

## **Communication via Explanation Approach For Female Students: A Study on Rasulullah's SAW. Practices with Special Reference to the Selected Hadiths in Sahih Al-Bukhari**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Communication is a bridge in a relationship (Asiah & Irkhaniza, 2015). A good communication is highly needed in order to ensure that a message can be conveyed with clarity. In the education context, a good communication between a teacher and students will generally influence students' understanding. Effective communication by teachers will result in students becoming more focused and more interested in what they are going to learn (Nurul Asiah Fasehah, 2015; Nik Rusila Nik Yaacob, 2007; Zalmiza Zakariya, 2004). In the realm of the educational context which involves many female students, the pattern of communication used by a teacher should take this factor into account (Nurhanani Husin 2015). Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to identify the communication approach that is suitable to female students especially in the context of explaining and clarifying by analysing the communication approach of Rasulullah SAW. with his companions as narrated in Hadiths in Sahih Bukhari. This study employed the qualitative approach using content analysis design. Nine hadiths that contain Rasulullah's SAW. communication with 5 of his kibar companions were contextually analysed in order to extract the themes of communication of Rasulullah SAW. with his companions that are relevant to the current educational context. Several communication approaches that are used in explaining and clarifying had been identified such as direct explanation, providing an analogy in question form, telling in a story form, bringing the audience's context closer to the story, conveying the intention, detailed explanation, step by step and in stages. This study has implications on classroom instruction particularly Muslim teachers in facing the higher number of female students in today's classrooms composition using Rasulullah's SAW. communication with his companions during his time. The use of such approach is suitable considering Rasulullah SAW. as an exemplary figure of all times.

**Keywords:** *Islamic education, Rasulullah SAW communication approach, communication with female students in teaching*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Rasulullah SAW. is an exemplary figure of all times. Each personality that Rasulullah SAW. demonstrated was a supreme disposition that it earns recognition in the Quran (Al-Quran, 60:6). Although he has left us, his Hadiths are well recorded and contain vast array of knowledge that can be used to solve various problems. This is especially so in the context of education because every message conveyed by Rasulullah SAW. during his lifetime was for the purpose to educate his ummah (Abu Ghuddah, 2001; Razali Saaran, 2010& Said Hawa, 1990). This is as such because the need to acquire knowledge is a general requirement for all Muslims regardless of ethnicity and gender.

In this regard, Islam upholds women's status and does not discriminate them in educational affairs. Women's significant responsibilities and roles in educating the Muslim generations require them to equip themselves with strong *fardhu ain* knowledge and solid *fardhu kifayah* knowledge. This need is due to educating woman is synonymous with educating the whole nation (Leah Witcher Jackson, 2009). According to Al-Ghazali (1997), only with knowledge that man can build his Muslim identity which generates his roles as the servant of Allah and as the ruler of the earth that consequently produces the *Muttaqin* traits in his life.

There are many examples mentioned in the Quran regarding producing exemplary mothers who will give birth to outstanding children. One of the examples is when Allah narrates the story of Maryam to Rasulullah SAW. in the Quran, of how Allah had chosen her guardian amongst the prophets who nurtured her in terms of knowledge (intellectual) and worshipping (spiritual) as a process of preparing her to be the mother of Prophet Isa a.s. (Al-Quran, 4:35-37). This story suggests the degree of the importance of knowledge amongst women as educators of the Muslim generation. Hence, Rasulullah SAW treated women really well during his lifetime. Such a treatment to women was for the purpose to educate and prepare them as educators to their children. The unique creation of women together with their gentle personality requires educational and communication approaches that are suitable to their natural traits. The purpose is for the educational message to be received in alignment with its intended aim and meaning.

In facing the expanding world, people become more materialistic (Mohd Sani Badron, 2014; Mohd Zaidi, 2014). Highly challenging situation is causing people to be less sensitive in the aspect of emotion and humanity (Syed taufiq Al-Attas, 2016). At the same time, a woman with her soft nature requires sensitivity in order to enable them to function optimally. This especially in the aspect of education in which an integral human being needs an approach that is also integral in nature in order to fulfil the fundamental of his creation (Nurul Asiah Fasehah, 2015; Zetty Nurzuliana Rashed, 2016). Such needs are particularly so in this era of which the composition of woman is more than man (Bernama, 2017). At the education institutional level, the statistics shows that female students are more than male students from the primary school level until the university level (Bernama, 2017). Such statistics shows that the roles of teachers are becoming more critical because they are not only the individuals who deliver the syllabus in the classrooms, but also they should function as a *murabbi* who are able to identify and take into account individual differences including gender difference amongst students in order to ensure that every student is able to understand the knowledge they deliver (Noornajihan Ja'afar, 2015; Ab. Halim Tamuri 2006).

Therefore, the current study attempted to examine the approaches used by Rasulullah SAW. as a supreme example in approaching women, particularly in the context of education. This study explored the Prophet's SAW. Hadiths that contains the interactions with his companions in order to extract themes from Rasulullah's SAW. communication approach to be applied in today's context in order to assist Muslim teachers in educating female students, particularly in the context of explaining and clarifying.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The purpose of this study was to explore the verbal communication approach in giving explanation to female students using Rasulullah's SAW. communication approach with his female companions extracted from Hadiths in Sahih Bukhari.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed qualitative approach using the content analysis design (A. Strauss & J. Corbin, 1998). The study was initiated by identifying the names of five kibar companions based on library research and expert validation. Data collection involved open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Creswell 2005).

Next, all Hadiths that contain the interactions between Rasulullah SAW. with the female companions were selected and analysed using 5W 1H contextual analysis (Mukhlis Mukhtar, 2015; Faisal Ahmad Shah, 2011; al-Khayr Abadi, 2009). The term 5W 1H means what, who, when, why, where and how. After that, the themes from Rasulullah's SAW. communication approach with the companions in the form of clarification were extracted and matched with today's educational context.

## **FINDINGS**

After each Hadith had been analysed contextually, Rasulullah's SAW. verbal communication approach in giving explanation and clarification to his companions reflected several forms of explanation acquired from the questions from the companions to Rasulullah SAW. and the Prophet's SAW. direct explanation to the companions without the companions asking any question. The term verbal communication in this study refers to a process of which a speaker interacts verbally with a listener with the intention to influence the listener's behaviour (Arni Muhammad, 2009). The themes for the communication approach in explaining were as follows.

### **Giving clarification based on a question**

This approach is used in several forms. For example, clarifying an issue directly such as the issue raised by Ummu Sulaim regarding the mandatory shower for women who have wet dreams. Rasulullah SAW. answered directly and explicitly without using any analogy in which the Prophet SAW. said, "Yes, if she saw liquid." (Sahih Bukhari, no: 127).

A similar approach was used by Rasulullah SAW. when a woman asked him about menstruation: "O Rasulullah, what is your opinion when there is a blood stain on the clothes of a woman amongst us. What should be done?" Rasulullah SAW. answered: "If any of you has menstruation blood stains on her clothes, then she should clean the blood on the clothes and then sprinkle water on the stains, and after that she can perform solah in the clothes" (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no: 307). Apart from this Hadith, in the following Hadith narrated by Asma' regarding maintaining silaturrahim (good ties) with a non-Muslim mother (Al-Bukhari, Hadith no: 2620), Rasulullah SAW. used the same direct explanation approach accompanied by a clarification to the issue as reflected in his answer: "Yes, maintain your silaturrahim with her" (Al-Bukhari, no.hadis: 2620).

In a different Hadith, Rasulullah SAW also provided a direct explanation to the companions who asked about istihadhah (menstrual-like bleeding due to sickness) in which the Prophet SAW. explained the reasons why women are not allowed to skip solah (prayers) due to this type of bleeding and he differentiated between normal menstruation (haid) and istihadhah to clarify the ambiguities as in the following narration: From 'Aishah who narrated the narration of Fatimah" Fatimah binti Abu Hubaiys came to see the Prophet and said, " O Rasulullah, I am a woman whi is having istihadhah that makes me unclean. Can I not perform

solah?" (Al-Bukhari, Hadith no: 325). This issue is similar in the case of Hindun who asked Rasulullah SAW. if it was sinful for her to take part of her husband's property for the purpose of feeding her family. Rasulullah SAW. answered: "It is not sinful if you feed them in a rightful way (Al-Bukhari, Hadith no: 2460).

The conclusion that can be made regarding Rasulullah's SAW. approach in providing explanation to the woman's question could be inferred as Rasulullah SAW. providing explanation based on a question. The majority of questions posted to the Prophet were related to the Islamic Fiqh rulings in which Rasulullah SAW. provided the answers in a direct manner to the companions who asked the questions. The Prophet SAW. provided the answers in two forms, which are providing the method of what should be done and providing the rationales of why something can or cannot be done. The following table demonstrates the two forms:

Table 1: Verbal communication that provides direct explanation in response to a question

Contexts	Content	Approach	Form of Explanation
Dare to voice Islamic ruling of Fiqh-related questions	Matters related to Islamic ruling of Fiqh	Answering the question in a direct manner. Then, providing clarification	Explaining how to do it
			Clarifying why it can or cannot be done

Apart from that, the Prophet SAW. also explained using an analogy in the form of question as in the same Hadith when he was asked by Ummu Salamah whether women produce semen. This question was a follow-up from Rasulullah's SAW. explanation of the question previously asked by Ummu Sulaim. Rasulullah SAW. answered in a very firm manner and ended his explanation with an analogy in a question form. The Prophet SAW. said, "Yes. Curse be on you. (If not) Where does a resemblance of a child come from?" (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no: 127). The use of the word "curse" in is not meant as a bad wish. Rather it is a word commonly used by the Arabs in giving a reprimand (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no: 127). Rasulullah SAW. used such word as a reflection to the reaction of Ummu Salamah when she heard the question from Ummu Sulaim, which she considered as degrading women in front of Rasulullah SAW. (Musnad Ahmad, Hadith no: 25869). Therefore, Rasulullah SAW. used such approach so that Ummu Salamah would not feel that it was wrong for her to ask such a question and that one should not feel embarrassed in seeking knowledge, particularly knowledge that is related to Islamic Fiqh rulings. Hence, Rasulullah SAW. used an analogy in the form of question at the end of his explanation so that Ummu Salamah could think of the answer to her question after the Prophet had given his explanation.

The approach used by Rasulullah SAW. was highly suitable to the context of women in asking questions. The table below exhibits communication approach, which Rasulullah SAW. used with regards to the context and content of this Hadith.

Table 2: Verbal communication for giving explanation using an analogy in the form of question

Context	Content	Approach
Shy and highly concern about women's dignity	The fiqh ruling of performing the mandatory shower when semen is ejaculated	-Encouraging and giving explanation that asking questions for the purpose of knowledge seeking is something that should be done -Providing an analogy in the form of question after giving an explanation.

Rasulullah SAW. t also answered questions from the women by giving explanation using the storytelling approach, explaining and supplication. As in the Hadith narrated by Anas bin Malik, Ummu Haram said: I asked: "What made you laugh O Rasulullah". He answered: "There are people from my followers shown to me as a troop of war in the path of Allah in which they sail through the ocean as kings on a throne or like kings on the throne". Ummu Haram said; I said "O Rasulullah, pray that Allah will make me one of them". So Rasulullah shallallahu 'alaihi wasallam prayed for her. Then he put down his head (fell asleep) and woke up while laughing. Ummu Haram asked; I asked: "What makes you laugh O Rasulullah". He answered: "There are people from my followers shown to me as a war troop in the path of Allah". Similar to his earlier speech. Ummu Haram said; I said: "O Rasulullah, pray to Allah that He will make me one of them". He said: "You will be amongst the first ones". So Ummu Haram sailed through the ocean during the time of Mu'awiyah bin Abi Sufan. After she had sailed through the ocean, she was thrown by the animal she rode on until she was defeated (Al-Bukhari, Hadith no: 2788).

The approach that Rasulullah SAW. used when interacting with Ummu Haram is giving explanation on what Ummu haram would like to know that is the reason why Rasulullah SAW. laughed. The Prophet SAW. responded to and unleashed Ummu Haram's curiosity by telling her the reason of his behaviour (laughing) explicitly and in detail. Not only that, Rasulullah SAW. was also very sensitive towards Ummu Haram's feeling and did not refuse his request for the Prophet to pray for her to be part of the group narrated by the Prophet SAW. The sensitivity of Rasulullah SAW. can also be traced when he still answered Ummu Haram's questions even though it was the second time he asked. Rasulullah SAW. also explained the position of Ummu Haram in his dream when he said: "You will be amongst the first ones" (Al-Bukhari, Hadith no: 2788). The clarification of Rasulullah's SAW. approach is shown in the following table:

Table 3: Verbal communication for providing clarification in the form of storytelling, prayer and explanation

Context	Content	Approach
Providing explanation to a question	dream	-telling what is wished for in detail explicitly -making a wish (prayer) , -showing sensitivity -connecting the audience's context with the story -providing explanation

### Providing explanation without being asked

Next, Rasulullah SAW. also provided an explanation without a preceding question in which his explanation was very detailed, step by step and at the level as in the Hadith narrated by Ummu 'Athiyah r. a. who was an Ansar woman: Rasulullah SAW came to see us when his daughter passed away and he said: "Bathe her with water that is mixed with the nabk leaves three times, five times, or more than that if you think appropriate and make the last one mixed with camphor or alike. And when you are done let me know." When we had finished, we informed the Prophet. Then the Prophet handed us a cloth and said: "Put this on her." Meaning the Prophet's clothe (Al-Bukhari, Hadith no: 1253). The following table explain the Hadith:

Table 4: Verbal communication for giving clarification in the form of explanation without a preceding question

Context	Content	Approach
Giving explanation	Procedure for mandatory shower	-Detailed explanation -Step by step -Stages

In conclusion, verbal communication in the form of clarification demonstrated by Rasulullah SAW. in various approaches; explicit and direct approach, providing an analogy in the form of question, explanation in story form, connecting the audience's context with the story, fulfilling wishes, providing detailed explanation, step by step and in stages. All these approaches are based on individual's context and the purpose of the explanation.

## DISCUSSION

Women have gentle dispositions and subtle emotions. Therefore, women need to be guided in such a way that suits their traits and nature. This was narrated by Rasulullah SAW. in his following Hadith:

*"Whoever believes in Allah and the hereafter, do not trouble his neighbours, and be kind to women. Because they are created from the rib, and the part of the rib that is most bent is the top. If you straighten it, you break and if you let it be, it remains bent. Therefore, be gentle to women"*

*(HR. Bukhari and Muslim)*

This Hadith clearly explains that the way to educate women must be by the right approach that meets their needs (Abul Kalam Azad, 2015). In today's educational context which is dominated by women, it requires teachers to be more sensitive with the kind of approach that is suitable to female students. This is to enable students to understand what they learn as well as the purpose of education. The approach demonstrated by Rasulullah SAW. clearly indicates how to communicate with females.

One of the approaches that can be observed from the Prophet's SAW. Hadiths is the method to give explanation to women in the context to educate them. The approach used by Rasulullah SAW. in giving explanation is reflected in the way Rasulullah SAW. answered questions by women. There are three different interesting ways that can be practiced by teachers. The first approach is when Rasulullah SAW. answered the questions posted to him by providing the answer with a direct explanation. For the second answer to an almost similar question, but asked by a different person, Rasulullah SAW. provided the answer in an abstract form that requires thinking by giving an analogy in the form of question. As a matter of fact, the approach used by Rasulullah SAW. during his time shows that he took women's emotion into account. The two women had different emotions when they asked the question. The first woman was more calm and inquisitive when she asked the question related to women. On the other hand, the second woman asked the question in shyness because in her perception, the question she asked degraded her as a woman in front of the Prophet SAW. (Al-Bukahari, Hadith no: 127). Thus, the approaches used by Rasulullah SAW. were different according to the need and emotion of the women who asked the questions.

The approach that Rasulullah SAW. used with Ummu Sulaim is more in a professional manner when he directly answered the woman's question followed by the explanation on how

and why in relation to the question. This is in alignment with the situation of the woman narrated in the Hadith mentioned earlier on regarding women's creation from men's ribs and that they need to be guided mentally and emotionally (Al-Bukhari and Muslim). However, Rasulullah SAW. used a slightly different approach for the Ummu Salamah because this woman's emotion was rather sensitive and she needed guidance that she did not have to be shy to ask questions in the context of knowledge and clarification seeking, particularly related to the ruling of Islamic Fiqh. Nonetheless, Rasulullah SAW. still took her emotion into account by giving the answer to her question in an abstract form so that she could think of what was intended by the Prophet SAW.

In today's world educational context, students' ideas, questions and emotions should be taken into account, particularly female students because the confusion in knowledge faced by students in their daily life leads them to so many questions (Nurul Asiah Fasehah, 2015; Zetty Nurzuliana Rashed, 2016; Mahfuzah Mohd Zabidi, 2016). This is especially so considering that information is at one's fingertip and so easy to acquire. This shows the magnitude of teachers' roles in schools to help address the questions that students have. The questions that students have become more complicated, particularly when they are related to issues and matters concerning religion. Such issues and matters are of great importance to be addressed. Current phenomena involving female students are alarming. Various social ill cases such as running away from home following male acquaintances, smoking problem, prohibited sexual relationships and alike (Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye, 2012) show how these female youngsters are easily influenced and as such they need more serious attention from parents and teachers. This situation indicates how important it is to pay heed by using a suitable communication approach with female children to enable them to share their curiosity and problems.

Therefore, in facing with issues concerning female students, teachers should pay attention to the content and the manner the question is asked. Should the teacher taps the seriousness of the student to know the answer to his or her question and the question asked is clear and explicit in nature, then the teacher should provide the answer in the same nature as the question accompanied by clarification using keywords in the form of how and why depending on the question. However, if the question from the student is unclear or indirect, teachers should still provide a clear answer, however, teachers should use an analogy that can be understood well in their explanation. Teachers who are sensitive to their students will understand students' emotion based on their body language as well as the nature of the questions (Ab. Halim Tamuri et al., 2006).

Other than giving explanation directly and in an abstract form, Rasulullah SAW. also provided explanation in a detailed story form, a manner that shows how serious and sensitive Rasulullah SAW. in the questions posted to him. In this context, Ummu Haram only asked "Why you are laughing O Rasulullah?" Rasulullah did not only take the question seriously, but also he explained in detail to Ummu Haram the reasons for him laughing. The purpose of Ummu Haram asking was because she was concerned and sensitive towards the reaction shown by Rasulullah SAW. On the other hand, Rasulullah SAW. took into account Ummu Haram's emotion when she asked the question and thus, Rasulullah SAW. placed the importance in answering the question fully. This situation is in alignment with the general theory of communication for women in the context of maintaining a good relationship, gaining trust and unity (Troemel-Ploetz, 1991; Furumo, 2009 Kimberly Furumo, Mark Buxton, Emmeline de Pillis, Kerrilynn Higa, Hannah Furumo., 2014).

Rasulullah SAW. also showed his sensitivity and appreciation towards Ummu Haram (Mohammad Ali Qutb, 2009) by fulfilling her wish to pray for her so that she could be part of the people whom Rasulullah SAW. saw in his dream. Fundamentally, Rasulullah's SAW action in the case of Ummu Haram, was to connect the content of his dream with the context of his audience to the point that his audience became more interested in knowing the following content of his dream. Such increasing interest can be traced in the follow up question by Ummu Haram when Rasulullah SAW. woke up from sleep once again in the state of laughing. She asked in full interest and once again she asked Rasulullah SAW. to pray for her so that she could be part of the people whom Rasulullah SAW. saw in his dream. Rasulullah SAW. did not leave Ummu Haram in uncertainty regarding her hope, Instead, Rasulullah SAW. explained her position in his dream.

The context and approach shown by Rasulullah SAW. in this Hadith is highly suitable to be practiced in our modern educational context. For female students, attention should be directed to their emotion and inquisitive nature. Teachers' sensitivity towards students' questions will contribute to students' increasing attention in following the teacher's explanation. The story telling approach is suitable to be used provided that it is delivered in detail and connected to their context. For example, if the students asked about the life of the companions of Rasulullah SAW., teachers must tell the story with full interest and detail and then connect the students' context with the content of the companions' lives by giving examples of which students can make connection with their context and in fact, teachers should even pray to Allah that the students will be able to emulate the companions' traits in alignment with their existing traits within the context of the companions' story.

Finally, in giving explanation and clarification in the classroom, female students need to be given a detailed guidance, step by step and in stages. Therefore, when giving explanation and clarification to female students, the explanation must be in a detailed manner, step by step and in stages. This is as such because according to Rasulullah SAW., women are less superior in her thinking and religiosity (Al-Bukhari & Muslim). They are less superior in terms of thinking because their memory is weaker while they are less superior in religiosity because of their menstruation and postpartum lochia, which cause them to miss prayers and fasting of which the prayers that they miss during menstruation and lochia period are not required to be made up (Ibnu Hajar, 2010).

This situation is in alignment with the findings shown in the context of Rasulullah's SAW. Hadiths that reflect how Rasulullah SAW. giving clarification in a detailed manner to the companions regarding how to bathe the deads by giving explanation step by step and in stages. After the first level had been completed, Rasulullah SAW. provided an explanation for what should be done in the next step.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the communication approach shown by Rasulullah SAW is indefinitely relevant regardless of time. Although the audience is different, the approach used is crucial to be practiced in alignment with today's needs. In the context of educating female students, the aspect that must be given careful attention is emotion. Therefore, to give explanation and clarification of a certain subject, the emphasis should be on their emotion while they ask the question. Should this factor not taken into account, female students might be shied away to participate in the teaching and learning process and might feel left out by the teacher. These



situations might cause the respective student to have difficulty in understanding the lesson. On the contrary, if these aspects are given attention, students would be able to follow the lesson easily and would be able to grasp the content of the lesson more effectively without any emotional disturbance. In giving explanation, teachers should make effort in giving a detailed explanation, step by step and in stages. This will help the female students in following the teaching and learning process more effectively.

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