



## Delineating the Effect of Educators' Affection on Students' Learning

Dr. Mohammad Reza Sharafi & Sareh Yadegari

Faculty member of Tehran University

[msharafi@ut.ac.ir](mailto:msharafi@ut.ac.ir)

Ph.d student at Tehran University

[yadegari.sareh@gmail.com](mailto:yadegari.sareh@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*This essay with the focus on education in Islam using the descriptive and analytical method aims to delineate the effect of educators' affection on students' learning. In Merriam Webster, learning is defined as knowledge or skill acquired by instruction or study while affection as a moderate feeling or emotion.*

*The main concern of this study is to maintain the relationship between teachers' affection and students' learning while considering its effects, its extent, and the right time of using it. This essay tries to answer these questions by providing evidences mainly from the Islamic point of view on education.*

*The most important results of this study show that affection is considered as part of magnetism of a teacher which contributes greatly to the teacher's effectiveness and teaching quality as well as the students' learning and engagement. Teacher's affection can extremely affects the students' learning experiences and is an essential element in education; nevertheless, in Islam, every action practiced without moderation can present considerable drawbacks to those affected.*

*Thus, the emotional domain plays a prominent role and affects the cognition to a great extent. Affection based instruction encourages the learners to participate dynamically and to cooperate eagerly in the learning experiences. Therefore, its importance is maintained prior to and along the entire process of learning.*

**Key words:** teacher's affection, learning, Islamic educational thought



## Introduction

Realistically, a large percentage of the overall day of the average student is spent within school, surrounded and submerged in an academic environment. Ergo, this environment must be supplied with the best tools to aid the students in their scholastic lives. However, the textbooks given and the curriculum taught are not the only aspects in the educational system that are imperative factors in students' learning; a teacher also plays a significant role, specifically the way the teacher's behavior is presented to the class. The way the teachers act towards the students and during class can be either extremely beneficial to a student, or in contrast, it can deflate the students by discouraging or simply boring them. This causes students to detest class. Most students prefer a teacher that is not only informed and well versed in his/her subject, but also someone who can present and convey this information in a way that is appealing to the students. One quality that they desire to see in a teacher is certain level of affection. However, with every virtue there is vice, and every action practiced without moderation can present considerable drawbacks to those affected.

In Islam, affection is prominent in many aspects of life including education and learning because we, humans, are drawn to the kindness and care. A charismatic teacher should be assertive, influential, and inspirational, and these cannot be flourished without the accompaniment of the affection. A teacher using the affection can provoke enthusiasm and devotion in students that may not only trigger a strong and powerful desire for acquiring deeper understanding and knowledge, a desire to learn, but may also pave the path towards the brilliant way ultimate goal of education in Islam, "Proximity to Allah". Teachers' affection absorbs the students' interest in that particular subject. When a student is interested in a subject, she/he tends to remain fully attentive, observant, and alert while engaging in activities related to the subject. If the interest is enhanced and boosted, the cognitive and affective functions of the learner will also increase and amplify. This leads to the devotion and effort of the learner to carry out the tasks enthusiastically and will ultimately boost and improve learning experiences. Anyone who has charisma and affection is like a magnet pulling fondness to themselves.

Denotatively, the term affection means a feeling of liking and caring for someone. Presumably, due to this, the quality of affection is said to be equally admired and desired among the general population as a whole. Affection, whether it is chiefly hereditary or learned behavior, has a few key factors which when compiled grants the ability to employ the term itself. These factors include but are not exclusively limited to: caring, tenderness, lenience, combined with the use of a smile, expressive body language (such as a firm stance or good posture), and a friendly or passionate voice.

Due to the inspiration and encouragement that affection instills in others, one place that it can fully be implicated in is the classroom. A teacher's behavior affects their students and the scholastic environment that they share in all classifications. To the students, a teacher can be many things: an educator, a role model, a guide, and more importantly, a motivator. For example, when a teacher is truly passionate about the subject he/she teaches, the students can almost tangibly feel it. This, in turn, will be a factor in how the students retain and understand the material the teacher presents to them. Therefore, it would not be unreasonable to say that a teacher's attitude and personality when teaching affects the students greatly in reference to their learning abilities. Teacher's affection can come into effect in this aspect of a student's learning environment. The teachers who show affection towards the students can call upon the class's attention easily, as well as almost obtain rapport with the students. Also, when students are comfortable as the result of the teacher's affection and encouraged in their academic environment, the class seems more enjoyable to them and their performance in return improves.



Throughout history, great figures have substantiated a magnificent deal of affection and kindness, a key to their success. Among those, the great leader of mankind is Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Alongside his success and achievement in guiding people, he was a great teacher and mentor. As the humans' role model, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), with his gentle and lenient behavior established affection prior to bringing the message of Allah: A good educator needs to base the learning experiences on affection. However, the main question is "To what extent does affection affect the students' learning?"

### **The importance of affection and its impact on pedagogy from the Western Intelligentsia Perspective**

Most western philosophers in discussion of cognition and knowledge have referred to the wisdom and factors affecting it; some of them have discussed the effect of affection on education and also the balance of affection and wisdom, such as David Hume, Kant and other education scholars and thinkers whose views are mentioned as following:

#### **1. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274):**

The philosophy of Aquinas represents the most brilliant and memorable efforts of human to give a structure to religion while the clearest expression of life style in medieval is appeared as well

(Zibakalam ,1999 :76). Thomism or Aquinas philosophical school of thoughts has considered the profession of teaching not only as a duty, but also as a mission to serve the humanity. Thomist has emphasized on the affection the same as the wisdom, and he believes the real affection derives from cognition and is based on the wisdom ( Gutek , 1993:8). In Thomism view, the teacher is a competent communicator who plays important moral role in addition to the mental role to communicate effectively (Ibid).

#### **2. David Hume (1711-1776):**

Hume uses the term "passion" to entail all different kinds of affections (Coplestone, 2009,5:336) . He considers passion as the stimulant of our acts divided in two categories: direct and indirect. Direct passions include grief, joy, hope and fear originated from the instincts or the tendency towards good which can be equivalent to the pleasures, and human avoidance of evil which is assumed to be the same as pain here.

Indirect passion such as pride, humility, love and hatred are the combinations of primary incentives which include the avoidance of pain, tendency toward pleasure in accompany with other factors such as environmental factors (Zibakalam , 1999: 141) .He considers the sympathy to fellowmen as a natural instinct with unlimited power which plays a great share in forming political and moral encounters in human (Ibid.).

#### **3. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778):**

Rousseau belongs to the romanticism era who founded in his certain philosophy with the nature of human. Against John Locke who sees human as the result of his intuitive experiences, so human is a victim of external conditions. He believes in a ruling principle over the human soul called "Free Self-Active Principle" (Zibakalam , 1999 : 154).

Rousseau in books of *Emile* and *The Social Contract* has presented a new philosophy regarding the human nature. According to Bertrand Russell, the nature of Rousseau's *The social contract* is substantially different from his other writings. This book contains a little about the affection matters, and its content is basically the rigor rational reasoning (Russell, 1986, 2: 952-953) . He believes the human nature is basically good and human seeks to form the community not because of the lack of security, but to become able to know his moral nature by the mutual interaction with others and their help. Thus, he does not perceive the human



nature as harsh as Thomas Hobbes would say, but he believes the humans are content and blessed who enjoys the sympathy and philanthropy. However, he believes that the current education system destroys the affection in children; they must be educated naturally away from the bad influences of society which encourage unhealthy competition (Ibid.).

In summary, in Rousseau education system, which can be called “naturalism”, the rationalization of affections" must be considered (Mayer, 1971, 1:318). In this view, the affections gradually become the crystal clear ideas which provide the basis for wise deeds (Guttek, 2003: 110).

#### 4. Immanuel Kant (1728-1804):

Kant introduced a new preamble in epistemology and also innovative thoughts in the philosophy of morals which can be found in his two books, “Critique of Practical Reason” , “ Foundations of Metaphysics of Morals”(Zibakalam , 1999 : 168).

Kant knows freedom as an exalted concept and believes that in epistemology, one cannot reach a significantly meaningful cognition regarding the supreme world (Ibid., 168). In Kant philosophy, the aesthetics experience and practical reason are both aspects of ethics. The rational concepts such as God, freedom and immortality are carved in minds sometimes appearing as moral affairs and other times are formed as an art or emotional forms by using imagination .Anyway, we could not remove these concepts out of our minds. These notions make us understand that the perception of the whole world for human is not possible; thus, the wise man or an artist is humble. This humility in human deserves to be praised. A humble person’s emotions and behaviors belong to the supreme world while he knows he is the only one who can recognize the natural world, so we can feel the moral exhalation and proximity of God and nature (Ibid., 174).

#### 5. Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827):

Educational goals of Pestalozzi is a reflection of his life. His father was dead when he was five years old, and his mother who encouraged his affections and emotions raised him. His efforts in Neuhauf Orphanage, in Stans where he was in charge of the poor and orphan children, in Urgdorf and finally Yverdon where he was managing a boarding school, eventually convinced him that education requires a new way of thinking (Mayer, 1971, 2:345).

The ultimate goal of education according to Pestalozzi is affection, an endless affection that entails weak students as much as the successful ones which should not be flawed by the mistakes the students might make. Pestalozzi especially loved the poor children and did his best to improve their future. He believed that an individual grows via head, hand and heart: Head represents the rational growth, the hand represents the practical growth (skills), and heart is the representative of affection growth (Ibid., 2: 346-347).

According to Pestalozzi, morality emerges from the satisfaction of human’s basic needs. Satisfying the needs of a child for food and mother’s warmth and love are cause the feeling of confidence, love and affection security in a child. This affection and confidence transfers to other members of family, citizens, fellowmen -and in its perfection- to God (Guttek, 2003: 105).

According to Rousseau , Pestalozzi and other naturalists, self -love and self- esteem beam down the rays of affection to others and surroundings creating the bond . A kind of natural morality can appear from self-



love which raises the human equality feeling that the social institutions based on the privilege and position are not able to prevent it or deviate from it (Ibid.).

#### 6. Friedrich Frobel (1782-1852):

Frobel was influenced by his mother's death throughout his life; he lost her when he was only nine months. His father, a church security guard, married again, but the relation between the step mother and the child was flat and emotionless. Frobel's experiences and his childhood memories affected his philosophical and mental principals significantly. Frobel believed that children usually suffer from some deprivation of affection and security at home, and education must happen as soon as possible in order to lead to the development of mutual understanding between children and parents. He was against war and would consider it as the enemy of education and culture. He said: "How can humans progress when he is always afraid of the destruction?" (Mayer, 1971, 2:370).

Frobel's educational goals were founded on the deep religious faith. He said: "The spiritual ideals cannot be described, yet need to be revealed. According to him, education is what leads humans to become thinkers, self-aware, pure without blemish, and a free agent of inner divinity in additions to teaching him the life styles (Ibid, 2:371)." Also he added: "The pedagogy must guide a human towards the self and what is related to and exists in him (Ibid)."

He states about the nature of a child: "Only the goodness is real. This view includes some important educational points and shows that a child is not an evil; in contrast, the stubbornness is usually the result of lack of insight and incorrect values. Thus, the child must be raised in a way that the eternal spark of his soul transforms to a live reality (Ibid, 2:372)."

Frobel's contentions about family have a great significance. He says: "A family with the superiority of unity as a result of affection is the best place for the human's progress. When the family avoids its responsibilities, the educator has a duty to guide the parents towards the goodness (Ibid)." Eventually, pedagogy is summarized in three points according to Frobel: the development of awareness, affection, and independence (Ibid, 2:373).

He addresses the fathers and writes: " O' father, your child will follow you where you go and what you do , do not reject him/ her harshly and do not become restless by his/her repeated questions since any harsh and gross word can break a branch of his life tree. Do not say him more than he can find without your words, because when a child can reach one fourth of response by his/her effort, it is more important and valuable than the half of what he can find by listening to and comprehending others' words (Ibid)."

The summary of the analysis of above views indicates that it seems the educators' attention to the stance of affection in education , especially the role of affection and emotion in facilitating the learning, has been fluctuating , especially in some historical periods when this pace has been sever and acute while in other times slow and gentle . The climax can be seen in naturalism movements or romanticism era especially with the emergence of Rousseau's school of thoughts as well as the publication of *Emile*. Since the Rousseau period and his influence in European pedagogy thoughts, we gradually observe the interference and conflict between the affection and rational based pedagogy. Some European thinkers like David Hume have done some efforts to decrease the stance of affection education and affection development to a personal and individual while some of them such as Pestalozzi praised it to the same extent of practical and rational education, and finally some like Frobel considered the affection education to be influenced by the rational education. Thinkers such as Kant have seen the emotional and affective affairs in relation to the supreme affair. It seems it can be concluded that Kant with edifying the theoretical wisdom and practical reason and



their criticism has created such a stance for thinking where the affection and emotions are so weak and pale under its shadow.

However, the fact is that human is multi dimension creature, so positing every dimension of his existence means the ignorance other dimensions and other human character aspects .The necessity of a balanced look at all human existence dimensions and educating all of them in its extent can be a real act in harmony with the various needs in childhood and adolescence more than any time. Perhaps the most significant pedagogical points among the above mentioned is the Rousseau's who considered mother as the source of affection and when this need is met, a kind of confidence is made in child in a way that spreads through the family and in the next ring , the feeling of security and optimism can penetrate the society. In final stage, such a good feeling blended with love, affection, security, optimism, trust can be extended to God.

### Affection in Islam

In Islam, affection is greatly emphasized, and the whole religion is founded on love in a way that the highest rank of affection is Allah who shows His affection towards the universe and specially us, humans.

In the word "Bismillah ir-Rahman ir-rahim", lies the great two words of compassion and mercy. The merciful Allah says about Himself: "Your Lord has decreed Mercy on Himself." (6:54)

Allah has mercy on all of the creatures and asks us to have mercy over one another.

Allah inspires humans to be affectionate. "Then he is of those who believe and charge one another to show patience, and charge one another to show compassion."( 90:17)

The prophets' messages are based on love and the main basis for all the religions are established on affection and care for people. We read in the Holy Quran that "We have not sent you (Prophet Muhammad) except as a mercy to all the worlds." (21:107)

The Prophet is a perfect model for a good teacher since he has the same mission of prophets which is to guide people. The teacher should be kind to his students as Allah says: "Certainly a Messenger has come to you from among yourselves; grievous to him is your falling into distress, excessively solicitous respecting you; to the believers (he is) compassionate." (9:128)

There are certain key words in the Quran which are greatly stressed and one of them is Rahmah. Rahmah, compassion and mercy, can be seen among Allah's own names which are Rahman and Rahim(compassionate and Merciful.) Allah is Rabb al-Alamin, the Sustainer of the whole world. This concept is based on Allah's mercy and compassion for everyone and everything He has created. In fact, rahmah is so central that it embraces all that exists in the universe.

Or in another verse Allah says: "O My worshipers, who have sinned excessively against themselves, do not despair of the Mercy of Allah, surely, Allah forgives all sins. He is the Forgiver, the Most Merciful." ( 39:53) This verse shows how Kind Allah is towards His servants.

Rahmah, mercy, is also the primary mission of Prophet Muhammad(PBUH). "We sent Muhammad not, but as a mercy for all creatures."(21:107)

Moreover, Imam Ali (AS) knows abundant Allah 's blessings as one way to make affection for Allah in to the human's heart that no man expresses his needs, but they are met, and these blessings have been bestowed on him. For example he expressed (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 109), "my clean Lord! ... What abundant are your blessings in this world." So many examples can be found from Nahj al-Balagha which express many



Allah blessings given to man. This brings to mind the grace of Allah to man. Considering this Lord's love to human can stimulate human emotions and his love to Allah which results in obedience.

Reflections over these verses show that Allah encourages us to be kind and merciful. The Almighty Educator of the whole mankind shows affection towards His creatures implying that at the first place, educators should create affectionate bonds with their students to provide the required environment for making them interested in liking them, listening to them, participating in the class, and learning.

### **Islam and the importance of teachers' role in creating the affection bond prior to learning**

Learning is shaped by affection. Schools in general and educators specifically play prominent roles in shaping the learners' souls and minds. The effect of teacher's character on students cannot be denied since good teachers can flourish affection in the students by their conducts and manners. Therefore, we can link the affective relationship between a teacher and a learner, and it can make big changes in the learners' lives as well as their academic performance and success.

For Muslims, the first and original educator is Allah, and all are bound by their faith to be Allah's scholars. Any teacher is a leader of a class and first and foremost a follower of Allah. Allah, the greatest educator, nurtured the Prophet, and this shows that education should be based on affection. As in the Quran it is stated: "It was by that Mercy of Allah that you (Prophet Muhammad) dealt so leniently with them. Had you been harsh and hardhearted, they would have surely deserted you. Therefore, pardon them and ask forgiveness for them. Take counsel with them in the matter and when you are resolved, put your trust in Allah. Allah loves those who trust." (3:159)

In this verse, Allah mentions that the success of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) lies in his affectionate, lenient, kind, and gentle behavior. Emotions work better for human beings than logic or better to say it is prior to reasoning and logic. The emphasis on creating an affectionate bond prior to their guidance is noticeable; it shows the Prophet had been granted the tool of affection to be successful in guiding the people. Thus, there must be an affectionate bond between the educator and the students which makes them well prepared and interested to listen to him. Also another verse from the Holy Quran says: "...Allah will bring a nation whom He loves and they love Him..." (5:54). One should reflect on the priority of Allah's affection for people over the people's affection for Allah. Regarding this verse, some commentators write that Allah has kept the priority of His affection over the Muslims', and He says that Allah loves them and afterwards he states that Muslims love Him. The secret of the priority of Allah's affection over the Muslims' lies in the fact that if Allah does not love them, they would not succeed in loving Him. (Sharafi, 2016)

Imam Ali (AS) knows abundant blessings of Allah as one way of penetration of affection in the humans' hearts. The humans' needs are met without being stated, and these blessings have been bestowed on him. Imam Ali (AS) expresses: "Glory to be Thee! ... How extensive are Thy bounties in this world ... (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 109)." There are many examples from Nahj al-Balagha that mark the many Allah blessings which have been given to mankind. This brings to mind the grace of Allah to us; considering His affection towards us can stimulate our emotions and love to Allah. The result of that affection is obedience because if human loves someone, he will follow him and not defy him. Therefore, the best way to educate people that can be useful and successful is teaching through the hearts.

### **Paving the path of learning through the students' hearts**

The heart is the core of the change in thinking and behavior (N. Jaafar et al., 2014). Due to the very significant role in human life, the Quran has repeatedly, 132 times, mentions the term heart (qalb). Allah says: "Have they never journeyed through the land so that they have hearts to understand, or ears to hear



with? It is not the eyes, but the hearts in the chests that are blind(22:46)". In this verse, Allah mentions that the heart plays a more important role than eyes and ears in understanding a matter. If the heart is blind, one is not ready to see or hear the truth. Therefore, an educator should first open her way through the hearts of the students to make them prepared for receiving the knowledge.

In education, one of the essential factors to be a professional teacher is lifting care, responsibility, and affection to the students so that the learning process will be evocative (Idi Warsah,2016). This marks the commendations of Imam al-Ghazali, who signifies the component of love by the notion of teacher as Murabbi: 1) Love the pupils and treat them like their own children; 2) Always advise pupils in all matters including their learning and behavior, and 3) Maintain discipline using precautionary approach and address them good against evil behavior and foster a loving kindness (Jaafar et al., 2014).

### **The effects of presence of affective relationship between educators and learner**

In order to obtain the desired results, learning atmosphere needs to be pleasant. Although the quality of curriculum and instruction cannot be ignored to achieve the objectives, supportive and affectionate learner-educator relationships are linked with a range of constructive effects. Great educators care about their students and want them to succeed and help them to achieve their goals. When teachers care about their students, they make them feel important. Thus, the student is responsive to a teacher who cares, and is more likely to learn and engage. This connection establishes trust which is important to students' learning because it makes them comfortable enough to participate, ask for help when needed, and pay closer attention to advice and encouragement.

Moreover, a compassionate teacher can easily be extremely beneficial to a classroom. He/ She can boost morale and create an environment that not only causes students to learn well, but also to take pleasure in and be enthusiastic about the subjects that are being taught. Teacher's affection can captivate the students' attention and interest and trigger a strong desire in them for acquiring knowledge.

Affection can raise the level of learners' self-esteem. By providing consistent affection for the learners, the educators actually provide them with the optimal learning experiences which lead to the development of self-esteem in them. Therefore, the learner is equipped with the required weapon which supports and protects him against the challenges of life. So, the teachers and administrators are the people who must do this because the most important moments of students' lives are spent at school.

It is evident that showing affection towards students has positive effect on their mental health. Kids who experience positive student-teacher relationships in the early years have fewer behavior problems. They show more engagement in the classroom and better performance, too.(Rudasill et al ,2013)

Teachers' affection help to improve student's behavior, mood and social interaction; it creates peaceful and enjoyable environment in which both student and teacher feel comfortable for development of learning. Teachers play crucial role in the school context. They should show affection towards their students for making them safe and relaxed in the classroom. Forming strong and supportive relationships with teachers allows students to feel safer and more secure in the school setting, feel more competent, make more positive connections with peers, and make greater academic gains (Hamre and Pianta p.57). As Sarason (1999, p.110) says, " The starting point of all learning is to know the minds and hearts of your learner."

Thus, teaching with affection offers numerous benefits for learners concerning their individual and societal growth and concurrently leads to a better relationship between the learner and the teacher. Students must receive care and love for achieving educational goals.





Eisner (2002) suggests that “teaching is a caring exercise” which takes an important role in effective learning process. According to Stronger et al. (2004) caring goes beyond listening, understanding, and knowing the students; it is also being patient, kind, warm, sensitive, human with them. It is to be flexible regarding specific students’ situations, candid, trustworthy, and having and displaying affection and love for them.

### **Islamic Scholars’ points of view on the importance of affection based instruction**

Muslim Scholars saw a good relationship between teachers and students as one of the keys to effective learning; they emphasized the requirement to be kind, lenient, and merciful towards the children (Eeqbal Hassim, 2010).

Khajeh Naseer Tusi says that if affection governs school and society and if it is considered in the educational planning, many corruptions and problems will be solved. Moulavi believed speeches, deeds and characteristics of teachers and educators could actually affects students. He believed that an educator could make students attached to him/her and provide the ground for the students’ acceptance of learning and place trust in the educator.(Alavi, 2009)

The first duty of the teacher according to Al-Raghib Al-Isfahani is to consider students as his own children and treat them kindly. The duty of the teacher is to treat his students as his children. (Eeqbal Hassim ,2010,p.193)

Eeqbal Hassim in his book says: “Al-Ghazali in the Mizan also mentions that the Prophet was a father to his companion and notes that a teacher should treat his students with love and affection just as one would treat his own children. One principle that underpins al-Ghazzali’s pedagogical advice is his first rule of conduct for teachers, that is, they should be merciful when educating children and empathize with them. Similarly, al-Nawawi wrote: The teacher should show compassion to his student and take care of his own interest and that of his pupil; he should treat his student with the kind of clemency and concern that would show to his own child.” (Ibid, p.94)

In several places in his book, Ibn Sahnun stressed the modesty, patience, and passion for working with children are indispensable qualifications for teachers, basing these views again on maxims from the Islamic prophetic view (Gunther,2006, p.371).

Al-Jahiz advised teachers to treat their students gently and lovingly and to touch their hearts. He concluded his Kitabu-l-Muallemin with a motivational passage on the merits of treating students with clemency, care, and kindness, paying attention to them, and not forcing them to do certain things lest they become impolite and rebel (Gunther,2006, p.371)

Ibn Jama’ah emphasizes on individual and specialized credentials of a teacher. According to him, an educator is responsible for the student’s elevation of prosperity and expansion of knowledge. His duty is to avoid being arrogant, to meet students with a smile on his face, and embrace them showing his affection (Ibn Jama’ah, 672 A.H.).

Hence, Muslim educationists advise a parental relationship between teachers and students: teachers are required to be kind and gentle to establish affection in their relationships with students; however, they should be aware of excessive affection since it may have negative effects on their learning experiences. As recommended in Islam, any action should be done in moderation.



### Affection, the best method of education

Imam Ali (AS) knew affection based education as the best training context. Without a doubt, affection is powerful enough to find its way through the learners' hearts and can be considered as the most useful, efficient educational method. The basis of universe is on affection and mercy. Affection has been focused as the educational factor and regarded as the starting point by Islam Education School.

"Then this Islam is the religion which Allah has chosen for Himself, developed it before His eyes, preferred it as the best among his creations, and established its pillars on His love." (Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 198)

Human's nature requires affection, and perfection happens only by its force. Affection is the source of self-education and can soften the hard hearts because nothing else like affection can penetrate in the heart of humans to win their hearts and deter them of the rebellion, wrong, and evil and force them to the right, servitude, and rectitude (DilshadTehrani, p. 260)

Affection is the best method of education since it is the most compatible with the human nature. In religious education, it contains a transformational power, used correctly and in moderation, will have the significant impact on learners which leads to perfection in education. According to Khajeh Naseer, harmony with human's nature and religion is the certain principle of education, and all education policies should be based on this nature to lead the perfection. The best education is achievable and attainable through this great force of affection. Almighty Allah equipped his Prophet with the miracle of affection, and he became successful in educating its people and their guidance. Without the emotional connection, the educational goals cannot be achieved. If the teacher teaches his students with affection, the avoidant student even goes to school at weekends!

Effective education should in its first step use affection to attract learners' deep care; a close look at the practical conduct in human education of the Prophet (PBUH) and Imams can reveal this fact that educators should educate the learners with affection and mercy. Almighty Allah addresses the Prophet of Islam (PBUH): " And most men will not believe though you desire it eagerly "(12:103) According to this verse, the Prophet (PBUH) not only is eager in affection but also in the guidance and educating of his people.

For the manifestation of affection in educator- learner relationship, the horizontal connection is required to make an atmosphere of intimacy and friendship. Imam Ali shows his emotional connection in some parts of the letter, using the word "Oh, my son". The word in Arabic language is used to express affection or attention and emotional tendencies. Imam Ali says: "O my son" or "my trainee" although he could use language without any emotional message. However, he established the most elegant emotional connection with his child using this method: " Oh, my dear, I love you." Thus, an educator is effective in his training particularly working with young when he can generate horizontal sympathetic bonds in a way that the learner feels that the teacher enjoys the instruction and also appreciates the existential aspects of his student well and can communicate affectionately and effectively with him. The stronger emotional connection exists between trainer and trainee, the more integrity, rectitude and congruence will prevail and less dishonesty, deceits and deception between them will be presented. Thus, affection seeking behaviors such as joviality, conviviality, benevolence, modesty, and justice are considered important in this regard. A true educator is the one who has deep affection for the students and love them like his own children considering all the aforementioned affection seeking behaviors. Teacher's affection inspires the students to obey the teacher and respect him. However, the educator should consider the fact that this attitude should be shown towards all students and avoid any discrimination that may injure the students' feeling and may have negative effect on their learning.



Many abnormal behaviors of learners are caused from unfavorable family conditions or those around him, which can be resolved using kindness and patience. The teacher must get involved with him patiently without showing pity instead of affection and could capture his heart and cure his mental illness with the miraculous power of affection. In the world, nothing but love does pave the path. Is it possible to educate and train students without showing affection towards them?

### **Tokens of affection**

The pivot of moral virtues is affection. Therefore, its importance is unquestionable even in learning. Showing the affection cannot happen in vacuum. Teachers should express their affection using different strategies in the learning environment. The use of different tokens can be used by the educators to express their genuine feelings in an effective way towards students. Different tokens can simply show that an educator cares about his/her students. One of these tokens is being gentle and lenient. The Holy Quran says: "Allah is Gentle to people, the Most Merciful."(22:65). In this verse, gentleness has priority over mercy since it has to be in this way; gentleness is the perfect mode of demonstrating that someone is lenient and kind. This shows that an educator should be gentle to create the affectionate relationship with students.

"It was by that Mercy of Allah that you (Prophet Muhammad) dealt so leniently with them. Had you been harsh and hardhearted, they would have surely deserted you. Therefore, pardon them and ask forgiveness for them. Take counsel with them in the matter and when you are resolved, put your trust in Allah. Allah loves those who trust." (3:159). As a principle leniency makes people eager to listen to someone while people tend to disperse if one shows severity and harshness. Or where it says: "Speak to him with gentle words; perhaps he will ponder or fear."(20:44). Due to the effectiveness of leniency and gentleness, Allah asks Moses (AS) & Harun to invite Pharaoh in that way to believe in the Almighty Allah. (Sharafi, 2016)

Friendly and cordial relation can be regarded as the second token for creating the bond between an educator and students. Skilled educators know the importance of having friendly relations towards students. This provides a better mutual understanding between the two parties and encourages students to seek education and be enthusiastic about learning.

The next token is forgiveness and clemency which is advised in the Holy Quran. "Let them pardon and forgive. Do you not yearn that Allah forgives you? And Allah is the Forgiver, the Most Merciful."(24:22)

Teachers' gentle and comforting voice, facial expressions, active listening, offering physical affection, and having respectful behavior accompanied with the aforementioned tokens show students that they are significant to the educator, and they care for them.

### **Moderation in affection**

Moderation in all aspects of life is constantly advised in Islam. In the Holy Quran, it is stated: "We have made you a moderate nation so that you could be an example for all people and the Prophet an example for you."(2:143)

While any relation should be based on affection for its growth, an educator needs to be reasonable in showing his affection towards his students. All the mentioned virtues that lie between the two extremes and the affectionate relationship with the students should be kept in check regarding the feelings and emotions. Without a doubt, an unbalanced relation, the two poles of excess and extravagance, can be destructive. Actually, the utility of the affection as a constructive tool in students' learning lies in the moderation use of it.



According to Sa'adi, a teacher should be the epitome of affection and authority; however, he emphasized that an educator should keep the balance between the extremes, not to be too serious, and not to be too lenient. He explained, "Anger, when excessive, createth terror; and kindness out of reason destroyed authority" (Gulistan, Chapter VIII, tale XVIII). According to al-Farabi, "the teacher should neither be too harsh nor excessively lenient. If he is too harsh, his students will resent him; but if he is too lenient, the pupils will not take him seriously." (Eeqbal Hassim, 2010, p.118)

Thus, the most operative technique is affection in acquiring knowledge. The stronger human affection is, so is the higher human enthusiasm towards the acquisition of virtues. However, one should remember the moderation process since the focus is on strength rather than abundance.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, mutual love and affection is considered as a basis in the Islamic system of education. One can link the affective relationship between a teacher and a student and the learner's learning process because the affection given by a teacher can make great changes in the life of a student as in an academic success as in his/her entire life. Teachers' affection relates to students' learning to a great extent which expands beyond the wall of a classroom. Teaching is not an easy work; it demands time, patience, effort, and knowledge. Although some teachers have all these components, they do not obtain good results with their students. The affection established by the teacher in moderation prior to and also along the learning process is crucial and lies above all those mentioned components.

The educators are the heart of education, are extremely influential to students' learning. Moreover, an effective teacher should combine professionalism with care. Actually, those who have the capacity to inspire students to reach their fullest potentials on learning through their qualities as well as professional and affective skills are effective teachers.

To finalize, teachers' affection reaches the soul of the learners; therefore, whatever they are taught is fixed in their souls like the roots of a tree. Actually, an educator functions as a role model for students by teaching through example, showing the great practices of patience and persistence towards a goal. It is the teacher's responsibility to encourage the students to achieve the highest goal of education which is the proximity to Allah; however, this cannot be achieved unless the bond between them is created, and nothing can succeed in doing so but affection.



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