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**The Establishment of Peace and Harmony in Pakistan from the Teachings of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ****Dr. Ambreen Atiq\***

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Email: [dr.ambreenatiq@greenwich.edu.pk](mailto:dr.ambreenatiq@greenwich.edu.pk)**Abstract**

Pakistan is an Islamic state whose foundation are laid on Peace and Harmony, but from few decades Pakistan is facing the issue of Extremism and radicalism. This issue is now challenging the state and its systems. The extremism affects the Pakistani society in all aspects like religion, politics and education. Religious fanaticism has created distortion in our society. We are the victim of religious extremism, that nobody wants to hear any word against his religious beliefs and dogma. Every one considers its beliefs superior to others. While the political leaders nurture their workers on fanaticism about their ideology that they are not supposed to accept the ideology and philosophy of others. Our education system is also producing a radical generation with narrow mindedness and extremism due to inappropriate curriculum and teaching methodologies. Even today our curriculum is silent on tolerance, philanthropy and Muslim humanitarian values. We have failed miserably in establishing an atmosphere of Peace, security and brotherhood in the region. This article explores the factors, causes and background of extremism in Pakistan in order to move towards a solution from Prophet Muhammad life and teachings that can control the rising tides of extremism in Pakistan and to develop Peace and harmony in society..

**Keywords:** Extremism, Radicalism, Peace, Harmony, Society, Ideology**Introduction**

Peace generally denotes to a state of tranquility and serenity or the lacking of conflict, violence, or disturbance. Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary defines Peace as: "When there is no war or violence in a country or in an area, it is considered in the situation of Peace. It also refereed as a period of time in which state remains calm, of peacefulness and living in alliance with others."<sup>1</sup> According to the World Book Encyclopedia: "Peace is the status of calmness, quiet and freedom from disturbance."<sup>2</sup> While harmony recommends cooperation, mutual respect, and the coexistence of diverse perspectives and the organization and balance of diverse and different elements of a society. It literally means communal reliance and acceptance, a sense of belonging, ethnic value, collaboration, co- operation, and a sense of settlement.<sup>3</sup> So peace and harmony is the status of calmness and peacefulness where people widely accept the diverse opinions and resolve conflicts with mutual collaboration in a respected way. Together, peace and harmony create an environment where individuals and groups can thrive, fostering understanding and collaboration. Peace and harmony are the fundamental requirement for a balanced society. It is an essential condition for the survival of mankind. Peace and harmony can bring a pacific and constant order to society. A peace full and harmonious society nourish the potential of individuals and cultivate the civilization and culture of nations. The sustainable development of society is possible by the establishment of peace and harmony in society, resulting in the prosperity of human and mankind. It provides the

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true and solid security to the individuals and fulfilling their feeling of sanctuary. A world without peace is like a jungle where strong one rule and deprive weak from their basic necessities.

The history is witnessed to flourish the civilizations where peace was established, otherwise numerous civilizations and nations vanished who were failed to acquire the standards of peace in the society.

Peace and harmony is an essential factor for stability and prosperity. When people with diverse cultures, values and understandings work together with more acceptance and tolerance, they must unite for the solutions of bigger societal issues like poverty, climate change, conflicts etc. A society where conflicts are resolved on the basis of dialogues and mutual understandings can flourish in a better way than the societies where people quarrel on little issues, making them indecision major societal challenging issues.

The presence of Peace develops the state of coordination in the society. It is the proof of love, compassion and brotherhood in society. The people not only understand each other's opinion in a bigger frame, but also learn to accept and tolerate the different perspectives of people. It cultivates the sense of empathy among people. It allows people to raise the value of different perspectives which lead them to more respectful communications and a strong bond of community. It will foster an environment where peace and harmony can flourish. Creating a place where diversity is practiced and conflicts are resolved with dialogues rather than violence.

### **Radicalism in Pakistani Society:**

#### **factors, causes and background of extremism in Pakistan:**

Radicalism is the extreme behavior and attitude of Pakistani people is a multidimensional problem influenced by various factors, including political uncertainty, economic challenges, sectarian divisions, and the impact of banned militant groups

**Historical Context or Background of Extremism in Pakistan:** The roots of extremism can be traced back to the Afghan War in the 1980s, which increased the radicalization and extremism in Pakistani society by affecting the Politics, religion and social behaviors in Pakistan. Mainly caused the rise of Pakistani militancy and terrorism, related to militants, drugs and modern weapons influx in Pakistan. That laid a foundation for current extremism situations.<sup>4</sup> The concept of 'global Jihad' introduced from Afghan war led to the "war on Terror". It initiated the new era for politico-religious movements in the world. These movements originated from the land of Afghanistan but flourished in the territory of Pakistan. It developed a new culture of terrorism, extremism, radicalism, based on fanaticism and intolerance. It triggered with other national, regional and international changes, which ultimately directed the country towards a security alert. The Presence of foreigner Jihadists adversely affect the Pak-Afghan tribal area.<sup>5</sup>

**Religious Factors:** Pakistan is home to a diverse range of religious beliefs and ideologies, Sectarian strains between different sects have driven the sense of intolerance, violence and discrimination among the people. The political rise of sectarian school of thoughts in early 80's was one of the main reason of the escalation of religious extremism and radicalism in the society. As these school of thoughts were flourished by the political support at that time, the conflicts among these sect's ideologies led to the disputes of their respective Later their religious educational institutions contributed to their sectorial education only.

**Educational factor:** All the school of thoughts are flourished by their educational institutions or madrasah, where sectarian teachings are mandatory, which conveyed and preached their sects

philosophies only, considering others sects concepts and views wrong and out of Islam. Students trained from the religious institutions are more devoted and committed to their ideologies and school of thoughts. Estimates of 2008 put the overall figure at over 45,000. In Punjab, the numbers of madrasas are 26,000. The NWFP have 10,000, Sindh 4,000, and Baluchistan 5,000. These seminaries accommodate approximately 6.2 million students and 2.5 million teachers. Madrasas serving for Shia population are estimated to be 4-10%.<sup>6</sup> Extremism among students from religious madrasas in Pakistan is a multifaceted matter that involves various causes, including socioeconomic circumstances, political impacts, and the particular curriculum and teachings of different sects. Each sect promotes certain interpretation of Islam, which can raise intolerance towards other beliefs or sects. The influence of specific rigid teachings can shape students' views considerably.

**Political Factors:** The political landscape in Pakistan, including the role of various extremist groups, can impact the society significantly. Some may align with certain political ideologies, further implanting extremist views among workers for electoral goals, acquire the militant's groups also. Political uncertainty, corruption, and weak governance, and abandonment of Law and order situations contributed to an atmosphere where extreme behaviors can thrive. socio-economic and political inequalities lead the radical individuals who question the government's legitimacy. Local and international political changes and radical statements by extremist organizations' leaders incited the citizen's attitude towards extremism. It generates a panic in society and serve as the foundation for terrorism in country.<sup>7</sup> Now fanaticism, instability, violence, and anger are becoming the prominent image of Pakistani people. People in society are impatient in simple situations, which can be handled easily, but people are responding weirdly in such situations and are losing their capability to handle the conflicts and disagreements. Everyone tries to prove them right, not willing to understand the viewpoint of the others and try to impose their opinion on others. Fanaticism in Pakistan amplified after 2013's elections with the Political protest by a renowned political party, where the leader provoked the political opponents with threats and personal attacks. The political speeches are not based on party agenda, vision and ideology but it is now based on blame game. Now the people respond severely on political and religious matters and do not care about the tone and language and do not bother for the consequences of his or her words. This socio- political intolerance is increasing day by day.<sup>8</sup> As a supporter the workers of these Political leaders show lack of tolerance and not accept the people with different opinions or belong to different Political backgrounds. Rather they impose their views on political disagreements and conflicts. The freedom of speech is practiced at worst degree.

**Socio-Economic factor:** Peace and harmony of society is provenly disturbed by high poverty rates, lack of education, and unemployment. These factors can make the youth more inclined to extremist ideologies. Economic marginalization often leads to radicalization in a society.

Addressing extremism in Pakistan requires a comprehensive approach that tackles underlying the religious, political, educational and socio-economic issues. The resolution lies in the following of Islamic Teachings, promoting education, and raises inclusive governance. Extremism can be overcome in society by the message of peace and harmony of Islam.

### **The Concept of Peace and Harmony in Islam:**

Islam is an Arabic word, means peace, harmony, and security. It literally means 'surrender' or 'submission'. Islam, as a faith, means total and sincere submission to Allah, to live in peace and tranquility. It is a religion that provides safety and security to its followers, who believe in the

oneness of Allah, entirely involves in obedience of Allah, completely surrender themselves before Allah and follows the Teaching of Islam by heart. Islam is the religion of peace and tranquility, means by Islam is the protection shield for Muslims from all the injustice and harms. It never allows its followers to harm others as well. This is the basic rule to achieve the peace and harmony in the society. Peace is accomplished through active obedience to the revealed commandments of Allah by Prophet Muhammad SAW. The word Islam is rooted from the Arabic word 'Salama or Salima', which means safety, security, protection and peace. Islam's foundation based on absolute peace, harmony, and protection".<sup>9</sup> Allah has chosen Islam as a religion for mankind" Quran has clearly mentioned:

“Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam.”<sup>10</sup>

Islam is a religion of peace and security. It is a religion of love, affection, tranquility, tolerance and peacefulness. Allah orders human beings to embrace Islam completely, not only verbally but practically follows all the commandments of Islam. Allah says in Quran:

"O, you who believe! Enter perfectly in Islam, and follow not the footsteps of Satan (Shaitan). Verily! He is to you a plain enemy.”<sup>11</sup>

This verse clearly mentions the fact that the right path and the way to ultimate success lies in the following of Quran. The other ways are the ways of Shaitan which should not be followed. Islam gives the correct ways of doings and promotes salamah, that is peace and tranquility in the world:

“Abu Hurayra(RA)articulated that, the Messenger of Allah (SWT)defines the Muslim as a person from whose tongue and hand all other people are secure.”<sup>12</sup>

Allah considers the life of a human being a precious one and respecting its freedom to live and verified its dignity:

"If anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder, or (and) to spread mischief in the land, it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind.”<sup>13</sup>

Ahadith also stresses on the value of the life of a human being:

“Abdul Bin Umar RA narrated “Once, I saw the Messenger of Allah (SWT) circumambulating the Kabah and addressing it “How excellent you are and how sweet your smell is! How grand you are and how to your sacredness is! By the One in Whose Hand is Muhammad's soul, the holiness of a believer's property and blood is greater in the sight of Allah than your sacredness. We must think only well of a believer”.”<sup>14</sup>

In order to establish peace in society and resolve social conflicts, Islam offers a mechanism for conflict resolution, settlements and reconciliation, justice, and good governance. A well-functioning state, political stability and law and order situation is required to maintain the state of peace in society. It can be obtained by electing eligible honest and devoting candidates, who are trained by the teachings of Islam. The economic system of Islam ensures the balance distribution of resources and services for every citizen of the state. When there will be equal opportunity of education, health and economic prospects for everyone, there will be peace and harmony in society. Islam emphasizes on the provision of rights and duties on everyone, and clearly mentions the acceptance and fulfilling the rights of others as the duties of individuals. The accountability of duties in Islam makes the individuals more concerned about their responsibilities and tasks. It

enables the elimination of dishonesty and corruption in the society at all levels. Low corruption enhances the capability of different institutions of society inculcating the confidence and trust among individuals. It improves the efficiency of business and economic of the state.

**Suggestions:**

In order to control the state of extremism and radicalism in Pakistani society some initiatives must be taken:

- Education reforms must be taken in both government and religious institutions, to achieve uniformity and national cohesion. These reforms include the updated curriculum of Religious Institutions with the practical teachings of Patience, tolerance, and acceptance. Sectarian conflicts must not be preached and taught in these seminaries.
- Political reforms must be taken. There will be ban on hate speeches and media trials and propagandas of political leaders. Their addresses must be properly planned and managed by providing them freedom of speech with certain code of conduct.
- Socio-economic reforms are introduced to maintain the peace and harmony in society, the government must initiate skill development programs in all educational institutions in order to build a skilled workforce. The Provision of jobs, career development and employment opportunities for youth, help in reducing the poverty level of state. The youth will not be disappoint showing radical behavior.
- Articulate a comprehensive national media policy for a cohesive and harmonized Society with proper code of conduct and policies for mass media. Manage the radical narratives and hate speech and conflict statements on all media platforms.

## Notes & References:

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- <sup>9</sup> Islam The religion of Peace, Terrorism is not Islam, Birmingham (UK) Mosques response to ISIS, P-2, 2nd edition.
- <sup>10</sup> Surah Al-Imran 3: 19
- <sup>11</sup> Surah Al Baqarah 2: 208
- <sup>12</sup> Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Emaan, Baab: Al-Muslim Man Salaamul Muslimon Man Lisaanah Waidiah, hadith No: 10.
- <sup>13</sup> Surah Al Maieda 5: 32
- <sup>14</sup> Sunnan Ibn-e-Majah, Kitabul Fatan, hadith No: 3934.