

Analysis of Strategies for Enhancing Altruistic Attitudes Based on the Guidance of Hadith

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ABSTRACT

This article delves into the intricate realm of altruistic hadiths within the Islamic tradition, shedding light on their ethical significance and profound implications for contemporary society. Altruism, as a fundamental virtue in Islam, manifests through various prophetic traditions encapsulated in hadith literature. Employing a qualitative analysis approach, this study examines the contextual nuances and moral imperatives embedded within altruistic hadiths, elucidating their relevance to modern ethical discourse. The research synthesizes classical Islamic scholarship with contemporary ethical theory to elucidate the multifaceted nature of altruistic hadiths. By dissecting the linguistic intricacies and historical contexts of these traditions, the article unveils their underlying principles and ethical imperatives. Moreover, it explores the socio-cultural dynamics that shaped the formulation and transmission of altruistic hadiths, providing valuable insights into the ethical framework of early Islamic societies. Furthermore, the article investigates the practical applications of altruistic hadiths in addressing contemporary moral challenges and fostering communal well-being. It highlights the role of altruism as a catalyst for social cohesion, compassion, and solidarity, thereby enriching the fabric of Islamic ethics in the contemporary world. Additionally, it underscores the imperative of interpreting altruistic hadiths in light of evolving social realities while preserving their ethical integrity and spiritual resonance. In conclusion, this article underscores the enduring relevance and ethical profundity of altruistic hadiths, urging scholars and practitioners alike to engage with these traditions critically and compassionately. By embracing the ethical imperatives embedded within these prophetic teachings, individuals and communities can strive towards a more just, compassionate, and altruistic society rooted in the timeless wisdom of Islamic tradition.

Keywords: *Altruistic, Hadith, Society*

A. Introduction

Altruism, as a concept underlying human behavior to assist others without expecting any reward, has become an increasingly relevant topic of discussion in contemporary social and humanitarian contexts. Amidst the complexities of global challenges faced by modern societies, the discourse on altruism has gained significant importance and warrants thorough exploration. Altruism not only serves as a key element in strengthening social bonds and enhancing the quality of communal life but also plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' empathetic and compassionate character. The imperative to revisit the concept of altruism in contemporary times is both evident and urgent, given the increasingly complex and diverse social challenges we face. Altruism embodies fundamental human values and reflects the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions as conveyed in their hadiths. In Islamic teachings, altruism is not merely regarded as a noble attitude but also as a principle to be deeply internalized and practiced in daily life.

It is essential to connect discussions on altruism with an exploration of the messages from the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the practices of his companions. The hadiths and stories of the altruistic behavior of the Prophet's companions provide a solid foundation and concrete examples of how humans should conduct themselves towards others. Therefore, discussions on altruism inspired by Islamic teachings are not only relevant to the general context of humanity but also significantly enhance our understanding of this concept. In the context of the advancement of knowledge, particularly in the study of social and human behavior, a deep understanding of altruism and its relationship with Islamic teachings is crucial. Through this approach, we can explore and delve into the moral and ethical values inherent in Islamic teachings, applying them within the complex and dynamic framework of contemporary life. Thus, discussing altruism in connection with the messages from the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the practices of his companions is not only relevant from a humanitarian perspective but also significant in the context of academic and scientific development.

This article meticulously explores the importance of revisiting the concept of altruism from an Islamic perspective, highlighting its urgency and relevance in contemporary social and scientific contexts. By examining the messages contained in the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the practices of his companions, author aim to elucidate the values that can be adopted and implemented in daily life to foster a more empathetic and caring society. This research employs a qualitative library research method that focuses on the content analysis of the scholars' interpretations of hadiths concerning the altruism. This method is also utilised to retrieve data from various relevant literature sources for research purposes. Literature included in this study comprises primary hadith collections classified within the Nine Books of Hadith (*Kutub al-Tis'ah*), secondary sources such as books of hadith commentary, as well as books and journal articles pertinent to the research theme. The data were analyzed using the *Fiqhul Hadith* approach. This method involves understanding and interpreting Islamic jurisprudence based on the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad.

B. Result

Altruism, as a concept underlying human behavior aimed at helping others without expecting any reward, has become a significant subject of research in psychology, sociology, and other social sciences. Altruism can be defined as voluntary actions intended to improve the well-being of another individual, without consideration for personal gain or anticipated reward. The theory of altruism has become a central focus in the field of social psychology, with research aimed at understanding the factors influencing the emergence of altruistic behavior in humans. One related theory is the kin selection theory, which posits that individuals are more likely to help others who share close genetic ties with them, as this can enhance the survival prospects of shared genes.¹

¹ Adcharina Pratiwi Nur Halimah Diwitau, 'Menanamkan Karakter Pada Siswa Sekolah Dasar Mengenai Attitude Dalam Meminta Tolong Dan Berterimakasih', *Pendekar: Jurnal Pendidikan Berkarakter*, 10.10 (2020).

Additionally, the theory of reciprocal altruism is a crucial concept in understanding altruistic behavior. This theory suggests that individuals are likely to help others with the expectation that the assistance they provide will be reciprocated in the future, thereby creating mutually beneficial relationships that strengthen cooperation among individuals.² In a social context, social theories of altruism emphasize the role of environmental factors, such as social norms and cultural values, in shaping an individual's altruistic behavior. Individuals tend to act in accordance with the social expectations and values accepted by their society, which can influence their propensity to help others. Although altruism is often associated with kindness and generosity, the concept also faces criticism. Some theories suggest that actions labeled as altruistic can actually be explained by selfish motivations, such as the desire to receive praise or to strengthen social bonds.³

In a religious context, the concept of altruism also holds profound meaning and implications. In Islam, for instance, altruism is regarded as an integral part of religious teachings that advocate for mutual assistance and care for others, regardless of social or economic differences. Thus, discussions on altruism involve not only understanding human behavior psychologically and socially but also entail considerations of ethics, morals, and religious values. Through a holistic understanding of this concept, we can develop effective strategies to encourage and reinforce altruistic behavior within society, as well as promote broader societal well-being and social justice.

Altruism is a form of prosocial behavior. In other words, prosocial behavior is a broader category of actions aimed at helping others, encompassing more than just altruism. Many acts of helping others cannot be classified as altruistic, including those motivated by self-interest, kinship, a sense of obligation, or affection towards the person being helped.⁴ The fundamental aspect of altruism is that the helping action is performed sincerely and without any expectation of reward. Auguste Comte was the first to introduce the term altruism in the 19th century. Altruism derives from the Greek word "alteri," meaning others. Comte used the term "alteri" to explain that every human being inherently has a moral responsibility to serve humanity at large. Therefore, each individual should have greater concern for others rather than for oneself.⁵ However, it was sociologist Pitirim Sorokin who emphasized the importance of studying altruism. Sorokin defined altruism as actions that nurture the physical and psychological well-being of others, driven by love and empathy. According to Sorokin, altruistic actions, at a certain point, require self-sacrifice for the benefit of others.⁶

Altruism can also be incorporated into the concept of ethical behavior. Philosopher Peter Singer posits those actions of helping others, even to the extent of sacrificing one's own interests, stem from an altruistic drive inherent in humans. This drive is a natural tendency present in every individual from birth, serving as the foundation for the emergence

² Yereimas Jena, 'Altruisme Sebagai Dasar Tindakan Etis Menurut Peter Singer', *Respon*, 23.1 (2018).

³ T. & Hudaniah Dayakisni, *Psikologi Sosial* (Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, 2003).

⁴ D. O. Taylor, S.E., Peplau, L.E., & Sears, *Social Psychology Education Prentice Hall*, 12th edn (Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2009), p. 457.

⁵ M. Hadori, 'PERILAKU PROSOSIAL (PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR); Telaah Konseptual Tentang Altruisme (Altruism) Dalam Perspektif Psikologi', *JURNAL LISAN AL-HAL*, 8.1 (2014), pp. 1-13.

⁶ P. Sorokin, *The Reconstruction of Humanity* (Beacon Press, 1948), p. 60.

of ethical behavior.⁷ According to Singer, ethics in humans cannot be separated from their natural state. Ethical behavior is shaped by biological conditions, making it the most primordial form of human biological behavior. The ability of humans to think rationally and ethically develops subsequently.

According to Singer, acting rationally and ethically fundamentally means acting based on universal moral principles⁸. Meanwhile, altruistic actions are also believed to be developable in everyone due to the presence of empathy in humans, which is also considered universal. Empathy is an attitude inherently present in every individual, requiring no conditions for its existence (Batson, Dyck, Brandt, Batson, & Powell, 1988). As a component of prosocial behavior, altruism indeed involves actions that benefit others but are not directed toward personal interests.^{9,10} Voluntary actions in helping others within the framework of altruism are devoid of expectations for reward, hence they are always referred to as sincere and selfless behaviors.

In other words, altruism involves doing good for others without anticipating any reward from those who benefit from such actions¹¹ Consequently, there is always a positive feeling experienced by anyone who acts altruistically. From a religious perspective, Morris and Webb emphasize that every religion encourages its followers to consistently engage in altruistic behavior. They also state that altruistic behavior is akin to the act of love known in Greek as *agape*. Essentially, *agape* represents loving actions toward others undertaken solely for their benefit, without any influence from the interests of the person performing the act of love).¹² In understanding the criteria for an action to be considered altruistic, Monroe (1996) provides further elaboration. According to Monroe, altruism is a behavior intended to benefit others, even when it involves a risk of sacrifice or jeopardizes the well-being of the altruistic individual. Based on this definition, Monroe then formulates the criteria that define altruistic behavior.¹³

First, altruism must manifest as tangible action. It cannot merely consist of thoughts and intentions toward others. Second, this tangible action must be directed toward a goal, although it can also be performed reflexively. Third, the primary purpose of the action must be for the benefit of others. If the benefit to others is merely a consequence of the action, then it cannot be considered altruism. Fourth, the intention behind the action is more crucial than its consequences. For instance, if someone donates money to another person to start a business, but that person later decides they are not suited for business and quits, this does not diminish the altruistic value of the donor's action. Fifth, altruism is inherently selfless; the goal is the well-being of others without expecting any reciprocity.

Interestingly, altruistic actions can, at certain points, form the foundation of solidarity. Monroe also emphasizes that, despite altruism being highly individual and singular, it is inherently connected to the universal human condition. Regardless of the

⁷ P. Singer, *The Expanding Circle: Ethics and Sociobiology* (New American Library, 1981), p. 28.

⁸ Jena.

⁹ R.N. Crisp R.J., & Turner, *Essential Social Psychology* (Sage Publications, 2007), p. 231.

¹⁰ Muhammad ibn Idris Al-Syafi'iy, *Al-Risalah* (Mathba'ah al-Babiy al-Halabiy, 1938).

¹¹ Taylor, S.E., Peplau, L.E., & Sears.

¹² E.J. Morris, E.E., & Webb, *Altruism and Philanthropy: Religious and Secular Approach*. (1991).

¹³ K.R. Monroe, *The Heart of Altruism: Perceptions of a Common Humanity* (Pinceton University Press, 1996).

mysterious nature of the motives behind altruistic actions, these actions can occur within a collective context. During specific historical political moments, acts of altruism can transform into moments of solidarity when their magnitude increases sharply¹⁴. Moreover, altruism can also serve as a foundation for state policies. Richard Titmuss stressed that altruism holds a fundamental position in a country's social policy. For Titmuss, the market and commercialization should not be the deciding factors in areas where human dignity and life are at stake¹⁵. Therefore, the relationships among individuals through voluntary acts should be institutionalized within state policies.

C. Discussion

Therefore, the relationships among individuals through voluntary acts should be institutionalized within state policies.

The Hadith on Loving Fellow Believers

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ

The hadith narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim underscores the significance of love and compassion among Muslims. The hadith states: "None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself"¹⁶. This hadith conveys a profound moral message, emphasizing that one's faith is tested through altruism and concern for others. In this context, 'brother' extends beyond familial bonds to encompass all of humanity, particularly fellow Muslims. Theologically, this hadith illustrates that faith is not merely an internal conviction but is also manifested through external behavior. True faith necessitates transcending selfishness and demonstrating sincere love and concern for others. This underscores that the social aspects of Islam are integral to a Muslim's faith. In other words, pure and genuine faith will radiate ethical behavior and actions that benefit others.

From an ethical perspective, this hadith encourages the development of empathy and solidarity. Altruism, in this context, means placing the interests of others on par with one's own interests. This attitude stands in opposition to egoism and narcissism, which often hinder the establishment of harmonious and peaceful relationships. Altruism benefits not only the recipients of good deeds but also the doers, fostering a sense of satisfaction and inner happiness. In a social context, the implementation of this hadith can create a more inclusive and harmonious society. When every individual in society strives to love and care for others as they do for themselves, a climate of mutual respect, understanding, and assistance will emerge. This can reduce social conflicts and enhance social cohesion, which is crucial for the stability and progress of society.

Lastly, from a psychological perspective, this hadith promotes healthy emotional and mental development. By loving and caring for others, individuals can develop positive qualities such as empathy, compassion, and social sensitivity. This not only enhances interpersonal relationships but also contributes to better mental health, as good deeds can

¹⁴ R. Robet, 'Altruisme, Solidaritas, Dan Kebijakan Sosial', *Jurnal Sosiologi Masyarakat*, 18.1 (2013), pp. 1–18.

¹⁵ R. Titmuss, *The Gift Relationship: From Human Blood to Social Policy* (The New Press, 1997).

¹⁶ Sahih Muslim, 'Sahih Muslim 2241a - The Book of Greetings - كتاب السلام - Sunnah.Com - Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و سلم)', *Sunnah.Com* <<https://sunnah.com/muslim:2241a>>.

reduce stress and increase feelings of happiness. Thus, this hadith is significant not only from a religious standpoint but also relevant in ethical, social, and psychological contexts, serving as a comprehensive guide for a better and more meaningful life.

The Hadith on Mutual Assistance

وَاللَّهُ فِي عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِي عَوْنِ أَخِيهِ

The hadith stating "Allah will help a servant as long as the servant helps his brother"¹⁷ encapsulates a vital principle in Islamic teachings regarding the importance of mutual assistance and benevolence among individuals. This hadith underscores that Divine assistance is granted to those who exhibit a spirit of helpfulness toward others, illustrating the reciprocal relationship between human actions and Divine mercy. Theologically, this hadith emphasizes the concept that acts of kindness performed by an individual toward others are directly rewarded by Allah. This signifies that Allah values and rewards every sincere act of goodwill. Divine assistance is not only spiritual but can also manifest in tangible forms in daily life, such as ease in one's affairs or protection from harm. This relationship highlights the intrinsic connection between ethical conduct and Divine favor.

From an ethical perspective, this hadith promotes the values of solidarity and communal support. Helping one another is a fundamental ethical value in Islam, teaching believers to cooperate and assist each other in righteousness. Acts of assistance not only benefit the recipients but also fortify the moral character of the benefactors, enriching social life by increasing the prevalence of good and mitigating the difficulties faced by individuals. Socially, the implementation of this hadith can enhance communal bonds and build a more cohesive and harmonious society. When individuals within a community support one another, a robust network of assistance is formed, capable of addressing various social issues. Mutual help fosters an environment of trust and respect, which in turn can improve the overall quality of life.

From a psychological standpoint, helping others has positive effects on mental and emotional well-being. Assisting others can enhance feelings of self-worth and personal satisfaction, as well as reduce stress and anxiety. Altruistic actions also strengthen interpersonal relationships and create a deep sense of connection with others, which is crucial for good mental health. Thus, this hadith holds significance not only theologically but also in ethical, social, and psychological contexts. It teaches that Divine assistance comes through acts of mutual help among people, serving as a comprehensive guide for building a better and more meaningful life. The implementation of this principle can bring widespread positive impacts, benefiting both individuals and society as a whole.

The Hadith on Being Kind to Neighbors and Guests

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكْرِمْ ضَيْفَهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيَصِلْ رَحْمَتَهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُقَلِّ خَيْرًا أَوْ لِيَصْنَمْ

The hadith stating "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honor his guest; whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him maintain the bonds of kinship;

¹⁷ Sahih Muslim.

whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him speak good or remain silent" ¹⁸ and ¹⁹ provides a comprehensive framework for ethical conduct among Muslims. This hadith emphasizes the manifestation of faith through respectful and constructive social interactions, highlighting the integral connection between belief and behavior.

Theologically, this hadith underscores that true faith in Allah and the Last Day is demonstrated through concrete actions that benefit others. Honoring guests, maintaining family ties, and speaking kindly are not mere social niceties but are portrayed as essential expressions of a believer's commitment to their faith. This emphasizes that faith is not only a private conviction but also a public responsibility, reflected in one's interactions and relationships with others.

Ethically, the hadith promotes values of hospitality, familial responsibility, and careful speech. Honoring guests underscores the importance of generosity and respect in social interactions, reinforcing the notion that guests are to be treated with dignity and kindness. Maintaining family ties highlights the significance of strong familial relationships and the duty to support and care for one's relatives. Speaking good or remaining silent encourages thoughtful and positive communication, advocating for restraint and consideration in verbal interactions to prevent harm and promote harmony.

From a social perspective, the implementation of this hadith can lead to a more cohesive and harmonious community. Honoring guests fosters a culture of hospitality and mutual respect, which can strengthen social bonds and enhance communal solidarity. Maintaining family ties ensures the stability and support of the family unit, which is fundamental to societal well-being. Encouraging positive speech or silence helps to prevent conflicts and misunderstandings, promoting a more peaceful and constructive social environment.

Psychologically, the principles outlined in this hadith can contribute to individual well-being and mental health. Acts of hospitality and maintaining family connections can provide emotional support and a sense of belonging, which are crucial for psychological health. Positive speech or silence helps to reduce interpersonal conflicts and stress, fostering a more positive and serene mental state. This holistic approach to social conduct aligns with modern psychological insights on the benefits of positive relationships and communication for mental well-being.

In conclusion, this hadith offers a multidimensional approach to faith that encompasses theological, ethical, social, and psychological aspects. By emphasizing the importance of honoring guests, maintaining family ties, and speaking kindly, it provides a comprehensive guide for believers to manifest their faith through positive and constructive social behaviors. Implementing these principles can lead to a more compassionate, cohesive, and harmonious society, while also enhancing individual well-being and mental health. Thus, the hadith serves as a timeless and practical guide for ethical conduct and community building in the context of Islamic faith.

¹⁸ Abi Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail Al-Bukhari, *Shahih Bukhary*, ed. by Muhammad Fuad Abdul Baqi, 1st edn (Dar Turuq al-Najah).

¹⁹ Ibn al-Hajjaj Abu al-Husayn al-Qusyayriy Muslim, *Al-Sahih*, ed. by Muhammad Fuad Abdul Baqi, 5th edn (Dar Ihya al-Turath Al-'Araby).

The Hadith on the Virtue of Charity

مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادُّهِمْ وَتَرَاحِمِهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ مَثَلُ الْجَسَدِ، إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عُضْوٌ تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالسَّهَرِ وَالْحُمَّى

The hadith stating "The example of the believers in their mutual love, mercy, and compassion is like that of a single body. If one part of the body feels pain, the whole body suffers from sleeplessness and fever illustrates the profound principle of unity and solidarity within the Muslim community. This hadith emphasizes that the bond among believers should be as strong and interconnected as the parts of a single body, where the suffering of one part is felt by the entire body.

Theologically, this hadith underscores the importance of unity in faith. True faith requires Muslims to love, show mercy, and care for one another as if they were parts of a single entity. It implies that faith is not only about the individual's relationship with Allah but also encompasses close interpersonal relationships among believers. This principle reflects the concept of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood), which is a foundational pillar in Islamic teachings.

From an ethical perspective, this hadith teaches the importance of empathy and solidarity. Believers are encouraged to feel and respond to the suffering of their brethren as if it were their own suffering. This creates a sense of collective responsibility and a drive to assist one another in times of difficulty. This ethic emphasizes that individual well-being is closely tied to the well-being of the community, thus promoting behaviors that prioritize communal interests.

Socially, the implementation of this hadith can strengthen cohesion and harmony within society. When members of a community behave like parts of a single body, they are more inclined to support and cooperate with each other in overcoming common challenges. This can reduce social conflicts and enhance a sense of unity, creating a more harmonious and productive environment. Such strong unity can also help build social resilience against various crises.

From a psychological standpoint, this hadith promotes mental and emotional health through social support. The solidarity and empathy described in this hadith can provide crucial emotional support for individuals facing difficulties. Knowing that they are not alone and that their community will feel and respond to their suffering can offer comfort and psychological strength. This also reduces feelings of isolation and enhances overall mental well-being.

In conclusion, this hadith offers a comprehensive approach to the concept of unity and solidarity in Islam. By emphasizing the analogy of the human body, it provides a powerful depiction of the importance of togetherness and mutual support among believers. Implementing these principles can result in a more cohesive, harmonious, and resilient society while also enhancing individual mental and emotional well-being. Thus, this hadith serves as a practical and holistic guide for fostering unity and solidarity within the Muslim community.

D. Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the strategies employed by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to foster altruistic attitudes among Muslims encompass several approaches. First, there is theologically-based motivation, which integrates commands with one's faith in Allah. This is reflected in hadiths indicating that a person's faith is not considered complete until they love their fellow Muslims, fellow human beings, and even other creatures. Second, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) likened the unity of the Muslim community to that of a single body. Just as pain in one part of the body is felt by the entire body, a unified community would naturally and automatically support each other without the need for coercion. This analogy illustrates the deep understanding of Prophet Muhammad, teaching altruism through a metaphor easily grasped by common sense. Moreover, this analogy is observable in real life: when one part of the human body is in pain, the rest of the body responds and reacts to that pain. Third, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) promised safety and happiness to those who help others overcome various life challenges. This concept instills in people the understanding that one pathway to a good and successful life is through diligent and active assistance to others. In Islamic teachings, everything is under Allah's dominion, and thus, the statements made by Prophet Muhammad, considered revelations, are believed to bring happiness to those who follow them. This has been proven through the life experiences of successful individuals in the past, making it difficult to dismiss these statements as unfounded. Everyone should strive to do good to others, and if unable, at the very least, avoid causing harm or disruption to others.

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