that they should not insult the students’ intelligence. If the students are told that on account of their low intelligence something is not taught to them, they will be disheartened and their interest and eagerness to study would be reduced.

Gradation and Continuity in Education:

One very important item of the Islamic method of teaching is to instruct the students gradually and step by step.

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45. Abu Dawud transmitted it and Nasai’s transmission finishes with “except in God.” See Mishkat al-Masabih, op.cit. p.175.

46. Ghazali, Ahya ul-ooloom, p.142.
teachers commit mistake. They begin instruction raising a number of complicated problems and expect students to solve them. Ibn Khaldun suggests that the teacher, at the very outset of the lesson, should not expose problems, but except those directly related to the topic concerned. This he can do when the topic taken up by him is properly explained and when the student has acquired scholarly mastery over the topic. Then it would be useful to evaluate and analyse the topic from every angle by posing questions and presenting problems about it. Such an effort in the beginning would confuse the students and they would avoid education and teaching. The teacher should not expose the final conclusions of the topic at the beginning of the lesson. This is not useful at all rather it is harmful. In the beginning the students are not prepared to understand. Preparedness of the students grows gradually, hence the lesson should also proceed gradually and little by little. This is in accordance of the principle the Prophet himself adopted in the process of education and training. He taught it to those who were appointed for training the people of various tribes. They were instructed to apply the principle of step by step advancement in their work. They were asked not to frighten the people

48. Ibid., p.293.
by at once presenting all the problems and requirement of religion. They were asked to present at the beginning the fundamentals of Islam which includes Tawheed (oneness of God) and Risalat (Prophet hook ) and thereafter people should be taught to perform Salat(Prayer) then fasting, then to pay poor dues (Zakat) and to perform Hajj (Pilgrimage). Ibn Khaldun discusses in his muqaddimah the method of effective teaching under which teacher has been taught to present at first the principal problem of the chapter in the form of an easy and simple summary and then he is required to carefully note the preparedness and understanding capability of the student when the students become acquainted with the nature of the discipline, the teacher, in the second phase, is expected to elaborate the lesson to a higher level. He should elucidate and comment on it and also compare it with other similar problems. At the third and the last round the teacher should try to fill up every sort of gap in the lesson. Thus, the teacher does not leave any item of the lesson vague, obscure and unexplained.  
This method of teaching propounded by Ibn Khaldun runs through the process of step by step learning and represents the very effective principle of learning 'proceed from easy to the difficult'. This principle, that the instruction should begin with matters that are easily understood has always been

considered important in the Islamic system of education. Az-zarnuji, in this connection, quotes the view of the venerable Imam sharf ad-Din al'uqaili\textsuperscript{51} as follows: "In my opinion the right procedure (in study) is what our elders practiced, for verily they choose to begin with a few subjects of broad content because they are more readily understood and retained, are less fatiguing and occur frequently among men."\textsuperscript{52} This view of the learned Imam shows that students become indolent and loath to occupy themselves with knowledge, if they are taught something that is not understandable. This does not mean that difficult problems should be ignored and they should not be included in the lesson but the purport of the statement is to prepare students and teachers to proceed gradually and step by step in imparting knowledge. Advising his student, Yunus the renowned scholar Ibn Shahab Zahri says that one who tries to acquire knowledge in a single attempt finds nothing except fatigue and depression.\textsuperscript{53} This instruction in the Islamic method of teaching is for the sake of preparing the learner to proceed slowly in the pursuit of knowledge and that they might not lose their patience in the course of learning. Zarnuji has rightly observed this fact when he says, "At low temperature a stick can be straightened."\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{51} Jurist, d. 1180/1 See Az-zarnuji, op.cit., p. 47.
\textsuperscript{52} Az-Zarnuji, p. 47.
\textsuperscript{53} See Ibn Abdul Bar, p. 91.
\textsuperscript{54} Az-Zarnuji, p. 41.
The slow but the natural speed of learning prevents the students from making unnecessary intermissions and breaks in learning, so that they might always remain fresh, untired and ready to proceed ahead in the acquisition of knowledge. Intermission in study has always proved harmful. On account of a break in the study the valuable time of the learner, on the one hand, is wasted and, on the other, he faces great difficulty to locate himself at the proper place in the setting of education because of the intervening period. So the teacher should also avoid to give long intervals between the various components of the single subject. Disruption created by break in teaching produces disorder in the linked series of knowledge and the learner becomes unable to establish link between the different parts of the subject. This is of course a loss to which the teacher must not yield. Without making any intermission a continuous pursuit of learning is praiseworthy in Islam. Many scholars have expressed their personal view in regard to their superiority in knowledge. Their excellence in learning was due

57. Az-zarnuji quotes the statement of his teacher the venerable Imam Burhanuddine, "Verily I became superior to my companions since neither relaxation nor perturbation interfered my study of knowledge." Az-zarnuji further says, "It was reported by venerable Imam Saih al-Islam Ali al-Asbijabi (Bahauddine Ali b. Muhammad b. Ismail al-Asbijabi as-Samar-qandi, famous Hanfi legist, d. 1140). That there occurred during the time of learning of knowledge a break (in his formal schooling) during a period of twelve years because of the overthrow of Govt. So, he left the country with his companions, with whom he went to debate matters, and did not cease his discussion. The two of them used to sit (together) in order to hold a discussion each day and they did not leave off getting together for the purpose of argumentation back and forth during this period of twelve years. Later his companion became the venerable Saih al-Islam for Safi'ites." Taleem al Mutaallim, p.54.
to their untiring and continuous involvement in learning. The zeal and enthusiasm showed by the learner in the cause of learning is quite proper at its place. But the continuity in education does not mean a very long and continuous process of instruction without giving leisure periods to students to be relaxed and refreshed. The teacher of the early Islamic period always provided sufficient time to their students for relaxation and recreation. It is reported about Ibn Abbas that when he was tired of teaching and learning he used to enjoy poetry. Ibn shahab Zuhri after transmitting a good number of Ahadith used to say to his students to recite Arabic poetry and used to chat with them. He is also reported to say that there must be an interval for relaxation in the time fixed for teaching and learning. Qasim bin Muhammad, the renowned teacher and scholar of the early Islamic period, whenever felt boredom and disgust during teaching of a lesson, used to allow his students to narrate stories of the olden times.

Conclusion:-

After explaining, elucidating and analysing the problem undertaken, the teacher must conclude the whole lesson in a few sentences. This technique is commonly applied by the teachers.

58. Az-zarnuji, op.cit., p.58.
59. Ibn Abdul Bar, p.81-82.
60. Ibid., p.82.
The Quran also uses this useful and important item of teaching method. When we study the Quran we find in its beginning long chapters which discuss Islamic thought and behaviour in an elaborated form and quote suitable instances to elucidate its purport. But the same subjects have been narrated in the last part of the Quran in very short form and in summary. In fact, these are conclusions of the various discussions of the Quran. For example we take the shortest chapter of the Quran named Ikhlas. The most important article of Islamic faith is the belief in the oneness of God. This has been widely discussed throughout the Quran but in this shortest chapter its summary has been presented. This is in fact the conclusion of the study made on the topic of Islamic monotheism. Likewise Akhirah (life after death) the second important subject of the Quran has been concluded in the last chapters such as Zilzal, Infitar and Inshiqaq. The chapter Asr of the Quran is considered the conclusion of the whole of the Quran. All these suggest that at the end of the lesson teacher should summarise his lecture in a few sentences.

A distorted picture of the Islamic method of teaching is that it is nothing but the memorization of the contents through repetition. The entire educative effort is said to listen to the teacher's discourse, read the text and memorize it. It is said that the students are not encouraged to critically examine and analyze the material under study; they are only advised to make the parrot-like recall of the content taught by the teacher. But the matter is not so simple as it is stated to be. Knowledge in Islam is a sacred thing and the way of its acquisition is not simple and easy. To have an idea of its gravity we must not forget the following remarks of Hazrat Ali, "The pursuit of knowledge is not carried on without six things which I shall indicate to you through words that are clear: Ingenious acumen, fervent desire, patience, sufficient sustenance, guidance of a teacher and the length of time". 62 This costly opinion of the venerable scholar makes it clear how the learner should be inwardly prepared for the acquisition of knowledge and what type of help he should be given outwardly. In the acquisition of knowledge some stages have to be crossed gradually by the learners. Fuzail bin Ayaz says that the first step in the process of learning is to keep silence. This would necessarily be meaningful and thoughtful as such silence.

has been praised in Islam. The second step according to him is to listen to the teacher’s discourse with full attention and the third is to memorise the lesson given by the teacher and thereafter the acquired knowledge is expected to be translated into action. The last stage is to transmit the acquired knowledge to other people. Abdullah bin Mubarak’s view in this regard appears more perfect. He says acquisition of knowledge begins with a sincere intention. This prepares the students to listen the teacher’s lecture with care and attention and consequently students understand the matter under study and their perception in this regard becomes correct and clear. After gaining full comprehension of the subject undertaken Abdullah bin Mubarak advises the students to memorize its contents and then put them into practice and lastly to transmit what has been acquired to others.

The above discussion and also which has been said earlier are sufficient proofs to reject the absurd hypothesis that under Islamic method of teaching students are prepared to be only efficient in the parrot-like recall of the materials transmitted by their teachers. There are a good number of information in the sources which throw full light how memory

63. See Ibn. Abdul Bar. p. 88
64. Ibid.
should be strengthened and forgetfulness should be cured. Besides the formal techniques ought to be applied for this purpose there are some etiquettes which are expected to be followed by the learner to strengthen memory. Although these have been harshly criticized and strongly objected to by the so-called objectivist critics. These are marked as folk-lore and illogical and primitive ideas. But in fact, these are the general etiquettes of the Muslim society. The students, learners and also the scholars are particularly expected to adopt them. Az-zarnuji has given in the chapters 12 and 13 of his 'Talim al-Mutaallim' an account of the etiquettes considered essential for the learners to strengthen the memory. He says that the use of honey, perfumes and tooth picks increases memorial recall. Honey is a light food which suits those who are in the pursuit of knowledge, perfume intensifies thinking power and the regular use of tooth stick makes a man refreshed. Thus the following view of Az-zarnuji regarding strengthening memory and removing forgetfulness appears something like a medical prescription. "Rubbing the teeth clean drinking honey and eating or chewing incense plants with sugar as well as eating 21 raisins, red ones each day in empty stomach, create

65. Al-Amash reports God's messenger as saying "The calamity which affects knowledge is forgetfulness," See: Mishkat, op. cit., p. 61.
67. Az-zarnuji,p.68.
68. Perhaps (white) hellebore, Kundus, this being used in antiquity to cure headaches, insanity, etc. text has kunder, incense plant see: Az-zarnuji, p. 68.
memory, since (these things) cure one of a great many sickness and illness. 69 Az-zarnuji further says that care for worldly life involves the learner into useless headaches while the concern for the life after death broadens the mind and strengthen the memory. 70 He however accepts that the most decisive factor in strengthening memory is to take regular and well-planned exercise with sincerity and assiduity. 71 Hence it is better to note the various techniques which should

69. Ibid.
70. Ibid.
71. Az-zarnuji, p.67- The rites and traditions helping in strengthening memory have been stated by Az-zarnuji as follows: "reduction of eating as well as praying at night and reading of the koran are among the causes of remembering. It is said: there is nothing that increases memory more than reading the koran silently, and reading the Koran silently is the most excellent thing because of the word (of the Prophet): "And the most excellent among the works of my community is the reading of the Koran silently". And one should say while lifting the Koran, "In the name of God, and Glory be to God, and praise be to God, and there is no God but God, and God is greatest, and there is no power and strength except in God, the Exalted, the Mighty, who knows the numbers of all letters that every were and that ever shall be written throughout the centuries and ages." And let it be said after every written section of the text: "I believe in one unique God, the sole truth who has no companion and I do not believe in any (deity) besides Him, "There also should be considerable praying to the Prophet since he is mercy for the world." Vide Ibid.
be applied by the teachers and adopted by the students. These techniques have been extensively discussed in the sources:

1. **Repetition**:

   This technique is considered very effective in acquiring and imparting knowledge. The Quran itself uses this technique for the fuller comprehension of the matter with which it desires to fill the learners mind. We seldom find a page in the Quran in which its fundamental message has not been repeated. The notable point is that the style of repetition is not uniform everywhere. The diversification of style and the proper expression with suitable words does not create boredom and disgust. 72

   We have earlier given an account of the Prophet's personality as a teacher. In fact, he was basically a teacher and remained so throughout. The assumption of the responsibilities of the head of the Islamic State, therefore could not prevent him from devoting a considerable portion of his time to teaching and instructing his followers. He used to lecture regularly to his companions who gathered round him after prayers to be instructed in religion. They were free to question him on all matters, especially on faith and human conduct. His method of teaching was based on repetition. When he wanted to emphasize any thing, he used to repeat it three times in order to make sure that the...

audience fully grasped and understood the import and meaning of the teaching.\textsuperscript{73} This technique has been described in the following Hadith, "Anas said that when the Prophet made a statement, he repeated it three times so that it would be understood, and that when he met a company and saluted them he did it three times.\textsuperscript{74} Repetition causes retention, and fuller comprehension. The Prophet, however, took care not to tax his followers to the extent that it caused fatigue or led to the loss of interest in the subject they were being taught.\textsuperscript{75} This method was maintained by his followers after him as is evident from the following Hadith, "Shaqiq said that Abdullah bin Masood used to exhort the people every Thursday. A man said, 'I wish Abu Abd ar Rahman\textsuperscript{76} that you would give us a daily exhortation.' He replied, 'my dislike of wearing you prevents me from that so I am considerate in my exhortations to you as God's messenger was to us, for fear of causing us aversion.'\textsuperscript{77}

The above suggests that the teacher must use the technique of repetition but at the same time he should not neglect the purpose of its application, the time at which it is used, its quality and also the proper place where it is required to be used. On the other side the learner and students are -

\textsuperscript{73} Semaan K.H. Education in Islam from Jahiliyyah to Ibn Khaludun, \textit{op.cit.} p. 192.

\textsuperscript{74} Mishkat, \textit{op.cit.} p. 52.

\textsuperscript{75} Tritton, A.S. \textit{Materials on Muslim Education in the Middle Ages} p. 66.

\textsuperscript{76} This is the Kunneya (title) of Abdullah b. Masood.

\textsuperscript{77} Mishkat, \textit{op.cit.} p. 52.
are advised to take help of it to grasp the content of the subject under their study. Scholars have suggested the amount of the matter to be given to the students in the beginning of their study so that the technique of repetition may be usefully applied for this purpose. Abu Hanifa quotes Imam Umar son of Imam Abu Bakr as follows: "Our elders stated: It is necessary that the amount of study for the beginner be an amount he can retain in his memory after two repetitions. Everyday he should increase (the span of) his memorial recall by one word so that even if the duration and quantity of his study become large it would (still) remain possible for him to recall it (by repeating it) two times, and thus increase (his retention) gradually." 78 This plan for memorial recall is not the final and the single one. The amount of material taken to be memorized depends upon the ability of the student. 79 If the learner wants to learn such an amount of material which requires ten repetitions he can do so but he should develop a habit to digest the matter learnt by him. 80 It is interesting to note here the programme Az-zarnuji proposes for the students to revise their past lesson for achieving strong retention of the knowledge acquired. He says, "It is further necessary to repeat the lesson of yesterday five times, and the lesson of preceeding

78. See Az-zarnuji, p. 46.
79. See Ibid., p. 53.
80. See Ibid., p. 47.
day four times, and the lesson of the day previous to that, three times, and the one which comes before, two times and that of the day before that once. These rules and regulations propounded for repetition look like the mechanical exercise behind which a lack of understanding is felt. But is not proper to think so. Like the other educationists Az-zarnuji also considers essential first to comprehend and understand the matter then memorize it. Az-zarnuji, in this regard, rather quotes the extreme idea by saying that understanding two letters is better than memorizing two "loads" of books. To minimize the mechanical aspect of repetition and to keep the student alert and concentrated in their task students are advised not to repeat in loud voice while they make exercise of repetition. But this does not mean making repetition silently. Students must show zeal and alacrity in their exercise. On account of giving vital importance to understanding the facts and comprehending the content some educationists do not favour to apply the technique of repetition in teaching. They discuss the adverse effects of rote memory and say that this encourages students only to pass the examinations of the set courses and does not enable them to have true insight into the subject. Among those who do not like

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81. Ibid., p. 81.
82. Abdullah bin Mubark says that students should not be encouraged to memorize any text without understanding it, see Ibn Abdul Bar, p. 88.
83. Az-zarnuji, p. 47.
84. Ibid., p. 54.
to use repetition technique are Qitadah and Zuhri. They have expressed their personal feeling in this regard. Qitadah says that he never asked anyone to repeat the matter since repetition destroys the true taste of the matter. Zuhri says that to repeat something is more difficult for him than to remove a heavy rock from its place. These statements of the scholars are for the gifted students as they themselves were. The importance of the repetition technique in the process of teaching and learning, however, cannot be ignored.

Questioning: In the process of teaching and learning posing questions on the part of the teacher and also by students plays very significant role. The various aspects of the problem under study are apparently hidden from the common eyes and efficient teachers and intelligent students bring them into light by posing relevant questions about it. Thus they provide opportunity to think over the problem and to search out its solution. The Holy Quran very extensively uses this technique. We have earlier noted how the Quran poses questions to create preparedness and curiosity in the students. At nine places the Quran encourages its readers to ask about the unknown. The Prophet

86. Ibid.
87. Ibid.
88. "Seest thou not how thy Lord dealt with the Ad( ﷲ) people? Fajr: 6. Seest thou not how they Lord dealt with the companions of the Elephants? Fii: 1. Do ye not see that God has subjected to your(use) all things in the heavens and on the earth". Luqman: 20. If indeed thou ask them who it is that created the heavens and the earth, they would be sure to say, "God, Zumar: 38.
has said that the remedy of ignorance is to ask questions.  

Abdullah bin Masood observes that knowledge increases by posing relevant questions. Moreover there is one very oft quoted saying of Ibn-i-shahab that knowledge is treasure and the wealth of this treasure can be obtained only through the key of the question. Hasan Basri says that one who feels ashamed in the acquisition of knowledge and does not raise questions remains ignorant. In this regard Ibrahim Ibn Mehdi's view is very interesting as well as instructive. He advises the learner to ask questions like the foolish but commit to memorits answer like the wise. Once Ibn Abbas was asked how he excelled in knowledge, His answer was, "With the aid of tongue fond of asking and a heart full of good sense".

We find a very nice example of questioning in a Hadith transmitted by Hazrat Umar. It is stated that once Gabriel, the angel through whom the Prophet used to receive the Divine message, appeared in the guise of a man at a time when the companions of the Prophet were around him. He asked certain

90. Ibn, Abdul Bar; p.69.
91. Ibić., p.70.
92. Ibić.
93. Ibić.,
94. Ibić., p.72.
95. Az-zarnuji., p.50.
question regarding faith ( ﷺ ﷢ ) and action ( ﷪ ) and when the Prophet answered the question, he certified that the Prophet spoke the truth.\(^{96}\) He in fact appeared to instruct the companions of the Prophet by raising some useful questions. This Hadith also suggests that questions can be asked even by those persons who are well acquainted with their answer; they raise question in order to profit others and to pursue the discussion ahead.

96. * Umar b. Khattab said: One day when we were with God's messenger, a man with very white clothing and very black hair came up to us. No mark of travel was visible on him and none of us recognised him. Sitting down beside the Prophet, leaning his knees against his, and placing his hands on his thighs, he said, "Tell me, Muhammad, about Islam. He replied Islam means that you should testify that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is God's messenger, that you should observe the prayer pay the zakat, fast during Ramdhan and make the pilgrimage to the House if you have the means to go," He said "You have spoken truth." We were surprised at his questioning him and then declaring that he spoke the truth. He said "Now tell me about faith." He replied, "It means that you should believe in God, His angels, His book, His apostles, and the last day, and that you should believe in the decreing both of good and evil." Remarking that he had spoken the truth, he then said, "Now tell me about doing good." He replied, "It means that you should worship God as though you saw Him, for He sees you though you do not see Him." He said, "Now tell me about the Hour." He replied, "That one who is asking about it is not better informed than the one who is asking. He said then tell me about its signs." He replied, "That a maid-servant should beget her mistress and that you should see bare-footed naked poor men and shepherds exalting themselves in buildings." (Umar) said: He then went away, and after I had waited for a long time (the Prophet) said to me "Do you know who the questioner was, Umar? I replied, "God and His messenger know best," He said, "He was Gabriel who came to you to teach your religion." Vide Mishkat al-Masabih, English translation by James Robson, Vol.I, p.5.
Sources suggest that there are certain limitations in the matters of asking questions. The purpose of a question must be clear to questioner. He should raise the question in the proper manner and also at the proper time. It is better to avoid raising unnecessary questions. This is why the Prophet expressed annoyance at irrelevant questions and passed derogatory remarks against such a practice. Ibn Abbas says that the companions of the Prophet were very cautious and careful in asking questions. He further says that they asked only thirteen questions throughout their lives and these are mentioned in the Qur'an. In this context the saying of Hazrat Umar appears very significant in which he advises the people to eschew irrelevant and unnecessary question. He hopes that when such issues will really arise in society, God will raise knowledgeable persons to solve them. Hasan Basri says that those who create mischief (fitna) among people by raising mischievous issues are the worst creatures of God.

The technique of questioning gives fruitful results only when it is properly applied. A good question always motivates the learner to acquire more and more knowledge. There are many Ahadith which show that the prophet sometimes raised interesting

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98. Ibid.
99. Ibid. 231.
100. Ibid., p. 233.
questions and taught the people by means of these questions.  

**DISCUSSION:** Allama Ibn Al-Akfani has discussed in his "Irshadul Qasid" certain conditions considering them essential for the learners in order to gain true insight which they wish to acquire. He has also quoted the well-known Arabic saying (knowledge exists in the heart and not on the pages of books. After mentioning it Al-Akfani emphasizes the need to arrange debates and discussion, for these are the important means of pursuing knowledge. It is correct that every doubt and confusion of the learner cannot be solved by books nor through the instruction of the teacher. There remain some perplexing questions and complicated problems in the mind of the learner concerning the subject under study which can be expressed and resolved by debates and discussion. Discussion also aims at arriving at truth, particularly when there is difference of opinion with regard to a problem. It provides an opportunity of mutual understanding. But the proper result of such meetings are obtained if the problem is taken up sincerely and with prudence and thoughtful consideration. Acrimony and anger have no place in discussions arranged for academic purposes. To express violent

101. Ibid. p.89.

emotion and to show hostility either by the words or actions, are counted as demerits. Evasive replies and tricks should not be allowed in literary discussion. Az-zarnuji, however, observes that these devices can be applied if the opponent is a quibbler, an obstinate person or a petulant. 103

There are a good number of informations suggesting the manners and etiquettes to be adopted in the course of discussion. The first item of the conversation, according to the Quran is fairness. It teaches "speak fair to the people" 104 when the discussion takes a turn where difference of opinion becomes apparent and the opponent emphasizes his viewpoint, the Quran, in such a situation instructs Muslims to argue with them in manner that is best and most gracious. 105 It again propounds a general rule which although true for other affairs, is more appropriate to be applied in education particularly in debate and discussion. The Quran says "word off evil with means that are the best." 106 The Quran at another place explains in the following words the result of such manner if adopted by a person who is opposed by his opponent. "then will be between whom and thee was hatred, become as it were thy friend and intimate." 107 The technique to convert the opponent into

103. Az-zarnuji, p. 49.
106. Mominum: 96
a friend is not easy to be successfully applied. The Quran itself discloses the fact as follows, "And no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint none except persons of greatest good and fortune." Thus, it is clear from these evidences that to pursue a scholarly discussion is possible only when the participants have endurance, forbearance and self-restraint.

The importance of debate and discussion in Islamic system of education is evident from the fact that eminent personalities of Islamic world excelled in knowledge and wisdom when they applied this technique of learning. It is a well-known saying that Abu Hanifah, when he was a cloth-merchant, used to discuss in his shop different academic problems with his customers. Abu Yusuf is reported that once he was hungry for five days and yet he was discussing with someone academic problems with full vigour and enthusiasm. Ali al-Asbijabi, during his student-ship, passed through a very critical period. Due to the disturbance in government there came a break in his formal schooling so he left the country with one of his fellows. It was the regular practice of the two friends to sit and discuss problems with

108. Ibid.
109. Az-zarnuji, p. 50. From this practice of the learned Imam, it is inferred that education can be linked with the earning of livelihood.
110. Ibid. p. 54.
one another. They continued this practice for twelve years. That companion of Asbijabi was later recognized as the learned scholar of Shafiite jurisprudence.\textsuperscript{112}

\textbf{Note Taking:-} It is very commonly expressed that the method of teaching in Islam is mostly oral and based on repetition technique with a view to cram certain facts in the mind of the learners. This assumption does not appear to be justified when we study the sources for a verification of this idea. It is found that writing was not only common in the time of the Prophet but also the learners were encouraged to take its use in the course of the acquisition of knowledge. The misunderstanding, however, arises from some Ahadith in which the Prophet forbade to write anything other than the Quran.\textsuperscript{113} In view of this instruction of the Prophet, some of his companions such as Umar bin Khattab, Ali bin Ali Talib, Abu Sayeed Khudhari, Ibn Abbas and Abdullah bin Masood are reported to be against writing anything except the word of God.\textsuperscript{114} This precaution in fact, was to maintain the importance of the Quran and also to safeguard it from additions and perversions. As far as writing itself is concerned, we have a number of Ahadith in which the Prophet not only permitted but also encouraged to take notes of his discourses. Abu Huraira

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{112} Vide Ibid.
\textsuperscript{113} Hadith Transmitted by Abu Sayeed Khudhari, See Ibn Abdul Bar, p. 61.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid., pp. 61, 62 & 63.
\end{flushleft}
reports that when the Prophet as a victorious ruler entered Mecca he delivered a lecture. After his lecture a Yamanite named Abu Shamama stood up and requested him to give him the lecture in the written form. The Prophet asked one of his companions to write the lecture for that gentleman.  It is reported that Amr bin Hazam was granted by the Prophet a parchment of the written rules of the obligatory duties in Islam. Abu Huraira reports that Abdullah bin Amr was allowed by the prophet to write Hadith. Once some Quraishite raised objection to the practice of writing every word that was uttered by the Prophet. So Abdullah bin Amr consulted the Prophet and asked for his verdict. He was not only permitted but also encouraged to continue the practice. Az-zarnuji quotes on the authority of Imam al-Adib, Rukn al-Islam known as Adib al-Kuhtar that Hilal bin Yasr said, "I saw the prophet giving his companions some words of knowledge and wisdom; and I said, 'O Messenger of God, repeat to me what you said to those people. 'The Prophet replied: 'Do you have ink with you?' Whereupon I said: 'I donot have ink with me and he said: 'O Hilal, donot separate yourself from ink for it is good in itself and it is good for those who have it in their possession till the day of Resurrection.' In the light of this information,

115. Ibid. p.65.
116. Ibid. p.66.
117. Ibid. p.65.
118. Ibid.
120. Ibid.
it is clear that note taking was considered as a very important aid to learning in the early days of Islam. This also suggests that the teacher should properly apply it in the instruction. They are expected to dictate at the end of the lesson the abstracts of their teachings. But one care in this regard must be taken, writing down something without understanding it is of no use, it is rather a waste of time and energy. It will create confusion in the mind of the learner. Hence after gaining true insight and full comprehension of the subject, note should be taken. Revision after writing is also considered an important item. Hisham quotes his father Urwah bin Zubair, the well-known companion of the prophet, that writing without revision is worthless.\footnote{121} Revision needs careful inquiry. It is said that if a written material is revised even a hundred times it should not be considered free from flaws and mistakes.\footnote{122}

At the end of this discussion it appears appropriate to quote some part of the poem composed by Judge al-Hilal b. Ahmad as-Sarahsi. The part of the poem mentioned below may be taken as the concluding word of the discussion made on the review of the various techniques applied to master the contents of education:

\begin{quote}
\textbf{\textit{\textbf{121}}. See. Ibn Abdul Bar. P.67.}
\textbf{\textit{\textbf{122. Muammer, Vide Ibid., p.68.}}}\end{quote}
Serve knowledge in a way that it becomes a useful thing (to you) and keep its lesson alive by praiseworthy action. And if you do not retain anything, repeat it, then affirm it in a most energetic manner. Then make notes about it in order that you may return to it. Then when you are sure it will not slip out of your grasp, go after it to something new. But at the same time repeat what has preceded (this new knowledge); and establish firmly (in your mind) the import of this increase (in knowledge). Discuss with people subject matter of the learning in order that you may grow. Do not keep yourself away from the enlightened.

DISCIPLINE:— One of the important conditions for smooth running of teaching work is discipline. The method of teaching, however, perfect and proper can hardly give fruitful result, if the students are not well disciplined and are properly controlled both by their inner self and by the external authority as well. Children want freedom to do something. But they are restrained when the system of teaching under which they are taught is expected to be disturbed. Discipline is required to foster creative attitude and to cultivate constructive approach in the students and also to help direct their energies with a view to achieve the objectives already fixed for them. Thus the purpose of discipline is to make the students familiar with the —

123. Az-zamiji, p.47.
restraints considered essential for the growth and promotion of learning. The correct method in this regard is to shape the behaviour of students in such a way that they, without any external supervision, may willingly adopt the desirable behaviour on their own accord.

A positive approach in discipline always emphasizes maintenance of self-restraint in character in the students while the negative approach suggests to use pressure and punishment in order to deter the students from undesirable behaviour. It is apparent from the study of Islamic sources that even the prophet who was assigned with the work of instruction in religion did not receive the authority to compel the people in the matter of religion or to apply any pressure on them in this regard.\(^{124}\) This clearly shows that the spirit of teaching is based on love, affection and good-wishes for the students. The Prophet who was lenient with their people has been praised in the Quran.\(^{125}\) The prophet himself explains that he has been sent to provide peace to the people and not to put them into hardships.\(^{126}\) Moreover, the Prophet instructs those who are engaged in teaching, to provide case and to keep the learner away from hardship. This

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\(^{124}\) "Thou art not at all a warder over them" \(\text{Ghashi a. 22}\)
\(\text{"There is no compulsion in religion" \text{Al-i-Imran: 256 Eng. tr. by Pickthal.}}\)
\(^{125}\) \text{Al-i-Imran: 159.}
\(^{126}\) \text{Bukhari, Hadith transmitted by Abu Huraira vide Naeem Siddique Mahwer Taleem Number.}
of his kind and favourable treatment, is praised and loved. Students do not show aversion to him.\textsuperscript{127} Abu Yusuf quotes a saying of Hazrat Ali which indicates that teaching should be free from pressure and punishment. The fourth caliph of Islam is reported to have said, "Hearts of people have desires and aptitudes, sometimes they are ready to listen and at other times they are not. Enter into people's hearts through their aptitudes. Talk to them when they are ready to listen, for the condition of the heart is such that if you force it to something then it becomes blind (and refuses to accept it)."\textsuperscript{128} Ghazali has given the various functions and duties of a teacher. One important item, according to him, is to constantly watch the conduct and behaviour of the students and whenever they are observed to indulge in misconduct, they should be asked politely to correct their conduct. An outright rebuke and scolding does not fulfil the purpose of education and training. Ghazali has reinforced this view from a Hadith recorded by Ibn Shaheen.\textsuperscript{129} He also infers the same conclusion from the story of Adam and Eve that when they were directly forbidden to go to the restricted tree, they made a mistake.\textsuperscript{130} To quote the story of Adam and Eve appears here out of place. However, not to forbid directly is useful in the process of learning.

Students feel pleasure and satisfaction when they understand the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{127} Reyazus Saleheen Babul ilm wal ana war Rafq vide Naee-n-Siddique, op.cit., p.14.
  \item \textsuperscript{128} Kitab al-Khyraj, Abu Yusuf, vide Afzalur Rahman, Islamic Education of Muslim Children in the west and the problem of curriculum and syllabus, Curriculum and Teacher Education, p.95.
  \item \textsuperscript{129} Ahya ul-ollom, p.140.
  \item \textsuperscript{130} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
hint given by the teacher. They take the underlying purport of the teacher as an achievement and become pleased of their success and willingly divert themselves towards the direction of the teacher.\textsuperscript{131}

In Islam the entire process of education and training is based on love, compassion and well-wishing. In the course of instruction the disciplinary punishment is not suggested but in very exceptional cases. If it is thought essential students are assured that the punishment is on account of their bad conduct. They should be told as to why some punishment was given to them. The teacher analyses their conduct and points out to the mistakes committed by them.\textsuperscript{132} As regard corporeal punishment, some points are drawn from the following Hadith, "Amr Shu' aib said on his father's authority that his grand-father reported as saying, "Command your children to observe prayer when they are seven years old, and beat them (for not observing) it when they are ten years old."\textsuperscript{133} This Hadith shows that a child of ten can be beaten for not observing \textit{salat} (the obligatory prayer performed five times a day). Though it is not proper to apply in education the ordinance given for a particular purpose but even it is acted upon no severe punishment should be given to the students. The teacher should take every possible care that

\textsuperscript{131} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{132} Az-Zarnuji has noted the following statement of Yusuf al-Hamadani, "Send the man away. Don't punish him for the misdeed he committed. His character and his deed will be sufficient (punishment for him)." This does not appear proper to quote in the reference of the Islamic method of teaching and training. Teacher in Islamic system is the well-wisher of the student and such attitude towards the students does not suit him. See Talim al-Mutallim, p. 60.

\textsuperscript{133} Mishkat al-Masabih, op. cit. p. 115.
the opportunity to give corporeal punishment to the students may not arise. He should preferably apply some techniques other than physical punishment. This punishment may be like the one that the Quran provides in the chapter Nisa, instructing the husbands that they may keep their wives apart from their bed, if their wives are not obedient to them.\footnote{134} Muhammad bin Abi Zayd has formulated some rules in this regard. He says, "If children must be beaten their educator must not strike them severely and more than three times sparing the face."\footnote{135} The method of teaching suggested by Haroon-al-Rasheed also indicates that punishment should only be used in the course of teaching when it is unavoidable.\footnote{136}

\footnote{134} Nisa: 34.  \footnote{135} See Ibn Khaldun, op.cit., p.305.  \footnote{136} The education in the palaces was quite different from the education arranged for the common people. The teacher employed in the palaces were called muaddib. These teachers used to adopt the method of teaching as the caliph himself suggested. Khalif bin Ahmar says, "Ar-Rasheed told me to come to educate his son Muhammad al-Amin, and he said to me: "O Ahmar, the commander of Faithful is entrusting his son) to you, the life of his soul and the fruit of his heart. Take firm hold of him and make him obey you. Occupy in relation to him the place that the commander of the Faithful has given to you. Teach him to read the Quran. Instruct him in history. Let him transmit poems and teach him the Sunnah of the Prophet. Give him full insight into the proper occasion for speech and how to begin a (speech). Forbid him to laugh save at times when it is proper. Accustom him to honour the Hashimit dignitaries when they come to his salon. Let no hour pass in which you do not seize the opportunity to teach him something useful. But do so without vexing, which would kill his mind. Do not always be too lenient with him, or he well get to kill leisure and become used to it. As much as possible correct him kindly and gently. If he does not want it that way, you must then use severity and harshness." Ibn -i-Khaldun Magaddimah, vol.3, p.305.
It is evident from the present study that through the application of the Islamic method of teaching the adverse influence of the un-Islamic teaching is minimised and the Islamic Faith is protected. Some of the psychological method such as brain-washing, indoctrination, subliminal perception and obliteration of personality traits are rejected by Islam and hence they can not be applied under Islamic methodology. It is wrong to confine the Islamic method of education to self-education only. Islam has its own particular method of teaching. It covers every item considered essential in the process and method of teaching. It suggests the teacher to adopt different techniques at different stages as the lesson proceed.

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There are guidelines available in the sources regarding creation of interest and aspiration in the students, producing in them a very high degree of motivation, drawing their attention towards the lesson and presenting the lesson to them in a suitable manner. Receptivity of the students to the instruction, gradation and continuity in teaching, explanation of the subject matter, conclusion of the lesson and home assignment etc., are the significant items of the Islamic method of teaching. Moreover the method of strengthening memory and the enforcement of discipline throughout the educative process are the objectives to be followed for achieving better results from the education endeavour.

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