



Prophetic Educational Practices and Their Relevance to Contemporary Student-Centered Learning: A Qualitative Thematic Study of Authentic Hadiths

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Abstract: This qualitative literature-based study examines Prophetic educational practices and their relevance to contemporary student-centered learning. The primary documentary corpus comprised twelve authentic Hadith narrations purposively selected from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. The narrations were selected because they describe identifiable teaching interactions involving a Prophetic educational action, a learner's role or response, and sufficient contextual information for analysis. Using thematic document analysis, the study examines the context of each Hadith, the Prophet's educational action, the learner's role, and its possible correspondence with contemporary education. Four themes emerged: (1) facilitative and compassionate teaching responsive to learners, (2) dialogic questioning, reflection, and inclusive participation, (3) formative correction, repetition, and instructional scaffolding and (4) modelling, experiential learning, and integrated Prophetic pedagogy. The findings show that Prophetic teaching joined clear guidance and moral purpose with sensitivity to learners' age, readiness, needs, and emotional condition. Learners participated through questioning, answering, observing, practicing, reflecting, and correcting their performance. These practices correspond with important features of student-centered learning, including active participation, supportive relationships, formative feedback, guided inquiry, and experiential learning. The study concludes that Prophetic pedagogy offers a balanced educational framework in which teacher guidance, learner participation, compassion, responsibility, knowledge, and practice remain closely connected.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic education is not limited to transmitting religious information. It seeks to develop knowledge, faith, character, responsible conduct, and commitment to society. Within this vision, learning becomes valuable when it shapes both understanding and action. Islamic values therefore provide a moral framework for education. On the other hand, Prophetic education emphasizes compassion, justice, equality, and personal development (Sahin, 2018; Achmadin et al., 2025). This holistic orientation connects spiritual, intellectual, and social growth and treats revelation, reason, and sensory experience as related sources of educational understanding (Iskandar et al., 2025; Samsuddin et al., 2025).

Despite these broad aims, Islamic Religious Education does not always move successfully from knowledge to practice. Strong dependence on lectures, memorization, and one-way transmission may limit learners' opportunities to question, reflect, participate, and apply religious meanings (Sulton et al., 2022; Sasi et al., 2026). Recent scholarship has therefore called for Islamic pedagogy that encourages meaningful understanding and critical reflection without weakening the authority of religious knowledge (Saada & Magadlah, 2021). Other studies have explored transformative and student-centered methods that integrate Islamic principles with cognitive, ethical, and character development (Husin et al., 2025; Abdullaha et al., 2026). Classical methods remain important for textual accuracy and scholarly continuity, but their implementation should consider learner readiness and changing educational conditions (Almajri et al., 2025; Maghfur et al., 2026).

Student-centered learning provides a useful contemporary framework for examining these concerns. It emphasizes learner participation, responsibility, interaction, and meaningful engagement, but it does not refer to one fixed method or require the teacher to abandon guidance (Tang, 2023). Its practice differs according to the subject, learning environment, and relationship between teachers and learners (Lea et al., 2003). Research distinguishes passive reception from active, constructive, and interactive engagement and associates active learning with improved performance and more equitable outcomes (Freeman et al., 2014). However, activity alone does not guarantee learning. Learners still need clear explanations and appropriate support, particularly when knowledge is unfamiliar or complex (Kirschner et al., 2006).

The importance of responsive Islamic pedagogy has increased because learners do encounter rapid technological and social change. Artificial intelligence, social media, misinformation, and post-truth communication require ethical judgment, information verification, and responsible interaction (Syahrin et al., 2026; Wahid et al., 2025; Hisbullah et al., 2026). Islamic education must also respond to digital limitations, sustainability concerns, and emerging technological practices without losing its spiritual and moral foundations (Alrumayh et al., 2025; Alsaeh et al., 2026; Alakhdar et al., 2026). The Qur'anic principle of *tabayyun* is particularly relevant because it links careful verification with responsible communication and protection from harmful digital behavior (Nurwahida et al., 2026).

Effective education also depends on the emotional and relational conditions of learning. Fear, humiliation, and weak teacher support may prevent learners from asking questions or admitting difficulty. Islamic educational approaches concerned with spiritual well-being, resilience, and culturally responsive support show that emotional development cannot be separated completely from learning (Kholilurrohman et al., 2026). A love-based and humanistic

school culture can further strengthen respectful relationships and compassionate guidance (Susilo et al., 2026; Almaloul et al., 2026). In addition, contemporary evidence associates positive teacher–student relationships and psychological safety with engagement and willingness to participate (McLeod & Gupta, 2023).

Existing studies provide important knowledge about Islamic values in university teaching, the integration of *turāth* and modern knowledge, contextual teaching materials, reflective learning, and participatory Islamic education (Ayad et al., 2026; Primarni et al., 2025). Also, research has also examined religious identity, narrative teaching, and Islamic dialogic pedagogy (Ahmed, 2019; Işık & Akbari, 2024). However, these studies mainly focus on educational philosophy, curriculum, institutional practice, or contemporary classroom methods. Research discussing Prophetic education often identifies general values or teaching techniques, but gives less systematic attention to the complete educational interaction recorded in authentic Hadiths. In particular, limited attention has been given to how the teaching context, Prophetic action, learner’s response, and immediate educational outcome function together. Comparisons with contemporary pedagogy may also become overstated when Hadiths are isolated from their textual and religious contexts (Masuwd, 2025; Pakaya et al., 2026).

This study addresses that gap through a qualitative thematic analysis of twelve authentic Hadiths selected from Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. It first interprets each interaction within its Hadith context and then considers its correspondence with contemporary student-centered learning. The study does not assume that Prophetic pedagogy and modern educational theory are historically or conceptually identical. Instead, it asks four connected research questions: (1) What educational practices emerge from the selected authentic Hadiths? (2) How do these narrations present the teaching context, Prophetic educational action, learner’s role, and immediate outcome? (3) In what ways do the identified practices correspond with contemporary student-centered learning? (4) What interpretive limits should be maintained when making this comparison? By answering these questions, the study aims to develop a textually grounded and educationally relevant framework for understanding Prophetic teaching.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative thematic document-analysis design to identify Prophetic educational practices and examine their relevance to contemporary student-centered learning. The primary corpus consisted of 12 authentic Hadiths selected purposively from Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. A narration was included when it described a recognizable educational interaction, contained an observable teaching action by the Prophet ﷺ, showed the learner’s role or response, and provided sufficient context for educational interpretation. Narrations were excluded when they offered only general statements about the value of knowledge, repeated an included event without adding a distinct educational meaning, lacked enough context, or consisted of statements by Companions rather than Prophetic Hadiths. The educational interaction, rather than an isolated word or sentence, was treated as the main unit of analysis. Each narration was entered into an analytical matrix recording its Arabic text, source, narrator, setting, participants, educational need, Prophetic action, learner’s response, immediate outcome, and provisional educational meaning. Relevant classical

commentaries were consulted to clarify wording and context before any comparison with contemporary educational literature.

Source triangulation was achieved by examining narrations from two independent canonical Hadith collections and comparing parallel accounts where the same educational event appeared in both collections. Interpretive triangulation was also used by examining the Hadith text, consulting classical commentaries for its wording and historical context, and then comparing the resulting educational interpretation with contemporary educational literature. These stages were kept separate to prevent modern educational concepts from determining the initial interpretation of the Hadiths.

The analysis proceeded through repeated reading, initial coding, theme development, review, and comparative interpretation. Coding was conducted by the lead researcher using a combined deductive and inductive process. The analytical categories of Hadith context, Prophetic educational action, learner's role, and immediate outcome were derived from the research questions and provided the initial deductive structure. Within these categories, descriptive codes were developed inductively from repeated actions, responses, and interaction patterns found in the narrations. Initial codes remained close to the textual evidence and included making instruction easy, protecting dignity, considering readiness, adapting guidance to age, asking reflective questions, using analogy, responding to learner requests, repeating for understanding, observing performance, providing corrective feedback, explaining actions sequentially, and demonstrating practical skills. Related codes were then organized into four themes: facilitative and compassionate teaching responsive to learners; dialogic questioning, reflection, and inclusive participation; formative correction, repetition, and instructional scaffolding; and modelling, experiential learning, and integrated Prophetic pedagogy. The themes were reviewed against the complete corpus to ensure that each was supported by clear textual evidence and remained distinct from the others. Inter-rater reliability was not calculated because the coding was not conducted independently by multiple coders. Instead, coding consistency was strengthened through repeated comparison among the original Hadith texts, the analytical matrix, the initial codes, and the final themes.

Trustworthiness was addressed through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was supported by using authenticated Hadith collections, checking relevant classical commentaries, comparing parallel narrations, and reviewing every theme against the complete corpus. Member checking was not applicable because the study analyzed documents and did not involve human participants. Transferability was supported through contextual description of the narrators, participants, educational situations, learner responses, and immediate outcomes, allowing readers to judge the possible relevance of the findings to other educational settings. Dependability was strengthened by maintaining the analytical matrix as an audit trail linking each narration to its codes, provisional meanings, and final theme. Confirmability was supported by grounding interpretations in identifiable textual evidence, recording analytical decisions, and clearly separating the original Hadith context from comparisons with contemporary educational concepts. The researchers also remained aware that the correspondence with student-centered learning represented an interpretive comparison rather than evidence of historical identity or direct derivation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Facilitative and Compassionate Teaching Responsive to Learners

The first theme shows that Prophetic teaching combined clear expectations with facilitation, compassion, and attention to learners' circumstances. Instruction was not shaped only by the importance of the content. The Prophet ﷺ also considered how guidance was communicated, whether learners were ready to receive it, and how mistakes could be corrected without unnecessary hardship. Facilitation therefore supported learning while preserving standards and responsibility.

This principle is clearly expressed in the instruction: "Make things easy and do not make things difficult; give glad tidings and do not drive people away" (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 69; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 1734). It also appears in the Prophet's description of his role: "Allah did not send me to cause hardship...but sent me as a teacher who makes things easy" (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 1478). Together, these Hadiths present ease and encouragement as basic qualities of teaching.

Ease in this context does not mean simplifying knowledge until its meaning is lost or accepting conduct that does not meet the required standard. It means removing avoidable barriers and presenting guidance in a manner that learners can understand and apply. This balance corresponds with student-centered teaching, in which teachers support meaningful participation while continuing to organize instruction and maintain its objectives. It is also consistent with Prophetic and humanistic Islamic education that connects compassion with moral guidance rather than treating the two as opposites (Grøndahl Glavind et al., 2023; Kasheem & Rusmana, 2025).

Responsiveness was also evident in the timing of teaching. Ibn Mas'ūd reported that the Prophet ﷺ selected suitable days for instructing the Companions because he did not want them to become bored (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 68; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 2821). This practice indicates that even valuable instruction may become less effective when it is delivered without considering learners' attention and readiness. The Prophet ﷺ therefore regulated the frequency of teaching instead of presenting information continuously.

This practice shares characteristics with differentiated instruction and cognitive-load management. Differentiation recognizes that learners do not always have the same readiness or need the same form of support. Cognitive-load research likewise explains that instruction should consider the limits of human information processing. The Hadith does not establish these modern theories, but it illustrates a similar educational concern: the amount and timing of instruction should support attention rather than produce fatigue (Eikeland & Ohna, 2022).

Compassionate correction was most clearly demonstrated in the incident of the Bedouin who urinated in the mosque. When some Companions moved to stop him forcefully, the Prophet ﷺ told them to leave him until he had finished and then instructed them to pour water over the affected area. He explained that they had been sent to make matters easy rather than difficult (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 220; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 284).

The Prophet ﷺ did not approve of the man's behavior, and the mosque still had to be cleaned. However, he recognized that the man lacked knowledge and prevented the correction from becoming a harsh public confrontation. The event therefore maintained the religious standard while protecting the individual's dignity. The mistake became an opportunity for guidance rather than humiliation.

This approach corresponds with psychological safety and supportive teacher–student relationships. Learners are more likely to ask questions, acknowledge uncertainty, and participate when mistakes do not expose them to ridicule or aggression. Positive relationships can also strengthen engagement because learners feel respected while receiving correction. Islamic spiritual education adds a holistic dimension by connecting learning with emotional stability, resilience, and supportive guidance (Roorda et al., 2017; Krwad et al., 2026; Salem et al., 2026).

Individual responsiveness also appears in the Prophet’s guidance to ‘Umar ibn Abi Salamah. When the young boy’s hand moved around the shared dish, the Prophet ﷺ said: “Young boy, mention Allah’s name, eat with your right hand, and eat from what is nearest to you” (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 5376; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 2022). The instruction was short, specific, and suited to the learner’s age and immediate behavior. The boy received only the guidance needed for that situation and could apply it directly.

The Bedouin and the young boy required different forms of correction. The Bedouin needed protection from an excessive public response and an explanation of conduct that he did not know. The young learner needed brief and direct guidance connected to an observable action. These differences show that Prophetic teaching did not apply one corrective method to every learner. The response was shaped by age, knowledge, context, and immediate need. This concern for the whole learner is consistent with Islamic approaches that connect compassionate guidance with emotional well-being and culturally meaningful support (Pallawagau et al., 2025).

The analysis therefore identifies four related characteristics of Prophetic teaching: accessible instruction, appropriate timing, dignity-preserving correction, and individualized guidance. These practices correspond with facilitative teaching, differentiation, cognitive-load management, psychological safety, and supportive educational relationships. Their common purpose was to help learners understand and improve without weakening the content or expected conduct.

The correspondence remains interpretive. The Hadiths were reported within religious and social contexts different from those in which modern educational concepts developed. They do not present a contemporary psychological or student-centered theory. More importantly, they do not remove teacher authority, educational standards, or learner responsibility. They show that firm guidance can be delivered in a manner that respects readiness, protects dignity, and makes learning more accessible.

Dialogic Questioning, Reflection, and Inclusive Participation

The second theme shows that Prophetic teaching gave learners an active intellectual and social role. Questions were used to stimulate reflection, analogies connected meaning with familiar experience, and learners could communicate needs affecting their access to instruction. These practices did not reduce the teacher’s responsibility. Instead, they created guided participation in which learners contributed while the Prophet ﷺ provided direction and clarification.

The Hadith of the date palm provides a clear example. The Prophet ﷺ asked: “Among the trees is a tree whose leaves do not fall, and it resembles the Muslim. Tell me which tree it is.” The participants considered several possibilities before he explained that it was the date palm

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 61; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 2811). The answer was therefore preceded by a period of thought rather than given immediately.

The question served more than one educational function. It attracted attention, activated prior knowledge, and required participants to compare the qualities of different trees. The date palm was also familiar within their environment, allowing a concrete object to communicate a wider religious meaning. Contemporary research similarly shows that purposeful questions and classroom dialogue can stimulate productive thinking when they invite learners to examine relationships rather than recall isolated information (Howe & Abedin, 2013).

Ibn ‘Umar reported that the correct answer occurred to him, but he remained silent because he was young and felt shy among older participants. This detail shows that intellectual engagement does not always result in spoken participation. A learner may understand an idea but hesitate to express it because of age, confidence, or the social setting. The effectiveness of dialogic teaching therefore depends not only on asking questions but also on whether learners feel able to respond.

A related pattern appears in the Prophet’s conversation with Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal. He asked: “O Mu‘ādh, do you know what Allah’s right over His servants is and what the servants’ right from Allah is?” Mu‘ādh replied: “Allah and His Messenger know best.” The Prophet ﷺ then explained the answer (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 2856; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 30). The opening question prepared Mu‘ādh for an important explanation and allowed him to acknowledge uncertainty without criticism.

The date-palm and Mu‘ādh narrations demonstrate guided inquiry rather than unsupported discovery. Learners were invited to think, but the Prophet ﷺ did not leave them without an accurate explanation. He selected the question, directed attention toward the intended meaning, and clarified the answer. Contemporary research also distinguishes productive inquiry from learning with minimal guidance. Cognitive engagement becomes more meaningful when learners actively process information and receive appropriate instructional support (Lazonder & Harmsen, 2016).

This balance is relevant to Islamic education because dialogue should deepen engagement with religious knowledge rather than replace it with unstructured opinion. Islamic dialogic pedagogy can provide space for reflection while remaining connected to moral formation and recognized sources of knowledge. Recent studies likewise associate participatory Islamic teaching with value integration, balanced thinking, and respectful engagement (Abraham & Baroud, 2025).

A different form of participation appears in the Hadith of the women who told the Prophet ﷺ: “The men have taken most of your time, so appoint a day for us.” He responded by selecting a day to meet and teach them (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 101). In this event, learners did not participate by answering a question. They identified a limitation in their access to instruction and proposed a practical solution.

The Prophet’s response gave educational value to the learners’ expressed need. The existing arrangement was adjusted without changing the content or purpose of the teaching. This represents learner voice because the women communicated a concern and influenced how instruction was organized. It also illustrates equitable access: providing a suitable opportunity for a group whose participation was limited under the existing arrangement.

Research on student voice similarly emphasizes the importance of including learners' perspectives in policies and practices that affect their education. Active learning may also support more equitable outcomes when instructional arrangements address barriers experienced by less-represented learners (Karrar et al., 2026; Abouzied, 2026). The Hadith does not establish a general requirement for separate teaching. Its significance lies in recognizing a genuine barrier and responding with an appropriate arrangement.

Contextual responsiveness connects the three Hadiths. The date-palm question drew upon a familiar environment, Mu'ādh received focused personal instruction, and the women's request led to a suitable learning opportunity. Contemporary Islamic education similarly emphasizes contextual materials and participatory religious experiences that connect learning with identity and learners' actual circumstances (Kuliyatun et al., 2025; Alqadhi et al., 2026).

The findings therefore identify three distinct but related practices. Prophetic questioning stimulated reflection, guided inquiry combined learner thought with accurate clarification, and learner voice contributed to more equitable access. Learners participated by considering answers, recognizing uncertainty, and expressing educational needs. The Prophet ﷺ responded by guiding thought, explaining meaning, and adapting educational arrangements.

These correspondences should not be overstated. The Hadiths do not describe complete learner control, and they do not present dialogue as an alternative to authoritative knowledge. The Prophet ﷺ encouraged participation while remaining responsible for the content, direction, and moral purpose of instruction. Prophetic dialogue therefore joined learner agency with teacher guidance rather than treating them as opposing educational principles.

Formative Correction, Repetition, and Instructional Scaffolding

The third theme shows that Prophetic correction was directed toward improvement rather than merely identifying failure. The selected Hadiths present a process in which the learner's understanding or performance became visible, the difficulty was identified, and appropriate support was provided. Repetition, feedback, and structured explanation were used according to the nature of the learning need.

Anas ibn Mālik reported that the Prophet ﷺ sometimes repeated an important statement three times so that it could be understood (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, nos. 94–95). The purpose of repetition was therefore comprehension, not mechanical routine. Repeating a statement could give learners another opportunity to hear, process, and remember important information. However, the Hadith does not require every statement to be repeated three times. Its educational value lies in adjusting explanation when understanding may be incomplete.

A more detailed pattern appears in the Hadith of the man who performed his prayer incorrectly. After observing the prayer, the Prophet ﷺ told him: "Go back and pray, for you have not prayed." The man repeated the prayer but continued to perform it incorrectly. He eventually admitted: "By Him who sent you with the truth, I cannot do better than this, so teach me." The Prophet ﷺ then explained the prayer in an ordered sequence and emphasized calmness in standing, bowing, rising, prostration, and sitting (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 757; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 397).

The interaction began with observation of actual performance. This provided evidence of what the learner could and could not do. The repeated difficulty showed that the problem was not simple carelessness but insufficient knowledge. In formative assessment, evidence of

current performance is used to identify the gap between the learner's present level and the required standard and to decide what instruction should follow (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Table 1. Stages of Formative Correction in the Hadith of the Incorrect Prayer

Analytical stage	Hadith evidence	Educational function	Contemporary correspondence
Observation	The Prophet ﷺ observed the man's prayer	Revealed the learner's present performance	Performance-based diagnosis
Identification of error	"Go back and pray, for you have not prayed"	Communicated that the performance did not meet the required standard	Corrective feedback
Further attempt	The man repeated the prayer	Provided an opportunity for reconsideration and improvement	Guided practice
Continuing difficulty	The same problem remained	Showed that the error resulted from insufficient knowledge	Identification of a learning need
Recognition of need	"I cannot do better than this, so teach me"	Made the learner's need explicit	Learner self-awareness
Structured explanation	The Prophet ﷺ explained the stages in order	Divided a complex performance into manageable actions	Instructional scaffolding
Performance standard	Calmness was required in each position	Clarified the quality expected in the task	Formative criteria for improvement

As Table 1 shows, correction developed from observation and brief feedback into structured instruction after the learner's difficulty became clear. The Prophet's final explanation was specific to the problem. He did not present every possible rule related to prayer. Instead, he described the actions needed for correct performance and clarified the standard of calmness required in each position.

This pattern corresponds with improvement-oriented feedback. Effective feedback should relate directly to the task and give learners information they can use to improve their performance. Its effect depends on its focus, timing, and clarity rather than simply on how often it is given (Wisniewski et al., 2020; Hmouma & Benarose, 2026). The Hadith shows this movement clearly: the initial feedback identified failure, while the later explanation showed the learner how to perform the task correctly.

The ordered explanation also shares characteristics with instructional scaffolding. A complex action was divided into smaller stages, and the required quality of each stage was made visible. Responsive scaffolding provides support based on an identified difficulty and helps the learner move toward more accurate performance (Belland et al., 2017; Al Dokali et al., 2025). The support in this narration was therefore connected to evidence from the learner's repeated attempts rather than provided without diagnosis.

The learner nevertheless remained responsible for acting on the guidance. He performed the task, tried again, admitted that he lacked the required knowledge, requested help, and received instructions that he was expected to apply. This interaction avoids both unguided discovery and complete learner passivity. Research indicates that explicit guidance remains necessary when learners face unfamiliar or complex tasks. Studies of Islamic educational practice likewise show that teacher authority can coexist with learner readiness, responsibility, and active performance (Alezabi et al., 2026).

The findings therefore reveal a connected sequence: performance was observed, an error was identified, another attempt was permitted, the learning need became clear, and structured guidance was provided. Repetition supported comprehension, while feedback responded to demonstrated difficulty (Abouzied et al., 2025). These practices correspond with formative assessment, guided practice, improvement-oriented feedback, and responsive scaffolding.

The comparison remains limited. Modern scaffolding commonly includes gradual withdrawal of support and transfer of responsibility over time, but these stages are not described in the Hadith. The narration should therefore be understood as evidence of responsive and structured support rather than a complete modern scaffolding model. Its main contribution is showing that correction becomes educationally useful when it is based on diagnosis, connected to clear standards, and followed by practical guidance for improvement.

Modelling, Experiential Learning, and Integrated Prophetic Pedagogy

The fourth theme shows that Prophetic teaching connected explanation with observable performance. Practical knowledge was not communicated only through words. Learners were shown how an action should be performed and were expected to reproduce it. This made the required standard visible and joined understanding with application.

This practice appears in the instruction: “Pray as you have seen me praying” (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 631). The Prophet ﷺ served as the practical model, while the learners observed the sequence and manner of prayer before performing it themselves. Their role was not limited to remembering information about prayer. They had to translate observation into competent action.

A related process appears in the report of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān. After performing ablution before a group, he said: “I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ perform ablution in a manner similar to this ablution of mine” (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, no. 164; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, no. 226). The Prophetic action was first observed by ‘Uthmān and then transmitted to later learners through another demonstration. This indicates that modelling supported both immediate learning and the preservation of practical knowledge.

These narrations share characteristics with experiential learning and cognitive apprenticeship. Experiential learning develops understanding through participation in meaningful activity, while cognitive apprenticeship makes expert performance visible through modelling and guided practice. Demonstration is especially valuable when a skill involves an ordered sequence that may be difficult to understand through verbal description alone (Zaet, 2026; Omran et al., 2026).

Observation, however, was not the final educational outcome. Learners had to select the important features of the demonstrated action, organize them mentally, and reproduce them.

This process corresponds with generative learning, in which learners develop understanding by actively applying or explaining information rather than receiving it passively. Contemporary Islamic educational innovation similarly emphasizes experiential and participatory methods that connect knowledge with cognitive and ethical development (Fiorella & Mayer, 2016).

Prophetic modelling also carried an ethical meaning. The teacher's conduct was consistent with the knowledge being communicated. The Prophet ﷺ demonstrated what he expected learners to perform, giving practical credibility to his teaching. This is especially important in Islamic education because its objectives include conduct and character as well as academic understanding. Studies of lived Qur'anic interpretation show that religious concepts become educationally meaningful when they are embodied in institutional and community practices (Taufikin et al., 2026).

The Hadiths further show that spiritual, intellectual, and practical learning operated together. Prayer and ablution had religious purposes, required correct understanding, and involved competent physical performance (Alsaeh et al., 2025). Contemporary Islamic educational thought likewise seeks to connect meaningful learning and character development with revelation, reason, experience, and responsible action (Husin et al., 2025; Samsuddin et al., 2025).

The four themes together form an integrated Prophetic educational framework. Each addresses a different part of learning: the conditions under which guidance is received, the learner's intellectual participation, support during difficulty, and the movement from knowledge to action. Their relationship is summarized in Table 3.

Table 2. Integrated Prophetic Educational Framework and Contemporary Correspondences

Prophetic dimension	Main evidence	Hadith	Learner's role	Contemporary correspondence	Interpretive boundary
Facilitation and responsiveness	Ease in teaching, suitable timing, Bedouin incident, and guidance to a young learner		Receiving and applying guidance suited to the situation	Facilitative teaching, differentiation, psychological safety, and cognitive-load management	Facilitation does not remove standards or teacher authority
Dialogue and inclusive participation	Date-palm question, conversation with Mu'adh, and women's teaching day		Reflecting, responding, recognizing uncertainty, and expressing needs	Dialogic teaching, guided inquiry, learner voice, and inclusion	Participation does not mean complete learner control
Formative correction and structured support	Repetition for understanding and the incorrect-prayer narration		Attempting, revising, requesting support, and using feedback	Formative assessment, guided practice, feedback, and scaffolding	The evidence does not contain every stage of a complete modern scaffolding model

Modelling and experiential learning	Demonstration of prayer and ablution	Observing, imitating, practicing, and transmitting performance	Modelling, cognitive apprenticeship, experiential learning, and generative learning	The evidence concerns religious practices and is not identical to modern educational theory
Integrated moral purpose	Connection between knowledge and conduct across the corpus	Developing understanding and expressing it through responsible action	Holistic and transformative Islamic education	Prophetic pedagogy cannot be reduced to modern instructional techniques

Table 2 shows that learner participation and teacher guidance were complementary across the four themes. Learners reflected, attempted tasks, communicated needs, observed demonstrations, and applied guidance. At the same time, the Prophet ﷺ maintained responsibility for accurate knowledge, clear standards, correction, and practical modelling. Prophetic pedagogy therefore avoided both learner passivity and instruction without direction (Hasan et al., 2025; Yuliantika et al., 2025; Maati et al., 2025)

For university Islamic education, these findings support designing lessons that combine short explanations with guided questioning, discussion, demonstration, supervised practice, and immediate feedback. The method should correspond to the intended learning outcome. Conceptual topics may be taught through dialogue and reflective questions, while practical subjects, such as worship and ethical conduct, require modelling and opportunities for students to practice. Lecturers should also create a respectful environment in which students can ask questions, acknowledge misunderstanding, and correct mistakes without humiliation (Artemey et al., 2026; Masoud et al., 2026). Such participation should remain guided by accurate knowledge, clear learning expectations, and learner responsibility.

Curriculum designers can apply these findings by linking each learning outcome to a suitable Prophetic educational practice. Course plans may include Hadith-based cases for reflection, guided questions for conceptual understanding, staged activities for skill development, and formative assessment before final evaluation. Curriculum documents should also connect knowledge with conduct by including cognitive, practical, and ethical outcomes. For Islamic educators, the findings emphasize adapting explanations to learners' readiness, providing correction that protects dignity, repeating essential guidance when necessary, demonstrating expected practices, and modelling the values taught in the classroom. These strategies can strengthen learner engagement without separating educational methods from their ethical and religious purposes (Alriteemi et al., 2026; Abraham et al., 2025).

The comparison remains interpretive. The Hadiths concern religious practices within the Prophetic community, whereas contemporary experiential-learning theories cover different subjects and institutions. The analysis does not claim that modern theories were derived from these narrations. It shows that Prophetic teaching included demonstration, active

application, and consistency between knowledge and conduct, features that may inform contemporary education when their original context is respected.

CONCLUSION

This study examined twelve authentic Hadiths to identify Prophetic educational practices and explore their relevance to contemporary student-centered learning. The thematic analysis produced four connected themes: facilitative and compassionate teaching responsive to learners; dialogic questioning, reflection, and inclusive participation; formative correction, repetition, and instructional scaffolding; and modelling, experiential learning, and integrated Prophetic pedagogy.

The findings show that Prophetic teaching combined clear educational guidance with sensitivity to learners' age, readiness, needs, and emotional circumstances. Learners were not passive recipients. They participated by listening, questioning, answering, observing, practicing, reflecting, making mistakes, receiving correction, and applying knowledge. The teaching method also changed according to the learner, the educational purpose, and the immediate situation.

Prophetic pedagogy cannot be classified as entirely teacher-centered or learner-centered in the modern sense. The Prophet maintained educational authority and clear standards while giving learners meaningful opportunities to participate. Student-centered Islamic education should therefore not mean removing teacher guidance. It should combine compassionate authority, active participation, structured support, learner responsibility, and clear moral purposes.

The identified practices correspond with several principles of contemporary student-centered learning, including supportive relationships, guided inquiry, formative feedback, differentiated instruction, and experiential learning. However, these similarities do not mean that Prophetic pedagogy and modern educational theories are identical or that one was directly derived from the other.

The study was limited to twelve Hadiths from Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. Its findings are therefore interpretive and cannot represent every aspect of Prophetic education. Future research should first extend the corpus to include educational narrations from other recognized Hadith collections and examine whether the four themes remain applicable or require revision. Second, comparative studies can examine how classical commentators from different periods interpreted the same educational interactions, especially those involving correction, learner participation, and adaptation to individual circumstances. Third, empirical classroom research can investigate the implementation of selected Prophetic practices in university Islamic education through lesson observations, interviews with teachers and students, and analysis of learner participation and responses. These directions would test, refine, and contextualize the interpretive framework developed in this study.

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