



Exploring the Multifaceted Dimensions of Hadith in Contemporary Social Welfare Discourse

Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Abrar Awan

Assistant Professor, Department of Urdu Encyclopedia of Islam,
University of the Punjab, Lahore

Dr. Naveed Ur Rehman

Assistant Professor, Law College, University of the Punjab, Lahore

Dr. Maaz Arif

Islamic Messaging System, Pakistan

Muhammad Naveed

M.Phil. Scholar, International Relations, Minhaj University Lahore

Muhammad Jawad Abrar

Department of ELT, I.E.R, University of the Punjab, Lahore

Atta Rasool

Doctoral Candidate, Islamic Studies, University of Sargodha, Sargodha

Abstract: The sayings of the Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ, known as Hadith, offer not only spiritual and religious guidance but also present a comprehensive framework for social welfare and collective human well-being. This study explores the diverse dimensions of social welfare as reflected in Hadith literature, including compassion, care for orphans and the needy, justice, fulfillment of social responsibilities, and mutual cooperation.

The research highlights how the teachings of Hadith remain deeply relevant in addressing contemporary societal challenges such as poverty, loneliness, unemployment, and social inequality. Despite the complexities of modern life, the simple yet profound ethical values of the Prophet's Sunnah provide timeless principles that can contribute to building a more peaceful, just, and compassionate society.

This study aims to serve as a source of guidance for scholars, policymakers, social workers, and individuals who seek sustainable and effective solutions to modern social problems through the moral lens of Hadith.



Keywords: Social Welfare, Contemporary Relevance, Justice, Compassion, Human Rights, Social Justice, Community Care

Definition of Society

The term “society” originates from the Sanskrit words “sam” (together) and “aaj” (to stay united). Linguistically, society means living together with unity. Hence, any collective gathering of people for mutual coexistence can be called a society.

Quranic and Prophetic Concept of Social Welfare

In Islam, serving humanity is not meant for fame or show but purely for the pleasure of Allah. After offering help, one should neither remind others of their favour nor humiliate the needy. The Qur'an beautifully describes the qualities of those who spend in the way of Allah:

"الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتْبِعُونَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا مَتًّا وَلَا أَدَىٰ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ"¹

“Those who give in charity—whether quietly or publicly, during the day or night—can rest assured that their reward lies with their Lord. They will not face fear or sorrow..”

Islam strictly discourages showing off (riya') in charitable works. The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ categorized riya' as a form of shirk (associating partners with Allah) and warned that even a charitable person who gives for fame will be among those cast into the lowest depths of Hell. Furthermore, Islam prohibits using illegitimate earnings for acts of charity. The Qur'an declares:

"يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ... قُلِ الْعَفْوَ"²

“People ask you about alcohol and gambling. Tell them that while these may offer certain benefits, the harm they cause is far greater. They also inquire about charitable giving—respond by advising them to donate whatever they

¹ Al Baqra: 274

² Al Baqra: 219

can easily spare. Through such instructions, Allah guides you clearly so you may reflect".

Practical Steps Taken by the Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ for Social Welfare

One of the unique qualities of the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ blessed family was their deep concern for humanity and compassion. Even before prophethood, his ancestors upheld noble roles in society. For instance, his forefather Qusai established institutions like *Siqayah* (providing water to pilgrims) and *Rifadah* (feeding the poor). Another forefather, Abd Manaf, was known for his unmatched generosity and was called *al-Fayyadh* (the generous one).

Pre-Prophethood Social Reform Movements

Before the advent of Islam, the Arabian society lacked a structured political system, which led to chaos and insecurity. The absence of justice made people's lives and wealth vulnerable to oppression. In this climate, a few noble-hearted individuals gathered at the house of Abdullah ibn Jud'an and formed an alliance to protect the oppressed and support justice. This alliance became known as *Hilf al-Fudul*.

The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ himself participated in this alliance and later stated that if he were called to a similar pact again, he would join it without hesitation. This early participation in social justice shows his lifelong commitment to defending the rights of the weak and promoting communal welfare.

Post-Prophethood Welfare Initiatives

After the declaration of Prophethood, the Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ laid down a comprehensive framework for social justice. He defined the rights and responsibilities between children and parents, men and women, employers and employees, Muslims and non-Muslims—even extending mercy and justice to animals. His entire life was a beacon of love, compassion, and service for all beings.

"وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ³"

"We have sent you, O Prophet, as a source of mercy and compassion for the entire universe."

The Pact of Brotherhood (Mu'akhāt-e-Madina)

After migrating to Madinah, one of the Prophet's ﷺ first actions was to establish a bond of brotherhood between the Muhajirun (immigrants) and the Ansar (locals of Madinah). This wasn't just a symbolic gesture; it addressed the immediate needs of migrants who had left everything behind for Islam.

The Qur'an mentions this act of unity:

...وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا"⁴

"Stay united by holding firmly to the guidance of Allah and do not let divisions grow among you. Remember how Allah transformed you from enemies into brothers and saved you from disaster. These reminders help guide you rightly.."

Establishment of Medical Facilities (Shifa Khanay)

In pre-Islamic Arabia, healthcare was an individual or family concern, and public hospitals were virtually non-existent. After Islam, this changed. The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ encouraged care for the sick and wounded, even during battles.

One notable example is **Rufaida bint Sa'ad**, who set up a medical tent near Masjid al-Nabawi to treat the wounded for the sake of Allah. When Sa'd ibn Mu'adh was injured during the Battle of the Trench, the Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ recommended that he be treated in her tent for better care and easy visitation.

Building of Mosques

Mosques were not just places of worship in early Islam—they were community centers, schools, courts, and gathering places. The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ himself said:

"مَنْ بَنَى مَسْجِدًا لِلَّهِ بَنَى اللَّهُ لَهُ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ"⁵

³ Al Anbiya: 107

⁴ Ale Imran: 103

⁵ Muslim bin Hajjaj Al-Qusheri, Al-Sahih Al-Muslim, Lahore: Dar-us-Salam, 2007, Hadith no. 7471

“The Prophet ﷺ said that anyone who builds a mosque—even something as small as a bird’s nest—will have a house built for them in Paradise by Allah.”

Masjid al-Nabawi, the Prophet's own mosque, included a section called *Suffah*, where the poor and travelers were provided food and shelter. It became a model of social support through religious infrastructure.

Provision of Clean Water (Wells)

Water is a basic human necessity. Even today, many areas struggle to access clean water. Islam gave this issue special attention.

When the mother of Sa‘d ibn ‘Ubādah passed away, he asked the Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ what kind of charity would best benefit her. The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ replied, “Digging a well.” Sa‘d did so in her name, and it became a lasting charity (*Sadaqah Jariyah*).

Maintaining Roads and Pathways

Islam teaches that public welfare includes cleanliness and safe access for all. The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ emphasized the importance of clearing paths and helping those in need on the road. He said:

الإِيمَانُ بِضْعٌ وَسِتُّونَ شُعْبَةً⁶

Faith has over seventy aspects, and one of the most important among them is modesty, as highlighted by the Prophet ﷺ.”

He also told his companions to give roads their due rights: lower their gaze, avoid harming others, remove obstacles, and guide those who are lost.

Establishment of Educational Institutions (Maktabs)

One of the first educational setups in Islam was the *Suffah*—a shaded platform at Masjid al-Nabawi where poor companions would live, learn, and spread knowledge.

⁶ Muslim bin Hajjaj Al-Qusheri, *Al-Sahih Al-Muslim*, Lahore: Dar-us-Salam, 2007, Hadith no. 152

The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ himself was their teacher, and their learning included the Qur'an, Hadith, manners, and Islamic law. This platform became the foundation of Islamic education, eventually leading to famous institutions like **Al-Azhar University (Egypt)**, **Darul Uloom Deoband (India)**, and others around the world.⁷

Cooperation with Non-Muslims in Social Work

Islam encourages cooperation in all good deeds, regardless of religious or cultural differences. The Qur'an says:

"وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ" ⁸...

"O believers, honor the sacred obligations related to pilgrimage, animals offered in sacrifice, and those traveling to the Holy Mosque. Even when old enemies try to provoke you, do not act unjustly. Instead, work together in kindness and righteousness, and never unite in wrongdoing. Be mindful—Allah's accountability is serious.."

So, it is permissible—and even commendable—for Muslims to work with non-Muslim organizations for the welfare of humanity, as long as the values remain ethical and just

The Spirit of Goodwill

The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ said:

"لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ" ⁹

"The Prophet ﷺ said, true belief is not complete until you love for your brother what you love for yourself.."

He also said:

"لَا يَجِلُّ لِلْمُسْلِمِ أَنْ يَهْجُرَ أَخَاهُ" ¹⁰

⁷ Hafiz Ghulam Rasool Khan, "Hadith Nabawi kay Roshni mein Muasharti Insaf ka Tasawwur," Al-Uloom al-Islamiyya, 2001, no. 1

⁸ Al Maida: 02

⁹ Al-Bukhari, Muhammad bin Ismail, Al-Sahih Al-Bukhari, Riyaz: Dar-us-Salam, 1997, Hadith no. 13

“According to a narration from Abdullah ibn Umar, the Prophet ﷺ emphasized that a believer should not cut ties with their fellow believer for more than three days.”

This hadith encourages reconciliation, empathy, and community unity—essential elements of a healthy society.

The Contemporary Relevance of Social Welfare and Hadith Teachings

1. Human Rights and Their Global Importance

Human rights are those inherent freedoms and protections granted to every individual by virtue of being human, regardless of race, religion, nationality, gender, or region. These include the right to life, liberty, education, equal treatment, freedom of belief, and access to basic needs and protections.¹¹

Although formal efforts to safeguard these rights gained momentum internationally after the horrors of World War II, Islam had already presented a comprehensive and ethical model for human rights through the teachings of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ over 1400 years ago. After witnessing immense global suffering caused by war, slavery, and racial discrimination, the United Nations adopted the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 1948**, outlining 30 fundamental rights for all people.¹²

Some of the key human rights include:

- The right to life and protection from unlawful killing or detention
- Freedom of religion and expression
- Equal treatment without discrimination
- Access to education and employment

¹⁰ Muslim bin Hajjaj Al-Qusheri, *Al-Sahih Al-Muslim*, Lahore: Dar-us-Salam, 2007, Hadith no. 6534

¹¹ Dr. Saeed Ahmed, “Islam mein Khidmat-e-Khalq ka Tasawwur aur Asri Manawiyat,” *Al-A’raf*, 2020.

- Protection for the sick, poor, elderly, and disabled

Islam promotes all these values. The Qur'an states:

مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا¹³

“Allah commanded that taking one innocent life is like killing all humanity, and saving one life is like saving all of mankind.”

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ taught:

لا فضل لعربي على عجمي ولا عجمي على عربي ولا احمر على اسود ولا اسود على احمر إلا بالتقوى¹⁴

“The Prophet ﷺ declared that no race holds superiority over another—Arab or non-Arab—except through piety..”

He championed the rights of women, orphans, the poor, and those with disabilities. His **Farewell Sermon** became a timeless declaration of human dignity and equality, proclaiming that all people are equal in worth and status.

These teachings remain highly relevant today and offer a timeless framework for justice and mutual respect in a world still grappling with inequality.¹⁵

2. Reforming International Welfare Efforts

Today, numerous humanitarian organizations and NGOs work across the globe in areas like health, education, poverty alleviation, and crisis response. While many of these groups have contributed greatly to human welfare—especially in war zones and underdeveloped areas—some have unfortunately strayed from true humanitarian values.

Issues like biased distribution of aid, hidden political agendas, and interference with local cultures have raised serious concerns about the sincerity and neutrality of some aid efforts.

¹² Dr. Ayesha Javed, “Seerat al-Nabi ﷺ ki Roshni mein Insani Falah ka Nazriya,” Tehqiqat-e-Islami, 2021

¹³ Al Maida: 32

¹⁴ Al-Bani, Muhammad Nasir Al-Din, Silsila Hadith Sahiha, Hadith no. 294

¹⁵ Dr. Muhammad Rafiq, “Hadith aur Jadeed Muasharti Uloom: Taqabli Mutala,” Ma'arif-e-Islamia, 2022

Islam provides a strong ethical framework for charitable work. The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ said:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّةِ¹⁶

“Every deed is judged by its intention, and the value of an act lies in the sincerity behind it..”

These teachings emphasize sincerity, justice, and non-discriminatory service to all. True humanitarian work must not be used as a tool for propaganda or personal gain. Aid should be driven by compassion, not politics. Welfare organizations must remain transparent, culturally respectful, and committed to impartial service—values deeply rooted in Islamic ethics.

3. Reforming Muslim Societies Through Hadith

The core of reform in Muslim societies lies in returning to the authentic teachings of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. His life provides a model of social justice, compassion, and transformation. He once said:

لَمْ يَكُنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَاجْتَنِبْنَا وَلَا مُتَفَحِّشًا وَإِنَّهُ كَانَ يَقُولُ: "إِنَّ خَيْرَكُمْ أَحْسَنُكُمْ أَخْلَاقًا"¹⁷.

“The best among you, the Prophet ﷺ said, are those who exhibit the finest character and conduct..”

إِنَّ الدِّينَ النَّصِيحَةُ¹⁸

“The essence of religion is sincere advice and guidance offered with goodwill..”

a) Social Ethics and Reform

In another hadith, the Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ said:

الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ¹⁹

¹⁶ Muslim bin Hajjaj Al-Qusheri, Al-Sahih Al-Muslim, Lahore: Dar-us-Salam, 2007, Hadith no. 4927

¹⁷ Al-Bukhari, Muhammad bin Ismail, Al-Sahih Al-Bukhari, Riyaz: Dar-us-Salam, 1997, Hadith no. 6035

¹⁸ Abu-Dawud, Suleman bin Ashas. Al-Sunan, Egypt: Cairo Publications, 1935, Hadith no. 4944

“A true Muslim is defined by how safe others feel from their words and actions.”

If this principle were applied across Muslim societies, many social evils—such as extremism, hatred, and division—could be eliminated, paving the way for peace and harmony.

b) Educational Reform

The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ was not only a messenger but also an ideal teacher. He said:

قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "إِنَّ أَفْضَلَكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ"²⁰

“The most honorable among you are those who learn the Qur’an and also take the responsibility of teaching it to others..”

Today, when education has become more about degrees than character, we need to revive these values. Schools and universities must aim to build responsible, honest, and ethical individuals—not just professionals.

c) Political and Judicial Reform

Justice lies at the heart of Islamic governance. The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ said:

سَبْعَةٌ يُظَاهَرُهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى فِي ظِلِّهِ يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلُّهُ، إِمَامٌ عَدْلٌ²¹

“One of the most honored people on the Day of Judgment will be the just ruler who governed with fairness..”

From leadership to judiciary, fairness and accountability must guide all decisions. If today's Muslim states followed these principles—like equality before law, transparency, and merit over nepotism—real justice could be restored.²²

4. Social Justice and Stability

¹⁹ Al-Tirmidhi, Abu Issa Muhammad bin Issa, Al-Sunan Tirmidhi, Beirut: Dar-ul-Fikar, 1997, Hadith no. 2627

²⁰ Al-Bukhari, Muhammad bin Ismail, Al-Sahih Al-Bukhari, Riyaz: Dar-us-Salam, 1997, Hadith no. 5028

²¹ Al-Bukhari, Muhammad bin Ismail, Al-Sahih Al-Bukhari, Riyaz: Dar-us-Salam, 1997, Hadith no. 1423

Social harmony and justice are vital to any successful society. The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ once advised:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "انصُرْ أَخَاكَ ظَالِمًا أَوْ مَظْلُومًا، قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، هَذَا نَنْصُرُهُ مَظْلُومًا، فَكَيْفَ نَنْصُرُهُ ظَالِمًا؟ قَالَ: تَأْخُذُ فَوْقَ يَدَيْهِ"²³.

"Help your brother whether he is being oppressed or acting unjustly—by stopping him from doing wrong, you are helping him.."

This principle teaches mutual responsibility and reform from within society. In a world suffering from economic disparity, prejudice, and inequality, such teachings offer a clear roadmap to social peace.

Conclusion

Today's world is facing many deep-rooted social challenges—like poverty, economic injustice, inflation, moral decay, and a widening gap between the rich and poor. While governments try to address these through policies, lasting change cannot come without a strong moral and spiritual foundation.

Islam, especially through the Hadith of the Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ, provides a powerful framework for building a just and caring society. The Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ said:

"الْمُؤْمِنُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ كَالْبُنْيَانِ، يَشُدُّ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا"²⁴

"The bond between believers is like a well-built structure where each part supports and strengthens the other.."

This Hadith highlights cooperation, unity, and mutual support as the backbone of a strong society.

²² Dr. Farhat Ghani, "Islam mein Insani Huqooq ka Tasawwur: Aik Taqabli Jaiza," Islamic Studies, 2018

²³ Al-Bukhari, Muhammad bin Ismail, Al-Sahih Al-Bukhari, Riyaz: Dar-us-Salam, 1997, Hadith no. 2444

²⁴ Al-Bukhari, Muhammad bin Ismail, Al-Sahih Al-Bukhari, Riyaz: Dar-us-Salam, 1997, Hadith no. 2446

If we apply these teachings sincerely, we can create a system based on compassion, fairness, and shared responsibility—where helping others isn't just charity, but a duty. These principles go beyond rituals; they shape everyday life—whether in politics, education, economy, or family.

In summary, Hadith offers more than spiritual guidance—it gives us a complete roadmap for individual reform and collective welfare. By implementing this Prophetic wisdom, Muslim societies—and even the world at large—can move toward peace, justice, and true human dignity.

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