OPEN ACCESS
The Citizen
Vol: 1, Issue: 1
Faculty of Social Sciences,
Lahore Garrison University, Lahore.

Date of Acceptance: 13-04-2026
Date of Publishing: 30-06-2026
January-June-2026
Email: thecitizen@lgu.edu.pk
OJS:https://thecitizen.lgu.edu.pk/index.php/thecitizen

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF SOCIAL ISSUES CREATING DISORDER IN SOCIETY AND ITS SOLUTIONS IN THE LIGHT OF SEERAH OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH)

Hafiz Muhammad Nawaz

M.Phil Islamic Studies/Senior Scale Stenographer,Punjab local Government Board (LG&CD Department):
hafizmnawaz786@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Contemporary Muslim societies face deep social crisis. Inequality, moral decline, family breakdown, extremism and political corruption are tearing at the fabric of communal life. This article argues that the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is not merely a historical biography but a living manual applicable for resolving these disorders. Drawing on primary sources including the Quran, Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abu Dawod, Jamia Tirmadhi, Sunan Ibne Majah and Seerah literature, this study applies an analytical and thematic methodology to match specific social pathologies with prophetic remedies. The Prophet's model of social reforms built on justice, compassion, consultation, education and institutional trust, remains relevant and practically workable in the twenty-first century.

Keywords: Social Issues, Society Disorder, Seerah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Islamic Reforms, Justice, Twenty-first century

1. Introduction

Every civilization confronts moments of social fracture. Institutions weaken and trust collapses. The Muslim world today is navigating precisely such a moment. From Cairo to Karachi, Istanbul to Jakarta societies that once prided themselves on cohesion are grappling with structural inequality, rising domestic violence and the disintegration of family bonds.

These are not merely policy failures. They are moral failures rooted in the abandonment of foundational values. Economists offer structural solutions. Sociologists propose institutional reforms. Politicians promise legislative fixes. Yet the disorder deepens.

Islamic scholarship has long insisted that the Prophet's biography is not a relic of the past. It is a dynamic source of practical wisdom. The Quran itself describes him as an 'uswa hasana' a beautiful model of conduct. The Seerah, therefore, is not merely a chronicle of events from seventh-century Arabia. It is a methodological guide for social transformation at any time and in any place.[1]

This article undertakes an analytical examination of the major social disorders plaguing contemporary Muslim communities. It then traces the prophetic responses to analogous problems in the Meccan and Medinan periods. The goal is not to romanticize the past but to extract transferable principles from it.The methodology is analytical and thematic. Primary sources are the Quran, Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim and Seerah Ibn Hisham. Secondary scholarship from figures like Martin Lings, Tariq Ramadan and Karen Armstrong supplements the analysis. The argument unfolds in five stages: a diagnosis of current social disorders, a contextual understanding of pre-Islamic conditions, a thematic study of prophetic solutions, a reflection on modern applicability, and a conclusion.

2. Importance of the topic:

This topic matters because Muslim societies are facing various social issues. People often look for solutions in Western theories or government policies. Whereas, the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) gives us a complete and tested model of how to solve these problems because he successfully transformed a society full of similar disorders through justice, kindness, and good character. Studying his Seerah is therefore not just a religious duty, it is a practical need. It helps us understand that the answers to our modern social crises already exist in our own tradition, and that by

[1] Quran 33:21: See also Tariq Ramadan, In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 4–8.

following his example, we can rebuild trust, fairness, and peace in our communities.

3. Major Social Issues Creating Disorder in the Contemporary Society

3.1 Structural Inequality and Economic Injustice

The gap between the wealthy elite and the poor people in Muslim-majority countries is staggering. According to the World Inequality Report 2022, the top ten percent of income earners in the Middle East and North Africa control over sixty percent of the region's total income. This is not an abstract statistic. It translates into hunger, homelessness, lack of healthcare, and despair.[2]

Economic injustice breeds resentment. Resentment breeds radicalization. Radicalization breeds violence. The chain is well-documented. When people feel permanently excluded from prosperity, they become vulnerable to extremist ideologies that promise radical redistribution, often through violent means.

3.2 Family Breakdown and Gender-Based Violence

The family unit is the foundational cell of any society. When it fractures, everything above it weakens. Divorce rates are climbing across Muslim societies. Domestic abuse remains chronically underreported due to social stigma, weak legal protections and cultural pressures to maintain silence. Children raised in abusive or broken households disproportionately contribute to crime, addiction, mental illness and the inability to form stable relationships.

Gender based violence is particularly acute. UNICEF data suggests that in parts of South Asia and the Arab world, over thirty percent of women report experiencing physical or sexual violence by intimate partners. This figure likely underestimates reality. The normalization of patriarchal

[2] World Inequality Lab, World Inequality Report 2022 (Paris: World Inequality Lab, 2022), 12–14. Available at https://wir2022.wid.world/.

dominance often falsely legitimized through selective religious citation creates a culture where abuse goes unchallenged.[3]

3.3 Moral Decline

Across Muslim societies, bribery, nepotism and corruption have become systemic rather than exceptional. Public institutions are hollowed out by self-interest. Religious practice often continues superficially while ethical principles are quietly abandoned. People pray five times a day but deceive in business. They fast in Ramadan but exploit their workers.

3.4 Sectarianism, Tribalism and Political Extremism

Intra-Muslim violence, Sunni versus Shia, Arab versus non-Arab, one ethnic group against another has reached catastrophic proportions in parts of the Muslim world. The wars in Yemen, Syria and Iraq have their roots partly in sectarian manipulation, fueled by both internal power struggles and foreign intervention. But the underlying tribal and sectarian tensions are real and predate external interference.[4]

Extremist organizations exploit social grievances, identity crises and theological grievances to recruit the dispossessed. Their narrative is simple that the community has been humiliated and violent restoration of honor is the only authentic Islamic response. This narrative is theologically bankrupt. But it is psychologically powerful when communities feel abandoned.

3.5 Youth Identity Crisis

Young Muslims face an acute identity crisis. They are caught between the cultural demands of modernity and the spiritual imperatives of their faith. Many feel neither fully Western nor fully rooted in their inherited tradition. This double alienation creates fertile ground for psychological instability, radicalization, or a complete disengagement from religious community life.

---

[3] UNICEF, 'A Familiar Face: Violence in the Lives of Children and Adolescents' (New York: UNICEF, 2017), 72–75.

[4] Vali Nasr, The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006), 21–30.

The absence of meaningful mentorship, purposeful education and constructive community engagement leaves enormous numbers of young Muslims spiritually adrift. They hunger for belonging and meaning.

4. The Pre-Islamic Context: A Society in Disorder

Understanding the Seerah requires understanding the context into which it was revealed. Pre-Islamic Arabia, the period where the Muslims called Jahiliyyah, was not simply a morally primitive era. It was a period of sophisticated social dysfunction. Tribal warfare was multigenerational. Blood feuds could last centuries. Infanticide of female babies was practiced openly. Slavery was not merely permitted but normalized and celebrated. Economic exploitation was systemic, with the wealthy merchant class of Mecca dominating trade routes while the poor, the enslaved and the orphaned had no institutional protection.[5]

Women had no legal personhood. Widows were treated as heritable property. The orphan was a figure of social contempt rather than compassion. Power determined rights. The weak had none.

This society also had latent virtues: a culture of hospitality, a sense of tribal solidarity, an oral tradition of remarkable sophistication and a poetry that preserved collective memory. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did not arrive to destroy Arab culture. He arrived to purify it. He preserved what was good and challenged what was unjust. This selective, principled approach to cultural engagement is itself one of the most instructive aspects of his methodology.[6]

5. Solutions from the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

5.1 Establishing Justice as the Foundation of Social Order

The Constitution of Medina that was a remarkable political document that established a pluralistic, rights-based social compact among Muslims, Jews, and polytheists. This charter guaranteed freedom of religion, tribal

[5]. Ibn Hisham, Al-Sira al-Nabawiyya, ed. Mustafa al-Saqqa, Ibrahim al-Abyari, and Abd al-Hafiz Shalabi, 4 vols. (Cairo: Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi, 1955), 1:131–145.

[6] . Martin Lings, Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2006), 23–29.

autonomy within a unified political framework, mutual defense obligations, and shared governance of public life. It was the world's first known written constitution and reflected the Prophet's deep conviction that just institutions are the precondition of social peace.[7]

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) institutionalized zakat not as charity but as a structured redistribution mechanism with legal force. He established rules of trade that prohibited deceptive practices. He personally adjudicated disputes without favoritism. When his daughter Fatimah was implicated in a case, he declared famously that even she would face the same justice as anyone else. This impartiality was not merely personal virtue. It was deliberate institution-building.

5.2 Elevating the Status of Women and Protecting Family Integrity

The Holy Prophet's reform regarding gender relations was one of the most radical aspects of his mission. He prohibited female infanticide. He established women's right to inherit, to own property, to initiate divorce, to seek education, and to participate in public life. He consulted his wives on matters of community importance. His wife Khadijah was his first supporter. His wife Aisha became one of the most important scholars in early Islam, transmitting thousands of hadiths and issuing legal opinions.[8]

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said that ‘best of you is the best to his family, and I am the best of you to my family.' He washed his own clothes. He helped with household chores. He expressed tenderness for his children and grandchildren publicly. This modeling of equitable, compassionate family conduct was as important as any formal legal pronouncement.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) also addressed domestic violence directly. The hadith literature records his explicit disapproval of men who beat their wives. He created social and legal mechanisms through which

[7] W. Montgomery Watt, Muhammad at Medina (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), 221–228.

[8] Leila Ahmed, Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 41–63

women could seek redress. He empowered them through religious knowledge, giving them direct access to the Quran and to his teachings.

5.3 Moral Reformation Through Character Education

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) famously declared: 'I was sent to perfect noble character.' This statement defines his mission at its core. Social reform for him was inseparable from moral transformation. He did not begin by changing laws. He began by changing people. For thirteen years in Mecca, he built a community of character before building a state. The Medinan institutions rested on the Meccan character development.[9]

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) knew his Companions individually. He addressed each person according to their specific weakness and strength. To one man obsessed with anger, he gave the counsel: 'Do not be angry.' He repeated it three times, reducing a complex moral problem to a simple, memorable directive. This contextual, individualized moral education is a model that contemporary institutions, schools, mosques, and families have largely abandoned in favor of mass instruction. He also tied morality to accountability—both divine and communal. He created a culture of self-reflection and repentance. Mistakes were not scandals to be hidden but opportunities for growth to be acknowledged. The institution of Tawbah (repentance) was psychologically sophisticated: it allowed individuals to confront their failures without shame-induced paralysis and return to the community without permanent stigma.

5.4 Dismantling Tribalism Through Universal Brotherhood

The Mu'akhat, the Brotherhood that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) established between Meccan migrants (Muhajirun) and Medinan helpers (Ansar) was a social engineering miracle. He paired individuals across tribal, ethnic and economic lines. The Ansar shared their homes, their wealth, and their social capital with strangers. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) then declared in his Farewell Sermon: 'No Arab is superior to a non-Arab except by piety.' This was a direct assault on the core tribal ideology of pre-Islamic Arabia.[10]

---

[9] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, n.d.), hadith no. 8952.

[10] Ibn Hisham, Al-Sira al-Nabawiyya, 2:115–121.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) elevated Bilal, an Ethiopian former slave, to the role of the first Muadhdhin, the voice that called all Muslims to prayer. He appointed Zayd ibn Haritha, a freed slave, as a military commander over Arab nobility. These were not incidental choices. They were deliberate, visible, public acts of social leveling. They communicated something that words alone could not: that the new social order operated on entirely different principles from the old one. The Holy Quran reinforced this:

"O mankind, we have created you from a male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you". The criterion of human worth was shifted from lineage and wealth to character and conduct. This remains the most radical egalitarian statement in the ancient world.[11]

5.5 Engaging and Empowering Youth

The Prophet did not marginalize young people. He gave them responsibility. Usama ibn Zayd was appointed commander of an army at the age of seventeen. Ali ibn Abi Talib became the Prophet's most trusted confidant and deputy while still in his teens. Abdullah ibn Abbas, cousin of the Prophet, became one of Islam's greatest scholars while barely an adolescent. Young people were not sidelined to peripheral roles.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) created structured contexts for learning, mentorship. The Suffah, a covered platform adjacent to the mosque in Medina functioned as a residential learning space for young men who devoted themselves to education and community service. They studied under direct prophetic guidance. They became, in effect, the first generation of professionally trained Muslim scholars and community leaders.[12]

6. Practical Application of Seerah in the Contemporary Context

The principles extracted from the Seerah are applicable frameworks. But their application requires contextual intelligence. The challenge is not to

[11] Quran 49:13. See Ismail ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, trans. Muhammad Nasib al-Rifai (London: Al-Firdous, 1998), 4:223–226.

[12] Muhammad ibn Saad, Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir, ed. Eduard Sachau, 8 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1904–1940), 1:254. See also Karen Armstrong, Muhammad: A Prophet for Our Time (New York: HarperOne, 2006), 132–140.

transplant seventh-century Arabia into the twenty-first century. It is to identify the underlying principles and adapt their expression to contemporary realities.

On economic justice: Muslim-majority states and Muslim communities in the West must revive the spirit of zakat as a structural institution rather than a seasonal charity. Islamic endowment institutions can be redesigned to fund education, healthcare and housing for the poor, creating Islamic social welfare infrastructure that reduces dependence on corrupt state systems.

On family and gender: The prophetic model demands an honest reckoning with patriarchal distortions that have misrepresented Islamic teachings on women. Religious education must include explicit instruction on the Prophet's treatment of women as a normative standard. Legal reforms in Muslim-majority countries must align with the rights the Prophet himself established fourteen centuries ago.[13]

On moral education: Mosques, Islamic schools, and family environments must shift from information-centered to character-centered pedagogy. Children must be taught not merely what Islam says but how it transforms—through lived example, through storytelling of prophetic conduct, through community service that embeds compassion as a practiced skill rather than an abstract value.

On sectarianism: Muslim institutions at every level must name tribalism and sectarianism as un-Islamic. Interfaith and intra-faith dialogue structures—modeled on the Constitution of Medina—can build the trust needed to de-escalate communal tensions. Political leaders who exploit sectarian divisions must be challenged, not accommodated, by religious authorities.

On youth: Muslim communities must invest substantially in mentorship infrastructure. The Suffa model, dedicated learning and service communities for young people can be replicated through youth centers,

[13] Amina Wadud, Quran and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 67–82.

mentorship programs and community engagement projects that give young Muslims a sense of belonging, and contribution.

7. Conclusion

The situation of social disorders of the society is very serious and alarming. Inequality is structural. Family breakdown is cultural. Moral decline is institutional. Sectarianism is political. Youth alienation is existential. No single solution can address all of these simultaneously. However, the Seerah of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) offers a coherent, tested, divinely guided framework for social transformation. It demonstrates that change is possible that a deeply fractured, unjust, violent society can be transformed within decades into a community of remarkable cohesion, justice, and moral vitality. The Prophet accomplished this not through force alone, not through rhetoric alone, but through the patient, principled, personal embodiment of the values he preached.[14]

The lesson for contemporary Muslims is demanding. It requires not merely the recitation of the Prophet's biography but its serious study, its honest analysis, and its courageous application. It requires leaders who lead by example. It requires institutions that serve rather than exploit. It requires communities that hold themselves accountable rather than deflecting blame.

8. Bibliography

Primary Sources

1. Al-Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Ismail. Sahih al-Bukhari. Translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan. 9 vols. Riyadh: Darussalam, 1997.
2. Ibn Hanbal, Ahmad. Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal. Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, n.d.
3. Ibn Hisham, Abd al-Malik. Al-Sira al-Nabawiyya. Edited by Mustafa al-Saqqa, Ibrahim al-Abyari, and Abd al-Hafiz Shalabi. 4 vols. Cairo: Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi, 1955.

[14] Ramadan, In the Footsteps of the Prophet, 196–202. Ramadan argues persuasively for the universality of prophetic principles across historical contexts.

4. Ibn Kathir, Ismail. Tafsir Ibn Kathir. Translated by Muhammad Nasib al-Rifai. 4 vols. London: Al-Firdous, 1998.

5. Ibn Saad, Muhammad. Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir. Edited by Eduard Sachau. 8 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1904–1940.

6. Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj. Sahih Muslim. Translated by Abdul Hamid Siddiqi. 4 vols. New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1986.

Secondary Sources

1. Ahmed, Leila. Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.

2. Armstrong, Karen. Muhammad: A Prophet for Our Time. New York: HarperOne, 2006.

3. Lings, Martin. Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources. Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2006.

4. Mubarakpuri, Safiyy al-Rahman. The Sealed Nectar (Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum). Riyadh: Darussalam, 2002.

5. Nasr, Vali. The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006.

6. Ramadan, Tariq. In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

7. UNICEF. 'A Familiar Face: Violence in the Lives of Children and Adolescents.' New York: UNICEF, 2017.

8. Wadud, Amina. Quran and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

9. Watt, W. Montgomery. Muhammad at Medina. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956.

World Inequality Lab. World Inequality Report 2022. Paris: World Inequality Lab, 2022. https://wir2022.wid.world/.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License