

## Relational Justice in the Prophetic Tradition: An Analysis of Selected Hadith

### Keadilan Perhubungan dalam Tradisi Kenabian: Analisa Hadith Terpilih

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#### ABSTRACT

*Islam reveres justice as a paramount virtue that is explicitly commanded to permeate all spheres of human existence. The Quran commanded mankind to conduct justice. This commandment was subsequently assimilated and exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad through his prophetic traditions and serves as a crucial source that elucidates the concept of justice from an Islamic perspective. Acknowledging the significance of relational justice is imperative as it entails an understanding that justice encompasses more than just the equitable distribution of wealth, rights, and opportunities. Hence, the study aims to identify the dimensions of relational justice from the vantage point of the prophetic tradition, thereby serving as a moral compass for Muslims across a myriad of life's dimensions. This qualitative study utilises document analysis in its data collection whereby the components of relational justice are first identified, followed by the recognition of related hadith through the takhrīj process. Books of hadith commentaries and other supporting sources are consulted while analysing the data to determine the reason behind the revelations, the people involved, and the locative and chronological factors. The findings of this study illustrate that relational justice from the Sunnah's perspective encompasses various facets such as justice within the familial institution, inter-neighbourhood relations, and the dynamics between rulers and citizens. Consequently, the study posits that the Prophetic sunnah holds intrinsic potential to serve as a moral compass, warranting the promotion of justice across all realms of human endeavours.*

*Keywords: Prophetic ways; Sunnah; relational justice in Islam; social justice in Islam; social justice in Sunnah*

#### ABSTRAK

*Islam meletakkan keadilan sebagai nilai utama dan ia telah diperintahkan secara jelas merangkumi seluruh aspek kehidupan manusia. Al-Quran telah memerintahkan manusia untuk berlaku adil. Perintah ini kemudiannya telah diteladani oleh Nabi Muhammad melalui sunnah baginda dan menjadi sumber penting untuk menerangkan konsep keadilan melalui perspektif Islam. Mengenal pasti signifikan keadilan perhubungan itu penting kerana pemahaman keadilan itu melangkaui keadilan dari sudut pengagihan kekayaan, hak, mahupun peluang. Oleh itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti dimensi keadilan perhubungan dari sudut pandang tradisi kenabian, yang berfungsi sebagai kompas moral bagi umat Islam dalam pelbagai aspek kehidupan. Kajian kualitatif ini menggunakan analisis dokumen dalam pengumpulan data, yang mana komponen keadilan relasional akan dikenal pasti. Ia diikuti dengan pengenalan pastian hadis-hadis yang berkaitan melalui proses takhrīj. Kemudian, buku syarah hadis dan sumber sokongan lain digunakan dalam proses analisis data untuk mencerakinkan faktor penurunan wahyu, individu dan pihak yang terlibat, serta lokasi dan juga kronologi hadis. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa keadilan perhubungan menurut perspektif Sunnah merangkumi pelbagai aspek seperti keadilan dalam institusi keluarga, hubungan antara jiran dan dinamika antara penguasa dan warganegara. Oleh itu, kajian ini juga membuktikan bahawa Sunnah Nabi berpotensi untuk berfungsi sebagai panduan utama, dalam mempromosikan keadilan dalam semua perhubungan manusiawi.*

*Kata kunci: Kaedah kenabian; Sunnah; keadilan perhubungan dalam Islam; keadilan sosial dalam Islam; keadilan sosial dalam Sunnah*

## INTRODUCTION

Justice is one of the most significant concepts in Islamic tradition described in the divine scripture. It has been extensively discussed from matters pertaining to the distribution of resources and opportunities to justice in the punishment system. In fact, justice also refers to the idea of obedience and enduring interpersonal connections between people, groups, and states, including between rulers and the ruled, and between monarchs and the people (Al-Attas 2020). Relational justice places importance on comprehending the shape of social cooperation through the arrangement of political structures, economic and social establishments, families, and individual interpersonal connections. This entails evaluating the official and unofficial guidelines that determine the behaviour between individuals in a society. In contrast with distributional justice which emphasizes the distribution of wealth, right and opportunities, and hugely characterised by individualistic and atomistic essences, relational justice approach is more holistic where it emphasizes the interconnectedness of individuals in society (Gewirtz 1996). Additionally, relational justice was found in around thirty different fields, ranging from behavioural sciences, criminology, jurisprudence, and philosophy (Casanovas & Poblet 2008). Therefore, relational justice revolves around the standards and structure of social connections and the importance of how individuals interact and connect within a larger societal structure. This stimulates thoughtful considerations about the interpretation and implementation of values such as respect and dignity in different situations.

The Quran as the primary source of Islam had commanded mankind to implement justice under all circumstances. This directive finds its manifestation in the deeds of Prophet Muhammad, who serves as the best exemplar for mankind. Prophet Muhammad is not only the messenger sent by Allah to proclaim the message of Oneness (*tauhid*), but he is also a leader of his age, a judge, a politician, a father, and a fellow human being (Razali & Hamzah 2019). In addition to establishing distributive justice in matters of wealth, rights, and opportunities, Prophet Muhammad was also responsible for educating the ummah in practicing justice within the relational dimension of human relationships. This embodies the Quranic commandments that emphasize not only the relationship of mankind with the creator (*hablum minallāh*) but not forgetting the

interrelation between mankind (*hablum minannās*). As a Muslim leader during his time, it was inevitable that he had to deal with relational justice issues and help the community resolve them. Hence, the manifold instances of injustice and difficulties that the companions encountered had called for the intelligence and wisdom of Prophet Muhammad SAW, whose decisions and actions were guided by the divine revelations.

Therefore, this study aims to reveal the underlying wisdom of the prophetic sunnah that underpinned the establishment of relational justice during the Prophet's time. Employing a qualitative design, this study uses document analysis to extract and explain the data in both its data collection and data analysis phases. The components of relational justice are first identified, followed by the determination of suitable hadīth that went through the *takhrīj* process (the validation of the narrator's reliability and hadīth authenticity). In analysing the data, reference to the books of hadīth commentary and other supporting sources are utilised to derive the reasons behind the revelation, persons associated, and recognition of the time and locations of the event.

## RELATIONAL JUSTICE IN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES

Justice is commonly defined as the equitable placement of elements in their rightful positions. It is considered the paramount virtue, transcending all others, and is to be upheld in all human interactions, irrespective of time and circumstance. This concept encompasses justice between an individual and their Creator, as well as the establishment of ethical and moral principles that promote fairness and equal treatment within society. According to Al-Qaradawi (2018), Islam is a comprehensive message comprising essential tenets of faith, acts of worship to draw closer to Allah, and laws that aim to ensure justice in various spheres, encompassing the individual, family, community, state, Ummah, and humanity at large. Justice stands as a fundamental pillar in human relationships, permeating various aspects such as familial ties, marriage institutions, neighbourly relations, and interactions between state leaders and citizens. By upholding justice in these realms, peace and harmony can be fostered among individuals and groups.

The Quran, being the main source in Islam, has elucidated numerous verses regarding justice, which will be the main discourse of this section. First

evidence can be found in Surah Al-Nahl verse 90. This verse underscores the compelling obligation to implement justice in all circumstances, reflecting the high moral standards set by Allah for the betterment of the world.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ

90. Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct (An-Nahl 16:90).

Besides that, Surah An-Nisa verse 36 embodies the idea of justice by depicting the two major purposes of human creation: to worship Allah and as a vicegerent of the earth. The latter purpose includes serving fellow human beings in other capacities, including spouses, children, neighbours, employees, employers, state leaders, and citizens alike. Regardless of a specific role one is entitled to, a great relationship should be established, and serving justice is crucial to ensure that Allah's blessings are attained.

﴿وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي  
الْأَرْحَامِ وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ  
وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا  
يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا﴾

36. Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbour, the neighbour farther away, the companion at your side, the traveller, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful. (Surah Al-Nisa' 4:36)

Relational justice in the Quran is also recognized as a collective responsibility of individuals in a society (Hasan 2007), or known as *farḍ kifāyah*. By definition, *farḍ kifāyah* refers to the shared responsibility that if the obligation is fulfilled, all society members are free from the religious responsibility of that particular commandment; yet, the community members will be held accountable if no one fulfills the obligation. In Surah Al-Fatir, Allah promises to bestow rewards to individuals in return for their sincere assistance extended to others. Even though those who receive the service might not express proper gratitude or reciprocation, Allah witnesses the genuine effort and guarantees the rewards for the sincere endeavours.

لِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ إِنَّهُ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ

“And whoever commits a good deed - We will increase for him good therein. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Appreciative”. (Surah Al-Fātir 35:30)

Furthermore, the Quran encourages the practice of relational justice in human interactions through the adherence to two fundamental principles: using kind speech and forgiving others. Islam acknowledges the inherent fallibility of human nature where committing errors and wrongdoings are parts and parcels of being a human being. Nevertheless, it stresses the value of seeking forgiveness and working towards personal growth rather than being counter-productive by dwelling on the conflicts or worse, opting for an apathetic approach. This is evident in one revelation of the Qur'an where kind speech and forgiveness are ranked above charity that is followed by harm.

﴿قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أَذًى وَاللَّهُ  
عَنِّي حَلِيمٌ﴾

“Kind speech and forgiveness are better than charity followed by an injury. And Allah is Free of need and Forbearing” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2: 236)

Moreover, Allah also commands His beloved people, the prophets, to establish justice in the world, propagate the message of the oneness of Allah, unite people in the axis of belief, and govern the world with justice so that peace, prosperity, and harmony in society can be attained. While the Quran presents the theoretical version of relational justice in Islam, the Prophets were sent down to execute the idea and provide exemplary models for humanity. As modelled by the Prophets, the manifestation of justice is not exclusive to just the creator, but it extends to the relationships between human beings.

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ  
النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

“We have already sent Our messengers with clear evidence and sent down with them the Scripture and the balance that the people may maintain (their affairs) in justice” (Surah al-Hadid 57:25).

Moreover, practicing relational justice involves more than superficially fair actions; it necessitates the integration of ethical principles into those relationships. The basic foundation that leads persons in practising relational justice is ethical justice. Relational justice and ethical justice are interconnected components of a holistic approach to building a just and ethical society. Both notions emphasise the significance of treating others fairly, adhering to moral standards, and cultivating harmonious relationships in all aspects of life.

Among the important Muslim scholars in the realm of ethics is Miskawayh, who distinguished ethics from other fields and constructed a comprehensive framework based on the Islamic perspective (Omar 2010). With regards to justice, Miskawayh divided justice into three categories: natural, conventional, and divine justice (Khadduri 1984). Natural justice refers to justice that administers the relationship between physical and natural bodies while divine justice pertains to the morality between an individual and their Creator. Conventional justice, on the other hand, explains the moral relationship between humankind in all aspects of human relationships. Miskawayh expounded upon four cardinal virtues namely courage, temperance, wisdom, and justice. He opined that justice is the master of all virtues and emphasized that justice is consistent with moral principles, putting its status as the ultimate goal in Islam. Ayob et.al (2021) explained that according to Miskawayh, an instance when justice contradicts is when someone obtains something (i.e. position) through wrongful means or when someone of power arbitrarily punishes others. Justice should be a manifestation of wisdom, courage, and moderation in actions, fostering fairness rather than acting oppressive toward others

In addition, it is worth noting that Al-Ghazali held similar opinions to Miskawayh regarding the four pillars of virtue: temperance, courage, wisdom, and justice. However, he further subdivided the concept into three distinct categories. These divisions encompass political justice, which centres on the equitable allocation of rights within a nation; moral justice, which concerns itself with the dynamics of interpersonal relationships; and economic justice, which pertains to the equitable and fair opportunities within all economic transactions (Ayob et al. 2021). The realm of relational justice encompasses moral obligations towards fellow individuals, including the duty to respect parents, uphold the rights of others, and attend to various other ethical responsibilities. Al-Ghazali authored a significant manuscript elaborating on the concept of relational justice in the context of interactions between leaders and citizens. This manuscript called “*Naṣīhat al-Muluk*,” offers advice to leaders on various facets of governance. In this treatise, Al-Ghazali underscored the rulers’ awareness that their authority stems from Allah, endowing their positions with both blessings and considerable responsibilities. Furthermore, Al-Ghazali accentuated the imperative of fostering a

relationship of justice between state leaders and citizens. He posited that this can be achieved through the conscientious discharge of responsibilities, which entails prioritizing the welfare of all citizens, ensuring equal treatment, and demonstrating mercy and benevolence towards the populace. In essence, Al-Ghazali’s discourse presents a comprehensive framework for cultivating harmonious governance grounded in the principles of relational justice.

Therefore, from an Islamic perspective, relational justice underlies from the guidance of the Quran, which is then manifested through the sunnah of Prophet Muhammad SAW. In addition, the ideas advocated by Muslim scholars also align with the idea that justice stands a fundamental ethical principle that governs human activities and relationships rather than being limited to a mere legal foundation. Individuals and society bear the responsibility to foster an atmosphere where all members are treated fairly, conflicts are resolved harmoniously, and communal welfare is prioritised through the incorporation of justice as a fundamental concept.

## METHOD

The qualitative method of document analysis emerged as the most suitable approach for this study due to the nature of its data, necessitating a thorough examination of specific documents. The data collection process involves identifying the elements of relational justice and subsequently pinpointing relevant hadith from the six renowned collections of hadith known as the “*sunan sittah*.” In the subsequent data analysis phase, the extracted hadith underwent a process of *takhrīj* to verify their authenticity and status. The analysis delves into the interactions between Prophet Muhammad and his companions, drawing from commentaries on hadith such as *Fathul bāri Sharh Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*, *Umdatul Qārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*, and *Irshād al-Ṣari Sharḥ Sahih al-Bukhāri*. Furthermore, additional reputable sources were consulted to supplement the analysis, aiding in the identification of pertinent details from the hadith. This includes exploring factors such as the context in which the hadith was uttered, the individuals involved, as well as the temporal and locational elements associated with the event. Through this meticulous method, accurate information is garnered, ultimately contributing to a comprehensive understanding of relational justice as exemplified by the Prophetic Sunnah.



## FINDINGS

The findings demonstrate that relational justice in the prophetic tradition could be found in three interhuman relationships: the marriage institution, the neighbourhood, and the relationship between the rulers and citizens. The Prophet effectively served as a role model, illustrating relational justice across various spheres of life. Consequently, it remains essential for humanity to adhere to his prophetic traditions, thereby ensuring the effective implementation of justice in relational dimensions. The hadith found in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Al-Adab Al-Mufrād*, *Sunan Ibn Majah*, and *Sunan Ibn Daud* illustrate the justice reflected through the traditions of Prophet Muhammad.

### RELATIONAL JUSTICE IN MARRIAGE INSTITUTION

Marriage is a sacred institution that unites individuals as husband and wife. This union is considered a divine gift from Allah SWT to those who seek to share their lives within the context of a family. Such marital contentment is accessible to couples who possess a genuine comprehension of Islamic marital principles (Abdul Rahman et al. 2014). In Islam, the husband and the wife must uphold the sacredness of the union by employing compassion (*rahmah*) as the secret to matrimony (Ismail & Awang Mat 2016). Marriage can be viewed as a battleground for personal development and effort, in which spouses must work hard to improve their relationship. Within a marriage, essential characteristics such as modesty, endurance, and truthfulness are critical, whereas bad traits such as negligence, arrogance, and unfaithfulness are harmful. (Mohamad 2019). As a truly holistic individual, The Prophet PBUH set a remarkable example in all aspects of life, including the sacred institution of marriage. When asked about his character, his wife, Aishah, the mother of the believers (*ummahāt al-mu'minūn*), confidently attested that he embodied the essence of the al-Quran, reflecting the divine commandments of Allah SWT.

A memorable statement delivered by the Prophet Muhammad should serve as a lesson for husbands in creating a happy marriage.

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ  
" خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي " .

It was narrated by Ibn Abbas: The Prophet said, "The best of you is the one who is best to his wife, and I am the best of you to my wives" (Ibn Mājah, hadīth no. 1977).

This is a sound hadīth (*hasan*) recorded in Sunan Ibn Mājah in the book of Marriage and the chapter "Good Treatment of Women". According to this hadith, treating one's wife with love and respect is one of the most admirable virtues a person may have. Muhammad Al-Amin Al-Harari in *Al-Kaukab Al-Wahhāj Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim Ibn Al-Hajjāj* emphasises in his book of hadith commentary that keeping a strong familial relationship is crucial in practising the faith, and those who succeed in this aspect are genuinely among the best of people. He further suggested that those who flourish in their family ties are more likely to excel in other good deeds, exhibiting virtue in all aspects of their lives. The sincerity of a person's character is shown when individuals who are continually by their side witness their spectrum of emotions, from joy to grief, and how they respond to trials and adversities. While one might be able to mask their emotions in the presence of strangers, family members, especially a spouse, sees their true character. Therefore, it is justifiable to gauge a person's best character based on the way they treat their spouse.

When the Prophet was asked about how should the believers approach their wives, he explained as in the following narration.

حَدَّثَنَا بَهْرُ بْنُ حَكِيمٍ، حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي، عَنْ جَدِّي، قَالَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ نِسَاؤُنَا مَا نَأْتِي مِنْهُنَّ وَمَا نَنْدُرُ قَالَ " أَنْتِ حَزْنُكَ أَلَى شَيْئَتٍ وَأَطْعَمَهَا إِذَا طَعِمَتْ وَاكْسُهَا إِذَا اكْتَسَيْتِ وَلَا تُفَبِّحِ الْوَجْهَ وَلَا تُضْرِبِ "

Bahz bin Hakim reported on the authority of his father from his grandfather (Mu'awiyah ibn Haydah) as saying: I said: Messenger of Allah, how should we approach our wives and how should we leave them? He replied: Approach your tilth when or how you will, give her (your wife) food when you take food, clothe when you clothe yourself, do not revile her face, and do not beat her. (Abi Daud, hadīth no. 2143).

The hadīth is graded as *hasan saḥīḥ* (sound hadīth) by Al-Albāni and was recorded in Sunan Abi Daud, the book of Marriage in the chapter "The Rights of a Woman upon her Husband". As a religion that advocates for women's rights, Islam emphasises the importance of husbands treating their wives with justice. This is manifested through various means, with a significant emphasis on showing them affection and respect. In the book of hadith commentary, *Bazhl*

*al-Majhud Fi Hal Sunan Abi Daud*, al-Saharnafuri emphasises that a man is obligated to provide for his bride with the same degree of care that he would provide for himself. This practice encourages love and compassion between the husband and wife, building a strong marriage institution based on three fundamental pillars mentioned in the Quran: tranquility (*sakīnah*), love (*mawaddah*), and mercy (*rahmah*) (Surah Al-Rum 30:21). Furthermore, the Prophet's teachings warn against offending one's spouse, which includes refraining from insults, insulting remarks, or even bodily violence, such as slapping. Concerning intimate relations, he advised the people to interact with the wife in the manner that she loves, as permitted by Allah, from the front and not the back, as it is prohibited in Islam. Islam promotes the avoidance of violence in every form and manifestation, guiding individuals to value and preserve life while prohibiting any form of harm or aggression towards it. These principles are founded on cultivating compassion and affection between spouses, emphasizing the importance of peaceful coexistence (Dengni et al. 2014). Maintaining marital harmony requires the practice of equitable treatment toward one's spouse.

In addition to meeting women's fundamental needs, the Prophet displayed emotional connectedness and attentiveness to his wives as a husband. For example, he demonstrated great awareness of the nuances in their interactions. By understanding the intricacies in Aishah's phrases of endearment, the Prophet demonstrated a keen disposition, allowing him to judge her emotional condition, whether she was pleased or dissatisfied with him.

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ قَالَ لِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى رَاضِيَةً، وَإِذَا كُنْتُ عَلَى غَضَبِي. "قَالَتْ فَقُلْتُ مَنْ أَيْنَ تَعْرِفُ ذَلِكَ فَقَالَ "أَمَّا إِذَا كُنْتُ عَنِّي رَاضِيَةً فَإِنَّكَ تَقُولِينَ لِأَرْبِّ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَإِذَا كُنْتُ غَضَبِي قُلْتُ لِأَرْبِّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ". قَالَتْ قُلْتُ أَجَلٌ وَاللَّهِ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، مَا أَهْجُرُ إِلَّا اسْمَكَ.

Narrated Aisha: That Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said to her, "I know when you are pleased with me or angry with me." I said, "When do you know that?" He said, "When you are pleased with me, you say, 'No, by the Lord of Muhammad,' but when you are angry with me, then you say, 'No, by the Lord of Abraham.'" Thereupon I said, "Yes (you are right), but by Allah, O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), I leave nothing but your name." (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, hadīth no. 5228).

This is an authentic hadīth recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, the most authoritative book of hadīth compilation in Islam in the book of Wedlock and Marriage under the chapter "the Jealousy of Women and their Anger". The Prophet astutely observed a subtle shift in the endearing terms Aishah used when expressing her emotions toward him. Whenever she was pleased, she affectionately referred to him as the "lord of Muhammad," while in moments of dissatisfaction, she would use the term "lord of Ibrahim" during her conversations with Prophet Muhammad. Imam Al-Aini (2009), in his book of hadīth commentary called '*Umdah al-Qārī Fi Sharḥ Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*' explains that the mention of Prophet Ibrahim over other Prophets demonstrated the brilliance of Aishah in recognising that Prophet Ibrahim was the father of many Prophets and the promoter of pure monotheism. The Prophet's recognition of the matters that are commonly perceived as insignificant made him an outstanding partner in a relationship. The event clearly demonstrates the Prophet's attentiveness to his wife's emotions, a significant trait that should be emulated by Muslim men in this age.

Therefore, the exemplary conduct of Prophet Muhammad in establishing relational justice within the institution of marriage is evident in the prophetic tradition. Apart from emphasizing the significance of providing for the basic needs of a spouse, the Prophet also underscores the importance of offering both physical and emotional care as integral aspects of relational justice in marriage. His attentive nature towards minor details exemplifies how such qualities contribute to a just and harmonious marital relationship. Hence, the rule to build relational justice in marriage entails satisfying the spouse's rights in terms of food, clothing, home, and giving each other emotional support, as displayed by Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

## RELATIONAL JUSTICE WITH THE NEIGHBOURS

In Islam, neighbours are one of the most vital groups in the community. Neighbours may be of various races, religions, and languages, but these distinctions must not stand in the way of fostering harmony in the neighbourhood (Al-Ghazali 2009). However, because life is increasingly more focused on the workplace than on where people live, neighbourhood engagement becomes less and less significant today (Mohd Nor 2017).

Neighbours play a vital role in the growth of the community and The Prophet has provided some guidelines to interact with the neighbours including ensuring the basic needs are fulfilled.

سَمِعْتُ ابْنَ عَبَّاسٍ يُخْبِرُ ابْنَ الزُّبَيْرِ يَقُولُ: سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى  
الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ: لَيْسَ الْمُؤْمِنُ الَّذِي يَشْبَعُ وَجَارُهُ جَائِعٌ.

Ibn ‘Abbas informed Ibn az-Zubayr, “I heard the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, say, ‘He is not a believer whose stomach is filled while his neighbour goes hungry.’” (Al-Bukhārī in Al-Adāb al-Mufrād, hadīth no.112).

The hadīth is ranked authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*) by Al-Albānī and it is recorded in Al-Adāb Al-Mufrād, the book of Neighbours. The gravity of taking great care of the neighbours and granted them rights could be demonstrated from the saying of the Prophet who claimed that a person’s faith is not complete if he knows that his neighbours are hungry and ignore his needs while he is able to help him. Being a believer does not solely revolve around an individual’s relationship with their creator, but it also entails implementing justice towards society members, including neighbours. Depriving anyone of food hinders their ability to nourish the body and fulfil their role as a servant of Allah. Constantly worrying about the next meal impedes a person’s capacity to contemplate more significant matters in life and fulfil their role as Allah’s vicegerent. Thus, by acknowledging the duty to care for fellow society members, one can effectively embrace their role as a khalīfah of Allah. This serves as evidence that Islam emphasizes the responsibility of people to take care of one another, alongside respecting the rights of the human body.

Apart from ensuring the neighbour from being deprived of food, the Prophet also warned the believers to refrain themselves from inflicting harm on the neighbours.

عَنْ أَبِي شُرَيْحٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " وَاللَّهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ  
وَاللَّهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ، وَاللَّهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ ". قِيلَ وَمَنْ

Narrated Abu Shuraih: The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “By Allah, he does not believe! By Allah, he does not believe! By Allah, he does not believe!” It was said, “Who is that, O Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ)?” He said, “That person whose neighbour does not feel safe from his evil.” (Al-Bukhārī, hadīth no. 6016).

This hadīth is graded authentic and recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, from the book of Good Manners,

in the chapter of “the Person whose Neighbour does not Feel Safe from his Evil”. The Prophet repeated three times that those who conduct harms to the neighbours are not among the believers. This repetition of oath in the name of Allah indicates the gravity of sins on offending the neighbours. According to Al-Zaidānī (2012) in Al-Mafāṭih fi Sharḥ Al-Maṣābih, evil in this hadīth refers to the cunning, affliction, injustice, oppression, and transgression. In addition, Lashin (2002) in his book of hadīth commentary, Fath al-Mun’im Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim mentioned that neighbours in this hadīth is not only specified to Muslims, but also the non-Muslims. Hence, it is imperative for a believer in Islam to refrain from committing any form of injustice, oppression, or transgression, both physically and emotionally, towards neighbours of diverse backgrounds. Islam holds the rights of neighbours in high esteem, and those who purposefully inflict harm upon them are not among true believers, as they lack the essential qualities inherent in genuine faith.

Moreover, the Prophet also expounded that inflicting evil on the neighbours might potentially lead someone to hellfire as their final abode even though they fulfill the Islamic pillars such as praying, fasting, and obligatory alms.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ يَقُولُ: قِيلَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: يَا رَسُولَ  
الله، إِنَّ فُلَانَةَ تَقُومُ اللَّيْلَ وَتَصُومُ النَّهَارَ، وَتَفْعَلُ، وَتَصَدَّقُ،  
وَتُؤْذِي جِيرَانَهَا بِلِسَانِهَا؟ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:  
لَا خَيْرَ فِيهَا، هِيَ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ، قَالُوا: وَفُلَانَةُ تُصَلِّي الْمَكْتُوبَةَ،  
وَتَصَدَّقُ بِأَثْوَارٍ، وَلَا تُؤْذِي أَحَدًا؟ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ  
وسلم: هِيَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ.

Abu Hurairah said, “The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was asked, ‘Messenger of Allah! A certain woman prays in the night, fasts in the day, acts and gives charity, but injures her neighbours with her tongue.’ The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, ‘There is no good in her. She is one of the people of the Fire.’ They said, ‘Another woman prays the prescribed prayers and gives bits of curd as charity and does not injure anyone.’ The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, ‘She is one of the people of the Garden.’” (Al-Bukhārī, Al-Adab Al-Mufrad, hadīth no. 119).

This hadīth is narrated by Al-Bukhārī in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad and graded as authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*) in *Silsilah Al-Ṣaḥīḥah* by Al-Albānī. According to this hadith, as expounded by Ibn Abd Al-Barr, a person who has accumulated numerous good deeds will face judgment on the Day of Judgment. However, if

they have been abusive towards others through their words or actions, their good deeds will be transferred to those whom they have injured or mistreated. Consequently, they will be left bereft, with all their good actions having been rightfully given to their victims. At that moment, Allah will command the people to return that person's sins to them. This profound hadith serves as a powerful warning about the dangers of causing harm and mistreatment to others. It emphasizes that no matter how vast a mountain of good deeds one may possess, their virtue will be rendered null if overshadowed by the harm inflicted upon others through words and deeds. In essence, Allah despises the bad character displayed towards one's neighbours.

### RELATIONAL JUSTICE BETWEEN THE STATE LEADER AND CITIZENS

Islam regards the relation between the state leader and the citizens highly, whereby this relationship should be based on the elements of love, justice, and compassion to gain mutual respect (Syed Qutb 2000). The sincere rulers should provide the best policies that render benefits to the public. Likewise, the citizens should obey the rulers who use justice, fairness, and compassion as the foundations of their leadership (Kamali 2002). In contrast, unjust rulers who oppress the citizens through many forms such as selective treatment, and failure to implement the best political, economic, and social policies will invite dissatisfaction and hatred from the citizens. As a result, the social order is disrupted due to a conflicted relationship between the governor and the citizens (Hassan 2021).

One of the crucial elements that will help build obedience of the citizens towards the rulers is trust. The effectiveness of the political systems, social and economic progress, personal satisfaction, relatively better health, education and greater income, tolerance of minorities, and other positive societal outcomes are all strongly correlated to institutional trust (OECD 2017). Apart from that, institutional context or culture, citizen-state relationship, and citizens' perceptions of economic and political performances are also among the contributing factors to the level of trust in the government. Therefore, the rulers should lead by example by developing concrete social, political and economic policies and establishing morality in leading by safeguarding themselves from being involved in corruption at any level. By exhibiting effective leadership, leaders will earn the trust of the

citizens, leading to obedience and reverence. As a result, relational justice between the state leader and the citizens is restored. The Prophet PBUH emphasizes the importance of obeying the leaders even though he comes from different backgrounds than the citizens.

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " اسْمَعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا وَإِنْ اسْتَعْمِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَبْدٌ حَبَشِيٌّ كَأَنَّ رَأْسَهُ زَبِيبَةٌ "

Allah's Messenger said, "You should listen to and obey, your ruler even if he was an Ethiopian (black) slave whose head looks like a dried raisin." (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī hadīth 7142).

This hadīth is ranked authentic, recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, in the book of Judgements, chapter "to Listen and Obey the Imam". The hadīth explained that obedience to the ruler in different contexts, and not limited to just the governor and citizen context. According to Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalāni (2013) in his book of hadith commentary, *Fath Al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* a leader is anyone of a higher position such as the Imam of the prayer, the leader in the zakat affair, or the commander in an army. It is mandatory for the followers to obey these leaders despite their physical appearance. He further elucidated that the metaphor of dried raisins refers to the dark skin of an individual (leader). This narration explains that one's skin colour should not be a determining factor for people to obey or disobey them. The content of the hadīth was actualised by the Prophet through his appointment of Bilal Ibn Rabah, a black companion who used to be a slave as the caller of prayer (*muazzin*) and minister to *Baitulmāl* (public treasury). The justice principle could be reflected through this event, whereby it is mandatory for a leader to be obeyed by its citizens despite their physical characteristic such as the skin colour, for as long as they exhibit piety and righteousness (Junaidi 2019). Physical characteristics should not determine someone's capability in holding important positions in leadership, but the character and conduct are the determinants of their competency.

While it is mandatory for a good leader to be obeyed, one should be careful of the misconception of total or absolute obedience towards a leader. This stems from the following hadīth.

يَكُونُ بَعْدِي أَيْمَةٌ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ بِهَدَايَ وَلَا يَسْتَنْتُونَ بِسُنَنِي وَسَيُفَوِّمُ فِيهِمْ رَجَالٌ قُلُوبُهُمْ قُلُوبُ الشَّيَاطِينِ فِي جَنَمَانِ إِنْسٍ ". قَالَ قُلْتُ كَيْفَ أَصْنَعُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَدْرَكْتُ ذَلِكَ قَالَ " تَسْمَعُ وَتَطِيعُ لِلْأَمِيرِ وَإِنْ ضَرَبَ ظَهْرَكَ وَأَجِدَ مَالَكَ فَاسْمَعِ وَأَطِعْ "



There will be leaders who will not be led by my guidance and who will not adopt my ways. There will be among them men who will have the hearts of devils in the bodies of human beings. I said: What should I do Messenger of Allah, if I (happen) to live in that time? He replied: You will listen to the leader and carry out his orders; even if your back is flogged and your wealth is snatched, you should listen and obey. (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim hadīth no. 1847).

This hadīth is graded authentic, recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim in the book of Government, chapter “The obligation of staying with the *jamā’ah* (main body) of the Muslims when tribulations appear, and in all circumstances”. The Prophet mentioned that even though the leaders have been astray from the path of the prophet, one should obey the leader and perform his command even though they might suffer physical harm and the properties being taken. When taken out of context, some authorities have failed to contextualise the hadīth and tried to use the hadīth for their own benefit to gain total obedience from the people, and refuse to take any suggestions to improve public policies. Abu Al-Abbas Al-Qurtubi (1996) in his book of hadīth commentary entitled *Al-Mufhim Li Mā Ashkala min Talkhīs Kitāb Muslim* explains that this statement is a commandment to an offender to accept the punishment imposed by the leader as a form of submission and obedience. They should not perform any act of rebellion against the ruler, just because of their lack of knowledge of the ruler’s judgement of the situation. Al-Raisūni(2021) then elaborated on this notion by giving a few examples such as through the expropriation of private property for the sake of public welfare, or obligating the wealthy to withdraw the property during a calamity or similar necessities, although the people involved perceived the actions as unfair. However, he added that this discussion is necessary to be referred to the scholars and judges, and that their verdict shall be implemented even though it is disliked or rejected by some community members. Hence, it could be concluded that this hadīth requires contextual understanding and not to be taken out of context to serve the interest of the irresponsible authorities.

In another perspective, for the leader who promotes disobedience, the obligation does not fall unto the people to obey them as explained in the following hadīth

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ  
" السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ عَلَى الْمَرْءِ الْمُسْلِمِ، فِيمَا أَحَبَّ وَكَرِهَ، مَا لَمْ  
يُؤْمَرْ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ، فَإِذَا أَمَرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ فَلَا سَمْعَ وَلَا طَاعَةَ ".

Abdullah narrated that the Prophet said “A Muslim has to listen to and obey (the order of his ruler) whether he likes it or not, as long as his orders involve not one in disobedience (to Allah), but if an act of disobedience (to Allah) is imposed one should not listen to it or obey it” (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī hadīth no.7144).

This is an authentic hadīth recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, in the book of Judgements, chapter “to Listen and Obey the Imam”. The obedience to the leaders might be revoked if they advocate for acts of disobedience to Allah. Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalāni (2013) mentioned that it is prohibited for citizens to obey the leader if he imposes an act of disobedience. Abu Al-Abbas Al-Qurtubi (1996) then added that obedience to the leaders and judge is classified as mandatory and there is no disagreement (*ikhtilāf*) on this matter for as long as the ruler is not involved with the vices. He further mentioned that the scholars have achieved a consensus that if the ruler commands an act of disobedience that leads to disbelief, the Muslim is obligated to remove him from being the leader. Similarly, replacement of the ruler is necessary if the ruler does not establish religion’s pillars such as Solat, fasting in Ramadhan, *hudūd* implementation, and legitimise alcohol drinking and fornication. Additionally, if he commands to conduct the vices such as confiscating property, murder, or causing physical harm, he must not be followed and obeyed. Therefore, it could be deduced that the inability of a leader to implement the pillars of Islam and the inclination towards conducting the act of disobedience will revoke the obligation and reverence of citizens towards him.

## CONCLUSION

The principle of relational justice was deeply rooted in the prophetic approach to solving issues during his time. By adhering to the general principles of the Quran, the Prophet was able to demonstrate justice in his words and deeds with the help of the revealed knowledge. His method should not be abandoned or deemed obsolete owing to the enormous generational difference because it is the best model to follow. In actual fact, his methods are relevant to be used at all times to address the complex relational justice problems of the modern era.

The study demonstrates that justice, from an Islamic perspective, goes beyond the mere distribution of wealth and rights. It encompasses the relational dimension, wherein its pillars include respect and cooperation in various human relationships. Within the institution of marriage, the prophetic tradition

emphasizes the measurement of good treatment towards one's spouse as a hallmark of a devout believer. It also provides explanations of the rights of wives and underscores the significance of attending to seemingly trivial matters. Moreover, recognizing the significant role of neighbours in society, the Prophet offers instructions on upholding justice among one another, ensuring that the basic needs of neighbours are met, and refraining from causing offense to foster peace and harmony. Similarly, the prophetic Sunnah stresses the implementation of justice between leaders and citizens. Just governance is incumbent upon leaders, and citizens are obliged to obey as long as it does not entail disobedience to Allah. To enrich our understanding, future research is encouraged to explore diverse social justice issues, thereby delving deeper into the solutions elucidated in the prophetic Sunnah.

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