

An Analytical Study on the Islamic Perspectives of Morality

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ABSTRACT

The morality is beyond the religions, and there are people and nations that do not believe in any religions but have moral and ethical values. Islam as a Divine religion gives a considerable importance to morality, and it inspires the followers to be morally and ethically sound persons in their individual and social life. There are more than hundred moral values that have been discussed in different books of traditions as far as in the holy Quran. The aims of the current article are to explore the core moral values and to describe the Islamic perspectives of morality. Islam views a child should be trained at the beginning of his or her life, so he may become a morally strong person as he or she grows up. Islam teaches peace, love, brotherhood, respect, tolerance, conviction, clemency, forgiveness, responsibility, honesty, truthfulness, humbleness, cooperation, religious harmony, cheerfulness, empathy, sympathy, generosity, charity, worship, obedience, unity, faith, prayers, good manners, cleanliness, patience, courage, struggle, sincerity, repentance, reconciliation, leniency, righteousness, hope, freedom, good character, conciseness, trustworthiness, loyalty, modesty, compassion, thankfulness, hospitality, infallibility, justice, self-sacrifice, service, equity, and kindness. Islam gives no importance to valueless education as it affects negatively on child's development. Without morality education is like a body without soul.

KEYWORDS: **analytic, education, Islamic, morality, responsibility, compassion, contentment**

INTRODUCTION

There are many ills in the society, which are due to the reason that importance is not given to the moral development of the children. It is generally

observed that tolerance, patience, forgiveness and respects for others are disappearing in the society, and intolerance, impatience, disrespects and disobedience are increasing day by day. Values are promulgated in society but not practical measures are taken to inculcate these values among children and youth. There is a continuous degradation of moral values. With the passages of time, the society is deteriorating morally and ethically. Morality is one of the neglected topics that are not given importance in educational organizations, therefore, the researcher felt a need to study to what extent the students are morally intelligent.

The fundamental aim of education should be to prepare such kind of skilled persons who have the desire to serve humanity. If the purpose of education will only be a production of selfish, self-centered, greedy and uncivilized graduates then this type of education is not desired and should not be promoted.

Education must teach how to behave with other people, how to help the needy people, how to bring prosperity in a country, how to stand against tyranny, how to build positive image of the nation, how to boost-up the sense of humanity, how to promote peace and tolerance among nations and individuals, how to eradicate the evil forces, how to solve people's problems and difficulties, how to eliminate poverty, and how to create peaceful educational environment. These values should be the part of the syllabus. The absence of these values in the education system causes many unpredictable losses. Today it is observed no differences between highly educated and uneducated people. Like illiterate people, the literate ones also feel no hesitation in performing and doing wrong actions. The basic reason behind this reality is the least preference for moral education in the education system. It is taught how to read, write, make money, gain marks, and pass the exams, but pay no attention to moral intelligence, personality development and character building, values formation and wisdom development. It is spent a huge amount of money on education but gain nothing. There should be coherent and comprehensive national education policy in order to infuse the spirit of moral

intelligence and wisdom in children. Education should produce civilized, qualified, wise and morally intelligent graduates. The impacts of education on students should be observed, but due to the negligence in teaching these values, it is observed children as they achieve high degrees, they begin disrespect their parents, teachers, elders, and do not follow rules and regulations. This is a great dilemma, and it should be solved. Due to these facts, it was considered important to study to what extent the students are morally intelligent and to what extent moral intelligence contributes in the academic achievement of the college student.

Morality is a concept that has been extensively studied throughout history by Eastern and Western scholars and philosophers. It can be defined as “a moral rules or social terms” and moral rules are regarded as the foundational in the sense that they are related to maintenance of justice, mutual help, and trust in human relationship. Moral rules are the measures that are used to evaluate the particular activities that whether they should perform or not (Sergey, 2013).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were:

1. To describe the importance of Morality in Islam.
2. To explain some important moral values in Islam

RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

Q: 1 What does Islam say about the importance of morality?

Q: 2 What are some important moral values in Islam?

MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN ISLAM

Islam as a Divine religion puts great emphasis on morality and it is considered one of the cornerstones of Islam. Islam has a comprehensive moral system that comprises all aspects of human life. Its moral system is universal in its scope and applicability. It orders its followers to possess moral values in order to be good Muslims. Islamic morality has some basic characteristics that distinguish it from other schools of thought. Like, Islam says there are some universal and

permanent values that are morally good, Muslims should try their best to obtain them, and there are some values that are morally bad and Muslims should avoid them. For instance, Islam says “Telling the truth is morally good, and it never can be bad” (Tehrani, 1980).

According to Islam, all the actions and deeds of a person can be divided into two categories; good and bad. Allah Almighty has created the human being with the ability to distinguish good from bad and right from wrong. Islam also says that moral values are not important only for this world, but also important for Hereafter and there are Angels who have appointed by Allah Almighty to write down all deeds of men. People will observe all the deeds and their consequences that they have done in this world in Judgment Day. If they do the right things then they will be rewarded and if they commit the wrong actions, then they will be punished. As the Holy Quran says “Whoever does good whether male or female and he is a believer, We will most certainly make him live a happy life, and We will most certainly give them their reward for the best of what they did” (Quran,16: 97).

In the Islamic moral system, to be virtuous is not enough, rather it is the duty of every Muslim that they should enjoin virtues to others. They should avoid and refrain from vice and evil, and also forbid others from doing evils. It is undesired in Islam to enjoin others to be virtuous, while a person him/herself does not refrain from evils. First, he or she should possess the moral values then He or she should enjoin others.

In the Arabic language morality is called “Akhlaq or Akhlaqiat”. Akhlaq is a plural word, and its singular is Khulq. Khulq means the inner quality or esoteric characteristic. (Tehrani, 1980). This esoteric attribute may be a good as well as a bad quality. Morality is defined as an ability of a person that prompts and inspires him to do things without intention (Tehrani, 1980).

MORAL VIRTUES IN ISLAM

According to Fred Keil and Doug Lennick, there are four moral virtues, and Dr. Borba believes in ten moral virtues, but in Islamic moral system, morality is not limited to the four or ten virtues, rather there are more than seventy virtues. In Islam, morality is not only possessing these noble traits but also avoiding and refraining from the bad traits. According to Islamic scholars, there are 75 noble moral traits and 75 immoral traits in Islam (Shubbair, 2015).

It is very difficult to mention all of them, here are presented some important noble traits. Imam Sadiq (AS) said, "there are ten moral traits, if you find them within yourself, then you should praise Allah. Those are contentment, conviction, thankfulness, patience, clemency, generosity, excellent character, courage, ardor, and self-respect" (Sadooq, 1979).

CONTENTMENT

Human life is full of cares, desires, and difficulties. No one can say that I do not need more. Everyone in this world desires to get more. This desire of people makes them uncomfortable, unease, and unhappy. There are people, who have a lot of money and wealth and these can meet their needs, but instead of saying Al-Hamdulillah, for what they already have, they want more.

Contentment is the blessing of Allah Almighty. Ones who have this characteristic, they are the richest persons. It is impossible to fulfill all needs and desires because we have unlimited desires and limited time and material resources. Contentment is an important prerequisite for man's happiness. Man's life becomes more difficult when they look at people who have more, if it is looked at people who possess less or nothing, then the life will be easy and happy. It is said that "a man complained about his old shoes until he saw a man who had no feet". The example of this world is like the water of the sea, and there is a man who is suffering from thirst, the more he drinks it, more he feels thirst until the water eliminates his life. Contentment means to be satisfied with what you already have.

It is a realization that I have much more than my needs. It also means the economic use of time and resources. Imam Ali (AS) said about contentment that ‘The root of self-restraint is contentment, and its fruit is fewer sorrows’ (Masalib al-Sa ul, p. 50)

There are many examples of contentment in the life of Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS); it is narrated that ‘‘Hazrat Fatima Zahra, the beloved daughter of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS), used to wear a dress made of camel hair, once the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) saw her daughter in that dress, tears welled in his eyes, then he told her, ‘‘O Fatima’’ ‘‘this world is nothing’’ endure the difficulties, poverty, and hardship of this world with patience, so you will be rewarded with the comfort of Paradise on Hereafter’’ (Naraqi, 1984).

CONVICTION

It means to trust in Allah and his promises. Conviction is the very important quality of all Apostles of Allah. It is the desired characteristic of believers. It is against doubt. One of the major problems of today’s human beings is absence of conviction in their lives. People commit the wrong action due to lack of trust and conviction in Allah. Lack of conviction causes crimes. If we believe and have conviction in Hell, Paradise, accountability, and supremacy of Allah Almighty, then we should spend our lives in performing the best, desired and positive activities. Skepticism is one of the dilemmas of the modern era, and it leads to frustration, confusion, misunderstandings, dissatisfaction, disturbance, and atheism. An excellent conviction is the part of best faith, and the perfection of the intellect also lies in strong conviction (Rayshehri, 2010). The Holy Prophet (SAWS) said: ‘‘there is no worship without conviction’’ (Sadooq, 2012), it means one who wants to worship Allah, at first, he/she should have conviction in Allah. If he/she does not have conviction in Allah, then his or her worship is worthless. Worship is accepted after a strong belief in God, because the first and the basic condition of worship is, it should be for the sake of Allah.

THANKFULNESS

One of the noble traits of human beings is thankfulness. It is a desired characteristic of human beings that they should be thankful for the ones who have done kind acts for them. Every well-natured person will accept this reality. There are two types of thankfulness; thankfulness to Allah Almighty and thankfulness to His creatures. In many verses of the Holy Quran as well as in sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS), it has put great emphasis on thankfulness. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) says, “if a person has four qualities, then Allah will transform his evil deeds into good deeds, they are modesty, honesty, thankfulness and good character” (Al-Kafi, v,2). In the Holy Quran, Allah says, “If you are grateful, I would certainly give to you more, and if you are ungrateful, My chastisement is truly severe” (Quran; 14; 7).

Thankfulness is the most significant aspect of Islam. We should be thankful to Allah for His countless blessings that He has bestowed on us. Our lives, soul, body, breath, wealth, health, friends, family and all things are the blessings of Allah, therefore, we should thank Allah. Here, one question arises, that how do we thank Allah. There are quotations from the Holy Prophet (SAWS) that guide us how to thank Allah. We may thank Allah by praising verbally, doing right things, avoiding bad things, helping the needy ones, refraining from evil and Satanic activities, obeying His orders, following His Messengers, and practicing the Holy Quran. (Tahrani, 1980). It is our religious responsibility to be thankful to Allah. Allah has ordered in the Holy Quran, “Be grateful to Me” (Quran, 1; 152).

There are many benefits of gratitude to Allah; gratitude increases the blessings, develops a better relationship with Allah Almighty, brings prosperity in life, protects us from punishment, especially from the Hell, and helps in getting the pleasure of Allah. It is also a command of Allah that we should also thank human beings. As the Holy Prophet (SAWS) says, “One who has not thanked the creature has not thanked the Creator”. It is our religious duty to be thankful towards ones

who help us, who teach us, who uplift us, who guide us, who train us, who take care of us, who give us, who love us, and in brief who does any kind act towards us. So, we should be grateful to all people who have done kind and good things to us, because it is basically giving praise and repay the kindness. If we do not thank and pay gratitude to those who have done good things to us, then we have not thanked Allah also. As Imam Raza (AS) narrated from the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) ‘‘whoever does not thank the one who does a kind act toward him, has not thanked Allah either.’ (Sadooq, 1979).

PATIENCE

According to Islam, this world is an examination center, where everyone has to appear in examinations, and ones who succeed in the examination, will be rewarded and ones who fail will be punished in Doomsday. This world is full of sorrows, grieves, and upheavals, therefore, only those who have patience will win the situations. We observe that everyone has problems, there are ones who have children, but do not have wealth, some have wealth but not health, some have wealth and health but not have children, some people have all of them but have security problems, and some have all of them, but they have unlimited desires and ambitions that cannot be fulfilled in this world. In such kind of phenomena, patience is the only thing that may give satisfaction, joy, and peace. Patience is one of the very important topics in Islam. There are a lot of verses of the Holy Quran that highlight the importance of it. Allah Almighty commanded all His Apostles to be patients in difficult circumstances. In the Holy Quran, there are more than 30 verses that describe the importance of patience in Islam. Allah says, ‘‘O you who believe! Seek assistance through patience and prayer; surely Allah is with the patient’’ (Quran, 1; 153).

PATIENCE IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE;

- It is the part of faith.
- It is the best virtue.

- It is the key to success.
- It overcomes anxiety.
- It eases the life.
- It maintains human dignity.
- It is the sign of believers.
- It enhances intellect.
- It gives determination.
- It makes individuals nearer to their destination.
- It increases respect.
- It seeks the pleasure of Allah.
- And it leads towards Paradise, while impatience leads towards the Hell.
(Kulaini, 2010).

In the Arabic language, the word “Saber” is used to denote patience. The literary meaning of Sabr is to avoid, to stop and to prevent oneself, and it is defined as the ability of a person to refrain, detain and to stop from panicking, and despairing in order to seek willingness of Allah (Johari, 1996). According to Ibne Qiyam (1997), Saber means to avoid and abstain from doing illegal and unlawful things and to do right and lawful things for the sake of Allah. Imam Ali (AS) defined patience, “it is that a man bears whatever afflicts him and swallows his anger (Rayshahri, 2012).

According to Islamic teachings, there are two types of patience; patience in tough and difficult situations, and patience in joyful moments. A person who keeps himself balanced in those situations is called a patient. Generally, patience is assumed to be balanced in difficult circumstances, whereas, we need patience in both conditions. So, it can be concluded that patience is a very important moral characteristic, which is needed in every moment of life. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) said, “Sabr” (the patience) is illumination” (Muslim, 2004).

CLEMENCY

Clemency means in the Arabic language “الجلم”. The literary meaning of Hilm is endurance and restraint. This word has been repeated 15 times in the Holy Quran. Islam gives tremendous importance to clemency. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) was an ideal example of clemency. We see a lot of historical events about clemency in his practical life. At the beginning of Islam, there was a person; whose name was Abdullah Ibn Az-Zubaari and he consistently used to hurt and satirize the Holy Prophet (SAWS). He was an atheist until the Conquest of Makkah. When the Muslims under the leadership of the Holy Prophet conquered Macca, and he came to the Holy Prophet (SAWS) and apologized. The Holy Prophet (SAWS) forgave him. The Holy Prophet (SAWS) was so clement that he forgave the killer (Wahshi) of his respected uncle Hamza (AS). There are many more historical events of the clemency of the Holy Prophet (SAWS). Hazrat Aisha (the mother of the believers) narrated that once a lady brought her child to the Holy Prophet (SAWS) and the child proceeded to urinate in the lap of Holy Prophet (SAWS) and when the lady saw this, she was shocked and tried to stop the urine. The Holy Prophet (SAWS) did not stop the child and let him urinate. He (SAWS) calmly called for water, poured it on the cloth and cleaned it (Bukhari, 2004). Imam Baqir (AS) narrated from the Holy Prophet (SAWS) that “religion is affection and affection is religion” (Rayshahri, 2012).

Clemency means to control anger, and forgive ones who committed mistake. Allah loves those who forgive the people. Society without clemency and forgiveness cannot survive.

The opposite characteristic of clemency is anger. Anger results destruction, killing, beating, mocking, obscenity, and evildoings. It is said that anger is the door to all evils. Imam Ali (AS) said, “Anger is a stroke of madness, for the angry, later on, feels sorry. If he does not, his madness then is inclusive” (Razi, 2005). Anger is a negative aspect of human life, and there may be different reasons, such as

mental stress, physical disorder, a feeling of inferiority, and selfishness. Anger damages the image of persons, and sometimes it harms mutual relationships between relatives, communities, nations, and countries. It causes to shed blood of innocent people and arise wars. Anger and revenge are the signs of madness. In common situations, anger is a negative characteristic, but in particular circumstances, it is an important instinct that inspires the people to stand up against the tyrants, oppressors, traitors, corrupts, and wrongdoers. It infuses the spirit of sacrifice for the protection of country, nation, and dignity.

So, clemency is a very significant moral trait that has many advantages in human life, it causes to increase Allah's bestowals to the clement, it increases intellect, it arranges the affairs of the clement, it produces great resolution, it enhances the chances of victory over enemy, it increases the numbers of friends, it makes the society stable, it creates a peaceful environment, it decreases misunderstanding, and hates, it causes to get pleasure of Allah, and it is the sign of humanity.

LIBERALITY/GENEROSITY

One of the noble traits of human beings is liberality, and every wise man should struggle to attain this virtue. It means willingness in giving away what you own for the sake of Allah. It may be wealth, talent, time, knowledge, guidance, and energy. Every religion suggests its followers to be generous. In a human society, people of different social status live together, some people have wealth, some have knowledge and experiences, some have energy and power, some have a strong family background, and some have nothing. If they contribute what they have in making the society stable and prosperous then the society becomes a paradise.

Islam stresses on its followers to help the poor and needy people, to share their knowledge and experiences with ignorant people, and to spend what you possess in order to fulfill others' needs. In Islamic history, there are many examples of generosity. Umme Salamah (The mother of believers) narrated, once the Holy

Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) came home and he was seemed worried. She asked the Holy Prophet about his worry. He (SAWS) replied that I had received seven dinars, and until now I had not distributed among the needy and deserving people. He (SAWS) did not sleep until they were distributed among the needy people.

Islam suggests being balanced in spending wealth and energy. Squandering is a negative trait of human beings. It is forbidden in Islam. Quran says, “Squanderers are the brothers of Satan” (Quran, 17: 27). Squandering leads towards disrespect, and upheaval in society. Both the misers and squanders are undesired in Islam. All mankind can be divided into three categories; the first category comprises the waste consumers or squanders, who spend more than their needs, the second category is of the misers, who have wealth and energy, but they neither spend money for their own sake, nor for others, the third category includes the generous ones, who spend wealth for their own sake as far as help other people. According to the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, squandering is the bane of liberality.

THE BENEFITS OF LIBERALITY ARE:

- Liberality is the noble trait of the Holy Prophets.
- It presents the righteousness of the persons.
- It makes the generous ones nearer to Allah.
- It is the sign of intellect.
- It cultivates love.
- It adorns ones’ character.
- It is a cornerstone of belief.
- It is an essential quality of believers.
- It is the best way to thank Allah’s blessings.
- It increases sustenance, and lifespans.
- It melts away the sins and mistakes
- It eliminates poverty and brings prosperity (Sadooq, 1979)

There are many moral values that are also important in Islam. Such as; excellent characters, courage, self-respect, and respect for others, honesty, humbleness, giving charity, meeting people with cheerful face, leniency, magnanimity, self-sacrifice, and forgiveness.

Once, a person came to Imam al-Sadiq (AS) (The great teacher of Imam Abu Hanifa (ra)) and asked Imam about the moral virtues. He (AS) replied, the noblest virtues are; to forgive one who has oppressed you, to establish and repair relationships with one who has broken ties, to give the one who has deprived you and to speak the truth in all circumstances, even it harms you and it is against yourself” (Sadooq,1979).

SUMMARY

Islam is a perfect code of life and it has the capacity to meet the needs of all times and all human beings. It is the religion that is for all mankind, and it is not specified to any race, generation, tribe, nation, and country. Islam teaches peace, love, brotherhood, respect, tolerance, conviction, clemency, forgiveness, responsibility, honesty, truthfulness, humbleness, cooperation, religious harmony, cheerfulness, empathy, sympathy, generosity, charity, worship, obedience, unity, faith, prayers, good manners, cleanliness, patience, courage, struggle, sincerity, repentance ,reconciliation, leniency, righteousness, hope, freedom, good character, conciseness, trustworthiness, loyalty, modesty, compassion, thankfulness, hospitality, infallibility, justice, self-sacrifice , service, equity, and kindness. These are the noble moral values that are desired in Islam. It is the religious obligatory upon every Muslim to follow the religion as it is described by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAWS). Unfortunately, the glorious teachings of Islam were presented by extremists and terrorists in dreadful and horrible manner to the world.

There are some undesired characteristics that Islam orders its followers to avoid them. They are listed here; backbiting, disrespect, hypocrisy, tyranny, humiliating, corruption, covetousness, cowardice, delusion, differences, disgrace,

dispute, enmity without any reason, extremism, terrorism, falsehood, fame, foolishness, adultery, fornication, greed, hoarding, insulting, jealousy, miserliness, negligence, obscene language, prejudice, predestination, pride, magnify, defamation, resentment, scorn, self-admiration, showing off, slander, squandering, usurpation and wretchedness.

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