

Understanding and Promotion of Civic Behavior among Students in the Light of Sīrah

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ABSTRACT

Civic behavior reflects the values related to individual's attitude towards family, peer group, and neighborhood and includes the way one behaves in the society and community as a whole. The purpose of the present study is to describe what civic behavior is, its characteristics, its status in the Hadith, and the way forward for improvement of the civic behavior as guided by Sīrah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Study implies that truthfulness, mercifulness, polite talk, helping others, respect for others, caring and sharing and promise-keeping, loyalty, sympathy, honesty, kindness, brotherhood, cooperation, fairness and unity are the core qualities that make the individual a civilized and active citizen and our Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is the embodiment of all these virtues. Descriptive approach was followed to explain and analyze the concept. First the concept of civic behavior was interpreted, then its importance and characteristics were discussed. After that it was explored in the light of the teachings of the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The findings highlight that the civic behavior in its best form was preached and practiced by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions. Each dimension was interpreted in the light of the Quran and the Sīrah. It was concluded that Sīrah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is an immaculate source of guidance and inspiration not only for Muslims but also for the whole mankind in acquiring the core values and abilities that determine the Civic behavior of an individual which ultimately results into a well-organized, peaceful and civilized society. The study suggests that civic behavior of the citizens has significant impact on the formation and development of a peaceful society.

It is recommended that civic behavior as reflected and practiced by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) should be promoted and practiced for achieving a civilized social setup.

Keywords: *Civic behavior, civic education, civic rights, ethics, Sīrah teachings.*

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Introduction

Civic behavior is not only based upon the values related to individual's attitude towards family, peer group, and neighborhood but also includes the way he behaves in the society and community as a whole.

It comprises of civic actions that are performed by the individuals during social interactions by joining organizations and clubs, contributing in society and participation in voluntary organizations. The term civic is derived from the Latin word 'civis', which means a citizen, a person who lives in a city or a country.⁽¹⁾

In oxford dictionary civic is defined as:

"The study of the rights and duties of citizenship."⁽²⁾

Flanagan, Syvertsen, & Stout defined civic behavior as:

"Civic behavior means a tangible action followed by young people in their daily lives on behalf of their society and its norms and values."⁽³⁾

It is quite evident that Civic behavior plays an important role to bring the societal changes through the nature of civic actions performed in routine activities. This implies that civic behavior of the citizens has a significant impact on the formation and development of a peaceful society.

Civic behavior is based upon the psychological, physiological and sociological abilities of an individual which are exerted in conducting day to day affairs. Since, Loyalty, sympathy, honesty, kindness, promise keeping, brotherhood, cooperation, fairness and unity are the core qualities that make the individual a better and active citizen hence attainment and enhancement of these abilities might be related to the ethical, moral, and spiritual developments. Sīrah of our beloved Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is an immaculate source of guidance and inspiration for not only Muslims but also for the whole mankind in acquiring these core values and abilities that determine the Civic behavior of an individual which ultimately results into a well-organized society. Civic Institutions especially the schools and religious places can play an important role in development of civic behavior of Muslim youth through the guidance from Sīrah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

In the first part, life of our Holy prophet is highlighted in developing civic behavior of Muslims. While in second section, the Hallmarks and characteristics of civic behavior are presented in detail. In the third section,

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- (1) Anuradha Sud, Transitions History and Civics, (vikas publishing house private limited, 2008A.D), 5.
 - (2) J.A. Simpson and E.S.C wiener, the Oxford English dictionary, (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1989A.D), 5/321.
 - (3) Lonnie R. Sherrod, Judith Torney-Purta, Constance A. Flanagan, Handbook of Research on Civic Engagement in Youth, (John Wiley & sons, Inc. 2010A.D), 209.

guidelines for the improvement of Civic behavior in the light of Sīrah of Holy Prophet (ﷺ) are described. While at the end strategies to promote civic behavior among citizens are given. Findings and conclusion of the study are also given.

Life of Holy Prophet as an Embodiment of Civic Behavior

Islam is a complete code of life and according to teachings of Islam, apart from having the true belief, it is also important for a person to show and perform good deeds. The Holy Quran and the Prophet (ﷺ) guided the people how to deal and behave with others. The elements of civic behavior can easily be traced in the basic teachings of Islam which are explicitly practiced by glorious character of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in the excellent manner. Allah (SWT) sent a prophet to Muslims who brought reforms in individuals. Allah Almighty has praised his beloved prophet's behavior and character, in the Holy Quran as:

﴿وَأَنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾⁽¹⁾

And indeed, you are of a great moral character.

Formation and establishment of a peaceful cooperative society is possible with good civic behavior only and by exercising the good deeds. This is best practiced by Holy Prophet (ﷺ) as Allah says in the Qur'an:

﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ﴾⁽²⁾

You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoy what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah.

When we study and explore the life of holy prophet (ﷺ), we come to know that even before he received revelation from Allah, the Prophet was known throughout his hometown of Makkah for his generosity and helping people in need. In olden days, there were no law enforcement agencies but the Prophet (ﷺ) created the norms to save the rights of the poor. Throughout his life, the Prophet (ﷺ) encouraged Muslims to do good deeds.

«وَاللَّهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ وَاللَّهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ وَاللَّهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ» قِيلَ: «وَمَنْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: " الَّذِي لَا يَأْمُرُ
جَارُهُ بِوَيْقِهِ»⁽³⁾

By Allah, he does not have faith!" It was said, "Who is it, O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet said, "He whose neighbor is not safe from his harm.

It is the main element of civic behavior to not harm the others either it is animal, bird or human. They all are respectable creature of Allah.

(1) Sūrah Al-qām: 4.

(2) Sūrah Aal-e-Imran: 110.

(3) Muhammad bin Ismā'īl Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, The Book of Al-Adab (good manners). Chapter. The sin of that person whose neighbor does not feel safe from his evil, Hadīth No.6016, (Riyāḍ: Dārussalām, publishers, 1404h).

Everyone should do his maximum efforts to prevent harm in the society. It is the duty of every Muslim to work with fellow Muslims by extending his full support and cooperation.

Life of the Holy prophet teaches us to obey the laws and rules of a state. The one who doesn't follow the law cannot be a good Muslim. His life can be taken as a way forward on which an individual can act and can prove him/herself as a good citizen of a society. As Allah states:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ
يَعْظُمُ لَعْنُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾⁽¹⁾

Verily, Allah enjoins justice, and 'ihsaan and giving help to relatives, and He forbids immoral sins, evil and tyranny. He admonishes you, so that perhaps you may take heed.

According to the preaching of Holy prophet, a citizen in an Islamic society should extend his maximum support, cooperation and one must deploy full efforts to resolve the problems existing in a society whether they are social, cultural and traditional, economic, or political in nature. This support should also be extended and drawn out in natural disasters and other unexpected occurrences faced by the society or community from time to time.

Social responsibility is the key feature of civic behavior and an important element of Islamic society, which should be exercised by every person individually in that society. This responsibility starts with the basic family unit and extends to the neighbors, city and country, etc. The Holy Quran ruminates helping others as an obligatory duty of each and every Muslim by saying:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يُهَاجِرُوا مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ وَلَايَتِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا وَإِنِ اسْتَنْصَرُوكُمْ فِي
الدِّينِ فَعَلَيْكُمْ النَّصْرُ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ﴾

And as to those who believed but did not emigrate (O Muhammad), you owe no duty of protection to them until they emigrate; but if they seek your help in religion, it is your duty to help them except against a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance.

Humbleness is another important characteristic of good civic behavior. An individual who behaves humbly with his fellow beings and avoids of being arrogant and selfish, brings about Allah's pleasure in the life hereafter and is admired by the society. As Holy prophet (ﷺ) says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنْ تَوَاضَعُوا حَتَّىٰ لَا يَبْغِيَ أَحَدٌ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ وَلَا يَفْخَرَ أَحَدٌ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ﴾⁽²⁾

Verily, Allah has revealed to me that you must be humble towards one another, so that no one oppresses another or boasts to another.

(1) Sūrah An-Naḥal: 90.

(2) Abū Dāwūd, Sunan Abū Dāwūd, the book of Al-adab, chapter, General Behavior, Hadīth No.4895, (Riyāḍ: Dārussalām, publishers, 1420h).

Life of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is exemplary for everyone. He lived his life in a simple house made of clay and bricks, leaves and trunks of palm tree. His meal contained mostly of barley bread, and normally he rode on a mule, using a saddle made up of fiber of date-palm. The Prophet mixed with his companions to an extent that he never wished to sit in a high place of honor in gatherings instead He used to sit in any available vacant spot. He was so indistinguishable and common amongst the people that a newcomer could not recognize him and would have to ask, "Which one of you is the Prophet?" Prophet instructed the Muslims to avoid creating difficulties and problems in the lives of others and motivated people with elegant personality. He acted elegantly and behaved gracefully throughout his life.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), said:

«يَسِّرًا وَلَا تُعَسِّرًا وَيَسِّرًا وَلَا تُعَسِّرًا وَلَا تُنْفِرًا وَلَا تُنْفِرًا وَلَا تُطَاوَعًا وَلَا تُخْتَلِفًا»⁽¹⁾

Make things easy and do not make things difficult. Give glad tidings and do not repel people. Cooperate with each other and do not become divided.

Being tolerant is one of the core requirements of good civic behavior in social life. Social life means to live with other people by knowing different attitudes, behaviors, life styles and tastes with the various philosophies and ideologies. Since from the very beginning of human history by living socially we are always connected to others in one way or the other. In some cases, our rights and benefits seem overlapping with the rights and benefits of others, but we have to show tolerance in order to live and survive in a society. Therefore, tolerance is the key solution preached and practiced by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) to us so that any conflict may not arise among the Muslims.

The story of Bedouin who urinated in Mosque shed light on the fact, how tolerant was our beloved Prophet (ﷺ) towards non-believers even.

عَنْ أَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ عَائِشَةَ عَنْ حَلْقِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ، فَقَالَتْ: «كَانَ خُلُفَةُ الْقُرْآنِ»⁽²⁾

Abu Darda says: I asked Ayesha about the morals and manners of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). She said: The morals of the Prophet were based on Quran.

The Prophet (ﷺ) showed with his practice that he never stretched his legs before others, always gave respect to all and never spoke harsh.

Elements of Civic Behavior and Teachings of Holy Prophet (ﷺ)

Civic behavior describes how the individual lives and behaves in the

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- (1) Muhammad bin Ismā'īl , Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, The Book of Jihād and Expeditions Chapter The command to show leniency and avoid causing aversion (towards Islam). Hadīth No.3038.
 - (2) Ibn al- kathīr, Ismā'īl ibn-e-'Umar, Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, (Beirut: Dār al-fikar, 1986A.D), 6/35.

society. The values and actions of good civic behavior of an individual guarantees a peaceful society. These values are basically a set of rules that must be followed and practiced by all citizens to maintain peace in the society. Elements of civic behavior and teachings of holy prophet (ﷺ) are explained here:

1. Honesty

When the individuals are honest, straightforward, open and fair in their dealings and they do not intentionally mislead, cheat or deceive others only then a peaceful society can emerge. Individuals must perform their work honestly. They should not deceive themselves, their parents and teachers. This honest attitude will promote truthfulness and fair dealings in the society. When the honesty is lost then society is led to darkness. As the messenger of Allah (ﷺ) says:

«إِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ، وَإِنَّ الْبِرَّ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَصْدُقُ حَتَّى يَكُونَ صِدِّيقًا. وَإِنَّ الْكُذْبَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْفُجُورِ وَإِنَّ الْفُجُورَ يَهْدِي إِلَى النَّارِ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَكْذِبُ حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَذَّابًا»⁽¹⁾

You must be truthful. Verily, truthfulness leads to righteousness and righteousness leads to Paradise. A man continues tell lies and encourages falsehood until he is recorded with Allah as a liar.

Therefore, honesty is a special element of civic behavior without which peace cannot be established in any society and our Holy prophet's life is an excellent example of truthfulness and honesty that even his enemies called him 'Sadiq and Amin.'

2. Integrity

Civic behavior demands integrity in social dealings. The individuals must prove their integrity with the courage by doing the right. They should not sacrifice their principles and must fight for their beliefs. Same is preached by messenger of Allah:

«فَإِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ حَرَامٌ كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا فِي شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا»⁽²⁾

Your blood and your wealth and your honor are sacred to one another, as sacred as this day of yours, in this land of you.

So, integrity being practiced and preached by Prophet Muhammad is also an important virtue which should be practiced in a modern civic society for the welfare of mankind.

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- (1) Muhammad bin Ismā'īl, Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, The Book of Al-Adab (good manners), Chapter The sin of that person whose neighbor does not feel safe from his evil. Hadīth No.6094.
 - (2) Ibn Mājah, Sunan Ibn Mājah, Book Almnāsik, Chapters Speech on Day of Scarify (Yaum al-naḥr), Hadīth no:3055, (Riyād: Dārussalām, publishers, 1404h).

3. Promise-keeping and Trustworthiness

Civic behavior exhibits trust. The individuals should make every reasonable effort to fulfill their promises and commitments. For example, in every institution, there are some rules and regulations which are needed to be followed. Individuals must abide by these rules and regulations. One who does not fulfill his promise, he is not a true believer, as trustworthiness is necessary to keep the society secure.

«أَرْبَعٌ جَلَالٍ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ كَانَ مُنَافِقًا خَالِصًا مَنْ إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ، وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ، وَإِذَا عَاهَدَ غَدَرَ، وَإِذَا حَاصِمًا فَجَرَ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ فِيهِ حُصْلَةٌ مِنْهُنَّ كَانَتْ فِيهِ حُصْلَةٌ مِنَ الْيَفَاقِ حَتَّى يَدْعَهَا»⁽¹⁾

Whoever has (the following) four characteristics will be a pure hypocrite: "If he speaks, he tells a lie; if he gives a promise, he breaks it, if he makes a covenant he proves treacherous; and if he quarrels, he behaves in a very imprudent evil insulting manner (unjust). And whoever has one of these characteristics, has one characteristic of a hypocrite, unless he gives it us.

Trust worthiness is very important hallmark of modern civic behavior to spend a meaningful life. The life of our beloved Prophet is full of such examples that people including his worst enemies blindly trusted his words.

4. Loyalty

Civic behavior stresses the individuals to be loyal with others. One must not disclose and open the information for personal interests and advantages, or on the forums where it should not be revealed. One should be loyal to his colleagues, parents and with teachers. Loyalty is equally important for professional life as well as for personal life. It strengthens the relationship among the individuals. In hadith, loyal friends and enemies of Allah Almighty are described. The messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said that:

"Allah Almighty said: Whoever shows hostility to a friend of mine, then I have declared war upon him. My servant does not grow closer to me with anything more beloved to me than the duties I have imposed upon him".⁽²⁾

5. Fairness

It is the one of the many distinguished aspects of civic behavior to be fair and just in all dealings. Individuals with good civic behavior are not supposed to use wrong and false means to gain or retain any advantage, nor

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- (1) Muhammad bin Ismā'īl , Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, the book of al-jizyah and the stoppage of war, chapter The sin of a person who makes a covenant and then proves treacherous, Hadīth No.3178.
 - (2) Muhammad bin Ismā'īl , Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, the book of Ar-Riqāq (softening of the hearts), Chapter The humility or modesty or lowliness (to lower oneself) Hadīth No.6501.

to take undue favor for personal interests. One must not exploit others by using their mistakes and short comings. Fairness also includes equality, justice and righteousness by all means. As Holy prophet (ﷺ) said that:

«إِنَّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَلَى مَنَابِرٍ مِنْ نُورٍ عَنْ يَمِينِ الرَّحْمَنِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَكَلَّمْنَا يَدَيْهِ بَحْرَيْنِ، الَّذِينَ يُعْدِلُونَ فِي حُكْمِهِمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ وَمَا وَلُوا»⁽¹⁾

Verily, those who were fair will be in the presence of Allah upon pulpits of light, near the right hand of the Merciful, the Exalted, and both of His sides are right (being equal in honor); those who practiced justice in their rulings and with their families and in all that they did.

It is preached by our prophet that justice and fairness means to give the right to every rightful owner, and to behave with people without any discrimination and irrespective of any biasness. So it can be said that modern elements of civic behavior that are being taught and are asked to practice today, has been preached and practiced by our Holy Prophet (ﷺ) thousands of years ago.

6. Timely help and Concern for others

Good Civic behavior reflects to help those who are needy. It develops the habit in individuals to have some concern for others by giving helping hand. Supporting and helping others not only give benefit in this world but in the world hereafter. It also gives inner satisfaction. Same is taught to us by the holy prophet (ﷺ) when described great award for the people who help each other:

«مَنْ نَفَسَ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ الدُّنْيَا نَفَسَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ يَسَّرَ عَلَى مُعْسِرٍ يَسَّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ»⁽²⁾

Whoever relieves the hardship of a believer in this world, Allah will relieve his hardship on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever helps ease someone in difficulty, Allah will make it easy for him in this world and in the Hereafter.

7. Respect for others

Good Civic behavior stresses upon respecting each other. One must respect all human beings and should take special care of dignity of every human being, their privacy, their rights, and interests should be given importance and to be valued. One should be polite, generous and respectful in treating all people with honor and dignity regardless of sex, caste, creed, race or nationality. As it is preached by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

“When Abu Dhar al-Ghafari insulted Bilal due to his black color, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: You are a man who still has some of the ignorance

- (1) Muslim ibn al-Hajjāj, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, the book on government, chapter the merits of a just ruler and the demerits of a tyrant ruler, Hadīth no:4721, (Riyāḍ: Dārussalām, publishers, 1404h).
- (2) Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book Al Zikr wa Du‘ā wa al-Taubah wa al-Istighfār, Chapter Fazal al-Ijtīmā‘ ‘ala tilawat al-Qur’ān, Hadīth No. 2699.

in you. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said in the Sermon of the Farewell: An Arab does not have any superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab over an Arab; neither a white man over a black man nor a black man over a white man except the superiority gained through piety. ”

8. Adherence to the rules and regulations

Civic behavior demands the individuals to abide by the laws, rules and regulations relating to their daily life activities. One must follow the rules and regulation in making day to day dealings, transactions and performing activities in the routine life. A Muslim is bound to obey those who are in power and have authority as long as they do not order and ask to commit sins. The Messenger of Allah, (ﷺ) said:

«السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ حَقٌّ مَا لَمْ يُؤْمَرْ بِالْمَعْصِيَةِ فَإِذَا أُمِرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ فَلَا سَمْعَ وَلَا طَاعَةَ»⁽¹⁾

Listening to and obeying the leader is an obligation as long as he does not command disobedience to Allah. If he commands disobedience, then there is no listening to him or obedience.

This hadith proves and gives a lesson to every Muslim that every individual should obey the set of the laws which are made for them and where they live. One should not tell a lie, betray, or deceive anyone. One must not violate the rules and regulations because it cannot be the conduct of any Muslim and can never be appreciated.

9. Sense of Responsibility

Civic behavior motivates and encourages the individual to accomplish his duties and responsibilities with passion and professional commitment. Everyone is responsible to fulfill his duties with great devotion. As Holy prophet (ﷺ) says that:

«أَلَا كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ فَالْإِمَامُ الَّذِي عَلَى النَّاسِ رَاعٍ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ»⁽²⁾

Every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. The leader of people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects.

Hence it is proved that every Muslim should perform his duties honestly and should feel it a great responsibility in performing the duties and tasks assigned to him. Life of Holy prophet is full of such examples which guide the individuals to perform the acts with great responsibility.

10. Practice of Moral Values

Civic behavior promotes a sense of morality among individuals. Their behavior must depict moral values that are desirable in the society. One should think critically about what is “good” or “right” and how to make civic behavior compatible with social permissible norms.

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- (1) Şaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, the book of Al-Jihād and Al-Siyar, Chapter obedience, Obey the ruler as long as he does not impose sinfulness, Hadīth No. 2955.
 - (2) Şaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, book of judgment, Chapter obligations of Allah and his Prophet, Hadīth No.7138.

Morality and ethical values are the greatest virtues of the world. Using abusive language during communication is the cause of Allah's anger which is not allowed to a Muslim believer. As Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ says:

«مَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَثْقَلُ فِي مِيزَانِ الْمُؤْمِنِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ خُلُقٍ حَسَنٍ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيُبْغِضُ الْفَاحِشَ الْبِذِيءَ»⁽¹⁾

Nothing is heavier on the believer's Scale on the Day of Judgment than good character. For indeed Allah, Most High, is angered by the shameless obscene person.

The concept of social ethics is a matter of great importance in the teachings of Holy Prophet. He encourages people to be kind and good to others. This is the only way through which Allah wipes off worries and removes the psychological distress from society. As Holy Prophet says:

«عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ شُعَيْبٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ جَدِّهِ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: " أَخْبِرْكُمْ بِأَحَبِّكُمْ إِلَيَّ، وَأَقْرَبِكُمْ مِنِّي بِمَجْلِسِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ؟ " ، فَسَكَتَ الْقَوْمُ، فَأَعَادَهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ أَوْ ثَلَاثًا. قَالَ الْقَوْمُ: نَعَمْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! قَالَ: أَحْسَنَكُمْ خَلْقًا»⁽²⁾

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) asked his companions: Should I tell you whom I love and he would be close to me on the Day of Judgment. The Companions remained silent. When he repeated twice or thrice same question, the companions asked (about that blessed one). The prophet (ﷺ) said: The one who is morally best amongst you.

Promotion of Civic Behavior among Students

Good manners and noble qualities which are discussed are much important for the formation of society. Our Holy prophet as an embodiment of civic behavior is here before us as a role model. The need is just to give awareness to people of the society for the understanding and promotion of these civic values among them.

Civic Behavior and Educational Institutions

Educational institutions play an important role in development of Civic behavior and attitudes of Muslims especially the young citizens through the Islamic teachings and guidance from the Sīrah of Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Since, youth is the backbone of any society hence, the need of the hour is to imply full efforts for developing their civic behavior under the light of Sīrah of Holy Prophet (ﷺ) through every forum including but not limited to schools, colleges, universities, Madrassas and other related platforms. When The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) started teaching at Suffa in Madīnah, He (ﷺ) inculcated all virtues of civic behavior in the minds of

(1) Imām Abu 'Isā Muhammad al-Tirmidhī, Jami' al-tirmidhī, The Book of Righteous and Virtues. Chapter description of Ethics and moralities, Hadīth No.2002, (Riyād: Dārussalām, publishers, 1420h).

(2) Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, the book of Adab, Hadīth No. 206.

Aṣḥāb-e-Ṣuffā and all aspects of civic behavior were truly reflected and perfectly demonstrated through their actions. These civic patterns became permanent part of their daily acts and practices. Present day educational institutions are deficient in theory and practice for promoting civic education. The strength of Muslim youth ensures the integrity of the whole society. Since youth is the future of the country hence refinement of their civic behavior will ultimately result into socio-political progress of the country. Further, the development of nation lies in the hands of civic individuals. That is why, every nation is aimed at improving the civic behavior of students through the educational institutions. Their polished civic behavior can not only resolve many social, economic and political issues in future but also get them prepared to meet the challenges of the Modern era under the guidance of our beloved Prophet (ﷺ).

In promoting the civic behavior among students, teachers and academic institutions can play a vital role. Teacher's behavior in the class room has significant impact on as they learn a lot from their teachers. For example, the way teacher treats the student either with fortitude or intolerance, forbearance or roughness, kindness or aloofness, partiality or impartiality, softly or harshly will in turn surely affect the attitude and behavior of students as well. So the civic behavior of students can be developed through presenting the teacher's attitude as a role model. Life of Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is exemplary role model and a wonderful source of guidance for all in general and for teachers in special.

Four aspects were identified for teachers who want to implement, develop and promote civic behavior among youth. The institutions (its rules, culture, organizations) should be a community that fosters good citizenship in students.

1. The institutions should provide a broad range of activities and situations in which students can practice the good citizenship.
2. Teachers should be the example of civic virtue to their students.
3. Teachers should arrange the classroom conversations and discussions to encourage the students to think about what good citizenship entails and how they can be good citizens themselves.

Through these techniques, students learn the civic behavior. When a student is praised for his hard work and treated with respect and dignity; his self-esteem is enhanced and he becomes more motivated for doing good work⁽¹⁾.

(1) Frank Willems, Stimulating Civic Virtue in Students, (Germany: Waxmann Co, 2013A.D).

Findings

Key findings of the study are described below:

1. Civic behavior is considered a dire need of the current global community; particularly it is eagerly felt in developing societies.
2. Guidance can be sought from the Quran and the Sunna to foster virtues of civic behavior.
3. Sirah of the Holy Prophet is the best model which can be used to engage the individuals to develop civic behavior.
4. Civic behavior of the citizens has a significant impact on the formation and development of a peaceful society.
5. Educational institutions especially the schools can play an important role in development of Civic behavior of students and Muslim Youth under the guidance from Sīrah.
6. Sirah of our beloved Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is an immaculate source of guidance and inspiration for not only Muslims but also for the whole mankind in determining the Civic behavior of an individual which ultimately results into a well-organized society.

Conclusion

From the present study, it can be concluded that good civic behavior is essential for a peaceful society. Problems like intolerance, inequality, aggressive behavior, extremist behavior, hate speech etc. can be overcome by promoting civic virtues and making people sensitized and aware of the civic behavioral patterns. Civic institutions including but not limited to schools, colleges and universities can play a vital role in development of Civic behavior among youth. Since Sīrah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is an immaculate source of guidance and inspiration for all of us, hence all citizens of society whether a student, teacher, professional, household, young or old, man or woman can equally get benefit from the teachings and guidance of Holy Prophet (ﷺ) to improve civic behavior and to establish a peaceful society. Development of civic behavior may be materialized by making it a part of national curriculum. Contents i.e. lessons, stories, poems, themes in the text etc. may be developed based on the Quran and Sirah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Training workshops may also be arranged to practice civic behavior as needed and observed in daily routine life of the individuals



Understanding and Promotion of Civic Behavior among Students in the Light of Sīrah

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ABSTRACT

Civic behavior reflects the values related to individual's attitude towards family, peer group, and neighborhood and includes the way one behaves in the society and community as a whole. The purpose of the present study is to describe what civic behavior is, its characteristics, its status in the Hadith, and the way forward for improvement of the civic behavior as guided by Sīrah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Study implies that truthfulness, mercifulness, polite talk, helping others, respect for others, caring and sharing and promise-keeping, loyalty, sympathy, honesty, kindness, brotherhood, cooperation, fairness and unity are the core qualities that make the individual a civilized and active citizen and our Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is the embodiment of all these virtues. Descriptive approach was followed to explain and analyze the concept. First the concept of civic behavior was interpreted, then its importance and characteristics were discussed. After that it was explored in the light of the teachings of the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The findings highlight that the civic behavior in its best form was preached and practiced by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions. Each dimension was interpreted in the light of the Quran and the Sīrah. It was concluded that Sīrah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is an immaculate source of guidance and inspiration not only for Muslims but also for the whole mankind in acquiring the core values and abilities that determine the Civic behavior of an individual which ultimately results into a well-organized, peaceful and civilized society. The study suggests that civic behavior of the citizens has significant impact on the formation and development of a peaceful society.

It is recommended that civic behavior as reflected and practiced by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) should be promoted and practiced for achieving a civilized social setup.

Keywords: *Civic behavior, civic education, civic rights, ethics, Sīrah teachings.*

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Introduction

Civic behavior is not only based upon the values related to individual's attitude towards family, peer group, and neighborhood but also includes the way he behaves in the society and community as a whole.

It comprises of civic actions that are performed by the individuals during social interactions by joining organizations and clubs, contributing in society and participation in voluntary organizations. The term civic is derived from the Latin word 'civis', which means a citizen, a person who lives in a city or a country.⁽¹⁾

In oxford dictionary civic is defined as:

"The study of the rights and duties of citizenship."⁽²⁾

Flanagan, Syvertsen, & Stout defined civic behavior as:

"Civic behavior means a tangible action followed by young people in their daily lives on behalf of their society and its norms and values."⁽³⁾

It is quite evident that Civic behavior plays an important role to bring the societal changes through the nature of civic actions performed in routine activities. This implies that civic behavior of the citizens has a significant impact on the formation and development of a peaceful society.

Civic behavior is based upon the psychological, physiological and sociological abilities of an individual which are exerted in conducting day to day affairs. Since, Loyalty, sympathy, honesty, kindness, promise keeping, brotherhood, cooperation, fairness and unity are the core qualities that make the individual a better and active citizen hence attainment and enhancement of these abilities might be related to the ethical, moral, and spiritual developments. Sīrah of our beloved Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is an immaculate source of guidance and inspiration for not only Muslims but also for the whole mankind in acquiring these core values and abilities that determine the Civic behavior of an individual which ultimately results into a well-organized society. Civic Institutions especially the schools and religious places can play an important role in development of civic behavior of Muslim youth through the guidance from Sīrah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

In the first part, life of our Holy prophet is highlighted in developing civic behavior of Muslims. While in second section, the Hallmarks and characteristics of civic behavior are presented in detail. In the third section,

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- (1) Anuradha Sud, Transitions History and Civics, (vikas publishing house private limited, 2008A.D), 5.
 - (2) J.A. Simpson and E.S.C wiener, the Oxford English dictionary, (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1989A.D), 5/321.
 - (3) Lonnie R. Sherrod, Judith Torney-Purta, Constance A. Flanagan, Handbook of Research on Civic Engagement in Youth, (John Wiley & sons, Inc. 2010A.D), 209.

guidelines for the improvement of Civic behavior in the light of Sīrah of Holy Prophet (ﷺ) are described. While at the end strategies to promote civic behavior among citizens are given. Findings and conclusion of the study are also given.

Life of Holy Prophet as an Embodiment of Civic Behavior

Islam is a complete code of life and according to teachings of Islam, apart from having the true belief, it is also important for a person to show and perform good deeds. The Holy Quran and the Prophet (ﷺ) guided the people how to deal and behave with others. The elements of civic behavior can easily be traced in the basic teachings of Islam which are explicitly practiced by glorious character of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in the excellent manner. Allah (SWT) sent a prophet to Muslims who brought reforms in individuals. Allah Almighty has praised his beloved prophet's behavior and character, in the Holy Quran as:

﴿وَأَنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾⁽¹⁾

And indeed, you are of a great moral character.

Formation and establishment of a peaceful cooperative society is possible with good civic behavior only and by exercising the good deeds. This is best practiced by Holy Prophet (ﷺ) as Allah says in the Qur'an:

﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ﴾⁽²⁾

You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoy what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah.

When we study and explore the life of holy prophet (ﷺ), we come to know that even before he received revelation from Allah, the Prophet was known throughout his hometown of Makkah for his generosity and helping people in need. In olden days, there were no law enforcement agencies but the Prophet (ﷺ) created the norms to save the rights of the poor. Throughout his life, the Prophet (ﷺ) encouraged Muslims to do good deeds.

«وَاللَّهُ لَا يُؤْمِنُ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُؤْمِنُ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُؤْمِنُ قِيلَ: وَمَنْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: " الَّذِي لَا يَأْمُرُ
بِحَاوَةِ بَوَائِقِهِ»⁽³⁾

By Allah, he does not have faith!" It was said, "Who is it, O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet said, "He whose neighbor is not safe from his harm.

It is the main element of civic behavior to not harm the others either it is animal, bird or human. They all are respectable creature of Allah.

(1) Sūrah Al-qām: 4.

(2) Sūrah Aal-e-Imran: 110.

(3) Muhammad bin Ismā'īl Al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, The Book of Al-Adab (good manners). Chapter. The sin of that person whose neighbor does not feel safe from his evil, Hadīth No.6016, (Riyāḍ: Dārussalām, publishers, 1404h).

Everyone should do his maximum efforts to prevent harm in the society. It is the duty of every Muslim to work with fellow Muslims by extending his full support and cooperation.

Life of the Holy prophet teaches us to obey the laws and rules of a state. The one who doesn't follow the law cannot be a good Muslim. His life can be taken as a way forward on which an individual can act and can prove him/herself as a good citizen of a society. As Allah states:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ
يَعْظُمُ لَعْنُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾⁽¹⁾

Verily, Allah enjoins justice, and 'ihsaan and giving help to relatives, and He forbids immoral sins, evil and tyranny. He admonishes you, so that perhaps you may take heed.

According to the preaching of Holy prophet, a citizen in an Islamic society should extend his maximum support, cooperation and one must deploy full efforts to resolve the problems existing in a society whether they are social, cultural and traditional, economic, or political in nature. This support should also be extended and drawn out in natural disasters and other unexpected occurrences faced by the society or community from time to time.

Social responsibility is the key feature of civic behavior and an important element of Islamic society, which should be exercised by every person individually in that society. This responsibility starts with the basic family unit and extends to the neighbors, city and country, etc. The Holy Quran ruminates helping others as an obligatory duty of each and every Muslim by saying:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يُهَاجِرُوا مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ وَلَايَتِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا وَإِنِ اسْتَنْصَرُوكُمْ فِي
الدِّينِ فَعَلَيْكُمْ النَّصْرُ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ﴾

And as to those who believed but did not emigrate (O Muhammad), you owe no duty of protection to them until they emigrate; but if they seek your help in religion, it is your duty to help them except against a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance.

Humbleness is another important characteristic of good civic behavior. An individual who behaves humbly with his fellow beings and avoids of being arrogant and selfish, brings about Allah's pleasure in the life hereafter and is admired by the society. As Holy prophet (ﷺ) says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنْ تَوَاضَعُوا حَتَّىٰ لَا يَبْغِيَ أَحَدٌ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ وَلَا يَفْخَرَ أَحَدٌ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ﴾⁽²⁾

Verily, Allah has revealed to me that you must be humble towards one another, so that no one oppresses another or boasts to another.

(1) Sūrah An-Naḥal: 90.

(2) Abū Dāwūd, Sunan Abū Dāwūd, the book of Al-adab, chapter, General Behavior, Hadīth No.4895, (Riyāḍ: Dārussalām, publishers, 1420h).

Life of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is exemplary for everyone. He lived his life in a simple house made of clay and bricks, leaves and trunks of palm tree. His meal contained mostly of barley bread, and normally he rode on a mule, using a saddle made up of fiber of date-palm. The Prophet mixed with his companions to an extent that he never wished to sit in a high place of honor in gatherings instead He used to sit in any available vacant spot. He was so indistinguishable and common amongst the people that a newcomer could not recognize him and would have to ask, "Which one of you is the Prophet?" Prophet instructed the Muslims to avoid creating difficulties and problems in the lives of others and motivated people with elegant personality. He acted elegantly and behaved gracefully throughout his life.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), said:

«يَسِّرًا وَلَا تُعَسِّرًا وَيَسِّرًا وَلَا تُنْقِرًا وَتَطَاوَعًا وَلَا تَخْتِلَفًا»⁽¹⁾

Make things easy and do not make things difficult. Give glad tidings and do not repel people. Cooperate with each other and do not become divided.

Being tolerant is one of the core requirements of good civic behavior in social life. Social life means to live with other people by knowing different attitudes, behaviors, life styles and tastes with the various philosophies and ideologies. Since from the very beginning of human history by living socially we are always connected to others in one way or the other. In some cases, our rights and benefits seem overlapping with the rights and benefits of others, but we have to show tolerance in order to live and survive in a society. Therefore, tolerance is the key solution preached and practiced by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) to us so that any conflict may not arise among the Muslims.

The story of Bedouin who urinated in Mosque shed light on the fact, how tolerant was our beloved Prophet (ﷺ) towards non-believers even.

عَنْ أَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ عَائِشَةَ عَنْ حَلْقِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ، فَقَالَتْ: «كَانَ خُلْفَةُ الْقُرْآنِ»⁽²⁾

Abu Darda says: I asked Ayesha about the morals and manners of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). She said: The morals of the Prophet were based on Quran.

The Prophet (ﷺ) showed with his practice that he never stretched his legs before others, always gave respect to all and never spoke harsh.

Elements of Civic Behavior and Teachings of Holy Prophet (ﷺ)

Civic behavior describes how the individual lives and behaves in the

- (1) Muhammad bin Ismā'īl , Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, The Book of Jihād and Expeditions Chapter The command to show leniency and avoid causing aversion (towards Islam). Hadīth No.3038.
- (2) Ibn al- kathīr, Ismā'īl ibn-e-'Umar, Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, (Beirut: Dār al-fikar, 1986A.D), 6/35.

society. The values and actions of good civic behavior of an individual guarantees a peaceful society. These values are basically a set of rules that must be followed and practiced by all citizens to maintain peace in the society. Elements of civic behavior and teachings of holy prophet (ﷺ) are explained here:

1. Honesty

When the individuals are honest, straightforward, open and fair in their dealings and they do not intentionally mislead, cheat or deceive others only then a peaceful society can emerge. Individuals must perform their work honestly. They should not deceive themselves, their parents and teachers. This honest attitude will promote truthfulness and fair dealings in the society. When the honesty is lost then society is led to darkness. As the messenger of Allah (ﷺ) says:

«إِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ، وَإِنَّ الْبِرَّ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَصْدُقُ حَتَّى يَكُونَ صِدِّيقًا. وَإِنَّ الْكُذْبَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْفُجُورِ وَإِنَّ الْفُجُورَ يَهْدِي إِلَى النَّارِ، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَكْذِبُ حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَذَّابًا»⁽¹⁾

You must be truthful. Verily, truthfulness leads to righteousness and righteousness leads to Paradise. A man continues tell lies and encourages falsehood until he is recorded with Allah as a liar.

Therefore, honesty is a special element of civic behavior without which peace cannot be established in any society and our Holy prophet's life is an excellent example of truthfulness and honesty that even his enemies called him 'Sadiq and Amin.'

2. Integrity

Civic behavior demands integrity in social dealings. The individuals must prove their integrity with the courage by doing the right. They should not sacrifice their principles and must fight for their beliefs. Same is preached by messenger of Allah:

«فَإِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ حَرَامٌ كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا فِي شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا»⁽²⁾

Your blood and your wealth and your honor are sacred to one another, as sacred as this day of yours, in this land of you.

So, integrity being practiced and preached by Prophet Muhammad is also an important virtue which should be practiced in a modern civic society for the welfare of mankind.

(1) Muhammad bin Ismā'īl, Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, The Book of Al-Adab (good manners), Chapter The sin of that person whose neighbor does not feel safe from his evil. Hadīth No.6094.

(2) Ibn Mājah, Sunan Ibn Mājah, Book Almnāsik, Chapters Speech on Day of Scarify (Yaum al-naḥr), Hadīth no:3055, (Riyād: Dārussalām, publishers, 1404h).

3. Promise-keeping and Trustworthiness

Civic behavior exhibits trust. The individuals should make every reasonable effort to fulfill their promises and commitments. For example, in every institution, there are some rules and regulations which are needed to be followed. Individuals must abide by these rules and regulations. One who does not fulfill his promise, he is not a true believer, as trustworthiness is necessary to keep the society secure.

«أَرْبَعٌ جَلَالٍ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ كَانَ مُنَافِقًا خَالِصًا مَنْ إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ، وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ، وَإِذَا عَاهَدَ غَدَرَ، وَإِذَا حَاصِمَ فَجَرَ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ فِيهِ حِصْلَةٌ مِنْهُنَّ كَانَتْ فِيهِ حِصْلَةٌ مِنَ الْيَفَاقِ حَتَّى يَدْعَهَا»⁽¹⁾

Whoever has (the following) four characteristics will be a pure hypocrite: "If he speaks, he tells a lie; if he gives a promise, he breaks it, if he makes a covenant he proves treacherous; and if he quarrels, he behaves in a very imprudent evil insulting manner (unjust). And whoever has one of these characteristics, has one characteristic of a hypocrite, unless he gives it us.

Trust worthiness is very important hallmark of modern civic behavior to spend a meaningful life. The life of our beloved Prophet is full of such examples that people including his worst enemies blindly trusted his words.

4. Loyalty

Civic behavior stresses the individuals to be loyal with others. One must not disclose and open the information for personal interests and advantages, or on the forums where it should not be revealed. One should be loyal to his colleagues, parents and with teachers. Loyalty is equally important for professional life as well as for personal life. It strengthens the relationship among the individuals. In hadith, loyal friends and enemies of Allah Almighty are described. The messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said that:

"Allah Almighty said: Whoever shows hostility to a friend of mine, then I have declared war upon him. My servant does not grow closer to me with anything more beloved to me than the duties I have imposed upon him".⁽²⁾

5. Fairness

It is the one of the many distinguished aspects of civic behavior to be fair and just in all dealings. Individuals with good civic behavior are not supposed to use wrong and false means to gain or retain any advantage, nor

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- (1) Muhammad bin Ismā'īl , Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, the book of al-jizyah and the stoppage of war, chapter The sin of a person who makes a covenant and then proves treacherous, Hadīth No.3178.
 - (2) Muhammad bin Ismā'īl , Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, the book of Ar-Riqāq (softening of the hearts), Chapter The humility or modesty or lowliness (to lower oneself) Hadīth No.6501.

to take undue favor for personal interests. One must not exploit others by using their mistakes and short comings. Fairness also includes equality, justice and righteousness by all means. As Holy prophet (ﷺ) said that:

«إِنَّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَلَى مَنَابِرٍ مِنْ نُورٍ عَنْ يَمِينِ الرَّحْمَنِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَكَلَّمْنَا يَدَيْهِ بَحْرَيْنِ، الَّذِينَ يُعْدِلُونَ فِي حُكْمِهِمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ وَمَا وَلُوا»⁽¹⁾

Verily, those who were fair will be in the presence of Allah upon pulpits of light, near the right hand of the Merciful, the Exalted, and both of His sides are right (being equal in honor); those who practiced justice in their rulings and with their families and in all that they did.

It is preached by our prophet that justice and fairness means to give the right to every rightful owner, and to behave with people without any discrimination and irrespective of any biasness. So it can be said that modern elements of civic behavior that are being taught and are asked to practice today, has been preached and practiced by our Holy Prophet (ﷺ) thousands of years ago.

6. Timely help and Concern for others

Good Civic behavior reflects to help those who are needy. It develops the habit in individuals to have some concern for others by giving helping hand. Supporting and helping others not only give benefit in this world but in the world hereafter. It also gives inner satisfaction. Same is taught to us by the holy prophet (ﷺ) when described great award for the people who help each other:

«مَنْ نَفَسَ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ الدُّنْيَا نَفَسَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ يَسَّرَ عَلَى مُعْسِرٍ يَسَّرَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ»⁽²⁾

Whoever relieves the hardship of a believer in this world, Allah will relieve his hardship on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever helps ease someone in difficulty, Allah will make it easy for him in this world and in the Hereafter.

7. Respect for others

Good Civic behavior stresses upon respecting each other. One must respect all human beings and should take special care of dignity of every human being, their privacy, their rights, and interests should be given importance and to be valued. One should be polite, generous and respectful in treating all people with honor and dignity regardless of sex, caste, creed, race or nationality. As it is preached by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

“When Abu Dhar al-Ghafari insulted Bilal due to his black color, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: You are a man who still has some of the ignorance

- (1) Muslim ibn al-Hajjāj, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, the book on government, chapter the merits of a just ruler and the demerits of a tyrant ruler, Hadīth no:4721, (Riyāḍ: Dārussalām, publishers, 1404h).
- (2) Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Book Al Zikr wa Du‘ā wa al-Taubah wa al-Istighfār, Chapter Fazal al-Ijtīmā‘ ‘ala tilawat al-Qur’ān, Hadīth No. 2699.

in you. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said in the Sermon of the Farewell: An Arab does not have any superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab over an Arab; neither a white man over a black man nor a black man over a white man except the superiority gained through piety. ”

8. Adherence to the rules and regulations

Civic behavior demands the individuals to abide by the laws, rules and regulations relating to their daily life activities. One must follow the rules and regulation in making day to day dealings, transactions and performing activities in the routine life. A Muslim is bound to obey those who are in power and have authority as long as they do not order and ask to commit sins. The Messenger of Allah, (ﷺ) said:

«السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ حَقٌّ مَا لَمْ يُؤْمَرْ بِالْمَعْصِيَةِ فَإِذَا أُمِرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ فَلَا سَمْعَ وَلَا طَاعَةَ»⁽¹⁾

Listening to and obeying the leader is an obligation as long as he does not command disobedience to Allah. If he commands disobedience, then there is no listening to him or obedience.

This hadith proves and gives a lesson to every Muslim that every individual should obey the set of the laws which are made for them and where they live. One should not tell a lie, betray, or deceive anyone. One must not violate the rules and regulations because it cannot be the conduct of any Muslim and can never be appreciated.

9. Sense of Responsibility

Civic behavior motivates and encourages the individual to accomplish his duties and responsibilities with passion and professional commitment. Everyone is responsible to fulfill his duties with great devotion. As Holy prophet (ﷺ) says that:

«أَلَا كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ فَالْإِمَامُ الَّذِي عَلَى النَّاسِ رَاعٍ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ»⁽²⁾

Every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. The leader of people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects.

Hence it is proved that every Muslim should perform his duties honestly and should feel it a great responsibility in performing the duties and tasks assigned to him. Life of Holy prophet is full of such examples which guide the individuals to perform the acts with great responsibility.

10. Practice of Moral Values

Civic behavior promotes a sense of morality among individuals. Their behavior must depict moral values that are desirable in the society. One should think critically about what is “good” or “right” and how to make civic behavior compatible with social permissible norms.

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- (1) Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, the book of Al-Jihād and Al-Siyar, Chapter obedience, Obey the ruler as long as he does not impose sinfulness, Hadīth No. 2955.
 - (2) Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, book of judgment, Chapter obligations of Allah and his Prophet, Hadīth No.7138.

Morality and ethical values are the greatest virtues of the world. Using abusive language during communication is the cause of Allah's anger which is not allowed to a Muslim believer. As Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ says:

«مَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَثْقَلُ فِي مِيزَانِ الْمُؤْمِنِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مِنْ خُلُقٍ حَسَنٍ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيُبْغِضُ الْفَاحِشَ الْبِذِيءَ»⁽¹⁾

Nothing is heavier on the believer's Scale on the Day of Judgment than good character. For indeed Allah, Most High, is angered by the shameless obscene person.

The concept of social ethics is a matter of great importance in the teachings of Holy Prophet. He encourages people to be kind and good to others. This is the only way through which Allah wipes off worries and removes the psychological distress from society. As Holy Prophet says:

«عَنْ عَمْرِو بْنِ شُعَيْبٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ جَدِّهِ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: " أَخْبِرْكُمْ بِأَحَبِّكُمْ إِلَيَّ، وَأَقْرَبِكُمْ مِنِّي بِمَجْلِسِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ؟ " ، فَسَكَتَ الْقَوْمُ، فَأَعَادَهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ أَوْ ثَلَاثًا. قَالَ الْقَوْمُ: نَعَمْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! قَالَ: أَحْسَنَكُمْ خَلْقًا»⁽²⁾

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) asked his companions: Should I tell you whom I love and he would be close to me on the Day of Judgment. The Companions remained silent. When he repeated twice or thrice same question, the companions asked (about that blessed one). The prophet (ﷺ) said: The one who is morally best amongst you.

Promotion of Civic Behavior among Students

Good manners and noble qualities which are discussed are much important for the formation of society. Our Holy prophet as an embodiment of civic behavior is here before us as a role model. The need is just to give awareness to people of the society for the understanding and promotion of these civic values among them.

Civic Behavior and Educational Institutions

Educational institutions play an important role in development of Civic behavior and attitudes of Muslims especially the young citizens through the Islamic teachings and guidance from the Sīrah of Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Since, youth is the backbone of any society hence, the need of the hour is to imply full efforts for developing their civic behavior under the light of Sīrah of Holy Prophet (ﷺ) through every forum including but not limited to schools, colleges, universities, Madrassas and other related platforms. When The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) started teaching at Suffa in Madīnah, He (ﷺ) inculcated all virtues of civic behavior in the minds of

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- (1) Imām Abu 'Isā Muḥammad al-Tirmidhī, Jami' al-tirmidhī, The Book of Righteous and Virtues. Chapter description of Ethics and moralities, Hadīth No.2002, (Riyāḍ: Dārussalām, publishers, 1420h).
- (2) Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, the book of Adab, Hadīth No. 206.

Aṣḥāb-e-Ṣuffā and all aspects of civic behavior were truly reflected and perfectly demonstrated through their actions. These civic patterns became permanent part of their daily acts and practices. Present day educational institutions are deficient in theory and practice for promoting civic education. The strength of Muslim youth ensures the integrity of the whole society. Since youth is the future of the country hence refinement of their civic behavior will ultimately result into socio-political progress of the country. Further, the development of nation lies in the hands of civic individuals. That is why, every nation is aimed at improving the civic behavior of students through the educational institutions. Their polished civic behavior can not only resolve many social, economic and political issues in future but also get them prepared to meet the challenges of the Modern era under the guidance of our beloved Prophet (ﷺ).

In promoting the civic behavior among students, teachers and academic institutions can play a vital role. Teacher's behavior in the class room has significant impact on as they learn a lot from their teachers. For example, the way teacher treats the student either with fortitude or intolerance, forbearance or roughness, kindness or aloofness, partiality or impartiality, softly or harshly will in turn surely affect the attitude and behavior of students as well. So the civic behavior of students can be developed through presenting the teacher's attitude as a role model. Life of Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is exemplary role model and a wonderful source of guidance for all in general and for teachers in special.

Four aspects were identified for teachers who want to implement, develop and promote civic behavior among youth. The institutions (its rules, culture, organizations) should be a community that fosters good citizenship in students.

1. The institutions should provide a broad range of activities and situations in which students can practice the good citizenship.
2. Teachers should be the example of civic virtue to their students.
3. Teachers should arrange the classroom conversations and discussions to encourage the students to think about what good citizenship entails and how they can be good citizens themselves.

Through these techniques, students learn the civic behavior. When a student is praised for his hard work and treated with respect and dignity; his self-esteem is enhanced and he becomes more motivated for doing good work⁽¹⁾.

(1) Frank Willems, Stimulating Civic Virtue in Students, (Germany: Waxmann Co, 2013A.D).

Findings

Key findings of the study are described below:

1. Civic behavior is considered a dire need of the current global community; particularly it is eagerly felt in developing societies.
2. Guidance can be sought from the Quran and the Sunna to foster virtues of civic behavior.
3. Sirah of the Holy Prophet is the best model which can be used to engage the individuals to develop civic behavior.
4. Civic behavior of the citizens has a significant impact on the formation and development of a peaceful society.
5. Educational institutions especially the schools can play an important role in development of Civic behavior of students and Muslim Youth under the guidance from Sīrah.
6. Sirah of our beloved Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is an immaculate source of guidance and inspiration for not only Muslims but also for the whole mankind in determining the Civic behavior of an individual which ultimately results into a well-organized society.

Conclusion

From the present study, it can be concluded that good civic behavior is essential for a peaceful society. Problems like intolerance, inequality, aggressive behavior, extremist behavior, hate speech etc. can be overcome by promoting civic virtues and making people sensitized and aware of the civic behavioral patterns. Civic institutions including but not limited to schools, colleges and universities can play a vital role in development of Civic behavior among youth. Since Sīrah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is an immaculate source of guidance and inspiration for all of us, hence all citizens of society whether a student, teacher, professional, household, young or old, man or woman can equally get benefit from the teachings and guidance of Holy Prophet (ﷺ) to improve civic behavior and to establish a peaceful society. Development of civic behavior may be materialized by making it a part of national curriculum. Contents i.e. lessons, stories, poems, themes in the text etc. may be developed based on the Quran and Sirah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). Training workshops may also be arranged to practice civic behavior as needed and observed in daily routine life of the individuals

