

COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM: Lessons from the Life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

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Abstract

This article undertakes a qualitative analysis of Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) principles as derived from the life and practice of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Drawing on primary Islamic sources, the Quran, authenticated Hadith collections, and biographical literature of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), alongside contemporary CVE scholarship, this study identifies six thematic pillars that align prophetic conduct with modern frameworks of Counter Violent Extremism (CVE), like deradicalisation, conflict prevention, and community resilience. Employing a document-analysis methodology, the study codes prophetic episodes and sayings against established CVE typologies. Results demonstrate a robust correspondence between Prophetic practice and evidence-based CVE approaches, with non-violence, inclusive governance, dialogue, and restorative justice emerging as dominant themes. The analysis yields actionable insights for policymakers, community leaders, and practitioners engaged in countering violent extremism within Muslim-majority and minority contexts.

Keywords: Counter Violent Extremism, Prophet Muhammad, Deradicalisation, Islamic Peacebuilding.

Introduction:

Violent extremism remains one of the most pressing security challenges of the twenty-first century. From the rise of transnational terrorist networks to the proliferation of domestic radicalisation pathways, governments, civil society organisations, and scholars have increasingly sought multi-disciplinary frameworks to prevent, counter, and rehabilitate individuals engaged in or at risk of violent extremism¹. Central to this endeavour has been the recognition that religious narratives, whether exploited or authentic, play a decisive role in both recruitment and the prevention of violent behaviour². Radicalisation is the shift toward extreme ideologies that depart from societal norms. While extremism rejects compromise and fundamental values (like democracy), terrorism is its strategic subset, using indiscriminate violence against civilians to instil fear for political gain. The Socio-Religio-Academic Mentoring (SRAM) model, adopted by Stockwell Green Community Services (SGCS) in the UK, integrates religious mentoring to advance the moderate interpretation and interfaith dialogue³. This entails organised programs designed for true interpretations of Quranic teachings, and workshops conducted by

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¹ United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT). United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Review Report. (New York: United Nations, 2021).

² Kundnani, Arun. *The Muslims Are Coming! Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror*. (London: Verso, 2015).

³ Qureshi, Toaha, and Rashid Ali. "Religious Mentoring to Counter Extremist Narratives: The SRAM Approach in the UK." *Pakistan Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences Research* 8, No. 2: (2025), 10–16.

role models who are professionals and are practicing their faith to develop a resistance towards radicalisation.

Regardless of Religious denomination or background, religion has been used and is being used by almost every major faith, such as Judaism, Christianity, Zionism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, etc., to fulfil heinous desires. For example, religious purity has been employed by extremist Buddhist groups such as the 969 group in Myanmar to instigate ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya, and the Hindutva ideology has also been applied in India to justify communal violence against minorities (Jerryson, 2013). Likewise, the Islamic ideas of the Caliphate were manipulated by ISIS to carry out mass executions and the Lord Resistance Army in Africa deformed Christian mysticism with the practice of brutal child recruiting (Vinck et al., 2008). In Christianity, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda provides a stark example; led by Joseph Kony, the group claimed to fight for a state based on the Ten Commandments while committing mass abductions and mutilations of civilians (Vinck et al., 2008). The Provisional IRA utilized Catholic identity as a cultural and social marker to mobilize resistance against British Protestant hegemony in Northern Ireland (Dingley, 2012). Although pursuing secular republicanism, the group framed its campaign of bombings and "martyrdom" as a justified struggle for an oppressed religious minority (White, 2017). Similarly, in Judaism, extremist elements within Religious Zionism, such as followers of the late Meir Kahane or "Hilltop Youth," have utilised religious identity to justify "Price Tag" attacks, acts of violence and vandalism against Palestinians. Led by Menachem Begin, the Irgun (Etzel) engaged in militant Zionism, viewing British rule as a theological and historical illegality on ancestral Jewish land (Heller, 2017). Their 1946 bombing of the King David Hotel led to their classification as a terrorist organization, as they prioritized sacred sovereignty over secular Mandate law (Hoffman, 2017). These actors view the seizure of land as a sacred obligation, often rejecting secular law in favour of radical theological interpretations (Pedahzur, 2012). God, the Almighty, explicitly negates Extremism in His Book. There is an emphasis on moderation and balance in Islam. God enjoins:

*"O People of the Scripture, do not exceed limits in your religion beyond the truth and do not follow the inclinations of a people who had gone astray before and misled many and have strayed from the soundness of the way."*⁴

The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (PBUH), spanning 570–632 CE, presents one of history's richest and most documented exemplars of social transformation, conflict resolution, and community building under conditions of acute existential threat, but not for a single moment did he resort to violent extremism. Due to persecution by the non-believers of Makkah to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his

⁴ *Al-Quran, Al-Ma'idah:77.*

companions, he had to migrate from his birth town to Madinah, 450 kilometres away, avoiding any violence and preferring peace over conflict. Here, the construction of a multi-faith polity in Madinah, as reflected in the Prophetic biography (Seerah), offers a compendium of strategies that contemporary CVE literature independently validates as effective⁵⁶. When he returned to Makkah as a conqueror, he forgave all those who had persecuted him and tortured him, leaving a lesson for humanity: "Forgive and Forget". Yet a systematic, academically rigorous mapping of these strategies against CVE frameworks remains underdeveloped in the literature. This article addresses that gap through a qualitative document analysis of authenticated Seerah accounts and Hadith literature, coding them against established CVE typologies. The study is structured with theoretical frameworks that present the thematic findings and offer a comparative policy analysis with conclusions and recommendations.

Research Objectives:

- To conduct a qualitative mapping of Prophetic practices against modern Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) frameworks to demonstrate how 7th-century Islamic principles of mercy, governance, and restorative justice align with contemporary deradicalisation and peacebuilding strategies.

Theoretical Framework:

CVE scholarship broadly organises interventions into three tiers: structural (addressing root causes), psychological (targeting individual cognition and identity), and community-based (strengthening social fabric) approaches⁷⁸. Each tier corresponds to a distinct phase of radicalisation: vulnerability, engagement, and action⁹.

Parallel to secular CVE theory, Islamic jurisprudence has long theorised conditions for just war (Jihad), the prohibition of fitna (civil strife), the sanctity of non-combatant life, and the imperative of sulh (peace-making)¹⁰. Scholars such as Ramadan¹¹, Nasr¹², and Esposito have argued that authentic Islamic teaching provides robust internal resources for countering violence. The Prophetic model integrates structural, psychological, and community dimensions, making it especially fertile ground for CVE analysis. Hazrat Saeed bin Musay'yib (RA) has related a

⁵ Ramadan, Tariq. *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁶ Esposito, John L. *The Future of Islam*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

⁷ Horgan, John. *Walking Away from Terrorism: Accounts of Disengagement from Radical and Extremist Movements*. (London: Routledge, 2009).

⁸ Neumann, Peter. "The Trouble with Radicalization." *International Affairs* 89, no. 4: (2013), 873–893.

⁹ McCauley, Clark, and Sophia Moskalenko. "Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways toward Terrorism." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 3: (2008), 415–433.

¹⁰ Peters, Rudolph. *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam: A Reader*. (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1994).

¹¹ Ramadan, Tariq. *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹² Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity*. (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2004).

Tradition narrated by Saraqa bin Malik bin Ja'sham (RA). In an address, the Holy Prophet (SAW) told us,

"The best among you is he who defends his tribe but does not commit sin."
*Sunan Abi Dawud, Book 43 (General Behaviour), **Hadith 5120**.*

Watt ¹³ argues that the Prophet's leadership in Madinah constitutes a prototype of what contemporary political science calls a 'consociational democracy' a system purposefully designed to manage deep social cleavages through power-sharing, mutual recognition, and negotiated norms. This structural dimension maps directly onto CVE literature's emphasis on inclusive governance as a violence-prevention mechanism ¹⁴.

Methodology:

Research Design:

This study employs qualitative document analysis as its primary method¹⁵. Document analysis involves the systematic review, evaluation, and interpretation of documents in this case, authenticated Hadith collections (Sahih al-Bukhari; Sahih Muslim), classical Seerah texts (Ibn Hisham's Sirat Rasul Allah; Al-Mubarakpuri's The Sealed Nectar), and contemporary Islamic scholarship to elicit meaning and generate theory in relation to a specified research question ¹⁶. Thematic codes were developed deductively, based on established CVE typologies drawn from Horgan ¹⁷, Neumann ¹⁸, and UN frameworks ¹⁹, then applied inductively to primary Islamic sources. Six major codes were identified: (1) Non-violence and Mercy; (2) Dialogue and Negotiation; (3) Social Justice and Equity; (4) Governance and Rule of Law; (5) Community Cohesion; and (6) Restorative Justice. Each Prophetic episode or saying was assigned one or more codes, and frequency distributions were calculated to assess thematic emphasis. Sources were selected based on three criteria: authenticity (Hadith graded Sahih or Hasan; Seerah accounts corroborated by multiple chains); relevance (direct or analogically applicable to CVE contexts); and scholarly consensus (sources cited in at least three peer-reviewed

¹³ Watt, W. Montgomery. Muhammad at Madinah. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

¹⁴ Schmid, Alex P. "Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review." ICCT Research Paper. The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2013.

¹⁵ Bowen, Glenn A. "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method." Qualitative Research Journal 9, no. 2: (2009), 27–40.

¹⁶ Rapley, Tim. Doing Conversation, Discourse and Document Analysis. (London: SAGE Publications, 2007).

¹⁷ Horgan, John. Walking Away from Terrorism: Accounts of Disengagement from Radical and Extremist Movements. (London: Routledge, 2009).

¹⁸ Neumann, Peter. "The Trouble with Radicalization." International Affairs 89, no. 4: (2013), 873–893.

¹⁹ United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT). 2021. United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Review Report. (New York: United Nations).

secondary analyses). A total of 187 Hadith excerpts, 51 Seerah episodes, and 112 Quranic verses were coded in the final analysis.

Thematic Analysis:

Non-Violence and Mercy as Primary CVE Mechanisms:

The most frequently coded theme across the dataset was the Prophet's systematic deployment of mercy (rahma) and non-violence as tools of social transformation. The Quran describes the Prophet as 'a mercy to the worlds' (Quran 21:107), and this characterisation is validated across hundreds of authenticated Hadith. Significantly, the Prophet's mercy extended explicitly to adversaries, a dimension rarely foregrounded in popular discourse but centrally relevant to CVE²⁰. In the Battle of Uhud (625 CE), following a severe military defeat, the Prophet, physically wounded and emotionally tested, is reported to have prayed for the guidance of his adversaries rather than invoking imprecation upon them: 'O God, forgive my people, for they do not know'²¹. This episode is paradigmatic of what modern CVE literature terms 'narrative counter-framing', the deliberate reorientation of a traumatic experience away from revenge-seeking toward constructive meaning-making²².

The prohibition of mutilation, collective punishment, and the killing of non-combatants is codified in the Prophet's military instructions²³ anticipates International Humanitarian Law by over a millennium and directly counters the extremist narrative that indiscriminate violence is religiously sanctioned^{24,25}.

Dialogue and Negotiation: The Treaty of Hudaibiyyah:

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) always preferred dialogue over confrontation. The Treaty of Hudaibiyyah (628 CE) represents perhaps the most analytically rich episode in Prophetic biography for CVE purposes. Under conditions of significant power asymmetry, the Prophet accepted terms that appeared deeply unfavourable to his community, including the return of new Muslim converts to Makkah and the suspension of pilgrimage for a year in exchange for a ten-year peace accord²⁶. The Quran subsequently described this treaty as a 'clear victory' (Quran 48:1), affirming the strategic wisdom of negotiated settlement over escalation- a clear example of the preference for peace over violence.

²⁰ Lings, Martin. Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources. (London: Islamic Texts Society, 1983).

²¹ Sahih al-Bukhari. n.d. Translation of Sahih al-Bukhari. Translated by M.M. Khan. 9 vols. (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers).

²² Schmid, Alex P. "Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review." ICCT Research Paper. The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2013.

²³ Sahih Muslim. n.d. Sahih Muslim. Translated by A.H. Siddiqui. 4 vols. (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf).

²⁴ Ramadan, Tariq. In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

²⁵ Cook, David. Understanding Jihad. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

²⁶ Haykal, Muhammad Husayn. The Life of Muhammad. Translated by Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi. (Indianapolis: North American Trust Publications, 1976).

Modern CVE scholarship broadly affirms that sustained dialogue with non-violent elements within extremist or hostile communities, so-called 'hard-to-reach' engagement, is among the most effective deradicalisation tools available²⁷²⁸. The Hudaibiyah model exemplifies this approach: the Prophet maintained channels of communication with Makkan elites, leveraged the commercial interdependencies of the Arabian Peninsula, and prioritised long-term stability over short-term symbolic gains²⁹.

Social Justice and Equity as Structural Violence Prevention:

A robust literature in CVE identifies socioeconomic marginalisation, perceived injustice, and political exclusion as primary structural drivers of violent radicalisation³⁰³¹. The Prophet's ministry directly targeted these structural conditions. His prohibitions on usury, his redistribution of war spoils, his emancipation of enslaved people, and his insistence on the legal equality of all ethnic groups before the law encapsulated in the Farewell Sermon (632 CE), represent a comprehensive programme of structural grievance-redress³². The Farewell Sermon³³ In Makkah, it is particularly significant as a CVE document. Delivered to approximately 120,000 people, it addressed explicitly the conditions that generate collective violence: economic exploitation ('your blood and your property are as sacred as this day'), ethnic supremacism ('an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab'), and gender-based injustice³⁴³⁵. Contemporary analysts such as Nasr³⁶ identifies these principles as constitutive of an Islamic human rights framework that, if operationalised, would structurally inhibit extremist recruitment.

²⁷ Neumann, Peter. "The Trouble with Radicalization." *International Affairs* 89, no. 4: (2013), 873–893.

²⁸ Horgan, John. *Walking Away from Terrorism: Accounts of Disengagement from Radical and Extremist Movements*. (London: Routledge, 2009).

²⁹ Al-Mubarakpuri, Safiur-Rahman. *The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet*. (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 2002).

³⁰ Kundnani, Arun. *The Muslims Are Coming! Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror*. (London: Verso, 2015).

³¹ Wiktorowicz, Quintan. *Radical Islam Rising: Muslim Extremism in the West*. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

³² Esposito, John L. *The Future of Islam*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

³³ The Farewell Sermon (Khutbah al-Wada') was delivered by the Prophet Muhammad on the 9th of Dhul Hijjah, 10 AH (March 6, 632 C.E.) at Mount Arafat in Mecca during his only Hajj pilgrimage.

³⁴ Sahih Muslim. n.d. Sahih Muslim. Translated by A.H. Siddiqui. 4 vols. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf.

³⁵ Ibn Hisham. n.d. *Sirat Rasul Allah (The Life of the Messenger of God)*. Edited and translated by A. Guillaume, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955).

³⁶ Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity*. (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2004).

Inclusive Governance: The Madinah Charter:

The Madinah Charter or Constitution of Madinah is a documented political agreement attributed to the Prophet in approximately 622 CE, establishing a federated covenant among diverse tribes and religious communities, including Muslims, Jewish tribes, and pagan Arabs³⁷³⁸. The Charter is analytically remarkable for what CVE scholars would identify as 'power-sharing architecture', the systematic distribution of rights and responsibilities across potentially competing identity groups to reduce the incentives for violent contestation.

The Charter explicitly prohibited internecine violence ('the believers shall not leave a debtor among them without giving him what is fair'), established a collective security agreement, and guaranteed religious freedom for each constituent community³⁹. From a CVE standpoint, this represents what Schmid⁴⁰ terms 'upstream prevention', the creation of governance structures that reduce the grievances from which violent extremism draws legitimacy. Contemporary governance frameworks, from Northern Ireland's Good Friday Agreement to Indonesia's Pancasila, echo structural features of the Madinah Charter⁴¹.

Community Cohesion: The Brotherhood:

Upon the Prophet's migration to Madinah (622 CE), his immediate political intervention was not military but social: the institution of brotherhood, a structured pairing of Makkan migrants (for their effective integration) with Madinan hosts, creating reciprocal bonds of obligation, support, and identity⁴². Contemporary CVE literature identifies social isolation, marginalisation, and the absence of belonging as critical vulnerability factors in radicalisation pathways⁴³⁴⁴. The UK government implemented the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (2022) as a unique humanitarian model to support those fleeing the conflict. This scheme functions by pairing Ukrainian migrants with British Nationals or those with settled status, who act as "hosts" by providing rent-free accommodation for a minimum of six months⁴⁵. To facilitate this, the government provides hosts with a monthly "thank you" payment (ranging from £350 to £500) while local authorities receive a per-person tariff to ensure access to essential services such as

³⁷ Watt, W. Montgomery. *Muhammad at Madinah*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

³⁸ Hamidullah, Muhammad. *The First Written Constitution in the World: An Important Document of the Time of the Holy Prophet*. 3rd ed. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1981.

³⁹ Hamidullah, Muhammad. *The First Written Constitution in the World: An Important Document of the Time of the Holy Prophet*. 3rd ed. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1981.

⁴⁰ Schmid, Alex P. "Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review." ICCT Research Paper. The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2013.

⁴¹ Esposito, John L. *The Future of Islam*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

⁴² Lings, Martin. *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*. (London: Islamic Texts Society, 1983).

⁴³ Wiktorowicz, Quintan. *Radical Islam Rising: Muslim Extremism in the West*. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

⁴⁴ McCauley, Clark, and Sophia Moskalenko. "Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways toward Terrorism." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20, no. 3: (2008), 415–433.

⁴⁵ HM Government. *CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism*. (London: HMSO, 2023).

healthcare, education, and social support (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2024). This model emphasizes community-led integration, moving away from traditional state-run detention or hostel systems (House of Commons Library, 2025). This has been directly taken from Muakhaat Model⁴⁶ of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), used in Madinah.

The system functioned as a community resilience mechanism in the precise sense advocated by modern CVE frameworks: it created diversified social networks, established mutual accountability, and constructed a supra-tribal identity that reduced the appeal of particularist extremist narratives. Rippin⁴⁷ notes that the community built around the Prophet in Madinah achieved what contemporary sociologists call 'bridging social capital' connections across social cleavages alongside the 'bonding social capital' of in-group solidarity.

Restorative Justice: The Conquest of Makkah:

The Conquest of Makkah (630 CE) stands as the Prophet's most dramatic and well-documented exercise of restorative justice. Having secured military superiority over the city whose leadership had persecuted, tortured, and killed his followers for over a decade, the Prophet declared a general amnesty. 'Go, for you are free'⁴⁸ a statement that contemporary legal scholars have compared to transitional justice instruments such as truth and reconciliation commissions⁴⁹.

The amnesty was not unconditional: a small number of individuals guilty of egregious crimes were excepted, and even several of these were subsequently pardoned upon individual petition. Cook⁵⁰ argues that this episode demonstrates what CVE rehabilitation literature identifies as graduated reintegration, a calibrated process of accountability and restoration that neither perpetuates cycles of vengeance nor collapses into impunity. The psychological literature on forgiveness further affirms that restorative rather than retributive responses to political violence are more effective in sustainably reducing recidivism and reintegrating former combatants⁵¹.

⁴⁶ The **Muwakhaat** (Brotherhood) model originated in **622 CE** when the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) migrated from Makkah to Madinah. To integrate the displaced Makkans (Migrants) into the local community, he established a system of "pairing" each migrant with a local resident of Madinah (Ansar).

⁴⁷ Rippin, Andrew. *Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*. 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2001).

⁴⁸ Al-Mubarakpuri, Safiur-Rahman. *The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet*. (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 2002).

⁴⁹ Peters, Rudolph. *Jihad in Classical and Modern Islam: A Reader*. (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1994).

⁵⁰ Cook, David. *Understanding Jihad*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

⁵¹ Horgan, John. *Walking Away from Terrorism: Accounts of Disengagement from Radical and Extremist Movements*. (London: Routledge, 2009).

Qualitative Analysis: Thematic Distribution:

The following table presents the thematic frequency distribution derived from the coded dataset of 350 primary source excerpts (187 Hadith + 51 Seerah episodes + 112 Quranic verses). Figures represent the number of excerpts coded under each thematic category and the proportional coverage of each theme within the total dataset.

Table 1: Thematic Frequency Distribution in Prophetic CVE Sources

Sr No	CVE Theme	No. of Hadith Sources	Seerah Episodes	Quranic References	% Thematic Coverage
1	Non-violence & Mercy	47	12	28	24%
2	Dialogue & Negotiation	31	8	19	18%
3	Social Justice & Equity	38	10	22	21%
4	Governance & Rule of Law	24	7	15	14%
5	Community Cohesion	29	9	17	16%
6	Restorative Justice	18	5	11	10%
Total		187	51	112	100%

Source: Author's own coding of *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, *Ibn Hisham (Sirat)*, *Al-Mubarakpuri*⁵², and authenticated Quranic references

Figure 1 (below) visualises the proportional thematic distribution across the coded dataset, illustrating the relative prominence of non-violence, social justice, and dialogue themes relative to governance and restorative justice.

Figure 1: Proportional Distribution of CVE Themes in Prophetic Sources (Bar Chart)

Non-violence & Mercy		24%
Dialogue & Negotiation		18%
Social Justice		21%
Governance & Rule of Law		14%
Community Cohesion		16%
Restorative Justice		10%

⁵² Al-Mubarakpuri, Safiur-Rahman. *The Sealed Nectar: Biography of the Noble Prophet*. (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 2002).

Note: Bar lengths are proportional to percentage coverage. Each block (■) represents approximately 1% of total coded material.

The dominance of Non-violence and Mercy (24%) alongside Social Justice (21%) is notable, suggesting that Prophetic CVE practice was primarily oriented toward addressing structural conditions of violence rather than its immediate management alone. Dialogue and Negotiation (18%) and Community Cohesion (16%) constitute the relational tier of the framework, while Governance (14%) and Restorative Justice (10%) represent its institutional dimension.

Findings:

The six-pillar framework derived from this analysis is presented in Table 2, mapping each Prophetic strategy to its exemplary historical episode, modern CVE application, and key scholarly references.

Table 2: Prophetic CVE Framework: Mapping Historical Practice to Modern Applications

Sr No	CVE Dimension	Prophetic Example	Modern Application	Key Reference
1	Prevention	Madinah Charter (622 CE)	Social contracts & pluralism	Watt ^[1] ; Al-Mubarakpuri ^[2]
2	Dialogue & De-radicalisation	Treaty of Hudaibiyyah (628 CE)	Negotiated peacebuilding	Ramadan ^[3] ; Esposito ^[4]
3	Inclusive Governance	Farewell Sermon (632 CE)	Human rights & equality norms	Nasr ^[5] ; Haykal ^[6]
4	Restorative Justice	Conquest of Makkah (630 CE)- General Amnesty	Truth & reconciliation models	Peters ^[7] ; Cook ^[8]
5	Community Resilience	Brotherhood system	Social cohesion programmes	Lings ^[9] ; Hamidullah ^[10]
6	Psychological Resilience	Compassion for captives & prisoners	Trauma-informed deradicalisation	Rippin ^[11] ; Aslan ^[12]

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Source: Author's own framework synthesised from cited sources.

Table 3 maps the six Prophetic CVE principles against five contemporary national and international CVE frameworks, assessing the degree of substantive alignment between prophetic practice and policy architecture. Alignment is coded as Very Strong (direct conceptual and operational correspondence), Strong (significant conceptual overlap with operational divergence), or Moderate (partial correspondence with structural gaps).

Table 3: Alignment of Prophetic CVE Principles with Contemporary Policy Frameworks

Sr No	CVE Strategy	Prophetic Principle	Contemporary Policy	Alignment Level
1	Prevent (UK)	Early warning & pastoral care	Channel programme referrals	Moderate
2	Countering Violent Extremism (US/UN)	Dialogue & community engagement	CVE Task Forces	Strong
3	Deradicalisation (Saudi Arabia)	Mercy, forgiveness & reintegration	Counselling & vocational rehab	Very Strong
4	Countering Terrorism (Pakistan)	Just governance & social equity	NACTA Framework	Moderate
5	Social Cohesion (Indonesia)	Brotherhood model	Inter-faith community programmes	Very Strong

Sources: *HM Government (2023)*; *UNOCT* ⁵³; *Ministry of Interior Saudi Arabia (2017)*; *NACTA* ⁵⁴; *Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs (2022)*.

The comparative analysis reveals that Prophetic principles are most closely aligned with contemporary deradicalisation programmes that integrate psychological support, community engagement, and restorative processes such as Saudi Arabia's Mohammed bin Naif Counselling and Care Centre and Indonesia's BNPT (National Counterterrorism Agency) community programmes ⁵⁵⁵⁶. UK and US frameworks, while structurally sound, tend toward surveillance-heavy approaches that underutilise the relational and restorative dimensions richly evidenced in Prophetic practice ⁵⁷.

Discussion:

Implications for CVE Theory:

The findings challenge the assumption prevalent in some secular CVE literature that religious frameworks are primarily problems to be countered rather than resources to be engaged ⁵⁸. The Prophetic model demonstrates that authentic religious practice, grounded in mercy, justice, and inclusive community-building, constitutes a robust internal counter-narrative to extremist ideology. This resonates with Schmid's ⁵⁹ argument that effective CVE requires engagement with the ideological terrain rather than its avoidance. Similarly, the Socio-Religio-Academic Mentoring (SRAM) model, adopted by Stockwell Green Community Services (SGCS) in the UK integrates religious mentoring to advance the moderate interpretation and interfaith dialogue ⁶⁰.

⁵³ United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT). United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Review Report. (New York: United Nations, 2021).

⁵⁴ NACTA. National Counter Terrorism Authority Pakistan: Annual Report 2022. (Islamabad: Government of Pakistan, 2022).

⁵⁵ Horgan, John. *Walking Away from Terrorism: Accounts of Disengagement from Radical and Extremist Movements*. (London: Routledge, 2009).

⁵⁶ United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT). United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Review Report. (New York: United Nations, 2021).

⁵⁷ Kundnani, Arun. *The Muslims Are Coming! Islamophobia, Extremism, and the Domestic War on Terror*. (London: Verso, 2015).

⁵⁸ Wiktorowicz, Quintan. *Radical Islam Rising: Muslim Extremism in the West*. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

⁵⁹ Schmid, Alex P. "Radicalisation, De-Radicalisation, Counter-Radicalisation: A Conceptual Discussion and Literature Review." ICCT Research Paper. The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, 2013.

⁶⁰ Qureshi, Toaha, and Rashid Ali. "Religious Mentoring to Counter Extremist Narratives: The SRAM Approach in the UK." *Pakistan Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences Research* 8, no. 2: (2025), 10–16.

Furthermore, the six-pillar framework offers a more holistic model than many contemporary CVE approaches, which tend to over-index on psychological intervention at the expense of structural and relational dimensions⁶¹. The Prophet's life demonstrates the integration of all three tiers: structural (justice reforms), relational (brotherhood, dialogue), and psychological (mercy, forgiveness narratives) as a unified programme rather than sequential interventions. For CVE practitioners operating in Muslim-majority contexts, these findings suggest significant untapped potential in Seerah-based community programming. Muslim religious leaders are uniquely positioned to deploy Prophetic narratives as counter-extremism tools precisely because they are authoritative within the communities most targeted by extremist recruiters, in the case of Pakistan. Programmes such as the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers and the Global Network on Extremism and Technology (GNET) have begun to formalise such approaches, but their reach remains limited^{62,63}. For policymakers in Western contexts, the findings suggest the value of engaging authentic Islamic scholarly voices in CVE programme design not as tokens of community consultation, but as substantive intellectual and spiritual resources. This will encourage and empower the Muslim community to be part of the solution rather than being part of the problem⁶⁴. Ramadan⁶⁵ has argued persuasively that Western CVE programmes that bypass or marginalise religious learning are both epistemically impoverished and strategically counterproductive.

Conclusion:

This article has demonstrated, through systematic qualitative analysis, that the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) offers a rich, internally coherent, and externally validated framework for countering violent extremism. Six thematic pillars, Non-violence and Mercy, Dialogue and Negotiation, Social Justice and Equity, Inclusive Governance, Community Cohesion, and Restorative Justice, emerge from the coded analysis as the constitutive elements of a Prophetic CVE model that anticipates and enriches contemporary theory and practice.

The comparative policy analysis confirms that these principles align most strongly with programmes that integrate community, psychological, and structural dimensions, suggesting that deepening engagement with Prophetic practice could strengthen the efficacy of CVE frameworks globally. As violent extremism continues to evolve and diversify, the wisdom embedded in the Prophetic Seerah offers both a moral anchor and a strategic toolkit for communities, scholars, and policymakers committed to building a more peaceful world.

⁶¹ Neumann, Peter. "The Trouble with Radicalization." *International Affairs* 89, no. 4: (2013), 873–893.

⁶² Esposito, John L. *The Future of Islam*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

⁶³ United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT). *United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy: Review Report*. (New York: United Nations, 2021).

⁶⁴ Qureshi, Toaha, and Rashid Ali. "Religious Mentoring to Counter Extremist Narratives: The SRAM Approach in the UK." *Pakistan Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences Research* 8, no. 2: (2025), 10–16.

⁶⁵ Ramadan, Tariq. *In the Footsteps of the Prophet: Lessons from the Life of Muhammad*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Future research should undertake longitudinal programme evaluations of CVE initiatives explicitly grounded in Prophetic principles, as well as comparative studies across Shia, Sufi, and other Islamic traditions to broaden the analytical base.

Recommendation:

- Policymakers should adopt the Prophetic "Brotherhood" model pairing vulnerable individuals with established community mentors to create the "bridging social capital" necessary to prevent social isolation and provide a robust religious counter-narrative to extremist recruitment.