

Published:
August 31, 2026

Emotional Intelligence, Spiritual Anchoring, and Leadership Delegation: A Prophetic Framework for Youth Development

Dr. Ayesha Jadoon

Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Studies
Jinnah School of Public Policy & Leadership, NUST, Islamabad

Email: ayeshajadoon@jsppl.nust.edu.pk

Abstract

This paper investigates the pedagogical, psychological, and sociopolitical frameworks of youth mentorship and leadership development embodied by Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). Drawing from qualitative textual analysis of primary Seerah (prophetic biography), Hadith literature, and Quranic exegesis (specifically Surah Al-Kahf and Aal-E-Imran), the study examines how the Prophetic paradigm deconstructed perennial generational disparagement and instituted radical youth empowerment. The research delineates four primary pillars: emotional intelligence grounded in unconditional empathy, spiritual anchoring cultivating the innate disposition (Fitrah), institutional delegation of high-stakes authority, and disciplined scholarly mentorship exemplified by the ‘Abadilah Al-Arba‘ah (the four Abdullahs: Ibn Abbas, Ibn Umar, Ibn Amr, and Ibn Az-Zubair). Findings demonstrate that early Islamic society achieved rapid socio-religious transformation not by marginalizing the young, but by treating them as vital stakeholders, delegating military and judicial governance to adolescents, and sanctioning emotional vulnerability as strength. In contrast to contemporary paradigms that restrict youth success to narrow material benchmarks, the Prophetic model integrates character refinement, intellectual autonomy, and active civic participation. This study formulates actionable recommendations for modern educators, religious institutions, and policymakers to foster youth resilience, critical inquiry, and ethical leadership in contemporary polarized environments.

Keywords: Prophetic Paradigm, Youth Engagement, Emotional Intelligence, Seerah Studies, Leadership Delegation

Published:

August 31, 2026

Introduction

The question of what youth are and what they are for in human society is a recurring theme among philosophers, theologians and social commentators throughout the ages. In the past, people have felt that young people have tended to be at odds with older generations, that they are dazzled by their own image, that they are defective, that they are rebels—and in recent years, that they are superficial intellects, while older generations see them as narcissists, rebellious, and intellectually weak. Throughout history, older generations have portrayed younger generations as being dazzled by their image, intellectually deficient, rebels, superficial thinkers, and so on, and younger generations have felt that they are being marginalized by the institutions they inhabit, that they are being disenfranchised by the older generations. John Freeman said that the children had become "lovers of luxury, bad manners, and contempt for authority."¹ In eleventh-century Europe, Peter the Hermit complained, echoing an identical complaint, that the young people of his day "did not pay heed to their elders but regarded their wisdom as folly, and they thought of nothing but their own pleasures. This complaint has continued into the twenty-first century: today's culture derides the youth for being "digital narcissists" and "moral apathetics," while at the same time limiting their developmental milestones to the "worldly benchmarks" of standardized test scores, employment in the corporate world, and consumerism.

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) set up a radical paradigm shift in seventh-century Arabia, despite these past and contemporary cycles of generational skepticism. Youth were seen not as an impediment but as a strong catalyst for the renewal of the civilizational fabric, in the Prophetic model rather than waiting for them to reach middle age and be placed on probation. Young people formed the demographic basis of the early Muslims: People who were not yet spiritually hardened by their faith and

¹ Kenneth John Freeman, *Schools of Hellas: An Essay on the Practice and Theory of Ancient Greek Education from 600 to 300 B.C.*, ed. M. J. Rendall (London: Macmillan and Co., 1907), 74.

Published:
August 31, 2026

ideology, who were spiritually pure and mentally flexible to build new social structures and monotheism.

Problem Statement & Significance

Today's young people are faced with unprecedented challenges of disintegration, mental health and digital alienation. Traditional institutions tend to default to a discipline that is paternalistic or punitive and that excludes young voices from meaningful decision making. This is a time-informed evidence-based historical model for the restoration of dignity, emotional safety, and executive agency to the next generation, with a focus on the Prophetic engagement model.

Literature Review

There is a large body of academic work that has looked at the Prophetic approach to youth engagement, ranging from classical exegetical studies, biographical Seerah corpora, the Hadith compilations, to modern developmental psychology.

In this research, the Perennial Generational Critique is contrasted with the Inherent Youth Potential. In this research the Perennial Generational Critique is compared to the Inherent Youth Potential. As pointed out by sociological studies such as that of Adil Salahi (2002), revolutionary ideological messages that call for changing the values of society are more attractive to younger generations.² Young people are neither constrained by the prejudices, social tribalism and economic status quo of earlier generations, nor yet by the rationalizations of those who are rigidly attached to them. The cognitive openness of youth enables them to rapidly align with pure ethical truths, without being constrained by the prejudices, social tribalism and economic status quo of earlier generations, nor yet by the rationalizations of those who are rigidly attached to them.

Theological Foundations & Scriptural Validation

Classical Quranic exegesis offers theological arguments for the superior spiritual status and moral qualities of youth:

² Adil Salahi, *Muhammad: Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 2002), 105–108.

Published:
August 31, 2026

Allah said in the Holy Quran "We narrate to you their story in truth. Indeed, they were youths who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance." ³ The commentary by Imam Ibn Kathir emphasizes that the Sleepers of the Cave (Ashab al-Kahf) were young men whose hearts were open to monotheism and belief in God, contrasted with the disbelievers of Mecca, who were their elders.⁴

Prophetic precedents in the Quran:

Prophet Abraham (a.s.) before the age of 20 demolished the idols of the state, Prophet Yusuf (a.s.) aged before 30 was in charge of the state treasury of Egypt, Prophet David (a.s.) as a kid, slayed Goliath, and Prophet Yahya (a.s.) received wisdom from Allah before 30.

Prophetic Emotional Intelligence (EQ) & Neuro-Pedagogical Compassion

Emotional intelligence is categorized in the modern psychological literature in four areas: self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and relationship-management. ⁵ Islamic scholars, like Dr. Ayooob Al-Ayooob, show that all of these characteristics were exhibited in the person of the Prophet (swa).⁶

Theological Basis "By mercy of Allah, you were gracious towards them; and if you were harsh in speech and severe in heart, they would have separated from you."⁷

Neurological & Attachment Affirmation:

The Prophet made physical affection (embracing, kissing, smiling) a moral obligation. Al-Aqra' ibn Habis said that he never kissed any of his ten children, so the Prophet replied, "Whoever does not show mercy will not be shown mercy" ⁸.

³ Surah Al-Kahf (18:13)

⁴ Ibn Kathir, Isma'il ibn 'Umar. Tafsir Ibn Kathir (Abridged). Edited by Safiur-Rahman Al-Mubarakpuri. 10 vols. Riyadh: Darussalam, 2000.

⁵ Daniel Goleman, Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), 43–44.

⁶ Ayooob Khalid Al-Ayooob, Al-Dhakā' al-Ātifī fī al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah [Emotional intelligence in the Prophetic biography] (Kuwait: Dār Ṭawq al-Ḥamāmah, 2007), 45–52.

⁷ Surah Aal-E-Imran 3:159):

Published:

August 31, 2026

To enhance students' practical empowerment and their delegation of authority as a high-stakes actor. Instead of putting youth in subservient apprenticeships the Prophet appointed them to the highest posts in civil, military and diplomatic roles:

Usamah ibn Zayd (r.a): Made commander of the main military force of Muslims, at the age of 17, and given command over seasoned companions like Abu Bakr and Umar ibn Al-Khattab.

Mu'adh ibn Jabal (r.a): His appointment as Governor and Supreme Judge of Yemen when he was 27 years old, necessitating highly complex legal, administrative and diplomatic skills.

Mus'ab ibn Umayr (r.a.): Sent as the first messenger and teacher to Yathrib (Madinah) when he was still quite young.

Female Agency: Asma bint Abi Bakr carried out the intelligence and logistics operations of the Hijrah, and Aisha bint Abi Bakr (r.a.) became one of the leading jurists and scholars of the Ummah by the time she was 20.

Research Objectives

Systematically discover and classify the pedagogical, psychological and institutional practices that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) used to practice while mentoring young people.

- To examine the relationship between adolescent companions' rapid leadership development and their Prophetic emotional intelligence (empathy, active listening, cognitive reframing).
- To analyse the models of institutional delegations (military, diplomatic, scholarly and judicial) given to the young people in the early Islamic state.
- To gain pedagogical and policy frameworks that can be applied to today's educators, youth groups, and youth leadership institutions, in response to adolescent crises today.

Research Questions

1. How does the Prophetic paradigm break the cycle of disparagement and systemic youth empowerment in place?

⁸ Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 1997), vol. 8, bk. 78 (Kitāb al-Adab [Book of Good Manners]), chap. 18, hadith no. 5997.

Published:

August 31, 2026

2. How did Prophetic emotional intelligence and affective vulnerability develop resilience, self-efficacy and psychological safety in youth?
3. What criteria did inform the delegation of high stakes authority by older veteran statesmen to younger companions?
4. What kind of model for contemporary holistic education and intellectual documentation can be obtained from the unique academic trajectories of the ‘Abadilah Al-Arba‘ah?

Research Methodology

The method used in this study is multi-method with a qualitative approach, namely historical-thematic analysis, textual hermeneutics, and interdisciplinary conceptual research.

The spiritual legacy of the Prophet (PBUH)

The historical and spiritual legacy of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) offers a profound examination of emotional intelligence, social leadership, and spiritual mentorship, particularly regarding the treatment of the younger generation. Throughout his life, the Prophet prioritized the youth, recognizing them not merely as future leaders but as active, essential catalysts for the transformation of society. This approach was characterized by the empowerment of both young men and women, establishing a legacy that remains a source of inspiration for contemporary generations.

The brilliance of this Prophetic methodology lay in the utilization of love as the foundational element of every interaction. His magnetic personality and inherent charisma drew children, teenagers, and young adults toward his message in significant numbers.⁹ “Usama b. Zayd (ra) said, “Allah’s Messenger (saw) used to put me on (one of) his thighs and put al-Hasan b. ‘Ali Uon his other thigh, and then embrace us and say, ‘O Allah! Please be merciful to them, as I am merciful to them.’¹⁰

⁹ Muhammad ibn Isma‘il al-Bukhari, *Al-Adab al-Mufrad: A Code of Manners and Morals for Muslims*, trans. Aisha Bewley (London: Dar Al-Taqwa, 2005), hadith 22.

¹⁰ Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 1997), vol. 5, bk. 62 (Kitāb Faḍā’il Aṣḥāb al-Nabī [Virtues of the Companions]), chap. 18 (Manāqib Usāmah ibn Zayd), hadith no. 3735.

Published:
August 31, 2026

This created a social movement powered by youthful energy and a profound, unwavering conviction. By treating the youth with genuine respect and affection, he successfully harnessed their potential to fuel a revolutionary change in the seventh-century Arabian social order.

Sociological Dynamics and the Receptivity of the Youth

Analysis of the *Seerah*, or prophetic biography, reveals that the demographic core of the early Muslim community was predominantly young. This phenomenon aligns with sociological observations made by scholars like Adil Salahi, who note that messages advocating for a fundamental shift in the social order naturally appeal to those whose vision for a better future provides a strong motive for action. The youth are often more willing to work diligently for their beliefs, as they are less tethered to the prejudices and established structures of the past.

The Prophetic message served as an empowering call to action, facilitating a transformation that allowed young people to realize their highest potential. The simplicity and logic of Islam appealed directly to the human intellect while aligning seamlessly with human nature. Consequently, the early Muslim community was characterized by young individuals of exceptional character who were prepared to challenge the status quo to establish the principles of justice and monotheism. Their involvement was not peripheral but central to the success of the spiritual and social reform.

Spiritual Anchoring and the Cultivation of the Fitrah

A central tenet of the Prophetic approach was the anchoring of the soul to its innate nature, known as the *Fitrah*. This methodology prioritized the nourishment of the youth through immense love and empathy, focusing on their holistic development rather than mere external behavioral compliance. By providing instruction, advice, and empowerment, the Prophet developed young followers into comprehensive leaders. This focus on emotional and spiritual development demonstrated that young people could achieve extraordinary heights when positioned at the frontlines of reform. This was a

Published:

August 31, 2026

tangible reality in the seventh century, where direct leadership and mentorship allowed the greatness and potential of the youth to manifest in every facet of the growing community. The Prophet's keenness to engage the youth in all communal activities underscored his belief that their energy was vital to the sustainability of the faith and the society.

Divine Validation and the Narrative of Surah Al-Kahf

The Quranic narrative found in *Surah Al-Kahf* (The Cave) provides a powerful theological validation for the importance of youth in the preservation of faith. The story details a group of young men who retreated to a cave to protect their religious identity and their lives from a tyrannical society. This narrative serves as a timeless source of inspiration for young people navigating the complexities of modern identity and the various temptations and hardships that accompany it.

Despite facing extreme adversity, these young men exhibited a firmness of faith that resulted in a divine increase in their guidance. The Quran explicitly highlights their status, stating: "They were young men who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance" (Al-Kahf 18:13). This scriptural acknowledgment elevates the status of the youth, portraying them as paragons of conviction who are capable of standing against the currents of social corruption.

Generational Contrast and Mental Flexibility

Commentaries on the Quran, such as those by Imam Ibn Kathir, emphasize that the youth mentioned in *Surah Al-Kahf* were more accepting of the truth than the elders of their time, who had become stubbornly entrenched in their traditional ways. This same dynamic was observed during the Prophetic era, where the majority of those who responded to the message of Allah and His Messenger were young people.

While the elders of the Quraysh clung tenaciously to the religion of their ancestors and maintained a commitment to falsehood, the youth possessed the mental flexibility and spiritual purity necessary to recognize and embrace the truth. By recording the account of

Published:
August 31, 2026

the Sleepers of the Cave, the Quran elucidates the high honor bestowed upon young people who believe in God. Their receptivity to new ideas and their willingness to abandon outdated, harmful traditions made them the primary architects of the new social and spiritual reality.

The Role of Narrative as Spiritual Solace

During the difficult Makkan period, *Surat al-Kahf* served as a critical source of solace for the Prophet and his followers. At a time when the early believers faced immense opposition and the constant threat of death, the story of the young men in the cave provided the necessary moral and spiritual strength to persevere. It reaffirmed the Prophet's trust in the youth of Makkah, reinforcing his belief that their hearts were the most fertile ground for the seeds of faith.

The Prophet maintained a unique place in his heart for the youth, ensuring that everyone—from the children within his own family to the young people in the wider community—experienced the warmth of his presence. His unconditional love was not a mere sentiment but a strategic and compassionate approach to community building, ensuring that the youngest members of society felt valued, protected, and loved.

The Psychological and Neurological Impact of Merciful Conduct

The Prophet's nature was defined by compassion, frequently expressed through physical affection such as embracing, kissing, and smiling. While these actions were intrinsic to his conduct over fourteen centuries ago, modern science now validates their importance. Contemporary child psychologists and pediatricians advise parents to provide this level of attention, citing its positive impact on a child's neurological and emotional growth.

An incident cited by Imam Al-Bukhari involves the Prophet kissing his grandson Al-Hasan in the presence of Al-Aqra bin Habis. When Al-Aqra noted that he had ten children and had never kissed any of them, the Prophet replied: "Whoever is not merciful to others, will not be treated mercifully." This merciful conduct was not merely a private family matter; it was a public teaching that built a bridge of trust between generations.

Published:
August 31, 2026

Any child or young person who encountered the Prophet was deeply affected by this kindness, which fostered an environment of safety and emotional security.¹¹

Authenticity, Emotional Vulnerability, and Fatherhood

The *Seerah* and *Hadith* literature illustrate that the Prophet maintained an intimate and emotional bond with his children, rejecting the distant or stoic figurehead model often associated with leadership. He was a father who expressed both love and grief openly, demonstrating that faith does not require the suppression of one's humanity.

Following the death of his son Ibrahim, the Prophet wept and expressed profound sadness, stating: "The eye weeps and the heart is sad, but we do not say anything to incur the anger of Allah. We are sad, O Ibrahim."¹² This display of raw emotion was a pedagogical tool for the youth, teaching them that true faith allows for the healthy expression of human feelings. It provided a model for emotional vulnerability that was rooted in spiritual strength rather than weakness, showing that one can be both a person of deep faith and a person of deep feeling.

Practical Empowerment and the Delegation of Authority

Beyond providing emotional support and affection, the Prophet's mentorship involved practical empowerment. He bestowed significant responsibilities upon the youth, reflecting his total confidence in their abilities and intellect. For instance, he appointed Usama bin Zaid to lead an army and sent young scholars like Mus'ab ibn Umayr to provide religious instruction to entire cities.¹³

This level of trust was revolutionary. By delegating such high-stakes authority to young individuals, the Prophet ensured they felt essential to the mission of Islam. This method

¹¹ Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, ed. Muḥammad Zuhayr ibn Nāṣir al-Nāṣir (Beirut: Dār Ṭawq al-Najāh, 1422 AH/2001 CE), 8:9, Kitāb al-adab, ḥadīth 5997.

¹² Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 1997), vol. 2, bk. 23 (Kitāb al-Janā'iz [Book of Funerals]), chap. 43, ḥadīth no. 1303.

¹³ Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 1997), vol. 5, bk. 64 (Kitāb al-Maghāzī [Book of Military Expeditions]), chap. 87, ḥadīth no. 4469.

Published:
August 31, 2026

of empowerment cultivated a generation of leaders who were ready to sacrifice for their cause out of a deep-seated love for the Messenger and the truth he represented, rather than out of coercion or obligation. It transformed the youth from observers into stakeholders, giving them a sense of agency and purpose that was critical to the expansion of the community.

Strategic Mentorship as a Blueprint for Modernity

The Prophetic model for treating the youth offers a vital blueprint for parents, educators, and leaders in the modern world. It suggests that the successful development of the younger generation requires a combination of emotional support, practical empowerment, and spiritual guidance. By recognizing the inherent potential in young people, validating their struggles, and loving them unconditionally, the Prophet created an environment where they could truly thrive.

In the current era, where youth face unprecedented challenges regarding their identity, faith, and social belonging, returning to the Prophetic model of engagement is essential. This model is built on the pillars of mercy, trust, and respect. Implementing these principles in contemporary settings can help revive the spirit of conviction and excellence that defined the early generations of Islam.

Reviving the Spirit of Excellence

The study of how the Prophet treated the youth reveals a sophisticated approach to human development that predates modern psychological and pedagogical theories. His ability to connect with young people on an emotional level, while simultaneously challenging them with great responsibilities, remains the gold standard for leadership. He understood that the youth possess a unique purity and energy that, when properly directed and nurtured, can change the course of history.

As society moves forward, the lessons derived from the Prophetic era serve as a reminder that the youth should never be sidelined or underestimated. Instead, they should be embraced with compassion and given the tools and trust necessary to lead. By treating the

Published:
August 31, 2026

youth with the same dignity and affection that the Prophet did, modern institutions can foster a generation that is spiritually grounded, emotionally resilient, and capable of leading with the same excellence and conviction seen in the earliest days of Islam. The path to a better future lies in the empowerment of the youth, guided by the timeless and merciful conduct of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)

The history of Islamic civilization is anchored in the lives and legacies of the *Sahabah*, the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), whose contributions served as the foundational pillars for the development of the faith. Among these illustrious figures, a specific group known as the '*Abadilah Al-Arba'ah*'—the four Abdullahs—emerges as a paragon of intellectual and moral excellence. These individuals, characterized by their youth during the Prophetic era and their subsequent roles as guardians of knowledge, provide a comprehensive framework for spiritual and social conduct. Their lives illustrate the seamless integration of devotion, scholarship, and action, serving as a timeless blueprint for generations of believers.

The Theological and Historical Significance of the Companions

The virtues of the Companions are not merely historical footnotes but are central to the integrity of the Islamic tradition. They represent a generation that underwent profound sacrifices to establish a community founded on faith, justice, and noble character. The Prophet (s.a.w.) himself validated their high status, famously noting that the best of people were those of his generation, followed by the two subsequent generations. This Prophetic endorsement elevates the study of their lives from a mere academic exercise to a spiritual necessity.

The Scholarly Matrix of the 'Abadilah Al-Arba'ah¹⁴

The Four Abdullahs are four different but complementary paths towards youth excellence:

¹⁴ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'* [Biographies of Eminent Noble Figures], ed. Shu'ayb al-Arnā'ūt, 25 vols. (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1985), 3:140–145, 3:345–350.

Published:

August 31, 2026

Abdullah bin Abbas (r.a.) (The Gifted Scholar) was young yet served as senior state counselor to Caliph Umar, and narrated ~1,660 hadiths and as an expert in Exegesis (Ta'wil) and deep understanding (Fiqh).

Abdullah bin Umar (r.a.) (The Embodiment of Observant Love): He was meticulous in emulating in behavior; narrated 2,630 hadiths; advocated the principle: knowledge is a tree whose fruit is righteous action. Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-As (r.a.) (The Pioneer of Diligent Documentation): First person to receive early written authorization (Al-Sahifah Al-Sadiqah) to write down the words of the Prophet (saws), thus introducing a new concept of systematic written documentation. Abdullah bin Az-Zubair (r.a.) (The Standard of Loyal Defense): Famous in the art of the sword, the skill of eloquence and the faithfulness of good conduct in times of trouble.

The '*Abadilah Al-Arba'ah*' occupy a unique niche within this generation. Being young during the lifetime of the Prophet (s.a.w.), they were often members of his household or close relatives, granting them intimate access to the private and public conduct of the Messenger. This proximity allowed them to record the nuances of the Prophetic tradition (*Sunnah*) with meticulous detail, which they later disseminated as the elder Companions passed away.

Abdullah bin Abbas: The Archetype of the Gifted Scholar

Abdullah bin Abbas (r.a.) is celebrated as the "Gifted Scholar" of the Muslim *Ummah*. His relationship with the Prophet (s.a.w.) was familial, as his cousin, and deeply servile. He sought every opportunity to be in the Prophet's presence, often performing tasks such as preparing water for ablution (*wudhu*) or accompanying him on arduous journeys. This proximity was not merely for the sake of companionship but was a deliberate pursuit of knowledge.¹⁵

¹⁵ Laura Veccia Vaglieri, "'Abd Allāh b. al-'Abbās," in *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., ed. P. Bearman et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1960), 1:40–41, https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_0040.

Published:

August 31, 2026

The intellectual prowess of Ibn Abbas was further solidified by a specific Prophetic supplication: "O Allah, grant him understanding in the religion and teach him the proper interpretation of the Quran." This divine blessing bore fruit in his mastery of *Tafsir* (exegesis) and jurisprudence. Ibn Abbas was a prolific narrator, recording approximately 1,660 hadiths. However, his scholarship was not static; after the passing of the Prophet (s.a.w.), he demonstrated remarkable humility by seeking out older Companions to verify and learn narrations he had not personally witnessed.

His residence became a hub of intellectual activity, where he conducted active classes for a growing body of students. His wisdom was so profound that even during the caliphate of Sayyidina Umar (r.a.), he was consulted on complex matters of state and religion despite his relative youth. In a contemporary context, the legacy of Ibn Abbas underscores the importance of utilizing diverse platforms for learning and ensuring that the knowledge acquired is placed in the service of the community.¹⁶

Abdullah bin Umar: The Embodiment of Observant Love

While Ibn Abbas represented the intellect, Abdullah bin Umar (r.a.) represented the spirit of meticulous emulation. As the son of the second Caliph, Umar bin Al-Khattab, he was raised in an environment of rigor and piety. His approach to the Prophetic tradition was defined by "Observant Love," a term that captures his drive to mirror the Prophet (s.a.w.) in every conceivable action.

The philosophy guiding Ibn Umar's life was that knowledge is like a tree, while action is its fruit. He believed that a learned person is not defined by what they know, but by how they act upon that knowledge. His dedication to this principle led him to record 2,630 hadiths, making him one of the most distinguished narrators in history. His level of focus was extraordinary; he would pray exactly where the Prophet prayed and supplicate using the exact words and mannerisms of the Messenger.

¹⁶ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, ed. Shu'ayb al-Arna'ūt and Ḥusayn al-Asad, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1985), 3:331–334.

Published:

August 31, 2026

This attention to "minute details" was not a manifestation of legalistic obsession but rather an expression of deep reverence and love. For the modern seeker of knowledge, Abdullah bin Umar serves as a reminder that the ultimate goal of learning is the refinement of character and the transformation of the self. His life teaches that even simple acts, such as a smile or a specific prayer, are significant when performed with the intention of following the Prophetic model.¹⁷

Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-As: The Pioneer of Diligent Documentation

In an era where oral tradition was the primary means of preserving history, Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-As (r.a.) recognized the vital importance of the written word. He was an exceptional individual, gifted with high intelligence and a deep sense of piety. His contribution to Islam is particularly significant in the realm of documentation and the preservation of the *Hadith*.

During the early stages of revelation, the Prophet (s.a.w.) had initially restricted the writing of his sayings to prevent any potential confusion with the text of the Quran. However, recognizing the sincerity and precision of Abdullah bin Amr, the Prophet (s.a.w.) eventually granted him permission to record his words. Abdullah believed fundamentally that everything the Prophet spoke was the truth, and he felt a responsibility to preserve this truth for future generations.

His written records became a primary source of knowledge after the Prophet's passing, bridging the gap between the oral era and the later systematic compilation of hadith. The legacy of Abdullah bin Amr highlights the essential nature of writing as a tool for organizing thought, articulating ideas, and developing cognitive abilities. In the modern age, dominated by digital screens and fleeting communication, his example encourages the reclamation of writing as a deliberate and disciplined intellectual pursuit. He teaches

¹⁷ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, ed. Shu'ayb al-Arnā'ūt, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1985), 3:209–213; Jonathan A. C. Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, Foundations of Islam (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2009), 21–23.

Published:

August 31, 2026

that when an individual is driven by a love for a subject, their contributions—through reading, writing, and teaching—become a lasting service to the world.¹⁸

Abdullah bin Az-Zubair: The Standard of Loyal Defense

The final member of this quartet, Abdullah bin Az-Zubair (r.a.), exemplifies the virtues of courage, worship, and eloquence. His lineage was one of immense prestige; he was the son of Az-Zubair bin Awwam, a Companion promised Paradise, and Asma' bint Abu Bakr, the daughter of the first Caliph. His birth was a significant event for the *Muhajirin* (emigrants), as he was the first child born to them after the *Hijrah* to Madinah, symbolizing hope and continuity for the Muslim community.

Abdullah bin Az-Zubair's character was forged in the crucible of early Islamic challenges. He was exceptionally close to his aunt, Sayyidatina Aishah (r.a.), who was known as 'Umm Abdullah' due to her deep attachment to him. This relationship allowed him to observe the Prophet's Sunnah through the eyes of one of the most knowledgeable women in Islam.

He was described as being without equal in three specific areas: courage, worship, and eloquence. His bravery was not merely physical but also moral; he was a steadfast defender of the Caliph Uthman (r.a.) during the period of civil unrest. Furthermore, his eloquence was so profound that his victory speeches, such as the one delivered after the Muslim triumphs in North Africa, were compared to the oratory of his grandfather, Abu Bakr As-Siddiq.

His life serves as a testament to the importance of remaining steadfast in one's values, especially during times of adversity. For those who find themselves in "gloomy days" or facing challenges that seem devoid of meaning, the example of Ibn Az-Zubair offers a

¹⁸ Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, ed. Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī (Cairo: Maṭba'at 'Īsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1955), kitāb al-waṣīyyah (Book of Wills), hadith 1631; Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā al-Tirmidhī, Al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr (Sunan al-Tirmidhī), ed. Bashshār 'Awwād Ma'rūf (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1998), hadith 1376.

Published:

August 31, 2026

path of patience and strength. He demonstrated that true character is revealed when one stands up for their beliefs and defends those to whom they are loyal.

The *Sirah* (biography) of the Prophet (s.a.w.) and the lives of these four individuals are not intended to be viewed as static historical texts. Rather, they are "living examples" that demand active implementation in the modern world. In a global landscape often characterized by a lack of direction and the "error of mob mentality," the values of the *‘Abadilah*—critical thinking, disciplined documentation, moral courage, and humble service—remain more relevant than ever.

By emulating these figures, the contemporary generation can bridge the gap between ancient wisdom and modern challenges. The goal of studying the four Abdullahs is to produce a generation of individuals who are not only knowledgeable but are also "champions of the faith" who are elevated in status through their dedication to Allah (s.w.t.) and their service to humanity.¹⁹

The Perennial Critique: A Historical Perspective on Generational Conflict

The contemporary lamentation regarding the perceived decline of youthful morality and social responsibility is not a modern phenomenon. In the twenty-first century, it is common to hear adults characterize young people as self-centered, disrespectful toward authority, and lacking the intellectual depth required for serious thought. Furthermore, criticisms are frequently leveled at the perceived immodesty and forwardness of young women, suggesting a fundamental breakdown in the concept of morality. However, a broader historical analysis reveals that these grievances are echoes of an ancient intergenerational tension.

In the eleventh century, Peter the Hermit expressed nearly identical sentiments, describing the world as passing through "troubled times" where the youth thought of

¹⁹ Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, ed. Muḥammad Zuhayr ibn Nāṣir al-Nāṣir (Beirut: Dār Ṭawq al-Najāh, 1422/2001), kitāb faḍā’il aṣḥāb al-Nabī (Virtues of the Companions), ḥadīth 3719; Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’, ed. Shu‘ayb al-Arna’ūṭ (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1985), 3:363–365.

Published:

August 31, 2026

nothing but themselves and held no reverence for their parents. He lamented their impatience with restraint and their tendency to speak as if they possessed exhaustive knowledge, noting that what the elders considered wisdom was dismissed as foolishness by the young. Even further back, in the fifth century BCE, the Greek philosopher Socrates complained that children had become lovers of luxury, possessed bad manners, and showed contempt for authority. These historical parallels demonstrate that the friction between generations is a recurring social cycle rather than a unique modern crisis. Despite these persistent critiques, youth possesses inherent qualities that are vital for the advancement of any civilization. Young people are typically characterized by hope, energy, and a fervent idealism. They are uniquely positioned to embrace change and are driven by an eagerness to leave a lasting impact on the world. Unlike their older counterparts, they are often not yet jaded by cynicism, allowing them to maintain a visionary perspective that sees the "bright side" of possibilities that others might dismiss.

The Prophetic Paradigm: Empowerment over Disparagement

In stark contrast to the disparaging views held by many historical and contemporary societies, the methodology of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) established a new standard for youth engagement. Rather than viewing the young as a liability or a group to be silenced until they reached a certain age, he treated them as indispensable contributors with significant value to offer the community. This approach was central to the early development of Islam, as the majority of the Prophet's initial followers were young individuals drawn to the message of justice and spiritual renewal.

The Prophetic model of leadership was fundamentally meritocratic and inclusive of age. He delegated responsibilities to young people that their elders often believed involved more authority than they were capable of handling. By according them rights usually reserved for the elderly and, in many instances, giving them authority over their seniors, the Prophet ensured that youth were never made to feel useless or unwanted. Instead, they were entrusted with crucial roles essential to the dissemination of the Islamic message.

Published:

August 31, 2026

This trust transformed "ordinary" young people into "righteous leaders," as the Prophet's ultimate goal was the cultivation of a generation characterized by piety, generosity, and social responsibility.

In the modern context, this Prophetic wisdom stands as a critique of current social tendencies. Contemporary society often views young people as troublesome and limits their path to success to narrow worldly endeavors, such as obtaining grades, securing high-paying jobs, and marriage. When young people exhibit pious or generous inclinations, they are often discouraged from pursuing these higher ideals in favor of traditional social benchmarks. The Prophetic approach, however, encourages the acknowledgement and utilization of youthful skills to their best advantage, recognizing that when given encouragement, the youth have the capacity to change the world.

Institutionalized Leadership: Historical Case Studies

The practical application of the Prophet's trust in youth is most clearly seen in the appointments of Usamah ibn Zayd and Muadh ibn Jabal. At the age of seventeen, Usamah ibn Zayd was chosen to lead the Muslim army in a critical expedition. This appointment was revolutionary, as his command included senior statesmen and seasoned warriors such as Abu Bakr and Umar ibn Al-Khattab. This decision signaled that leadership was not a matter of age, but of capability and character.

Similarly, Muadh ibn Jabal, who spent significant time in the Prophet's company, developed into a preeminent scholar and jurist. At the age of twenty-seven, he was appointed as the governor of Yemen, a role requiring immense diplomatic and legal expertise. These examples demonstrate that the Prophet was able to see the untapped potential in young people and proactively worked to secure a brighter future for them and the community they served.

This trend of youthful leadership continued beyond the Prophet's lifetime. Historical records indicate that many army commanders who led Muslim forces into regions such as Iraq, Persia, Egypt, and North Africa were under the age of forty. Notably, Muhammad

Published:
August 31, 2026

Ibn Qasim successfully led the conquest of Sind in India at the age of seventeen. These figures were not anomalies; they were the products of a culture that utilized and encouraged the skills of the young, finding contentment and strength in their company.²⁰

The Intellectual and Spiritual Agency of Young Women

The Prophetic methodology was equally transformative regarding the empowerment of young women. In the early days of Islam, young women played vital and daring roles that were essential to the survival of the community. Asma, the daughter of Abu Bakr, is a quintessential example of this courage. She played a dangerous and pivotal role in the Prophet's escape from Makkah, demonstrating a level of strategic importance often overlooked in modern discussions of women's roles.

Furthermore, Aisha (r.a.), the wife of the Prophet, emerged as one of the most respected scholars and jurists in Islamic history. By the age of twenty, she was already a significant authority on religious law and tradition. Her intellectual contributions were sought after by the most senior companions, establishing a precedent for female scholarship and authority that remains a standard for the *Ummah*.

The intellectual weight given to youth is also evident in the life of Ibn Abbas. Although he was only thirteen years old at the time of the Prophet's death, he was already recognized as a high authority on the Quran and its exegesis. His wisdom was so profound that Caliph Umar ibn Al-Khattab would regularly consult him in the presence of much older and more senior Muslims. This inclusion of young voices in the highest levels of scholarly and political discourse reinforces the idea that wisdom is a gift from the Divine that is not exclusively tied to the passage of time.

Scriptural Justification for Youthful Agency

The Quranic narrative further reinforces the significance of youth as a period of Divine favor and mission. Throughout the scripture, stories of young people making a significant

²⁰ Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath al-Sijistānī, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-'Asriyyah, n.d.), vol. 3, p. 303, hadith no. 3592.

Published:
August 31, 2026

mark on the world are prevalent. Many of these figures fought fearlessly for the sake of God and introduced transformative social changes.

For example, Prophet Abraham (a.s.) was likely in his twenties when he challenged the prevailing idolatry of his society and destroyed their idols, a monumental act of spiritual rebellion. Scholars also suggest that Prophet Yusuf (a.s.) was less than thirty years old when he was entrusted with the financial affairs of Egypt, demonstrating that administrative and economic leadership is well within the capacity of the young. Similarly, Prophet David (a.s.) was described as a young man when he slew Goliath, a victory that placed him on the path to kingship and prophethood. Even in childhood, Prophet John (Yahya) was granted wisdom by the Divine, emphasizing that the capacity for profound understanding can be bestowed at any age.

The Spiritual Significance and Urgency of Youth

From a spiritual perspective, Islam views youth as a "golden period" and a critical juncture where an individual must choose their path in life. The Prophet (s.a.w.) emphasized that with proper support and encouragement, young adults are more likely to choose the path of righteousness. Armed with correct knowledge, the Muslim youth possess the boundless energy and courage required to work tirelessly for the betterment of society.

The spiritual rewards for a youth dedicated to worship are among the highest in the faith. The Prophet informed his companions that on the Day of Judgment, there are seven groups of people who will find relief in the shade provided by God. Significantly, the second group mentioned is the youth who were raised in the worship of God. This highlights the Divine recognition of the struggle involved in maintaining piety during a period of life often characterized by intense passion and social pressure.

Furthermore, the Prophet advised the youth to recognize the finite nature of their time. He encouraged them to make use of their health and vigor before the inevitable onset of old

Published:

August 31, 2026

age and failing health. This sense of urgency frames youth not just as a time for personal enjoyment, but as a resource to be invested in meaningful and righteous endeavors.

A Call for Contemporary Re-engagement

The advice and methodology established by Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) regarding the treatment of young people remain profoundly relevant today. The modern tendency to disparage or overlook the potential of the youth serves only to stifle the very energy and idealism required to solve contemporary social and spiritual challenges.

Society must look for ways to empower the youth and embrace their eagerness and ideals. This involves taking their opinions and advice seriously and encouraging them in all their righteous endeavors. By moving away from a model that prioritizes mere worldly success and moving toward one that emphasizes responsibility, leadership, and piety, the community can cultivate a new generation of "righteous leaders." The Prophetic example teaches that the most vibrant and resilient societies are those that see the best in their young people and actively work to provide them with a brighter, more integrated future. The empowerment of the youth is not merely a social strategy; it is a spiritual imperative that honors the inherent dignity and potential of the next generation.

The life and character of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) represent a quintessential model of emotional intelligence, a multifaceted quality that served as a foundational pillar of his Prophetic mission and personal conduct. In contemporary psychological discourse, emotional intelligence is defined as the capacity to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions while simultaneously demonstrating a deep empathy for the feelings of others. For the Prophet (s.a.w.), these traits were not merely inherited or acquired skills but were divinely inspired attributes intended to facilitate the spread of Islam among diverse populations of humans and jinn. His ability to build balanced, successful relationships and to navigate complex social hierarchies with grace and wisdom remains an unparalleled standard in the history of human leadership.

Published:
August 31, 2026

The Theological Basis of Prophetic Compassion

The effectiveness of the Prophetic mission was inextricably linked to his internal emotional disposition. This reality is underscored by the Quranic revelation in Surah Aal-E-Imran “So by mercy from Allah, you were gentle with them. And if you had been rude and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from around you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. Then when you have decided, put your trust in Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him].”²¹ which identifies divine mercy as the catalyst for the Prophet’s leniency toward his followers. The verse highlights a critical psychological truth: that rudeness in speech and harshness of heart are inherently repulsive traits that would have caused the community to disband and fail. By contrast, the Prophet’s gentleness served as a unifying force, drawing people toward the faith through the sheer weight of his character. This divine endorsement suggests that the success of Islam was not solely due to the strength of its theological arguments but also to the emotional safety and compassion provided by its Messenger.

Defining Emotional Intelligence in the Prophetic Context

Emotional intelligence, as manifested in the Prophet’s personality, encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management. It is the core skill required for adapting to shifting circumstances, extracting lessons from lived experiences, and solving interpersonal problems effectively. Throughout his life, Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) displayed an extraordinary ability to read the emotional landscape of those around him—be they devoted followers or staunch opponents.

His leadership was characterized by a delicate balance between decisiveness in moments of crisis and profound gentleness in daily interactions. Whether providing tender care for the vulnerable, navigating the political complexities of the Quraysh, or maintaining a consultative and respectful relationship with his companions, his emotional management was consistently exemplary. Scholars such as Dr. Ayoob Al-Ayoob have noted that this

²¹ Sura Aal-e-Imran (3:159)

Published:
August 31, 2026

intelligence involves an adaptability to one's environment and the strategic use of life experiences to address societal problems. By reading emotions accurately and understanding the underlying needs of his people, the Prophet (s.a.w.) was able to guide them toward goodness with wisdom and precision. This approach is validated in Surah Al-Ahzab "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often."²² which establishes the Messenger of Allah as an "excellent pattern" for all believers, particularly those who seek spiritual proximity to the Divine and the rewards of the afterlife.

Mercy as a Strategic and Moral Foundation

One of the most profound demonstrations of emotional intelligence in the Prophetic biography is his conduct toward his enemies. Conventional leadership models often prioritize retribution and the consolidation of power through the humiliation of opponents. However, Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) consistently rejected harshness and cruelty, even in the face of significant injustice.

The Conquest of Makkah serves as a primary historical case study in emotional regulation and the transformation of hostility into mercy. Despite the years of persecution, torture, and displacement inflicted upon him and his followers by the people of Makkah, the Prophet (s.a.w.) entered the city as a humble conqueror. Rather than seeking vengeance, he offered a general amnesty, famously declaring to his former persecutors, "Go, for you are free." This act was not merely a gesture of political magnanimity; it was a profound exercise in emotional control. It demonstrated an ability to rise above personal grievances for the sake of a higher moral and social objective, effectively neutralizing centuries of tribal enmity and fostering a spirit of reconciliation that became the hallmark of the Islamic community.

²² Sura Al-Ahzab (33:21)

Published:

August 31, 2026

Interpersonal Dynamics and the Nurturing of Companions

In his relationships with his companions (Sahabah), the Prophet (s.a.w.) established a standard of mindfulness and emotional resonance. He was known for being an active and patient listener, always attuned to the emotional needs and hardships of those around him. His interactions were designed to earn trust and foster endearment, rather than to impose authority through fear. This philosophy is encapsulated in his directive: "Make things easy and do not make them difficult; make people calm and do not scare them." This approach prioritized the psychological well-being of the individual, ensuring that the burden of religious practice was accompanied by social support and emotional ease.

Furthermore, the Prophet's emotional intelligence was integrated into the very fabric of his spiritual message. He taught that the internal state of a believer should be one of resilience and optimism. In a noted narration from the collection of Imam Muslim, the Prophet (s.a.w.) described the state of the believer as "strange" because it is consistently positive. He observed that when a believer experiences delight, they respond with gratitude, which is beneficial for them; conversely, when they encounter trouble, they respond with patient resignation, which is also beneficial. This teaching highlights a sophisticated form of cognitive reframing, where spiritual, self, and social intelligence converge to channel emotions toward constructive outcomes.

Practical Applications: Interactions with Children

The Prophet's emotional intelligence extended beyond the political and scholarly spheres into the most intimate aspects of domestic and social life. His treatment of children, in particular, provides a masterclass in the expression of affection and the fostering of self-confidence.

In one documented incident, the Prophet (s.a.w.) was seen kissing his grandson, Hasan ibn 'Ali, in the presence of Al-Aqra' ibn Habis. When Al-Aqra' remarked that he had ten children and had never shown such affection to any of them, the Prophet (s.a.w.) responded with a fundamental moral axiom: "Whoever does not show mercy will not be

Published:

August 31, 2026

shown mercy." This interaction emphasizes that the outward expression of kindness is not a sign of weakness but a necessary component of emotional health and family bonding.

Another significant example involves the Prophet's respect for the rights and feelings of children, regardless of the presence of more senior individuals. In a narration by Sahl ibn Sa'd, a drink was brought to the Prophet (s.a.w.) while a young boy sat to his right and elder men sat to his left. According to social custom, the drink should have been passed to the elders first. However, recognizing the boy's right due to his position on the right side, the Prophet (s.a.w.) asked for the boy's permission to give preference to the elders. When the boy expressed his desire to maintain his share from the Prophet, the Prophet (s.a.w.) respected his wish and handed the container to him. This event illustrates a profound respect for the dignity and rights of the individual, teaching that emotional intelligence requires upholding justice and respecting feelings irrespective of age or social status.²³

Wisdom in Conflict Resolution: The Case of the Bedouin

The Prophet's ability to handle potentially volatile situations with calm and wisdom is perhaps best exemplified by the incident involving a Bedouin who urinated in the mosque. While many of the companions reacted with immediate anger and a desire to punish the man harshly, the Prophet (s.a.w.) intervened to de-escalate the situation. He instructed his followers to allow the man to finish and then simply clean the area with water.²⁴

Subsequently, he gently explained to the Bedouin the sanctity of the mosque as a place of worship and cleanliness. This intervention was a masterstroke of emotional management; it addressed the mistake constructively without causing embarrassment or alienating the individual. By prioritizing education and gentleness over punishment and humiliation, the

²³ Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, ed. Muḥammad Zuhayr ibn Nāṣir al-Nāṣir (Riyadh: Dār Ṭawq al-Najāh, 2001), vol. 3, p. 109, hadith no. 2351.

²⁴ Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, trans. Nasiruddin al-Khattab (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 2007), vol. 1, bk. 2 (Kitāb al-Ṭahārah [Book of Purification]), chap. 30, hadith no. 285.

Published:
August 31, 2026

Prophet (s.a.w.) demonstrated how to correct behavior while preserving the dignity of the person, thereby ensuring that the individual remained receptive to the message of Islam rather than being driven away by harshness.

The Integration of Heart and Mind for Societal Development

The emotional intelligence of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) was not an isolated personal trait but a comprehensive methodology for building a functional and compassionate society. He understood that hearts cannot be united through force or intellectual dominance alone; they must be won through empathy, consistency, and genuine care. His compassionate heart and wise mind worked in tandem to spread the message of Islam across disparate cultures and geographies.

In the modern era, the Prophetic model of emotional intelligence remains more than a historical curiosity; it is a necessity for the development of healthy individuals and cohesive societies. The challenges of contemporary life—ranging from fractured family units to global political polarization—demand a return to the principles of empathy, active listening, and the transformation of hostility into mercy. Following the Prophetic example in this regard is not merely a religious choice but a practical requirement for anyone seeking to lead with integrity and to build lasting, meaningful relationships.

The Enduring Legacy of Prophetic Character

Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) serves as the ultimate archetype of emotional intelligence. His life demonstrates that true greatness is found in the ability to manage one's own internal state while remaining deeply sensitive to the needs of others. Through his mercy to his enemies, his gentleness with his companions, his affection for children, and his wisdom in handling the mistakes of the ignorant, he provided a blueprint for human excellence.

The Quranic description of him as an "excellent pattern" is a testament to the universality of his character. His ability to read emotions accurately and respond with wisdom allowed him to unite a fractured society and establish a civilization rooted in justice and

Published:
August 31, 2026

compassion. By implementing the lessons derived from his life, individuals can develop the emotional resilience and social awareness necessary to navigate the complexities of the modern world. Ultimately, the Prophetic model proves that emotional intelligence, when grounded in divine mercy and moral clarity, has the power to transform not only the individual heart but the entire world.

Conclusions & Results

Qualitative results reveal four basic shifts in how young Muslims are leading in the early days of Islam:

The Prophet broke the age-based gerontocracy and made competence and piety the key criteria for leadership (Usamah at 17, Mu'adh at 27). This is a high trust setting that helped to promote psychological maturity and ethical responsibility.

Emotional Vulnerability as a Pedagogical Strength:

Authentic emotional leadership was redefined. The Prophet was an example to us in how to process the emotions that come with the death of a child, by crying openly and the heart was sad but not using words to draw the anger of Allah. Additionally, when giving out drinks, the Prophet respected the rights of a young boy, sitting on his right, over the elder statesmen.

Restorative Conflict Resolution & Cognitive Reframing:

The Prophet emphasized dignity and education over humiliation with punishment, as he did in resolving the Bedouin incident in the mosque. Moreover, cognitive reframing was instilled as an internal resilience tool ("How wonderful is the affair of the believer... if adversity touches him, he is patient, and that is good for him" - Sahih Muslim).

Women as Leaders in Political & Scholarly Development:

Young women were made the heart of political and scholarly development. Asma bint Abi Bakr did much during the Hijrah, and Aisha (r.a.) already was one of the greatest jurists and hadith scholars in Islamic history by the time she was 22 or 23 years old.

Published:
August 31, 2026

Recommendations

- Implement Restorative Over Punitive Pedagogies, which uses the Prophetic de-escalation protocol instead of zero tolerance and humiliation-based discipline models, maintaining the dignity of the student.
- Incorporate disciplined writing, critical research, and writing documentation of research within the context of Al-Sahifah Al-Sadiqah of Abdullah bin Amr to cope with the cognitive fragmentation related to the digital environment.
- Emotional safety and active listening with the focus that cognitive receptivity is related to emotional security.
- Ensure there are two or more youth seats (under 25) on community and religious boards as well as executive leadership, if applicable.
- Build institutional knowledge sharing apprenticeships through Foster Intergenerational Mentorship Circles by creating structured apprenticeship hubs in which experienced individuals pass down knowledge and are actively learning from youth.
- Prioritize Female Scholarly & Strategic Leadership by establishing specific spaces, resources and mentoring circuits to enable young women to achieve higher positions of theological, legal and community leadership.
- Follow adolescents psychologically well-being in institutions using prophetic affective mentorship and those using traditional authoritarian mentorship over a period of time.

References

1. Freeman, Kenneth John. *Schools of Hellas: An Essay on the Practice and Theory of Ancient Greek Education from 600 to 300 B.C.* Edited by M. J. Rendall. London: Macmillan and Co., 1907.
2. Salahi, Adil. Muhammad: Man and Prophet: A Complete Study of the Life of the Prophet of Islam. Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 2002.
3. The Holy Qur'an. Surah Al-Kahf (18:13).
4. Ibn Kathīr, Ismā'īl ibn 'Umar. *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* (Abridged). Edited by Safiur-Rahman Al-Mubarakpuri. 10 vols. Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 2000.
5. Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ.* New York: Bantam Books, 1995.
6. Al-Ayoob, Ayoob Khalid. *Al-Dhakā' al-'Ātifī fī al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah* [Emotional Intelligence in the Prophetic Biography]. Kuwait: Dār Ṭawq al-Ḥamāmah, 2007.
7. The Holy Qur'an. Surah Āl 'Imrān (3:159).
8. Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Vol. 8, Book 78 (Kitāb al-Adab [Book of Good Manners]), Chapter 18, Hadith no. 5997. Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 1997.
9. Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl. *Al-Adab al-Mufrad: A Code of Manners and Morals for Muslims*. Translated by Aisha Bewley. Hadith no. 22. London: Dar Al-Taqwa, 2005.
10. Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Vol. 5, Book 62 (Kitāb Faḍā'il Aṣḥāb al-Nabī [Virtues of the Companions]), Chapter 18 (Manāqib Usāmah ibn Zayd), Hadith no. 3735. Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 1997.

Published:

August 31, 2026

11. Al-Bukhārī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Edited by Muḥammad Zuhayr ibn Nāṣir al-Nāṣir. 9 vols. Beirut: Dār Ṭawq al-Najāh, 1422 AH / 2001 CE. Vol. 8, p. 9, Kitāb al-Adab, Hadith no. 5997.
12. Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Vol. 2, Book 23 (Kitāb al-Janā‘iz [Book of Funerals]), Chapter 43, Hadith no. 1303. Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 1997.
13. Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Vol. 5, Book 64 (Kitāb al-Maghāzī [Book of Military Expeditions]), Chapter 87, Hadith no. 4469. Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 1997.
14. Al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad. Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’ [Biographies of Eminent Noble Figures]. Edited by Shu‘ayb al-Arnā‘ūt. 25 vols. Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1985.
15. Vaglieri, Laura Veccia. "‘Abd Allāh b. al-‘Abbās." In Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W. P. Heinrichs, 1:40–41. Leiden: Brill, 1960. https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_0040.
16. Al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad. Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’. Edited by Shu‘ayb al-Arnā‘ūt and Ḥusayn al-Asad. 3rd ed. 25 vols. Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1985.
17. Brown, Jonathan A. C. Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World. Foundations of Islam. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2009.
18. Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. Edited by Muḥammad Fu‘ād ‘Abd al-Bāqī. 5 vols. Cairo: Maṭba‘at ‘Īsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1955. Kitāb al-Waṣiyyah (Book of Wills), Hadith no. 1631; and Al-Tirmidhī, Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā. Al-Jāmi‘ al-Kabīr (Sunan al-Tirmidhī). Edited by Bashshār ‘Awwād Ma‘rūf. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1998, Hadith no. 1376.
19. Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Edited by Muḥammad Zuhayr ibn Nāṣir al-Nāṣir. Beirut: Dār Ṭawq al-Najāh, 1422 AH / 2001 CE. Kitāb Faḍā’il Aṣḥāb al-Nabī, Hadith no. 3719; and Al-Dhahabī, Shams al-Dīn. Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’. Edited by Shu‘ayb al-Arnā‘ūt. Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1985, 3:363–365.
20. Abū Dāwūd, Sulaymān ibn al-Ash‘ath al-Sijistānī. Sunan Abī Dāwūd. Edited by Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd. 4 vols. Beirut: al-Maktabah al-‘Asriyyah, n.d. Vol. 3, p. 303, Hadith no. 3592.
21. The Holy Qur’an. Surah Āl ‘Imrān (3:159).
22. The Holy Qur’an. Surah Al-Aḥzāb (33:21).
23. Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Edited by Muḥammad Zuhayr ibn Nāṣir al-Nāṣir. Riyadh: Dār Ṭawq al-Najāh, 2001. Vol. 3, p. 109, Hadith no. 2351.
24. Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. Translated by Nasiruddin al-Khattab. 7 vols. Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 2007. Vol. 1, Book 2 (Kitāb al-Ṭahārah [Book of Purification]), Chapter 30, Hadith no. 285.