

## Need of Seerah Studies at University Level in Current System of Education in Pakistan

**Dr. Munazza Sultana**

Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, NUML, Islamabad

Email: [msultana@numl.edu.pk](mailto:msultana@numl.edu.pk)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3200-7269>

### ABSTRACT:

Seerah educates about the meaning of the Holy Quran. Without complete knowledge of Seerah, we cannot understand the Holy Quran. The Holy Quran somehow depends on Seerah for understanding its full and exact meaning. It sheds light on why the particular verse was revealed and what was its context of revelation. It is therefore, noteworthy to let children learn Quran with reference to Seerah at an early stage and at higher level. This would help them make the Holy Quran a part of daily life. Seerah is the life of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) as a whole. It includes not only HIS life after Prophet Hood but also before Prophet Hood. In Pakistan, students and youth are becoming less tolerant, ill-mannered, rude and aggressive due to the adoption of modern culture and globalization. It is necessary to teach them the life style of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). This can be done through Seerah, the best-suited way. This study finds whether Seerah is taught as a core course at university level in Pakistan in order to improve the life pattern of Muslim youth. To raise our eman, to understand the meaning of Quran and to increase the love for Holy Prophet (PBUH), it is necessary to implement it as an important course to combat modernization that is empowering youth life.

### Keyword:

Seerat-Un-Nabi, University level, Current System, Youth, Life Style.

### 1. Introduction

Knowledge and learning of Life journey of our Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) is a foundational aspect of our belief and religion. Muslim must know the history of Islam to learn Islam well. It is believed that true devotion to ALLAH is achieved by following the example of our Holy Prophet (PBUH). It is mentioned in Quran:

*“Say, if you love God, follow me (i.e. Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H), and God will love you and forgive your sins”<sup>1</sup>*

From this Hadith, it is evident that it is compulsory to study the life as well as example of our Holy Prophet. It is an essential discipline in any form of Islamic curriculum taught at any level in Pakistan. Learning about life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is broadly approached through:

1. The science of hadith: It comprised of sayings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) along with HIS actions and tacit approvals.
2. Shama'il: It is explanations of HIS life, appearance and manners.
3. Khasa'is: It is a description of virtues of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).
4. Seerah: It is the biography of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

### **1.1 Seerah:**

The terminology "Seerah" is "way of walking; March; way of acting, conduct; life ... course of life; biography"<sup>2</sup>. Knowing and studying Seerah is an obligation. ALLAH has instructed Muslims to know HIM and our beloved Holy Prophet (PBUH). HE says:

*"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent role model for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often."*<sup>3</sup>

Learning Seerah is not just reading a book. It is the process of anticipating, pondering, reflecting, as well as deriving lessons from it and applying them in our lives. It is actually developing a spiritual connection with the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

#### **1.1.1 Sources of Seerah:**

Two main sources of knowledge in Islam are Quran and Sunnah<sup>4</sup>. Seerah is an academic discipline that is being derived from many sources. The two significant sources are Quran and the hadith literature. They, both, provide details of the instances as well as the stories of the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) life.

Beyond these above-mentioned sources, main sources of Seerah are the books written and devoted to document biography of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). These important sources began to arise in generation after the companions of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Some storytellers were sons of the beloved companions of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The famous of these was Urwa ibn Zubair (d. 713 CE). He was the son of companion Zubair ibn Awwam (d. 656 CE) and nephew of the wife of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), Aisha bint Abi Bakr (d. 678 CE). Another well-known storyteller was ibn Shihab Az-Zuhri (d. 741 CE). Though, works done by such early scholars do not exist now. Some other early scholars that are documenting Seerah now reference their significant works. Generation after this has seen the rise of most popular and complete compilation of Seerah i.e. the Seerah of Muhammad ibn Ishaq (d. 768 CE). This historic volume had been written within first two centuries of Hijri Islamic calendar (Siddiqui, 1996). Analysis of Hadith is also an extensive Islamic discipline. It ranks sayings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) from thoroughly authentic to fabricate. Most significant books are referred to as al-Sihah al-Sittah i.e. “The Authentic Six”. It is the collection of Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abu Dawud, Jami al-Tirmidhi, Sunan al-Sughra al-Nisaa’I, and Sunan ibn Majah<sup>5</sup>.

### **1.2 Problem Statement:**

Seerah is a fundamental topic for an Islamic educational curriculum. Research is required to assess quality and efficiency of Islamic educational curricula as well as assessment in addressing Seerah topic. By studying biography of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), the students are able to understand detailed rulings and attain a deeper understanding of Quranic verses and stories that are outlined in Quran and the hadith literature. Seerah is the best way to increase love for the Holy Prophet (PBUH). This

is a very sad fact of our Ummah that we have neglected this study. Every discipline must have Seerah as a core course. The students and the teachers or the curriculum developers are ignorant of this. Students are becoming intolerant, ill-mannered and rude due to the influence of modernization. It is embarrassing that Muslims know a lot about the movie stars, actors and the sportsman but have no or less clue of the real person that we must know about. It is necessary to remind them how to live their lives according to ALLAH and Islam. This is only being done by teaching them Seerah. The study provides educators in Pakistan with a sense of why Seerah is an essential discipline at university level in Pakistan.

Narrated Hazrat Anas that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said:

*“None of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father, his children and all mankind.”<sup>6</sup>*

### **1.3 Research Questions:**

The following research questions are focused in the study:

1. To what extent students in Pakistan are adopting modernization and western culture and are deviating from Islamic life style?
2. What are the patterns of their behavior towards peer group?
3. Why Seerah is needed to be an essential discipline of curriculum at university level in Pakistan in order to improve their life styles?

### **1.4 Objectives:**

The following objectives are:

1. To find the attitudes of students as an effect of modernization.
2. To study the importance of Seerah (biography of the Holy Prophet PBUH) in the lives of youth?
3. To find why Seerah is needed to be an essential discipline of curriculum at university level in Pakistan.

## **2. Literature Review:**

Seerah has number of features to be learnt. First, it is the soundest account of the life of the Holy Prophet. Second, it tells the life journey of that man whom ALLAH has honored with the blessing of being HIS messenger. Third, the biography has all the aspects of human being. The remarkable and outstanding qualities of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) are mentioned in the Holy Quran from variant perspectives<sup>7</sup>. At one place, it is stated:

*“He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger (Muhammad, PBUH) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses, purifying them (from the filth of disbelief and polytheism), and teaching them the Book (this Qur’an, Islamic laws and Islamic jurisprudence) and Al-Hikmah (As-Sunnah, legal ways, acts of worship of Prophet Muhammad, PBUH). And verily they had been before in manifest error”.*<sup>8</sup>

It is emphasized that our Holy Prophet (PBUH) is a source of light from whom guidance should be taken. Muslims should follow His exemplary and outstanding character and must take His moral life as an ideal. This is the only way through which Muslims can be succeeded in both the worlds either Deen or Duniya. This is the right guided way that Muslims should adopt. Whenever any Muslim tries to deviate from it, he/she will surely forsake the definite straight path<sup>9</sup>.

### **2.1 Reasons to learn Seerah:**

Why is it so important to learn Seerah? Here are five major reasons:<sup>10</sup>

1. ALLAH tells in Quran that Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) is the best role model to be followed. To follow the footsteps of Holy Prophet (PBUH), it is needed to learn more about HIS life. In The Quran ALLAH says:

*“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and (who) remembers Allah often.”<sup>11</sup>*

2. We consider the Holy Prophet (PBUH) to be a super-human. But we forget that He was first a human being and then became Prophet. There are certain instances in His life where He (PBUH) cried, He (PBUH) was hurt (physically as well as mentally), He (PBUH) loved his beloved family and also He (PBUH) suffered many losses etc. We can see His humanly feelings that we as Muslims often neglect. We keep in our minds His preaching, prophet hood, and preaching etc. Reading Seerah would help in understanding all these humanly traits better.
3. A lot can be learned from His life and are applied in our lives. For example, He (PBUH) introduced himself first when He (PBUH) used to meet new people. He (PBUH) said Salam first and greeted them politely. Another lesson is learning patience. He (PBUH) showed how to live our lives with a balance between Deen and Dunya. He (PBUH) did not neglect or overlooked Dunya. He (PBUH) took care of His family and also loved them. He visited market to earn a living also.
4. Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) is the only man in whole history of mankind whose life is being documented in an absolute detail. The simplest things of His life is well recorded. Quite evidently, Seerah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is so reliable and trustworthy.
5. Now a day, Muslim Ummah is undergoing an Iman crisis. It is needed to revive the tremendous glory of Muslim Ummah by educating ourselves significantly about Seerah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and applying the learned lessons in our lives.

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**3. Students' Behavior: An Analysis:**

Deviation from following Islam and the moral values are causing certain problematic behaviors in the youth. The internet, social media, television and all other forms of the digital media are seen converging today and inviting potential for the behavioral destruction. They test young Muslims in multiple ways in which society was never being tested before. The prompt and relentless timeline of the information may swarm the young minds, making them deviate from the right Islamic path. Spoiled youth is also a spoiled future as the author explains: "For the youth, as it relates to the Ummah, is like the heart to the body. If the heart is rectified, then the entire body is rectified, and if it is corrupted, then the entire body is corrupted and will deviate, and that will subsequently affect the entire society."<sup>12</sup>

The prominent behaviors of youth includes neglecting worship or Namaz, irresponsibility, carelessness, wasting plenty of time and even not appreciating it, lavishness, pride, self-conceit, committing sins, disobeying their parents, smoking, drug addiction, imitating famous people, molestations through the phones, copying others clothing, walking, talking, moving, dancing, hairstyling, preferring comfort, lack of patience towards study and work, arrogance, evil manners and disrespecting people<sup>13</sup>.

**3.1 Factors:**

There are some factors refraining youths from being ensnared into being religiously astray. These factors include role of their parents, peers, environment, society and the media nor social media. It is seen that a sort of addiction has now being created among the social media users. Most of the individual time is spent on the social media-causing disturbance in sleep. This is making social media users much crazy. This addiction of

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social networking is creating a group of stupid youth. Without a practical life, there has been no thought, lack of emotions, waking up whole night and sleeping at daytime, and writing or reading is falling apart. The youth's respect for either women or men has been lost. The bond between the youth is now weakening. Youth is losing morality. They are now involved in crime but they are not understanding it<sup>14</sup>.

#### **4. Knowledge of Religion and the Behavioral Pattern - the Correlation:**

The amount and the degree of knowledge regarding religion as well as the participation in the religious activities are major factors that are influencing behavioral patterns of adolescents. Within any society where the resident value religious belief and the adolescents, having higher level of knowledge of religion conforms to the social norms. The societies that are ordered on the foundation of the religious beliefs, religion is practiced as an important agent of socialization. The religion acts as guideline and also provides goals. Here, the actions are taken according to the standards of morality, a view of good and evil, self-discipline, and a determination to order activities in relation to the religious code. It enables to have good morals, morality, and to distinguish among good and evil<sup>15</sup>.

The Muslim Ummah should accept this fact that following Seerah is the part of Aqeedah of Islam. If Muslims do not adhere to the Seerah of our Holy Prophet (PBUH), then on what basis can we expect Him (PBUH) to negotiate on our behalf on Day of Judgment? This is exclusively important as we all are living at a time of a great awakening<sup>16</sup>.

#### **5. Why Seerah Studies are needed at University Level in Current System of Education in Pakistan:**

The study of Seerah is very importance as it gives direction to the Ummah. The Seerah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is the second trustworthy source

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of the teachings of Islam<sup>17</sup>. Because the last of the Ummah cannot rise without practicing the manners and practices, that Islam has bestowed. These practices can only be explained by a careful study of Seerah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). It is the believe of Muslims that the Quran is profound book consisting of general principles of life. But the details are in Sunnah and Seerah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Apart from this, Quranic verses, sometimes, are not understood without Seerah as Seerah provides the context for the Holy Quran. One example is the verse three of Surah al-Duhā in which ALLAH says:

*“Your lord has neither left you and nor he is displeased with you.”*

This verse may not provide understanding without the context, which is in Seerah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). It is said:

*“None of you have complete faith until God and His Prophet are more beloved to you than anything else.”*  
(Kitāb Al-Sunnah Li Abī Bakr).

### **5.1 Seerah at University Level:**

As it has been discussed that the youth are now deviated from Islamic teachings and they are studying science and fiction. They are far behind the Islamic way of living and are experiencing lack of moral values. At university level, Seerah must be taught as a core course so to help students to revise their way of living along with competing with the international level. It is already mentioned in the ayah where the Holy Quran is declaring that the life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is an excellent pattern:

*“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.”<sup>18</sup>*

He is the role model for the youth and also the best example.

Ibn Hajar said:

“Whoever seeks the preeminence of the Hereafter, the wisdom of this life, just purpose, and the embodiment of morality and character, let him follow Muhammad salAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, the Prophet of ALLAH”.

Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) is the best example of perfect Ikhlāq [character]. By studying His Seerah, youth can beautify their character. Ibadat rituals of syahadat, solat, fasting, zakat and seeking knowledge through formal education system are helpful for youths in refraining from being involved in bad behaviors of the moral deviation as well as being religiously astray<sup>19</sup>.

As a core or fundamental course, the students will desire to increase their love for the Holy Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) in order to gain a better understanding of our Prophet’s life and to explore approaches in reviving spirit of Islam by studying Prophetic journey in-depth. As a course, it will help in providing the following:

#### **5.1.1 Basic Knowledge:**

It will provide basic information/knowledge regarding history of Islam and life journey of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)

#### **5.1.2 Mannerism:**

It will provide Insight into mannerisms, morals, ethics, and teachings as well as the examples of our Prophetic life.

In Sūrah -Al-Ahzāb, Qurān says:

*“Indeed there is an excellent example for you in the Prophet of Allah”.*

#### **5.1.3 Muslim Identity:**

It is important, as it is necessary to develop Muslim identity. One famous Russian historian said:

*“To destroy a people, you must sever their roots”.*

This example is best suited as this is what happening with the youth. Muslims are suffering from a very serious identity crisis. Muslims are practicing Islam and performing prayers and necessary responsibilities of worships like fasting, hajj, umrah etc. but their actual identity is losing due

to bad behaviorisms. Seerah study is very important in helping them to practice Islam.

#### **5.1.4 Studying Seerah is ‘Ibaadah’:**

It is said that studying Seerah is ‘ibaadah’. There lies a reward. Muslims worship ALLAH and study the life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)<sup>20</sup>.

Allah says:

*“Say if you do love Allah then follow me (i.e. Muhammad Sallallahu ‘Alayhi wa Sallam) Allah will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful”.*<sup>21</sup>

#### **5.1.5 Optimism:**

The motivation level of youth/students is declining negatively. To motivate students, it is necessary that they might be filled with hope and enthusiasm<sup>22</sup>. This can be done by studying Seerah.

#### **5.1.6 Living a Life of Mercy:**

The life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) projects a beautiful picture of affection, mercy, tolerance and forbearance. He rejected evil from the society through moral values. He laid the foundations of Muslim society on honor, love, dignity as well as patience<sup>23</sup>.

The students will be motivated to follow how our Prophet has lived His life.

ALLAH says in the Holy Quran:

*“The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better than verily! He between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend.”*

#### **5.1.7 Revival of the Muslim Ummah (Community):**

If Muslims want to get out of present situation, with the disunity and discord among various nations, we must go back and view the methodology of our Holy Prophet (PBUH) that He used in spreading message of Islam. This can only be performed by following Sunnah and Seerah that is the only answer to our problems. Muslim youth have knowledge of contemporary world but are not being able to accomplish what our Sahaaba have done without following methodology of our Holy

Prophet (PBUH). By studying Seerah and by emphasizing methodology of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), Muslims can follow His steps and may attain success. Seerah "أسوة حسنة" is for all the human beings in the world<sup>24</sup>.

## **6. Conclusion:**

After analyzing, it is concluded in this study that in order to cope with the contemporary behavioral issues of youth/students, it is necessary to teach them Seerah at university level. Islam is a very distinct religion. It provides unique viewpoint with reference to the world as well as the role of humans in the universe. Moreover, it also provides a deep insight into the human psyche, human aspirations, and the goals or objectives of life. Every Muslim student must be encouraged to study Seerah.

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