

Prophetic Approach towards Personality Development and its Significance in Modern Educational Context

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ABSTRACT

Personality development means, to enhance mental and physical capacity of a person for better professional performance and leadership but Islam correlates it with moral development as well, which is more likely to be known as character building. It is observed that different philosophical, political, social and educational experts have tried their best for an ideal personality development in different eras of the human history. The prophetic methodology is considered most significant strategy for personality development and character-building. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) initiated many bold steps to develop the character of his companions on Islamic foundations. It was very difficult task, but the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) succeeded to transform them according to divine vision in few years. Modern educational context has lack of this aspect of personality development with special reference to moral and physical development. Here a question arises if the beloved Prophet (ﷺ) can produce best men power with his kind efforts and unique approaches then how we can use these approaches in modern era. The core objective of this study is to discover the approaches and techniques of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) about personality development and character-building. It also mentions the need and importance of personality development in modern Muslim educational discourse. In this research work analytical approach has been adopted with qualitative research methodology. This study concludes if we adopt the Prophet's (ﷺ) active approach and techniques for personality development we can produce better professionals and academicians.

Keywords: Prophetic approach, character-building, Importance, modern era, education

Introduction:

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Character and character building has been a matter of special concern for humankind throughout the human history; especially it becomes the momentous issue and vital need of the modern age because developed personality is considered as basis of all kind of success and welfare of the society. For that purpose, different philosophers, reformers and educational experts have been tried their best for a model personality development in different phases of the human history. During these efforts we find a powerful voice and struggle of the beloved Prophet (ﷺ) for personality development and character-building. We should not forget this fact that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) totally altered an ignorant and subjective tribal society of the Arabs. They had rude and strange kind of behavior. Although they have some good features too but mostly they were in worst condition of their moral and social life.

Many verses and blessed Ahadith of the wise Messenger (ﷺ) not only discuss their worst moral condition but also recommend the remedy for their moral evils, which is ultimately following the divine guidance of Allah and model character of His Prophet (ﷺ). Accordingly, to make them useful for his divine mission and great revolution, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) initiated many daring steps to build their character on Islamic principles of personality development. Obviously, it was very difficult task, but the Prophet (ﷺ) succeeded to transform this society according to his divine vision and goal in a shortest time. This is an undeniable fact and human history is the eyewitness of it.

Definitely it was not an individual success or effort but a collective work which was completed with the help of his Noble companions. There is a place of thinking that what kind of efforts and approaches done by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) that an ignorant and rude society became leader of the human being in a shortest period of the human history. This Paper elaborates the tireless efforts and noble approaches of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) about personality development and character building with its need and importance in modern Muslim educational perspective.

1. Personality development and its importance:

The study of human personality and its development is considered as most significant and valuable topic in the contemporary era. Almost every

reasonable institution and organization spent a lot of capital and human resources to develop good personalities in their institution. Regular training courses and personality development programs are conducted. It means personality development and character building has become most substantial issue in modern educational discourse because the experts know this fact that good personality is basis of all kind of goodness and welfare of the society. Then it appears higher to understand the concerning temperament and character building or in alternative words, need of temperament development. Different scholars and experts define it in different ways, Webster's dictionary tells that "The complex of characteristics that distinguishes an individual, nation or a group; especially, the totality of an individual behavioral and emotional characteristics".¹ In simple words, it is counting of personality goodness and its development for betterment. When we try technically defines the term, it gives little bit different understanding. The Encyclopedia of the personality development defines it in this way.

"Personality development is the development of the organized pattern of behaviors and attitudes that makes a person distinctive. Personality development occurs by the ongoing interaction of temperament, character, and environment. Personality is what makes a person a unique person, and it is recognizable soon after birth".²

If we keenly analyze the meaning and definition of the above statement, the Dictionary focuses on the behavior and features of a personality which distinguish it from others with most significant features that it makes a person most unique and useful especially for society and in general for the whole human race. Therefore, we can consider it as a common standard of a developed and successful personality.

According to monotheism teachings, the term temperament development or character building is outlined in an exceedingly slight or totally different manner. Keeping in view, *Dīn* (Islam) is also concerned with the personality development and character building. The revealed

1 Webster, Merriam, ed., *Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary* (London: Random House Inc., 1994), P. 1075.

2 <http://www.healthofchildren.com/P/Personality-Development.html>: 20/6/19.

guidance which was sent to the humanity by the Prophets of Allah (peace be upon them), the core objective of it, has to reform and develop the good and welfare personalities. In other words, their basic objective was to build the character of people according to the divine teachings. In Islamic perspective it is also called *Tazkīyah Nafas* or self-purification. An Islamic research scholar of Islamic Psychology Fatima Abdulla sees the character building as the development of positive emotions and removal of negative emotions.

“The development of good character (personality development) in Islam is mostly a process of dealing with one’s emotions. It helps to build and support positive or good emotions or virtues and to fight and suppress negative emotions. Character building would, therefore, have much to do with patience and perseverance in controlling emotions leading to negative aspects and reinforcement of emotions leading to positive ethics”.¹

From above definitions of the modern era, the researcher thinks the term *Tazkīyah-e-Nafas* defines more clearly the personality development or character building in Islamic perspective. Here, a renowned Islamic scholar and reformer of the contemporary era *Moulānā Amīn Ahsan Islāhī* define the term *Tazkīyah Nafas* in the following way;

“Literally Tazkīyah means to purify and develop the things and technically it means to stop and return the Nafas (human soul) from bad habits to good habits. To run the human soul on God fearing and virtue-based path of Almighty Allah and make reach it on the highest rank of virtues and goodness, to build his character, to reach at on the goal of mental, moral and spiritual level of highest rank”.²

1 Fatima Abdullah, “Virtues and character building in Islamic Ethics and Psychology”, *International Journal of education and social sciences* 1:2 (2014): PP. 69-78.

2 Islāhī, *Tazkīyah e Nafas Kāmil*, P. 43.

Various verses of the Holy Quran also explain and define the term *Tazkīyah Nafas* in a very clear mode. One of the most significant verses of the Noble Quran enlightens it as;

{وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا (7) فَأَنهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا (8) قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ رَزَّاهَا (9) وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا }¹

By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right; - Truly, he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it."

Here we find a number of explanations of this verse of the Quran in between the *Qurānic* commentaries. A renowned Islamic scholar of the twentieth century *Moulānā Moudūdī* explains this verse of Quran in way;

“*Tazkīyah* means to purify, develop and cultivate. In the context, it clearly means the one, who purifies his self of *Fajūr* and develops it to the level of *Taqwā* and cultivates in it well, will attain to eternal success. As against this, the word *Dassāhā* has been used, the infinitive of which is *Tadsīyyāh*, which means to suppress, conceal, seduce and lead astray. The meaning of this also becomes clear from the context; i. e. one who suppresses the tendency in his self towards good instead of developing and cultivating it”.²

The core objective of *Tazkīyah* has to purify the people from the evils and to get the blessing of Almighty Allah therefore the Glorious Quran also discuss this issue.

{يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ (27) ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً (28) فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي (29) وَادْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي }³

“To the righteous soul will be said: O soul, in rest and satisfaction! “Come back thou to thy Lord, - well pleased, and well-pleasing unto Him! Enter thou, then, among my devotees! Yea, enter thou My Heaven!”

Here, we must remember that being a Muslim believer, man is created for special mankind to test in this world. If he wants to succeed, he will be act to the right direction and will be carefully travel on righteous path. This direction can be achieved to adopt good action and behavior and abolish the bad habits and character. According to *Mubsahir Nazir* analysis.

1 Al-Qur’ān 91: 7-10.

2 Mawdūdī, *Tafhīm al-Quran*, Vol. 6, P.354.

3 Al-Qur’ān 89: 28-30.

"God has created this world for a specific test of human beings. The test is composed of 'purification of their souls' which is another name of 'personality development'. The person, who purifies his /her personality from moral filth, will be successful in both this test world and the real world, which is the hereafter. The person, who fails to do this, will not prosper in any of these worlds".¹

These things needed action, devotion and determination instead of whims and desires. The kind prophet (ﷺ) stated about success of believers as.

"The wise (successful) amongst you who act up rightly for Hereafter life and the mental (failed) amongst you who does not act but claims to Allah wrongly for success and salvation".²

In many *Āhādīth* of the Wise Prophet (ﷺ), the word *Akhklāq* (ethics or morality) is also used for good character or character building. The Wise Quran also uses it in this perspective to describe the character of the prophet (ﷺ). The Noble Quran states about this model of excellence, about ethics and morality of human being in an excellent manner.

{ وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ }³

"And thou standest on an exalted standard of character".

The Noble Prophet and Preceptor of the ethics Muhammad (ﷺ) whispered about the importance of *Akhklāq-e-Hasnah* or good character in this way.

"The best amongst you is one who has good morals and I have the best morals amongst you"⁴

According to the majority of Islamic scholars, the main objectives of the Prophet's (ﷺ) prophet-hood was to build the character of human being and the kind Prophet (ﷺ) is basically to send as a teacher of ethics and character

1 <http://www.mubashirnazir.org/PD/English/PE01-0001-Introduction.htm>: /24/6/19.

2 Tirmidhī, Muhammad bin 'Īsā, *Jām'al-Tirmidhī* (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007), Hadīth no. 2459.

3 Al-Qur'ān 68: 4.

4 *Jām'al-Tirmidhī*, Hadīth no. 723.

building. Therefore, The Nobel Prophet (ﷺ) also said about himself in his wise *Hadīth*; “God did not send me to be harsh, or cause harm, but He has sent me to teach and make things easy.”¹

Keeping in seeable, with the claim to create human ethics and character building several of the philosophers, political thinkers, social activists and academic specialists have tried their best for a model temperament development and character building in several phases of the human history. This is also noted from the *Qurānic* teachings that to transform and build the character of the human being are a core objective of the prophets. Almighty Allah announces about the Nobel Prophet *Hazrat Muhammad* (ﷺ) in this way;

{رَسُولًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ}²

“A Messenger from among themselves, to rehearse to them His Signs, to sanctify them, and to instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom, - although they had been, before, in manifest error”.

This verse of the Quran including other verses clearly declares the prophetic divine mission. Obviously, that mission is to transform and build the character of human being. Here, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Idrees Lodhī rightly illustrates in his research study.

“It means that the basic purpose of his Prophet-hood was to show a climax of good morals. As a moral Preceptor, he himself was the embodiment of lofty moral values. The Holy Quran has witnessed. “And Verily you (O Muhammad (ﷺ)) are on an exalted (highest standard of character)”.³

Hence, it may be responsively explicit regarding the position of the Holy Prophet *Hazrat Muhammad* (ﷺ) that history will never gift a model of that sort once more until the Hereafter. Contrary to them, the Prophet (ﷺ) faced an ignorant and rude tribal society. So to make them beneficial for his divine mission the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) took many daring steps to build their

1 Shahīh Muslim, *Hadīth* no. 3763.

2 Al-Qur’ān 62: 2.

3 Lodhi, Muhammad Idrees, Qureshī, Muhammad Shakeel, *The Holy Prophet as preceptor of all times, The Research Journal Dialogue* 1:4 (2011), PP.300-318.

character and personality on Islamic foundations. Although, it was most difficult task but the Prophet (ﷺ) succeeded to transform them according to his noble vision and sacred goal in very short time. This is not only my religious affiliation, nor a myth, but the fact and the history is the eye witness of it. Many scholars of high repute have presented their dedications to the Holy Prophet *Sayyīdnā* Muhammad (ﷺ). Here, I would like to share a remarkable encyclopedic judgment;

“Muhammad was admired for his courage, resoluteness, and impartiality and for firmness that was tempered with generosity. He won men’s hearts by his personal charm. He was gentle, especially with children. Though he was sometimes silent in thought, for the most part he was engaged in purposeful activity. He worked vigorously and spoke rapidly. He became for the later Muslims an example of virtuous character, and stories presented him as realizing the Islamic ideal of human life”.¹

This kind of statements presents the dynamic work and Nobel personality of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). This also shows that the prophet (ﷺ) succeeded to establish a society of welfare and developed personalities in his life. These personalities were like mines of diamonds. According to the witness of a partial opponent of Islam, a well-known Western Orientalist PK Hitti; “After the death of the Prophet of Islam (ﷺ), the sterile Arabia seems to have been converted as if by magic into a nursery of heroes the like of whom both in number and quality is hard to find anywhere”.² Apparently, we do not need of these appraisal but these things increase our determination and encourage us to use the Prophetic techniques and approaches to transform the society from devil to social and from materialistic to moral. In line with my study, currently, it has become entire demand of the humanity that we have a tendency to get inspiration from the

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- 1 Goetz, Philip W., *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, “Muhammad and the religion of Islam”, (London: Britannica Inc., 1995), P. 22: 5.
 - 2 Hitti, Philip K, *History of the Arabs* (London: MacMillan Education Ltd., 1989), P.142.

simplest temperament of the world to develop common personalities and their character.

2. Major approaches of the Prophet (ﷺ) for character building:

In the contemporary era, personality devilmment is the subject of deep interest in the front of the scholars, Muslims and non-Muslims both. Furthermore, one of the massive question in front of researchers that what kind of efforts and approaches made by the Nobel Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) that an illiterate and prejudice society reached to the glory of human leadership with the struggle of few years. In the following lines, I will try to elaborate unique approaches of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) about personality development and character building and its need in the contemporary educational perspective. Here, one thing I would like to clarify that the Wise Prophet (ﷺ) adopted the inclusive approaches to build the beautiful conduct of his (Companions) *Sehāba* (RA) and whole society. The main steps of these approaches are as follows:

3.1. Strong relationship with Allah Almighty: The foremost approach and methodology of the Prophet (ﷺ) to transform the society and develop the personality of his beloved companions was a strong association with Allah. This is also a most important subject of the Quran. Many verses of the Holy Quran describe it frequently. Actually, the Prophet (ﷺ) joined the connection of the people with their Creator, the Lord of the universe, Allah Almighty. When a person has a faith that Allah is with me and there is no any other authority which can harm or make profit to him. The fear of Allah and sense of his presence is a tool that a person does not commit sins as well as make mistakes. The book of Allah declares this connection.

{وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَتَعَلَّمْ مَا تُوَسَّوَسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ} ¹

“It was We Who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein”.

The beloved Prophet (ﷺ) said; “To worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you cannot achieve this state of devotion, then you must consider that He is

1 Al-Qur’ān 45:16.

looking at you”.¹ Strong faith in Allah makes an ability of hope in a Muslim believer and he does not leave his hope anywhere because of this strong faith and association with Allah. According to Mr. *Ghulām Hussain* Azhar valuable comments;

*“Faith in Allah makes a man perfect. Due to this faith he reaches on the highest place of respect honor and self-determination. He feels unfear and independent in the front of any authority. He cannot make any hope other than Allah. Faith in Allah creates optimism in him and he does not leave his hope on any place and difficulty”.*²

Strong association and connection with Allah actually provide a strong pillar to a Muslim believer which does not make him deviated as he does not seek of any other connection and support. Thus, it is observed from the prophetic approaches that powerful character makes a person establish and welfare personality for human society. Consequently, a devoted relation with Almighty and his sayings i.e; Tawhīd leads a man towards enriched thoughts which differentiate between a layman and a Muslim.

3.2. Hereafter ‘s Thought: The second most important feature and approach of the Holy Prophet *Hazrat* Muhammad (ﷺ) to develop the good character and personality of his companions was deep thinking about Hereafter. There is a big deal of *Qurānic* verses are founded on the concept of Hereafter and it was also the most significant creed in the preaching of the Prophet (ﷺ). A true Muslim cannot forget or ignore it in any case. This thinking not only gives the benefit after death but as well as in this world makes a person responsible and modest. Even the Glorious Quran declares fear of Allah for a man as the point of the exam and success. Therefore, this creed makes a person responsible and answerable in this world and the Hereafter.

1 Bukhārī, Muhammad bin Ismā‘īl, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Riyadh: Darussalam, 1997) Hadīth no. 50.

2 Azhar, Ghulām Hussein, “Islam aur T’amūr e Shakhsīyyat”, *Fikr o Nazar* 10:3(1972), PP.142-165.

{الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا}¹

“He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed: and He is the Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving”

The Last Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) declared about the continuity and integrity of the worship in the humble and very beautiful words;

“Be feared Allah wherever you are, follow a bad deed with a good deed and it will erase it, and behave with good character toward people”.²

According to my thinking and analysis, this factor makes a person, humble, caring and modest in his life as he is encompassed by a religion which believes that each of his action is accountable after death. This behavior is very important part of a developed and characterized person. Thus, an Islamic Scholar Dr. Khalil Ahmad specified;

“The Prophet (ﷺ) adopted a humble way of character building through the concept and thinking of Hereafter. When a person thinks he is answerable for his every action and conversation, then he becomes more responsible and caring rather than the absence of it. Therefore, the concept of the Hereafter is the best way to transform a society and build a character of a good personality”.³

3.3. Taqwā (Fear of Allah): The third most important feature and approach of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) for character building and personality development is fear of Allah (*Taqwā*). In Islamic discourse *Taqwā* has a vital role of good training and better reformation of the society. *Taqwā* provides a strong base for character building and personality development. An account of *Qurānic* teachings is available on the topic of *Taqwā*. At Many Places, Almighty Allah recommends in the superb book, Quran;

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ}⁴

1 Al-Qur’ān 67: 2.

2 Jām’ī Tirmadhī Hadīth no. 1987.

3 Khalil, Dr. Muhammad, *Islamic Studies*, (Lahore: Ilmī Kitāb Khāna, 2010), P.168.

4 Al-Qur’ān 3:102.

“O believes! Fear Allah as He should be feared and die not except in a state of Islam”.

At another place, the Noble Quran relates it to the whole community of the world. It means *Taqwā* is not specific to the Muslim believers, but every person on the globe is directed to get *Taqwā*. Another verse which was the mandatory part of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) *Jumma* sermon continuously is also very important for character building. The wise Book of Allah says;

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَفُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا }¹

“O ye who believe, Fear Allah, and say a word directed to the Right”.

According to Islamic teachings, *Taqwā* is an ultimate source of all kinds of virtues and welfares in this world and way of salvation in the Hereafter. Moreover, *Taqwā* is the key of every kind wisdom and *Hikma*. Therefore, the kind Prophet (ﷺ) tried his best to incorporate *Taqwā* in his companions because it is very necessary tool for character building and personality development. Allah’s Prophet said;

*“The topmost of the wisdom is fear of Allah (Taqwā)”.*²

Hence, we see that the Prophet (ﷺ) adopted *Taqwā* as tool and approach to establish the welfare society and also to build the character and personality of his companions. This approach was adopted in *Madnī* period as common and especially in *Makkī* period.

3.4. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) as a Model of Excellence: Another most vigorous approach of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) towards character building is like a demonstration of an unordinary person, the model of excellence for whole humanity. The revolutionary leadership and model of excellence of the Prophet (ﷺ) developed a new sense of energy and motivation to do something new. In other words, the companions of the Kind Prophet (ﷺ) felt a kind of encourage and spiritual solidarity to do anything and were ready to give any sacrifices for the sake of Allah. Quran presents him as a model of excellence;

1 Al-Qur’ān 31:70.

2 Bahaqī, Abdullah bin Husain, *Sh’ab al Emān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Ilmīyah, 2003), Hadūth no. 730.

{لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا}¹

“Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah”

Because of this training and moral obligation the companions of the beloved Prophet (ﷺ) were ready to give any sacrifices and to get any difficult task in the way of Almighty Allah (*Fī Sabīlillah*). The Divine Book of Allah describes this unique attribute of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) companions likewise;

{وَيُؤْتُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ}²

“They give preference over themselves, even though poverty was their”.

The Glorious conduct of the Prophet (ﷺ) encompasses a vigorous role to develop the temperament of his companions, especially, and whole Muslim community generally. Here, an Islamic scholar Prof. Dr. Abdul Mohaimin rightly observed in his research study;

“The traditions of the Prophet (ﷺ) play such a vital role in the discussions of character building and its implementation in all forms. The sayings of Prophet (ﷺ) promote and propagate the importance of good and sound moral character. He says that he was sent to perfect the good character and the best among all is the one who owns good moral character”.³

It was the impact of this spiritual training and character building of the prophet (ﷺ) that once at the time of battle of *Badar* when the Prophet (ﷺ) asked from *Ansār* to help him in that difficult situation. Leader of the *Ansār* Hazrat *S’ād bin Moāz (R.A)* said in superb words;

“O, Prophet of Allah we believe in you and bear witness to what you have granted to us and we declare in clear terms what you have brought is the Truth. We give you our firm pledge of obedience and sacrifice. We

1 Al-Qur’ān 33: 21.

2 Al-Qur’ān 59: 9.

3 Muhaimin, Abdul, “Character building Through Islamic Schools”, *Tehdīb al-Afkār* 2:1(2014): PP.15-29.

will obey you most willingly in whatever you command us, by Allah, Who has sent you with the Truth, if you were to ask us to throw ourselves into the sea we will do that most readily and not a man of us will stay behind”.¹

These golden words tell us the impacts of the model of excellence of the kind Prophet *Hazrat* Muhammad (ﷺ) on the unique character of his companions. This kind of examples shows the hardworking of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) on the character building and personality development of his companions. This was the great influence of this kind and humble character that the ignorant society becomes the leaders of the globe in a short period of the history.

3.5. Balance between *Dīn* and *Dunyā*: Islam is the complete code of life. So it gives a balanced and middle approach to solve the issues, as well as to handle the worldly and spiritual matters. The Prophet (ﷺ) integrated this important aspect of human being to his companions during their character building and personality development. Keeping in view, Islamic approach is a balanced approach towards *Dīn* and *Dunyā*. Verses of Quran guide us;

{رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ}²

“O, Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter and defend us from the torment of the Fire”.

The middle way (Balance between worldly and spiritual things) is most significant subject of the Quran. Another verse of the Quran explains it more frequently.

{وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا}³

“Thus, have We made of you an Ummat justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves”.

These verses of the Quran tell the middle way in *Dīn* and *Dunyā* matters. A Muslim does not deviate from the right way, but he keeps balance between

1 Mubārḳ purī, Safī ur Rehḡān, *al-Raḡeeq al-Makhtòm*, (Lahore: Maktaba Salfīya), 284.
2 Al-Qur’ān 2:201.
3 Al-Qur’ān 2:143.

Dīn and *Dunyā* affairs and walks on the middle way. This kind of balance we see in the rights and duties as well as in worship to Allah. Once a companion of the Prophet (ﷺ) complained another companion that he worships all the time to Allah and do not care about his family and other worldly matters. Then, the Kind Prophet (ﷺ) advised him to maintain the balance in *Dīn* and *Dunyā* affairs as;

“Your lord (Allah) has right on your own body, He has right on you and your family has right on you so pay every right to every right holder”.¹

A renowned classical Islamic thinker and philosopher Imam Abu Hāmid al-Ghazālī elaborates the balanced Character as,

“Definitions and balance of Knowledge, aggression, senses of sex and intellect is called character-building. The power of knowledge is called wisdom. The balance in the power of aggression emerges as bravery. When the power of sex is in balance it is called chastity. The balanced power of intellect produces good opinion and provident”.²

Therefore, the training to keep and adopt a middle way in *Dīn* and *Dunyā*, made the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) ready to face the challenges of this world and to get salvation in the world hereafter. Actually, they did not give preference to the worldly things, but they prefer *Dīn* in everywhere. They believed that *Dīn* is guarantor of every achievement in this world and in the world hereafter. We also adopt and teach this excellent approach to build the character of our academia and professionals.

3.6. Maintaining the moral and physical Discipline: In professional and academic life, discipline is most important attribute. Islam also adopts and gives preference to this precious habit, but the core difference between secular and Islamic discourse is that Islam incorporates this habit through the system of worship and virtues. The system of prayer is a good example of it. Every professional and academic presently needs strength of time and

1 Sahīh Bukhārī, Ḥadīth no.1968.

2 Ghazali , Ihyā al-Ulūm Urdu, vol.3, P. 95.

the system of prayer teaches it as a moral duty. The Noble Quran repeatedly describes verses about prayer;

{إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا}¹

“For such prayers are enjoined on believers at stated times”.

Moreover, the fastening is mandatory in the month of Ramadan and Hajj is offered in the blessed month of Zil-Hajj and the *Zakāt* (Recommended Charity) is given at the end or completion of a year on a specific amount of capital. As well as, the *Jumma* prayer and the weekly sermon of *Jumma* is a beautiful way to maintain the discipline. We cannot offer prayer of *Jumma* without *Khutba* and *khutba* is delivered by an educated and highly qualified Imam (Religious leader). If you are late, you cannot get the proper virtue of *Khutba-e-Jumma* and *Khutba* is compulsory to perform *Jumma* prayer. Even that many *Āhādīth* of the Wise Prophet (ﷺ) are available on the manners of listening *khutba-e-Jumma*. The Book of Almighty Allah also gives some important principles about *Jumma* prayer;

{إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ}²

“And when the Prayer is finished, then may ye disperse through the land, and seek of the Bounty of Allah: and celebrate the Praises of Allah often; that ye may prosper”.

We can observe from the above discussion that Islam is a well-disciplined religion and this discipline is taught through the system of worships and virtues not from so called activities and exercises. Therefore, the Prophet (ﷺ) gives a road map to his companions for action and in this way got ability of character building and personality development.

3.7. Time management and hardworking: Time management and hardworking is also an important approach of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) for personality development. The Divine Book of Allah commands the believers and consider it in the principles of faith.

{إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ (2) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ}³

1 Al-Qur’ān 4:103.

2 Al-Qur’ān 62:10.

3 Al-Qur’ān 2-4

“Verily Man is in loss, except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy”.

The prophet (ﷺ) said about hard working as;

*“A wise man is the one who calls himself to account (and refrains from doing evil deeds) and does noble deeds to benefit him after death; and the foolish person is the one who subdues himself to his temptations and desires and seeks from Allah the fulfillment of his vain desires”.*¹

A famous verse of the Quran tells about importance of time and time management because prayer is recommended on specific times in a day for the five times regularly. This practice makes Muslim mature and caring regarding time management. Allah says in the Quran;

{فَأَقِمْوَا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْفُوتًا}

“For such prayers are enjoined on believers at stated times.”

Many verses of the Quran and *Āhādīth* of the Kind Prophet (ﷺ) guide us towards practical life and management of time for the affairs of world and the world hereafter both.

3.8. Unity and Mutual Cooperation: The sense of unity and cooperation is must in **every** well-assembled organizations and institutes. Definitely Islam also teaches it to his followers but the basic difference between these secular institutes and Islamic discourse is that Islam declares as a principle of social cooperation and binds it with values. Almighty Allah recommends in the Glorious Quran;

{وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ}

“Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour: fear Allah: for Allah is strict in punishment”.

Many *Āhādīth* (traditions) of the Prophet (ﷺ) guide us towards this community cooperation in a very decent way. The Prophet (ﷺ) binds Muslims to conjoin each other as a moral duty;

1 Jām’ī Tirmazī Hadīth no.2459.

2 Al-Qur’ān4:103

3 Al-Qur’ān 5:2.

*“A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor. Whoever fulfilled the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfill his needs; whoever brought his (Muslim) brother out of a discomfort, Allah will bring him out of the discomforts of the Day of Resurrection, and whoever screened a Muslim, Allah will screen him on the Day of Resurrection”.*¹

As far as the unity, it is a more concern of Muslims than every other community of the world. Almighty Allah declares them brothers and binds them to hold strong relations.

{وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا} ²

“And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah, and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favour on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren”.

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) taught the issues of unity in many *Āhādīth*. Even the prophet (ﷺ) recommends them do not travel or live without their community leader (*Amīr*). *“Adhere to the Jama'ah, beware of separation, for indeed Ash-Shaitan is with one, and he is further away from two. Whoever wants the best place in Paradise then let him stick to the Jama'ah”.*³The Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) strategy towards this matter was very open and clear. Many studies and also the model conduct of the Prophet (ﷺ) show that He did not leave any person from his companions alone. He liked the mutual cooperation and community relationship among his companions strictly. Actually, this exercise was done to make the Muslim followers as cooperative, well disciplined, organized and united community. We see this strategy also at the time of migration, *Methāq-e-Madīnah* and *Mwākhāt-e-Madīnah*, the Muslim community was treated as separately and the bond of brother-hood was confirmed among Muslim

1 Sahīh Bukhārī, Hadīth no. 622.

2 Al-Qur'ān 3:103

3 Jām'ī Tirmazī Hadīth no. 2165.

followers. Later, the result of this exercise was produced as the birth of the concept of Muslim *Ummah*. Therefore, the Muslim *Ummah* is ethically bounded to help out each other on different issues and at the time of difficult situations.

These were the significant approaches in personality development of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). In order to avoid the elongation of research work some of the constituent steps involved in personality development have been avoided which are knowledge, and its practice, consistency, accountability, modesty, devotion, tolerance and appreciation. In short, if we want to groom and develop our academic and professional discourses, it is necessary to follow these steps, approaches and methodology for production of better man power.

4. Need of Character building in modern educational perspective:

In the contemporary era, Muslim educational and professional institutions are in the situation of moral decline and ideological stagnant. Although some countries and some institutions have gotten partial worldly success, but ethically and morally we are going towards failure day by day. In very simple words, the whole Muslim *Ummah* has become a hunt of moral instability and ideological stagnation. The educational and professional training of the contemporary Muslim world is an eye witness of this challenging situation. We look towards the West for the solution of our problems and have become ideological and physical slaves of their civilization and thought as well. Actually the present moral situation of Muslim *Ummah* has become very dangerous and difficult. It is sour collective dilemma that we want supremacy and success over the whole world in a day, but do not ready to change our attitude and skills. Furthermore, in these days, Muslim world is under threat of secular Western civilization. No field of life escaped from the influence of Western society. Especially our educational institutes are a bad example of it. According to an eye opening study report on influence of the Western thought and Civilization;

“Muslim youth are being greatly influenced by Western ideas and this is very apparent in the way they think, wear, the foods they eat, the way they socialize, and the entertainment that they prefer and participate in. Today,

through media and internet, the Muslim youth is bombarded with so much information on Western culture, which greatly influences them and they tend to forget about their own culture and way of life”.¹

It is observed, there are many educational institutions in Pakistan whose priority is not to emphasize the Islamic personality development. This might be the knowledge insufficiency which leads them to distribute the degrees without any check and balanced confirmation. Here, Dr. Muhammad Amin rightly pointed out “Thousands institutions of modern education have founded in Pakistan. Unfortunately, they have no concept of personality development in terms of Islamic character-building. The difficulty for the teachers of Islamic studies is that they have no model and sufficient portion of Islamic syllabus. But it does not mean that the duty of moral training has been finished”.² Syed *Moudūdī* also shows his concerns towards modern education and its lack of character–building as; “At the time several systems of education are working in our country which are unable to prepare people according to the needs of our national requirement. Keeping in view, we do not need to prepare our generations mentally and academically only but also for ethically and morally”.³ Therefore in the light of Holy Prophet’s (ﷺ) Seerah adaptation of comprehensive techniques for personality development is perceptively important especially for modern educational interest.

Moreover, Knowledge and its practice are equal wheels of Islamic educational system. Therefore, a contemporary Malaysian scholar Ahmad *Faosiy* rightly observed; “Islam encourages human personality to be developed through absorbing accurate and useful knowledge, that is to say, a personality should be developed through acquiring knowledge. This is one of the reasons why the first revelation to the Prophet (ﷺ) was based on knowledge”.⁴ But unfortunately we are cut off from our great heritage and

1 <http://westernizationandislam.weebly.com/Accessed:27/6/19/>.

2 Muhammad Amin, *T’alīmī Idāray aur Kirdār Sāzī*(Aziz Book Deport: Lahore ,1997), P.18.

3 Moudūdī, Syed Abul’ala, *T’alīmāt* (Delhi: Markazī Maktbā Islāmī, 1978),76.

4 Ogunbado, Ahmad Faosiy, “The significant of Islamic spiritual ethics in human personality development”, *RIMM* 6:88(2016), PP.119-124.

unique tradition of ethics and intellect and now modern Muslim educational scenario is going to be collapsed morally and intellectually. Furthermore, it is necessary to know about Islamic norms and role of practical Islamic in every field of life. A Muslim scholar rightly reflects;

“Education, therefore, takes place within a complex system of intersecting norms and allegiances. First, there is the education of the self .To be a Muslim means to know Islam as a normative system; and to be considered as an educated person in an Islamic system means first and foremost to have allegiance to its norms and to make every effort to exemplify them”.¹

But here again, sorry to say, there is no connection of Deen (Islam) in our collective lives and behaviors on personality development. It means our present educational system is not able to produce humble, model and welfare characters which we need foremost.

Therefore, in this situation we need a kind of spiritual energy and overhauling to convert them in a dynamic position and direction. Undoubtedly, Modern Muslim society is in the situation of ethical decline at this time. We have every kind of resources, but failed to utilize them for the welfare of common good. Here, we should rethink our strategy that what kinds of problems are faced by our national professional and academic institutions. We are failed to produce such personalities which can transform our society according to our national need and requirement. Our modern educational institutions have become factories of unemployment which has no moral stability as well as professional skills and determination to work hard for moral objectives. Thus, we have a dire need to value based curriculum that can entirely change our moral and professional behavior. But the forefront question is that how will it be possible? According to my humble opinion; this is only possible through character building. Allah says;

{لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ} ²

“Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day.”

1 Shah, Syed Farooq and Irfanullah, Quality and Features of Education in Muslim world, *Universal Journal of Education Research*3:4(2015), PP. 243-257.

2 Al-Qur’ān 33:21.

The prophet (ﷺ) said about success and to get rid from worldly and spiritual decay of Muslim *Ummah* in these golden words; “*I have left amongst you two things, you would not be deviated until you hold them strongly, the book of Allah and Sunnah of his prophet*”.¹ For that purpose we must follow the value based system of Islam and build the character of Muslim nation on pure Islamic values. According to a well-known Muslim researcher's views;

“The character building in Islam means to learn value and follow all those moral values which Islam has focused on and to avoid all those traits which Islam determines as unpleasant. The moral system of Islam enables an individual to distinguish between right and wrong and live his life accordingly”.²

As for as for the building of character, we are eager to get guidance from the *Seerah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) because he was the only one who has status of complete moral and ethical achievement. Book of Allah announces;

{وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقِي عَظِيمٍ}³

“*And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character*”.

The Prophet (ﷺ) additionally aforementioned concerning himself as I'm sent to the humanity for orientation and building of their sensible character. According to a Hadith of the kind Prophet (ﷺ);

“*That I have been sent to complete good morals*”.⁴

Actually, the essential mission of the Prophet (ﷺ) as to rework the society and was to make their character in step with the need of the Creature of this universe. This objective is the most important topic of the Quran. This unique activity was the objective of all Prophets (ﷺ) from Almighty Allah.

It is discussed in The Quran at many places, such as;

{يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ}⁵

1 Mālik, Ibne Anas, *Mu'ṭā Imām Mālik* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikar, 1978), Hadīth no. 678.

2 Abdul Muhaimin, “*Character building Through Islamic Schools*”, P.16.

3 Al-Qur'ān 68: 4.

4J Jām'ī Tirmazī, Hadīth no. 723.

5 Al-Qur'ān 2:151.

“We have sent among you a Messenger of your own, rehearsing to you Our Signs, and sanctifying you, and instructing you in Scripture and Wisdom, and in new knowledge”.

Obviously, the character building of human being is the core objective of the Holy Prophet’ Prophet-Hood (ﷺ). According to a landmark statement of a prominent Muslim scholar and psychiatrist about the divine and revolutionary mission of the Prophet (ﷺ);

“Character building is one of the core missions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and should be incorporated in a holistic concept of progress and sustainable development of community within the worldview of Islam, which unifies and balances the material with the spiritual dimension producing wellbeing in this life and wellbeing in after life”.¹

Then the question arises how can we develop the personality and build the character of a Muslim person? What kind of duty is assigned to us from the teachings of Islam in this regard? According to the *Qurānic* teachings, we must adopt the Prophetic approaches of *D’awāh*, Islamic training and try to spread the mission of Islam according to its spirit and objectives. Here, the Holy Quran guides us as ;

{وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ}

“Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: ”.

According to the valuable comments of a Muslim trainer and scholar about responsibility of personality development and character building as;

“The method for personality development as established by these Prophets is that people should be taught the Book and *al-Hikmah*, so that their personalities are sanctified from all types of material and moral filth. After the end of Prophesy, ‘*Ulamā* are responsible to educate people. All activities related to Islamic *D’awāh* in the world are based on the education of this Divine Law and Wisdom. If we are interested in

1 Fatima, *Virtues and character building in Islamic Ethics and Positive Psychology*”, P.69.

2 Al-Qur’ān 3: 104.

developing our personality, we should learn the Divine Law and the Divine Wisdom”¹

At the end, I would like to say that the personality development and character building is a most difficult and constant task, but we can achieve it after consecutive and continuous struggle for the pursuit of excellence. For that purpose, we can get help from the Book of Allah and Nobel *Seerah* of the kind Prophet *Hazrat* Muhammad (ﷺ). When we review the Nobel *Seerah* of the Kind Prophet (ﷺ) we see the constant struggle and hardworking which changed the ignorant of the Arabs and made them able to lead all the humanity in every sphere of life. We read in history, when the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) came with his prophecy in 610 AD, only 17 people were able to write and read, and when the Prophet (ﷺ) delivered his historical last sermon in 632 AD, no one from his companion was illiterate. It happened only in a short period of 23 years. Thus, here, I feel necessary to share the chosen poetry of a well-known Poet *Maulānā Altāf* Husain *Hāllī* which he dedicates to the Nobel Prophet *Hazrat* Muhammad (ﷺ);

وہ بجلی کا کڑکا تھا یا صوتِ ہادی عرب کی زمیں جس نے ساری ہلا دی
نئی اک لگن دل میں سب کے لگا دی اک آواز میں سوتی بستی جگا دی
پڑا ہر طرف غل یہ پیغام حق سے کہ گونج اٹھے دشت و جبل نام حق سے
سبق پھر شریعت کا ان کو پڑھایا حقیقت کا گر ان کو ایک اک بتایا
زمانہ کے بگڑے ہوؤں کو بنایا بہت دن کے سوتے ہوؤں کو جگایا
کھلے تھے نہ جو راز اب تک جہاں پر وہ دکھلا دیئے ایک پردہ اٹھا کر²

Consequently, here I compel to dedicate this nice success to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) I'm feeling pleasure and happiness to mention that it had been solely involved in mentioning the results of the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) dynamic leadership, temperament development program and character building system that created his companions the Heroes of this world and

1 Mubashir, *Qurānic Strategy of Personality Development*, P.3.

2 Hāllī, *Maulānā Altāf Hussein, Musaddas Hāllī* (Lahore: Tāj Company Ltd., 1908), P. 17.

also the self-made personalities of the life hereafter. It's conjointly counseled and urged if we want to be self-made Muslim community in each field of life then we should follow and adopt the model of excellence of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). It's one and solely cure of this human grieves, sorrows and failures. (ﷺ) Otherwise destruction and failure is anticipated for us.

Conclusion: The above study revealed that personality development is the most significant subject in Islamic teachings and have become a matter of concern in modern education and professional discourse as well. The term *Tazkīyah Nafas* (Self redemption) is used as an alternate term for personality development in Islamic context. It plays a vital role to reform Muslim personality on individual and collective level. For personality development the *Seerah* of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) has special importance. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) adopted comprehensive approach and steps to build characters of his companions for bringing a vital and fundamental change into the society. So, we have to grasp the gradual but continual efforts to bring change in the society in short time.. It is also explored; the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) was succeeded to bring a positive change in a rude society with continuous struggle and determination with less privileges and accessories. Doubtlessly, this society was an excellent collection of all kinds of goodness and virtues and these virtues were achieved only and only due to the dynamic leadership of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Noble approaches of personality development and character building. It was due to noble character and unique prophetic approaches.

Moreover, it's determined that the modern Muslim instructional discourse is within the scenario of ethical and skilled declines. Our ingenious establishments haven't manufacture ideal personalities for materialistic and religious development of the society. Thus, it is dire need

of the time is to adopt the Prophetic approaches to rebuild the moral and academic structure of the modern Muslim institutions. If we want to establish a model welfare society, then these steps and approaches should be necessary syllabus for character building of its inhabitants. We must follow these approaches and methods frequently because these approaches can play a significant role to build the character of our national professional and educational community. Therefore, it is suggested we must incorporate the Nobel teachings of the Quran and model *Seerah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) in modern curriculum for better personality development and character-building.