



Constructing Social Harmony through Mercy-Based Education: Insights from the Prophetic Model

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Abstract: Prophet Muhammad SAW is known as a plenary figure who succeeded in transforming the pluralistic society of Medina into a harmonious and just community. This success is inseparable from his educational strategy that utilizes spiritual, social, and intellectual capital. This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature study method. Data sources were obtained from books of the Prophetic Sirah, hadith, and contemporary academic literature. The analysis was done thematically to identify the principles and educational strategies used by the Prophet in the social context of Medina. The research found that the Prophet Muhammad's educational strategy was rooted in the values of compassion, wisdom, and dialog. These strategies established a peaceful and inclusive social order. These values remain relevant to be applied in addressing contemporary social challenges, such as intolerance, identity crisis, and social fragmentation. This finding confirms the importance of actualizing mercy-based education in building a civilized society.

Keywords: constructing; mercy-based education; social harmony

Abstrak: Nabi Muhammad SAW dikenal sebagai figur paripurna yang berhasil mentransformasi masyarakat Madinah yang pluralistik menjadi komunitas yang harmonis dan adil. Keberhasilan ini tidak terlepas dari strategi pendidikan beliau yang memanfaatkan modal spiritual, sosial, dan intelektual. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi literatur. Sumber data diperoleh dari kitab-kitab sirah Nabawiyah, hadis, serta literatur akademik kontemporer. Analisis dilakukan secara tematik untuk mengidentifikasi prinsip dan strategi pendidikan yang digunakan oleh Nabi dalam konteks sosial Madinah. Penelitian menemukan bahwa strategi pendidikan Nabi Muhammad SAW berakar pada nilai-nilai kasih sayang, kebijaksanaan, dan dialog. Strategi ini membentuk tatanan sosial yang damai dan inklusif. Nilai-nilai tersebut tetap relevan untuk diterapkan dalam menjawab tantangan sosial kontemporer, seperti intoleransi, krisis

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identitas, dan fragmentasi sosial. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya aktualisasi pendidikan berbasis rahmat (*mercy-based education*) dalam membangun masyarakat berkeadaban.

Kata Kunci: konstruksi; harmoni sosial; pendidikan berbasis rahmat

Introduction

The Prophet Muhammad Saw. as a messenger of Allah role model that is very monumental in providing a role towards the transformation of human civilization. Eradicating the culture of slavery and partial curtains, inspiring the spirit of renewal by building brotherhood, equality of human degrees based on human and divine values (Sofa Izurrohman et al., 2023). Education based on compassion has strong roots in Islamic tradition especially through the example set by the Prophet Muhammad Saw. He is positioned as an educator who places *rahmah* (mercy) as the foundation of social interaction and the process of moral development.

The Prophet Muhammad Saw. as the closing Prophet of Islam which is believed to be the last religion has a mission to perfect the morals of mankind (Ali, 2015). The mission of Islam is not only for certain groups (nations), but all groups of humanity (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*) (Damayanti, 2024). This is the specialty of the teachings of Muhammad Saw, when compared to the previous prophets. The personality of the Prophet Muhammad Saw. reflected in the daily association with the people of Madina (Alkhotob et al., 2023). The Prophet Muhammad interacted without distinguishing groups, tribes and their origins. Ennoble them with a polite attitude, full of compassion. Embrace togetherness with Muslim and non-Muslim communities. In QS. Ash-Shuara, 215 Allah explains which means: "And humble yourselves to those who follow you, those who believe" (Bullock, 2020).

The existence of the Prophet Muhammad Saw as a human chosen by God who has a complex personality, a messenger of God as well as the head of the state who regulates people's lives. Not only the Muslim community but also the non-Muslim community under his rule (Dr. Sohail Akhtar et al., 2022). The complex personality of the Prophet was able to create peace in the Medina community in the midst of diversity (diverse) communities on the basis of universal humanitarian interests. Providing guarantees and freedom for followers of other religions to carry out their worship properly (Shah Rizvi Pakistan) & Alviri Iran), 2022). Muslims and other religious communities participate in maintaining and maintaining the provisions of the joint decision of the "Medina charter" in reducing actions that can damage the agreement.

The plurality of the people of Medina as described above, is almost the same as the plurality of Indonesian citizens who have about 300 ethnicities with their respective cultures, have about 250 varieties of languages spoken, various customs, and various religious beliefs. So Indonesia is called a pluralistic nation (Falihi et al., 2024). This diversity is the wealth and privilege of the Indonesian nation that needs to be cared for and maintained. Diversity will become a disaster and give birth to various internal problems if it is not properly maintained. Various events that have afflicted the Indonesian nation, such as the conflict between the Maduran and Dayak ethnic communities in Sampit Kalimantan in 2001 and many horizontal-internal conflicts that have occurred in Indonesia, religion often appears as a forerunner of conflict (Sarapung, 2009).

Indonesia is a country that is very diverse in ethnicity, race and religion, it needs to be maintained and maintained its diversity in order to continue to exist and stand strong. The rise of conflicts lately is due to a lack of awareness in accepting differences. Differences are a necessity that must be accepted with full awareness with a tolerant attitude (Yuniarto et al., 2023). It needs to be a common concern to handle it well so that it does not develop into a major conflict that usually causes the country to be destroyed.

The multicultural attitude of Indonesian society needs to be instilled. An open attitude in accepting differences in religion, ethnicity, and language (Universitas Islam Syekh Yusuf Tangerang, Banten. et al., 2024). Multiculturalism believes that differences that are not managed well will lead to conflict, whereas differences that are managed well will become energy and productive potential (Appelbaum et al., 1998).

Religious pluralism as an attitude of religious adherents is required not only to recognize the existence and rights of others but to try to understand differences and similarities in order to create harmony in diversity. Through the attitude of pluralism, tolerance between religious communities is created which realizes the life of Indonesian society is safe and peaceful (Hutabarat, 2023).

The Prophet's strategy in fostering the ummah in the midst of the diversity of ethnicities, religions, and social groups of society needs to be studied as a pattern of fostering Muslims that is relevant to the conditions of diversity of people in the country of Indonesia.

Results and Discussion

A. Geographical and Cultural Context of Pre-Islamic Arab Society

The religion of Islam brought and spread by the Prophet Muhammad Saw. full of challenges and heavy struggle. The situation and conditions of social life of the Pre-Islamic Arabs were tribal, classed in social strata. So it is very contrasting community life between the descendants of noble people who are highly respected, life facilities with all the luxuries, while the descendants of people who have social starata from the slave class have a very deprived life, often get humiliated, and get less respect (Haidir, 2005).

The situation of the Arab community of Makkah before Islam came had the belief and routine of worshiping idols as God (paganism). In addition to worshiping idols, some Arabs were Christians (Christianity), Jews, Majuzi religion (mazdaism) (al-Nahee, 2016). The social conditions of the community became a challenge for the Prophet Muhammad Saw. in carrying out his duties as a messenger of God (Miir & Ssekamanya, 2018). His presence is to preach (educate) or invite mankind to follow the commands of God as well as towards the path of truth so as to create benefits and peace in the world and the hereafter.

By origin of descent, the Arab community can be divided into two major groups. The first group is Qathâniyun or descendants of Qathan and the second group is 'Adnâniyûn or descendants of Ismail bin Ibrahim (H.M. Nasron Hk et al., 2023). At that time, the location of the occupied area was divided into the Northern region occupied by 'Adnâniyûn and the Southern region by Qathâniyun. Over time in the end these two groups mingled due to the movements between one another. With this it is evident that at

that time the Arab community was still accustomed to moving from one place to another (Feghali, 1997).

Political conditions in the pre-Islamic period can be said to be not very developed, even tending to be low (Darling, 2021). In the socio-political field in the pre-Islamic Arab community, there were already formed kabilahs (clans) which then from several kabilahs formed tribes or tribes (Rohman & Muafatun, 2021). Thus, since the pre-Islamic period, Arab society has had a fairly clear social organization and identity. However, due to the emphasis on tribal relations that were so strong, loyal and solid, there was often inter-tribal warfare.

The socio-political conditions of Arabia during the pre-Islamic era were basically fragmented, with no central leadership or unity. Political leadership was based more on tribe or tribe to defend themselves from attack by other tribes. Strong social ties were made on the basis of blood relations and self-preservation, hence the term fanaticism (Syafichrul Umam. Fat Han F et al., 2023).

As a result of protracted warfare, which seems to have been the nature of Arab society in addition to a strong tribal attitude, their culture was not very developed. Nonetheless, the pre-Islamic Arabs at least had the ability to make iron tools and the most famous literary tradition. The pre-Islamic Arabs had a high ability to compose poetry. In fact, during the pre-Islamic period, poetry competitions were often held in the market of Ukaz where the champion poet would be hung on the wall of the Kaaba (H.M. Nasron Hk et al., 2023).

Social conditions before Islam, the Arabian peninsula society is divided into Arab Ahl al-Madar and Arab Ahl al-Wabar. Arabs are residents who reside in the city which is the center of civilization, they are called Ahl al-Madar (city dwellers), namely the owner of the building house. Whereas Arabs are residents who live in villages and are called Ahl al-Wabar (villagers), namely those who live in tents. The village Arabs or Baduwis are tribes who occupy tents and live on the move or are nomadic (Waro, 2019).

The tribe is the unity of the community, meaning that the tribe is the place where the emergence (source) of the order of social values that develops in the community, not the family (Béteille, 1986). Each individual feels a sense of camaraderie, not because of their family, but because of their tribe. It is this feeling that will defend them when they are attacked, even defending them desperately. In this way, dying is a high honor while running away from war is a disgrace. This feeling was also always present in some of the wars fought with other tribes (Wulandari & Imania, 2023).

Socio-economic conditions, the natural conditions of the Arabs were arid and barren because they consisted of rocks and deserts (Abahussain et al., 2002). Therefore, water becomes a primary need that is difficult to obtain in abundance. As one form of implication, livelihoods that allow for livestock and trade. The trading profession received further geographical support due to Mecca's very strategic position as a medium for trade traffic (Zeinali et al., 2017).

Trade played an important role in driving the Arab economy at that time, but there were other sources of wealth available such as pastures, springs and wells. These properties were spread among the people, but as some individuals emerged who had special abilities such as physical strength, courage, ingenuity and intelligence, the process of monopolizing economic resources began to take place so that a class structure based on the amount of material possessions began to be built as well.

B. Religion is a Necessity

Religion comes from Sanskrit, where “a” means not and “gama” means chaos. Religion means not chaotic (organized) (Dwi Wahyuni, 2023). So religion is a rule, regulating human conditions, both related to the supernatural and ethics in the association of others in life (McKay & Whitehouse, 2015). Religion is the process of human relationship that is felt towards something he believes, that something is higher than humans (Guthrie, 1996). The teachings revealed by God for the guidance of people in living their lives.

Harun Nasution states that religion means a bond that humans must hold and obey. This bond has a huge influence on everyday human life. The bond comes from a power higher than humans. A supernatural power that cannot be captured by the five senses (Nasution, 1979).

The source of religion can be divided into two categories, namely Celestial religion or religion from heaven, which is obtained through Divine Revelation (Islam, Christianity, Judaism). In addition, Wa'i religion or also called earth religion, which is a cultural religion that arises due to the power in the mind or intellect of a person or society (Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and other streams of religion or belief). A belief can be said to be a religion if it contains three elements, namely; humans, worship, and God. The purpose of religion is the servitude of man to his God (Asir, 2016).

Religion functions as a practical relationship that is felt with what is believed to be a being or as a higher being than humans (Cohen & Johnson, 2017). In this increasingly secular age, religion plays an important role in the lives of millions of people. The results of the study mentioned that more than 70 percent of the world's population shows that they adhere to one religion (Barro et al., 2010).

The presence of religion to regulate human life on earth can maintain and control human conditions so as to keep humans away from stress symptoms that result in unfavorable human beings (Ellison, 1994). As a result of stress, humans can lose control and the role of lust and satan to take control of the entire state of the heart and the state of mind and human feelings, leading to mental damage or human morals.

The command of religion in Islam as Maulana Muhammad Ali in the word of Allah surat al-Baqarah verse 208 which means: O you who believe, enter into Islam as a whole, and do not follow the steps of the shaitan. Indeed, the shaitan is a real enemy for you (Sa'idah & Anwar, 2024).

Islam always guides mankind and points him to the straight path, (Aryandika Firmansyah et al., 2024) as Allah says in the Qur'an Surah Al-Isra' (17): 9: Indeed, this Qur'an guides to a straighter path and gives good news to those Mu'min who do good deeds that for them there is a great reward. The basis of goodness in Islam is to obey Allah and His Messenger. With regard to this, Allah has said in the Qur'an Surah Al-Anfaal, (8): 20: O you who believe, obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not turn away from Him, while you hear (His commands).

C. Islam as a Religion of Mercy; Prophet Muhammad's Inclusive Da'wah Amidst Diversity

1. Normative Review of Da'wah

Islam is a religion of da'wah, which is a religion that emphasizes its followers to spread and broadcast Islam to all mankind as a mercy for all nature, Islam can guarantee the realization of the happiness and welfare of mankind, if the teachings of Islam, which cover all aspects of life, are used as a guide to life and are implemented seriously (Bastomi, 2018).

Da'wah can also be understood by the process of internalization, transformation, transmission, and diffusion of Islamic teachings in people's lives (Shapiah et al., 2023). Da'wah means a call from Allah SWT, and Rasulullah SAW. For mankind to believe in the teachings of Islam and realize the teachings they believe in in all aspects of their lives (Majid et al., 2024).

In the Qur'an Surah An-Nahl: 125 Allah swt. says which means: "Call (people) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good lessons and argue with them in a good way. Verily, your Lord is the One who knows better who has strayed from His path and is the One who knows better those who are guided."

Inviting people in a wise way to the right path in accordance with God's commands for the benefit and happiness of the world and the hereafter (Saputra et al., 2021). So that the religion of Islam under the Prophet influenced the hearts and minds of various races, nations and tribes in various countries in which there is racial and cultural diversity (Monia, 2023).

Islam is the perfect teaching of Allah and was revealed to regulate individual and community life (Rahman, 2024). However, the perfection of Islamic teachings is only an idea and wishful thinking if the teachings are not practiced in human life. More so if the teachings are not practiced in human life. Therefore, da'wah is a very important activity in the overall teachings of Islam. With da'wah, Islam can be known, lived, and practiced by humans from one generation to the next. Conversely, without da'wah, the human generation that practices Islam is cut off and then Islam will disappear from the surface of the earth.

2. Prophet Muhammad as the Last Prophet

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). As the last prophet and apostle of God, he has special privileges compared to the previous prophets (Gawhar Ahmad Khan, 2024). One of the features is that the mission of Muhammad's message is not limited to a particular people (nation), but includes all mankind (rahmatan lil 'alamin) (Khosiiin et al., 2023). All human beings who lived at the time of Muhammad until the arrival of the last day are obliged to follow the sharia brought by the Prophet Muhammad Saw.

The command to believe in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad Saw.) is stated in the Qur'an letter al-Nisa' (4) verse 136: "O you who believe, keep believing in Allah and His Messenger and in the book that Allah sent down to His Messenger, as well as the book that Allah sent down before. Whoever disbelieves in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day, then indeed that person has gone far astray." (QS. Al Nisa' (4): 136).

The Prophet Muhammad viewed a person who was of a different religion to his as a human being who needed to be converted to Islam, because that individual was on the path of a straying person. It is the responsibility of the Muslims to show him the straight path (Erdoğan, 2024). Muslims are at the same time the people of Muhammad (peace be upon him), the last apostle and prophet. Muhammad Saw. as the closing of the prophets and apostles, so that after him there are no more prophets and apostles of God (Malinda & Djamduri, 2021). The certainty of the Prophet Muhammad as the last prophet and apostle is stated by Allah SWT. In the Quran: "Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets." (QS. al-Ahzab (33): 40). Another verse in the Qur'an explains that "And We have not sent you, but to mankind as a whole, as a bearer of glad tidings and as a warner, but most people do not know." (QS. Saba' (34): 28).

Islam does not require people to live in isolation away from the scenarios of the world around them, on the contrary it is their responsibility to connect with the world and invite other people to the right path, spread Islam to all corners of the world, remove all obstacles that block the call of Islam to the nations of the world. When the da'wah has reached them, then the choice is theirs, to convert to Islam or remain in their religion at the same time as submitting to the rule of the Islamic da'wah.

3. Prophet Muhammad's Modality

a. Spiritual Capital

The Prophet as a personal figure who is not in doubt, so it deserves the title as Sayyid al-Anbiya' (leader of the Prophets). Illustrated in the words of Allah Swt, among others, emphasizing the position of the Prophet in the Qur'an Surah al-Hasyr: 7, which means: What the Messenger of Allah tells you accept, and what he forbids you leave. Likewise the word of Allah in the Qur'an Surah al-Nisa' verse 64, which means: And We did not send a Messenger, but to be obeyed with the permission of Allah.

The two verses give a hint of the spiritual capital of the Prophet Muhammad which is always practiced in everyday life. The Prophet has shown his zuhudann to the companions, as witnessed by Ibn Mas'ud, he entered to meet the Prophet and found him sleeping on a mat that made the side of his side smeared, when Ibn Mas'ud offered a mat that could keep himself from smearing, but he replied: "What business is there between me and the world? The world for me is like a rider who takes shelter under a tree and then leaves it" (Nashih, 1999). In addition, the Prophet's modesty characterized his prophethood and apostleship; he would greet others with the greeting of peace, facing his body to those who greeted him, small or large, not rushing to withdraw his hand when shaking hands, sitting with his companions, going to the market and carrying his own luggage, not being arrogant to lowly workers, fulfilling the invitations of freemen and slaves, accepting the excuses of people with excuses, he himself tied his camel, eating with his servants, and not being ashamed to sit on the ground (Nashih, 1999).

The Prophet's personality is reflected in his behavior in everyday life. His speech was very eloquent, full of wisdom, little but deep meaning (Jawami'ul kalim). Having a polite attitude, forgiving, and patient in facing trials. He has a generous nature, likes to give as much as he can, and is not the least bit afraid of poverty (Haidir, 2005).

Allah SWT praised the Prophet's personality. As explained in His word QS. Al-Qalam: 4 "And indeed you (Muhammad) are truly of noble character". He was greatly admired by the disbelieving kings and rulers. He was the defender of the poor infidels who chose to live in poverty and destitution. Allah SWT says in the Qur'an Surah Al- Hadid: 25, which means: "Verily, We have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and We have sent down with them the Book and the balance, that men may execute justice; and We have created iron, in which there is great strength and many benefits for men, (that they may use it) and that Allah may know who helps Him and His Messengers, and whom He does not see. Verily, Allah is strong and mighty.

b. Social Capital

The Prophet Muhammad Saw. is known as al-amin, which means always trustworthy. This title was obtained by Muhammad since he was still young (Alkhotob et al., 2023). In the Mecca community, the title al-Amin is an honorable title. This title is present in Muhammad because it is inseparable from his personality from childhood which is so admirable. For a long time the people of Quraysh have known well the young man named Muhammad as a person who never lies, noble in character, soft in speech

and very good in speech so that all the tribes respect and put their trust in him. He also became a human model who always rejected all forms of evil, even his actions were often imaged as the Qur'an (Arifuddin, 2019).

The morality of the Prophet also appears in his patience, his compassion for both his family and his people, his generosity, his generosity, his humility, and his modesty. The morality of the Prophet is what should be emulated and applied in the daily life of Muslims (Anum et al., 2024). The Prophet has a character that is easy to get along with all circles, gentle speech, easy to understand. Even Aisha said; "Rasulullah Saw. Never issued an indecent speech. His language is composed and easily understood by all audiences (Akbar & Vebrynda, 2022).

The Prophet is also described in QS. Al-Azhab: 21 as a model and symbol of compassion. Prophet Muhammad Saw. Before expanding the prophetic and apostolic mission, the Quraish considered him as a very wise person. In an event told specifically on the construction of the Kaaba which was slowly torn down. All tribes took part in the construction of the Kaaba, until it came to the position of laying Hajar Aswad. There was a dispute regarding the tribe that had the right to place Hajar Aswad which was known for its glory. The Prophet was appointed as the most appropriate person to be able to solve the problem. He asked for a piece of cloth, then Hajar Aswad was placed in the center position and asked each of them to lift the cloth. So that the Prophet Muhammad Saw. Resolved the issue of laying Hajar Aswad very wisely and all tribes were satisfied with the Prophet's decision (Haidir, 2005).

In addition, the Prophet Muhammad Saw has an attitude of tawadhu (humble) away from arrogant attitude, is one of the personalities of the Prophet Muhammad Saw, being the key in fostering Muslims. In one story it is explained that he forbade the companions to stand up to give awards as the treatment of kings. He visited, accepted the invitation of the poor and slaves, chatting with them (Haidir, 2005). The personality of the apostle of Allah, shows a very wise and attractive personality, until all levels of society recognize it. In Islam, the Prophet Muhammad Saw as a role model or *uswatun khasanah* who is considered a superior and ideal human being, namely the Prophet Muhammad Saw.

c. Intellectual Capital

Muhammad Saw as *uswatun hasanah* and the closing Messenger, the Prophet for mankind until the end of time, must be an intelligent person and have a high level of intelligence (Bin Ab Latif et al., 2023). Muhammad's intelligence both before and after becoming a Messenger, is undeniable with historical evidence. Not only Muslims, but also non-Muslim orientalists recognize that he has a high intellectual intelligence. It is no exaggeration that Michael H. Hart in *The 100, a Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*, places the Messenger of Allah in the first hundred most influential figures in history. Hart wrote that the first choice was Muhammad Saw because he believed that the Prophet of Islam was the only human being in history who managed to achieve extraordinary success both in terms of religious and worldly scope (Hart, 1990).

This success is certainly inseparable from the intelligence of the Prophet. He had the trait of *fathonah*, which means intelligent. Philip K. Hitti, the famous author of *History of the Arabs*, at the end of the chapter on Muhammad, after at length describing success, wrote that Muhammad had inspired the formation of a nation that had never been united before, built a religion that a large number of people followed, and laid the foundation for the construction of empires and cities that would later become the center of world civilization. "Though never formally educated, Muhammad was the bearer of the Book

that one-eighth of the earth's population believed to be the source of science, wisdom, and theology" (Hitti, 2005).

The Prophet Muhammad Saw. besides having a wise personality, he also has a very extraordinary intelligence. This can be believed when making policies about prisoners of war. The Prophet asked for consideration from the companions Abu Bakar and Umar bin Khattab, regarding the polytheists who were prisoners of war. Abu Bakr gave a solution so that the polytheists who became prisoners gave a copy for their freedom. While Umar bin Khattab gave a solution that they should be killed (Haidir, 2005). However, the Prophet was a man of intelligence, so he chose the solution offered by Abu Bakr, namely paying a copy. Each prisoner of war was ordered to pay four dirhams for his copy, if they did not have the ability to pay, then the copy was to teach the Muslims to read and write until he was able to (Haidir, 2005). Thus it can be seen, that the Prophet, very rightly chose his decision now to try to build Muslims by providing education, through prisoners of war until Muslims who became able to read and write.

Conclusion

The Prophet Muhammad was not only a spiritual figure, but also an educator, statesman, and social reformer who succeeded in building the multicultural society of Medina into a just, peaceful, and inclusive community. This success was born from his educational strategy that touched three important sides of life: spiritual, social, and intellectual. By prioritizing the values of compassion, wisdom, and open dialogue, the Prophet was able to bridge differences in religion, ethnicity, and social status into a unifying force. This strategy is very relevant in today's Indonesian context, where challenges such as intolerance and social divisions still threaten the nation's diversity. Mercy-based education, as exemplified by the Prophet, not only fosters harmony, but also creates a collective awareness that differences are a blessing, not a threat. These values are important to revive in the life of the nation so that Indonesia continues to stand strong in its diversity.

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