



THE NEED OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract

Since the beginning of the universe, religion is a key element of the society across the globe because religion is the collective forces that binds and provide the satisfied explanations regarding the metaphysical queries and force to the members of society. Therefore, it has played the crucial role in the nourishment and development of the core religions. In fact, despite of the universality or relativity between religions the diversity of religious principles, faith, practices and other cultural elements are manifested in numerous states or nations which is one of the significant factor of spreading the religious bigotry sectarianism sentiments among the masses of the society. Even in contemporary modern and advanced era, it is distressing that people are still conflicting with each other on religious basis. The people are being killed; divided and their holy places are occupied and tear down just because of the religious differences and practices. In this context, if we talk about Pakistan so it is the sacred state with religious and cultural diversity. In spite of this the sectarian and religious beliefs, practices, and teaching of other sects and religion is not acceptable at any level in our society which, led hazardous and anarchy situations in the society because in Pakistan sectarianism is being promoted by the political and religious authorities in order to established their political regime and authenticity. Unfortunately, the imam or religious scholars could not play their significant and effective role in condemning such religious violence and exploitations and took part in stressing and promoting the violent behavior by teaching the narrow point of view and brainwashing of their students and followers. The diverse religious beliefs, principles and practices are really a



cause of confusion, disorganization and alienation among the masses regarding adherent which belief, principle and traditions. In such hazardous situation there is need of the interreligious dialogue to protect the humanity and to comprehend the diverse religions and their belief structure as well. In this article researcher will yield a brief historical background and introduction of the interreligious discourse, after that author will talk about the need and significance of interreligious dialogue in 21st century. The content will be helpful to understand the discourse between world's core religions and will be beneficial to eliminate the biasness and misinterpretation regarding the other religious beliefs and practices. Here it is significant to understand the benefits of this discourse such as inception of fairness and world harmony, to escape communities from disintegration, the safety of human rights and the ethical values of diverse religions across the world.

Key words: Religion, faith, interreligious, dialogue, sectarianism, world, significant, harmony, contemporary, humanity, violence, religious differences, human rights, ethical values.

1. Introduction, Importance and Backdrop of the Research Topic

The concept of inter-religious discourse have gained an excellent significant in the background of political, spiritual, socio-economic state of affairs of Pakistan. The global incidents that have took place in the previous couple of years have forced the religious leaders to look for a few new paths, instruments and strategies fostering inter-religious dialogue. There have been heinous tragedies in the past like Iran-Iraq conflicts, aggression between Muslims and Buddhists in Thailand, 9/11 attack and ongoing situation in Kashmir that continue to destroying world today and other the most recent psychological oppressor exercises in France, England, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan and Pakistan have trembled the entire globe. In such conditions, it is the requirement of the time that supporters of all religions have to embrace the strategy stoicism, forbearance, patience and discourse. Pakistan is not merely pluralist society yet in addition neighbor to a few vital nations like China, India, Iran, Afghanistan and Russia. In this specific financial, spiritual and geological situation, it is the demand of period to treat the adherents of all belief system being equal. The shared humanitarian social and religious association among the adherents of various religions and faiths ought to be strengthening without considering of color, caste and belief. Rather than pointing up the diversities, we ought to encourage a culture of discourse to overcome the any issue among the various religious ethnic group, class and communities. This is the main way through which we can lay out harmony, equity, fairness and love for mankind. The genuine premise of commonly deferential relations among various countries is a legitimate and genuine discourse. The nature, quality and amount of this relationship rely on the common discourse. The subject of "discourse" because of its philosophical and psychological nature has remained extremely indispensable for individuals of the several of circles and particularly for the people who are connected with the fields of instruction, examination, thought and religion. They bring up various issues like what is exchange? For what reason would it be advisable for us to embrace it?



Also, what ought to be its inclination, constraints and systems?

Discourse is the way for changing multi-aspects menace of intimidation, abhorrence and bigotry into a lovely and serene and socio-world of politics. It is a consistent and strong wellspring of contact among various religions. An exchange doesn't mean a challenge to formulate alterations in any faith or a shallow solidarity amongst various religions. Throughout the discourse, the component of discrete character and regard for different beliefs ought to succeed. The inter-religious associations are to be sure a communication of psyches and spirits of the supporters of various faiths. Discourse provides us with the memorandum of common regard, love, tranquility and association. It shows us how to endure others' perspective, how to regard them and how to bear all the structure of the society with all out patience. In Pakistan, the inter-religious discourse won't just work on the religious issues of individuals yet in addition bring a socio-economic revolution. The task of the all organizations of any society is vital in the improvement and advancement of associations among the supporters of various faiths and for the achievement and progression of the discourse. Featuring the meaning of the inter-religious discourse by educational institutions, mass media, academic discussion, seminar and rallies in Pakistan is very fundamental. This research article is being introduced because of the specific religious, political, social and philosophical significance of inter-religious discourse.

This article based on five parts which are given below;

1. It contains of the Introduction, importance and backdrop of the research topic.
2. Illustrates historical pattern of inter-religious discourse in Pakistan.
3. Underlines six significant existing issues to inter-religious discourse are faced by Pakistan. Nine suggestions have been mentioned
4. Fifth part is based on conclusion.

1.1 Historical Pattern of Inter-Religious Discourse in Pakistan

As Islam is the national religion of Pakistan therefore, it is the core element that can encourage the amicable culture of inter-religious discourse in the state. In Pakistan, it is vital to respect the perspectives of people belong to other religion as per the teachings of Islam. Islam precludes us to mishandle anybody for having a specific conviction, belief and religion, or to blame anybody with no proof. It has been directed to resolve the contentious and dubious problems with the assistance of most potential strategies and abilities in view of shared shrewdness and welfare. The Islamic educations provide us the message to treat well with the non-believers, and feeling of all out fairness and equity ought to succeed everywhere. It does not permit anybody to act mischievously or affront anybody due to the distinction of conviction, faith and theology. The Prophet Mohammad (S.A.W.W) himself entrenched, encouraged and merged excellent associations with the non-believers in the diplomatic, socio-economic sphere. The *Madina* Pact, the *Hudaibiah* Treaty, the Delegation of *Najran* and the Conquest of *Makkah* are the astounding



instances of the presence and meaning of such associations. The Prophet Mohammad (S.A.W.W) aided the amenities of the non-believer specialists and in no way held onto at all religious prejudice. The Muslim class proceeded with such stunning custom of humanism even after the death of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The Holy Caliphs (11-40 h), The Umayyad (41-132 h), The Abbasid (132-656 h) and the leaders of the Muslim Spain and the Ottoman Empire performed a commendable part in such way. The inter-religious discourse between the believers and the believers arrived at its peak in the Muslim government in sub-continent. The leaders of Delhi (1206-1526) and the incomparable *Mughals* (1526-1857) encouraged and upheld the spiritual autonomy and uniformity. The Muslim state of sub-continent procured a worldwide status during such era. The supporters of different theologies such as Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity and Buddhism were additionally the residents of this incredible state which had its own uniqueness and social and scholarly foundation. The Muslim leaders laid out brilliant customs of fairness and equity in this diverse sacred state. The freedoms of the non-believers were guaranteed as well secured. They were given the most ideal edifying and wellbeing services. Their events and rites were taken part and shared. They were respected with higher positions at different managerial levels. Their diplomatic dialogue was looked for as well as respected. Their spiritual leaders were respected and provided the option to make decisions of individual and communal cases as per their own spiritual principles. They relished the opportunity of propagating their faith even in the court of the head of state. They were permitted to build their religious spaces in any area of the country and the most ideal strides were adopted for their security. Sociable associations were entrenched with various non-believer countries which brought about abiding commercial ties. To put it plainly, the Muslim rulers declared a significant inter-religious discourse with the non-Muslims by advancing an environment of uniformity, equity, fraternity, forbearance and compassion. It was observed that in the early period of 20th century some important personalities who were devoted to inter-faith cohesion such as Ghandi who was influenced by the comprehensive explanation of Hinduism and Quaker belief South Africa, Christian pacifism. In the 20th century numerous inter-faith associations were being as well. Even before the incident of the holocaust, few Jews and Christians were conducting gatherings for talking about contentious issues like role of Jesus in Judaism and some of them consider as moral teacher, although they did not accept the Jesus as messiah. The London Society of Jews and Christians was established in 1927 which is the ancient inter-religious association in the U.K and Council of Christians and Jews founded in 1942, in time of World War II. The International Council of Christians and Jews has been dialogue associations in almost 40 countries. One of the initial wide-based inter-religious associations is the World Congress of beliefs, established in 1936. At the present, there are many national and international inter-religious organizations. Interreligious exchange may be troublesome, but it isn't inconceivable. Numerous South African Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jews, Buddhists, and others worked together seeking after peaceful protests against the apartheid system of government within the a long time fair some time recently flexibility in 1994. They were motivated by Gandhi, who had culminated his methodology of non-violent Satyagraha whereas living in South Africa, additionally by the activism of Dr. Martin Luther Lord, Jr. (d. 1968), who included Jews and Muslims as well as Christians in



his gracious rights development in the Joined together States. As well as giving critical interfaith figures, the twentieth century saw the creation of various interfaith organizations. Indeed some time recently the Holocaust of six million Jews beneath Nazi rule, a few Jews and Christians were assembly together and indeed talking about controversial matters, such as Jesus' part inside Judaism. In Christianity, the ameliorates of the second Vatican council, particularly as declared in the manuscript *Nostra Aetate* (1965), indirectly deserted the ancient roman catholic teaching of "outside the church, no salvation." Pope Paul VI fabricated the particular section in the roman curia for associations with followers of other religions in 1964 and in 1988 turned as the pompous council for inter-faith dialogue. Interestingly, the official associations of church with the Jews continued through the pontifical council for advocating Christian integrity. In 1971, the world council of churches, a supported institution of various Protestant and Orthodox churches generated a sub-section, dialogue with people of living faiths and ideologies. Entities of other faith acted as the symbols of good inter-faith associations such as 14th Dalai Lama of Tibetan Buddhism and other modern religious leaders take part for encouraging inter-faith religious dialogue. Such activities inclusive of local, national and global conferences unified a large numbers of intellectuals and advocates of diverse faiths in order to negotiate about the issues of inter-faith and global concern. Reverend Moon's International Religious Foundation (IRF) in 1985, called the biggest meeting of religious leaders on American soil to date. The meeting of world's religions (AWR) which was held in New Jersey congregated more than thousands most famous spiritual and religious leaders across the globe. In 1990, Baba Virsa Singh a Sikh guru established a organization for advance studies in comparative religion at gobind sadan, a farm in the suburbs of DEhli, India, where various people from all religion search their way to ask for wisdom.

1.2 Existing Issues to Inter-Religious Discourse in Pakistan:

The shared discourse among the scholars of all religions not merely promote the supporters of other religion to set the basis for the pleasing shared association yet it will help to build the positive image of Pakistan internationally. The supporters of various religions know this fact that just shared discourse, amiable social associations and abolition of bigotries can pushed Pakistan towards the path of progression and development. Nevertheless, the distressing reality is that an adequate amount of religious, cultural and sectarian clusters are yet perplexed and do not understand the procedure, nature and the goals of the inter-religious discourse. Therefore, the accomplishment of inter-religious discourse faces a multiple issues in Pakistan. A few radical religious organizations have been expanding negative dissemination that the minorities in Pakistan are working with the foreign authorities which is against the integrity and national interest of Pakistan. They covet to carry on having the association with the Jews, Christians and the Hindus grounded on disharmony, forbearance, bigotry, and hate furthermore, people could not forget the ill treatment of Jews, Christians and the Hindus in the religio-political arena of life. These clusters are scholastically uninformed about the convictions of others and have no comprehension of the current day world. In contrast, the religious ethnic-group of Pakistan also exhibits the reckless



mentality. They have gone against the law of blasphemy rather than publically censuring blasphemy. One more miserable reality in such manner is that individuals who are blamed for blasphemy take off from the country as opposed to protecting themselves. The states of the nations which are prevalently Christians safeguard them as well as respect them with an extraordinary convention. A few Hindus in Sindh are likewise answerable for the unwillingness and semi-disappointment of this inter-religious discourse. The examples of their departure from Pakistan to India are very few, yet the media broadcast these occurrences for an enormous scope. The backdrop of these episodes is normally social and financial rather than spiritual, however it is by and large featured that the Hindu young ladies are compelled to alter their faith in order to wed Muslims without their will. The circumstance made by various people and communities has adversely impacted the correspondence and positive associations among the diverse ethnic groups. This has poorly marked the different strides of the inter-religious discourse. In this socio-religious and geo-political potentials, it is very vital for the Pakistani country to encourage perspectives and make strides which are helpful to establish a milieu beneficial for inter-religious discourse. In such manner, a fair-minded evaluation of the elements and intentions which verify significant obstacles in the way of this discourse is vital. It is likewise similarly important to have a careful study of the essential difficulties looked on the way of the inter-religious discourse in the present international situation of religious, socio-political volatility, prejudice and cacophony. It is the require of great importance that every one of the strict gatherings and organizations has an exhaustive and fair-minded study of these difficulties and formulate modes and structures which can stop these difficulties and set out the ground works of concurrence, harmony and concordance in the state. A fair-minded study and examination of these difficulties will be introduced here.

1.3 Insufficient Perceptive of The Real Nature and Soul of the Discourse:

The outcome of the inter-religious discourse relies on the communal understanding and wit of the people and countries. The fact is that ordinary citizens know nothing about the soul and nature of this discourse; they are fairly befuddled about it. Few individuals think about it as the blending of various ethnic beliefs. Few individuals regard as it as their former and the premier obligation to offer expressions against it. The Indo-Pak history is brimming with such savvy clashes. A rich past of critical discussion has been a reason for hostility and contempt. It is the requirement of time to bring issues to consciousness among the ordinary masses about the significance, nature, goal and process of such discourse.

1.4 The Lack of Communal Insight and Wisdom of Being Pakistani

The spiritual, local, semantic and ethnic recognitions of the people of Pakistan have adversely impacted the feeling of sate pride. The small clusters and cults have smothered the wit and intelligence of the people of Pakistan. They are underprivileged of the right of articulation. The sentiment of as a cohesive country is practically hidden. The befuddled and hazy idea of recognitions has not identified an opportunity of sustenance and encouragement to religious



fairness. The inter-religious exchange cannot happen among countries in such conditions and various groups cannot benefit of the outcomes of such exercise.

1.5 Misunderstanding regarding other Ethnicity

The wellspring of data for the supporters of different ethnicities dwelling in Pakistan about different ethnicities depends on a biased and fractional sacred writing which makes perplexity and fears among them. The adolescent supporters and apprentice of any religion start to regard as different theologies and their adherents as lower. The stories of supremacy of their religion frequently influence the minds of youth. The conventional and ambiguous ideas encourage fanaticism, bigotry, torment and common conflicts among the devotees of various religions. In these conditions, it is the need of contemporary moment to present an aggregate edifying syllabus based in light of the aggregate learning of various religions. The specialists of the diverse religions ought to take part in such exercise for a typical reason.

1.5 The Unjust Exercise of Religion for Diplomatic Intrigue and Individual Vengeance

The logical and reasonable utilization of a faith is the statement of its usefulness the way that appealing, interesting and enchanting a religion idea is. The negative utilization of religion achieves adverse outcomes. Each and every demurs and angst raised against the legislative procedure in Pakistan are diplomatic and personal in nature. The electoral reforms are an instance of it. The minor ethnicities need to participate in the provincial and national assembly elections as discrete and now and then as aggregate. In local bodies votes, they are in some cases chose straightforwardly and some of the time circuitously. It has been seen that the sacrilege regulation has been utilized for social and financial reasons by certain people and clusters. To fault any non-believer of lewdness is neither any support of Pakistan nor to Islam. The nonappearance and non-cooperation of the non-believers in the law making procedure is likewise an obstacle in the method of the Inter-religious exchange.

1.7 The Inappropriate Approach of the Religious Scholar

Generally, by far most of learned religious scholars has consistently assumed an extremely certain part to create a socio-religious comprehension among various and different devotees of a diverse religions. Yet, unluckily, few non-Muslim researchers have deceived the ordinary masses and elevate barriers of fallacy, religious bias and cult hatred among the allies of various religions. There is a major aperture between the conventional and the moderates which does not permit them to lead a dire Inter-Faith discourse. The inner sectarianism is the primary driver of this scholarly clash. Perplexity and anxieties about the comprehension of the nature, goals, sources and system of the inter-religious exchange have been created and disseminated. Different ethnic clusters and institutions have been blaming each other for encouraging and supporting illegal intimidation. Misapprehension of Jehaad is an additional cause for the outcome of inter-religious discourse.



Indubitably, Jehaad ensures the security of the lives and right of individuals of all religions and organizations, yet, in some cases, it has not been perceived with its actual soul. The alleged religious scholar have been misconstruing and abusing this extraordinary resource of Islam in their personal sake. Some of the time, it has been utilized as an unreasonable and uncalled instrument against the minorities. The religious biased writing is one more large obstacle in the approach to starting and advancing a between confidence dialogue. This writing established an extremely bad strict climate in the Sub-Continent. The shared discourse must be begun in the wake of forbidding such toxic writing by the devotees of the relative diverse religions. This environment of bigotry, hostility, torment and terror has harmed gravely the common comprehension of the complex socio-political existence of the state. In the predominant biased religious writing and the non-agreeable disposition of the alleged religious pioneers, the drive of Inter-Faith Dialog is practically close to conceivable.

2. Literature Review:

Mohammad Elius et.al (2019) stated that, dialogue is a necessary condition among the members of different religions and cultural background. It is a source of spreading and promoting harmony and peace in today's era. This research relayed on the verses of Quran in which peace and justice are main core of investigation. The major concerns of Islamic teachings are all about promoting peace and justice for the wellbeing of humanity. Prophet (SAWW) never abuse with any non-Muslim member of the society he made many agreement with non-Muslim members this is a true example of promoting peace and prosperity among the religious groups. Islam is the foundation of encouraging interreligious dialogue between Christians, Jewish and other religion around the world. If the Qur'anic teachings are implemented in the society so hatred, mistrust, sectarianism and misconception about different religions will be removed easily.

Saeed, R. A., et.al (2021) highlighted that; the religion is the best source of providing and securing mankind in every stage of human life. Through religious values and practices we can identify what is wrong and right? The best way of acceptance and understanding of another religion is interreligious dialogue but in Pakistan the religious scenario does not meet the criteria of today's world. Under the critical conditions in Pakistan there is no way of success for an interreligious dialogue. Pakistan sectarianism is being promoted by using the political and religious authorities which will establish their political regime and authenticity. Unluckily, the imam or religious students could not play their vast and powerful role in condemning such religious violence and exploitations and participated in stressing and selling the violent behavior by teaching the slender factor of view and brainwashing of their students and fans. The various spiritual ideals, concepts and practices are definitely a purpose of confusion, disorganization and alienation the various loads regarding adherent which notion, principle and traditions. In such dangerous scenario there may be need of the interreligious speak to defend the humanity and to recognize the diverse religions and their perception shape as well. In this critical scenario there



is an urgent need of interreligious dialogue.

3. Research methodology:

This study followed the qualitative approach within the shape of contextual analysis. Data had been accrued from the primary reasserts of Islam, that is, the Qur'an and Sunnah (Prophetic traditions) and scholarly articles and books have been reviewed. The critiques of modern-day religious scholars have additionally been analyzed to apprehend the character of interreligious communicate in Islam.

4. Results and discussions

The accomplishment of inter-religious discourses, straightforwardly, relies on the socio-political system of a specific country. It is, generally, acknowledged that it is the above all else obligation of the government to protect and safe the fundamental rights of all the various groups of the state. Yet, unluckily, the state organizations and the legal system of Pakistan have not been versatile, dynamic and efficient in such manner. The Pakistani diplomatic groups have been supposed allies and harbingers of equivalent basic rights for every group of the country as per their own interests. Other than, they have not been capable to perform any affirmative and significant part for such reason. The state heads of Pakistan, definitely, can play a crucial part to curtail and ensure the trends of fanaticism, torment and disparity in the state. They can ascertain a good and sturdy association with the ordinary inhabitant of the country by their diplomatic members, activists and laborers. They might have the approach at region and city level towards the supporters of all the creeds, ethnic groups and factions. These social exercises can be set down and encouraged by such associations. People associated with various languages, creeds and locality might contribute and discuss their perspectives and contemplations with each other by these exercises. Such observances might take a few forms; games and athletics, scholarly meetings and social events so forth. People associated with diverse social and religious backdrops can come nearer and together via such platforms. So the psychological and actual gaps can be decreased between the religious communities of them state.

4. Recommendations

In the light of comprehensive discussion, we can easily say that Pakistan should work and function as a steady and moderate sacred country due to its spiritual diversity and significant geographical position. With the help of mutual feelings of tolerance, acceptance, equality and understanding can give assurance for a better situation in the religious as well as cultural life. Under the present religious scenario of Pakistan, this unfavorable phenomenon highlighted that no dimension of success is available for the fulfillment of the interreligious dialogue in the society. There is a vital need to end these challenges and barriers which are continuously triggering the structure of the society and also the concept of dialogue. To ending this situation following recommendation are



made: Opposing all acts of violence committed in the name of religion in order to promote and maintain peace; urging the protection of religious and cultural by speaking up against injustice, discrimination, marginalization, and minorities being harmed in the name of religion; promoting dialogue and condemn non-violence acts when Extremists who use violence try to manipulate religion to defend violent behavior. Create networks and collaborations with various religious and faith-based institutions, local secular institutions and communities nationwide and internationally. Seeking a deeper comprehension of the role that laws and policies can play in promoting social harmony and peace; attempting to turn tense vertical the interactions between the state and civic society by engaging everyone and fostering respect in favor of variety in religion and culture Promoting trust in officials and the government institutions that exist for everyone's benefit societal members; forming alliances and networks with religious and faith-based organizations communities to advocate for and put into effect policies to engage a variety of the community's. Create bridges to cultivate & promote respect by the religious leaders, any anti-non believer exercises relied on exploitation and discrimination ought to be banned. Make strategies and policies to overcome misunderstanding and stereotypes regarding another religion that affects harmony and peace of the society. Finally, address all forms of intolerance, prejudice and sectarian and biased religious debate or literature should be banned because it affects the relationship between the groups in the society.

5. Conclusion:

In today's world there is an increasingly major concern is dialogue between the followers of different religions, cultural backgrounds and ethnicities. People are living in a global world with multiple communities, religions, beliefs, ideologies and practices. There is a vital need of interfaith dialogue for maintaining harmony and peaceful co-existence among them. Flowers of mutual harmony and prosperity can be blossomed through inter-faith dialogue among the member of Pakistani society. Interreligious dialogue is the best source of spreading teachings of Islam in Islamic republic of Pakistan in which tolerance and acceptance of different diversity is the major concern of the dialogue. Islamic teachings never allow anyone to abusing or accusing baselessly on the basis of different religious beliefs.

The current scenario of Pakistan facing numerous hurdles like unnecessary misconceptions regarding sectarian beliefs are being spread on the name of religion, people uses religion for personal benefits and taking revenge because of differences on the religious as well as cultural diversity. Extremism is getting higher day by day that's why our religious leader are disappointed to seeing masses in this critical situation. Our nation is still unaware of the true spirit and meaning of dialogue. In this alarming situation our leaders, teachers, instructors, police judiciary should play their vital roles to overcome this situation.



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