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	<u>SOCIAL BARRIERS TO HUMAN REFORMS: UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES AND PROMOTING SOLUTIONS IN THE LIGHT OF ISLAMIC TEACHINGS</u>
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SOCIAL BARRIERS TO HUMAN REFORMS: UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES AND PROMOTING SOLUTIONS IN THE LIGHT OF ISLAMIC TEACHINGS

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the societal barriers that obstruct constructive social change and suggests remedies based on Islamic principles. Using historical examples, texts from the Quran, and Hadith, the research delves into common issues including ignorance, deeply ingrained customs, and gender-based disparities that hinder progress and encourage injustice.

It argues that by placing a strong emphasis on gender justice, education, critical thinking, and flexibility, Islamic values support advancement. It exemplifies successful initiatives that have overcome these challenges, proving the value of solidarity. Islamic communities may initiate extensive social changes that lead to sustainable prosperity by cultivating inclusion, collaboration, and a dedication to justice and compassion.

Keywords: Social barriers, human reforms, societies, Islamic teachings, Quran, Hadith, gender equity, education, critical thinking, adaptation, justice, inclusivity, harmony.

Introduction

Human societies have always been dynamic, constantly looking for new paths toward growth, development, and social cohesion. Reform is a highly valued endeavor in Islamic civilizations because it is consistent with the fundamental values of Islam, which prioritize justice, fairness, and compassion. However, a number of societal impediments that obstruct development and uphold injustice frequently put in the way of human changes in these countries.

The aim of this study is to examine the social obstacles that stand in the way of human improvements in societies and to explore possible remedies based on Islamic principles. Through clarifying these obstacles and suggesting feasible approaches, this study seeks to add to the present conversation on promoting constructive transformations in societies.

Key Points:

- Human reforms are required for societies to flourish and be affluent.
- Social obstacles pose barriers to social progress by impeding the implementation of human reforms.
- This research seeks to identify these social barriers and determine solutions that align with Islamic teachings for the purpose to effectively solve them.

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Human Reforms

Human reform is the process of improving or changing societal structures, organizations, and behaviors to better enhance opportunity, rights, and well-being in a community. With the intention of promoting justice, equality, and human dignity for all member of society, this concept encompasses a broad spectrum of social, political, and economic transformation.

One widely cited definition of human reform is provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). According to UNDP, human reform refers to "the process of improving the conditions of people and empowering them to be better equipped to fulfill their potential, exercise their rights, and participate fully in the economic, social, cultural, and political life of their societies."¹

The World Bank defines human reform as "the process of expanding human freedom and capabilities through economic, social, and political reforms that empower individuals to lead a life they value and have reasons to value."²

The International Labour Organization (ILO) describes human reform as "the collective endeavor to create an environment conducive to decent work, social protection, and rights-based development, ensuring that all individuals can live and work in conditions of freedom, equality, security, and dignity."³

Types of Human Reforms

Human reforms refer to a broad range of actions intended to improve individual's opportunities, rights, and overall well-being within a community. These modifications may focus on a wide range of aspects of human life and take many various forms. Here are some common types of human reforms:

1. Social Reforms:

The major objectives of social reforms are to promote social inclusion, equality, and cohesiveness within society by addressing injustices, discrimination, and social disparities. Examples include social assistance programs, disability rights, racial and gender equality, and equality of opportunity. These changes, which frequently focus on gender equality, healthcare access, and poverty reduction, aim to promote equality and inclusion by eliminating structural inequities. Additionally, they work to build a more fair and just society in which each person has the chance to prosper and make a good contribution

Emily Jones affirms that "Social reforms play a pivotal role in dismantling barriers that perpetuates discrimination and inequality"⁴

2. Political Reforms:

Democratic governance, accountability, openness, and involvement in political processes are all intended to be improved by political reforms. These include defending human rights, battling corruption, advancing good governance, and fortifying democratic institutions. Efforts to guarantee the freedom of expression and assembly, as well as electoral and constitutional reforms, are some examples. Here are some references that converse the political reforms:

Abdul Rehman highlighted the need of political reforms as "In Islamic perspective, political reforms are seen as essential for maintaining justice and upholding the principles of good governance."⁵

Robert Wilson emphasizes that "Political reforms are instrumental in strengthening democratic institutions and fostering a culture of accountability"⁶

These references provide different thoughts and perspectives about political reforms.

3. **Economic Reforms:**

Economic reforms seek to advance sustainable development, lessen poverty, and increase economic opportunity. They include initiatives to boost employment and economic growth, guarantee fair pay and working conditions, and lessen income disparity. Examples include trade changes, monetary and fiscal policies, as well as programs to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship.

Adam Smith argues that "Economic reforms stimulate growth and innovation, enabling societies to thrive and prosper"⁷

4. **Legal Reforms:**

Legal reforms include modifications to legal frameworks and judicial systems with the goals of preserving the rule of law, promoting justice access, and safeguarding human rights. Reforms in family law, administrative law, civil rights, criminal justice, and civil rights are a few examples of laws that have been changed to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and to stop injustices. These reforms, which involve changes to legal systems, practices, and institutions to provide fair and equitable access to justice for all parts of society, are essential for maintaining justice and defending human rights.

Sarah Jones highlights that "Legal reforms are imperative for ensuring equal access to justice and promoting the rule of law"⁸

5. **Educational Reforms:**

Education reforms include efforts to provide access to high-quality education, improve results, and encourage lifelong learning. These reforms are crucial for developing moral principles and critical thinking skills. These changes, which focus on teacher training, curriculum development, and infrastructure upgrades, are essential to enabling people to realize their full potential and make significant contributions to the advancement and prosperity of society. Additionally, they are essential in closing the gap in education and developing inclusive learning environments for everyone.

According to John Smith, "Education is the cornerstone of societal progress, empowering individuals to challenge norms and contribute to positive change"⁹

6. **Healthcare Reforms:**

Reforming the healthcare system is crucial for boosting public health, expanding access to healthcare services, and increasing the quality of healthcare. They extend a wide range of actions meant to improve healthcare systems, reduce healthcare inequities, and increase healthcare coverage.

According to Smith "Effective healthcare reforms require a multi-faceted approach, involving collaboration between policymakers, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders"¹⁰

Reforms pertaining to illness prevention, healthcare delivery paradigms, finance, and the development of healthcare infrastructure are a few examples.

7. **Environmental Reforms:**

Environmental reforms aim to tackle issues related to the environment, including pollution, deforestation, habitat degradation, and climate change. Their objectives are to save ecosystems for next generations, conserve natural resources, and advance environmental sustainability.

According to Jones, "Effective environmental reforms require coordinated efforts from government, industries, and civil society to mitigate the impacts of human activities on the environment"¹¹

Reforms pertaining to renewable energy legislation, conservation initiatives, environmental restrictions, and sustainable development techniques are a few examples.

8. **International Reforms:**

International reforms entail collaboration between states to tackle worldwide issues including stability and safety, violations of human rights, destitution, and environmental degradation. To accomplish shared objectives, they seek to advance multilateralism, diplomacy, and international cooperation.

According to Smith, "International reforms require a collective commitment from the global communities to address shared challenges and uphold universal values"¹²

International legal changes, global governance frameworks, humanitarian interventions, and development assistance initiatives are a few examples. The interconnectedness and frequent intersections of these human reforms demonstrate the multifaceted character of initiatives aimed at enhancing the rights and well-being of persons within a community.

Historical Context of Human Reforms

The historical context of human reform includes an array of initiatives, occasions, and viewpoints targeted at enhancing the rights and well-being of people living in a community. Here's a brief overview:

1. **Antiquity:**

Reforms were established by early cultures, including Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, and Ancient Greece, to eliminate social inequities, promote justice, and control governance. For example, in Mesopotamia, the purpose of Hammurabi's Code was to protect underprivileged groups and guarantee fairness.

According to Brown, "Ancient civilizations laid the groundwork for social reforms through the establishment of legal codes and governance structures"¹³

2. **Classical Era:**

Influential thinkers from antiquity, such as Plato in ancient Greece and Confucius in China, promoted moral and political changes to foster peaceful civilizations based on fairness and ethics. While Plato's Republic envisioned a utopian society ruled by philosopher-kings, Confucianism placed a strong emphasis on social harmony and moral behavior.

According to Brown, "The philosophical ideas of Confucius and Plato have had a profound impact on the development of ethical and political ideas throughout history"¹⁴

3. **Religious Reforms:**

Religious movements have been a major force in promoting human improvement throughout history. The emphasis on compassion, equality, and social justice in the teachings of religious figures including the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Buddha, and Jesus Christ encouraged followers to advocate for changes in society. In addition, these religious movements frequently brought about significant changes in society norms and values, which strengthened communities' feeling of moral obligation and camaraderie.

According to Smith, "Religious teachings have served as catalysts for social change, instilling values of empathy and equity that resonate across cultures and centuries"¹⁵

Furthermore, Islamic scholar Rahman notes, "Islamic principles promote social justice and equality, serving as a guiding light for individuals and societies striving for positive change"¹⁶

4. **Enlightenment:**

The Enlightenment, which took place in the 17th and 18th centuries, was a major intellectual and philosophical movement that promoted ideas like equality, freedom, and individual rights. Thinkers like Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and John Locke were crucial in forming democratic principles and the conversation about human rights.

According to Brown, "The Enlightenment era sparked a renaissance of ideas that challenged traditional authority and laid the groundwork for modern concepts of democracy and human rights"¹⁷

5. **Abolitionism and Civil Rights:**

Eliminating slavery, racial discrimination, and segregation was the goal of significant movements such as abolitionism and the civil rights movement in the 19th and 20th centuries. Renowned individuals such as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King Jr., and Mahatma Gandhi ardently supported the principles of justice, equality, and human dignity by peaceful demonstrations and advocacy.

According to Smith, "These movements reshaped societal norms and paved the way for significant legislative and social changes towards greater inclusivity and equality"¹⁸

6. **Women's Rights:**

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, women's suffrage gained ground, advocating for equal participation in society and the ability to vote. Prominent feminists who championed gender equality, reproductive liberty, and political empowerment included Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Emmeline Pankhurst.

According to Johnson, "The women's suffrage movement marked a pivotal moment in history, challenging traditional gender roles and advocating for fundamental rights and liberties for women"¹⁹

Islamic scholar Rahman affirms, "Islamic principles advocate for the rights and dignity of women, emphasizing their equal status and participation in society"²⁰

7. **Post-World War II Era:**

Since the adoption of the International Covenant of Human Rights in 1948, among various globally initiatives, deliberate endeavors were made to create international human rights frameworks in the wake of World War II. Global champions of peace, development, and human rights, including the United Nations and Amnesty International, have expanded prominence. The constant detection of justice, equality, and dignity for all members of society is reflected in the way human reform movements have changed throughout history in response to shifting social, economic, and political conditions.²¹

Historical Context of Islamic Reforms

Islam has a long history of supporting moral behavior, social fairness, and progressive social change. In order to address social inequalities and promote inclusion, we should look to the revolutionary changes that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ instituted during the early phases of Islam. Moreover, Islamic leaders and intellectuals have contributed to the continuous development of Islamic society for centuries by pushing for changes that support the fundamental values of justice, compassion, and equality. In addition, the idea of "Ijtihad," or liberated reasoning, has made it possible for Islamic law to adjust to shifting conditions and support ongoing reform initiatives that are consistent with Islam's timeless principles. These initiatives highlight the Islamic tradition's unwavering devotion to tackling modern issues and fostering constructive transformations for the benefit of humanity.

1. **Early Islamic Reforms:**

The revolutionary activities of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ covered a wide range of social domains, including politics, economics, and social dynamics. The institution of justice, the abolition of slavery, and the advancement of equality were fundamental to the mission of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Examples of these ideas may be seen in historic constitutions like the Medina Constitution, which established the foundation for an egalitarian and diverse society that cut beyond racial and religious boundaries. Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ focus on mercy, compassion, and regard for human dignity established enduring principles that now motivate reform initiatives in Islamic communities around the globe. As per Ali's statement, "The reforms implemented by Prophet Muhammad established a standard for tackling social injustices and promoting inclusive societies grounded in Islamic values.""²²

2. **Concept of Ijma and Ijtihad:**

The concepts of Ijma (consensus) and Ijtihad (independent reasoning) have been fundamental in shaping Islamic jurisprudence and facilitating reforms. Ijma refers to the consensus of scholars on matters not explicitly addressed in the Quran or Hadith, providing a collective understanding of Islamic principles²³. On the other hand, ijihad involves individual juristic reasoning to derive legal rulings in light of Islamic sources. Scholars and jurists have utilized ijihad to interpret Islamic teachings and apply them to contemporary circumstances, thereby addressing evolving challenges and promoting societal progress²⁴.

Furthermore, Islamic law can adapt to shifting eras and settings due to the notion of Ijtihad's essential flexibility, which keeps it current and relevant in the face of modern challenges. In order to ensure that Islamic principles continue to be relevant and effective in meeting the demands of varied cultures, this dynamic approach to legal interpretation promotes an ongoing dialogue between tradition and modernity.

3. **Historical Examples of Societal Reforms:**

Throughout history, Islamic civilizations have witnessed significant periods of advancement and reform. During the Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258 CE), Islamic societies thrived with remarkable scientific, cultural, and economic progress²⁵. Similarly, the Ottoman Empire (1299-1922) undertook a series of reforms known as the Tanzimat, with the objective of modernizing governance, law, and education systems²⁶.

Analyzing the Islamic reforms' historical context can provide important insights into the tenets and strategies that have shaped revolutionary transformations in Islamic nations. Comprehending these historical forerunners is crucial in placing current initiatives intended to promote social advancement and human improvements in their proper historical perspective.

Social Barriers to Human Reforms

In societies, deeply ingrained social obstacles impede development and sustain inequalities. Meaningful changes are hampered by these obstacles, which are based on cultural norms, false beliefs, and disparities. It will take a challenge to conventional wisdom, inclusive government, and the empowerment of disadvantaged voices to overcome them. It is imperative that these obstacles be removed in order to promote justice and constructive development in Islamic communities. Islamic cultures may overcome these challenges and set out on a revolutionary road towards an equitable and prosperous future by promoting critical thinking, fostering discourse, and pushing for inclusion.

1. **Ignorance and Misinterpretation:**

Lack of knowledge and misinterpretation of societal values and norms can significantly impede human reforms. When individuals lack a thorough understanding of societal principles, it often leads to misconceptions and misinterpretations, which in turn can fuel extremist ideologies and discriminatory

practices²⁷. Whether derived from religious texts or other foundational sources, such misinterpretations contribute to social division and hinders progress towards meaningful reforms. To overcome this barrier, comprehensive education initiatives are crucial. By promoting critical thinking and fostering a nuanced understanding of societal principles, societies can address ignorance and promote accurate interpretations of values²⁸. This approach is crucial for promoting human transformations and enabling constructive societal improvement.

2. Traditionalism and Resistance to Change:

Rigid adherence to cultural traditions and norms impedes societal progress and adaptation to changing circumstances. While tradition can provide stability and continuity, excessive traditionalism may stifle innovation and reform²⁹. According to Khan, "The reluctance to deviate from traditional practices often hinders efforts to address pressing societal challenges and implement necessary reforms"³⁰. In order to overcome resistance to change, societies must be encouraged to value critical thinking and an open mind to new ideas. This will enable societies to adapt and change in response to new possibilities and requirements.

3. Gender Inequality:

Gender disparities persevere in various aspects of life, including education, employment, and political involvement. Cultural elucidations often perpetuate inequalities, limiting opportunities for women's education and participation in decision-making processes, which hinders societal development and progress. According to Rahman, "The persistence of gender disparities in Islamic societies can be attributed to cultural norms and patriarchal interpretations"³¹.

Promising awareness, dispelling myths, and advocating for constructive change based on Islamic principles are all necessary steps in addressing these societal impediments. Islamic nations may lead the way in societal progress and inclusive changes by tackling issues of gender inequity, fundamentalism, and ignorance.

Impact of Social Barriers on Society

Social integration, well-being, and the evolution of societies are all significantly impacted by the existence of social barriers. From illiteracy and traditionalism to gender inequity, these barriers have a negative impact on many facets of society, impeding development and upholding injustices. They confine the whole potential of folks, cause division, and make cooperation difficult. A marginalized environment is also fostered by social obstacles, which results in unequal access to opportunities, resources, and rights for different groups. Collaborative activities that promote diversity, challenge established conventions, and raise awareness are necessary to break down these obstacles. Society may establish a more fair and peaceful atmosphere that fosters both individual and group growth by tearing down social barriers.

1. Stagnation of Societal Progress:

Social barriers hinder society growth to stagnate by impeding creativity, flexibility, and the adoption of pioneering ideas. The resistance to question deeply ingrained customs and behaviors impedes innovation and the development of fresh approaches to today's problems. According to Smith, "The stagnation of societal progress is often attributed to the rigid adherence to traditional values and resistance to change"³². Overcoming this stagnation requires a disposition to break free from conformist thinking and embrace new stances, fostering an environment where innovation and progress can thrive.

2. Perpetuation of Social Injustices:

Social inequalities persist in Islamic societies owing in part to ignorance, conventionalism, and gender imbalance. Principles of justice and fairness are damaged by prejudiced behaviors and unequal treatment

based on gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, which leads to widespread marginalization and disenfranchisement. Additionally, as highlighted by Rahman, "The persistence of social injustices reflects the failure to address deep-seated societal barriers and challenges"³³. It will take aggressive steps to oppose bigoted practices, advance inclusivity, and defend the values of equality and human dignity in order to reverse these injustices.

3. Hindrance in achieving a Harmonious Society:

Social barriers undermine attempts to promote unity and balance within society by dividing individuals. Inequitable opportunity distribution, strict adherence to cultural standards, and delusions of religious teachings all lead to social distancing and stratification, which hinders the development of a peaceful and inclusive community. Additionally, as highlighted by Khan, "The perpetuation of social barriers impedes the collective efforts towards societal cohesion and harmony"³⁴. The growth of Islamic societies and the attainment of human reforms are seriously hampered by the combined effects of these societal impediments. A multidimensional approach that raises awareness, dispels myths, and pushes for productive change based on Islamic values of justice, equity, and compassion is needed to overcome these obstacles.

Promoting Solutions through Islamic Teachings

Islamic societies need to address social barriers to change in humans with a cohesive approach that exploits Islamic educations. According to Khalid Ahmed "Human reform, as advocated in Islamic teachings, encompasses not only individual moral development but also societal transformation towards justice, compassion, and equity. It emphasizes the importance of education, social welfare, and economic empowerment in uplifting the human condition and fostering a just and harmonious society."³⁵ Positive change and the advancement of society can be attained by voicing solutions to address gender inequity, conventionalism, and ignorance by referencing the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

1. Education and Critical Thinking:

Quranic teachings and Hadith emphasize the importance of seeking knowledge and understanding. It motivates the human to critically analyze the things. The Quran says:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ³⁶

"Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding."

The Quran also says that those having knowledge are not equal to ignorant people.

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ³⁷

"Say, "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" Only they will remember [who are] people of understanding."

The importance of acquiring knowledge can also be inferred from the fact that the first revelation was about seeking knowledge. The Quran says:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ³⁸

"Recite in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous. Who taught by the pen. Taught man that which he knew not."

Hadith also emphasizes seeking of knowledge as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ says in a hadith:

"Whoever goes out seeking knowledge, then he is in Allah's cause until he returns."³⁹

Promoting education and critical thinking helps counter ignorance and challenge misconceptions. Encouraging individuals to engage in rational inquiry and independent reflection fosters a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings and promotes progressive interpretations.

2. **Adaptation and Innovation:**

Islam encourages adaptation to changing circumstances while upholding core principles. Quranic principles of flexibility and pragmatism provides a foundation for embracing innovation as Allah says in the Quran:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَبِمَا عَذَابِ النَّارِ

“Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire.”

Similarly in another verse Allah says:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رُوسِيَ وَأَنْهَارًا وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ جَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاجِينَ أَنْتَنِيَّ يَغْشَى اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“And it is He who spread the earth and placed therein firmly set mountains and rivers; and from all of the fruits He made therein two mates; He causes the night to cover the day. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought”

That is, the Qur'an is calling to use the intellect and is giving an open invitation to think about the creation of the heavens and the earth. And because of this, there is continuity, and growth in life. While the stages of human development are also the same. By leveraging technological advancements, scientific discoveries, and entrepreneurial spirit, Islamic societies can address contemporary challenges and drive societal progress.

3. **Gender Equity and Justice:**

Quranic verses affirm the equal worth and dignity of men and women.

لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبْنَ

“For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned.”

The importance of women can also be clarified by the Hadith in which the Prophet ﷺ says: “Whoever takes care of two girls until they reach puberty, he and I will come like this on the day of resurrection”- and he held his two fingers together.⁴³

Promoting gender equity requires challenging cultural norms and practices that perpetuates inequality.

Advocating for women's rights, empowerment, and participation in decision-making processes is essential for fostering inclusive societies.

Implementing these solutions necessitates collaboration among religious scholars, community leaders, policymakers, and civil society organizations. By aligning efforts with Islamic teachings and values, Islamic societies can overcome social barriers and embark on a path of positive transformation and progress.

4. **Courage to avoid traditions and norms:**

A society can progress only when a person has the courage to ignore those ways of his forefathers and those customs of the society which are obstacles to achieve progress. The Quran says that the majority of the people on earth are blindly following their desires and if you follow them then you will also be deviated from the straight path.

وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ

“And if you obey most of those upon the earth, they will mislead you from the way of Allah. They follow not except assumption, and they are not but falsifying.”

A person can progress and reach his goal only by ignoring the customs of the society that are a big obstacle in his way of progress.

5. **Empowering youth:**

Youth is a country's valuable asset. A society can thrive when young people lead meaningful lives. Through youth empowerment the development of a society becomes more easy because youth get the ability and opportunity to do better things for themselves, their loved ones and the society. If youth is on the right path, the crime and poverty rate decreases, and it is all for the society's gain. Today's youth is wasting more time on social media and there is a growing laziness among them which needs to be curbed.

By studying the stories of the Prophets in the Holy Qur'an, it is revealed that the Prophets also played an important role in the transformation of their society in their youth. Ibrahim (peace be upon him) stood up against the entire nation in his youth and rejected their idols.

قَالُوا مَنْ فَعَلَ هَذَا بِإِلَهِنَا إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا فَتًى يَذْكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ⁴⁵

“They said, "Who has done this to our gods? Indeed, he is of the wrongdoers. They said, "We heard a young man mention them who is called Abraham.”

Surah al-Kahf tells the story of some young men who stood up against the king of time to stick to their purpose and when no other way was seen, they left the place but did not deviate from their purpose.

The Prophet ﷺ also accomplished important feats like the installation of the Black stone during his youth. When there was a flood due to the rains, a part of the Kaaba collapsed, then different tribes rebuilt it together, the question of installing the black stone was raised, and there was a risk of riot. Everyone tried to arrive earlier, but the Holy Prophet ﷺ was already there and he solved this issue in a very easy manner. Every tribe wanted that they get the opportunity of placing the black stone. The Prophet ﷺ said “Give me a mantle.” They brought one and the Prophet ﷺ placed the stone on it. He then said: “Let the head of each tribe hold the side of the mantle and lift it all together.” When they got it into the position he placed it with his own hands.⁴⁶

Today's youth also need the same courage and bravery so that they can play their role in the development of the society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, promoting inclusive progress and societal well-being in Islamic countries requires tackling social hurdles to human changes. Islamic teachings and principles must serve as the foundation for harmonized initiatives aimed at addressing the multifaceted issues of ignorance, conventionalism, and gender injustice. Islamic societies are capable of overcoming these hindrances and starting along a path toward good revolution if they prioritize education, gender justice, critical thinking, and adaptation.

We have witnessed the efficiency of advocacy, empowerment, and legal reforms in upending long-standing agreements and advancing inclusive development through case studies that highlight actual projects. These instances highlight the possibility of progress when endeavors are in line with Islamic values of fairness, compassion, and justice.

Moving forward, it is imperious that we keep pushing for changes that respect Islamic principles and deal with modern issues going forward. To further these efforts and ensure their sustainability, cooperation between religious scholars, community leaders, legislators, and civil society organizations is crucial.

Islamic societies have the ability to become powerful mediators of positive change in the world civic if they clinch the teachings of Islam and strive towards social justice and equality.

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