



Societal Advancement and Civilizational Reform in the Prophetic Model

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ABSTRACT

This research is intended to define the concept of societal progress (advancement) and to identify the fundamental characteristics and forms of this concept. It also intends to outline the most critical levels of the societal progress project as viewed by Islam; to illustrate how the individual will develop and mature into a contributor to the process of societal progress; and to present strategies to achieve an overall and total societal Renaissance. This study employs qualitative thematic document analysis, supported by inductive coding and interpretive synthesis, to examine Qur'anic, Prophetic, classical Islamic, and contemporary scholarly sources concerning societal advancement and civilizational reform. The findings showed that societal progress means regaining the position of the society within civilizational development after passing a stage of weakness and stagnation. Processes of advancing society are based on two major dimensions. First, the construction of the individual in his intellectual, psychological, spiritual and physical aspects. Second, the construction of society at all political, social, scientific, technological and economic levels with full strength. It can be concluded that in order for society to develop according to the Islamic outlook on the issue, it is important to start with personal reforms and end up with structural reforms. In addition to that, it should be noted that there could be an opportunity for Muslims to utilize the Prophetic model as a framework which will not make them abandon their basic tenets while moving forward in the face of global challenges.

KEYWORDS

societal advancement; prophetic model; civilizational reform; social transformation; islamic thought; values

INTRODUCTION

Today's societies, particularly those in the Arab and Islamic worlds, face numerous political, economic, intellectual, and social problems that lead to their continued state of weakness, fragmentation, dependency, and degradation. Apart from eroding the effectiveness and power of the institutional infrastructure, these problems also create an identity crisis, social solidarity crisis, intellectual crisis, and a crisis of societal functionality in the context of modern civilization. Although there have been many reform initiatives and modernization projects in the post-modern period, many societies continue to grapple with their ability to advance and grow so as to restore equilibrium, develop institutions, promote education, and maintain their cultures and civilizations. Similarly, authoritarianism, institutional inertia, and the decline in intellect have been seen as products of larger issues of under-development within Muslim societies (Kuru, 2019). It follows that societal advancement is among the most significant theoretical and practical issues in contemporary reformist thought.

While the current crisis cannot be explained by material or economic parameters—in that many societies have vast amounts of both human and natural resources but have been unable to stabilize and consolidate themselves—the problem cannot just be solved through technical or economic solutions and is, rather, a crisis rooted in much deeper problems involving human, ethical, institutional, and even civilizational aspects (Ali, 2023). While reformist efforts have often focused only on political structures, bureaucracies, or economics without consideration of the human elements, other scholars have discussed the problem of modernity, the dissolution of normative orders, and the attempt to construct new conceptual paradigms on which to base society's organization in accordance with moral and civilizational values (Ali, 2023; Jung, 2021). For this reason, many reform efforts have been unsuccessful because they have failed to create a larger and coherent paradigm around which individual and institutional efforts may be structured into a coherent effort towards societal advancement (Jung, 2021).

It follows that societal advancement plays a central role in contemporary discourse with regard to mechanisms whereby societies move out of stagnation and disintegration and begin to evolve according to a systematic model of development. Advancement goes well beyond mere economic development and technological progress; it represents a process whereby society is able to reinvigorate itself intellectually, ethically, politically, socially, and institutionally in order to become productive, stable, and influential in a wider civilizational sense. This can only be achieved through mobilization of society's energies in a concerted manner.

The history of thought in Islamic intellectual tradition is full of examples of scholars writing about a society's development or downfall, its potential for reform, civilization, moral and political development, and how it organizes itself. Recent scholarship shows that reformers such as Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi sought to reconcile Islamic principles with efforts toward institutional and political modernization (Al-Tūnisī, 1867; Dursun, 2023). Reform-minded thinkers and Islamic scholars wrote about the elements required to bring about a renaissance and they studied the bases from which societies could overcome their weaknesses and recover

their lost strength and vitality as a civilization (Riḍā, 1898). Ibn Khaldūn (2001) linked development to civilization, urbanization and to the effectiveness of the organization of society; whereas Bennabī (1969) defined the construction of civilization through ideas, culture and the individual's capacity to act. Al-Kawākibī believed that the elimination of tyranny was a necessity for social reform, as well as justice and freedom. Ali Shariati advocated the release of individuals from their "mental slavery" and the recovery of true identity by the people for them to have an actual civilization (Sharī'atī, 1986). Although each contributed to Islamic reformative thinking, many contemporary debates still approach societal progress through isolated views that concentrate solely on either politics, spirit, morals, or governance without providing a cohesive structure for analyzing all dimensions together. Much contemporary research revisits the paradigm of authenticity–modernity and its implications for reconstructing society in the contemporary world (Viersen, 2023).

In this study, the Prophetic model refers to an integrated framework of individual, moral, social, political, and institutional transformation derived from the guidance and practice of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) in building the early Muslim community. Within modern Islamic thought, the Prophetic experience has served as an important normative source for reform. At the same time, scholars have debated how its principles should be interpreted in relation to modernity, authenticity, governance, and contemporary institutional realities (Dursun, 2023; Hashemi, 2023; Jung, 2021). It encompasses the coordinated development of faith, ethical conduct, knowledge, social cohesion, governance, institutional organization, and collective responsibility as interconnected foundations of societal advancement. On this account, the Prophetic model offers perhaps the greatest example in history of successful societal transformation and construction of civilization. The example provided by the experience of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) shows that it was possible to transform a disunited, fragmented, and often violent society into a well-organized and influential civilizational community based on faith, justice, knowledge, accountability to God, organizational structures, and mutual support. The need for reforms was not only spiritual, but individual development and societal construction went hand in hand; it included not only intellectual development, but also spiritual training, moral improvement, governance, structuring of institutions, and civic unity.

Although the present study addresses societal advancement within a broad civilizational framework rather than focusing exclusively on formal schooling, education constitutes a central mechanism (Bathatho, 2022; Rizza et al., 2026; Usman & Shousha, 2021) within the Prophetic model of societal transformation. Knowledge acquisition, ethical formation, critical reflection, social responsibility, and the preparation of competent individuals connect individual development directly with wider institutional and civilizational reform. In terms of education, from a theoretical perspective, these principles affect what is taught about values and citizenship education, how curricula are constructed to prepare students for civic life, how school leaders develop their capacities to foster socially responsible learning environments and

how teachers support the development of students who will contribute positively to society (Hensley et al., 2026).

Despite substantial previous research (Dursun, 2023; Razzaq & Nawaz, 2024; Thohir & Septiadi, 2025) in terms of Islamic civilization and reform, it should be admitted that there is a deficiency of studies which systematically analyze the phenomenon of societal development as a whole and interdependent process that combines the processes of individuals' transformation and institution-building as well as collective civilization through the same paradigm. While some studies (Belhaj, 2025; Kuru, 2019; Malik, 2019) focus on different aspects of civilization and societal development such as spirituality, governance, ethics, or political power separately, there are very few studies which analyze these issues together through the prism of a common civilizational paradigm. This study addresses this gap by examining the foundations, dimensions, and dynamics of societal development through the Prophetic paradigm.

This study aims to define societal development and identify its main characteristics and forms from an Islamic perspective. In addition, the foundations of societal development will be analyzed, the preparation of individuals for societal development in terms of their intellectual, spiritual, psychological, physical, and social development will be considered, and the dynamics of societal development will be described in terms of governance, organizational structure, social integration, and civilization development. It will demonstrate the applicability of the Prophetic approach to addressing the contemporary crisis and finding a balance between authenticity and modernization (Ibn Hishām, 1955).

To address the research objectives and questions, this study uses a qualitative thematic analysis of relevant documents. The study identifies and examines recurring themes from relevant Qur'anic verses, Prophetic traditions, classical Islamic sources, reformist writings, and relevant contemporary academic literature using an inductive coding process and interpretive synthesis. Themes are then categorized by their relationship to both individual and collective social advancements. These themes are then integrated through an analytical structure which integrates all levels in order to connect how individuals form with how institutions and civilizations develop. This study uses the four main concepts of societal advancement; individual preparation; and both institutional and collective advancements as the organizing principles of this study.

Research Objectives and Questions

The study has four objectives:

1. To clarify the concept of societal advancement within Islamic intellectual and civilizational thought and distinguish it from related concepts such as reform, development, and civilization.
2. To identify the individual-level intellectual, spiritual, ethical, psychological, physical, and social dimensions associated with societal advancement in the Prophetic model.
3. To identify the collective and institutional dimensions of societal advancement, particularly those related to governance, consultation, leadership, social cohesion, institutional organization, and societal capacity.

4. To integrate these dimensions into a coherent analytical framework and examine their implications for contemporary societal and educational reform.

Accordingly, the study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1. How is societal advancement conceptualized within Islamic intellectual and Prophetic sources, and how does it differ from reform, development, and civilization?

RQ2. What individual-level dimensions of preparation for societal advancement emerge from the Prophetic model?

RQ3. What collective and institutional dimensions of societal advancement emerge from the Prophetic model?

RQ4. How can the individual and collective dimensions be integrated into a coherent framework relevant to contemporary societal and educational reform?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Societal advancement is central to scholarly, philosophical, and reform-oriented thought. Society advancement discusses how societies move from disorganization, fragmentation and stagnation to effective organization and civilization. Historically, many scholars, intellectuals, reformers, and philosophers have attempted to identify the basic principles of the success of societies and the causes of their advancement and downfall. The subject of society advancement was one of the most studied subjects by the Islamic intellectual tradition on the basis of discussion regarding reform, civilization, governance, ethics, social organization, and preparing the human being. Accordingly, societal advancement is best understood through its theoretical foundations, related concepts, and the intellectual approaches that have shaped its development.

Advancement (Nuhud) linguistically stems from the Arabic Verb *Nahaḍa*, which has several possible translations including rise up, stand upright, strengthen oneself, move oneself, recover from weakness or decline. In addition to these meanings, classical Arabic lexicons indicated that *nuhud* signified vitality and assuming responsibility. For example, Ibn Manzur stated in his book *Lisān al-ʿArab* that *Nahaḍa* signifies rising from a seated posture or weakness; additionally, he mentioned that *Nahaḍa* means readiness for action; confronting an obstacle; or moving upward. Likewise, the Arabic Language Academy in Cairo defines *Nuhud* as rising actively; recovering from a setback; and accepting responsibility for completing significant objectives. All of these definitions signify that *Nuhud* inherently connotes motion; transformation; energy; and movement from a passive state to an active effective state.

Mujtamaʿī (Societal) linguistically stems from *Mujtamāʿ*, meaning a group or collective community, which is derived from the root *Jamaʿa* (to gather; unite; organize). Society therefore signifies a collective human structure governed by relationships, shared systems, customs, values, and institutions. Accordingly, societal advancement may be understood as the collective ability of a human community to overcome decline and reorganize itself through coordinated effort in pursuit of comprehensive progress and civilizational effectiveness.

Terminologically, the concept of renaissance or advancement has been interpreted differently according to intellectual, historical, and civilizational perspectives. Some scholars associated the concept of renaissance with the European historical experience following the Middle Ages, where Europe experienced intellectual revival, scientific discovery, and political transformation. Within this perspective, renaissance refers to liberation from stagnation and the emergence of modern civilization through science, reason, and institutional development. Other Arab and Muslim thinkers associated renaissance with reformist movements that emerged during periods of colonialism, political weakness, and civilizational decline within the Islamic world. These reformist approaches sought to explain the causes of backwardness and identify the conditions necessary for restoring societal strength and effectiveness.

Despite differences in interpretation, these thinkers generally agree that advancement signifies comprehensive societal transformation rather than temporary improvement or isolated reform. Rather, it is a fundamental transformation of a society into an effective, productive, cohesive and powerful civilization capable of exercising considerable civilizational influence.

As such, several important Muslim thinkers have made significant contributions to the conversation about societal progress and civilizational reform. For example, Ibn Khaldun believed that societal progress was closely related to the emergence and growth of civilizations (*'umran*). In his opinion, the strength or decline of a society would depend on a number of key factors including social solidarity, the quality of governance, political authority, the degree of organizational structure within society. The social cohesion, moral discipline, and overall institutional effectiveness of a society were likewise seen as being critical determinants of whether or not a society would experience an upward or downward trajectory in terms of power. As such, for Ibn Khaldun, the primary indicator of whether or not a society had advanced was the presence of strong social bonds, high levels of moral discipline, high degrees of institutional effectiveness, good governance, etc. (Ibn Khaldūn, 2001). Likewise, Bennabī (1969) posited that the emergence of civilization is the result of interactions among individuals; ideas; and materials. He also felt that the current crises of Muslim society can be traced to a crisis of ideas/civilization-consciousness. Similarly, Bennabī saw the Renaissance from a civilizational view and believed that societal advance depended fundamentally on the relationship between human beings/ideas/material resources. Bennabi further suggested that societal decay could result from the paralysis of ideas and loss of productive cultural consciousness (i.e., not simply from material deprivation); thus, viewed societal renewal/rebirth as the process of rebuilding both thought; culture; and civilizational consciousness. Despots are always responsible for weakening knowledge, weakening morals, weakening creativity and reducing a society's social responsibilities; thus, creating barriers to societies' ability to advance and reform (Al-Kawākibī, 1902). Therefore, according to Al-Kawākibī, the only way a society can experience Renaissance is if they are able to achieve their individual freedoms, be just and have a heightened level of awareness intellectually. Ali Shariati likewise emphasized the importance of intellectual

independence and the conscious reconstruction of civilization as alternatives to imitation and passivity. Thus, all these intellectual contributions illustrate that societal advancements based on Islamic reformist thoughts were never limited to the economy and/or government but included renewal of the mind, ethically transforming individuals, institutionally restructuring institutions and shared social responsibility. Additionally, the development of Islamic civilization, in general, has always been associated with the interplay of the elements of knowledge, innovation, and intellect as essential forces for progress in civilization (Thohir & Septiadi, 2025).

Finally, there are a number of other concepts that are very similar to the idea of advancing a society; specifically reforming a society (*iṣlāḥ*), developing a society (*taṭwīr*) and building a civilization. Reform means to correct, improve and eliminate corruption. In Islamic thought, reform is viewed as an ongoing effort to restore balance, justice and moral order into the fabric of a society. While reform is important for advancing a society since it allows people to live under balanced, just and morally ordered systems; however, advancement goes beyond reform because advancement includes a full-scale transformation and transition to greater levels of effective civilization-building. Likewise, development means to gradually improve a society's position and move from one stage of evolution to another. However, like with reform, development is different from advancement because development does not address the root causes of a society's weakened state, it simply improves upon its current status. Finally, civilization represents the sum total of all of humanity's intellectual achievements, moral standards, institutional structures, scientific discoveries, governmental systems and material progress over time. As such, advancement provides a major mechanism for constructing and sustaining civilizations. In this view of the world, based on Islam, progress in society depends largely on a number of key elements including collective obligation, moral discipline, knowledge, justice and community-based social action. Ibn Taymīyah (1986), like many other scholars of his time, has noted that justice, good governance and social obligation are basic requirements for both the stability and collective success of a society. The Qur'anic view of the world consistently addresses the link between an individual's transformation of their soul, heart and mind and changes made to their external environment. Classical exegetes were also very clear that before a society can undergo transformative change, it must first undergo personal and group level transformation through the means of moral and cognitive improvement (Ibn Kathīr, 1999). A foundational principle that guides transformative change at the societal level was identified when God stated, "Truly Allah does not alter the state of a nation until they bring about a change in what exists in themselves" (Qur'an 13:11). This statement illustrates that societal advancement is dependent on a collective consciousness and intentional effort to ethically improve rather than simply waiting for something to happen or taking independent actions. This principle provides evidence that a society cannot achieve progress independently without participating collectively in efforts to improve intellectually and internally.

The Prophetic Model exemplifies the theoretical principles mentioned above. When he came to Arabia, the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) created an integrated approach to creating a new civilization that combined spiritual guidance, educational training, governmental structure, social cohesion and institution building into a cohesive social system. Unlike separate approaches to reform that often place moral development outside of political organization or intellectual development outside of institutional efficiency, the Prophetic Model viewed societal advancement as a holistic and integrated process that encompasses every aspect of life. Additionally, there are currently scholars who continue to explore the connection between Islamic reform and scientific progress within contemporary Muslim societies (Razzaq & Nawaz, 2024). Similarly, current scholarship continues to emphasize the connections between political ethics, governance, legitimacy and social responsibility within modern Islamic thought (Belhaj, 2025).

At the same time, the Prophetic model should not be approached solely through affirming or idealizing interpretations. There are a number of contemporary issues concerning how Islamic reform relates to historical memory, modern political institutions and authenticity. For example, Kuru's (2019) work indicates that many Muslim societies suffer from authoritarianism and underdevelopment due to specific institutional and political factors; thus, he argues it is impossible to explain decline as simply due to "moral" or "spiritual" reasons. Jung (2021) has also critically examined the use of an idealized Islamic past in the construction of modern authenticity. Furthermore, Viersen (2023) critiques overly simplistic notions of a binary opposition between modernity and authenticity and makes a case for further complex conceptualization of reform. Contemporary evaluations of Political Islam demonstrate ongoing conflicts that exist in terms of religion as an identity, government as an institution, adapting institutions to modern political realities and governing. Hashemi (2023) notes these assessments warn against using the Prophetic Experience as a ready-made model for contemporary states. Instead, he supports assessing the Prophetic Experience as a historical and analytically located normative and analytical source with principles requiring interpretive context in applying them to modern pluralistic societies and their institutions.

In addition to previous research regarding Islamic civilizations and reforms; studies have generally focused on distinct aspects of a society (e.g., governance, ethics, spirituality, education etc.) independently. There has been limited scholarly examination of the relationships between individual development, organizational structures, institutions and civilization advancement within the Prophetic Model. Therefore, the need for the present study becomes evident as it seeks to assess how the individual and the society develop together and as a single unit. The theoretical foundation for this study is based on the belief that society will only advance when there are reforms that integrate all the necessary elements of an individual's development (e.g., intellectual, spiritual, and ethical development), institutional structures and systems (e.g., education systems, governance systems, social institutions) and scientific advances (collective knowledge and skills). Therefore, the study uses the Prophetic model as a holistic approach to

civilization that can address current societal issues and problems, at the same time maintain its fundamental values and adapt to the complexities of modern life. The contribution of the present study therefore lies not in presenting the individual concepts of justice, knowledge, ethical responsibility, consultation, or social cohesion as historically new, but in systematically examining their interrelationships and integrating them into a multilevel framework connecting individual formation, education, institutional organization, and civilizational advancement.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Research Design

This study employs qualitative document analysis using thematic analysis. Qur'anic, Prophetic, classical Islamic, reformist, and contemporary scholarly texts were examined as qualitative documents to identify recurring concepts and relationships relevant to societal advancement. The analysis combined inductive theme development with contextual interpretation grounded in Islamic intellectual and civilizational scholarship.

Data Sources and Document Selection

Sources included both Qur'anic verses and hadith (Prophetic tradition) as well as other texts from early Islamic history (classical sources), recent reformist writing and current academic studies on reforming governance, reforming education, developing a global Muslim civilization. The documents were purposefully chosen for their direct relation to the research questions as well as for their contributions toward either individual or collective forms of social progress.

Thematic Data Analysis

The analysis involved becoming acquainted with the texts, coding pertinent concepts, organizing related codes into categories, comparing different source types, and merging into overarching themes. The ultimate themes were arranged into two analytical categories: personal development and collective-institutional readiness.

Critical Interpretation

The identified themes were examined relative to their relevant historical and current contexts. The researcher clearly distinguished personal interpretations from the normative claims presented in the Islamic sources. Critical and complementary literature was reviewed to help determine if models that functioned well historically can be applied directly to present-day institutional forms.

Trustworthiness, Reflexivity, and Reproducibility

Rigor was enhanced by employing source triangulation, comparing different sources, and openly documenting the selection of sources, coding processes, and theme creation. Researcher bias was mitigated by exploring different interpretations and engaging with critical scholarship. The analytical sequence from source selection through coding and theme development was explicitly reported to support reproducibility. Because the analysis was conducted by one researcher, inter-coder reliability was not assessed and is acknowledged as a limitation.

Scope and Limitations

This study does not intend to provide a historical narrative about the Prophetic experience only from a historical perspective, but it intends to derive analytical principles and civilizational foundations based on the Prophetic experience that would help analysts understand how advanced civilizations and systems could be formed. Social advancement is understood to be the result of the interplay of many variables such as the individual variable, social variable, institutional variable, value variable, government variable, and knowledge-generation variable. The study is theoretical and analytical and does not rely on fieldwork, quantitative measurements, or statistical analyses. It is limited to a conceptual, interpretive, and analytic investigation of textual and intellectual resources relative to social advancement from an Islamic viewpoint. Although it centres on the Prophetic model and selected Islamic reformist writings without undertaking a comparative analysis of every theory of modernization or civilizational development developed globally, it attempts to make a meaningful contribution to contemporary debates regarding social advancement through developing an analytically integrated framework founded on Islamic intellectual and civilizational resources. Since the coding and analysis were performed by one researcher, the results are somewhat reliant on subjective interpretation; thus, the framework serves as a conceptual understanding rather than a validated or universally applicable model.

Ethics Statement

This research is analytical and theoretical, and it did not include human or animal subjects; thus, ethical approval was not necessary.

RESULTS

Advancement on the Individual Level

The thematic analysis found the five dimensions of personal preparation to be: intellectual and cognitive development; spiritual and ethical formation; psychological and behavioral discipline; physical health; and a socially accountable self-concept. As such, these represent interpretative themes which have been abstracted from the written texts studied in this research. The findings of this research indicate that, as per the Prophetic model for social advancement, the first step in creating a better society is for all members of it to be formed and prepared as individuals. Sustainable societal renewal depends on individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, psychologically, physically, and socially prepared to contribute meaningfully to societal progress, rather than relying solely on institutional or governmental action. As such, it is within the Prophetic paradigm that the individual represents the fundamental unit of civilization, and thus reform occurs gradually through the creation of human beings who are aware, accountable, ethically motivated, and capable of assisting in the burden of reform as well as actively contributing in the building of their society.

Based upon the results of this study, the intellectual/cognitive preparation aspect plays a very important part in the advancement process due to the fact that the intellect serves as the foundation of accountability, awareness, judgment, and purposeful action. According to the

findings of this study, the Prophetic Model focuses heavily on the acquisition of knowledge, reflection/evaluation, observation, questioning/seeking answers, and acquiring knowledge based upon evidence. Discourse found in the Quran consistently guides humans towards contemplating existence, examining reality and seeking knowledge that will benefit them using reasonable and legitimate methods of investigation. It was also shown in this study that, when viewed from the Islamic perspective, intellectual preparation is not limited to religious knowledge alone, but rather consists of additional forms of scientific, practical and civilizational knowledge required for a society's development and achievement of humanity's duty to cultivate the Earth and create reform.

Furthermore, on the basis of the above findings from this study, the protection of the human intellect is a condition precedent to social progress. Thus, anything that impedes, perverts, or weakens the faculty of reason and rationality cannot be allowed under the Prophetic model. Likewise, modern-day scholars of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* also maintain that the protection of the intellect is one of the essential goals of the Islamic Shariah, along with religion, life, progeny, and property, which together help to ensure social stability and civilized growth (Usman & Shousha, 2021). The study also identifies religious or spiritual training as one of the primary dimensions of personal development in the Prophetic model. The research shows religion helps to support a person's sense of direction, purpose, moral guidance and emotional equilibrium. Religion also provides a belief in a relationship between humanity and a larger civilization. According to Al-Sa'dī (2011), the ethics of conduct and self-disciplined spiritual practice can lead to stabilization of the individual as well as help transform society. These beliefs are consistent with teaching of the Prophet who encouraged a community of unity and collective responsibility among Muslims (Al-Tirmidhī, 1955).

Religion affords the individual a feeling of duty to perform actions toward others, and in doing so promotes positive action, perseverance, self-sacrifice, and participation in society's overall reform efforts. In addition to being a means of worship, it serves as a source of spiritual sustenance, ethically disciplining the individual's psyche and providing the individual with the strength to endure hardships and assist in group progress. The Prophetic tradition further emphasizes that "the best among you are those with the best character," reinforcing the centrality of moral excellence in individual and societal reform (Al-Bukhārī, 2002, Hadith 3559). Likewise, the Prophetic Sunnah emphasizes mutual care, compassion, and social responsibility as essential foundations for a cohesive and morally responsible community (Al-Tirmidhī, 1955).

The findings also indicate that societal advancement depends on psychological and behavioral preparedness. Both the Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition emphasize personal purity through removing immoral characteristics which are damaging to individuals, e.g., envy. Additionally, moral character development, social accountability and ethics were identified by Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj (1955) as essential components of maintaining social solidarity and overall societal stability. The findings demonstrate that the Prophetic paradigm combines an emphasis on developing positive attributes such as honesty, justice, humility, responsibility, patient

behavior, self-respect and community compassion along with the eradication of negative qualities such as hate, selfishness, dishonesty, corruption and aggression. Thus, the findings clearly show that in the Prophetic view of civilization the development of moral character is essential to civilization's success and its ability to sustain itself.

Consistent with the present findings, Quṭb (1995) emphasized that ethical responsibility and social justice are critical components of constructing a unified Islamic society. Furthermore, if societies lack strong internal control mechanisms and emotional/psychological balance they can experience rapid growth in wealth and other material aspects; however, these same societies will be unable to resist falling apart at the seams and thus experiencing collapse.

Finally, the findings also showed that the Prophetic paradigm places a high value on preparing one's own body for the demands placed upon it. The research demonstrated that the Prophetic paradigm advocates for protecting the integrity of the body; maintaining physical capabilities; keeping the body clean; acquiring practical skills; and ensuring that one is prepared for active involvement in his/her society.

Protecting physical well-being supports cognitive performance, productivity, psychological health, and social interaction. Physical preparedness also contributes to intellectual and spiritual development by strengthening an individual's ability to fulfill social responsibilities and take an active role in societal advancement.

Additionally, another significant finding of the research was regarding how national identity plays into the advancement of society according to the Prophetic model. The study demonstrated that the Prophetic model emphasizes establishing a balance between commitment to God, communal belonging, and attachment to one's country. When Muhammad migrated from Mecca to Madina he did so not simply to relocate geographically, but instead established a new type of social environment where societal organization could occur. The findings suggest that creating conditions for social advancement requires both social order and stability; institutional membership and loyalty; collective accountability and responsibility for contributing positively to the social system in which individuals live. Therefore, in accordance with the Prophetic view, national identity should reinforce religious identity rather than conflict with it. It should help build greater social unity and shared sense of purpose among people; facilitate cooperative action among people; promote mutual accountability; etc.

Civilizational Preparation on the Collective Level

Societal advancements according to the prophetic model go far beyond the reforms and preparations of an individual to build a collective structured society that can provide the means to direct its energy towards overall civilizational developments. Because this study is theoretical and interpretive rather than empirical, the findings presented in this section represent recurring themes and principles derived from the analysis of Qur'anic, Prophetic, classical Islamic, and reformist textual sources rather than observations generated from field data. The analysis identified six principal dimensions of collective civilizational preparation: a unifying intellectual and moral framework; organized governance and political institutions; consultation and

institutional continuity; competent and accountable leadership; multidimensional societal capacity and responsible resource management; and social cohesion through stable social institutions. The findings indicated that the individual's reforms were just the initial step in the process of change; however, no viable form of societal renewal will exist until there exists an organized, collectively coordinated, governed and cohesive social entity providing a unified societal framework that allows for the collective efforts of individuals working together on a single civilizational objective.

The first dimension concerns a unifying intellectual and moral framework. Analysis demonstrated that one of the most critical components of collective advancement according to the prophetic model is the existence of a unifying and inspirational idea capable of directing the social energies of the people and directing their collective consciousness. Al-Kawākibī (1982) similarly emphasized collective awareness and organized reform as means of overcoming societal fragmentation and stagnation, consistent with these findings.

It was revealed that the prophetic mission successfully created a comprehensive intellectual and moral framework based on monotheism, justice, mutual responsibility, and freedom from any form of oppression and fragmentation. Both individuals and societies were provided with a common view of their existence, mission, responsibility, and relations with one another through this frame. At the same time, it helped to develop a collective sense of mission and a way for civilizations to move forward. The findings of the research proved that the presence of such a unifying concept contributed greatly to social cohesion, reduction of social fragmentation, collective social efforts, and orientation towards common goals.

The second dimension relates to organized governance and political institutions. Moreover, it was concluded that political institutions have an essential role to play in the evolution of societies. The creation of a governmental system in Medina was a practical case demonstrating how an organizational mechanism could be integrated into a societal structure through the organization of constitutional governance, leadership, legislation, and coordination within social relations. Through the findings of the research, it could be proven that the prophetic concept saw not only politics in governance but also a way of organizing societies and protecting their interests. The Constitution of Medina established one of the first models of organized constitutional governance governing inter-group relationships; defining principles concerning rights and responsibilities; social solidarity; and collective security.

The third dimension concerns consultation and institutional continuity. Research showed that consultative governance (*shura*) also plays a critical role in societal development. Results demonstrated that the Prophetic model stressed collective participation; consultation; accountability; and shared responsibility in matters relating to public affairs. More recent research emphasizes that participation in public affairs; accountability to the public; protection of individual freedoms; etc., are core elements of governance in current Islamic political theory (Ghannouchi, 2020).

Results illustrated that after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the appointment of Abu Bakr as leader exemplified the significance of institutional continuity through consensus-based decision-making processes and preventing fragmentation (Ibn Taymīyah, 1986). Results demonstrated that organized systems of governance are instrumental in facilitating societal advancement because they enhance institutional legitimacy; minimize conflict; facilitate orderly succession of leadership; and maintain collective objectives over extended periods.

The fourth dimension concerns competent, trustworthy, and accountable leadership. Finally, results demonstrated that for a society to be able to advance sustainably, it is required to have effective governance mechanisms including competent leadership and organized administrative frameworks able to coordinate societal activities effectively. The prophetic model prioritized identifying capable and honest individuals who possess integrity, honesty, accountability, and trustworthiness for positions of leadership; while discouraging tribalism; nepotism; personal loyalty etc. Results demonstrated that competence, honesty, accountability, and trustworthiness are essential foundation stones for successful administration and institutional effectiveness. Societies unable to establish effective systems of leadership distribution will likely face ineffectual institutions, corrupt systems of governance; ineffective resource utilization; and societal fragmentation.

The fifth dimension concerns multidimensional societal capacity and responsible management of collective resources. One additional key finding pertains to the relationship between societal advancement and attaining comprehensive types of power. The analysis showed that the prophetic model supports building capacities in various ways, including those based on intellectual, scientific, economic, military, technological, and institutional advancements. Findings showed that holistic advancement would be achieved through access to creative knowledge; scientific abilities; economic independence; defensive preparation; and organized institutional systems that could ensure society protection and progress. The analysis also showed that relying heavily on external sources of power makes it difficult to develop autonomously.

Findings also included the necessity to protect national treasures and to keep the institutional system intact while developing. The prophetic model calls for effective governance; protecting public property; combating corruption; and proper management of public property. The analysis showed that corruption or abuse of public funds prevents the society from developing as it leads to loss of trust in governmental institutions; economic instability; injustices; and loss of cohesive social ties. Consequently, good management is required for sustainable development and stability.

The sixth dimension concerns social cohesion and the role of stable social institutions. Building social order was also shown to be another important aspect of social development by the analysis. Family emerged as an important element within the framework of the prophetic model as it was viewed as the primary means of nurturing social virtues, ethics, and belongingness. Family units that are socially intact contribute significantly to social

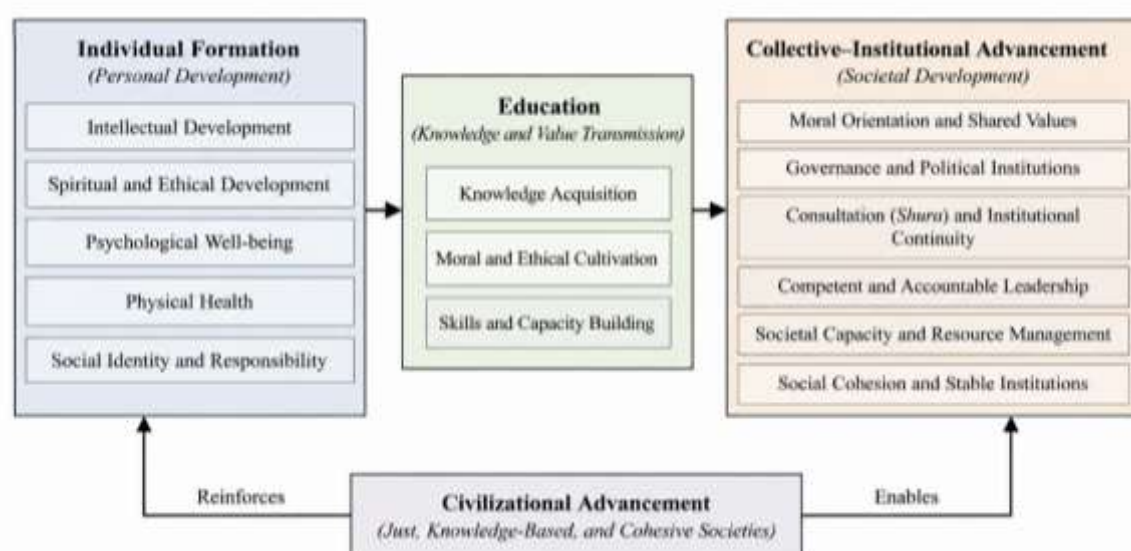
cohesiveness; social/ethical development; and ongoing social continuance. Social disintegration weakens social cohesion and diminishes the ability of societies to develop common social/civilizational objectives.

Integrated Prophetic Societal Advancement Framework

The findings produce a two-level framework linking individual formation with collective and institutional advancement. The individual level comprises intellectual, spiritual, ethical, psychological, physical, and social preparation, while the collective level includes moral orientation, governance, consultation, accountable leadership, societal capacity, resource management, and social cohesion. Educated individuals strengthen institutions by promoting ethical conduct, accountability, civic competence, and active participation. Informed citizens also play an important role in holding political leaders accountable.

Figure 1.

Integrated Prophetic Societal Advancement Framework.



DISCUSSION

The findings of this study show how social progress based on the Prophetic Model is a complete and holistic civilizational paradigm that combines personal development, group organization, moral obligation, institutional building and cognitive development into one whole, in which social change is seen as a single, continuous process. As opposed to some of the present-day theories of social change where social progress is measured solely by economic development, political control or technological modernization, the Prophetic Model sees social change as an all-encompassing process that recognizes the interdependence of moral values, governance, knowledge, social coherence and human development. Thus, the Prophetic Model offers a new way of looking at the multifaceted nature of social renaissance, demonstrating that sustainable development will not take place if it is not pursued through coordinated reform measures.

One of the major implications arising out of the study's findings concerns the central status given to man in the process of social development. The study has shown that the first

step taken by the Prophetic Model in its approach to building a strong and advanced society was to develop man cognitively, spiritually, emotionally, physically and socially before embarking on the creation of institutions and the formation of society. In other words, the success of civilizations and societies lies in the quality and awareness of the people who form such societies, as well as their levels of ethics and effectiveness. Modern reform efforts usually pay more attention to institutions and economic reforms than preparing people morally and intellectually, resulting in the establishment of societies capable of making minor progress economically but failing to develop ethically and civilizational, which would ensure their sustainability and success. Hence, based on the results obtained from this research, sustainable social development will only take place if institutional modernization is complemented by human development. The findings also indicate that intellectual preparation plays a central role in social development, as knowledge, critical thinking, rational inquiry, and scientific awareness are essential to societal progress. The Prophetic Model promotes reflective thinking, observation, evidence-based reasoning and intellectual responsibility, while at the same time protecting society from forms of intellectual degeneration such as blind imitation, superstition, misinformation and ideological manipulation. The above finding has very significant implications today since many societies are currently experiencing fragmentation and polarization in terms of intellectual trends, and a decline in scientific production capabilities notwithstanding rapid technological advancements and increased availability of information. The results thus suggest that social development entails not only having access to knowledge but also fostering intellectual freedom, methodology-based thinking and responsible attitudes towards information and ideas.

The study also demonstrated that the spiritual/ethical dimensions play an essential part in the process of development. The Prophetic Model did not differentiate between material progress and moral responsibility, nor did it disconnect governance/institutional organization from ethical principles. This perspective coincides with recent discussions regarding the implementation of maqāṣid-based governance models which seek to combine institutional effectiveness with ethical responsibility/human well-being (Malik, 2019), as opposed to treating governance as mere procedural/administrative efficiency.

Faithfulness/accountability, justice/honesty/trustworthiness/social responsibility represent essential components supporting both individual conduct and collective institutional stability. A moral or civilizational dimension to the relationship between morality and civilization is a key factor that separates the Prophetic Model from most other modernizing models (which tend to focus on economics or politics). Thus, the study demonstrates how ethical decline as well as institutional disintegration can harm social progress even if a country has large amounts of wealth and technology.

An additional implication refers to organized collective action and institution-building in advancing society. The findings indicated that the Prophetic Model progressed beyond individual reform to the establishment of organized government/governance structures,

constitutional orders, administrative coordination/cooperation and collective social structures within Madinah State. Contemporary analyses of Islamic governance also contend that successful reform necessitates institutional organization/participatory governance/ethically-driven leadership/adaptation mechanisms responsive to evolving societal realities (Koç, 2021). This demonstrates that lasting development relies not merely on providing moral guidance/individual piety but also on institutional organization/effective leadership/accountability/social coordination/stable organizational frameworks capable of collectively directing energy toward common goals. Consequently, societies now encountering fragmentation/weaknesses in institutional organizations/political instability may derive greater benefits from frameworks combining ethically-driven leadership with organized governance/responsibility in institutions.

The findings further indicate that the notion of 'power' in the Prophetic Model goes beyond mere military and political superiority alone. It has similarly been found that Al-Sadr (1961) held that a nation's capacity to sustain its economic and social independence and justice was an important prerequisite for any form of sustainable socio-civilizational progress. The progress of any nation requires its strength and capabilities in numerous ways such as in terms of intellectual, scientific, economic, social, technological, and institutional capacity. These forms of strength constitute important sources of productive knowledge, science, economy, sociality, and institutions as essential foundations for sustained socio-economic advancement. Given today's globalization, many nations still remain structurally dependent on others with respect to economic, technological, and political issues and hence have been limited in terms of developing their full potential independently. Therefore, the findings suggest that progress requires internal productivity and the reduction of structural dependency in society.

Lastly, the findings revealed that progress based on the Prophetic Model did not involve rejection of a nation's cultural heritage or identity. On the contrary, it has been seen that the model of progress depended upon a synthesis of continuity, preservation, and reform. Reformist thinkers prior to this study have also argued that a nation could make use of new institutional models while retaining its Islamic civilizational and moral-spiritual principles whilst establishing dynamic institutional/political/social systems capable of adapting to shifting societal realities. This equilibrium remains pertinent today within discussions on modernization, globalization, cultural identity, or civilization continuity. Many of today's nations face the tension of maintaining identity and modernity, for the relationship of tradition and modernization is believed to be irreconcilable. The findings of the research demonstrate that genuine progress can be realized through constructive adaptation while maintaining fundamental values in conjunction with scientific advancements.

National allegiance and social identity emerged as another dimension of societal advancement. The prophetic experience at Madinah brought together faith, social unity, political organization, shared solidarity, and collective identification under one unifying umbrella for civilization. These results indicate that spiritual devotion, collective identity, and

organized governance can coexist and both promote long-term sustainable society development.

The results suggest that modern-day society has concerns going beyond economics and politics. Salih (2021) indicated the need for a revival of intellect, culture and morality. As such, Arslān (1930) identified intellectual stagnation as one cause of the decline of Muslim societies; weak political organizations and declining societal values were also contributing factors. The Prophetic model provides a theoretical structure from which to understand how to develop these elements of strong community: stability, ethical leadership, communal duty and development. The framework, however, needs important refinement. The Prophetic experience arose in a specific historical and political setting and should not be considered a direct model for modern states. Its principles therefore require contextual interpretation in light of modern legal, social, technological, and pluralistic conditions. Its analytical value lies in the relationships it identifies among ethics, knowledge, governance, social organization, and collective welfare.

The findings also have educational implications. Education can connect individual and institutional advancement by developing knowledge, ethical judgment, critical thinking, civic responsibility, dialogue, and social participation (Clabough et al., 2026). Schools and universities can therefore serve as settings in which responsible leadership, consultation, social cohesion, and ethical institutional practice are cultivated.

Although this study's findings are significant in scope, it remains theoretically and analytically oriented; thus, this study does not endeavor to measure empirically either social advancement or comparative statistical analysis among diverse societies. Future studies would therefore gain substantially from investigating how these principles are practically applied in contemporary institutional-political-social-educational contexts. Additionally, studies comparing the relationships between lawful governance/institutional functioning/collective identity/social stability could further support understanding practical applications of the Prophetic Model for contemporary reform and civilizational development.

Overall, the findings indicate that the Prophetic model views societal advancement as an integrated process that connects personal reform, institutional organization, moral accountability, governance, and material development. Based on these results it appears that a successful renewal for a society will require the same type of total transformation as individuals, in terms of their intellectual, moral, social, political and institutional lives. Therefore, as opposed to merely attempting to create a number of separate or fragmented reforms for society, contemporary assessments of political Islam continue to demonstrate that significant challenges remain in reconciling governance, identity, reform, and modern political realities in many Muslim countries (Hashemi, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study examined societal advancement within an Islamic civilizational framework by analyzing the intellectual, ethical, spiritual, social, political, and institutional dimensions of the

Prophetic model. Results indicated that the achievement of social progress is a comprehensive, interconnected, multi-faceted process integrating personal preparation with collective organizational structure as well as institutionalization.

Additionally, the results also identified that the Prophetic model conceptualizes societal progress through a holistic approach by combining the levels of intellectual development; ethical responsibility; spiritual growth; governmental functions; social unity; and institutional capabilities into a single unified civilizational system. Furthermore, results found that long-term achievements in progress can never be accomplished by means of isolated reforms, but rather must occur through a synchronized transformation across the individual, societal, and institutional levels. The study's principal contribution is an integrated multilevel framework linking individual formation with educational, social, governmental, and institutional processes of advancement. The framework is conceptual and requires further critical examination and empirical testing in contemporary educational and institutional contexts.

It can be concluded from this study of the Prophetic model that it has the capacity to continue to provide a balanced and equitable way of addressing the current problems of modern society while at the same time preserving its fundamental values and cultural identity.

Conflict of Interest

The author confirms the research was conducted without any commercial or financial relationships that might create a conflict of interest.

Author Contributions

The sole author developed the study concept, conducted the literature review, performed the analysis, and wrote the manuscript. The author also takes full responsibility for all aspects of the work.

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Data Availability Statement

No primary empirical dataset was generated. The analysis used publicly available Islamic and scholarly textual sources identified through citations and the reference list.

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