

Islamic Legislation for Creativity and an Analysis of the Era of the Prophet (Pbuh) In The Light Of Creativity

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ABSTRACT

In this study the researchers tackle the subject of creativity from the Islamic viewpoint. Creativity is the Islamically legitimate and purposeful work which produces authentic and unprecedented results. Its aim should be targeted towards the fulfillment of the ultimate purpose for our existence; the comprehensive worship of Allah (swt). This is by virtue of His subjection of everything in the Heavens and Earth for the use of the human being in order for man to establish himself as its shepherd. Thus, Islam encourages man to seek that with benefits him in both religious and worldly matters.

The principal source of creativity and creative success for our species is Allah (swt) and this is absolute. Notwithstanding The Creator is the one who bestows His Bounty upon us, including our mental abilities, we do not fail to recognise the role of the environment and individual effort and application of such mental acumen in our successes and in the advancement of all aspects of life; this not being exclusive to creativity.

This study shows the environment for creative excellence that the Prophet (pbuh.) prepared for those surrounding him which as consequence stimulated creativity. He (pbuh.) encouraged, praised and accepted ideas of creative brilliance and gave opportunities for the expression of creativity in pursuit of solutions to the problems facing the Muslims at his time and in order to develop the creative thinking skills of his Companions (ra.)

Thus, the researchers extend their invitations to those who research the history of creativity to seriously study the biography of the Messenger (pbuh.) and to discontinue ignoring it in their research in order to derive from it the optimal spirit of creativity. Furthermore the researchers would like to invite the students of Islamic knowledge to pay close attention to creativity in their studies in order to revive the finest methods of Da'wah; employing it with wisdom and pleasant approach with firm adherence to the principles of Islam.

Keywords: Islamic Legislation, the Era of the Prophet, Creativity.

INTRODUCTION

Praise be to Allah, the Originator of the Heavens and Earth and may His peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). As Allah's entrusted shepherds of the Earth it is paramount that we ought to be creative; how else if not by being creative did man establish the many civilizations that have populated our world? Creativity is one of many approaches of utilising the abundance of resources Allah has subjected for our use in the Heavens and Earth. Al-'Īsawī said, "Thus creativity will engender man to exploit his natural

disposition for his own benefit."⁽¹⁾

Through study of the biography of the Messenger (pbuh), it is clear that he prepared a creative environment for those around him by encouraging creative thinking whilst using educational methods of varying degree. This resulted in producing the best generation of humans history has ever seen, the Companions, who produced for humanity a nation of knowledge and a civilization of advanced thought. In this study, we will discuss:

1. The creative examples in the biography of the Apostle of Allah (PBUH)
2. The methods which the Prophet (PBUH) used in encouraging creative thinking

This study aims to demonstrate the Islamic legitimisation for creativity and to bring to light the role of the biography of the Messenger (PBUH) in shaping the

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contemporary Islamic creative personality, in order to allow said personalities freedom from reliance on external sources for creative inspiration.

The researchers would like to add that in their limited knowledge they have not come across a study by Muslim researchers which have demonstrated the role of the Messenger (PBUH) in the advancement of creativity. On the other hand, western researchers studying creativity have ignored this significant period (i.e. the period of the Prophet (PBUH)) and its contributions to creativity.

We have divided this paper into four sections:

Section one: The Islamic perspective of creativity

- I. *The definition of creativity and creative thinking*
- II. *Criteria of creativity and its fields*
- III. *The main skills of creative thinking*
- IV. *Islamic legislation for creativity*
- V. *Islamic regulation of creativity*
- VI. *Sources of creativity*
- VII. *Areas of application of creativity in the Sharī'a*
- VIII. *The purpose and objectives of creativity*

Section two: Paradigms of creativity from the life of the Messenger (pbuh.)

Section three: The role of the Apostle of Allah (pbuh.) in the development of the skills of creative thinking

Section four: The Prophet's methods in stimulating creative thinking

Section one: The Islamic perspective of creativity

I. The definition of creativity and creative thinking

Creativity or, *Al-ibdā*, from the arabic viewpoint, stems from the word *bada'a*, which refers to the act of pioneering something new; producing something which nobody previously has created.⁽²⁾ *Al-ibdā* furthermore originates from the verb *abda'a* which means to create or invent, thus the Qur'ān uses *badī'* to describe Allah as the originator of the Heavens and Earth.⁽³⁾

There are many definitions of creativity and we consider the most significant to be that of Purs (1960) and Wallace (1985). Purs (1960) defined creativity as the embodiment of an individual's ability to use unconventional methods in achieving results with an exhibition of the characteristics of authenticity and innovation.⁽⁴⁾ Wallace (1985), defined creativity as work producing results not previously known or produced before.⁽⁵⁾

As for creative thought, it can be defined as composite mental activity targeted with a strong desire

towards solving problems, or to create authentic products not previously known to exist. Creative thinking can be further explained as a complex comprehension, because it combines elements of cognition, emotion and morality; constituting in a unique state of mind. This is also called, 'productive thinking', 'remote thinking', and 'lateral thinking'.⁽⁶⁾

According to Torrance (1963), creativity is "the process of sensing problems or gaps in information, forming ideas of hypotheses, testing, modifying these hypotheses and communicating the results. This process may lead to any one of many kinds of products—verbal and nonverbal, concrete and abstract".⁽⁷⁾

II. Specifications of creativity and its areas of use.

According to Cropley (2001), the most important criteria for a creative production are as follows:

1. **Novelty**, something unconventional which, before production, was not known.

2. **Effectiveness**, the product, regardless of its kind, has substance or practicality - whether spiritual or materialistic.

Here Cropley demonstrates these standards, defining novelty as something which was not known before and indicating that effectiveness aids novelty in tackling specific problems.⁽⁸⁾

There is a widespread misconception that creativity is only associated with technological inventions, but in reality creative thought can be found in all fields; ranging from the sciences to the arts, politics and even in the struggle for personal happiness.⁽⁹⁾

III. The main skills of creative thinking

There are four main skills of creative thinking:

1. **Cognitive Fluency**. This refers to the ability to fluidly produce a vast quantity of suitable ideas or solutions to problems in a much quicker time than that of a normal person. It further refers to the ability to generate a large number of alternative ideas or solutions when responding to a particular question and this skill in essence relates to the individual's recollection of information, concepts, experiences or facts in his or her construction of knowledge.⁽¹⁰⁾

2. **Intellectual Flexibility**. The creative individual has the innate ability to differentially categorise and transform a range of ideas, being able to perceive things through differing perspectives and openly manoeuvre from one perception or idea to another, otherwise known

as divergent thinking. In contrast, a person of lesser creative talent could be argued as one in a state of deadlock, confined mostly to one set of ideas; being a convergent thinker.⁽¹¹⁾

3. Ideational Originality. This regards those ideas or products relative to the problem at hand which are rare, distinguished, unique and either rarely conceived or never conceived before. Thus it could be argued that originality is synonymous with creativity itself.⁽¹²⁾

4. Sensitivity to problems. This pertains to the ability of an individual to identify either the problems or the potential improvements in objects, tools or social systems, which others may not notice. The creative individual is the quickest at realising this in surety and also quickest in acting a solution. In all cases, recognition of a problem is the first step towards discovering its solution.⁽¹³⁾

IV. Islamic legislation for creativity.

The following principles legislate creativity as Islamic.

The first principle: *Appointment of man as the Khalīfah (successive authority) on Earth.*

Allah says in the Holy Qur'ān, "**And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority..." (Al-Baqarah, 2:30)**

As Allah made humans the *Khalīfah* (successive authority) on Earth we are required to be creative in all aspects of life, in order to achieve establishment of civilizations on Earth through advancement of knowledge. Hence creativity is one of the prerequisites of *'Istikhlāf* (appointment as an authority), and creativity is one of the qualities of the human being that Allah the Almighty has made unique to him in order for him to perform the task of reconstructing the earth through a successive function.

The second principle: *Subjection of the universe for mankind's use.*

Allah says in the Holy Qur'ān, "**And He has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth - all from Him. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought.**" (Al-Jāthiyah, 45:13)

In being creative, man is fulfilling his purpose by exploiting that which Allah has subjected for his use; that which is in universe; whether in an intellectual, materialistic, scientific or aesthetic fashion. This is explained the aforementioned quote of Al-Īsawī, who said, "Thus creativity will engender man to exploit his natural disposition for his own benefit."⁽¹⁴⁾ If one simply considers the entirety of mankind's technology and invention it

becomes quite apparent how man has explicitly prospered from that which Allah has subjected for him and thus one can easily sympathise with such an understanding.

The third principle: *Fulfillment as a benefit to humanity*

The Prophet of Allah (pbuh.) said, "**cherish that which gives you benefit**".⁽¹⁵⁾ This is with regard to that which benefits one in this life and the hereafter. It is without doubt that creativity has benefited man throughout history and this benefit will not cease provided he continues to be creative.

V. Islamic regulation of creativity.

After seeing creativity being used for that which is forbidden in Islam, one may question how it can be legitimized from the perspective of the *Sharī'a*.

We can solve by regarding the creative process from the Islamic point of view; weighing it upon the scales of the *Sharī'a*. We can consider creativity to be permissible in Islam so long as it benefits humanity; nonetheless its objectives if incorrect can lead creativity to fall into the realm of proliferating that which is *Makrūh* (disliked) or *Ḥarām* (forbidden). So creativity needs to be regulated by the Islamic perspective.

Be that as it may, we do not wish to place obstacles before creativity however we do wish to standardize it in order for it to facilitate the actualization of the main purpose of man's creation; to worship Allah, his Creator.

These rules can be summarized as follows:

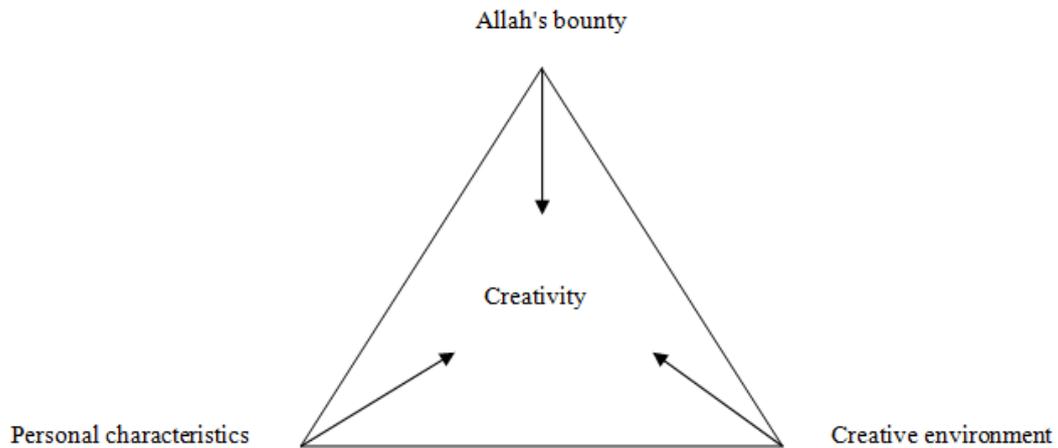
One. That one should not permit something which is *Ḥarām* (forbidden) or forbid something which is *Ḥalāl* (permitted).

Two. That there should only be *ibtidā'* (creativity); not *bid'ah* (heretical innovation). *Bid'ah* refers to any innovation in religious matters and though linguistically translates to "innovation" carries a negative connotation in Arabic; contrasting to that of the English term, which is usually seen in a positive light.

Three. That during the procurement of something creative one should be cognizant of Islamic ethics in performing research, defining aims and objectives and in the sources of information used; in the interest of making the origins of our work Islamically legitimate whilst being paradoxical to fraud, theft and deception.

Thus, if creativity in any field meets the above three precedents it can be considered as Islamically legitimate. This exactly complies with Wallace's definition of creativity (1985)⁽¹⁶⁾ if we include the addition of the word "legitimate".

We have summarized the above three points into a diagram:



VI. Sources of creativity.

There are certain factors that contribute to an individual's creativity.

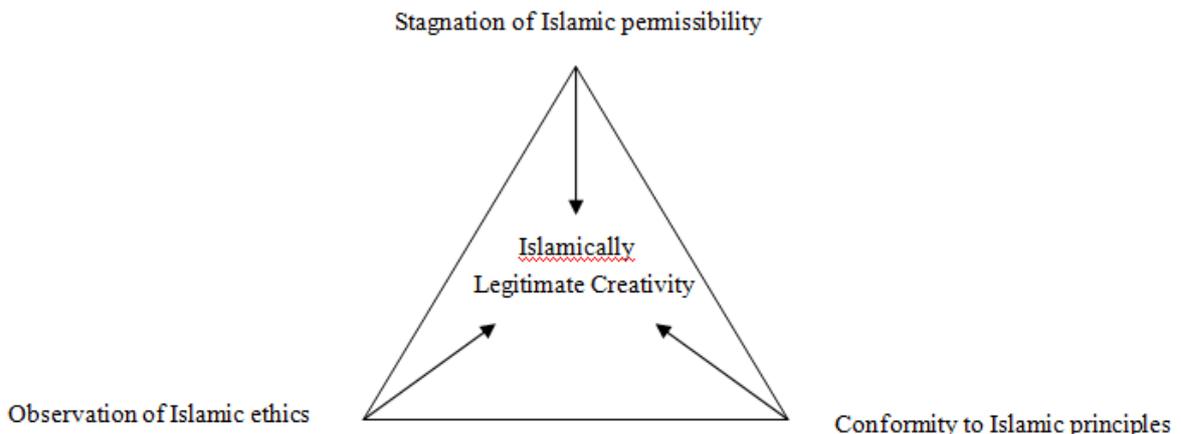
Allah's Bounty. The bestowal of the bounty of Allah is one of the most important contributions, since Allah gives inventive power to whomever He wishes and He can take away such bounties if He so wishes. However this does not mean that the creative person gives no physical contribution; rather his or her own assiduous efforts and diligent self-application entwine with the blessing of the Almighty and together form the roots of monumental work. This is contrary to Plato's hypothesis that creativity came from divine inspiration alone.⁽¹⁷⁾

Personal characteristics. The creative person has certain characteristics; the power of memory and focus, intelligence, initiative, motivation, confidence, daringness

are examples of such qualities and all of these will coalesce and contribute to the creative personality

A creative environment. The archetypal environment for creativity is one in which inventive endeavours are acknowledged, respected and favoured, where there exists positive attitudes and open-mindedness, with a collective ambition towards the revival of anything beneficial encompassing a rewarding atmosphere for creative excellence.⁽¹⁸⁾ Contrarily, the environment which is detrimental and deadly to the prosperity of the creative person and creativity itself is one which is negative with qualities opposite to the aforementioned.

The above three elements bring to a conclusion the Islamic theory of the formation of creativity and an interaction of all three points can be shown in the following diagram:



VII. Areas of application of creativity in the Shari'a

1. The techniques and avenues of *da'wah* (proselytism of Islam). With regard to modern thought on religion, new approaches to the advocacy of Islam are predominantly welcomed. An area of creativity that has the potential to satisfy the demand of the modern rationality, *da'wah* is in the main the promotion of virtue and the prevention of vice. It is both wonderful and impressive to see some extraordinarily imaginative preachers using creativity to enrich and bolster *da'wah* in a manner that is avant-garde; accomplishing a charismatic and profound impact on their recipients.

2. Islam's verdict on emerging contemporary issues

Life, in its dynamic nature, is ever-changing. As new developments come to light, there is always a high demand for the Islamic standpoint on any issue. It is the role of the scholars of jurisprudence to confront these issues and give the verdict of Islam in light of the Qur'an and Sunnah. *Ijtihad* (independent reasoning) itself encourages creativity and further stimulates creative thought.

3. Linkage of Islam and modern science

By virtue of perpetuating the presence of Islamic knowledge in modern society whether in the humanities or in the natural sciences, one must appropriate creativity to demonstrate the congruence and consistencies between these disciplines and Islam itself according to the Islamic cognitive theory.

VIII. The purpose and objectives of creativity

As aforementioned, creativity is one of the qualities Allah (swt). has made exclusive to the human being; making humanity distinct from the rest of His creation. Hence creativity itself is one approach to accomplishing the worship of Allah (swt). through total submission and obedience to Him and man should direct his creativity towards acquiring the pleasure of Allah; anything contradictory to this will backfire on him. Allah the Almighty indicates the purpose of our creation in the Holy Qur'an,

"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." (Adh-Dhāriyāt 51:56)

This purpose has substantially been disregarded by scholars of creativity in their theories, research and writings. We do not here refer solely to western scholars but also many Muslim scholars of creativity and Muslim

educationalists.

Not only has the single most important purpose of our existence been abandoned by said scholars, but there is also a chronic omission of the most significant, relevant and influential eras from the history of creativity; the Messenger's (pbuh.) lifetime, in conjunction with a recurring blind eye being turned to the achievements of a myriad of noteworthy creative Muslims of the past.

It is essential that this damaging negligence ceases to continue, or else there may be a detrimental affect on the sources of information for creativity. We therefore urge both Muslims and non-Muslims who are studying and teaching creativity to recognise and commemorate the aforementioned points that have been depreciated and to do them justice.

Section two: Paradigms of creativity from the life of the Messenger (pbuh.)

Through the criteria of creativity we have established in the previous section, we can identify a number of prominent paragons of creative excellence in the biography of the Prophet (pbuh.), whether through study of the Messenger (pbuh.) exercising creativity himself or his approvals of the creations of his noble Companions (may Allah be pleased with them). These archetypal models brought something new, being well ahead of their time, incorporating inventiveness into affecting solutions to a broad spectrum of problems. The following are some such examples:

1. Resolving an intensifying dispute between rival tribes

Prior to the his prophethood, the Prophet (pbuh) demonstrated significant creative merit in solving an angry dispute that was threatening to turn violent between the tribes of Quraysh who all wanted themselves to replace the sacred *Al-Hajr Al-Aswad (The Black Stone)* back in its designated area during the reconstruction of the Ka'bah.

Ibn Ishāq said, "The tribes of Quraysh collected stones to rebuild the House, each tribe collecting on their own. They started rebuilding it, until the rebuilding of the Ka'bah reached the point where the Black Stone was to be placed in its designated site. A dispute erupted between the various tribes of Quraysh, each seeking the honor of placing the Black Stone for their own tribe. The dispute almost led to violence between the leaders of

Quraysh in the area of the Sacred House. Banu `Abd Ad-Dar and Banū `Adi bin Ka`b bin Lu'ay, gave their mutual pledge to fight until death. However, five or four days later, Abu Umayyah bin Al-Mughirah bin `Abdullah bin `Amr bin Makhzum, the oldest man from Quraysh then intervened at the right moment. Abu Umayyah suggested that Quraysh should appoint the first man to enter the House from its entrance to be a mediator between them. They agreed.

The Messenger - Muhammad - was the first person to enter the House. When the various leaders of Quraysh realized who the first one was, they all proclaimed, 'This is Al-Amin (the Honest one). We all accept him; This is Muhammad.' When the Prophet reached the area where the leaders were gathering and they informed him about their dispute, he asked them to bring a garment and place it on the ground. He placed the Black Stone on it. He then requested that each of the leaders of Quraysh hold the garment from one side and all participate in lifting the Black Stone, moving it to its designated area. Next, the Prophet carried the Black Stone by himself and placed it in its designated position and built around it. The Quraysh used to call the Messenger of Allah `Al-Amin' even before the revelation came to him."⁽¹⁹⁾

Thus it is unequivocal in this honorable exploit of the Apostle of Allah (pbuh.) the outstanding creativity, initiative, resourcefulness and remarkable fairness with which he dealt with the dilemma before him; restoring calm and preventing the violence from escalating whilst gaining the satisfaction of each of the disputing tribes; giving not one but all of them the honour of replacing the sacred Black Stone.

2. Extraordinary and unique handling of the captives of war.

The battle of Badr took place between the Muslims and the Quraysh during the first year of *Hijrah* (migration from Makkah to Madīnah) resulting in the Muslims gaining victory and taking prisoner seventy men from the Quraysh. The common practice at that time in handling war captives was to either execute them, receive a ransom for their release or to set them free altogether. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh.) came up with a new alternative emancipation for those who otherwise could not pay the ransom and thus had no expiation for their capture; each prisoner could teach ten Muslim children how to read and write in exchange for their freedom.⁽²⁰⁾

Thus the Messenger (pbuh.) forged an ingenious

boon, excogitating two benefits from one action; firstly, substituting the exacting ransom for a less burdensome education, catering for those who would otherwise be unable to regain their freedom; and secondly, solving the problem of illiteracy within the Muslim community.

3. Authorisation of the Adhān (call to prayer)

It is related that Ibn 'Umar said, "When the Muslims arrived in Madīnah, they would gather and guess at the time of the prayer. There was no call for it. They discussed it one day and some of them said that they should adopt a bell like that of the Christians and others said that it should be a trumpet like the horn of the Jews. 'Umar said, 'Why don't you send a man to call to the prayer?' The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, 'Bilal, stand up and call to the prayer.'"⁽²¹⁾

In this exemplary case of conglomerate creativity in which the Companions (ra.) convened together to confer the issue of how the times for the assembly of prayer should be signalled, nominations of imitating the Ahl al-Kitāb (non-Muslim adherents to faiths which have a revealed scripture i.e. Christians and Jews) were immediately disliked.

In the search for a reasonable solution the idea of using the most natural and most beautiful instrument of all instruments; the human voice itself was instead proposed and this remarkable and inventive collective motion of creativity was given approval by the Prophet (pbuh.) himself; an atypical and prodigious feat whereby even the Jews at the time said; "O Muhammad, you have created something which was not known before."⁽²²⁾

4. Construction of the Minbar (Pulpit to deliver sermons)

Narrated by Jabir bin Abdullāh: An Ansari woman said to Allah's Apostle, "O Allah's Apostle! Shall I make something for you to sit on, as I have a slave who is a carpenter?" He replied, "If you wish." So, she got a pulpit made for him. When it was Friday the Prophet sat on that pulpit."⁽²³⁾

Narrated Abu Hazim: Some men came to Sahl bin Sad to ask him about the pulpit. He replied, "Allah's Apostle sent for a woman (Sahl named her) (this message): 'Order your slave carpenter to make pieces of wood (i.e. a pulpit) for me so that I may sit on it while addressing the people.' So, she ordered him to make it from the tamarisk of the forest. He brought it to her and she sent it

to Allah's Apostle . Allah's Apostle ordered it to be placed in the mosque: so, it was put and he sat on it." (24)

After examining the above two narrations it is plausible to combine them to deduce that the idea of producing the pulpit was proposed from an Anṣārī woman first and thereafter the Messenger (pbuh.) sent someone to her to further implement her idea.

By the same token this woman creatively composed of her own accord a pragmatic belvedere after diagnosing a pressing need for such a raised platform with which religious sermons could better be delivered to the public. This was in part due to the creative environment provided and encouraged by the Prophet (pbuh.) and accordingly the Prophet (pbuh.) accepted and acclaimed her invention and thus requested her to prepare it.

5. Military strategic creativity

While the Muslims were in Madīnah there was an impending attack from the Quraysh and their allies. Infact, the imminent assault was an overwhelming cause of worry for the Muslims, as the Qurayshi originated mobilization was tremendous, both in number and equipment; surpassing significantly anything the Muslims had, who were both poorly equipped and few in number. As the gravity of the situation befell the Muslims, the Prophet (pbuh.) gathered his Companions (ra.) in an emergency meeting to consult them for strategies in order to fortify their defenses.

It was Salmān Al-Farīsī, who hailed from Persia (Iran) and who was well acquainted with warfare stratagem that suggested the Muslims dig a trench on the undefended and exposed north side of Madinah (the other sides already being somewhat defended by natural or man-made barricades). It was reported that Salmān said "When we were in Persia, if we were besieged we dug a trench around us, then the prophet (pbuh.) commanded the companions to dig a trench around Madīnah..." (25) Although this was originally a Persian concept, the Prophet (pbuh.) adopted and approved it after Salmān's creative proposal and it was the first military tactic of its kind to be implemented in the Arabian peninsula; having weighty ramifications in securing the Muslim victory in the conflict.

6. Creative hospitality of a Muslim family

Narrated Abu Huraira: A man came to the Prophet. The Prophet sent a messenger to his wives (to bring something for that man to eat) but they said that they had

nothing except water. Then Allah's Apostle said, "Who will take this (person) or entertain him as a guest?" An Ansar man said, "I." So he took him to his wife and said to her, "Entertain generously the guest of Allah's Apostle " She said, "We have got nothing except the meals of my children." He said, "Prepare your meal, light your lamp and let your children sleep if they ask for supper." So she prepared her meal, lighted her lamp and made her children sleep, and then stood up pretending to mend her lamp, but she put it off. Then both of them pretended to be eating, but they really went to bed hungry. In the morning the Ansari went to Allah's Apostle who said, "Tonight Allah laughed or wondered at your action." Then Allah revealed: "...But give them preference over themselves even though they were in need of that And whosoever is saved from the covetousness Such are they who will be successful." (Al-Hashr 59:9) (26)

It is a fascinating thing to truly consider this rare and incredible scenario drawn by the Muslim family and their creative planning and sacrifice of the utmost merit to provide the best hospitality they could to the guest of the Prophet (pbuh.). What was the result of their deeds? Their praise and mention by Allah the Almighty in recited verses of the Holy Qur'an until the Day of Judgement!

Section three: The role of the Apostle of Allah (pbuh.) in the development of the skills of creative thinking.

1. Encouragement of cogitative fluency

We discussed earlier the symposium of how the Adhān (call to prayer) should be called, where a number of suggestions were made, for instance the use of a bell or horn or even to light a fire and this concluded with 'Umar's proposal that a man call the prayer; the Messenger (pbuh.) subsequently ordering Bilal to call it. Here we find that although multiplicity of ideas came to the Prophet (pbuh.) in consecution, he did not prohibit any person from disclosing their opinion, rather he allowed a freedom of expression in pursuance of the optimal procedure and in this way eheartened ruminative volubility.

2. Acceptance of intellectual flexibility

Narrated Al-Miswar bin Makhrama and Marwan: ...When the writing of the peace treaty was concluded, Allah's Apostle said to his companions, "Get up and slaughter your sacrifices and get your head shaved." By Allah none of them got up, and the Prophet repeated his order thrice. When none of them got up, he left them and

went to Um Salama and told her of the people's attitudes towards him. Um Salama said, "O the Prophet of Allah! Do you want your order to be carried out? Go out and don't say a word to anybody till you have slaughtered your sacrifice and call your barber to shave your head." So, the Prophet went out and did not talk to anyone of them till he did that, i.e. slaughtered the sacrifice and called his barber who shaved his head. Seeing that, the companions of the Prophet got up, slaughtered their sacrifices, and started shaving the heads of one another, and there was so much rush that there was a danger of killing each other...⁽²⁷⁾

The treaty of Al-Hudaibiya (a place near Makkah) was a pact made between the Prophet (pbuh.) and the Quraishi tribes of Makkah after the Muslims had performed the *Hijrah* (migration to Madinah). The Muslims, having travelled all the way from Madinah, were entering Makkah in a state of *Ihrām* (a state of pilgrimage involving taking a ritual cleansing, wearing the prescribed attire and observing certain prohibitions in behaviour and actions) intending to perform the 'Umrah (minor pilgrimage).

Before entering the city they were met with members of the Quraish who engaged in a discussion to mutually sign a treaty of which the main clauses stipulated a halt to the war between the Quraish and the Muslims for ten years and demanded the Muslims stop their 'Umrah in the current year and return to Madinah to instead perform it in following year. The Prophet (pbuh.) complied with their terms and the treaty was made.

This deeply angered and upset the Muslims. Thus when the Messenger (pbuh.) ordered his followers to remove their *Ihrām*, shave their heads and slaughter their animals (rites that are components of the minor pilgrimage), they objected and refused to obey him even after he asked them three times. Disappointed and upset from their objections, the Apostle of Allah (pbuh.) returned to his tent where he informed his wife Umm Salama about the Companions' noncompliance.

Umm Salama consequently envisaged the dilemma from a different perspective, and cleverly recognised that the words of the Prophet (pbuh.) would not change the attitude of his followers and thus she advised him to perform the rites himself before them; acknowledging the more practical solution of his actions to be of more consequence than his words.

The Messenger (pbuh.) accepted her creative intellectual flexibility did what she advised him. This galvanised the Companions to knuckle under him and they immediately followed suit to such an extent that it was reported they did so with such vigor that they were at risk of killing each other. Ergo this saved the Companions from insubordination of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), this incident transforming from total disobedience to total obedience to the Prophet (pbuh), thanks to the wisdom and remarkable insight of his wife, Umm Salama.

3. Endorsement of ideational originality

On the topic of the archetypal creative paradigms from the life of the Prophet (pbuh.) as discussed previously in chapter two; these epitomical models without exception shared the features of being authentic, unorthodox, unique and rare and they were all accordingly endorsed by the Messenger (pbuh.) who not only actualized them, but also encouraged their conception and inspired their authors and those encompassing them to continue in analogous efforts.

4. Allowance for the Companions' moral perceptions and resolutions in accordance with their sensitivity to problems.

Narrated 'Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb: My Lord agreed with me in three things: 1. I said, "O Allah's Apostle, I wish we took the station of Abraham as our praying place (for some of our prayers). So came the Divine Inspiration: And take you (people) the station of Abraham as a place of prayer (for some of your prayers e.g. two Rakat of Tawaf of Ka'ba)". (Al-Baqarah 2:125) 2. And as regards the (verse of) the veiling of the women, I said, 'O Allah's Apostle! I wish you ordered your wives to cover themselves from the men because good and bad ones talk to them.' So the verse of the veiling of the women was revealed. 3. Once the wives of the Prophet made a united front against the Prophet and I said to them, 'It may be if he (the Prophet) divorced you, (all) that his Lord (Allah) will give him instead of you wives better than you.' So this verse (the same as I had said) was revealed." (At-Tahrīm 66:5)⁽²⁸⁾.

As exemplified above, 'Umar was highly sensitive to the problems around him and in this he thus recognised a flaw in the manner in which people would enter the house of the Prophet (pbuh.), a house in which there was free entrance to all; inclusive to both the righteous and the wicked. 'Umar was antagonistic to the fact that any

person could enter and see the wives of the Prophet (pbuh.) whilst they were uncovered, wherefore he suggested that the Prophet (pbuh.) should screen his wives.

Subsequently a verse in the Qur'an was revealed regarding this, signifying Allah the Almighty's Divine approval of 'Umar's viewpoint. Through examining 'Umar's character we can deduce that if he knew his proposition would earn the Prophet's (pbuh.) anger he most probably wouldn't have suggested it, however fortunately the contrary took place; the Prophet (pbuh.) being happy with 'Umar's outlook after Divine Revelation on the matter came to pass.

Section four: The Prophet's methods in stimulating creative thinking

1. Epitomizing creativity.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh.) exercised creative thinking in front of his Companions (ra.) in the interest of motivating them to follow suit. He was their first creative role model. And it is unequivocal that when the student finds his or her mentor as a quintessence of originality and intellectual flexibility he or she will try in earnest to emulate them.

It was narrated that 'Ali (ra.) said: When we came to Madinah and we ate from its fruits and did not feel comfortable in it, and we became ill. The Prophet (pbuh.) was trying to find out about the well of Badr, and when we heard that the mushrikeen had come, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh.) marched to Badr, and Badr was a well. We got there before the mushrikeen and we found two of their men, a man from Quraish and a freed slave of 'Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ait. As for the Quraishi, he managed to escape, but we caught the freed slave of 'Uqbah and started asking him: How many are the people? He said: By Allah, they are great in number: and powerful. When he said that, the Muslims began to beat him and they brought him to the Prophet (pbuh.), who said: How many are the people? He said: By Allah, they are great in number and powerful. The Prophet (pbuh.) tried hard to make him tell him how many they were, but he refused. Then the Prophet (pbuh.) asked him: How many camels do they slaughter? He said: Ten each day. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh.) said: They are one thousand; each camel is for one hundred men.⁽²⁹⁾

As regards the above milestone; the Prophet (pbuh.) exerted his best efforts in trying to extract information from the freed slave regarding the number of soldiers of

the approaching Quraishi army in foresight of an impending attack. After the man unrelentingly refused to divulge the number of soldiers, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh.) creatively changed tactic and instead asked the less discernible question of how many camels they slaughtered each day. When the man answered, the Prophet (pbuh.) astutely inferred the number of the incoming army from the number of camels they slaughtered for food; ten camels per hundred men resulting in an approximation of one thousand men.

2. Shūra (Consultation) and collective reasoning.

With reference to the antecedent story of the debate between the Companions (ra.) on how the Adhān should be called, a number of different proposals were put forth after they made council on the affair. *Shūra* (Consultation) of one another thus took place on the unsolved issue and through collective creative reasoning they reached an ideal settlement in that the call should be made by man himself.⁽³⁰⁾ This noteworthy motion turned out to be highly effective in fulfilling its purpose and the Adhān, in and of itself, was both unprecedented and prolific and inexorably did not exist before this event. Distinguished is it that it was conceived through the Prophet's implementation of *Shūra* and this historical event testifies collective consultation as one fruitful way of eliciting creative produce.

3. Providing opportunities for creativity.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh.) regularly offered opportunities for creative persons to submit their ideas and would accordingly accept them and put them into practice, in order to prevent deterrence or disheartening of a person expressing creative thought. Rather, he would often encourage those around him to be creative, utilizing their abilities for the benefit of the *Ummah* (nation). We have discussed excellent examples of this in the case of the Prophet's (pbuh.) adoption of Salman's military tactic in the Battle of the *Khandaq* (Trench) and approval of the Ansari woman's idea of constructing the *Mimbar* (pulpit).

4. Inspiritment through praise.

If we regard the foregoing story of the married couple who rendered astonishing hospitality to the guest of the Prophet (pbuh.); we and the rest of mankind can remain witness to their assiduous efforts as they gained the incomparable praise of Allah the AlMighty in the Qur'anic verse:

"...But give them preference over themselves even though they were in need of that." (Al-Ḥashr 59:9)

For their creativity and virtue, Allah honoured and rewarded them, and the Prophet (pbuh.) praised them. This unsurpassable accolade of being mentioned in the Qur'an is to be preserved and recited until the Day of Resurrection.

5. Narrating stories of creativity.

One of the Prophet's (pbuh) methods in encouraging creative thinking was to share stories of those who have demonstrated exceptional creativity and relate their extraordinary ideas to others. This can be illustrated in the following paradigms that he detailed:

Narrated by Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said, ... "There were two women, each of whom had a child with her. A wolf came and took away the child of one of them, whereupon the other said, 'It has taken your child.' The first said, 'But it has taken your child.' So they both carried the case before David who judged that the living child be given to the elder lady. So both of them went to Solomon bin David and informed him (of the case). He said, 'Bring me a knife so as to cut the child into two pieces and distribute it between them.' The younger lady said, 'May Allah be merciful to you! Don't do that, for it is her (i.e. the other lady's) child.' So he gave the child to the younger lady." ⁽³¹⁾

When Prophet Sulaimān (pbuh.) was faced with the crisis of solving to which of the two women the child in question truly belonged to, he realised that neither would abate their claim on the boy through simple enquiry. He needed a better way to procure the truth and distinguish which of the ladies was the real mother. Thus, in a clever move, he creatively feigned wanting to literally even the child by knife.

This bluff worked perfectly, the real mother (the younger lady) became horrified as a consequence and relinquished her claim for the sake of keeping her son alive, favouring the lesser pain of seeing her child being taken away alive over seeing him dead. Thus, through creative flair, Sulaimān (pbuh.) deduced that she was the true mother and gave the child to her.

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said, "A man bought a piece of land from another man, and the buyer found an earthenware jar filled with gold in the land. The buyer said to the seller. 'Take your gold, as I have bought only the land from you, but I have not bought the gold from you.' The (former) owner of the land said, "I have

sold you the land with everything in it.' So both of them took their case before a man who asked, 'Do you have children?' One of them said, "I have a boy.' The other said, "I have a girl.' The man said, 'Marry the girl to the boy and spend the money on both of them and give the rest of it in charity.'" ⁽³²⁾ (Book #56, Hadith #678)

In this second story, we find a conundrum in to whom a small fortune found by a buying merchant in the land previously transacted between him and his seller belongs. There is a clash of morals, both buyer and seller being remarkably noble by refusing to take it for themselves, insisting it the property of the other. Wanting to find the most righteous and just clarification, they take the case to a third party; seeking the judgement of an honest man.

Upon finding that the two men have between them one son and one daughter, the judging man gives both an interesting and unheard-of verdict; that the fathers should marry their children to one another and spend the discovered riches on them, with any accessory money being given to the poor. This outstanding notion was both ingenious in its fairness and creativity; both men leaving happy, giving an equal portion to each other without taking it for themselves.

This expertly adaptable solution gained the approval and delight of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh.) and our reasoning for this is in that if the Prophet (pbuh.) was not happy with it he would not have narrated it to his Companions (ra.).

6. Testing creative aptitude.

Imam Al-Bukharī included the following authentic ḥadīth in the book of knowledge, forming a chapter called "Chapter: The Imam directing questions to his companions to test their knowledge":

Narrated Ibn 'Umar: The Prophet said, "Amongst the trees, there is a tree, the leaves of which do not fall and is like a Muslim. Tell me the name of that tree." Everybody started thinking about the trees of the desert areas. And I thought of the date-palm tree. The others then asked, "Please inform us what is that tree, O Allah's Apostle?" He replied, "It is the date-palm tree." ⁽³³⁾

Through this riddle the Prophet (pbuh.) provoked his Companions' (ra.) divergent thinking in order to assimilate possible similarities between two things seemingly quite distant; the Muslim and the tree and furthermore to creatively pinpoint the specific likeness between the Muslim and the date-palm tree. Scholars have commented on this ḥadīth, explaining the similarity;

we reap numerous benefits from everything of the date-palm tree; the trunks can be used as pillars to uphold buildings, the branches and leaves can further be used in thatching roofs and forming infrastructure, the dates are most obvious in their benefit as food but even the stones can be utilized as animal feed or fuel for fires. The leaves of the date-palm tree also present all year-round, and all of these benefits can be correlated to the Muslim who brings a multitude of differing benefits wherever they are and at all times.

7. Accepting imaginary ideas

Narrated Aisha, Ummul Mu'minin: When the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) arrived after the expedition to Tabuk or Khaybar (the narrator is doubtful), the draught raised an end of a curtain which was hung in front of her store-room, revealing some dolls which belonged to her. He asked: What is this? She replied: My dolls. Among them he saw a horse with wings made of rags, and asked: What is this I see among them? She replied: A horse. He asked: What is this that it has on it? She replied: Two wings. He asked: A horse with two wings? She replied: Have you not heard that Solomon had horses with wings? She said: Thereupon the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) laughed so heartily that I could see his molar teeth.⁽³⁴⁾

It is an axiom that a vivid and wide imagination is a fundamental criterion and prominent characteristic of a creative individual.⁽³⁵⁾ Here the Prophet (pbuh.) was amazed by what he saw; a horse with two wings. Thus he had a dialogue with 'Ā'ishah (ra.) regarding the marvel in which she convinced him to accept her imagination and this was manifest in his laughter.

Conclusion

The researchers after studying the creative experiences of the Prophet (pbuh.) can conclude the following:

- That independent Islamic legislation for creativity can be sourced from the biography of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh.) through examining his own implementations of creativity or his approval and encouragement of that which was exercised by his Companions (ra.)
- That the Prophet (pbuh.) played a transcendent role in the development in the skills of creativity of his Companions and we can non-exhaustively specify those skills as; cogitative fluency, intellectual flexibility, ideational originality, and sensitivity to problems.
- That the Apostle of Allah (pbuh.) used several methods in order to stimulate creativity and we can again, non-exhaustively, name them as; being an epitome of creativity himself, implementing *shūra* (consulation and collective reasoning), providing opportunities for creativity, inspiring others through praise, narrating stories of creative achievements, performing tests of creativity on those around him and finally accepting imaginary ideas of his Companions (ra.)

This article is an attempt to formulate a concise and accurate Islamic theory of creativity, in order to establish an awakening of creativity in the Muslim world inclusive to all fields study of and all types of occupation. Therefore the researchers do indefinitely call for an augmentation and expansion of Islamic creative models, in pursuance of an end to the shortcomings and absences of these types of studies from the Islamic viewpoint, on the grounds that many Muslim researchers rely heavily on Western sources for studies of creativity.

NOTES

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- (2) Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān il-'arab* (The arabic tongue), Beirut, Dār Sādir, vol.8 p.6-7. See also Danāwī, Mu'ayyid, *Taṭwīr Muḥarāt At-tafkīr Al-ibdā'* (Development of creative skills and thinking), Irbid, Jordan, 'Ālam Al-Kutub Al-Ḥadīth, first edition, 1429 A.H. 2008 A.D, p.30

- (3) Abu Gharbīya, Imān, *Al-ibdā' At-tarbawī* (Educational creativity), Amman, Jordan, first edition, Dār Al-bidāya 1429 A.H. 2008 A.D. , p.11.
- (4) Ṣubhī, Taysīr, *Al-Mawhibat wa Al-ibdā'* (Talent and creativity), Dār Al-Tanwīr Al-'ilmī, Amman, 1992, first edition, p.26
- (5) Jarwān, Fathī, *Al-mawhibah wa al-tafawwuk wa al-ibdā'* (Talent, excellence and creativity), Dār Al-Kitāb Al-Jamī'i, first edition, 1419 A.H. 1999 A.D, p.89.
- (6) Ibid. p.96
- (7) Torrance, Ellis Paul *Creativity*, National Education Association. Washington, D.C. 1963 p.24. See also

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- (8) Cropley, Arthur, *Creativity in education and learning*, First edition, 2001, p.11, translated by Ibrāhīm Al-Ḥārithī and Muhammad Muqbil, Al-Riyāq, Maktabat Al-Shaqrī, 2002, p.11
- (9) de Bono, Edward, *Creative thinking*, translated by Khalīl Al-Jayūsī, Manshūrāt Al-Majma' Ath-thaqāfī, 1997, p.10
- (10) Nūfīl, Muhammad Bakr, *Al-ibdā' Al-jād (Serious creativity)*, Amman, Dār Dībūnū li Al-Ṭība'a wa An-Nashr, first edition, 2009, p.53. See also Al-Kinani, *Psychology of al-ibda' wa asālīb tanmiya (Psychology of creativity and techniques of development)*, Dār Al-Masīra, Amman, First edition, 2005, p.80
- (11) Ibid. Nūfīl p.53. Al-Kinani, p.86-87.
- (12) Ibid. Nūfīl, p.53-54.
- (13) Al-Mubaythīn, Lana Mohammed, *At-Tafkīr Khārij As-Ṣundūq (Thinking outside the box)*, Amman, Dār Dībūnū li Al-Ṭība'a wa An-Nashr, first edition, 2011, p.37-38. See also Jarwan, *Al-mauhibah wa al-tafawwuk wa al-'ibdā' (Talent, excellence and creativity)* p.99
- (14) See footnote 1
- (15) Muslim, Saḥīḥ, *Kitāb Al-Qadr (The book of destiny)*, Chapter *Al-Amr bi al-qūwwa wa tarik Al-'ajiz (The command to be strong and to refrain from losing heart)* Hadith no.6441
- (16) See footnote 5
- (17) Al-Suroor, *Muqaddimah fī al-ibdā' (Introduction in creativity)* pp.11-12
- (18) Awnī Shahīn and Hanān Fadhil Zayyid, *Creativity*, Dār Al-Shurūq, Amman, First edition, 2009, p.36. See also Arthur Cropley, *Creativity in education and learning*, translated by Ibrahim Al-Harithi and Muhammed Muqbil, Maktabat Al-Shaqrī, First edition, Riyadh 2002, p.90.
- (19) *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr (Exegesis of Ibn Kathīr)* Vol.1. Commentary on Al Baqarah (2: 125-149). See also Hanbal, Aḥmad, *Musnad Aḥmad*, Beirūt, Mu'assasat Al-risālah, 1998 vol.24 p.261-262 ḥadīth no.15504
- (20) Hanbal, Aḥmad, *Musnad Aḥmad*, vol.4 p.92 ḥadith no.2216
- (21) Al Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, *Kitāb al-'Adhān (Book of the call to prayer)*, Book 11, Ḥadīth no.578
- (22) Ibn Ḥajar, Aḥmad ibn 'Alī, *Faṭḥi al-Bārī bi Shariḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī ("Grant of the Creator", commentary on Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)*, *Kitāb al-'Adhān (Book of call to prayer)*, no date, vol.2 p.77-78 Commentary on the ḥadīth no. 581
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- (24) Ibid. Hadith no.2094 and in another version Ḥadīth no.307
- (25) Ibn Ḥajar, Aḥmad ibn 'Alī, *Faṭḥi al-Bārī bi Shariḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī ("Grant of the Creator", commentary on Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)*, vol. 7, p.392. See also, Al-'Umarī, Akram Ḍiya, *Al-Sīrah Al-Nabawīyah Al-Ṣaḥīḥah (The Authentic biography of the Prophet(pbuh.))*, Riyadh, Maktabat Al-I'ḥkān, fifth edition, 2003, vol.2 p.42
- (26) Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, *Kitāb Manāqib al-Anṣār (Book of the merits of al-Anṣār (helpers))*, Bāb: 'wa yu'firūna 'alā an fusihim' (Chapter: "But give them preference over themselves"), ḥadīth no.3798 and in another version, ḥadīth no.142. See also Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ, *Kitāb al-'Ashribah (Book of the drinks)*, Bāb: *Ikrām aḍ-Ḍaiḍ (Chapter: Hospitality to the guest)*, ḥadīth no.2054
- (27) Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, *Kitāb Ash-Shurūṭ (Book of Conditions)*, Bāb *Ash-Shurūṭ fī al-Jihād (Chapter of Conditions of Jihād (Struggle))*, ḥadīth no.2723 and in another version ḥadīth no.891
- (28) Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, *Kitāb At-Tafsīr (Book of Prophetic Commentary on the Qu'ran)*, Bāb 'wa attakhidhu min maqāmi Ibrāhīm musalā' (Chapter: "And take (you people) the station of Abraham as a place of prayer") ḥadīth no. 4483 and in another version, ḥadīth no. 395. See also, Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ, *Kitāb Faḍā'il aṣ-Ṣaḥābah (Book of Virtues of the Companions)*, Bāb Faḍā'il 'Umar (Chapter: Virtues of 'Umar), ḥadīth no. 2399
- (29) Hanbal, Aḥmad, *Musnad Aḥmad*, vol.1, *Musnad 'Alī ibn abi Ṭālib (Narrations by 'Ali ibn abi Ṭālib)*, ḥadīth no.948. See also Ibn Al-Jawzī, Abdur-Rahmān, *Al-Athkiyaa' (The Intelligent)*, Beirut, Dār Al-Kutub Al-'Ilmīyah, 2002, p.26.
- (30) See footnote 21
- (31) Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, *Kitāb Aḥādīth Al-Anbīyāh (Book of stories of Prophets)*, Bāb "wa wahabnā li dāwūda sulaimān" (Chapter:"And we to David we gave Solomon"), Ḥadīth no.3427 and in another version, Ḥadīth no.637. See also Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ, *Kitāb Al-Aqḍiyah (Book of Judicial Decisions)*, Bāb Ikhtilāf Al-Mushtahidīn (Chapter: Differences between the Mushtahids (scholars competent to make independent judgements regarding the sharā)), Ḥadīth no. 1720.
- (32) Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, *Kitāb Aḥādīth Al-Anbīyāh (Book of stories of Prophets)*, ḥadīth no.3472 and also *Kitāb Faḍā'il As-Sunnah (Book of Merits of Sunnah)*, ḥadīth no. 678
- (33) Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, *Kitāb Al-'Ilm (Book of knowledge)*, Bāb Ṭarḥi al-Imām al-Mas'alah 'ala aṣḥābihī li

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- (34) Abū Dāwūd, Sunan, *Kitāb Al-Adab (Book of general behaviour)*, Bāb al-lu'ab bi al-banāt (Chapter: playing with dolls), ḥadīth no.4932 and in another version ḥadīth no. 4914
- (35) Al-Mubaythīn, Lana Mohammed, *At-Taḥkīr Khārij As-Ṣundūq (Thinking outside the box)*, Amman, Dār Dībūnū li Al-Ṭiba'a wa An-Nashr, first edition, 2011, p.32.

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التأصيل الإسلامي للإبداع والبيئة الإبداعية في عهد النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم

علي بن ابراهيم العجين ومحمد عبد الحميد الخطيب*

ملخص

يتناول الباحثان دراسة الإبداع من منظور إسلامي، فالإبداع: عمل هادف وشرعي يقود إلى نتائج أصيلة غير مسبوقة، وغايته تحقيق العبودية لله تعالى بمفهومها الشامل، لأن الله تعالى سخر للإنسان ما في السموات والأرض وأوكل له عمارة الكون وحثه على الحرص على ما ينفعه في دينه ودنياه، ومصدر الإبداع توفيق الله تعالى لهذا الإنسان المبدع، فهو خالقه ومانحه القدرات العقلية، وهذا لا يلغي الجهد الذاتي الذي يقوم به المبدع، وكذلك دور البيئة المحفزة للإبداع. كما تبين الدراسة البيئة الإبداعية التي هيأها النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم - لمن حوله من حيث التشجيع على الإبداع والثناء على المبدعين، وقبول الأفكار الخلاقة، وفسح المجال لحل المشكلات التي واجهت المسلمين، وتنمية المهارات الإبداعية : الطلاقة، المرونة، والأصالة .

وقدم الباحثان دعوة للباحثين في تاريخ الإبداع لدراسة السيرة النبوية واستلهم روح الإبداع منها، ودعوة طلاب العلم الشرعي للاهتمام بدراسة الإبداع لتجديد وسائل الدعوة إلى الله تعالى بالحكمة والموعظة الحسنة، مع الحفاظ على الثوابت الشرعية .

الكلمات الدالة: التأصيل الإسلامي، عهد النبي، البيئة الإبداعية.

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