

The Role of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) Tolerance in Promoting Social Harmony and Unity in the Society

Dr. Shehla Riaz

Post Doctorate Fellow Islamic Research Institute IIUI, Assistant Professor Islamic Studies, Riphah International University Islamabad

Abstract:

Tolerance among individuals is a critical step towards achieving social harmony and well-functioning society. The teachings and life of Prophet Muhammad PBUH emphasize the importance of tolerance as a fundamental virtue in fostering social harmony. The approach of Prophet Muhammad towards tolerance can be seen through his interactions with people of various religions, backgrounds, and cultures. They demonstrated respect, empathy, and acceptance of Prophet PBUH to tribal and societal divisions, allowing Him to form a strong alliance and establish a just and harmonious society in Arabia. The Prophet Muhammad's PBUH emphasis on tolerance creates a framework for resolving conflicts and bridging differences through peaceful dialogue and negotiation. His teachings emphasize the importance of empathy, forgiveness, compassion, encouraging people to overcome prejudices and engage in constructive dialogue in order to promote social cohesion. Furthermore, the Prophet's tolerance extends beyond religious boundaries to include issues of social, economic, and gender equality. His teachings uphold the principles of justice, fairness, and equality, while also advocating for the rights of marginalized groups and encouraging social inclusion. The lesson of tolerance from the Sirah of Prophet Muhammad PBUH is more relevant for today's era of increasing globalization, cultural diversity, and interfaith interactions. Today when societies are interconnected, the need to foster respect among diverse communities becomes more important. The basic aim of the study is to highlight Prophet's PBUH character as well as the impact of His teachings on promoting peaceful coexistence, diversity respect, and conflict resolution while opting qualitative research approach. The application of Prophet Muhammad's teachings on tolerance is critical in the face of rising polarization, discrimination, and conflicts in the modern world. Individuals and communities can work to build harmonious societies where diversity is celebrated and differences are respected by embracing his legacy of compassion, humility, and understanding. The study will propose practical strategies for promoting tolerance and social harmony.

Key Words: Tolerance, Conflict resolution, Sirah of Prophet PBUH, social Harmony, Unity peaceful coexistence, religious pluralism, social cohesion, inclusive communities

Introduction:

The word "Tolerance" in English means generosity, easiness and to bear.¹ This concept includes the acceptance, respect of diversity, forms of expression, and ways of being human. In Arabic the world 'Afw means pardon forgiveness, sparing, dispensation, exemption, and excuses. The word Rawadari is used in Urdu. It enables an individual to carry out all of his responsibilities while also respecting and cooperating with people of other faiths. The religion Islam meaning peace and security has faced enormous challenges since its inception.² Islam was revealed at a time when a lot of people denied the respect for humanity. Fourteen hundred years ago the Arabian Peninsula had extremely dangerous situation. Gambling, alcohol, tribal hatred, racial pride was common in

¹ Ibn Manzur, Lisan Al-'Arab vol. 2 (Beirūt: Dār Sadar, 1414 A. H.), 489.

² Bodley R. V.C, The Messenger: The Life of Moḥammad, (New York: Garden City, 1946), 145.

this society. There was no patient tolerance and respect for each other as swords were drawn over trivial matters, and wars raged year after year.

During the darkness that overwhelmed the world, on one blessed night, the divine revelation was sent down along with a noble, and comprehensive message for humanity.³ With the arrival of Islam all the Arabia long-standing calamities have been eradicated and the dignity for human being was restored. Islam has preached the atmosphere of peace harmony, justice and created a spirit of brotherhood. It highlighted the importance of protecting one another's rights, which resulted in the formation of a peaceful society.⁴ Tolerance, patience, forbearance, and open-mindedness are basic characteristics of Islam, the last divine religion. In the time of anger Islam directed towards self-control. Prophet PBUH said:

﴿مَنْ كَظَمَ غَيْظًا - وَهُوَ قَادِرٌ عَلَى أَنْ يُنْفِذَهُ - دَعَاهُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عَلَى رُؤُوسِ الْخَلَائِقِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى يُخَيِّرَهُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْحُورِ مَا شَاءَ﴾⁵

“The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: If anyone suppresses anger when he is in a position to give vent to it, Allah, the Exalted, will call him on the Day of Resurrection over the heads of all creatures, and ask him to choose any of the bright and large eyed maidens he wishes.”

The Prophet Muhammad PBUH signed several peace treaties with hypocrites, polytheists, Jews, and Christians to overcome the most difficult situations for the sake of peace to society. During the conquest of Makkah, He PBUH declared the forgiveness for all. With his strategy and political wisdom, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) defeated all the challengers while spreading the message of Islam.⁶ So it can be said that the most important manifestation of tolerance in Islam is religious freedom. All principles, values, beliefs, and laws are for the benefit of man and the pursuit of happiness in life.⁷

Significance of the Topic

Humans and every living soul desires peace and ever wise people agree to this without having any dispute. It is mentioned in the Holy Quran as following:

“أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا آمِنًا وَيَتَخَطَّفُ النَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ”⁸

“Do they not see that We have given them a sanctuary of safety whereas people around them are being snatched away.”

Peace and order are such a blessing and people in any society can only prosper when they live in peace. Peace is the message of every Prophet's teaching. Prophet Ibrahim (AS) prayed to Allah:

³Dr. Jamal Badawi, Women under the shade of Islam, (published by organization of Islamic Conference), 10

⁴ Dr. Naseem Akhtar and Dr. Zia-ur- Rahman, *Difficulties & Challenges Facing Islam in Establishing Peace on Arabian Lands and the Holy Prophet's PBUH Strategy*, vol.5, No.1, Journal of Religious studies (July-Dec 2021), 112-125.

⁵ Sulaymān ibn al-Ash‘th Abū Dāwūd, *Al-Sunan, kiṭāb al-Adab*, (Cairo: Muṣṭafa Muḥammad Press, n.d.) Ḥadīth 4775.

⁶ Dr. Naseem Akhtar and Dr. Zia-ur- Rahman, *Difficulties & Challenges Facing Islam in Establishing Peace on Arabian Lands and the Holy Prophet's PBUH Strategy*, 112-125.

⁷ Rawaa Maḥmūd Ḥussain, *A Monogram on Islamic Tolerance*, International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, S.N

⁸ Al-Qur’ān 29:67

“وَأَذِّقْ آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ”⁹

“And when Abraham prayed: “O my Lord! Make this a place of security and provide those of its people with fruits for sustenance.”

A society having tolerant atmosphere provides a conducive working environment, stability and harmony which are helpful for socioeconomic structure of the nations. Islam teaches tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and human dignity throughout the world. It directs to adherents, respect of all religions and prophets. Religious tolerance is one of the important factors that contribute to human unity. Islam holds that all men are equal before Allah Almighty and religious beliefs must be respected.¹⁰ The Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad's PBUH teachings are the inspiration and guaranty of peace and security for humanity.¹¹ Islam guides people to dialogue, argument with others through respectful and compassionate manner.

“أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِهِمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ”¹²

“(O Prophet), call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation,¹² and reason with them in the best manner possible.”

So, the primary message of the Qur'ā is peace, unity and harmony.¹³

Objectives

Tolerance is important in fostering social harmony and unity among diverse societies. The current study aims to explain the role of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) tolerance in promoting harmony and unity. The paper investigates the Prophet's historical context and analyses his actions, teachings, and interactions with people of various backgrounds and faiths. The study highlights how the tolerant behavior of Prophet served as a model for promoting social harmony and unity in society.

Basic Concepts of Qur'ān

Human's Dignity

Qur'ān recognized and honored all the humans with dignity, respect irrespective of their belief, gender, or color as Allah Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān:

“وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ”¹⁴

“Indeed, We honored the progeny of Adam”

This respect and dignity for human is also found in the practices of Prophet PBUH.

⁹ Al-Qur'ān 14:35

¹⁰ Prof. Dr. Fazli Rabbi, Concept of Tolerance in Islam for Promotion of Human Unity, Al-Basirah, 1-17.

¹¹ Dr. Farhat 'Aziz and Dr. Musfirah Maḥfooz, The Role of Peace in Stability of the Society an Analysis in Islamic Perspective, al Basira, vol.10, no 1. (Jan-June, 2021),

¹² Al-Qur'ān 16:125

¹³ Abdul Quddūs Suhaib and Farhat 'Aziz, “Sectarian Intolerance in Pakistan: An Analysis of Causes, Challenges, and Solutions”, Islamic Studies, (2023), 131-141.

¹⁴ Al-Qur'ān 17:70

﴿عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ أَبِي لَيْلَى، قَالَ كَانَ سَهْلُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ وَقَيْسُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ قَاعِدَيْنِ بِالْقَادِسِيَّةِ، فَمَرُّوا عَلَيْهِمَا بِجَنَازَةٍ فَقَامَا. فَقِيلَ لَهُمَا إِنَّهُمَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ، أَمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الدِّمَّةِ فَقَالَا إِنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَرَّتْ بِهِ جَنَازَةٌ فَقَامَ فَقِيلَ لَهُ إِنَّهَا جَنَازَةٌ يَهُودِيَّةٍ. فَقَالَ أَلَيْسَتْ نَفْسًا؟﴾¹⁵

Narrated `Abdur Rahman bin Abi Laila: Sahl bin Hunaif and Qais bin Sa`d were sitting in the city of Al-Qadisiya. A funeral procession passed in front of them and they stood up. They were told that funeral procession was of one of the inhabitants of the land i.e. of a non-believer, under the protection of Muslims. They said, "A funeral procession passed in front of the Prophet PBUH and he stood up. When he was told that it was the coffin of a Jew, he said, "Is it not a living being (soul)?"

2. Existence of Differences in Societies

Allah Almighty has decreed that there will be differences in society.

”وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ“¹⁶

“Do not revile those whom they invoke other than Allah, because they will revile Allah in ignorance out of spite”

Therefore, everyone must learn how to get along with people who have different perspectives.

Freedom of Choice

The **existence of different religions in humanity is the Wisdom and Will** of Allah who gave His creation complete freedom and choice in this regard. One of Islam's fundamental teachings is religious freedom, which recognizes the right of individuals to practice their own faith without being forced to do so. Allah says in the Qur`ān:

”لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ“¹⁷

“There is no compulsion in religion.”

Tolerance as a primary principle in Islam

Tolerance is regarded as a fundamental principle in Islam which emphasize the value of mutual respect, unity, and coexistence among people from various backgrounds, beliefs, and cultures. Islam encourages its adherents to be tolerant in their interactions with others, whether Muslims or non-Muslims.

The levels of tolerance can be among family members, community members, and people of different religions.¹⁸ Tolerance in Islam refers to listen the opposite views patiently as the Prophet Muḥammad PBUH never forced any non-Muslim to accept Islam. His Exemplary character urged people to accept Islam which was endorsed by H.G.Wells in following words:

¹⁵ Abū `Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā`īl ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mughīrah al-Bukhārī, *al-Jām` al-Ṣaḥīḥ, Kitāb*

Funeral, 3rd ed. (Dār Ṭawq al-Nijāt, 1422). Ḥadith: 1312,1313.

¹⁶ Al-Qur`ān 6:108

¹⁷ Al-Qur`ān 2:256

¹⁸ Prof. Dr. Fazli Rabbi, *Concept of Tolerance in Islam for Promotion of Human Unity*, Al-Basirah, vol. 1., (2012), 1-17.

“Although, the sermons of Human Freedom, Fraternity and Equality were said before and we find a lot of them in Jesus of Nazareth, but it must be admitted that it was Muḥammad PBUH who for the first time in history established a society based on these principles¹⁹

To promote tolerance and peace there is no compulsion to be a Muslim. Rather allowing everyone to practice their respective religions.²⁰

Prophet Muhammad PBUH set examples of tolerance through his interactions with people of different religious backgrounds while signed treaties ensuring their safety and rights within Islamic societies. Hence, tolerance is a central Islamic principle that promotes harmony, respect, and coexistence among diverse individuals and communities.

Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) Life and Teachings

Before the advent of Islam and Muhammad PBUH there was a time of complete darkness. The lights of major civilizations of the world (e.g., China, Egypt, Greece) had turned off. Persian as well as Roman civilizations also lost their reputations. The luxury lifestyles of leading class represented violence who manipulate the teachings of earlier prophets to achieve their goals.²¹ Muhammad's PBUH newly delivered message gained such a rapid thrust which led people towards accepting Islam. The main point behind this instant acceptance was that Muhammad (PBUH) brought them what they desperately needed. The precious gift of Muhammad's PBUH teachings were for all humanity. Being a Muslim was not required to enjoy the fragrance of these flowers.²² In the Quran Prophet PBUH is declared the best example and model for humanity.²³ The traditional ignorance of Arabs was crushed under the Prophet's feet and lead the lost humanity towards new path of success and altered the human's nature who became the dearest brothers.²⁴ The Prophet's teachings and actions continue to inspire millions of people to this day, promoting social harmony, unity, and tolerance. His emphasis on embracing diversity, engaging in interfaith dialogue, forgiveness, empathy, and just governance serve as guiding principles for building inclusive and harmonious societies.

Peaceful Environment in Arab and Holy Prophet's (PBUH) Strategy

Prophet Muhammad PBUH changed the Arab society gradually.²⁵ Psychology also describes how much of our behavior is maintained because it is consistently reinforced.²⁶ Therefore, He PBUH through the revelation of Allah, used a logical approach to implement the order of alcohol and gambling. The Prophet PBUH won many battles, release the prisoners and returning their wives to their homes with dignity. He laid the example for a civilized society based on human rights. In

¹⁹ H. G. Wells, *A Short History of the World*, ed. Michael Sherborne (London: Penguin, 2006)

²⁰ Abdul Ghafoor Baloach & others, *The Teaching of the Holy Prophet PBUH to Promote Peace and Tolerance in an Islamic Social Culture*, *European Journal of Social Sciences* (2012), Vol.31 No.1., 36-41

²¹ Naeem Aḥmad Siddiqī, *Mohsin-e-Insaniat*, (Lahore: Islamic Publishers, 1977), 22.

²² Syed Sulaymān Nadvi, *Khutbat-e-Madrās* (Lahore: Idarah Islamiyat, s.n), 143.

²³ Al-Qurān 33:21

²⁴ Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Ali Nadvī, *Insanī Dunya Par Musalmano Ky ‘Urooj-o-Zawāl Ka Athār*, (Karachi: Majlise Nashriyat-e-Islām, 1955), 138

²⁵ Dr. Muḥammad ‘Atif Aslam Rao. *The Methodology of the Holy Prophet PBUH for dealing with Societal Conflicts: A Research Based Study*, *Hazara Islamicus* (October 2018), vol. 7, No 1, 1-19

²⁶ Bernstein, Penner, Clarke-Stewart and Roy, *Psychology*, 211

both war and peace, his forgiveness of his enemies serves as an example and a cornerstone of current international law and instilled the people a sense of respect for great human values.²⁷ Recognizing Jerusalem as a Qiblah was also included in the various peace initiatives despite the fact that the Prophet's (PBUH) heart was devoted to Bait-Allah.²⁸ The Hudaibiyah incident is another example of Prophet's (PBUH) preference for peace, The Holy Qur'an refers to this peace as a victory.²⁹

Interactions with Diverse Communities and Prophet PBUH:

The Prophethood of Muhammad PBUH was free of ethnic, national, and linguistic discrimination and emphasized the importance of diversity. The Prophet engaged in active dialogue with members of various religious communities, including Jews, Christians, and polytheists. By focusing on shared ethical values, he sought common ground and promoted mutual understanding. People from various countries and speaking various languages attended Muhammad's (saw) gatherings. He PBUH desired and achieved a society free of caste, color, and creed prejudices. He PBUH gave a society to humanity what it deserved. This egalitarian approach laid the groundwork for inclusive societies in which people from various backgrounds could come together and contribute to the community's well-being. Human history had never seen the examples of His PBUH love, tolerance and peace.

Prophet's PBUH Tolerance, Justice, and Minorities

There are a lot of examples which highlights that Islam respects humans and makes no distinction between religion or caste. To promote the message of peace, the life of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH demonstrates glorious examples of good behavior with non-Muslims. He PBUH accepted the non-Muslim gifts³⁰ and meal invitations.³¹ Thus, He PBUH founded a society based on love, tolerance, dignity which reflect the compromising and tolerant policy of Him PBUH. Seventy renowned Quraish warriors were imprisoned during the Battle of Badr. They were treated well despite being the most vigorous opponents of Islam. The Muslim were directed to look after the prisoner's needs ahead of their own. While recalling the time of imprisonment and instructions by the Holy Prophet PBUH, Abu Aziz (who later converted to Islam) stated that these instructions had impact on the Muslims that they gave us bread and themselves ate dates.³²

Principles of Tolerance Exemplified by Prophet Muhammad PBUH

Tolerance is equated with justice in the Holy Quran, which means that no one should be discriminated or subjected to abuse/cruelty because of his religion.³³ Throughout his life, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) demonstrated various examples of tolerance.

²⁷ Dr. Muhammad Atif Aslam Rao. *The Methodology of the Holy Prophet for dealing with Societal Conflicts: A Research Based Study*, 1-19

²⁸ Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi, Qamruddin Samtho, *Al-Nabiyoul Amin wa al-Qur'an al-Mubeen Ifadaat*: (Karachi: Azad Communication, 1993), 28.

²⁹ Al-Qur'an, 49:1.

³⁰ Ahmad bin Hambal, *Al-Musnad*, volume 1 (Bairut: Dārul al-Ahya Al-turath Al-'Arabi), 92

³¹ Ibne Kaseer, *Tafsīr-al-Quran al-Azeem*,. volume 2 (Bairut: : Dārul al-Ahya Al-turath Al-'Arabi), 34.

³² Ibne Hassham, *Seerat al-Nabvi*, Dārul al-Ahya Al-turath Al-'Arabi), 288

³³ Dr. Farhat Aziz and Dr. Musfirah Mahfooz, *The Role of Peace in Stability of the Society An Analysis in Islamic Perspective*,

Medina Treaty

Holy Prophet Muhammad PBUH made treaties with various communities to promote peace and tolerance. After the Hijrah of Muslims from Makkah to Madina, there was challenge about the Jewish (in Madina) and polytheists (in Makkah) who were trying to push the Muslims out of Madinah. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) examined all internal and external risks. To resolve all immediate issues, and to bring peace to Madina, a momentous treaty known as Madinah Charter (Mithāq-e-Medinah) was contracted. For the promotion of tolerance, peace, and Brotherhood in Madinah this treaty played a vital role. The religious freedom had granted to Jews in Medina which was a key component of this treaty. The treaty was very clear that nobody should be forced to accept to Islam.³⁴ People of various religions living in the medina were given full legal rights, and all religious affairs were handled properly.³⁵

Similarly, non-Muslim's property remained in their possession.³⁶ While pursuing a policy of tolerance and assistance, the treaty of Madinah is regarded as a cornerstone.³⁷ This treaty established a unified community of Muslims and non-Muslims, guaranteeing their rights and freedom to practice their respective religions. It demonstrated the Prophet's willingness to accommodate and respect different religious beliefs in society. The Medina Constitution protected the rights of religious minorities, promoted peaceful coexistence and religious pluralism by encouraging social harmony and tolerance among various religious groups. Meeting with non-Muslims was the strategy of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH to promote collectivism. He would greet them in a brotherly and friendly manner rather than as a stranger.³⁸ Muslims need to promote a positive environment and respect for the dignity of each human being. What is more, they must eliminate prejudice. It is wrong to believe oneself to be always right.³⁹

Pact with Christians of Najran

The treaty of Holy Prophet's PBUH towards Christians of Najran is considered an exemplary which state that the safety of honor, property, stock, gifts, and religion of Christians living around Najran are in Allah and His prophet's guarantee. Their current situation would remain the same and none of their rights would be violated.⁴⁰ At a time when everyone was unaware of angelic laws, the Holy Prophet introduced these great principles. Islam seeks to spread global prosperity, and everyone is given freedom to exercise their rights as long as Islamic Sharia Law is followed.⁴¹ This is the greater example of equality in world's history, and there is need to put it back into

³⁴ Dr. Hameed Allah, "Al-Wathaiq Al-Syasaah fi 'Ahd al-Nabavī (P.B.U.H) (Cairo: Lajnah al-Talīf wa al-Tarjama, 1941), 4.

³⁵ Dr. Hameed Allah, 'Ahd-e-Nabavī (P.B.U.H) main Nizām Hukmaranī, (Karachi: Karachi Academy 1987), 197.

³⁶ Ibne Hassham, *Seerat al-Nabvi*, 19.

³⁷ Dr. Hameed Allah, 'Ahd-e-Nabavī (P.B.U.H) main Nizām Hukmaranī, 27.

³⁸ Dr. Hameed Allah, *Mazhabī Intiha Pasandī Ka Rujhan*, (Islamabada: Wazarat-e-Mazhabī Umūr 2004), 19.

³⁹ Abdul Quddus Suhaib and Farhat Aziz, *Sectarian Intolerance in Pakistan: An Analysis of Causes, Challenges, and Solutions*, 131-141

⁴⁰ Allama Blazrī Futūḥh Al-Baldān, (Cairo: Idarah Al-Nashr, Cairo, s.n), 27-28,

⁴¹ Ibn e Hassham, *Seerat al-Nabvi*, 471,

practice. This is need of hour to draft this treaty in its real spirit so the several obstacles to tolerance can be overcome in today's time⁴²

The Conquest of Makkah

On the conquest of Makkah, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) forgave the most vehement opponent of Islam and declared it a day of mercy, love, and happiness. It was at this point that the enemy began to convert to Islam. The world has no examples of the Prophet's (PBUH) peaceful behaviour.⁴³

Examples of Prophet PBUH Tolerance with non-Muslim delegations

Prophet Muhammad PBUH attended a delegation from Negus by Himself. He PBUH served them and stated that these are the people to whom Muslims owe a great debt. They had done well for the Muslims when they had migrated to their land. Moreover, when Muslims tried to prevent Christian delegation visited Medina from praying, the Prophet PBUH forbade them to do so and allowed the delegation to them to preach according to their own rituals in Masjid-e-Nabawee.⁴⁴ These examples demonstrate Muhammad's PBUH dedication to tolerance, unity, and peaceful social coexistence. His actions and teachings continue to inspire Muslims today, regardless of their religious or cultural backgrounds, to embrace tolerance and respect for others.

Impact of Prophet Muhammad's Tolerance in Mitigating Conflicts

Being a best model for humanity Prophet Muhammad PBUH, the founder of Islam, played a significant role in promoting tolerance and mitigating conflicts during his time and beyond. His teachings and actions emphasized the importance of peaceful coexistence, dialogue, and justice. Prophet Muhammad demonstrated exemplary conflict resolution skills. He sought peaceful resolutions to disputes and encouraged negotiation and mediation. His ability to reconcile conflicting parties, even in challenging situations, set an example of diplomacy and nonviolence. He established a just and fair society, where all individuals, regardless of their social status, were treated with dignity and respect. His teachings promoted the eradication of discrimination and exploitation, which contributed to social harmony and reduced conflicts arising from inequality. It is important to note that the impact of Prophet Muhammad's tolerance in mitigating conflicts extends beyond his time. His teachings and example continue to inspire Muslims worldwide to promote peace, tolerance, and coexistence. However, it is essential to consider historical context and various interpretations of his teachings, as different perspectives exist within the Muslim community.

Opinions of non-Muslims about Prophet Muhammad's tolerance

According to renowned orientalist H. A. R. Gibb, obtaining Islamic services is essential for fostering harmony and tolerance between the East and the West.⁴⁵ J. Toyeen Bee expressed that it is a big achievement of Islamic teaching to eliminate the racial discrimination and that using this service has become a global need in the modern era.⁴⁶ Gilbert had viewed that Foot-in-the-door is the

⁴² Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Sani, *Rasūl-e-Akrm (P.B.U.H) aur Rawadārī*, (Karachi: Fazli sons, 1998), 193.

⁴³ Ibn e Hassham, *Seerat al-Nabvi*, 412

⁴⁴ Ibn e Kaseer, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*.

⁴⁵ H.A.R Gibb, *Whither Islam*, (London. 2000), 329.

⁴⁶ A.J. Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial*, (New York, 1948), 205.

technique through which we learn from the life of the Holy Prophet PBUH how to reduce differences and establish harmony.⁴⁷ Hence this states that complying with minor requests may lead to compliance with larger, more significant requests in the future.⁴⁸

Social Harmony and Unity in Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) Community

Social harmony and unity are important ideals of Islamic Teachings. Islam emphasizes the importance of cultivating a sense of community, promoting unity, and fostering harmonious relationships among individuals and within society. Through his teachings and personal example, Prophet Muhammad PBUH played a pivotal role in promoting social harmony and unity in society. His extraordinary tolerance for people of different backgrounds, beliefs, and cultures was a powerful catalyst for fostering peaceful coexistence and social cohesion. The word peace means happiness, prosperity and Islam is the religion of peace and security.⁴⁹ Some key aspects of social harmony and unity in Islam are:

- Equality and Brotherhood: Islam teaches that all humans are equal and part of a single universal brotherhood. The concept of brotherhood encourages unity and solidarity, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual support.
- Respect for Diversity: Islam recognizes and values human diversity, as well as the differences between people, whether they are related to race, ethnicity, language, or culture.
- Cooperation and Mutual Assistance: Islam encourages cooperation and mutual assistance among individuals and communities which strengthens social bonds and promotes a sense of unity.
- Justice and Fairness: A just society in which everyone's rights are respected and protected is essential for social harmony and unity. In all aspects of life, Islam emphasizes the importance of justice and fairness.
- Conflict resolution: Islam encourages peaceful conflict resolution and discourages violence or aggression. The Prophet Muhammad exemplified peaceful conflict resolution through dialogue, mediation, and arbitration.

These Islamic principles and teachings seek to foster social harmony, unity, and cooperation.

Challenges and Obstacles to Achieving Social Harmony:

Due to various factors and obstacles, achieving social harmony can be a difficult task. Most common obstacles to achieving social harmony are:

- Prejudice and Discrimination
- Extremism and Radicalization
- Inequality and Injustice
- Political and Ideological Differences
- Historical and Cultural Baggage

⁴⁷ Freedman, J.L. & Fraser, S.C. (1966). *Compliance without pressure: The foot-in-the-door technique*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 4, 195-202, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/foot-in-the-door_technique, retrieved 14-11-12.

⁴⁸ Gilbert, S. J. *Another look at the Milgram obedience studies: The role of the graded series of shocks*, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, vol. 7, no. 4, (1981), 690–695

⁴⁹ Nadeem al-Wajidi, *Islām and the World of Peace*, (New Dehli: Rashtriya Sahara, 2013), 7

- Globalization
- Lack of Dialogue and Understanding

Strategies for promoting social harmony, tolerance and unity

To promote tolerance, social harmony and unity Individuals, communities, institutions, and governments must all work together to promote social harmony, tolerance, and unity. Here are some strategies that can help to promote social harmony:

- Education is critical in fostering understanding, empathy, and tolerance. Incorporating curricula that promote diversity, multiculturalism, and interfaith understanding from an early age can help combat stereotypes and promote inclusivity. Workshops, seminars, and cultural exchange programmes can also be organized by educational institutions, community centers, and religious organizations to raise awareness and foster dialogue.
- Interfaith dialogues, joint community projects, and cultural events can be helpful to bring people from various backgrounds together, share their experiences and build relationships based on mutual respect and cooperation..
- Creating spaces for constructive conversations, both online and offline, can facilitate discussions on challenging topics and promote empathy and tolerance. Encouraging active listening, empathy, and seeking common ground can help overcome differences and build bridges of understanding.
- Celebrating cultural festivals, promoting multicultural events, and creating inclusive spaces can also contribute to a sense of belonging and unity.
- Promoting fairness, justice, equal access to opportunities, healthcare, education, employment, and respect for human rights can contribute to a cohesive and harmonious community.
- Volunteering for social causes, participating in community projects, and collaborating on initiatives that benefit all members of society can help build bonds and promote unity.
- Responsible and ethical media representation can play a significant role in promoting social harmony. Encouraging media outlets to promote diverse narratives, counter stereotypes, and avoid sensationalism can contribute to a more informed and empathetic society.

Overcoming these challenges will necessitate the collaboration of individuals, communities, governments, and institutions. It entails promoting inclusivity, equality, and respect for diversity through education, dialogue, and policies. Building social harmony is an ongoing process that requires the continued commitment and active participation of all stakeholders.

Contemporary Relevance of Prophet Muhammad's PBUH tolerance

Islam prioritizes peace over the economy and the establishment of peace is more important to lead a society towards success.⁵⁰ The term peace can be interpreted in a variety of ways such as security, betterment, freedom, defense, fortune, and welfare. It is also defined as the absence of violence in any civilization. There are many factors such as, economic disparity, social decay, racism, religious extremism, which contribute to the breakdown of peace. In the current era man is returning towards the age of ignorance again from where Prophet PBUH brought him. Islamic teachings have been forgotten as the as he has submitted to worldly fantasies. It is necessary not

⁵⁰ Al-Quran, 2:126.

only to spread but also to apply Islamic teachings for the betterment of society. So that society can achieve peace and order.⁵¹ Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a shining example of tolerance and compassion, and his teachings hold great relevance in today's era. The world today is characterized by multiculturalism and religious pluralism. Tolerance allows us to bridge the gaps between different faiths, cultures, and ideologies. The Prophet Muhammad actively engaged in dialogue and sought common ground with people of different beliefs. His example teaches us to approach differences with understanding, empathy, and a willingness to learn from one another. Tolerance remains highly relevant in contemporary times.

- Tolerance is critical for fostering positive relationships between different faith communities in an increasingly interconnected and diverse world. Promoting interfaith harmony is critical for addressing common challenges and building understanding bridges.
- Tolerance allows for peaceful coexistence in modern societies where people of various beliefs coexist, while respecting the rights and dignity of all individuals.
- Tolerance is critical in combating extremism and promoting social cohesion. Tolerance promotes understanding and dispels misconceptions about Islam and Muslims, which helps to combat Islamophobia.
- Tolerance promotes social integration, allowing people of different cultural backgrounds to coexist while maintaining their distinct identities.

Unfortunately, we have not been succeeded in establishing a society based on justice to all. Hence there is a dire need of a society which provide peace for all.

Some good Initiatives to promote tolerance in current Era

- Paighm-e-Pakistan is regarded as a positive initiative aimed at making Pakistan a peaceful and secure country. This initiative's narrative can help prevent sectarianism in Pakistan and promote Islamic values like brotherhood, patience, and forgiveness, which are essential for peaceful coexistence. The declaration emphasized religious leaders' and scholars' roles in transforming society into a peaceful coexistence.⁵²

Conclusion

Tolerance is a fundamental component of social cohesion. We can create inclusive communities that welcome people from all walks of life if we accept and respect diversity. Tolerance is critical in promoting global peace and cooperation. Tolerance, as taught by Prophet PBUH, is critical in today's world for promoting peaceful coexistence, countering extremism, bridging differences, upholding human rights, and fostering social cohesion. He PBUH delivered the message of tolerance, peace and harmony in Arabia which lead the ignorant Arab society into a civilized society ruled by humanity. He PBUH had demonstrated the glorious example of forgiveness on the conquest of Makkah. It is critical to spread these tolerance-based teachings at this time. We

⁵¹ Dr. Naseem Akhter and Dr. Zia-ur- Rehman, Difficulties & Challenges Facing Islam in Establishing Peace on Arabian Lands, and the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) Strategy, Journal of Religious studies vol.5, no.1, (July-Dec 2021), 112-125.

⁵² Dr. Amir Hayat and Dr. Syeda Sadia, *Religious Authority and Its Role in Peacemaking: An Appraisal in Perspective of National Narrative for Peace*, Al-Basirah, vol. 10, no.2, (July-dec 2021)

can create a more inclusive and compassionate world for all if we live by these principles. The life of the Prophet PBUH demonstrates that we will be successful in eliminating differences. By studying Prophet Muhammad's legacy of tolerance, societies can learn how to create inclusive environments that prioritize social harmony and unity, thereby building a better future for all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds or beliefs. Islam is characterized by its love of peace. Even on the battlefield, Islam discourages infringing on the rights of others. The teachings of the blessed Prophet (saw) have much to teach modern Muslims. The teaching of the Quran protects the rights of human beings. So, understanding the true spirit of Islam is the need of the current era.

Suggestions

- The Function of the Media in Pakistan's current sectarianism situation, including electronic media, plays an important role in providing news, assisting the public, and encouraging positive behaviour. If the media broadcasts positive events that promote religious tolerance, love, and unity, society will benefit.
- Social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter have brought people from all over the world together. Finally, an Internet code of conduct should be proposed.
- The most important document for promoting national security is the National Action Plan. Sectarianism, terrorism, and extremism will be significantly reduced if fully implemented.
- Civil society should also be utilized to assist in the eradication of sectarianism and extremism so that Pakistan can be a part of a modern global society
- It is also necessary to maintain the respect and dignity of each human being for collective benefit. Despite their differences, Muslims must remain united. Differences should not be used to cause division or extremism.
- Conflicts and differences in our homes, workplaces, communities, shaping and foot in the door techniques are required.

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