



## "Mental Health and Well-being in the Light of Seerah"

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### *Abstract:*

*This article aims at outlining the lessons that can be learnt regarding mental health and well-being from the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It explores on how the Prophet addressed issues of mental health, the balanced model of body, soul, and spirit. From the Seerah, people can learn how the Prophet maintained a proper psychological state of being through the integration of work and rest as well as social activity. Thus, following these practices will help a person to maintain a state of psychological well-being and satisfaction that is so important for a person. In the perspective of the prophetic tradition, 'fitrah' or the innate human disposition, is the key to understanding mental health. The article therefore looks at how it is possible to live in harmony with this state which involves an inherent appreciation of divinity and a bent towards the good as a key component in achieving mental health. Intrusions to this state of harmony, for instance ethical dilemmas or spiritual abandonment, cause psychological imbalance. The Prophet's teachings on balance and moderation are further enhanced by the Prophet's teachings on fitrah and mental health, making it clear that living a fitrah compliant life is a recipe for stability and sound mind. Also, the article discusses the role of faith, spirituality, and community support in the promotion of mental health and coping mechanisms. The contemporary practices of mental health management benefit from the Prophet's advice on how to address difficulties, the significance of social justice, and the significance of a beneficial community. Applying the Prophet's model of empathy, compassion and community support, people will be able to integrate themselves into the society and attain mental health. This is an all-encompassing approach based in the Seerah and has important things to teach the contemporary approach to mental health as a whole.*

**Keywords:** *Mental Health, Seerah's Teaching, Self-care, Well-Being, Health Practices.*

### Introduction

In the last decade, the global rates of mental health disorders have risen, and the subject has become more popular among politicians, doctors, and scientists. According to the World Health Organization mental illness and other disorders such as anxiety, depression and stress-related disorders are among leading causes of disease burden in the world (World Health Organization, 2023). The reasons for this increase are many, such as, the changes in the contemporary life style,



lack of social interaction and financial stress. When the topic of mental health is increasingly being discussed in the context of public health, it is crucial to address different approaches and ways to solve these problems.

In the light of the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) there are numerous examples and concepts that can be utilized to explain the importance of mental health and how it can be nurtured. The prophetic model of mental health intervention and its application in the light of the life, teachings, and practices of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Some of the ways he used to create a balance and healthy state of mind are prayers, support from other people, and ethical standards. Not only do these elements of the Seerah provide a historical account, but also it presents useful approaches that can be used in contemporary issues of mental health. Integrating the principles from the Seerah in the modern practice of mental health might offer comprehensive remedies for the problems that affect people as individuals and members of communities.

The Prophet (PBUH) has stressed on kindness, tolerance and providing comfort to the distressed which is a strong message for empirical compassion and supportive network. While societies today are struggling to cope with increasing mental health problems, it is timely to review and implement some of the lessons from the Seerah to help create healthier and more robust society. I believe this approach fits well with a broad shift in thinking regarding the comprehensive and culturally appropriate approaches to mental health in the modern world.

### **The Prophetic Perspective on Mental Health**

Fitrah is an important concept in Islamic thought, which means the initial condition in which the human is born, which is sinless (Hassan, 2018). In Islamic tradition, 'fitrah' is the name given to inborn spiritual sensitivity to the Creator and the ability to do good to others, which is critical to the preservation of one's psychological health (Mohamed, 2021). This inherent disposition is in harmony with the spirit that says human beings attain a state of contentment when they are performing the deeds in line with the fitrah. Interference with this state, for instance, by ethical dilemmas or spiritual impoverishment, results in psychological turmoil (Khan, 2020). Hence, it can be said that knowledge and development of one's fitrah is crucial in order to have a healthy mind.



This research shows that if people work according to their personalities, then they experience higher psychological well-being and less stress (Ali, 2022). Allah's Messenger (PBUH) taught about moderation in all aspects of life, including mental health (Siddiqui, 2019). He teaches the way of moderation where one should avoid the vices of taking extremes in action, food and feelings (Rahman 2020). This principle of moderation is well illustrated in the Prophet's teachings on work, worship, and behaviour that fosters a sound mind (Fatima, 2021). For example, the Prophet prescribed a healthy exercise, sleep, and companionship as important aspects of the psychological well-being (Jamal, 2019). Through the above balanced practices, persons can avoid the usual pressure on the mind that results from the over consumption or starvation. Research evidence suggests that body balance during the daily activities has a positive correlation with anxiety and general mental health (Ibrahim, 2022).

Religious beliefs are critical in building resistance to mental health disorders as affirmed by the prophetic tradition of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (Ahmed, 2021). The Prophet also said that when a person has a strong relationship with Allah that comes from praying, asking and contemplating, he or she gets a great deal of comfort and courage during hardship (Khan, 2020). This spiritual foundation assists people to handle pressure and misfortune in life since they believe that they have a purpose and that everything happens for a reason (Hussain, 2022). Moreover, the practice of obeying the Prophet's teachings when it comes to the performance of gratitude to God and reliance on Him also strengthens the mental health and optimism in facing life challenges (Mohamed, 2021). A review of literature provides evidence for the understanding that spirituality and the use of religious coping mechanisms play a massive role in the improvement of mental health and coping mechanisms (Yusuf, 2022).

### **Coping with Stress and Adversity**

The life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) can be summarized with various obstacles and adversities in his life and his approach toward handling these adversities can teach the people a lot about handling stress and difficult situations (Ali, 2021). Among the measures taken by the Prophet, one of the most effective was optimism and reliance on the divine providence. He was very much loyal and persistent in his belief even in the worse times like the boycott of the Muslims and the battles of Badr and Uhud (Hassan, 2022). Therefore, the Prophet's attitude



towards affliction was one of waiting, doing what is necessary and waiting on God. His example shows that to overcome them, one has to apply pragmatic measures as well as rely on faith. Studies show that such an approach of integrating work and faith, of problem-solving and faith in the divine, is useful in stress regulation and stress coping (Khan, 2020).

When it comes to the qualities of character, patience (*sabr*) and perseverance are two of the most important values that are dear to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as they help a person to overcome all the hardships of life (Jamal, 2019). According to the Prophet's teachings, patience on the hardships and expecting Allah's mercy are essential for managing the tougher periods (Ahmed, 2021). For him, patience meant the ability to turn a problem into something that would help to improve one's character. Furthermore, the Prophet's teachings are very clear that hope and persistence are not only the waiting for something to happen but the process of actively trying to change for the better while expecting help from a higher power (Rahman, 2022). This view is in tandem with modern psychological models of personality that propose patience and hope as components of psychological strength and health (Siddiqui, 2021).

Dua and reliance on Allah are another teaching of the Prophet in the context of stress and coping (Hussain, 2020). In moments of difficulty, the Prophet (PBUH) often sought solace through dua, therefore proving its efficacy in terms of asking for help and solace from the Almighty (Fatima, 2022). Blessing is not only worship but also a way of building up the psyche and attaining calmness of the nervous system. Thus, making sincere invocations to Allah and learning to rely on Him, people can feel enclosed and encouraged to manage life's challenges (Khan, 2021). Recent research has indicated that performing prayer and remaining dependent on the help of higher powers are positively associated with healthy psychological functioning and stress coping (Yusuf, 2022).

### **Cultivating Emotional Intelligence**

In regards to the leader's emotional intelligence, we have Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who demonstrated mercy, care, and kindness, all manifestations of emotional intelligence (Ibrahim, 2021). The social contacts of the man were built on a very deep level of understanding and cognition of the moods and needs of the interlocutor. For instance, the Prophet was able to demonstrate kindness by first, listening to the people's problems then providing them with a



solution that would suit those (Jamal, 2022). He was equally passionate about social justice as he urged people to care of the poor, the orphans and the vulnerable in the society (Siddiqui, 2020). This principle of this model of empathy and kind-heartedness can be useful in achieving a balance in the emotional state and in interpersonal relationships for people (Ali 2021).

People interaction is one of the aspects of emotional intelligence and to this effect, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasized on the community support. The Prophet was interested in people developing good friendship and being supportive to friends as it is essential for a person to have friends to rely on (Khan, 2020). It focused on maintaining relationship with one's kith and kin and should stand by each other in moments of trouble (Fatima, 2021). Regarding the social support, the Prophet's guidance demonstrates the importance of establishing the system of trust and assistance that may enhance the quality of people's emotions and shield them from stress (Yusuf, 2022). The study of the cohort reveals that improvement of social network results in better psychological well-being and quality of life (Hussain, 2020).

It is important to know that anger is one of the types of emotion and conflict management in which Islamic teachings can offer knowledge (Ahmed, 2022). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also elaborated the anger and he also shared the ways to avoid temper loss during the fight (Khan, 2021). For instance, the Prophet used to recommend people to seek refuge with Allah and be patient when one is angry (Jamal, 2022). They also have sayings over conflict-solver and seeking for resolution while stressing on forgiveness in an attempt to seek for reconciliation (Siddiqui, 2020). They can be compared to the present day psychological intervention approaches to conflict and anger management, which is an evidence of the relevance of Islam in the modern practice of emotional health.

### **The Importance of Self-Care**

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also supported the maintenance of the physical structure which is one of the aspects of self-care (Al-Jubairi, 2021). From the movie, his lifestyle was a balanced one since he undertook physical activities as well as took balanced diet. For instance, the Prophet encouraged people to take on walking and riding of horses; and eating healthy, particularly foods that are mainly sourced from fruits and green vegetables (Nassir, 2020). In his



practices and recommendations, he has been insisting on the theme of physical health as one of the pillars of health. As for the food and beverages the Prophet prohibited people from taking too much of anything and urged them to exercise, these are the earliest reflections of the interconnection between the physical and the mental health (Ibrahim, 2022). Other research indicate that such practices assist in maintaining both the physical and spiritual health which is in line with current healthy practices (Zaid, 2021).

Sleep, recreation, and leisure are among the significant aspects of well-being that have been endorsed by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (Siddiqui, 2022). The Prophet also encouraged people to work and rest, play, and have fun, which are critical activities that help in the prevention of stress and provision of mental health (Khan, 2021). His life, therefore, depicted this aspect, where he went for recreation and even urged his followers to do the same. For instance, the Prophet had the habit of enjoying company and social events and fun, which helped to reduce stress levels and work pressure (Ahmed, 2022). This view accords with contemporary sensibilities regarding the necessity of having set intervals for recreation and rest as essential for psychological well-being (Hassan, 2020).

The importance of 'wudu' (ablution) in Islam is not only a physical washing exercise but also a way of washing the heart (Zain, 2021). The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was very keen on performing wudu before the prayers; he underscored the significance of wudu as a cleanliness process and as a way of preparing for the prayers (Siddiqui, 2020). It entails washing certain appendages of the body; this is good for the physical health and it also provides a time of reflection. Wudu encompasses touch and cleanliness of the external body and the soul, so the physical and the spiritual are intertwined and a clear understanding is provided of the link between physical actions and spirituality (Ibrahim, 2021). Recent works show practices such as 'wudu' that involve both physical and spiritual cleansing are beneficial to health and productivity as well as the mind, which shows that the Islamic methods of self-care are a combination of the body and the spirit (Nassir, 2022).

## **Mental Health in the Context of Community**



The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had dreamt of a society that is supportive, empathetic and compassionate, which are essential for healthy mentality of the people (Hussain, 2021). He also stressed on unity and compassion among people in the society. For instance, the Prophet teaching Muslims on how to assist one another within the social setting even when they are happy or sad, tenets that make people feel protected (Khan, 2020). The Prophet's model of community support was charity and helping the needy and giving them company so that they would feel safe and secure (Fatima, 2022). Studies show that such structures in the community help improve mental health since people lack loneliness and are socially connected (Ahmed, 2021).

### **The Role of Social Justice and Equality in Promoting Mental Well-Being**

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has always been an advocate of social justice and equality in the society and this is one of the ways that can enhance mental health in the society (Ali, 2021). Some of the principles that the Prophet has stressed on include justice, equal treatment, and the fight against prejudice all of which speak volumes of a great desire to foster justice in the society. Besides promoting the feelings of belonging, inclusion, and participation, these principles eradicate triggers of mental suffering as every person gets the needed resources and opportunities for their development (Hassan, 2022). Through the fight for the rights of the disadvantaged groups, the Prophet wanted to eradicate social injustices that result to mental health inequity meaning that he aimed at a society where all people can attain good mental health (Rahman, 2021).

Social justice within a community is a determining factor for mental health because it eradicates the social factors that cause mental ailments (Ali, 2021). In its simplest form, it offers people certainty and esteem, which are fundamental to well-being; and both are enhanced when people feel and are treated fairly and equitably (Siddiqui, 2020). In his teachings on justice, the Prophet has put much focus on the equality of all human beings and their rights irrespective of their class or status in the society (Hassan, 2022). Besides, it fosters individual's mental health as well as nurtures communal harmony because trust and respect are appreciated in the community (Rahman, 2021). Therefore, if social justice is integrated into the social fabric of a



given society or community, mental health disorders are likely to be well managed as the society will foster an enabling environment that encourages mental health wellbeing (Ali, 2021).

Moreover, there is evidence that environments rich in social justice and equity correlate with reduced prevalence of mental health problems including depression and anxiety, and increased life satisfaction (Rahman, 2021). Prophet Muhammad's vision of a social justice to the society can also be used to address modern day mental health issues because it calls for equity in the provision of mental health resources and opportunities (Siddiqui, 2020). Through the eradication of social inequality and embracing justice, then the effects of the social determinants of mental health can be controlled thus enhancing better mental health in the community (Hassan, 2022). This has further underpinned the fact that equity and justice form the core of mental health and that social justice agenda should continue to be pursued in all its dimensions (Ali, 2021).

#### **Community-based mental health support systems**

It is crucial when it comes to managing mental health issues in a community as the practice of communal care is in line with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (Ibrahim, 2021). The Prophet's teachings on helping our neighbours and being responsible for their well-being put emphasis on the fact that mental health services should also become part of our communities (Zaid, 2020). These systems which could entail support groups, counselling services, educational programs provide appropriate and culturally acceptable care that is acceptable by the community (Khan, 2022). Studies prove that such systems help in the increase of the utilization of mental health services, the reduction of the stigma associated with mental health disorders, and the improvement of the mental health of people and their integration into the community (Hussain, 2020).

In addition, the implementation of mental health intervention within the community context may reduce social exclusion of people living with mental health disorders and enhance the quality of their lives (Ibrahim, 2021). Through encouraging the uptake of mental health services, the community-based systems are very important in the well-being of the community (Khan, 2022). There is more to the integration of CMHS than just administering care; it is establishing a positive network that will encourage a patient to seek treatment without their





rights being violated or them being discriminated against (Hussain, 2020). Providing a framework for modern psychiatry, Prophet Muhammad's method of responding to the needs of the weaker members of society is still relevant today (Zaid, 2020). His focus on compassion, respect, and shared concern is a base for mental health interventions that are culturally sensitive and humane (Ibrahim, 2021). Therefore, when these values are incorporated into the current practices regarding mental health, people in communities can embrace other meaningful support systems that are culturally and religiously sensitive (Khan, 2022). This applies the cultural transformation practice of integrating modern practices with traditional ones in the delivery of mental health support thus finding ways of reaching out to other population groups and making it acceptable to them (Hussain, 2020).

In addition, community-based mental health support systems also provide for the community by enhancing their mental health literacy and coping mechanisms (Ibrahim, 2021). Promoting mental health literacy through education and providing people with access to resources will greatly decrease the prejudice of mental illness (Khan, 2022). It also promotes early engagement and saves the cost of the more professional health care systems (Hussain, 2020). Communal approach also complements the principles of equity and social justice to deliver mental health services across the society especially for those who are most vulnerable (Zaid, 2020). By promoting community based systems, societies can create strong and supportive culture that would address mental health as one of the crucial aspects of people's lives (Ibrahim, 2021).

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Prophet Muhammad's vision of a supportive and compassionate community offers deep insights into mental health and how it can be improved. His teachings were brought in the aspect of taking care of others, showing compassion and ensuring that people feel they are in safe hands. Through the encouragement of charity and emotional support, the Prophet fostered a culture where people are always willing to help each other socially during their gains and losses in life to reduce on feelings of loneliness and social disconnectedness. The principles of social justice and equality which are integral to the prophet's revelations also play a part in good mental health by eradicating prejudice. Thus, striving for the oppressed persons' rights and



helping to facilitate equal access to resources, the Prophet wanted to create a world where everyone would be happy and successful.

This kind of emphasis on social justice is not only beneficial for mental health relief from stress but also the improvement of life satisfaction that comes from fairness in opportunities, which calls for the promotion of healthy society. Mental health support systems that are drawn from the Islamic Prophet's teachings on the concept of community care are instrumental in the management of mental health issues. These systems also provide culturally sensitive support through such channels as support group, counselling, and educational support for people in the community. This approach not only helps in the enhancement of availability of mental health services but also eradicates stigma hence improving the mental health of the community and its cohesiveness. The Prophet's stress on cooperation and supporting one another is therefore in harmony with the current practices, as the social network is beneficial for mental health.

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