

Reinterpreting the Prophet Muhammad's Walking Pattern through Design Thinking for Healthy Lifestyle Promotion

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Abstract: Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the primary role model for all Muslims throughout the ages, as he is the messenger of Allah sent as a mercy to all creation. All of his words, actions, and attitudes serve as a guide for Muslims, encompassing both religious rituals and worldly affairs. Among these narrations are hadiths describing the walking manner of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), which was reportedly distinct from how people generally walked at that time. This article aims to analyze the narrations regarding the Prophet's walking manner in terms of their quality, along with the explanations provided by hadith scholars. This research employs a qualitative method, with data collection techniques including literature reviews and field studies, utilized within a design thinking approach. The study aims to design the Prophet's walking manner into an accessible and affordable healthy lifestyle. The findings and discussions cover the quality of the hadith narrations concerning the Prophet's gait along with their explanations, the interpretation of the essence of these hadiths as an inspiration for a healthy lifestyle, and specific innovations in walking style to be applied as daily activities without losing the spiritual wisdom of following the Prophet's Sunnah. The study concludes that walking modifications inspired by the Prophet's manner of walking can be practiced by anyone regardless of age, and highlights numerous testimonies from individuals who experienced health benefits after practicing it regularly over a certain period. This research recommends that a new design thinking approach should be further developed in understanding health-themed hadiths.

Keywords: Design Thinking, Healthy, Inspiration, Prophet, Walking Manner.

Introduction

Health is one of the greatest blessings bestowed by Allah upon human beings. From an Islamic perspective, the preservation of health is not merely a biological necessity; it constitutes a religious obligation enshrined in the concept of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (the objectives of Islamic law), specifically in the principle of *ḥifẓ al-nafs* (preservation of life). Al-Ghazali, in *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, affirmed that the human body is a divine trust (*amānah*) that must be diligently maintained, for perfect worship can only be rendered in a state of sound physical health (Al-Ghazali, 1986). The scholarly examination of healthy lifestyles within an Islamic framework is therefore both relevant and urgently needed as a field of rigorous contemporary inquiry.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as the *uswatun ḥasanah* (the finest exemplar) for Muslims and for all of humanity, bequeathed a rich legacy of health-oriented guidance preserved in thousands of hadith narrations distributed across the canonical collections. These narrations are not confined to matters of ritual worship alone; they encompass a holistic and comprehensive vision of physical, mental, social, and spiritual health. Classical hadith scholars—among them al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasā'ī, Imam Aḥmad, and Ibn Mājah—meticulously documented narrations pertaining to the Prophet's daily habits, behaviours, and lifestyle, thereby preserving them as an enduring guide for the Muslim community across generations (Al-'Asqālānī, 1988).

One dimension of the Prophet's lifestyle that implicitly harbours extraordinary health significance, yet has not been subjected to sufficiently comprehensive scientific scrutiny, is his manner of walking. Numerous narrations transmitted by prominent companions—including 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Abū Hurayrah, and Anas ibn Mālik—describe the characteristics of the Prophet's gait with remarkable detail and consistency. Imam al-Tirmidhī, in his *Kitāb al-Shamā'il al-Muḥammadiyah*, dedicated an entire chapter exclusively to the Prophet's manner of walking, a fact that demonstrates how earlier hadith scholars regarded this aspect as possessing considerable importance worthy of scholarly attention and emulation (At-Tirmidzi, 2019).

From a scientific standpoint, the human manner of walking—known in the medical literature as gait—constitutes a complex reflection of an individual's health status, involving the simultaneous coordination of the musculoskeletal, neurological, cardiovascular, and proprioceptive systems. Contemporary research in biomechanics and sports medicine has demonstrated that a correct walking pattern exerts a significant long-term impact on health, including the prevention of degenerative disease, the enhancement of cardiovascular capacity, and the maintenance of cognitive function in later life (Perry, Jacquelin & Burnfield, 2010; Whittle, 2007). A landmark study showed that as little as 30 minutes of walking per day reduces the risk of heart disease by 31%, lowers the likelihood of stroke by 35%, and significantly increases life expectancy (Ahmadi et al., 2024). Walking has furthermore been shown to lower blood pressure, improve insulin sensitivity in individuals with diabetes, and

promote cardiovascular health (Paluch et al., 2021). Additionally, walking in natural outdoor environments has been found to alleviate anxiety and depression (Bratman et al., 2015). Research has confirmed that as few as 15 minutes of daily walking is sufficient to extend average life expectancy by up to three years (Wen et al., 2011). Research has confirmed that as few as 15 minutes of daily walking is sufficient to extend average life expectancy by up to three years (Wen et al., 2011). When these scientific findings are examined alongside the hadith descriptions of the Prophet's gait, they reveal a remarkable congruence that underscores the enduring relevance of Prophetic Sunnah in modern life.

The current global health landscape presents a deeply concerning picture. The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported that physical inactivity has become one of the foremost risk factors for global mortality, with over 1.4 billion adults worldwide classified as insufficiently physically active (WHO, 2025). In Indonesia specifically, data from the National Basic Health Research (Riskesdas) of 2018 indicated that the prevalence of insufficient physical activity among residents above the age of ten reached 33.5%, an alarming figure that contributes substantially to the escalating burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as hypertension, type 2 diabetes mellitus, and cardiovascular disease (2018). This situation is further exacerbated by lifestyle changes brought about by rapid digitalisation and urbanisation.

The hadith narrations concerning the Prophet's walking style, which constitute the analytical focus of this study, are distributed across numerous authoritative hadith collections. This analysis cannot, however, be undertaken independently of the rigorous and systematic methodology of hadith sciences (*'ulūm al-ḥadīth*), for it is precisely this methodological rigour that provides the epistemological foundation for hadith-based research. Accordingly, these narrations will be subjected to careful scrutiny employing the methodologies of *takhrīj al-ḥadīth* (hadith tracing) and *dirāsah al-isnād* (chain-of-transmission analysis), in order to verify their authenticity and validity in accordance with the criteria established by classical hadith scholars (Ibnu al-Ṣalāh, 2021).

In this context, the design thinking approach offers an innovative and highly relevant methodological framework for examining, analysing, and translating the health values embedded in the Prophet's walking manner into practical guidance for contemporary society. Design thinking is a human-centred problem-solving approach that proceeds through the phases of empathise, define, ideate, prototype, and test (Gonen, 2019; Plattner et al., 2012). The application of design thinking to the study of Prophetic Sunnah introduces a new dimension into applied hadith studies, one that is not merely normative, but pragmatic and solution-oriented in addressing contemporary public health challenges.

The application of design thinking to Prophetic Sunnah is, in fact, not entirely novel within the Islamic scholarly tradition. The classical jurists, through the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* framework as elaborated by al-Ghazālī and refined by Ibn 'Āshūr, effectively engaged in analogous processes: identifying human needs (empathise), articulating problems (define), deriving *Shari'ah*-based solutions (ideate), implementing them in legal rulings (prototype), and evaluating their application in society (test). The application of design thinking to health-oriented hadith studies may therefore be understood as a methodological contextualisation that draws on the rich intellectual heritage of Islam (Al-Ghazaly, n.d.; Ibnu 'Āsyur, 2001).

The significance of this study within the domain of public health is considerable. Health promotion grounded in cultural and religious values—referred to as "culturally and religiously grounded health promotion"—has been demonstrated to be far more effective in changing health behaviours than biomedical approaches of a secular character. Research has shown that health interventions that integrate a religiosity dimension achieve significantly higher rates of adherence among participants (EB Davis et al., 2025), particularly among Muslim populations who maintain strong commitment to Islamic values. Framing healthy walking messages within the context of the Prophet's Sunnah therefore holds great potential as an effective and sustainable public health intervention strategy in Muslim-majority countries.

This study also aims to make a methodological contribution to the development of the design thinking approach within applied hadith studies. Existing applied hadith scholarship (*dirāsah al-ḥadīth al-taṭbīqiyyah*) has tended to favour juridical-normative approaches focused on legal and ritual dimensions, while the applicative and solution-oriented dimensions of prophetic narrations for addressing contemporary challenges have received comparatively little attention. By applying the stages of design thinking, this study offers a new paradigm for hadith scholarship—one that is more responsive to contemporary needs (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011; Meinel & Leifer, 2011).

The novelty of this research lies in three contributions: first, it represents a systematic effort to analyse the Prophet's walking manner through the lens of modern biomechanics, grounded in rigorous hadith methodology; second, it introduces design thinking as a new methodological instrument within applied hadith studies; and third, it produces a practical Sunnah-based health promotion model that can be implemented in public health programmes. Collectively, these contributions render this study significant both for the advancement of knowledge and for the improvement of Muslim community health.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach, as the findings are phenomenological in nature and cannot be obtained through statistical procedures or other forms of calculation (Elvera and Astarina 2021). Therefore, this study is descriptive in nature, emphasizing process and meaning. The method used in this study is *library research* combined with interviews with relevant sources. Consequently, data sources were obtained from classical and contemporary books related to the hadith under study, articles relevant to the research title published in various national and international journals, as well as through interviews with parties deemed representative of PAZ therapists in general.

The *design thinking* approach in this study encompasses several phases of research implementation, namely empathize, define, prototype, and test (Henriksen et al., 2017).

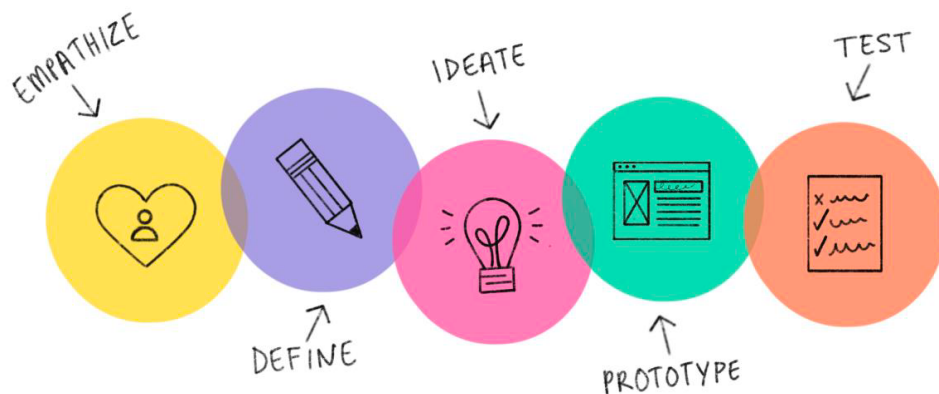


Figure 1 illustrates the *design thinking* approach, which encompasses several research phases. The explanation is as follows (Steinke et al., 2017):

1) Empathize

The empathy phase is used to understand the problems faced by the beneficiaries or users of the research results. Empathy requires several processes, such as observation, engagement through conversation, and in-depth interviews. The purpose of this phase is to understand the problems experienced by users.

2) Define

The definition phase is used to clarify the focus of the problem. Researchers apply their critical thinking skills to understand the problems experienced by users. Once the problem is clearly understood, researchers can move on to the next stage to generate ideas for solving the problem. The definition phase concludes with a clear establishment of the scope and parameters of the problem being studied.

3) Ideate

The ideation phase is designed to generate ideas that can serve as solutions to previously defined problems. Researchers are encouraged to use their imagination to generate a variety of ideas that lead to innovation. The ideation phase encompasses a range of innovation techniques, including prototyping, mind mapping, and sketching. In particular, prototyping with a fresh perspective as a solution.

4) Prototype

This phase involves creating a prototype of the innovative idea until a product is realized. The more realistic the prototype idea, the better it is to implement. Researchers identify the prototype's shortcomings to create a more innovative design so they can iterate on creating a better product.

5) Test

The testing phase is a way to obtain feedback on the previously created prototype. Testing allows for a more effective repetition of the empathy process with users. Feedback from this testing phase will aid in refining the prototype until it is confirmed that the problem can be addressed appropriately.

Results and Discussion

1. Hadith narrations about the way of walking of the Prophet Muhammad and the assessment of Hadith scholars about it

The study of the Prophet Muhammad SAW's way of walking cannot be separated from the Asy-Shamāil Al-Muḥammadiyah literature corpus, which specifically documents the physical characteristics, morals and habits of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This corpus is spread across more than twenty muktabar hadith books, starting from al-Kutub as-Sittah to the musnad books, mu'jam, which were then collected specifically in one book by at-

Tirmidhi (M. bin 'Īsa At-Tirmidhi, 2019). The author found several narrations about the walking of the Prophet Muhammad, the details of which are as follows:

- 1) Transmitted on the authority of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (RA):

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا مَشَى تَكَفَّأَ كَأَنَّمَا يَنْحَطُّ مِنْ صَبَبٍ

"When the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) walked, he inclined forward as though descending a slope." (M. bin I. At-Tirmidzi, 2020)

- 2) Transmitted on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (RA):

مَا رَأَيْتُ شَيْئاً أَحْسَنَ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَأَنَّ الشَّمْسَ تَجْرِي فِي وَجْهِهِ، وَمَا رَأَيْتُ أَحَدًا أَسْرَعَ فِي مَشْيِهِ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَأَنَّمَا الْأَرْضُ تُطَوَّى لَهُ، وَإِنَّا لَنَجْهَدُ أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنَّهُ لَغَيْرُ مُكْتَرَبٍ

"I have never seen anything more beautiful than the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), as though the sun coursed across his face. I have never seen anyone who walked more swiftly than the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), as though the earth were folded up for him; yet we strained ourselves whilst he appeared entirely unhurried." (Asy-Syaibāny, 2006; M. bin I. At-Tirmidzi, 2020). This narration was graded Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ by At-Tirmidzi, and assessed as "chain of transmission: ḥasan" Syu'aib al-Arnāūṭ.

- 3) Transmitted on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik (RA):

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ضَخْمَ الْكَفَّيْنِ وَالْقَدَمَيْنِ، لَمْ أَرْ بَعْدَهُ مِثْلَهُ، وَكَانَ إِذَا مَشَى تَقَلَّعَ

"The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) had large palms and large feet. I have never seen his like after him. When he walked, he stepped with firm vigour (*taqalla'a*)."

(Al-Bukhārī, 2015; An-Naisabūry, 2010; M. bin I. At-Tirmidzi, 2020). This narration is ṣaḥīḥ (authentic), having been transmitted by al-Bukhārī.

- 4) Transmitted on the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās (RA):

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا مَشَى مَشَى مُجْتَمِعاً لَيْسَ فِيهِ كَسَلٌ

"The Messenger of Allah (PBUH), when he walked, walked with full composure and determination; no trace of sluggishness was apparent in him." (Asy-Syaibāny, 2006; Ibnu Sa'ad, 1990) Aḥmad Syākir in his commentary on Musnad Aḥmad, assessed this narration's chain of transmission as authentic (ṣaḥīḥ al-isnād).

- 5) Transmitted on the authority of Hind ibn Abī Hālah (RA), the Prophet's stepson:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَخْمًا مُفَخَّمًا ... إِذَا مَشَى تَقَلَّعَ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ كَأَنَّمَا يَنْحَطُّ فِي صَبَبٍ، يَمْشِي هَوْنًا ذَا أَهْنَةٍ وَسَكِينَةٍ

"The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was a person of great magnificence and noble bearing... When he walked, he lifted his feet powerfully from the ground as though descending a slope, walking with ease, full dignity, and composure." (M. bin I. At-Tirmidzi, 2020; Ibnu Sa'ad, 1990). This narration is classified as weak (ḍa'īf).

- 6) Transmitted on the authority of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (RA) (second narration):

وَإِذَا مَشَى لَكَأَنَّمَا يَمْشِي فِي صُعْبٍ

"When he walked, it was as though he were walking uphill." (Al-Bazzār, 2009; Al-Bukhārī, 2014; Asy-Syaibāny, 2006). Graded Ḥasan.

2. Scholarly Exegesis of the Gait Narrations

The term most extensively discussed by hadith commentators (*sharāḥ*) in the context of the above narrations is *taqalla'a*. Their explanations converge on a consistent definition: "lifting the feet with power and vigour, not dragging them along the ground" (An-Nawawi, 1995), "walking with strength and firm resolve, like one who traverses an incline with unwavering conviction" (Al-'Asqalāny, 1988), a description that simultaneously reflects superior physical health and psychological groundedness (Al-Qaṣṭalānī, 1888)".

The second key phrase "*ka'annamā yanḥaṭṭu min ṣabab*" (as though descending a slope), is expounded in *Tuḥfat Al-Aḥwāzī Syarḥ Jāmi' at-Tirmidzi* as depicting the gait of one who descends an incline, in which the body naturally leans forward at a proportionate angle, rendering each step quick, light, and energetically efficient. This description does not imply, however, that the Prophet walked in an unbalanced or stooped manner; rather, it portrays a dynamically optimal posture—proportionately inclined forward, neither rigidly upright nor hunched (Al-Mubārakfūrī, n.d.).

The exegesis of the Prophet's walking speed offers particularly illuminating commentary. *Zād al-Ma'ād* explains that the Prophet's extraordinary pace, which compelled his companions to exert themselves to keep up, testifies to his exceptional physical condition. Ibn Qayyim attributes this vitality to the Prophet's adherence to a disciplined, healthy lifestyle encompassing controlled dietary habits, adequate sleep, regular physical activity, and profound inner tranquillity (Al-Jawziyah, 1997). The expression "*ka'annamā al-arḍu tuṭwa lahu*" (as though the earth were folded for him) is identified as a hyperbolic formulation (*mubalaghah*) that vividly conveys the extraordinary efficiency and optimality of his gait (As-Sindi, 2008).

When examined through a contemporary scientific lens, the body of narrations pertaining to the Prophet's gait collectively depicts what modern biomechanics terms an "optimal gait pattern." The parameters discernible from these narrations include: (1) proportionate forward lean; (2) complete heel-off followed by a powerful toe-

off; (3) a rapid and efficient stride; and (4) an upright posture free of excessive tension. This congruence is not coincidental; it constitutes compelling evidence that the Prophetic Sunnah organically embodies scientific principles that transcend its era.

The psychological and social dimensions of the Prophet's gait are likewise reflected in what contemporary psychology designates as a "confident gait"—a manner of walking marked by self-assurance—which has been demonstrated to exert a significant impact on social perception, interpersonal relations, and psychological well-being. Research by Carney and colleagues confirmed that an upright posture and confident walking style directly influence circulating levels of testosterone and cortisol, resulting in enhanced self-confidence and reduced stress (Carney et al., 2010). This insight adds a new dimension to the hadith concerning the Prophet's gait, demonstrating that its significance is at once physical, psychological, and social (Michalak et al., 2015).

Regarding the jurisprudential ruling on the emulation of the Prophet's gait, the question falls within the purview of *uṣūl fiqh* dan *fiqh ḥadīṣ*. Scholarly tradition categorises the Prophet's actions into three principal types: (1) *Af'āl Jibilliyyah* (natural/instinctive acts), such as eating, sleeping, and walking, (2) *Af'āl Tasyr'iyyah* (legislative acts), such as prayer and alms-giving, dan (3) *Af'āl Khusūṣiyyah* (acts exclusive to the Prophet) (Al-Āmidī, 1983). The Prophet's manner of walking falls primarily within the first category; however, given that it possesses a *kasbi* (voluntarily cultivable) dimension and acknowledged Sunnah value, it may be elevated to the status of recommended (mustahabb) or meritorious Sunnah (An-Nawawī, 2013). This is consistent with the call of al-Qaradāwī, who urged Muslims to study and practise the Prophet's Sunnah across all dimensions of life (Al-Qaradāwī, 2002).

3. Comparison of the Prophet's Gait with Common Human Walking and Its Health Benefits

A comparative analysis of the Prophet's manner of walking—as documented in authenticated hadith, with the walking habits of the general population in the contemporary era constitutes an important epistemological foundation before any Sunnah-based healthy lifestyle recommendations can be responsibly formulated. This comparison is not rhetorical or apologetic in character; it is grounded in a rigorous scientific analysis integrating verified hadith data with current research findings in biomechanics, exercise physiology, movement neurology, and public health (Nordin & Frankel, 2012). When organised systematically, this comparative framework yields a holistic understanding of the considerable gap between the prophetic standard of walking and the actual walking patterns of the modern population, while simultaneously opening pathways for evidence-based prophetic health interventions.

The first differentiating dimension is body posture. All relevant narrations consistently describe the Prophet's posture as upright, robust, and proportionate, characterised in modern biomechanics as neutral spinal alignment with appropriate forward lean (Wallden, 2008). Biomechanical authorities establish that an ideal walking posture requires a forward lean of 5–8 degrees from the vertical axis, consonant with the hadith description of "as though descending a slope"—as distinct from the rigidly upright "military posture" that actually increases compressive loading on the lumbar vertebrae (Perry, Jacquelin & Burnfield, 2010; Winter, 2009). A 2017 epidemiological survey found that 65–85% of modern adults display walking postures that deviate from this ideal, principally manifesting as thoracic kyphosis and forward head posture induced by excessive use of digital devices (Daneshmandi et al., 2017).

The second differentiating dimension concerns the stepping pattern. The Prophet's manner of lifting his feet with power and vigour (An-Nawawī, 1995), corresponds biomechanically to a complete heel-off mechanism followed by a powerful toe-off within each gait cycle. This mechanism optimises the propulsive force that drives the body forward efficiently whilst minimising the energy expenditure per step. This pattern stands in sharp contrast to the most prevalent walking style in modern populations—characterised by shuffling gait and excessive heel strike—which is not only energetically wasteful but also imposes excessive mechanical impact on the knee, hip, and spinal joints (Pheasant, 1981; Vaughn et al., 2009). McGibbon's research confirmed that a robust toe-off pattern correlates positively with long-term walking capacity and musculoskeletal health in older adults (McGibbon, 2003).

The third differentiating dimension is walking speed and efficiency. The hadith narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah describes the Prophet walking at a pace that compelled his companions to exert themselves to follow, yet he displayed no fatigue whatsoever. This description is indicative of what exercise physiologists term high "walking economy", a state in which minimal oxygen is consumed for a given walking speed (Ludlow & Weyand, 2017). WHO global data indicate that over 1.4 billion adults walk at speeds well below the recommended 1.2–1.4 m/s (Bull et al., 2020), whilst a major meta-analytic study demonstrated that low walking speed is an independent predictor of premature mortality, cognitive decline, and numerous chronic conditions (Studenski, 2011).

The fourth differentiating dimension pertains to balance and motor coordination. The narration of Umm Ma'bad states that the Prophet's gait was "neither slow nor hurried"—indicating a walking rhythm that was regular, consistent, and under perfect control. In neurophysiology, such rhythmic regularity correlates with optimally functioning Central Pattern Generators (CPGs) at the level of the spinal cord and cerebellum (Marder & Bucher,

2001). A study documented that the majority of sedentary adults display elevated step variability, an indicator of mild neuromotor dysfunction associated with increased fall risk and reduced overall quality of life (Menz et al., 2003).

The fifth differentiating dimension involves head orientation and gaze direction. The description by Hind ibn Abi Hālah of the Prophet's gait as dignified and composed implicitly conveys an image of a raised head, a level chin, and a forward-directed gaze. This neutral head position anatomically optimises cervical spinal alignment, reduces pressure on the cervical intervertebral discs, and efficiently maintains the head's centre of gravity over the body's base of support. This contrasts sharply with the globally prevalent "text neck" phenomenon. Research has shown that inclining the head 60 degrees towards a smartphone screen increases the effective load on the cervical spine from 4.5 kg (neutral position) to 27 kg—equivalent to carrying a small child on one's head (Dandumahanti & Subramaniyam, 2024). Recent data indicate that urban populations spend an average of 2–4 hours per day in this text neck posture (Daneshmandi et al., 2017).

Tabel 1. Comparative Analysis of the Prophet's (PBUH) Gait and General Human Walking with Health Implications

Biomechanical Aspect	The Prophet's Gait (PBUH)	General Human Gait	Health Implications
Body Posture	Upright, proportional forward lean of 5–8° (<i>mujammi'an</i>); neither rigid nor stooped	Frequently stooped or hyperlordotic, especially due to excessive device use (text neck)	Optimal posture → even spinal load distribution; prevention of low back pain
Stepping Pattern	<i>Taqalla'a</i> : complete heel-off, powerful toe-off, no foot dragging	Short shuffling steps and excessive heel strike, especially in the elderly and obese	Powerful push-off → postural muscle activation; prevention of lower-limb muscle atrophy
Walking Speed	Fast and efficient; companions struggled to keep pace, yet the Prophet showed no fatigue	Average 1.2–1.4 m/s; frequently lower in sedentary populations	Optimal speed → increased VO ₂ max; enhanced cardiovascular health
Arm Swing	Symmetrical and natural, proportionate to stride length (implicit from postural description)	Often asymmetrical, disrupted by one-sided bag carrying or smartphone use	Symmetrical swing → neuromotor balance; metabolic energy efficiency
Rhythm & Consistency	Consistent, composed, dignified (<i>dhā abbahat wa sakīnah</i>); unhurried	Inconsistent rhythm, frequently disrupted by digital, social, or emotional distractions	Consistent rhythm → autonomic nervous system regulation; reduced cortisol levels

Having identified the fundamental differences between the Prophet's walking manner and that of the general population, the following discussion synthesises the scientifically substantiated health benefits attributable to the practice of prophetically inspired gait. These benefits are organised into three principal domains that align with

both the Islamic conception of holistic health and the framework of contemporary public health: (1) cardiovascular and metabolic benefits; (2) musculoskeletal benefits; and (3) neurological and cognitive benefits. This categorisation operationalises the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* dimension of *ḥifẓ al-nafs* (the preservation of life) in its broadest sense.

Regarding cardiovascular and metabolic benefits: the Prophet's walking pattern—combining moderately high speed, upright posture, and vigorous stepping—produces an exercise intensity equivalent to what exercise physiology classifies as moderate-intensity aerobic exercise (Dixit, 2020), the category most strongly recommended by WHO for the prevention of cardiovascular disease. A study involving more than 90,000 participants demonstrated that brisk walking with correct posture reduces the risk of coronary heart disease by 35% and stroke risk by 34%, compared with slow walking without postural awareness (Lee et al., 2019). The metabolic benefits of optimal walking posture further encompass blood glucose regulation and insulin sensitivity. Research confirmed that walking with an upright posture and vigorous stepping activates the large lower-limb muscle groups more effectively than stooped walking, stimulating increased glucose uptake by muscles via insulin-independent GLUT-4 transporter mechanisms, thereby significantly attenuating postprandial blood glucose levels (Colberg et al., 2010).

With respect to musculoskeletal benefits: the taqalla'a pattern—with its complete heel-off and powerful toe-off—fully and proportionately activates the posterior kinetic chain, encompassing the erector spinae, gluteus maximus, biceps femoris, gastrocnemius, and soleus muscles. Proportionate activation of this entire muscle group produces an evenly distributed mechanical load across the musculoskeletal structure, preventing overloading of specific joints—a primary cause of osteoarthritis. A randomised controlled trial (RCT) involving 454 older adults with knee osteoarthritis demonstrated that modifying the walking pattern towards a more upright posture and more vigorous stepping significantly reduced knee pain by 51% and improved physical function by 47%, without any adverse effects (Messier et al., 2013). The upright walking posture with proportionate forward lean generates an optimal axial load distribution across all vertebral segments, preventing excessive compression of the intervertebral discs—the principal cause of disc herniation (HNP/HIVD). Research demonstrated that every 5-degree deviation from the optimal walking posture increases pressure on the L4–L5 and L5–S1 discs by 40–60%, cumulatively causing premature disc degeneration (Adams, 2004). Optimal walking posture with symmetrical, natural arm swing has further been shown to reduce rotational loading on the lumbar spine by 25–30% compared with walking without appropriate arm swing (Vos et al., 2020).

In the domain of neurological and cognitive benefits: contemporary neuroimaging research has revealed that walking with an optimal pattern exerts highly significant neuroprotective effects. An RCT with 120 older adult participants demonstrated that regular aerobic walking over one year increased the volume of the hippocampus—the brain structure central to memory and spatial navigation—by 2%, equivalent to reversing the brain ageing process by 1–2 years (Erickson et al., 2011). A further study found that walking speed and posture correlated positively with grey matter volume in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex—the brain region responsible for executive functions, decision-making, and emotional regulation—even after controlling for age, education, and general health status (Cosentino et al., 2020). The neuroprotective benefits of prophetically inspired walking also encompass the prevention of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. A study of 78,430 UK Biobank participants found that a higher daily step count combined with good walking speed significantly reduced the risk of dementia, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and overall mortality (Del Pozo Cruz et al., 2022). The relevance of these findings to the Prophet's manner of walking lies in the fact that vigorous and efficient walking naturally encourages greater distances and higher step counts within the same time frame, thereby facilitating the achievement of optimal daily step targets.

4. Design Thinking of a Healthy Lifestyle Inspired by the Prophet's Gait: The JAPAZ Method

Despite the numerous health benefits associated with practising the Prophet's manner of walking, no systematic effort has yet been made to introduce it as a widely accessible healthy lifestyle practice, at minimum within the Muslim community itself, even though it represents a form of physical exercise that is uncomplicated, inexpensive, and low-risk. For a Muslim, this practice carries the additional spiritual value of emulating the Prophet (PBUH) as an expression of love and obedience to the Messenger of Allah, elevating it to an act of worship deserving of divine reward.

It was against this backdrop that Aris Hidayat (d. 2020), known by his pen name Haris Moedjahid, developed a therapeutic method he claimed to have derived from Qur'anic inspiration, which he named the Pengobatan Akhir Zaman (PAZ) Al Kasaw therapy method. Upon its emergence in mid-2018, PAZ was a biomechanical therapy method focused on correcting the human skeletal framework to address a range of clients' health complaints (Susanto, 2020). Following the spread of a large number of trained practitioners (Paztrooper) across various regions of Indonesia and beyond, PAZ evolved from a therapeutic method into a comprehensive healthy lifestyle programme.

Among the therapeutic and healthy lifestyle practices taught by Haris Moedjahid is Jalan Ala PAZ (JAPAZ), a walking method he claimed to have derived from the Prophet's manner of walking. Initially named Jalan Ala

Rasulullah (JAR), the method was subsequently renamed JAPAZ based on feedback from various stakeholders and to avoid potential misunderstanding. Haris Moedjahid introduced the JAPAZ method at virtually every training session he conducted, providing detailed instruction on the correct movements and the expected health benefits. His underlying conviction was that any habitual practice of the Prophet (PBUH), however apparently mundane, would yield benefits when emulated, a conviction grounded in the reasoning that the Prophet, as the exemplary human being guided by divine revelation, could not have engaged in any practice that was without benefit or potentially harmful (Susanto, 2021).

In a video recording posted online (PAPKA, 2025), Haris provided a general overview of the JAPAZ practice, explaining that when a person walks as though descending a slope, the abdomen must serve as the pivot point. This is because a descending incline naturally forces longer strides that cannot be generated from the hip joint alone without risk of injury. Co-Founder of PAZ, Anjrah, provided further elaboration on JAPAZ technique (Al Kasaw TV, 2024), explaining that the walking style resembles the formal ceremonial marching step, but is oriented towards skeletal realignment. When stepping, the foot must land completely flat and straight, neither angled inward nor outward, as foot misalignment during stepping creates problems in the knee joint area.

The detailed technical specifications of the JAPAZ method as developed by Haris Moedjahid are as follows (Arif, 2024):

- 1) Walking driven by the abdominal pivot. This mechanism is designed to maximise stride length and generate maximal rotational movement of the trunk to the right and left. This movement is believed to increase spinal flexibility whilst optimising the nervous system and enabling peripheral capillaries to function at full capacity.
- 2) The foot must be directed straight forward during each step. This guideline is intended to assist in straightening the foot's alignment, thereby restoring venous blood vessels to their normal position and facilitating improved peripheral circulation.
- 3) The body position should simulate descent of an incline. This position maintains an upright chest and prevents stooping, thereby optimising respiratory function and reducing the workload of the heart. An important technical note: the legs must not be tense; a degree of suspension or elasticity must be maintained in the foot's contact with the ground during each forward step. The weight-bearing focus is on the heel with gentle pressure, but without hard stamping.
- 4) The stride should be long and extended. This parameter is designed to maintain straight leg position throughout each stride, since short strides tend to cause the leg to remain in a slightly bent position. Long, wide strides are believed to facilitate improved arterial circulation, enabling blood to flow more effectively to all organs of the body. It is important, however, that stride length be increased gradually to avoid injury.

An additional technical consideration concerns footwear: practitioners are advised not to wear excessively cushioned footwear—such as mid-range or long-range running shoes—as the weight-bearing emphasis in JAPAZ is on the heel, and an overly cushioned sole risks causing ankle or knee injury. In certain settings, such as clean grassland or safe bare ground, performing JAPAZ without footwear is considered preferable in order to maximise outcomes. It is further noted that incorrect JAPAZ technique may result in discomfort and related complaints (Al Kasaw TV, 2025).

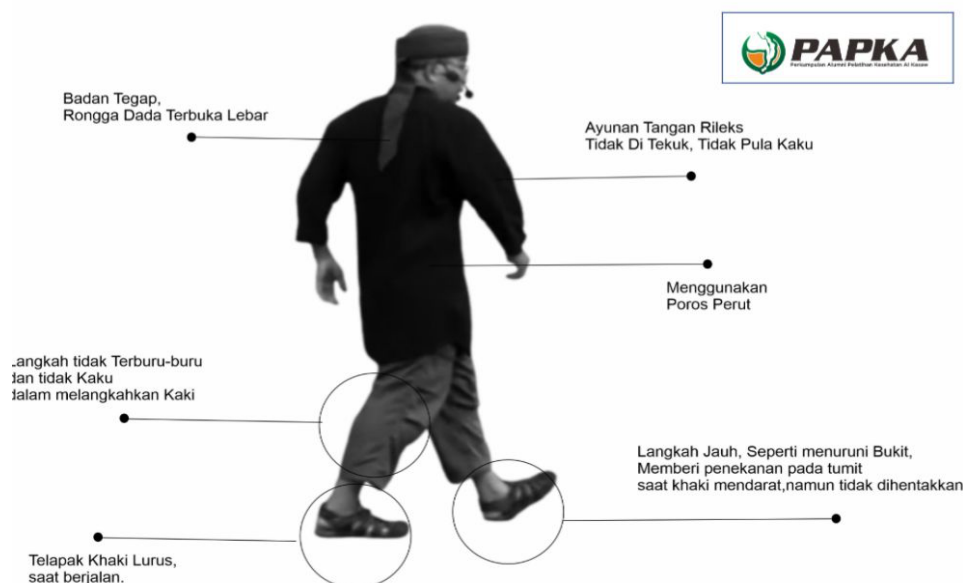


Figure 1. Penjelasan JAPAZ dari materi pelatihan PAPKA

The practitioners of the PAZ Al Kasaw method (Paztrooper) have adopted JAPAZ as a committed element of their personal health regimen. Based on a survey conducted by the PAZ Al Kasaw Training Alumni Association (PAPKA), numerous testimonies have been reported by JAPAZ practitioners describing tangible health benefits. These include accounts of relief from anxiety and chronic stress following consistent JAPAZ practice (Salman, 2024), normalisation of cholesterol levels, hair regrowth in individuals experiencing hair loss, and various other outcomes documented in the official PAPKA and PAZ channels. It should be noted that some observers have characterised certain claims as overclaimed (Hanif Acep Nur Adhi, 2025), however, no critical party has yet engaged in direct dialogue with representatives of PAZ Al Kasaw.

The seriousness with which the Paztrooper community under PAPKA has endeavoured to popularise JAPAZ is evidenced by the launch of a national JAPAZ movement, designated Sunday Morning JAPAZ (SunmoJAPAZ). This programme is routinely organised by PAPKA across various regions, at minimum twice annually, with the aim of consolidating JAPAZ practice among newly trained alumni, clients undergoing therapeutic programmes, and any member of the public who wishes to participate. The activity also serves the broader purpose of introducing JAPAZ to the wider community, encouraging adoption as part of a healthy lifestyle. The programme has received coverage in local media outlets (Suara Islam, 2025). In pursuit of formal state recognition, JAPAZ has been registered with the Ministry of Law and Human Rights under the name Perhimpunan Jalan Sehat Alkasaw Nusantara (JASANTARA) in 2025.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing discussion, the following conclusions may be drawn. All hadith narrations describing the Prophet's manner of walking are sufficiently reliable to serve as a scholarly basis, notwithstanding that some narrations are classified as weak (*da'if*) and are strengthened by corroborating transmissions. Taken together, and considered alongside the scholarly exegeses and commentaries of hadith scholars, these narrations describe a specific, consistent walking style that is distinguishable from the gait of people in general—a style whose health benefits have been substantiated by multiple strands of contemporary scientific evidence. The PAZ Al Kasaw therapy method has, accordingly, endeavoured to establish the Prophet's walking manner as an inspiration for a healthy lifestyle through the JAPAZ programme, first introduced by Haris Moedjahid. A substantial body of testimonies attests to meaningful health improvements experienced by regular practitioners of JAPAZ. The authors recommend that further research be conducted into hadith narrations describing the habitual practices of the Prophet (PBUH), with a view to identifying and developing the health benefits contained therein, in order to enrich an evidence-based, Sunnah-grounded conception of a healthy lifestyle.

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