



CONTRIBUTIONS OF SUFISM TO THE MAINTENANCE GLOBAL PEACE

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Abstract

Since the inception of consciousness, humans have sought methods to explore their individual existence. Sufism is widely regarded as the most embraced spiritual path for attaining the realization of Allah, with the aim of fostering love, harmony, and peace within society. This study specifically aims to examine the contributions of Sufis in the maintenance of global peace. Sufism has endeavored to unite diverse groups across the world, with the objective of establishing a practical roadmap to peace. This objective is of great importance as society is currently experiencing increasingly tumultuous times, necessitating the establishment of a sustainable framework for peaceful cooperation and humanity. It is widely acknowledged that Sufism has the potential to cultivate worldwide peace, as it offers an impartial approach that fosters a peaceful environment based on tolerance, empathy, and serenity. Contrary to Western misunderstandings, Sufism is open to all individuals regardless of their social class, race, ethnicity, caste, or creed. The essence of Sufism lies in the love for Allah and the belief in the ultimate authority of Allah.

Abstrak

Sejak awal kesadaran, manusia telah mencari cara untuk mengeksplorasi keberadaan diri mereka. Praktik tasawuf secara luas dianggap sebagai jalan spiritual yang patut dianut untuk mencapai kehadiran Allah, untuk tujuan menumbuhkan cinta, harmoni, dan perdamaian dalam masyarakat. Penelitian ini secara khusus bertujuan untuk mengkaji kontribusi para sufi dalam memelihara perdamaian global. Kaum Sufi telah berusaha menawarkan untuk menyatukan berbagai kelompok di seluruh dunia, dengan tujuan membangun peta jalan praktis menuju perdamaian. Tujuan ini sangat penting karena masyarakat saat ini mengalami masa-masa disintegrasi dan polarisasi yang mengharuskan perlunya adanya pembentukan kerangka peta jalan berkelanjutan untuk kerja sama damai dan kemanusiaan. Diakui secara luas bahwa tasawuf memiliki potensi untuk menumbuhkan perdamaian di seluruh dunia, karena menawarkan pendekatan yang tidak memihak dan membentuk lingkungan yang damai berdasarkan toleransi, empati, dan ketenangan. Berbeda dengan perspektif Barat,

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tasawuf terbuka untuk semua individu tanpa memandang kelas sosial, ras, etnis, kasta, atau keyakinan mereka. Esensi tasawuf terletak pada cinta kepada Allah dan kepercayaan pada otoritas tertinggi Allah



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INTRODUCTION

Islamic Sufism holds significant importance and has deep-rooted traditions within Islamic societies, which advocate for spirituality. The term Sufism is derived from the word "suf", and its literal meaning is wool, which refers to coarse woolen garments worn by the Sufis to embrace poverty. This practice clearly demonstrates that Sufis have no desire for worldly pleasures. The focus of Sufism has evolved over time as Islam has grown and expanded. Initially, Sufism was associated with the fear of God, but then it shifted its focus to the affirmation of the doctrine of love, and subsequently, Sufism promoted it as an individual's spiritual journey toward God. Sufism became an emotional connection for believers and worshippers, through which the Sufis attracted followers towards Sufism (Metcalf, 2012).

The Sufi experts established various schools of thought based on their beliefs. Some primarily focused on "SAMAA," such as moving rhythmically (whirling), vocalizing (chanting), and engaging in the devotions of the Sufi experts. On the other hand, another school of thought believed in adhering strictly to the teachings of the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad, which led to conflicting ideas between Sufis and religious scholars. Both religious scholars and Sufis shared the belief in spreading knowledge among the general public. Religious scholars emphasized institutional methods of knowledge transfer and engaged in charitable work by establishing shelters for orphans and hospitals for the needy. There are numerous Sufi orders led by a master and consisting of many followers and students. These Sufis choose to live a life of simplicity and destitution (FIKR). Sufi orders primarily emphasized the attainment of love and unity with Allah. Some Sufi orders even held political influence, particularly in the Ottoman Empire. Many Muslim calligraphers were closely associated with Sufi experts (Hammarlund et al., 2017).

The world has now become a global community and has progressed in all areas due to the use of technology and efficient means of communication. If there is any disturbance in any part of the world, the entire world feels its impact, so the social and religious well-being of the world depends on a peaceful and harmonious society. Therefore, establishing understanding between people of different faiths through mutual trust and respect is the only way to create a just and peaceful society. A large majority of Muslims reside across the globe. By the year 2020, the Muslim population is projected to reach approximately 4.7 billion (Kettani, 2010).

There are nearly 50 independent Muslim nations worldwide, and a significant number of Muslims live in various countries and hold important social and political positions. Islam and Muslims have played a crucial role in the development of human civilizations and sociocultural changes. However, in today's world, we are divided along religious lines instead of living in harmony. Muslims, in particular, are often seen as being at odds with people of

other religions, but this is due to a misconception resulting from the misinterpretation of the concept of Jihad. It is therefore essential to recognize and identify individuals who seek to disrupt peace, regardless of their religious affiliation, whether it be Islam, Christianity, or any other religion. It is highly unethical to associate acts of terrorism or terrorists with any specific religion, as no religion promotes such activities. To dispel misunderstandings about the religious beliefs of all faiths, joint dialogue sessions should be conducted to help everyone understand that religions do not endorse violence and terrorism. Religious leaders should play a role in promoting harmony and unity in the world. Islamic Sufism, in particular, is based on love and peace, and Muslim Sufis have exemplified Islam as a religion of peace through their behavior and attitude toward society. This demonstrates that Mysticism and Sufism are inherent aspects of every religion, and Islamic Sufism, in particular, emphasizes love, peace, and harmony for the betterment of humanistic societies, as Islam places a focus on humanity, tranquility, and harmonious society (Tahir & Ali, 2011).

Sufis have played a significant role in exploring realities and truths through their wisdom, which Allah has bestowed upon them. These realities and truths about the universe have been a puzzle for humanity, which is uncovered by the Sufi saints. Discovering these realities is not a simple task, they have achieved through annihilating their existence by following the path of Allah and submitting themselves before him. The truths and facts of the universe are revealed by Allah only to those who find ways to escape from worldly pleasures to uncover Allah.

Once they have attained true realization, they become liberated from all problems related to life, whether emotional or mental, etc. They come to know everything there is to know, just as God himself knows everything, the essential knowledge of certainty and truth that comes with annihilation and permanent non-being. By following this path, individuals will undoubtedly become aware of the mysterious connection between humans and God. After becoming deeply immersed in the reality of this relationship, the reformers (Sufis) migrated to various corners of the world to spread the message of peace among common people regardless of their religion. One notable Sufi scholar and reformer, Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah, migrated from Rajouri Shahdara Sharief Kashmir to benefit people through the laws of Islamic Shariah. For him, Shariah was a tool for social change, and mysticism is the foundation of all knowledge, whether it be science, art, philosophy, religion, or literature. Therefore, it is highly beneficial for everyone to follow the Sufi path (Andrabi, 2016).

Sufism is portrayed as a means of educating moral and other religious objectives, which has been confirmed by Sufi saints who held prominent positions in Muslim societies (Carl, 2017). In Islamic history, Sufism reached its peak during the medieval period, Arabic and Persian Sufi literature became the renowned literary work of the Sufi traditions (Carl, 2002).

METHOD

This study has concentrated on qualitative approaches by investigating the significance of Sufism in relation to global harmony through various qualitative research methods to establish a comprehensive comprehension of people's perspectives on Sufism and world peace. To achieve this objective, the researcher has opted for library research and content analysis as

the chosen methodologies to examine every possible detail and encompass all aspects of the research problem. The research materials have been sourced from different libraries, newspapers, and websites. This investigation explores the new dimension of Sufism and also seeks to gain a thorough understanding based on existing literature about Sufism and its role in promoting world peace. Therefore, the researcher has focused on conducting a detailed study on the subject using qualitative research methods, and the necessary information has been gathered for further analysis. Miles & Huberman (1994) theory was applied to analyze the final data collected, data display, data reduction and drawing conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Moulana Jalaluddin Rumi cautions that many evil beings disguise themselves as Sufi teachers. He advises individuals not to offer their hand and become a student of someone claiming to be a Sufi teacher or a spiritual guide unless they are convinced that their Sufi teacher is genuine and has fully surrendered themselves to Allah, a person of integrity and sincerity whose sole purpose is to help individuals become perfect and assist them in purifying their inner selves, allowing them to perceive the Divine within themselves. A Sufi teacher should have no other desires, attachments, or plans. They should not seek wealth and riches, but rather have a sole desire to attain the Divine and spread knowledge of the Divine. Only such an individual is qualified to teach Sufism. One might argue that it is extremely challenging to find such a teacher in this world. However, if one searches within themselves, the Divine will guide them on the right path (Ingram, n.d).

The Holy Quran discusses the three inner consciousnesses. According to biologists, humans are the result of evolution, having evolved from apes and monkeys. If this is true, then the animalistic desires in humans represent the animal consciousness, known as "nafse-e-ammara" in Sufism. Sufis acknowledge that humans initially possess all the instincts and behaviors of animals. Animals constantly seek food, satisfy their hunger, fulfill their sexual desires, fight for their territory, and conquer anyone who threatens them. They live solely for their own desires and lust. In individuals with this mindset, their inner consciousness is filled with anger, jealousy, and other ego-driven instincts. The animal consciousness leads to pride and hardens the heart (Arasteh, 2014). Therefore, the primary teachings emphasize that a person's heart, mind, and soul are filled with animal consciousness and that they must overcome it. This can be achieved through various methods taught in Sufism.

The second stage is called "nafse-e-lawwama", the awareness which educates you about right and wrong. Quran has informed you about what is right and what is wrong. Man continues to develop moral awareness which constantly reminds him of what he should and should not do. This is based on the teachings of society and also on the purity that resides in the heart and mind. Moral consciousness reminds man not to commit wrongs that harm others and take away their freedom. Wrongdoings destroy the goodness in both man and nature (Ali & Zainab, 2010).

The third consciousness is known as "nafse-e-mutmainna". In this self, divinity resides. The self that seeks the Lord; man starts to live according to the commands of the Lord and remains in a purified state. He practices day in and day out to maintain that state. He constantly remembers the names of the Lord. The cleanliness of the body is achieved by taking regular

baths with water. The cleanliness of the tongue is achieved by avoiding negative speech. The cleanliness of the mind is achieved by removing anything that disturbs the mind, maintaining equanimity, and nurturing a benevolent mind and heart. So, the "nafs-e-lawwama" attains the Divine. This perfection is achieved through daily efforts to keep the light in the heart and mind. This process is carried out from morning until evening. A Sufi master instructs his disciple to be true to oneself, to be true to the mind and heart, and to follow the commands of God. As a humble servant, one must carry out all assigned duties in the most perfect manner without disturbing one's mind and heart. The main goal in life is to see the inner light and to enlighten oneself. To enlighten one's being with knowledge of the Divine. To live a very honest, simple, humble, and noble life (Balsley, 2010).

Tasawwuf, Sufism and Irfan are the fundamental concept of Islam, it imparts teachings of humanity, brotherhood, tranquility, and the concept of monotheism i.e. oneness of Allah (the concept of Tauheed). Sufism provides guidance on how to attain perfection in Tariqat and nurtures our heart, mind, and soul (Lings, 1993). Sufism is a means to awaken the soul and embrace a simple way of life through the practice of meditation, recitation, and other Sufi rituals based on the belief in the unity of Allah, the Last Holy Prophet (SAWW), by strengthening faith, performing Salah five times a day, righteous actions, Taqwa (Awe of Allah), repentance, complete submission to Allah, sincerity, gratitude, remembrance of Allah, hope, righteousness, insightfulness, and so on. The Holy Prophet said: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should speak good or remain silent" (Islam, 2005). Sufism also assists in illuminating our soul and purifying our heart and mind. Sufism is not considered separate from Islam; instead, it is a segment or branch of Islamic spirituality (Osho, 1999).

The notion of Sufism (Mysticism) is associated with unity and promoting harmony and humanity in societies by fostering a deeper understanding of life. The Sufis focus on societies to foster brotherhood by respecting the beliefs, religions, and sacred texts of others. Essentially, Sufism is centered around love, compassion, and kindness towards all beings. It is a spiritual way of life that draws its inspiration from Islamic principles, emphasizing less on outwardly performed rituals and more on one's inner self, specifically highlighting Islamic mysticism. In Arabic, Sufism is known as Tassawuf (تصوف), and those who follow this path are referred to as Sufi (صوفي) or Sufia (صوفياء) (stoddart & Nicholson, 1998). The pious Sufis practice the true essence of Islam, guided by the principles of repentance (توبه), trust (توكل), and patience (صبر). A person who embraces Sufism renounces worldly pleasures and leads a simple and disciplined life (Platts, 1939). Sufism encompasses a wide range of concepts, but it primarily begins with embracing poverty and detaching oneself from desires (نفس) (Murad, 2008). Sufism is a mystical form of Islam that nurtures the Sufi culture of religious traditions based on fundamental concepts. It is deeply ingrained in the local cultural context, influencing local traditions, norms, and values by assimilating the indigenous cultural setup and values (Cunningham, 2014).

The Concept of Purification of the Soul in Islam (Tazkiya-e-Nafs)

The literal definition of the term Tazkiya (تزكية) is the process of eliminating both internal and external impurities. Almost every Muslim is well aware of external impurities, such as personal cleanliness. However, there are numerous internal impurities, which include

weak faith, false beliefs, and idolatry, relying on humans or entities other than Allah, envy, pride, hatred and ill-will, materialistic mindset, and so on. (Picken, 2011).

It is essential to always prioritize two important aspects when it comes to internal impurities. Allah Almighty has provided the two best and most accessible ways through which a person can achieve internal purity. Firstly, the revelation through Holy books and secondly, the sending of Prophets to explain and teach those books. In other words, Allah did not consider it enough to send Prophets without Holy books or books without Prophets.

Therefore, Holy books and Prophets hold equal importance in understanding the commands of Allah. This is evidence that Allah has sent Prophets to teach these books for the benefit of humanity, providing us with knowledge and wisdom, and teaching us that both books and Prophets are equally crucial for our proper upbringing and development. And true perfection can only be attained when the teachings of the Prophet and the heavenly sacred scripture come together to guide us toward becoming better individuals (Ishaq, 2014).

Sufism is the inner essence of Islamic principles and is the stage where a person can achieve Tawhid, which is attained through the universal concept of *Shahadah, la ilaha ill'Allah* to express unity before Allah. The secrets of Tawhid are understood by the Sufi saints, as they truly comprehend the meaning of assertion. The assertion here clearly refers to realizing the unity of Allah and knowing that Allah is present everywhere (Nasr, 2000).

In the Qur'an, three fundamental religious approaches are mentioned: Islam, Iman, and Ihsan. These approaches/attitudes aid in understanding the true essence of Sufism. The Holy Prophet has described these approaches as three components of religion, while Kitab-ul-Iman of Sahih Bukhari discusses Islam and Iman as distinct attitudes, which may vary depending on the religious context. They may also possess different characteristics and intensities within themselves. The attitude of Islam is related to the concept of surrendering to Allah's will and is considered the minimum requirement to enter the circle of Islam. The next attitude, Iman, is seen as a more advanced level in religion, based on a strong faith in religious teachings and delving deeper into Islam. The third attitude/quality, Ihsan, is the highest level of spiritual development. This level enhances the devotee's sense of realization about religious truths, leading to the devotee attaining a direct vision. Ihsan was later expressed by the Sufis as *Mushahidah* (Direct vision), which is also expressed in the traditions of the Holy Prophet as: *"Ihsan is to worship Allah as if you see Him, for if you do not see Him, He surely sees you."*

According to Annemarie Schimmel, these three attitudes demonstrate the devotee's spiritual progress from the initial level of Islam to the final stage of Ihsan (Schimmel, 1975). Arberry argues that Islam leans more toward mystical faith than Christianity (Arberry, 1942). Sufism encompasses the essence of mysticism and contemplation, which gained more significance during the Umayyad period's development of asceticism. Understanding mysticism provides a better understanding of Sufism. The Greek concept of *Myein*, meaning closing one's eyes, cannot be achieved through ordinary means. Essentially, mysticism and Sufism involve an absolute love for Allah, along with the realization of Tawhid. Sufis prioritize Allah's love over worldly pleasures, and Allah favors these devout individuals over others (James, 2004). Similarly, Lings suggests that Islam and Sufism are inseparable, much like the heart is to the human body (Lings, 2011).

Islam and Sufism are intertwined, as Sufism represents the spiritual growth of Muslims and is nothing other than the practice of Islamic teachings in its truest form (Stoddart, 1998). Religion helps us explore our true selves spiritually, while science focuses on the external world. Unlike religion, which aids in self-discovery, science helps us understand the world around us (Sopsy, 1976). Sufism aims to improve us as Muslims and as human beings by fostering inner purity and unity with Allah (Faruqi, 1984). Sufis are so deeply immersed in the love of Allah that they renounce worldly pleasures, corruption, and materialism. However, this does not mean that they do not believe in leading a normal worldly life. Islam has never discouraged Muslims from living in the world; in fact, people are advised to maintain a balance between religion and worldly pursuits. However, a Muslim is obligated to follow Shari'ah by following the spiritual path of Tariqah in order to achieve servitude to Allah, and become His beloved (peeran, 1998).

A Sufi saint must go through certain stages known as Muqamat during the process of self-purification, which is achieved through Ahwaal (subjective experiences). The stage of Fana (annihilation) is achieved by the Sufi after attaining inner self-purification. This stage is regarded as the Kamliyat, meaning perfection. Perfection can only be attained by following the Tariqat with the guidance of a Sufi master. The Sufi master or Murshid refines his disciple by assisting them in establishing a connection between humans and Allah (Rafiabadi, 2005).

The Foundations of Nonviolence

The fundamental principles of Islamic Sufism are based on nonviolence, which is affection and pantheism and they are also a significant part of Rumi's beliefs. Love in Sufism is utilized as a relative term concerning the context. It is essentially a fusion of experiences and emotions, which establishes the thoughtfulness and deep affection to Allah in regard to the oneness of Allah (Michon, 2016). In Islamic mysticism, affection holds a very important place and is considered a principle of Tasawwuf, which enables us to attain closeness to Allah. The theories and definitions of Sufism guide us to attain the affection of Allah and to be united with him (Abrahamov, 2003). The creation of the universe is also based on divine affection, and thus, it cures all disdain, selfishness, pain, and agony.

In this context, Maulana Rumi articulates the concept of affection so beautifully that "affection is the very meaning of creation and life," Citlak (2007). According to Rumi, when the heart is filled with affection, then there is no space for hatred and violence. Similarly, when Rabia al-Adawiyya (one of the most famous female mystics) was asked if she sees Satan as an enemy, her answer was in negative and she said that she has no place for negative feelings because she is full of affection for Allah (Smith, 1994).

Maulana Rumi has a very clear perspective on the existence of good and evil. He firmly believes that evil is not in an absolute form, rather it is relative because negativity can be transformed into positivity. Rumi has a very positive approach toward life, and he never holds a grudge against others (Rumi, 4V, 2000). He was known as "the brethren of affection" as he believes that the whole world revolves around the affection of Allah (Smith, 1972). Rumi believes that affection has great power and strength to transform negative aspects of our life into positivity. For example, war can be changed into peace, bitterness into sweetness, and cruelty into compassion. His perceptions and thoughts are clearly expressed in his poetry.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

The current state of global politics has divided the world into various factions, with almost all regions experiencing conflicts. Religion is now being used as a tool to gain political and economic advantages, resulting in increased hostility. This global situation has had a significant impact on society, particularly on the youth, causing them to feel ashamed of their culture, customs, traditions, religion, and cultural values. Muslim youth, in particular, are facing confusion regarding Islamic teachings and modern Western ideas. This gap can be bridged by embracing the Sufi approach. It is crucial to establish a connection between Muslims and their religion in order to achieve social harmony. Inner and outer societal peace are essential in maintaining this harmony, as society and individuals are interconnected. Inner peace influences outer peace, and without a balance between people and society, the concept of peace cannot be promoted. Since peace and harmony are based on social values, achieving global peace is not an impossible task.

By following the principles of Islamic Shariah, a mystical approach can be adopted to lay a solid foundation for social peace and attain ultimate reality. Islamic mysticism has always played an undeniable role in Islamic history, with its roots dating back to the Umayyad era. The link between Christianity and Islam during this time gave true meaning to mysticism, which was later embraced and promoted by Islamic teachings. Although Sufism originated from Islam, it became an independent aspect due to its unique characteristics. It was later known as Sufism (Tasawwuf) among the general population, with its followers being referred to as Sufis. Sufism had a profound impact on individuals and communities, transforming their religious beliefs to some extent. The term "Sufi" (meaning woolen cloth) originated from the Arabic language and became common in the nineteenth century. Essentially, Sufism is about seeking knowledge about the ultimate reality, which is the oneness and uniqueness of Allah. The main objective of Sufis is to detach themselves from their ego by realizing that nothing is permanent except for Allah. All societies, especially Muslim societies, cannot address their social issues without resolving them through peaceful means. Violence cannot solve social issues. Pakistan, despite being a land of Sufi saints, faces numerous social issues such as terrorism and extremism, which result in the loss of human lives and property. It is believed that Sufis can play a crucial role in resolving such issues by promoting tolerance and respect. As Sufism promotes tolerance, camaraderie, affection, and unity regardless of religion, belief, and heritage, and it is rooted in genuine emotions and solidarity.

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