ISLAMIC TEACHINGS RELATED TO CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF YOUTH AMID RELIGIOUS AND SECTARIAN CHALLENGES

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Abstract

This phenomenological research dwells upon the way Muslim youth in Pakistan interpret, observe, and use Islam teachings when dealing with conflicts due to religious and sectarian variations. The study is based on Islamic Peace and Conflict Resolution Theory, ideas of Restorative Justice and Social Identity Theory and explored the ethics and practice of Islamic conflict management in the form of in-depth interviews with sixteen university students who belong to different sectarian and cultural patterns. Based on Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the participants perceive Islamic conflict resolution as an ethical framework that is lived that focuses on reconciliation (sulh), forgiveness (ʿafw), justice (ʿadl), benevolence (ihsan), good intentions (husn-e-zan), and consultation (shura). The Quranic values are used as a learning guideline in creating patience, empathy, and unity in practices. Although the youngsters understand the transformative power of the Islamic values in terms of restoring peace and enhancing social connections, they also emphasize the difficulty of such principles in practice in the context of sectarian pressures, polarization of social media, and cultural forces. The research finds that Islamic conflict management is not an ideal theological notion but a realistic moral practice that influences social conduct and enhances peace among young people. The research proposes the development of a single Quranic system of life with no sectarianism where the rule, education, and social behavior are based only on the Quranic principles of unity, justice, and peace.

Keywords

Islamic conflict management; forgiveness (ʿafw); justice (ʿadl); reconciliation (sulh); youth; sectarianism; restorative justice; Islamic peace theory.

Introduction

In Pakistan, sectarian tension between communities of Muslims tends to result in conflict, mistrust, and violence. Young people of various origins contribute significantly towards the divisions or creating a harmonious society. Islam supports the policies of justice (ʿadl) aligned with the Quranic injunctions, forgiveness (ʿafw) and reconciliation (sulh) as the key elements of peaceful conflict management.[1]

Quran also emphasizes the importance of prioritizing justice even in the situations where it clashes with the individual or societal interest, as ethical behavior is the way to promote social harmony and preservation of moral values.

"For this, justice ought to prevail. Justice is evidence-based. Jama'at-ul-Momineen, if called to testify, testify for Allah, not anyone else. Be truthful while testifying against yourself, your parents, or your relatives, affluent or poor. Allah protects both sides. Avoid letting your personal desires derail justice. Do not force your testimony or avoid testifying. Allah knows your actions." (Qur'an 4:135)[2]

Similarly, reconciliation among believers is encouraged:

"If two Momineen groups fight, make peace immediately. If one of the two factions attacks the other again, you should combat the transgressors until they return to the Divine Law's decision. If they return, make good peace. Always be just—Divine Laws value this attribute." (Qur'an 49:9)[3]

And remember that when resolving such issues

"When making peace, treat every Momineen like brothers. Divine Laws require fairness in your decision. This will keep your Jamaat enjoying Allah's Rahmat." (Qur'an 49:10)[4]

Islam, being one of the three Abrahamic monotheistic religions, is the religion of truth and embodies a complete code of life. The task of defining the Islamic law is an arduous one, mainly because the legal and moral system of the Islamic law is dynamic. The word Islam simply means a submission or a surrender to the will of Allah. The Islamic law in the Arabic language is called *fiqh* and *Shariah* is the divine law in the divine, moral and social aspects that are contained in the Quran and the Sunnah. Islamic law deals with forward-thinking and ethical values of Muslim people and offers an overall set of rules on how to act individually and in society. Fiqh is the interpretation and application of this divine law by humankind whereas Shariah is the basis of faith and practice which is commanded by Allah. The first sources of Islamic law are the Quran and the Sunnah which are backed by the second sources of Islamic law i.e. Ijma, Qiyas and Istihsan.[5]

Research Questions
The current phenomenological analysis focuses on two fundamental research questions:
1. How do youth perceive the teachings of Islam with regard to conflict resolution especially when there is a religious and sectarian diversity?
2. What is it that they translate these teachings, in the real life context, to avert or to sort out disputes caused by sectarian or interfaith tensions?

Literature Review
Islamic conflict resolution teachings highlight the important moral principles of *sulh* (reconciliation), *afw* (forgiveness), *ihsan* (excellence), and *sabr* (patience) which are entrenched in the Quran and the Hadith. Those values facilitate moral, fair, and humane solutions of conflicts.[6] Traditionally, Islamic customs have supported mediation and arbitration as the way of achieving peace and social harmony between the parties in conflict. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) mainly emphasized on justice and patience when resolving dispute and hence it has presented a model that can still be used in modern conflict management.[7] Besides, the Islamic law combines the concept

of empathy, forgiveness, reconciliation, and communal involvement- the same ones that can be compared to the contemporary system of the restorative justice. The idea behind this system is that in addition to initiating reparation in the misfortune provoked by the wrong doing, it is also meant to initiate social peace and fortify the communal ties. As one of the foundational values in the Quran and Sunnah, empathy plays a vital role in restorative justice because it builds a sense of understanding, responsibility, and healthy relationships in the community.[8] Similarly, Kenny and Leonard note the relevance of restorative justice in contemporary situations by emphasizing community involvement, moral repair and reconciliation instead of punishment.[9]

On this basis, some contend that sectarian divisions that have remained tenacious hamper the practical performance of Islamic principles of reconciliation and unity. Sectarianism is an abomination to the Quran maximum of unity Ummah and a true peace and justice can only be attained through people going beyond sectarian boundaries back to the pure path as found in the Quran. Due to the disintegration or, more accurately, a renewal of sectarian identity and reorientation of Quran significance of justice, equality, and compassion, it is possible to stabilize the social order, where conflict-resolution is based not on the division but on the joint effort of moral and spiritual commitments. This perspective complements restorative justice ideals by suggesting that sustainable peace depends not only on individual forgiveness but also on dismantling systemic divisions that perpetuate discord.[10]

Research Gap
Although there is growing interest in how Islamic and customary law can support restorative justice in Pakistan, existing studies often focus on legal institutions, victim-offender reconciliation, or juvenile justice[11]. What remains underexplored is how youth amid religious and sectarian diversity, perceive Islamic conflict resolution teachings and apply them in everyday interfaith or sectarian tensions. For example, in one study of restorative justice application in child criminal acts, there is rich description of mediation, forgiveness, and apology, but the voices of youth in sectarian settings are absent[12]. Likewise, the trends in research on the impacts of sectarianism focus on analysing institutional, political, and family effects as opposed to how young people live phenomenologically over moral and ethical decision-making (Study on The Role of Madrassas in Sectarian Violence: An Empirical Study of Karachi)[13]. The gap denotes that there is need to conduct a study that incorporates Islamic moral theology, youth identity, and practical conflict handling techniques in sectarian settings to improve the interpretations of how these values are applied and actualized.

Theoretical Framework
This research is based on the interpretive and ethical principles of Islamic Peace and Conflict Resolution Theory, which utilises the Qur'an and Sunnah as fundamental sources of moral direction for the resolution of human conflicts. Islam does not see conflict as a destructive and inherently destructive aspect but rather it is an opportunity towards ethical growth, reconciliation and the recovery of justice. Quran instructs the believers that "O Jama'at-ul-Momineen, strictly follow this Code of Law with the respect it deserves in this life. All of you should uphold this Code as one whole rather than as sects and parties. Keep in mind the blessings of Allah on you, as you were enemies, but He interconnected together your hearts, and changed you into brothers. This

deep brotherhood, based on a common ideology, is an important blessing, since you were on the brink of a pit of fire, to which He saved you. In such a way, Allah enlightens His commandments to lead you in the right way. (Qur'an 3:103).[14]

This reveals how value Allah has on the need to enhance unity, social harmony, and the importance of having ideological brotherhood as the means of preventing division and discord. In this principled paradigm, peace does not just imply the absence of conflict but it is a reflection of the presence of moral unity that is based on the divine direction.

According to Islamic Peace Theory, *sulh* (reconciliation), *afw* (forgiveness), *adl* (justice) and *ihsan* (benevolence) are necessary in order to maintain the harmony of the community and avert violence.[15] These notions are reminiscent of the Restorative Justice Theory that considers moral restoration, responsibility and civic involvement to be of greater importance than punishment.[16] The philosophies aim to recover relationships and harmony in the society, using the empathy and mutual respect on Islamic philosophy, justice (*adl*) has both moral and social aspects, and based on compassion (*rahmah*) and the need to achieve balance (*mizan*) between individual and collective interests. This conceptual correspondence makes possible the phenomenological analysis of the ways in which the Muslims adolescents internalize and apply these teachings to the interfaith and sectarian challenges.

Moreover, this framework is further assisted by the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979) that offers a socio-psychological insight into the role of group identities/sectarian affiliations in forming perceptions of conflicts.[17]. Sectional identities could worsen the situation, yet the Quranic idea of *Ummah Wahidah* (a united community) urges the believers to go beyond group boundaries and establish peace through mutual religion and ethics. This is a complex theoretical approach that forgiveness, reconciliation and eradication of structural/ideological barriers that sustain conflict are needed in achieving sustainable peace.

A complex interpretive framework is provided by the interconnection between the Islamic Peace Theory, the Restorative Justice and the Social Identity Theory. They allow us to understand the way Islamic teachings encourage the youth as the agents of peace, unity, and justice in the multicultural surroundings where people of different religions and confessions are cohabited.

Diagram No. 01
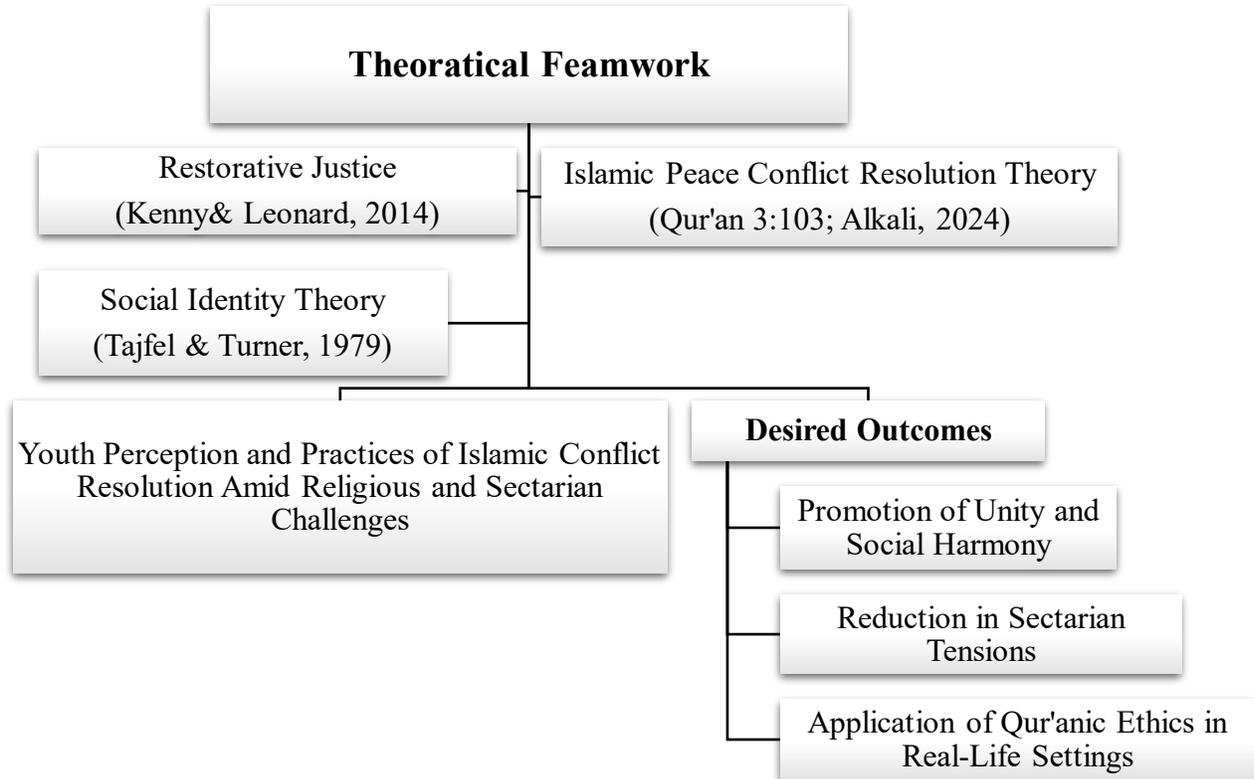
Source: Researcher's Vision

The diagram connects the emphasis of the Chicago School on the moral order and social cohesion to the models of unity, justice, and reconciliation of Quran (3:103). They create a model that shows how sectarian and interreligious conflicts are solved at the young level employing Islamic conflict management.

Research Methodology
The research design chosen in this study was a qualitative phenomenological research design in a case to examine the perceptions and practical use of the Islamic lessons by the young people in handling issues of religious and sectarian conflicts. It was possible to select the phenomenological approach due to its ability to help achieve a deep understanding of the lived experiences and the subjective meaning of social and religious reality. The research design that was used in this study was a qualitative phenomenological design to explore the perception and use of Islamic teachings by youth in terms of religious and sectarian conflicts management. The phenomenological method was chosen because it allows gaining a profound comprehension of lived experience and subjective sense related to social and religious realities.[18]. The study was organized in the Pakistani province of Punjab which is known to have a multicultural and sectarian background, thus a suitable location to study conflict resolution in the Islamic paradigm.

The sample was a purposive sample consisting of 16 participants aged 18 to 30 years primarily because qualitative research principles dictate that breadth of understanding is not a precursor but rather a depth-based research which was based on the population of Muslim youth between the ages of 18 to 30 years.[19] An interview guide comprising of open-ended questions was used to employ a data collection method. The questions were meant to provoke the thoughts that the participants had about the Islamic notions of forgiveness (*afw*), justice (*'adl*) and reconciliation (*sulh*) and how they put them into practice.

To guarantee content validity, two subject matter experts (criminologist and sociologist) were used to evaluate the interview guide to establish its relevance, clarity and contextual suitability of questions therein.[20] All interviews took about one hour each and they were conducted in a calm and unbiased atmosphere to allow a free conversation.

The data were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which places importance on the detailed examination of lived experiences of individuals and their importance to them.[21].

Two primary themes emerged from a repetitive coding process:

- **Theme 1: Foundations of Islamic Conflict Management**, encompassing sub-themes such as:
    - *Forgiveness and Reconciliation*,
    - *Justice ('Adl) in Conflict*, and
    - *Good Intentions (Husn-e-Zan),*
    - *Consultation (Shura) and Dialogue*.

- **Theme 2: Practical Application of Islamic Values**, including
    - *Conflict in Academic Settings*,
    - *Peer Pressure and Religious Expression*,
    - *Cultural Conflicts and Regional Identity*, and
    - *Parenting and Early Socialization*.

Diagram No. 02: Themes and Sub-Themes

Theme 1: Foundations of Islamic Conflict Management	Theme 2: Practical Application of Islamic Values
Forgiveness and Reconciliation	Conflict in Academic Settings
Justice ('Adl) in Conflict	Peer Pressure and Religious Expression
Good Intentions (Husn-e-Zan)	Cultural Conflicts and Regional Identity
Consultation (Shura) and Dialogue	Parenting and Early Socialization
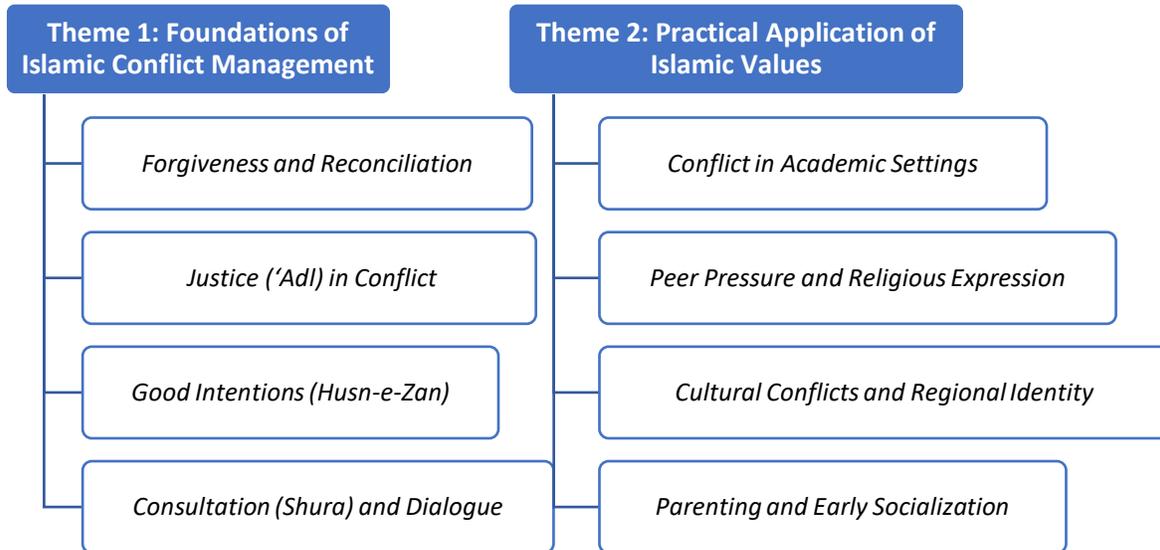
Source: Researcher's Vision

This conceptual framework shows how the young Muslims interpret and apply the Islamic morality in real life scenarios. The practice of IPA, by matching the personal stories with the general Islamic paradigms of values as applied to peace and a human society, helped to find both similar points of view and the ones specific to the individual.

Results

The backgrounds of the respondents offer necessary information as to the perspective of background and experience of the subjects on the teachings about Islamic conflict resolution. It contains demographic data like age, gender, education level, and their knowledge of Quran and Hadith, which are all helpful in generalizing the details of the answers.

Table No. 01: Background of Participants

S. No.	Age	Gender	Residential Area	Educational Background	Quranic Learning	Hadith Learning
1	21	Female	Rural	BS Psychology	Yes (Translation)	Yes
2	21	Female	Urban	BS Food Science	Yes	Yes
3	23	Female	Rural	BS Sociology	Yes	Yes
4	30	Female	Urban	M Phill Sociology	Yes	Yes
5	28	Male	Urban	BS Geography	Yes	Yes
6	29	Male	Semi-urban	BS Agriculture MA Islamiyat	Yes (hifz+tafseer)	Yes
7	25	Female	Rural	M Phill Sociology	Yes	Yes
8	24	Male	Rural	BS IR	Yes	Yes

9	21	Female	Urban	BS Education	Yes	No
10	24	Female	Rural	BS psychology	Yes	Yes
11	24	Male	Urban	BS Political Science	Yes	Yes
12	27	Male	Urban	BS Urdu	Yes	Yes
13	22	Female	Rural	BS Sociology	Yes	Yes
14	28	Male	Urban	BS Education	Yes	Yes
15	23	Female	Rural	BS Social work	Yes	Yes
16	25	Female	Rural	BS Sociology	Yes	Yes

The participants of the study were 16 Muslim youth of Punjab, aged between 21-30 years and majored in sociology, psychology, political science, education and International Relations. They were mostly religiously literate and were familiar with the Quran and Hadith and thus these affected their perspectives on how Islamic conflicts should be solved. The presence of undergraduate and postgraduate young people presented intellectual and experience with a broader perspective.

Thematic Analysis
The analysis below explains how the youth use the Islamic doctrines to solve conflicts caused by religious and sectarian variations.

Theme 1: Foundations of Islamic Conflict Management
This theme explores the perceptions of respondents of the underlying ideas of Islamic conflict management as derived out of the Quran and Sunnah. Their storylines emphasized on forgiveness, justice, goodwill, consultation and dialogue as key factors in the development and implementation of peaceful coexistence. These values were recognized by the participants as not only religious but also moral tools that can be used to ensure harmony in the family and society.

Sub-theme: Forgiveness and Reconciliation
Participants always identified forgiveness (*afw*) as a core Islamic policy of conflict resolution. They believed that it was not only the correct thing to do but also a nice way of maintaining relationships. One participant shared a personal experience that showed that forgiving an individual can stop bad things from happening:

"I saw my father solve a property problem by being fair and not getting angry. He reminded everyone of Islamic rules of justice." (P2)

This experience strengthened the belief that forgiveness can stop things from getting worse and keep families together[22]. Another participant thought about how much they knew about theory but not much about their own life. They said:

"I have acquired knowledge of *sabr* and *sulh*, yet I have never applied them in a genuine dispute." (P4)

Numerous participants regarded forgiveness as a spiritual and ethical obligation rooted in prophetic teachings. One remarked,

"After the Makkah conquest, the Prophet gave forgiveness. It shows that the secret of the strength is the ability to forgive." (P9)

It is a comment that would tie together the perception of the participants of forgiveness with the acts of the Prophet that forgiveness means moral strength and not weak. Another man gave a like expression:

"To forgive a person, does not mean to be a weak person; it takes him/her strength." (P15)

This understanding implies that youth change their understanding on forgiveness and regard it as a show of inner strength and self-control which was against society expectations of forgiveness as a sign of submission.

Sub-theme: Justice ('Adl) in Conflict

Justice meaning *adl* became a core value of maintaining fairness and reducing bias in case of conflict. Respondents defined justice as a Value of life that is necessary and ordered by Almighty Allah. One of the interviewees made a mention of the Quran, Surah al-Maidah (5:8):

"Promote righteousness even when it means that you must go against yourself." (P3)

This verse was often used by people to present the unbiasedness of justice. Another respondent presented a realistic example of how this value is applied:

"In the educational environment, throughout a conflict I mediated, I counseled the participants to be fair and to avoid expressing themselves by their anger." (P7)

One of the participants said she felt the same:

"The basic element of conflict resolution is the one called values and morality." (P1)

All these thoughts help to emphasize the idea that the participants experienced justice as a moral and value based system and not a procedural or legal one.[23] They suggested that neutrality is often difficult, especially in the conflict in life due to emotional and social pressures.

Sub-theme: Good Intentions (Husn-e-Zan)

The participants described husn-e-zan, or the assumption about good intentions, as the effective strategy to prevent the conflict and reduce misunderstandings. People who had good thoughts about others were regarded as people who had faith and trust. A participant stated,

"When we keep in mind that we are positive towards others several conflicts will be avoided." (P11)

This statement is used to show how Islamic ethics can bring positivity thus reducing social conflict and enhancing harmonious living together.

Sub-theme: Consultation (Shura) and Dialogue

The consultation (*shura*) and dialogue were recognized as the key means of reconciliation and the prevention of escalation. Respondents emphasized that open dialogue is an Islamic practice of respect and the development of a solution to mutual problems with the help of collective wisdom. A participant remarked:

"Islam believes in dialogue as first option, which insists on forgiveness and showing efforts to bring people together when they are in conflicts." (P6)

This observation highlights the observation of the participants on consultation being a democratic and divine process consistent to the Islamic values of consciences.[24]

The results obtained in this theme are consistent with the views promoted by social constructivists as conflict management behaviours based on Islamic teachings are acquired and reinforced in the relationships that people experience in their families, communities or educational institutions.[25] The reflections of the participants indicate that the concept of Islamic conflict resolution goes beyond mere doctrine and becomes more of a social practice that incorporates permanent values, education, empathy and experiential learning.

Theme 2: Practical Application of Islamic Values

This subject deals with how Islamic ethics are applied in people in their lives especially in the academic, social and family life. Their thoughts indicate that Islamic teachings can be both a guide to principles (values) and a guide to assist them in their interpersonal relationship, handling peer pressure, and fighting a cultural or generation clash. These applications provide pictures of how Islamic principles (especially permanent values) are internalised to the current social situations, and this is consistent with the constructivist view of values that are acquired during the learning process, and through social interaction.

Sub-theme: Conflict in Academic Settings

The academic institutions transformed to be important platforms where students would apply the Islamic teachings in promoting human peace and resolving the conflicts. Participants gave examples of when patience, dialogue and forgiveness was put into practice. A participant recounted:

"I also encouraged them to stay calm and reminded them that Islam is preaching of patience and peaceful conflict resolution." (P10)

This explains the ways that students use religious teachings and apply them as behavioural guidelines in conflict situations. Similarly, another member also considered disagreements that may occur due to group projects saying:

"In some cases, people do not carry out their duties, and tensions are increased. I strive to make them remember that arguing over minor issues will never give a solution." (P14)

These stories indicate that respondents interpret the Islamic values, i.e., patience (*sabr*) and reconciliation (*sulh*) as some expedient and adaptive tools to enable them to preserve academic and peer relations. These observations are consistent with the works of Haque (2022), who highlighted that both personal and institutional social behaviour and decision-making is informed by Islamic permanent values of life.[26]

Sub-theme: Peer Pressure and Religious Expression
The challenges of implementing Islamic ethics in secular or other diverse social settings were also explored by participants. They shared how they have felt uncomfortable or singled out in the process of being out and proud of their religion. One respondent explained:

"It is also difficult to stick to Islamic practices in a secular environment as it is judged or seen as extravagant in the society." (P9)

This comment highlights the opposition between personal devotion and social acceptability. It also depicts broader social processes whereby the young people have to contend with the need to maintain the Islamic identity, and the need to assimilate into the pluralistic societies. As Kamali (2008) opines, use of the faith-based principles in the modern institutions requires moral strength and the ability to understand contextually.[27]

Sub-theme: Cultural Conflicts and Regional Identity
The participants also identified cultural and sectarian misperception as a long-standing cause of interpersonal conflict. A respondent noted:

"Cultural differences are not personnel but can cause problems in the relation, hence it creates conflicts and misjudgment by the individuals. Remember, I resolving one such misunderstanding by quoting Qur'an and Sunnah." (P13)

This proves that Islamic teachings bring people of different cultures and even subdivisions together and tolerate. The use of Hadith to settle disagreements proves the fact that religious stories can strengthen social bonds. According to Abu-Nimer (2003), relying on Islamic principled constituents helps people to redefine cultural discrepancies through a unity of methodological and religious principles (values).[28]

Sub-theme: Parenting and Early Socialization

The power of family was always identified as the foundation of the moral development and conflict resolution. The interviewees emphasised on how parental guidance instills rich values of forgiveness, patience and justice. A participant contemplated:

"My dad would remind family members of the reward of forgiveness given to Allah and the dispute was quite amicable." (P12)

One more expressed concern about changing the structures of families:

"Parenthood in modern society is dysfunctional; in case of proper education of the family, there will not be conflicts." (P8)

These thoughts suggest that value based and moral socialisation at an early age affects the conflict resolution mechanisms used by youth at an older age. The families are the main agents of Islamic moral education as they inculcate values, which is later applied in the legal, social and institutional settings. This is aligned with the social constructivist model that states that values and moral thought develops interpersonally in terms of learning and observation.[29]

The Islamic values directly influence the behaviour of youth by refurbishing the religious values to reconcile faith, education and cultural identity towards managing the conflict.

Discussion

The emphasis participants placed on forgiveness (ʿafw) aligns closely with Qur'anic injunctions that elevate forgiveness as a values based moral virtue and divine reward. The Qur'an instructs believers to "while doing so, they observe the notion that punishment should be proportional to the offence and not excessive. If they think the aggressor is resentful and think forgiving him would help him change, they will forgive him" (42:40).

"You should also forget it; and erase its traces from your mind" (24:22) "Sublimate their violent passion towards some constructive end and care how others treat them (to maintain balance in themselves and society) Allah likes Mohsineen" (3:134), underscore forgiveness as an act of inner strength and moral excellence (ihsan). Those teaching enforce the interpretation of forgiveness as a prevention of social disunity and manifestation of godly maturity among the participants.

The thoughts that the participants had on justice are highly influenced by the teachings of the Qur'an that put justice under divine order. The fundamental set of commandments according to Qur'an (16:90) are:

"1. Do justice to all;
2. Discourse defectiveness of others, starting with beloved ones;
3. Avoid self-centredness.
4. Evade whatever the Qur'an does not accept of.
5. Respect Allah's limits;

6. Fulfil agreements after endorsement, principally when Allah is a surety (9:111);
7. Honour oaths (17:34, 25:16).
Allah, who sees everything, gave these orders.

These injunctions show that justice (*'adl*) is ethical and fair to form social harmony in Islamic conflict management.

Husn-e-zan (presumption of good intentions) and *shura* (consultation) being acknowledged by the participants as the key to peace are a testament to the Qur'anic ethics embedded in the participants. The Qur'an encourages the faithful "not to eavesdrop or backbite other believers" (49:12), setting moral optimism on the defensive against social strife. On the same note, it defines the righteous as "individuals who respond to the call and rise to establish the Nizam-e-Rabubiyyat. They follow His Laws and do their takes in respect to the Nizam-us-Salat that teaches them to solve their problems mutually and according to the Divine Laws" (42:38), a notion that places a lot of emphasis on dialogue as a divine pattern of making decisions. The example of the Prophet of comprehensive consultation – "Consult them about your system, and when you have decided on a course, believe Allahs Laws, set out. Allah loves those who believe in His Laws" (3:159); also encourages belief in participants that goodwill and open communication are necessary in the resolution of the conflict by mutual respect and morality.

The respondents emphasized patience (*sabr*) and reconciliation (*sulh*) as noteworthy mechanisms for preserving principled harmony. The Qur'an commands believers to "This System will encounter many challenges (because vested interests will prevent its implementation). Do not lose your constancy or courage of conviction in the face of these challenges, and pursue Allah's path, regardless of your opponents'. This will considerably empower you" (2:153). Allah's Laws have reached Jama'at-ul-Momineen. Be steadfast and encourage others to be steadfast, remain united, and follow Allah's laws to flourish" (3:200), presenting *sabr* as both self-discipline and a divine source of strength during interpersonal tensions. Similarly, reconciliation is portrayed as a sacred duty and Qur'an directive that "Self-interest is the main hurdle in the way of such settlement, for human mind is prone to it. If you also keep the other person's interest in view and adhere to Allah's Laws then this hurdle may be overcome. Allah is well aware of what you do" (4:128), strengthens the value of empathy-based, morally responsible peacemaking. *Sabr* and *sulh* is a Qur'anic model of moral restraint and understanding one another in order to enable peace.

It is not Allah who divides Muslims but man, politics and misguided interpretation of Islam. The Qur'an creates an image of a united Muslim community (*Ummah*) of faith in Allah and guidance by divine power rather than jurisprudential and theological variations. Haque (2022) believes that sectarianism is caused by blind imitation (*taqlid*), the ability of clerics to control Qur'anic principles, and the refusal to consciously think. In order to break sectarian lines, he proposes the recourse to the Qur'an as the supreme source of integration, the intellectual freedom, and the moral and social integration towards the understanding of a common belief instead of the sectarianism. In this reformist system, the Qur'anic spirit of entry is universal, fairness and communal development is put at the top to overcome religious and sectarian difficulties.

Conclusion

The study addresses an essential knowledge gap because it illuminates certain ways in which the youths understand and exercise the Islamic teachings regarding conflict management in a sectarian and religiously diversified environment. It is based upon the Islamic Peace and Conflict Resolution Theory that indicates that such Islamic ideals as *adl* (justice), *afw* (forgiveness), *sulh* (reconciliation), and *ihsan* (benevolence) can be used as the moral compass and brings about peace, empathy, and unity among ideologically different people. These findings support the fact that Islam does not treat conflict as a destructive phenomenon but a life experience that should be learnt through moral guidance and social prejudices under the guidance of Allah. Restorative Justice and Social Identity Theory applied to the study reveals that overcoming sectarianism tendencies and rehabilitating the idea of *ummah wahidah* (unity of community) is the solution of the long-run peace.

Recommendations

By analyzing the results of the study and with reference to the Quranic approach that highlights oneness, fairness, and opposition towards the sectarian divisions, a series of recommendations are suggested.

1. True eradiation of sectarianism necessitates adherence to the Islamic way of life as prescribed in the Quran.
2. A truly representative state of the teachings of Islam should model their governance, legislations, and the judicial system on the injunctions of the Qur'an exclusively.
3. Unity amongst Muslims can only be achieved by transcending sectarian identities and embracing the shared Quranic identity of a single Ummat.
4. Young people will be engaged in arousing change by having a program geared towards building capacity to the universal ideals of justice, peace, and reconciliation as implied in the Qur'an.
5. Religious leadership and institutions need to reorient their teachings from sect-based interpretations to Quran-centered guidance.
6. National campaigns rooted in Islamic ethics should be initiated to educate communities on the dangers of sectarian fragmentation.
7. To achieve a peaceful situation with conflicts to be addressed, the rule of law must be directly based on Qur'anic principles, which, in turn, must be extended to all citizens equally.

It highlights the importance of following Qur'anic teachings like unity, justice, forgiveness and reconciliation that Muslim societies can overcome sectarian differences and achieve long-term peace. The only way of leading to a harmonious and morally balanced system of the *Ummah* is the resurgence of the genuine Islamic way of life which is based on Qur'anic system.

Endnotes

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