



MADRASAHS OF THE PROPHET'S ERA AND THEIR CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

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Abstract:

The Madrasahs of the Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) era served as foundational institutions for religious, moral, and intellectual education, playing a pivotal role in shaping Islamic society. These early centers of learning, such as Suffah at Masjid al-Nabawi, not only provided spiritual guidance but also reflected an organized system of resource and capital management. Despite the absence of formal financial structures, the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions ensured the sustenance of these institutions through voluntary contributions (Sadaqah, Zakat, Waqf), labor sharing, and communal support. The capital was managed with simplicity, transparency, and a focus on collective welfare, ensuring equitable access to education regardless of socioeconomic status. This research explores the mechanisms used to manage educational capital during the Prophet's time and highlights how these principles can inform sustainable, ethical models for funding and administering madrasahs today. The study offers insights into aligning spiritual integrity with practical economic frameworks in religious education.

Keywords: *Madrasah, Prophet's Era, Capital Management, Suffah, Islamic Education, Waqf System, Resource Sustainability.*

Introduction: During the Prophetic era (ﷺ), when a historical review is conducted regarding formal educational institutions, it becomes evident that mosques held a central position in the Islamic educational system. Apart from the educational institution of "Suffah", it is challenging to identify any other formal educational establishment. The mosque was the focal point for political, cultural, and educational activities. However, the "Suffah" was considered a formal residential university where teachings of faith, citizenship, and morality were imparted. Most of those who resided there were individuals detached from worldly ties, dedicating their days and nights to asceticism, worship, and primarily the pursuit of knowledge. In the terminology of that time, these seekers of knowledge were referred to as "Qurra". This term appears consistently throughout "Sahih Bukhari".¹

In the Prophetic era (ﷺ), specific admission criteria were established and strictly adhered to for the residential institution of "Suffah". This establishment was not merely an educational institution but also a training center. The financial hardships of the seekers of knowledge did not hinder their academic pursuits, nor were they a burden on the state or the public. Instead, they were self-sufficient in meeting their expenses while also engaging in acts of charity and serving their teachers. The "Suffah" was a residential learning center where regular educational and instructional activities took place. However, the scope of knowledge acquisition during the Prophetic era was broader.

¹ Shibli Nomani, Allama, "Seerat-un-Nabi (ﷺ)", Muhammad Saeed and Sons-Karachi, Vol. 2, p. 89

People would visit scholars and learned individuals to quench their intellectual thirst. Some narrations indicate that apart from the “Suffah”, there were other places where the “Ashab al-Suffah” would study at night. According to “Musnad Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal”, Hazrat Anas (RA) mentioned that seventy individuals from the “Ashab al-Suffah” would attend lessons with a teacher at night and remain engaged in learning until morning. In addition to the formal “Suffah”, Dr. Hamidullah has mentioned another institution known as “Dar al-Qurra”, which was established in 2 AH at the house of Makhramah bin Nawfal.²

In the Islamic state, Medina held central importance as it was the permanent residence of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and also served as the hub of education. During the early period, the number of Muslims in other Arab tribes was relatively small. Therefore, it was essential to have a larger Muslim population to safeguard the center and to impart Islamic teachings to as many people as possible within a short time. To address the issues of population and the dissemination of education, the Prophet (ﷺ) encouraged Muslim tribes from outside Medina to settle there. Consequently, many external tribes migrated to Medina and established their residence. This encouragement from the Prophet (ﷺ) significantly increased Medina's population, leading to the construction of mosques in various neighborhoods. As a result, many Arab families left their homes and migrated to Medina. For instance, when Hazrat Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (RA) came to Medina, he brought eighty (80) people with him, and they settled there. Separate mosques were established in Medina for tribes like Juhaina and others, who had migrated there. Since Masjid al-Nabawi was not sufficient to accommodate everyone, these additional mosques were built to cater to their needs.³

The history of religious seminaries (Madaris) is as ancient as the history of Islam itself. As soon as the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) received the divine command to proclaim his prophet hood (وَإِنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ)⁴ began fulfilling this duty by inviting members of his tribe to his home, where he initiated the process of teaching and educating them. Later, when Allah's command (فَاصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ)⁵ the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) began openly preaching Islam. Those with sincere hearts who responded to this natural call were provided with systematic education and training. The Prophet (ﷺ) established formal educational systems and institutions, although these institutions cannot be termed "religious seminaries" in the conventional sense. This is because, at that time, Islam encompassed both the spiritual and worldly development of individuals and society—a principle that Islam continues to uphold today. However, in the modern Muslim world, particularly in the Indian subcontinent, education has been divided into "religious" and "secular" domains based on the perceived dichotomy between religion and the world. Despite this, the foundational and essential education in these institutions remained centered on the Qur'an and Sunnah. Before the migration to Medina, there were no

² Ghulam Abid Khan, “The Education System of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)”, Awami Kutab Khana-Lahore, p. 82-83.

³ Shibli Nomani, Allama, "Sirat-un-Nabi (ﷺ)", Vol. 2, p. 89-88

⁴ Ash-Shu'ara, 26:214

⁵ Al-Hijr, 15:94

designated educational institutions in Mecca where Muslims could peacefully acquire Islamic teachings. During the Meccan period, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) himself was the primary source of guidance, preaching, and education. The Companions (RA) would generally learn Islamic teachings discreetly due to the persecution by the Quraysh. Despite these challenges, in addition to the Prophet (ﷺ), notable figures such as Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (RA), Hazrat Khabbab bin al-Aratt (RA), Hazrat Mus'ab bin Umair (RA), and a few others were actively engaged in teaching and spreading the Qur'an. The informal study circles and learning centers of the Meccan era were primarily hubs of da'wah (invitation) and education, where the Qur'an was taught, and efforts were made for character-building and spiritual training, in accordance with the needs and sensitivities of the time. When the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) migrated to Medina, he initially stayed at the house of Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (RA) for three months. Subsequently, he laid the foundation of Masjid al-Nabawi, and in its northern corner, a platform with a canopy was constructed. This area, famously known as "Suffah" in history, became a center for education and learning. It is worth noting that the system of education and learning was not confined to "Suffah" alone. Several educational circles were also held in Masjid al-Nabawi from time to time. Those who pursued education were referred to as "Qurra" in the terminology of that era. These "Qurra" remained in the service of the Prophet (ﷺ), learning the principles, commandments, and truths of Islam while dedicating themselves to teaching. Meanwhile, others were engaged in agriculture, trade, and labor but would attend the learning circles at Masjid al-Nabawi whenever necessary to acquire knowledge.⁶

Literature review: The central educational institution of Medina was not limited to benefiting the city's Muslims but also attracted new Muslims from other regions through the allure of its knowledge. Indirect and subtle methods of acquiring and spreading knowledge also became effective means of its expansion. In the early Islamic era, Medina's social and economic conditions were not such that all Muslims of Arabia could be gathered there simultaneously for education and training. Therefore, efforts were made to encourage those who embraced Islam outside Medina to migrate closer to the Islamic center. In some cases, state-owned land was granted to them under the orders of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). In light of the prevailing circumstances, natural methods of promoting knowledge were adopted. These approaches ensured that issues of food, lodging, and transportation were avoided, daily life was not disrupted by large-scale movement, and the processes of education and training remained effective. A careful study of the educational conditions during the Prophetic era after the migration reveals that every person visiting Medina, even briefly to see the Prophet (ﷺ), would return enriched with knowledge and training. In the early days of Medina, the population was not large. However, whenever Muslims from outside Medina came to the city, whether for visiting or for participating in jihad, their essential education and training were provided during their stay. After fulfilling this responsibility, these returning Muslims

⁶ H. Rashid Ahmed, "The Practice of Religious Schools and Modern Social Requirements", University of Karachi, 2003, p. 79-80.

were equipped with lessons on jihad and basic Islamic teachings, enabling them to guide others in living an Islamic life upon their return. As the message of Islam spread far and wide, numerous delegations from different regions began visiting Medina to learn about the new faith. During their stay, they benefited from the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ). Many Arabs of that era were involved in trade, and their movements in search of livelihood also facilitated the dissemination of Islamic knowledge to distant regions. Within the first seven years after the migration, the Islamic welfare state of Medina had already established a basic system of education and learning. By 8 AH, following the conquest of Mecca, there was a pressing need to focus on the education and training of the newly converted Muslims of Mecca. To address this, the Prophet (ﷺ) initially appointed two of his Companions, Mu'adh ibn Jabal and Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (RA), as teachers in Mecca. They carried out the task of education and training for a considerable period, fulfilling the fundamental educational needs of the community. During the siege of Ta'if, some slaves of the Thaqif tribe who had abandoned their masters and embraced Islam were entrusted to six Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) for education and training. By the end of the Prophetic era, Islamic education and training were no longer confined to formal institutions. Instead, the responsibility for spreading knowledge was placed on every responsible and perceptive member of the Islamic state, who was encouraged to contribute to the dissemination of education within their capacity and sphere of influence.⁷

1-Madrasa/Masjid Abu Bakr (RA)

The first educational institution in the Makkah period was the mosque of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (RA). This mosque was located in front of his house, and in addition to offering prayers, Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA) would recite the Qur'an there, often reciting it aloud. Many of the children and women of Makkah, who were non-believers, would gather there upon hearing his melodious voice, attentively listening to the Qur'an, which caused their hearts to incline toward Islam. The mention of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq's mosque is recorded in "Sahih Bukhari" in this manner:

أَنَّ عَائِشَةَ زَوْجَ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ، قَالَتْ: " لَمْ أُعْطَلْ أَبُويَ إِلَّا وَهُمَا يَدِينَانِ الدِّينَ، وَلَمْ يَمُرَّ عَلَيْنَا يَوْمَ إِلَّا يَأْتِينَا فِيهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ، طَرْفِي النَّهَارِ: بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيَّةً، ثُمَّ بَدَأَ لِأَبِي بَكْرٍ، فَأَبْتَنِي مَسْجِدًا بِفِنَاءِ دَارِهِ، فَكَانَ يُصَلِّي فِيهِ وَيَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ، فَيَقِفُ عَلَيْهِ نِسَاءَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَأَبْنَاؤُهُمْ، يَعْجَبُونَ مِنْهُ وَيَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْهِ، وَكَانَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ رَجُلًا بَكَّاءً، لَا يَمْلِكُ عَيْنِيهِ إِذَا قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فَأَقْرَعَ ذَلِكَ أَشْرَافَ قُرَيْشٍ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ.⁸

"When the leaders of the Quraysh saw the growing number of people in the mosque and noticed that people were listening to the Qur'an with great enthusiasm, they decided to demolish the mosque and turn it into a barren place. They forced its teacher, Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA), to abandon the mosque. As a result, Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA) decided to leave Makkah with the intention of migrating. On his way, he met the leader of the Banu Daghna tribe, who inquired about his plans. Upon learning of his intention, he insisted

⁷ H. Rashid Ahmed, "The Practice of Religious Schools and Modern Social Requirements", p. 81-82.

⁸ Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Ismail, "Al-Jami' al-Sahih", Kitab al-Salah, Chapter: The mosque is on the road without harming people

that Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA) return to Makkah and offered him his protection, bringing him back under his shelter."

The permanent teacher of the mosque of Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA) was none other than Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA) himself. There was no other teacher or student at the mosque, except for him. However, this mosque can be regarded as the first educational institution in Makkah for the recitation of the Qur'an and the propagation of religion, where the women and children of the polytheists of Makkah would listen to the divine message of the Qur'an and be inclined towards Islam. As narrated by Ibn Ishaq, through the chain of narration from Hazrat Aisha (RA):

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ: وَكَانَ لِأَبِي بَكْرٍ مَسْجِدٌ عِنْدَ بَابِ دَارِهِ فِي بَنِي جُمَحٍ، فَكَانَ يُصَلِّي فِيهِ، وَكَانَ رَجُلًا رَفِيعًا إِذَا قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ اسْتَبَقَى. قَالَتْ: فَيَقِفُ عَلَيْهِ الصَّبِيَّانَ وَالْعَبِيدُ وَالنِّسَاءُ، يَعْجَبُونَ لِمَا يَرَوْنَ مِنْ هَيْئَتِهِ قَالَ: فَمَشَى رَجُلًا مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ إِلَى ابْنِ الدَّعْنَةِ فَقَالُوا: يَا ابْنَ الدَّعْنَةِ، إِنَّكَ لَمْ تُجِرْ هَذَا الرَّجُلَ لِيُؤَدِّبَنَا، إِنَّهُ رَجُلٌ إِذَا صَلَّى وَقَرَأَ مَا جَاءَ بِهِ مُحَمَّدٌ يَرِقُ وَكَانَتْ لَهُ هَيْئَةٌ، وَنَحْنُ نَتَخَوَّفُ عَلَى صِبْيَانِنَا وَنِسَائِنَا وَضَعْفَانِنَا أَنْ يَفْتِنَهُمْ، فَآتَاهُ فَمَرَهُ أَنْ يَدْخُلَ بَيْتَهُ فَلْيَصْنَعْ فِيهِ مَا شَاءَ.⁹

"Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (RA) was a tender-hearted person. When he recited the Qur'an, he would weep, and because of this, young boys, slaves, and women would stand around him, admiring his emotional state. Upon seeing this, a few of the Quraysh came to Ibn Daghna and said, 'O Ibn Daghna! You granted this man protection so that he would not harm us. However, he is the kind of person who, when he recites the Qur'an during prayer, which Muhammad (PBUH) brought, his heart fills with emotion, and he weeps. He has a specific manner of doing so, and we fear that our children, women, and others might be affected and be led astray (and accept Islam). Therefore, you should go to him and command him to stay at home and do whatever he wants there."

"Therefore, Ibn Daghna went to Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (RA) and said, 'Abu Bakr! Either you stop this practice or you return my protection to me.' In response, Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA) said, 'O Ibn Daghna! I have returned your protection to you, for the protection of Allah is enough for me.' Hazrat Aisha (RA) says:"

ثُمَّ بَدَأَ لِأَبِي بَكْرٍ، فَأَبْتَنِي مَسْجِدًا بِفِنَاءِ دَارِهِ وَبَرَزَ، فَكَانَ يُصَلِّي فِيهِ، وَيَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ، فَيَتَقَفُّ عَلَيْهِ نِسَاءُ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَأَبْنَاؤُهُمْ، يَعْجَبُونَ وَيُنْظَرُونَ إِلَيْهِ، وَكَانَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ رَجُلًا بَكَاءً، لَا يَمْلِكُ دَمْعُهُ حِينَ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ، فَأَفْرَعُ ذَلِكَ أَشْرَافَ قُرَيْشٍ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ، فَأَرْسَلُوا إِلَى ابْنِ الدَّعْنَةِ، فَقَدِمَ عَلَيْهِمْ فَقَالُوا لَهُ: إِنَّا كُنَّا أَجْرْنَا أَبَا بَكْرٍ عَلَى أَنْ يَعْبُدَ رَبَّهُ فِي دَارِهِ، وَإِنَّهُ جَاوَزَ ذَلِكَ، فَأَبْتَنِي مَسْجِدًا بِفِنَاءِ دَارِهِ، وَأَعْلَنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَالْقِرَاءَةَ، وَقَدْ خَشِينَا أَنْ يَفْتِنَ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَنَا، فَآتَاهُ، فَإِنْ أَحَبَّ أَنْ يَفْتَصِرَ عَلَى أَنْ يَعْبُدَ رَبَّهُ فِي دَارِهِ فَعَلْ، وَإِنْ أَبِي إِلَّا أَنْ يُعْلِنَ ذَلِكَ، فَسَلُّهُ أَنْ يَرُدَّ إِلَيْكَ ذِمَّتَكَ، فَإِنَّا كَرِهْنَا أَنْ نُخْفِرَكَ، وَلَسْنَا مُقَرَّبِينَ لِأَبِي بَكْرٍ الْإِسْتِعْلَانَ، قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ: فَأَتَى ابْنَ الدَّعْنَةِ أَبَا بَكْرٍ، فَقَالَ: قَدْ عَلِمْتُ الَّذِي عَقَدْتَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِ، فَإِنَّمَا أَنْ تَفْتَصِرَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ، وَإِنَّمَا أَنْ تَرُدَّ إِلَيَّ ذِمَّتِي، فَإِنِّي لَا أَحِبُّ أَنْ تَسْمَعَ الْعَرَبُ، أَنِّي أَخْفَرْتُ فِي رَجُلٍ عَقَدْتُ لَهُ، قَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ: إِنِّي أَرُدُّ إِلَيْكَ جَوَارِكَ، وَأَرْضِي بِجَوَارِ اللَّهِ.¹⁰

Thus, it is evident that the Mosque of Abu Bakr (RA) was a means of inviting people to Islam and spreading the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, which we can refer to as a place of learning, a mosque, or a Madrasa.

2- Dar al-Arqam:

⁹ Ibn Kathir, Ismail bin Omar, Abu al-Fida'i, "Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah", Dar al-Mu'trifah, Lebanon, vol. 2, p. 64

¹⁰ Al-Bukhari, "Al-Jami' al-Sahih", Kitab al-Kafala, chapter "The neighborhood of Abi Bakr in the Covenant of the Prophet (ﷺ).

The background of the great institution of “Dar al-Arqam” is as follows: In the early days of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) acted with wisdom and foresight, keeping the light of prophethood safe from the storms and challenges of the time for three years. During this period, he spread the light of guidance amidst the darkness of ignorance. Anyone who came near this divine light caused the flames of disbelief in the hearts of the Quraysh to flare up, making them feel as though their authority and pride were being threatened. As a result, they sought to persecute and kill the early Muslims. However, the Prophet (ﷺ), as a mercy to the world, welcomed them in a peaceful manner, without engaging in confrontation. For those sincere followers, the Prophet (ﷺ) created a sanctuary at the house of “Arqam ibn Abi al-Arqam”, where the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions could gather in safety to learn and worship. In this space, they could establish a close connection with Allah, learn His revealed messages, and submit to His will. “Dar al-Arqam” was the house of the noble young companion “Arqam ibn Abi al-Arqam”, a member of the Banu Makhzum tribe. It was a spacious and fortified building located to the south of the Kaaba, near Mount Safa, around 25 yards from the road heading north. It was strategically located in a secluded alley that offered safety and protection. As the persecution by the Quraysh intensified, “Arqam ibn Abi al-Arqam” generously dedicated his home to the Prophet (ﷺ) and the early Muslims as a place of refuge and learning. Imam Hakim has also recorded the declaration in which “Arqam” donated this house for the service of Islam. This house became a pivotal place where the teachings of Islam were imparted and where the early Muslim community gathered in the face of adversity.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، هَذَا مَا قَضَى الْأَرْقَمُ فِي رُبْعِهِ مَا حَازَ الصَّفَا أَنَّهُ صَدَقَةٌ بِمَكَانِهَا مِنَ الْحَرَمِ لَا تَبَاعُ وَلَا تَوْرَثُ
شَهَدَ هِشَامُ بْنُ الْعَاصِ وَمَوْلَى هِشَامِ بْنِ الْعَاصِ.¹¹

"This is the decision made by Arqam regarding his house, which is located near Mount Safa. Due to its proximity to the Sacred Haram, this house was regarded as sacred like the Holy Haram itself. It would neither be sold nor inherited. This decision is witnessed by Hisham bin As and his freed slave."

Thus, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) accepted this offer and established it as the first public educational institution for the companions (Sahabah). It became a place where the weak and the marginalized Muslims would receive education and training. Soon, “Dar al-Arqam” evolved into a grand institution of learning, where people were not only introduced to Islam but also provided with proper education, training, and spiritual purification. As Ibn Sa'd writes:

“كَانَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ يَسْكُنُ فِيهَا فِي أَوَّلِ الْإِسْلَامِ وَفِيهَا يَدْعُو النَّاسَ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ فَاسْلَمَ فِيهَا قَوْمٌ كَثِيرٌ.”¹²

"During the early days of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) resided in this house (Dar al-Arqam), where he called people to Islam, and many individuals accepted Islam there." Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, Imam al-Hakim, and Ibn Abd al-Barr also wrote that Dar al-Arqam became the center of Muslims and Islam in the early days. After it became the focal point

¹¹ Hakim Nisapuri, Muhammad bin Abdullah, "Al-Mustadrak Ali Sahiheen", Tazkirah Arqam bin Arqam, Darul Kitab Al-Ilmiyah-Lebanon, Vol. 3, p. 574

¹² Ibn Saad, Muhammad, "Al-Tabqat al-Kubra", Tazkirah al-Arqam ibn Abi al-Arqam, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, Lebanon, Vol. 3, p. 242.

of Islam and the first public educational institution, the Muslims were able to learn the teachings of Islam in peace and security, hidden from the eyes of the Quraysh.¹³

In conclusion, Dar al-Arqam was an intellectual institution where the verses of the Qur'an revealed up until that point were deeply ingrained in the minds of the students, and their character and behavior were refined according to these teachings. The students were also endowed with patience and perseverance. This was a residential institution where, at various times throughout the day, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (رضى الله عنه) personally engaged in the education and training of their companions.

Historical records and the study of Islamic biographies show that several important activities took place in Dar al-Arqam:

1. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) taught the newly converted Muslims the Qur'an and provided them with education and training.
2. The people who came to Dar al-Arqam were invited to Islam, and anyone who entered benefited from divine guidance.
3. It was a center of peace and comfort for the Muslims, especially for the poor, oppressed, and enslaved who sought refuge there.
4. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and his followers engaged in the remembrance of Allah and spiritual admonition, offering prayers and supplications together.
5. Dar al-Arqam was also a place where teachers and preachers were trained, and their performance was assessed. Various educational and preaching programs were also organized. Notable teachers from this institution included Hazrat Abu Bakr (رضى الله عنه), Hazrat Khabbab (رضى الله عنه), Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ud (رضى الله عنه), and Hazrat Mus'ab bin Umayr (رضى الله عنه).
6. The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) also conducted consultations with his companions in Dar al-Arqam, and most of the important decisions were made there, making it akin to a "House of Consultation" or the "Parliament House."
7. The establishment of Dar al-Arqam as a place of learning was a historic milestone, comparable to key events in Makkah's history, such as the Treaty of Fudhoul, the War of Fijar, and the Year of the Elephant. Just as the Quraysh marked their history with such events, Muslim historians also associate the events of the early Prophetic period with the time before and after the Prophet's arrival at Dar al-Arqam.

In short, Dar al-Arqam, which gained its fame as a prominent academic institution, holds great significance in Islamic history. It is also remembered by the blessed title "Dar al-Salam."¹⁴

3-Bait Fatimah bint Khattab:

Bait Fatimah bint Khattab was another important site for early Islamic learning and the spread of Islam during the Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) mission in Makkah. Fatimah bint

¹³ Ibn Abd al-Barr, Yusuf bin Abdullah, "Al-Sati'ab fi Ma'rifat al-Sahhab Tazkirah Arqam, Dar al-Jail. Beirut, vol. 1, p. 131

¹⁴ Mubarakpuri, Athar Qazi, "Khairul-Qarun Schools and Their System of Education and Training", Idara-e-Islamiyat-Lahore, p. 27

Khattab (رضى الله عنها), the sister of the famous companion Umar ibn al-Khattab (رضى الله عنه), played a pivotal role in the early days of Islam.

The significance of her house lies in the fact that it was one of the first places where the message of Islam was secretly spread during a time of severe persecution and opposition from the Quraysh.

Background and Role of Fatimah bint Khattab:

Conversion of Umar ibn al-Khattab (رضى الله عنه): Fatimah's home became an essential site during the conversion of her brother, Umar ibn al-Khattab (رضى الله عنه), one of the most influential companions of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). When Umar was initially hostile to Islam, he set out to confront the Prophet (ﷺ) but was redirected to his sister's home, where he found that his sister and her husband had already embraced Islam. Upon hearing the Qur'an being recited there, Umar's heart was softened, and this ultimately led to his conversion to Islam.

A Safe Haven: Fatimah bint Khattab's house provided a safe refuge for Muslims during the early days of Islam. The house became a private gathering place for believers to pray and learn about Islam away from the prying eyes of the Quraysh. It was a quiet refuge where the early Muslims could come together to strengthen their faith and learn the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Spreading the Message: Fatimah's conversion and the subsequent transformation of her home into a site of Islamic learning were significant steps in the spread of Islam within Makkah. As the Quraysh persecuted Muslims, these quiet, hidden spaces, such as Fatimah's house, allowed the message of Islam to be passed on to new converts and provided a place to pray, learn, and prepare for the difficult times ahead.

The house of Fatimah bint Khattab (رضى الله عنها) thus played an essential role as an early center of Islamic learning and a gathering place for some of the first believers, making it an important site in the history of Islam during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Hazrat Fatimah (RA) bint Khattab was the sister of Hazrat Umar (RA) ibn Khattab. She, along with her husband Hazrat Saeed (RA) ibn Zayd, embraced Islam in the early days of the Islamic faith. The couple would learn the Qur'an at their home from Hazrat Khabbab (RA) ibn Arat.

One day, before accepting Islam, Hazrat Umar (RA), with his sword drawn, set out to kill the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). However, on his way, he was informed by Hazrat Nu'aim (RA) that his sister and brother-in-law had embraced Islam. Upon hearing this news, Hazrat Umar (RA) became extremely angry and rushed to his sister's house. There, he saw his sister and her husband reading the Qur'an. According to Ibn Hisham, it is narrated that:

”وَعِنْدَهُمَا خَبَابُ بْنُ الْأَرْتِ مَعَهُ صَحِيفَةٌ، فِيهَا: طَهُ يُفْرُهُمَا إِيَّاهَا”¹⁵

"They were with Khabbab (RA) ibn Arat, who had a manuscript in which Surah Ta-Ha was written. He was teaching them both from it."

In "Sirat al-Halabiya", it is narrated from the words of Umar (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) had arranged for the provision of food for two Muslims at my brother-in-law's

¹⁵ Ibn Hisham, "Sirat al-Nabawiyyah," Islam Omar ibn al-Khattab, vol.1, p.344

house—one was Khabbab (RA), and I do not remember the name of the other. Khabbab (RA) would visit my sister and brother-in-law regularly and teach them the Qur'an. Umar (RA) continues, "When I reached the door (كان القوم جلوساً يقرؤون صحيفة معهم)¹⁶ A group was sitting and reading the manuscript that was present with them.¹⁶

4. The Dararqam Academy was steadily progressing towards its goal, making swift progress on its journey. The number of people was increasing day by day. The tribal leaders of Makkah, seeing their popularity waning and unable to bear the growing reverence for the “mercy to the world’s ﷺ”, soon realized that their delusions of using brutal oppression to extinguish this Islamic movement were futile. All their strategies and malicious tactics had failed. They saw that even Hamza ﷺ and Umar ﷺ had embraced Islam, and their ambassadors had faced humiliating failure in the court of Negus. These blows left the leaders even more distraught. After long deliberation, they reached a unanimous decision to besiege the Prophet ﷺ and his family and to destroy them. Hence, all the tribes agreed on a pact, vowing that no one would maintain ties with the Banu Hashim family, nor engage in any trade with them, nor allow food and supplies to reach them. In other words, they declared a complete boycott of the Prophet ﷺ and his family, and this pact was written and hung on the door of the Kaaba.¹⁷

Thus, Abu Talib, the leader of the tribe, along with the Prophet’s ﷺ supporters, was forced to stay in a valley under siege from the 7th to the 10th year of the Prophethood (three years). Despite the social and economic boycott, and in the face of extreme poverty and hardship, the Prophet ﷺ did not abandon the mission of teaching and educating. He continued to train his supporters, imparting knowledge and guidance. During the Hajj season, when people were safe, he would leave the Shi'b Abi Talib (the valley) and invite various tribes to Islam. Whenever new surahs and verses were revealed, they were taught to the Companions, who were instructed and familiarized with their meanings. During this time, the Prophet ﷺ made sure not to miss any opportunity for the training and character development of his companions. He emphasized practicing taqwa (piety) and encouraged enhancing this virtue. He taught methods to strengthen the connection with Allah, instructed on ways to convey the message of the truth, and also provided lessons on patience and perseverance in the most difficult situations. Therefore, despite these harsh conditions, the process of teaching and education continued uninterrupted for three years, making the Shi'b Abi Talib a religious institution in its own right.

Research Questions:

1. How were educational and financial resources managed in the Madrasahs during the Prophet Muhammad’s (ﷺ) era, particularly in institutions like Suffah?
2. What lessons can contemporary Islamic educational institutions learn from the capital management practices of early Madrasahs to ensure sustainability and equity?

Significance of Research: This research is significant as it uncovers the foundational principles of capital management in the Prophet’s (ﷺ) era, highlighting ethical, transparent, and community-based models. It offers valuable insights for modern

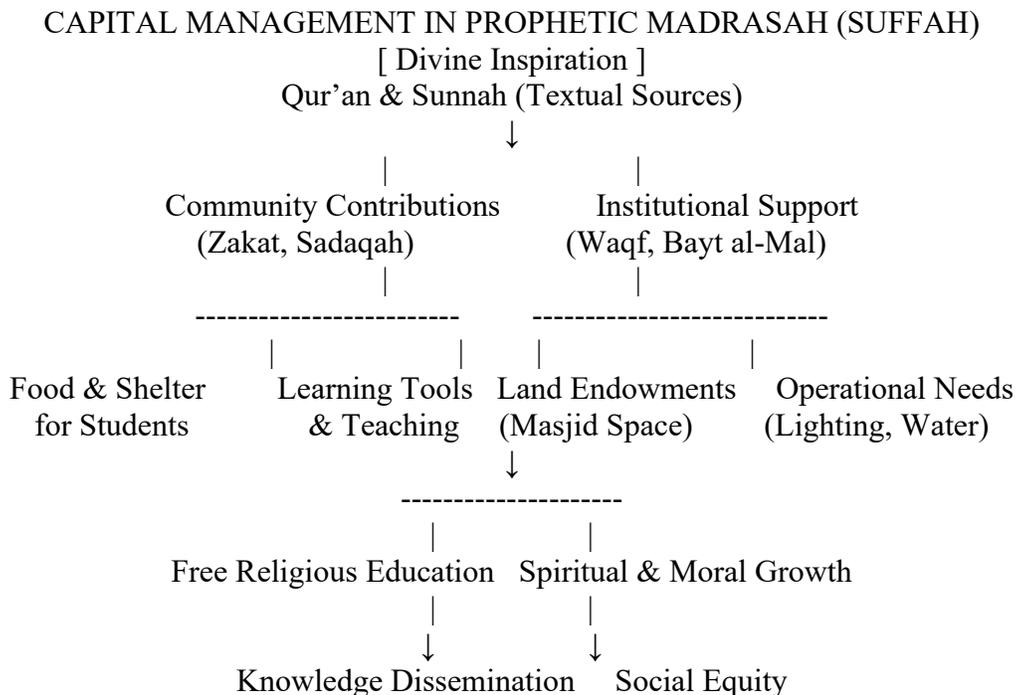
¹⁶ Ibn Hisham, "Sirat al-Nabawiyyah," Islam Omar ibn al-Khattab, vol.1, p.388

¹⁷ Ibid

madrasahs to develop sustainable financial systems rooted in Islamic values, ensuring inclusive access to religious education and long-term institutional resilience.

Research Methodology:

This study adopts a textual and analytical methodology based on the examination of primary Islamic sources—the Qur’an, Hadith, and Seerah (Prophetic biography)—to explore the establishment and financial management of Madrasahs during the Prophet Muhammad’s (ﷺ) era. Key events, narrations, and practices related to Suffah and the early educational structure of Masjid al-Nabawi are analyzed using classical commentaries (Tafsir and Sharh al-Hadith), historical chronicles such as Ibn Hisham’s Seerah, and Fiqhi literature on Waqf and Bayt al-Mal. The research also examines the socio-economic dynamics of early Madinah, including community-based support systems, voluntary charity, and resource pooling. The study compares these early financial management strategies with contemporary madrasah funding models to derive practical and ethical lessons for today’s Islamic educational institutions.



This model illustrates how madrasahs during the Prophet’s time were financially sustained through community participation, Islamic financial ethics, and a focus on collective responsibility, all centered around the pursuit of Ilm (knowledge) and Tarbiyah (character-building).

Data Analysis: After the first pledge of Aqabah, the spread of Islam began in Medina, but it was after the second pledge of Aqabah that Islam spread rapidly in Medina. This was especially due to the beautiful and compelling invitation of the first teacher of Medina, Hazrat Mus'ab ibn Umayr (RA), whose efforts led to the tribes of ‘Aws’ and ‘Khazraj’ among the Ansar of Medina embracing Islam in large numbers. By two years

before the Prophet's migration to Medina, the construction of mosques and the teaching of the Quran had already started in Medina.

The first center for the teaching of the Holy Quran and educational institution in Medina was Masjid Bani Zariq. Imam Ibn Qayyim writes in his famous book "Zad al-Ma'ad":

فاول مسجد قرى فيه القرآن بالمدينة مسجد بنى زريق.¹⁸

"The first mosque where the Quran was recited in Medina was the Mosque of Banu Zurayq."

The first teacher of this educational institution was Hazrat Rafi' bin Malik, from the Banu Zariq tribe of the Khazraj. He embraced Islam during the first pledge of Aqabah and, over the course of ten years, memorized the Quran with the guidance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, including Surah Yusuf. Hazrat Rafi' was the leader of his tribe. After returning to Medina, he immediately encouraged the Muslims of his tribe to learn the Quran and began teaching them at a platform in the town. He was the first to teach Surah Yusuf in Medina, and when Surah Taha was revealed in Makkah, he wrote it down and brought it to Medina, teaching it to the Banu Zariq. Hazrat Rafi' was the first teacher and reciter of the Quran in Medina. Later, a mosque, the Mosque of Banu Zariq, was built at the same platform. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ arrived in Medina, he was pleased to see Hazrat Rafi's educational and religious contributions.¹⁹

The second educational institution was located a short distance south of Medina, at the place of Quba, where the Quba Mosque was later built. After the First Pledge of Aqabah, many companions, especially those who were weaker in health, migrated from Makkah and settled at the place of Quba. In a short period, a significant number of them gathered here. Among them was Hazrat Salim (may Allah be pleased with him), the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah, who was the most knowledgeable in the Qur'an. He taught everyone the Qur'an and provided religious education, in addition to leading prayers. The educational activities continued until the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) migrated to Medina. Before arriving in Medina, he reached Quba, where he ordered the construction of a mosque.

Once, the Prophet (peace be upon him) heard Hazrat Salim reciting the Qur'an and expressed his appreciation, saying, "All praise is due to Allah, who has granted my Ummah a scholar and reciter of the Qur'an like Salim." He also said to the companions:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ: اسْتَفْرَأُوا الْقُرْآنَ مِنْ أَرْبَعَةٍ، مِنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ فَبَدَأَ بِهِ، وَسَالِمٍ، مَوْلَى أَبِي حُدَيْفَةَ، وَأَبِي بِنِ كَعْبٍ، وَمُعَاذِ بْنِ جَبَلٍ.²⁰

"Hazrat Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) say, 'You should learn the Qur'an from Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, Salim (the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah), Ubayy ibn Ka'b, and Mu'adh ibn Jabal.'"

The students of this Madrisa were accommodated at the residence of Hazrat Abu Khuthaymah Sa'ad ibn Khuthaymah Owasi (RA), which was designated as a hostel.

¹⁸ Ibn Qayyim, "Zad al-Ma'ad fi Huda Khayr al-Ibad," Ihya al-Turath al-Islami, Beirut, Vol. 1, p. 100

¹⁹ Al-Jazari, Ibn al-Athir, "Asad al-Ghabah," Tazkirah Rafi' ibn Malik-Tehran. Vol. 2, p. 157

²⁰ Muslim, "Sahih al-Jami", Book of the Virtues of the Companions, Chapter on the Virtues of Abdullah ibn Mas'ud and his mother (may Allah be pleased with them).

Hazrat Abu Khuthaymah (RA) was the chief of his tribe, Banu Amr ibn Awf. He embraced Islam during the first pledge of Aqabah. Being alone and without family, his house was vacant, so it was used to house those migrants who had left their families behind in Makkah and had come to Medina alone, or those without families. Because of this, his house was referred to as "Bait al-A'zab" (the house of bachelors).

Similarly, at the Madrasah of Masjid Quba, the companions (RA) would gather for teaching and learning. Abdul Rahman ibn Ghanam (RA) narrates:

حَدَّثَنِي عَشْرَةٌ، مِنْ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالُوا: كُنَّا نَتَدَارَسُ الْعِلْمَ فِي مَسْجِدِ قُبَاءٍ إِذْ حَرَجَ عَلَيْنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: تَعَلَّمُوا مَا شِئْتُمْ أَنْ تَعَلَّمُوا فَلَنْ يَأْجُرَكُمْ اللَّهُ حَتَّى تَعْمَلُوا.²¹

"Dozens of the companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) narrated to me that we used to study and teach religious knowledge in the Masjid (Madrisa) Quba. In this situation, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) came to us and said, 'You may study whatever you wish, but as long as you do not act upon it, Allah will not reward you.'"

It is evident that Masjid Quba was an educational institution, which was residential in nature, and its teachers and students were primarily immigrants. Their food, clothing, and other necessities were also arranged here. Local Muslims also received education from this institution.

The third educational center was located about a mile north of Medina, in the house of Hazrat As'ad bin Zararah. This area was situated after the Banu Salama settlement in the region of Naqee' al-Khuzamat, a lush, green, and scenic area. It was known for the soft, delicate, and colorful grass called Khazimah that grew there, and it also received floods from the Wadi Aqiq region. Later, Hazrat Umar bin Khattab (RA) turned this area into a pasture for the horses used in jihad.

This madressa, in terms of its location, was not only attractive but also distinct in its comprehensiveness and utility compared to the two previously mentioned madressas. After the first pledge of Aqabah, the leaders of the Ansar tribes of Aws and Khazraj responded positively to the call of Islam and requested the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to send a teacher for the education of the Quran and religious matters in Medina. In response to their request, the Prophet (PBUH) sent Hazrat Mus'ab bin Umair (RA). According to the narration of Ibn Ishaq, it was after the first pledge of Aqabah that the Prophet (PBUH) sent Hazrat Mus'ab bin Umair (RA) to Medina to teach the Ansar.

فَلَمَّا انْصَرَفَ عَنْهُ الْقَوْمُ، بَعَثَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ مَعَهُمْ مُصْعَبَ بْنَ عُمَيْرِ بْنِ هَاشِمِ بْنِ عَبْدِ مَنَافِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الدَّارِ بْنِ قُصَيِّ، وَأَمَرَهُ أَنْ يُفَرِّقَهُمُ الْقُرْآنَ، وَيُعَلِّمَهُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ، وَيُفَقِّهَهُمْ فِي الدِّينِ، فَكَانَ يُسَمَّى الْمُقْرَى بِالْمَدِينَةِ: مُصْعَبٌ. وَكَانَ مَنزَلُهُ عَلَى أَسْعَدِ بْنِ زُرَّارَةَ بْنِ عُدْسٍ، أَبِي أَمَامَةَ.²²

"When the Ansar returned after the pledge of Aqabah, the Prophet ﷺ sent Mus'ab ibn Umayr ﷺ with them and instructed him to teach the people the Qur'an, impart Islamic knowledge, and instill in them understanding and insight into the religion. As a result, Mus'ab ibn Umayr ﷺ became well-known as a teacher in Medina, and he stayed at the house of As'ad ibn Zararah."

²¹ Al-Qurtubi, Abu Omar Yusuf bin Abdullah, "Jami' Bayan al-Ilm wa Fadlah", Dar Ibn al-Jawzi-Saudi Arabia, Vol. 1, p. 694

²² Ibn Hisham, "Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah", Vol. 1, p. 434.

These two individuals were partners in spreading Islam and teaching the Qur'an. Mus'ab ibn Umair رضي الله عنه not only taught the Qur'an but also led the prayers for both the Aws and Khazraj tribes. After one year, when he brought the people of Medina to Makkah to meet the Prophet ﷺ, he had become well-known by the title "Muqari" (the teacher). Before the obligation of the Friday prayer was established, As'ad ibn Zararah had already arranged for the first Friday prayer in Medina, which was led by Mus'ab. For this reason, some traditions attribute the establishment of the Friday prayer to them.²³

It is in Kanzul al-Ummal:

(عن عبد الرحمن بن كعب بن مالك قال: كنت قائد أبي حين ذهب بصره فكنيت إذا خرجت معه الجمعة فسمع التأذين استغفر لأبي أمارة أسعد بن زرارة ودعا له، فقلت له: يا أبت! إنما شأنك إذا سمعت التأذين استغفرت لأبي أمارة ودعوت له وصليت عليه؟ قال: أي بني! إنه كان أول من جمع بنا قبل قدوم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في نقيع الخضعات في حرة بني بياضة قلت: وكم كنتم يومئذ؟ قال: كنا أربعين رجلاً).²⁴

"On the authority of Abdur-Rahman bin Kaab bin Malik, who said: I was the guide of my father when he lost his sight. Whenever I went out with him on Friday and he heard the call to prayer, As'ad bin Zararah would ask forgiveness for Abu Umamah and pray for him. I said to him: O my father! What is the matter with you that when you hear the call to prayer, you ask forgiveness for Abu Umamah and pray for him and pray for him? He said: O my son! He was the first to lead us in the prayer before the arrival of the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, in Naqi' al-Khadimat in the Harrat of Banu Bayadah. I said: How many were you that day? He said: We were forty men".

"Hazrat Mus'ab bin Umair (RA) was appointed to this school and along with him, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had also sent Hazrat Ibn Umm Kulthum (RA) to Medina as a guide. Hazrat As'ad (RA) bin Zurarah was also a scholar of the Holy Quran and Islamic teachings. Therefore, the three of them started the process of education and training in this school together. Hazrat Mus'ab (RA) worked as the head teacher and also performed the duties of Imam. In addition, Hazrat As'ad (RA) had organized Friday prayers in this school even before the Friday prayers were made obligatory. It is as if this school was not just an Islamic school but it was the center of Islam. All the Muslims of Medina had a special relationship with this center and they used to gather here especially on Fridays. Due to this center of Muslims, the status of the religious and academic center of the Jews, "Beit al-Madaris", was lost. Where the Jews of Medina used to teach, educate, train and pray, etc. Thus, the Aus Khazraj became independent of the Jews and became attached to their own center of knowledge and religion. Before Islam, the Aus and Khazraj tribes were very poor in literacy and thus they were dependent on the Jews. However, a few people knew how to read and write. These included Rafi' bin Malik, Zaid bin Thabit, Usaid bin Hudair, Saad bin Ubadah and Ubayy bin Ka'b.²⁵

Result and Findings: The study reveals that the Madrasahs of the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ era, particularly Suffah in Masjid al-Nabawi, operated on a simple yet effective model of capital management rooted in Islamic ethics, communal responsibility, and

²³ Mubarakpuri, Qazi Athar, "Khairul-Qarun Schools and Their System of Education and Training", Idara Islamiyat-Lahore, p. 34

²⁴ Alauddin Ali ibn Husamuddin, "Kanz al-Ummal", Al-Risala Foundation, Beirut, vol. 13, p. 611

²⁵ Mubarakpuri, Qazi Athar, "Khairul-Qarun Schools and Their System of Education and Training", p. 37.



voluntary support. There was no formalized financial structure, yet the educational institution thrived due to strong moral foundations and collective consciousness. Wealthy companions contributed generously through Zakat, Sadaqah, and direct provision of food, clothing, and learning materials, while land and infrastructure were often endowed (Waqf) for educational use. One key finding is the emphasis on transparent, needs-based distribution of resources, ensuring that all students, regardless of social background, had equal access to religious education. The system promoted economic justice and spiritual equality, blending material support with moral development. Another significant result is the active integration of education with society, as students were encouraged to participate in community service, military campaigns, and knowledge dissemination. These findings suggest that early Islamic madrasahs were sustainable, socially embedded, and spiritually driven institutions. Modern madrasahs can benefit from this model by implementing transparent resource management, community-based funding, and value-based governance, creating resilient and inclusive institutions aligned with both tradition and contemporary needs.

Futuristic Approach: A futuristic approach to capital management in madrasahs integrates traditional Islamic funding methods with modern financial technologies. Utilizing digital Waqf platforms, transparent Zakat systems, and blockchain-based audits can enhance accountability and efficiency. This model ensures sustainable support, wider community participation, and global access to quality Islamic education rooted in ethical values.