

ERADICATION OF EXTREME TRENDS IN SOCIETY THROUGH ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND TEACHINGS MECHANISM- CRITICAL STUDY OF PAKISTANI SOCIETY

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Abstract:

The primary objective of this research article is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the origins and consequences of radical trends within Pakistani society. In recent years, Pakistan has experienced a range of societal transformations that have posed challenges to established norms and values. This article examines the various factors that contribute to the trends of extreme trends in Pakistani society, as well as their impacts on different societal aspects. Moreover, this scholarly article critically analyzes the impact of Islamic teachings on the mitigation of radical tendencies within Pakistani society. Pakistan, being a nation with a predominantly Muslim population, encounters a range of societal obstacles and patterns that diverge from the moderate interpretation of Islam. Another objective of this study is to examine the capacity of Islamic teachings to effectively address and mitigate these radical tendencies. This research emphasizes the significance of cultivating a harmonious and balanced society in Pakistani society through an analysis of its social landscape and the fundamental principles of Islam. It underscores the need to promote cautiousness, justice, tolerance, and inclusivity.

Keywords: Extreme trends in Pakistan, Religious Extremism, Rising Consumerism, Political Polarization, Gender Dynamics, Islamic teachings, Education

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background:

Pakistan, being a nation that identifies itself as an Islamic republic, encompasses a society characterized by its diversity and encounters a multitude of social challenges. Throughout the course of time, a multitude of radical phenomena have surfaced, encompassing elements such as religious extremism; intolerance, sectarianism, gender disparity, and acts of violence, all of which diverge from the fundamental tenets of the Islamic faith (Sultana & Bhukhari, 2021). The primary objective of this study is to examine the efficacy of Islamic teachings for dealing with and ameliorating the prevailing radical tendencies within Pakistani society.

1.2 Problem Statement:

Pakistani society is currently grappling with a growing prevalence of radical ideologies that pose a threat to social cohesion and hinder societal advancement. It is imperative to comprehend the

fundamental factors underlying these patterns and examine the influence of Islamic teachings in their elimination in order to cultivate an equitable society founded upon principles of fairness, acceptance, and integration.

2. RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM:

The phenomenon of religious extremism in Pakistan is a multifaceted matter with intricate historical origins, exerting substantial influence on the cohesion of society and the diversity of its culture (Karamat, Muzaffar, & Shah, 2019). The ascent of religious extremism can be attributed to multiple factors.

Historical Context:

The origins of religious extremism in Pakistan can be attributed to the 1947 partition of the Sub-Continent, which resulted in the establishment of Pakistan as an independent nation with a Muslim majority. The conceptualization of Pakistan was founded upon the principle of safeguarding the rights and welfare of Muslims residing in the region. Nevertheless, the nation encountered difficulties in delineating its identity, leading to a conflict between non-religious and religious factions (Javaid, 2011). Over the course of history, religious groups have gradually acquired influence, leading to the emergence of religious parties as influential participants in the political arena. The religious extremism witnessed during the 1980s was exacerbated by the Soviet-Afghan War, wherein Pakistan assumed a pivotal role in providing assistance to the Afghan opposition against Soviet military forces. During this historical era, there was a notable emergence of militant organizations that subsequently redirected their focus toward matters within their own country (Yaseen & Muzaffar, 2018).

Factors Influencing Religious Extremism:

1. *Socio-economic conditions*: One of the key factors contributing to the emergence and proliferation of religious extremism is the influence of socioeconomic conditions. Specifically, the presence of poverty, limited access to education, and high rates of unemployment have collectively created an environment conducive to the recruitment and radicalization of individuals by extremist groups. Marginalized individuals frequently seek comfort through engagement with extremist ideologies (Riffat, 2015).

2. *The Impact of Madrasa Environment*: The growth of religious theological schools (madrasas) in Pakistan has contributed to the propagation of religious extremism. While it is true that numerous madrasas offer educational and social support, certain institutions have been associated with the process of radicalizing students, advocating for a limited understanding of Islam, and cultivating an atmosphere that facilitates the development of extremist ideologies (Basit et al., 2021).

3. *Proxy Warfare*: The engagement of Pakistan in territorial disputes, such as the war between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan and the Kashmir dispute, has resulted in the utilization of terrorist organizations as proxies. These groups were initially provided support with the intention of advancing strategic objectives; however, over time, they shifted their allegiance and started to promote an extremist agenda that was in opposition to the state (Lillah, 2014).

4. *Sectarian Tensions*: Pakistan has experienced instances of sectarian violence involving various sects of Islam, notably the Sunni and Shia communities. The aforementioned tensions have been strategically utilised by extremist factions to incite animosity and aggression, resulting in heightened societal fragmentation (Jan, Ashraf, & Shah, 2021).

Eradication of religious extremism according to Islamic teachings

In accordance with Islamic doctrines, the elimination of religious extremism necessitates a holistic strategy grounded in the fundamental tenets of the religion. Islam places a significant emphasis on the significance of knowledge, comprehension, and moderation. Islamic teachings advocate for the principle of acknowledging and appreciating diversity, as articulated in the Quranic verse, "O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another" (Quran Surah Al- Hujarat:13). This verse elucidates the fundamental importance of unity and collaboration among individuals hailing from diverse backgrounds. Islam promotes and emphasizes the pursuit of knowledge and comprehension, as articulated by Hazrat Muhammad PBUH who declared that the acquisition of knowledge is a mandatory duty for every

Muslim. The prioritization of education serves as a means to combat ignorance and foster the development of critical thinking skills, which play a crucial role in effectively addressing and questioning extremist ideologies. Furthermore, Islam places significant emphasis on the principles of moderation, equilibrium, and prevention of extremist tendencies across various domains of human existence. "Oh People of the Book, don't go extreme in your religion..." (Quran, Surah An-Nisa': 171). Hazrat Muhammad PBUH espoused the belief that adopting a moderate approach is the most favourable course of action. This principle serves to discourage all manifestations of extremism, encompassing religious extremism as well. Islam offers a comprehensive framework for addressing religious extremism and cultivating a harmonious society founded upon principles of harmony, compassion, and coexistence through the promotion of education, comprehension, and moderation (Khan, 2015).

3. RISING CONSUMERISM

Increased consumerism in Pakistan, as elsewhere, is an extreme trend with multiple causes and potential outcomes to consider. The term "consumerism" is used to describe the widespread trend of viewing the purchase and use of consumer goods and services as a way to greater happiness and social standing (Akbar Zaidi, 2015). Several reasons are contributing to Pakistan's growing consumer culture:

1. *Economic growth*: Pakistan's economy has expanded significantly in recent years, raising the standard of living for its middle class. People prefer to consume more when they have greater disposable income (Akbar Zaidi, 2015).
2. *Urbanization and globalization*: Rapid urbanisation and globalisation in Pakistan have opened the country up to the Western way of life and its associated values and advertising. Being constantly bombarded with advertisements for the newest and most expensive things encourages a consumerist mindset (Akbar Zaidi, 2015).
3. *Media and advertising*: It has been instrumental in spreading the message of materialism through the various channels available today. Advertisements are effective at influencing consumer behaviour because they position products as symbols of aspiration and achievement (Akbar Zaidi, 2015).
4. *Changing social values*: Pakistani society is shifting from its traditional norms of frugality and simplicity to one that places a higher value on material goods and displays of wealth. People are motivated to buy more expensive goods and services by their desire to appear successful and well-off compared to their peers (Akbar Zaidi, 2015).

Eradication of Rising Consumerism According to Islamic Teachings

In accordance with Islamic teachings, the elimination of increasing consumerism is a fundamental element that fosters equilibrium, satisfaction, and societal accountability. Islam places a strong emphasis on the principle of moderation and discourages the excessive pursuit of material possessions. Islamic teachings promote the cultivation of one's spiritual development and emphasise the importance of prioritising the welfare of others above personal materialistic pursuits. Islam emphasises the significance of satisfaction and gratitude for one's existing possessions, rather than incessantly pursuing additional acquisitions (Akbar Zaidi, 2015). The concept is centred around the promotion of philanthropy, assistance towards individuals in need, and the adoption of conscientious consumption. Islamic teachings seek to cultivate a societal framework that upholds sustainable lifestyles and responsible consumption by endorsing ethical business practises, equitable trade, and discouraging wastefulness. This approach aims to address the escalating issue of consumerism and ultimately eliminate its prevalence (Akbar Zaidi, 2015).

4. POLITICAL POLARIZATION:

Political polarisation in Pakistan encompasses the profound ideological schism and animosity that exists among distinct political groups within the nation. The phenomenon of polarisation in Pakistan can be traced back to the historical circumstances surrounding its establishment as a nation and the subsequent political events that unfolded (Sarwar, Umer, & Bajwa, 2020).

Historical context:

Pakistan was established in 1947 with the primary objective of serving as a designated territory for Muslims within the region of British India. From the inception, the nation encountered difficulties in delineating its collective identity and instituting a political framework capable of accommodating its heterogeneous populace. The historical context of political polarisation in Pakistan has been shaped by a combination of political challenges, military measures, and the presence of weak democratic institutions (Ishaque, Mukhtar, & Tanvir, 2022).

Factors and Catalysts of Political Polarisation:

1. *Ethnic and Regional Variations:* Pakistan exhibits a rich tapestry of diverse ethnic backgrounds and regional identities. Political parties frequently advocate for the interests of particular ethnic or regional constituencies, thereby engendering competition and discord among these factions (Zahid, Ali, & Ullah).

2. *Sectarian and religious divisions:* It has been observed in Pakistan, characterised by tensions among various religious factions, notably the Sunni and Shia Muslim communities. Political groups and religious organisations have strategically utilised these divisions to garner support, thereby exacerbating polarisation along sectarian lines (Siddique, Mumtaz, & Ali, 2020).

3. *Political Parties and Leadership:* The exacerbation of polarisation has been further intensified by the predominance of a limited number of influential political groups and their leaders. These political parties frequently prioritise their individual interests above the goal of achieving national unity, resulting in a dearth of agreement and trust among various factions (Tyagi, Field, Lathwal, Tsvetkov, & Carley, 2020).

4. *Socioeconomic Disparities:* The presence of significant socioeconomic gaps and the restricted availability of resources have contributed to the emergence of grievances and feelings of alienation within distinct social strata. This phenomenon has created a conducive environment for the propagation of polarising political discourse that strategically targets particular demographics (Shafiq, Sultana, & Munir, 2017).

Eradication of Political Polarization According to Islamic Teachings

In accordance with Islamic teachings, the imperative of eliminating political polarization is deemed a pivotal goal in promoting societal cohesion and fostering harmonious relations. Islam places significant emphasis on the paramountcy of fairness, empathy, and respect for others, principles that possess the potential to facilitate the bridging of ideological divides and foster cooperation. The Quran promotes the active participation of believers in open discourse, the pursuit of knowledge, and the incorporation of diverse viewpoints in the decision-making process. Islam places significant emphasis on the imperative for leaders to rule with justice and equity, thereby guaranteeing equal opportunities and privileges for all individuals within society, irrespective of their political ideologies (Fauzan & Fata, 2019). The teachings of Hazrat Muhammad PBUH were manifested through his practise of treating individuals with kindness and fairness, regardless of their political affiliations. Hence, the adoption of Islamic teachings can offer a comprehensive structure for people of all stripes to transcend political polarization and strive towards a just, empathetic, and unified society (Fauzan & Fata, 2019).

5. GENDER DYNAMICS:

In the context of Pakistan, there has been a notable transformation in gender dynamics within recent years; however, it is important to acknowledge that normative gender roles and persistent inequality continue to exist. The evolving social positions of women in Pakistan have been influenced by a range of factors, encompassing both advantageous and detrimental aspects (Channa & Tahir, 2020). Presented below is a concise summary:

Changing Roles of Women:

1. *Education:* The educational landscape has witnessed notable advancements in terms of women's educational opportunities, resulting in a discernible upsurge in women's literacy rates. There is an increasing trend of women enrolling in higher education institutions and actively participating in professional domains (Habib, 2021).



2. *Workforce Participation*: The involvement of women in the formal labour market has witnessed a notable rise, particularly in urban regions. They are currently present in diverse sectors, including medical care, educational institutions, media, and technological advances (Durrani & Halai, 2018).

3. *Political Engagement*: The realm of politics has witnessed a rise in the prominence of women, as evidenced by the growing presence of women politicians and administrators. The implementation of reserved seats for women in parliamentary and local government settings has afforded them enhanced prospects for political representation (Qureshi & Qayyum, 2017).

Stabilizing of Gender Dynamics According to Islamic Teachings


The repeal of gender dynamics, in accordance with Islamic teachings, places significant emphasis on the tenets of justice, equality, and respect in the interactions between men and women. Islam acknowledges the inherent worth and distinct societal roles of both genders. The principle of complementarity is prioritized over notions of superiority or inferiority. Islamic teachings promote gender equality and discourage any form of discrimination or oppression based on gender. These teachings emphasise the significance of fostering mutual cooperation, love, and understanding between men and women. It fosters the promotion of education and empowerment for individuals of all genders, thereby facilitating their active participation in societal progress (Tucker, 1998). According to Islamic teachings, achieving gender equality involves creating a conducive environment that ensures women are afforded equitable opportunities across various domains, such as education, employment, and decision-making. By embracing and practicing these teachings, individuals can actively work towards the establishment and preservation of a society that upholds and values gender equality (Tucker, 1998).

6. CONCLUSION:

The research article presents findings that shed light on the pronounced patterns observed within Pakistani society, emphasizing the potential of Islamic teachings in mitigating these trends. The analysis highlights the significance of Islamic principles, such as moderation, justice, tolerance, and inclusivity, in effectively addressing various societal challenges. The findings of this study indicate that the promotion of Islamic teachings within Pakistani society has the potential to foster social harmony, equality, and justice. The promotion of these teachings can be significantly influenced by educators, policymakers, and religious leaders. It is advisable to conduct additional research in order to investigate the efficacy of particular educational programmes, policies, and initiatives in advancing Islamic teachings and mitigating extremist tendencies within Pakistani society. Longitudinal studies assessing the effects of these endeavours can offer valuable insights for subsequent advancements. In summary, this research article underscores the significance of Islamic teachings in addressing the pervasive presence of radical tendencies within Pakistani society. By advocating for the principles of moderation, justice, tolerance, and inclusivity, the Pakistani society can progress towards a state characterised by equilibrium and harmony. The active involvement and cooperation of policymakers, religious scholars, educators, and the broader community are imperative in order to successfully execute strategies that lead to constructive societal change.

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