

Ethical and Moral Development of Contemporary Pakistani Society and Its Implications in the light of Shah Wali Ullah's philosophy of Ethics and Abdul Rehman Baba

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Abstract

Ethical and moral values are the fundamental prerequisites of any society as they play a significant role in its progress. Moreover, the behaviors of the citizens and their attitudes are all shaped and polished by the ethics and morality in any society. Islam possess a significant rank in the world because of its ethics that are based upon justice and human rights. The contemporary Pakistani society has been hit by numerous global challenges due to various reasons. In order to stand firm and strong against these challenges Pakistanis need to follow the ethical and moral guideline of Islam that is prescribed by Allah in His Holy Scripture-Quran and Prophet SAWW's Sunnah. The commandments of Allah and guidance from Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa SAWW is greatly comprehended and interpreted by Shah Wali Ullah- and excellent Islamic scholar. Also, he has authored several books in which he has deciphered Islamic teachings through his philosophical ideologies. These theories are the ray of light in this era of challenges for the contemporary Muslim society. Ideal Muslim society based on Islamic principles of ethics and morality can be established by following the philosophy of the terrific revivalist of Muslim Ummah-Shah Wali Ullah. Here I am going to highlight Ethical and Moral Development process for Contemporary Pakistan Society in the light of Shah Wali Ullah's Ethical Philosophy.

Key words: *Ethical development, moral development, contemporary Pakistani society, Philosophy, Shah Wali Ullah*

Area and objective of Research:

A precise theoretical framework of ethical and moral development for contemporary Pakistani society has been illustrated in this study based on the ethical and moral codes of Islam. This

study has been designed with an objective to remind the Muslims that putting the under-discussed ideologies into practice would be fruitful enough for their development and progress as an Islamic nation. Moral education is required for enhancing the moral attitude of the Muslims. Ethical and moral education as well as training is projected towards the development of purpose of accountability entrenched in the practices for example rationality, intention, and thinking. Equipping the contemporary Pakistani society with Islamic ethics and moral values based upon the peace-building philosophy of Shah Wali Ullah, is the dire requirement of recent times. Peace building includes every procedure which constructs positive associations, cure the wounds, bring together incompatible disparities, reinstate respect, regard human rights, full fill the primary demands, increase justice, encourage the sense of protection, energize moral values, and are independent, comprehensive, and fair.

Research Methodology:

Method of research opted for this study is comprehensive study of the literature regarding the ethical philosophy of Shah Wali Ullah. Moreover, analytical method has been chosen for the ethical and moral development of contemporary Pakistani society. The discussion is ended up with some recommendations prescribed for the successful growth of Pakistan.

Introduction

In the books of Ahadith and Sunnah that is the traditions of Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa SAWW, the preeminence of Islam as well as ethical codes and conducts of Islam for humanity has largely been discussed. One of book narrates a story which states that once a funeral procession was passing in front of Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa SAWW, and He SAWW stood up. His SAWW companions told Him SAWW that this is the Jew's funeral. To which He SAWW responded that was not that Jew a Muslim?¹ Factually, the facets of ethical and moral values were provided all there due rights in the Islamic world only, that was fundamentally founded on the principles and moralities prescribed by Allah in His book-The Holy Quran. Also, the world was blessed with the Prophets to perfect these codes, once they were broken, diffused, and ignored by the Islamic nations. Such ethical and moral values are not the result

¹ Narrated by Muslim on the authority of Qays ibn Saad and Sahl ibn Hunayf, chapter of Al-Jana'iz (funerals) (961), and Ahmad (23893).

of intellectual well-being over decades, yet these moralities were revealed by the Exalted-Allah and endorsed by Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa SAWW. Therefore, these teachings were enshrined almost 15 centuries ago by the laws of Islam.

The framework of Divine ethical and moral codes, that no coercion is there in Islam and that Islam enforces freedom of belief in religions, need to be highlighted in Pakistani society. In the favor of freedom of religion and expression, Allah says in verse 256 of Surah Al-Baqarah that Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa SAWW and His following Muslims did not force anyone obligatorily to accept Islam. Not even they pressurized others to make them look like the believers to evade death and torment. How the Muslims can even perform this act, also they know really well that in case any person embraces Islam due to pressure, there is not value of it on the day of judgement, that every Muslim must realize.

Shah Wali Ullah was a renowned Islamic intellectualist, reformer, bibliographer, philosopher, Muhaddith, historiographer, and theologian. Shah Wali Ullah applied a significant terminology that is utility or benefit in his debates about the ethics of the society. He was extremely organized and logical in his ideology². He described that Allah has instigated human to get engaged (valuable, ends) regarding his needs, since the time of Hazrat Adam AS. Alongside the social lifestyle, Shah Wali Ullah expanded the implementation of the lexicon towards the natural laws and human compulsion to abide by those laws. *In this paper I have highlighted ethical issues related to individual and society as whole and provided practical solutions in the light of Shah Wali Ullah, s Ethical philosophy. Pakistan possess massive prospective in the development of education as well as ethics in this context, for example National Narrative proposed and established by Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad. This narrative delivers various facets of ethics of Islam regarding peace together with co-existence. This national narrative of unity, harmony, and peace needs to be promoted for nonviolent and successful Pakistan to obey the mutual collaboration system and work in harmony with the neighbor communities.*

Ethics and their Quranic worth

Ethos is the Greek root term from which “Ethics” has been derived referring to as custom, value, or character. Spirit, attitude, behavior, action, interpretations, and cultural values

² Mahmud Hamdi Zaquq: Man caliphate of Allah- Thinking is duty, article published in Al-Ahram newspaper, edition 1 Ramadan 1423 hijri, November 200

of the human are the components of the ethical and moral framework. Moreover, ethics encompasses some Arabic terminologies inclusive of approved, truth, righteousness, equilibrium, pious, goodness, reasonable, equity, and justice. Altogether, ethics and moral framework illustrate characteristics which explains an advanced society of humans in which the enhanced levels of government, science, traditions, culture, and industry have been achieved. The Arabic terminology for the singular form of the word “ethics” is stated in verse 137 of Surah As-Shura and verse 4 of Surah Al-Qalam. *Adab* ادب (manner) is the other Arabic lexicon which closely relates to the term Ethics. Though, according to some intellectualists both of these lexicons possess the similar connotation, yet there exists some significant differences between the two which depicts of their usage and origin. Morality is defined as the distinctive articulation of a soul which defines the actions of a person based upon the philosophy of moral values. *Adab* ادب, however, is the praxis of moral ideology. The productive enhancements in the conduct, behavior, and character of Muslim requires Ethics as a fundamental component, as commanded in the Holy Quran by Allah. In verse 90 of Surah Nahl, Allah has encouraged the justified and righteous judgement in every matter along with the devotion towards good deeds and magnanimity for the relatives. Moreover, Allah has forbidden wickedness, vile behavior, indecency, and every offense amidst religion, personal properties, mental and physical health, life, and chastity. Also, Allah has repeatedly exhorted the mankind in order to make them reflective and conscious. Ethics of Islam explains Value in the context of good character which is influenced by the teachings of Holy Quran and Sunnah of Hazrat Muhammad SAWW and several standards made by the jurists of Islam. Therefore, a comprehensive living codes are presented by Islam which are mounted by the ethical beliefs. The guidelines of Islam for Individuals, familial units, societal units, political units, economic units, judiciary units, and every parameter of modern lifestyles are brimming with the moral directives.

Ethics and their societal worth

The process of social development depends upon the effective attainment of culpability. Mutual collaboration among the nationals persists. Resentment as well as monetary gains lodges bargains that leads to the denial of other human rights. In any society, people infatuated with the basic aims and the other individuals with the natural peculiarity to kill and loot, emerge. These traits are not productive for the affluence of the society. In the society of Pakistan, the roots of ethics are lies in those individuals, localities, or people that influence our

International Journal Of Pukhtunkhwa || Volume 6 | Issue 1 | January-June 2021

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living standards at various levels and therefore assists us in the development and adoption of the ethics. There are certain sources of the ethics which includes parents, peer groups, teenagers of school standard, observations, practices, curriculum, media, educational institutions, adult agers at higher study level, conferences, teaching patterns, and symposiums on ethics. Parents possess the fundamental position in developing the personality of their children as first practical educational institution of any child is his mother. Initially, at the beginning stages of life of the children, their role models are the parents. Towards the children, Parents illustrate their conduct and mindset. Parents guide the children about the appropriate mannerisms in daily life including the behavior with the guests, respecting elders, loving youngsters, walking, talking, daily life dealings, and performing certain activities in a best possible way. Parents are always there to teach their children regarding the difference amidst good and bad. They are the constructors and organizers of their children's personalities to maintain positive thinking, strong character, progressive habits, and be helping for all. Moreover, they guide their children about the value of character, self-respect, self-esteem, and self-image.

Shah Wali Ullah

Shah Wali Ullah was very copious author, a terrific intellectualist, and revolutionist. Shah Wali Ullah has wrapped nearly the complete array of Islam-based sciences in the languages of Arabic as well as Persian and included them in his works. Syed Maudoodi complimented the writings of Shah Wali Ullah by saying that if the times along with the situations of Shah Wali Ullah are related to his outstanding works, it would be astonishing to comprehend that how this extraordinary, brilliant man with high intellect at that era was born!³. mixing-up of the culture cauldron of Islam and sub-continent was staunchly opposed and condemned by Shah Wali Ullah. Also, he forced the Muslims to keep their selves away from this blending. He has a strong believe about Islam possessing a wide array of ethics polished by the commandments as well as prohibitions by Allah. According to him, it is compulsory for Muslims to abide by the commandments of Allah for the successful establishment of a stable society based upon the Divine and societal ethics recommended by the Holy Quran and Prophet SAWW's Sunnah. "The Muslim Community of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent" is authored by Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi, in which he has described that Shah Wali Ullah did not intent Muslims to get influenced by the sub-continent. Instead, he wants

³ Abul Ala Maududi, Tajdid wa Ihya-i-Din, Maktubat Jamat Islami, Rampur, 1954, p.98.

them to retain their relations with their other Muslim brothers in order to keep their inspirational figures and ideals in Islam so that the traditions of the world could be progressed by it⁴. According to him the social well-being of Muslims needs that doctrines along with the values that are inculcated by Allah and Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa SAWW through Islam, and they must be kept in their primeval transparency unblemished by the superfluous inspirations.

Intellectualizing Ethics: Perspective of Hazrat Shah Wali Ullah ^{RA} and contemporary Pakistani Society

The fundamental perspective of the teachings of Shah Wali Ullah was directed towards the reorientation of the Islamic societies with the notion of essential societal justice that is being virtuous to the other people, getting rid of societal disparities, and stabilizing the wealth distribution based on equalities. Moreover, he founded numerous campuses of his educational institution at Delhi prospecting at valuable propagation of his ideologies. "حجة الله البالغه" is the book authored by Shah Wali Ullah, in which he has highlighted the triggers of turmoil and collapse of Muslim societal network. Following are some traditions that were unethical standards of Governance as well as authorities of the public offices:

- Pressure on the wealth of public, the remunerations provided to many individuals who hardly deliver their states.
- Intense tax system for the peasants, workers, and merchants, that leads to the unchecked tax dodging. As per the ideology of Shah Wali Ullah, a nation can progress just on the base of reasonable taxations.

In the contemporary Pakistani society, nation has been hit with the challenges related to the poor governance system since past three decades. Tax prevarication, corrupt activities, and bank dodgers are the foremost unethical concerns predominating in our societies. Shah Wali Ullah came up with the achievable resolutions to surmount such unethical traditions by embracing the notion of "get from higher classes and distribute in the lower classes". In the Holy scripture of Quran, Allah states that:

"وفى اموالهم حق للسائل والمحروم"⁵

⁴ Ishtiaq H. Qureshi, Millat e Islamia of Subcontinent, Lahore, Chapter 6, p183

⁵ AlQuran: Al Zariyyaat, 51:19

“And in their properties, an appropriate share was designated for the vagrants and the needy people”.

Shah Wali Ullah considers that a genuine Islamic civilization can be created with reasonable and unbiased financial system under the guidance of state of Madinah, in which Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa SAWW embraced the procedure of **مواخات** which means unity and sorority. The state of Madinah is the paragon for entire Muslim world specifically for the economic impartiality. Shah Wali Ullah implored Islamic states to embrace the ideology of **مواخات** to develop the human affiliation and inter-personal contacts. Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa SAWW started a global notion on human affiliations and its growth based upon the values of mankind. He SAWW stated: “الناس ينفع من الناس خير”⁶ “the one who is the source of help for others is the best amidst the people”. **رationalizes the suitability of Islam as a most suitable religion, not only for the Muslims, but also for the whole humanity. Also, it clarifies the success of Islam in solving social, economic, political, and moral problems of the mankind**⁷. Also, this book has provided the comprehensive way outs for the deferential facets of ethics inclusive of applied as well as normative tools of ethics for the development of non-violent society.

The theory of moral excellence explained by Shah Wali Ullah states that man is a mix of body and his soul, soul is designated to turn back towards its creator that is Allah, however, body will stay in the world. Therefore, according to him soul should be protected well by avoiding any activity that leads to harm it. We can take care of our soul by obeying the commandments of Allah, as it is considered as the meal of our soul. The preliminary object of the will and demand of Allah is the purification of our soul. This is clearly stated in the verse of the Holy Quran as the one who have faith and the hearts which find tranquility by remembering Allah. The hearts can find tranquility only by remembering the creator⁸.

Since the initial period of revelation in Makkah, the fundamental teaching of Islam was to purify our souls and hearts from evil-doings. This is referred to as the *Purification of soul* (**تزكّيه نفس**).

Allah stated :

قد افلح من زكاهها وقد خاب من دسها

⁶ Al bani,Nasir ud Din,Al-Silsilah Al-Sahihah ,Riaz Printers KSA, 1300,p345

⁷ Shah wali ullah,Hujjat ullah al Balighah,v 1,Shirkah amen printers Delhi 1373,p 19

⁸ Qur'an, 13:28

“The one who purifies his soul has succeeded, and the one who corrupts his soul has failed”⁹. Shah Wali Ullah has accentuated on the character development under the guidance of Divine as well as Societal ethics advocated by Quran in Surah Al-Furqan and Surah Al-Hujaraat in the verses 63 to 77 and in Surah Al-Inaam in the Verses 151 to 153.

The ethical philosophy of Shah Wali Ullah is highly influenced by the Quranic teachings. In the preamble, that he wrote for the translation of Quran entitled *فتح الرحمن في ترجمه القرآن*, he stated that this translated version of the Holy book is for the ones who are unable to learn the language of Arabic in an appropriate way. They will be benefitted to comprehend the aim of its knowledge for the moral development of an individual as well as society¹⁰. He did an incredible work in providing a moral together with the ethical framework based upon the commandments along with the prohibitions by Allah Almighty in order to develop a harmonious and successful society. He authored a popular Book framing the straight road for spiritual brilliance named as *القول الجميل في بيان سواء السبيل*. In this book, he has debated regarding the diseases of soul and their treatment in the light of Holy Quran and Prophet SAWW’s Sunnah. Afterwards, Molana Khurram Ali translated *القول الجميل في بيان سواء السبيل* in Urdu with the title *شفاء العليل* and Abdul Aziz Dahelvi explained it. This book is considered as the source of remedies for every spiritual as well as social illness for every person¹¹.

Moreover, Shah Wali Ullah offered the way outs of clashes among the communities of Muslim in a peaceful manner. Shah Wali Ullah as underscored appropriate clarifications for the clashes in contemporary Islamic world in accordance with guidance from Surah Al-Hujraat in verse 9 and 10 in which the Creator, Allah has said:¹²

“And incase of the conflict among the two groups of Muslims, bring them together. Then, incase any of the two groups executes discrimination and belligerence against other group, then fight with that party who is executing belligerence until that group turn back to the command of Allah (of bringing about harmony). When these groups return and accept, reconcile them with justice. Also, put equality in preference. Undoubtedly, Allah love the people who are just”. Furthermore, in the verse followed by the above-mentioned, Allah stated:

⁹ Surah Ash-Shams 91:9-10

¹⁰ Shah Wali Ullah, Fath ur rahman fi Terjuma al Quran, preamble, Hashmi Meerath printers, p1,2

¹¹ Shah Wali Ullah, Al Qaul ul jameel, Azazia Printers India, p 114

¹² Al Quran: Hujraat 49/9

“The fact is that all the Muslims are brothers among one another. Therefore, establish peace amidst the two brothers and fear your Lord always in order to have mercy from Him”¹³.

In accordance with these instructions of Allah, the disputed issues can be resolved by embracing non-violent measures of resolving conflicts. Shah Wali Ullah is surely very obvious regarding the conflicted matters and their elucidation in his tome titled “الانصاف فى بيان سبب الاختلاف”. In this opus, he has made effort to comprehend the conflict issues amidst distinct school of ideologies and offered elucidations to solve those conflicts¹⁴. If the contemporary Pakistani society is observed, we will see that Pakistan has been hit with the challenge of conflicts among various religious sects. Shah Wali Ullah has cited the tenet from Quran to resolve the conflicts. As Allah has said:

فان تنازعتم فى شىء فردوه الى الله والرسول ان كنتم توعمنون بالله واليوم الاخر¹⁵

“ So, in case you do not agree with yourselves about any matter, leave it to Allah as well as the Prophet (SAWW) for ultimate decision, proviso you trust Allah and the day of Judgement”.

All the conflicted matters can be handled through discussions (compromises, casual conversations) (مذاكره), Arbitration (ثالثى), Adjudication (مصالحتى كونسيل) as well as Lawsuit (عدالت انصاف).

Shah Wali Ullah reviewed the system of Governance as well as political setup in Muslim welfare nation in his popular publication named “ازالة الخفاء عن خلافة الخلفاء”. According to his results, in order to construct a proper political setup, we should embrace political norms as well as culture embraced by our Rightly guided Caliphates (خلفاء الراشدين)¹⁶.

Findings and Recommendations:

Pakistan is suffering a period of decisiveness where brotherhood, solidarity, and mutual cooperation are intensively required. The philosophy of Shah Wali Ullah gives us an excellent opportunity to reconstruct and reanalyze our thinking and conduct to build a stable society based upon the framework of state of Madinah, where every resident was given the justice and due right including the right to live and perform in accordance with their belief

¹³ Al Quran:Hujraat 49/10

¹⁴ Shah wali Ullah,Al insaaf,Maktaba As Salafiah,Lahore p78

¹⁵ Al Quran, Al Nisa: 4/59

¹⁶ Shah wali Ullah,Izala til khifa,Siddique printers braili,India,p2,56

along with the sense of mutual respect as well as following the ethical codes for the protection of humanity at global level. Every Islamic teaching acknowledges the broader framework of moral and ethical values amongst the residents of Islamic nation. Therefore, the community of Muslims do not comprise any individualism, negativism, and selfishness. The Islamic community, instead, exists on loyal camaraderie, munificence, and assisting everyone in righteous deeds and piety every time.

Here few recommendations have been prescribed for reconstructing Pakistani society in the light of Ethical and moral philosophy of Shah Wali Ullah:

- Tolerance, peaceful co-existence, positive impression of Pakistan on the platform of social media such as twitter, Facebook etc., and harmony among different faiths should be promoted around the globe.
- Subjects related to ethical and moral codes should be made part of the curriculums from nursery to PhD level. This is because the values exist everywhere. Also, they are unique in every family. Fairness, kindness, compassion, honesty, integrity, tolerance, and respect are the values imparted to the youth through educational sectors. Our values are apparent in our actions, behaviors as well as inactions.
- Parents are advised to contribute to educate their children with moral lessons .
- Ethical values and moralities are learnt at various places along with the experiences that includes society, cultural traditions, religion, government, and ethnic practices along with the personal experiences. However, many among all, a person learns from his family, which is significant in our nurturing.
- National institute of ethics and morality needs to be established as it is an important requirement of the recent times. This institute is anticipated to provide detailed knowledge regarding the ethical ideology of Islam for building a serene society.
- Teaching of ethics is a must in every organization inclusive of department of police, politicians, public, and civil servants as well.
- For promoting the teachings of Shah Wali Ullah, government must adopt important measure for example establishing the chair of Shah Wali Ullah in the prominent educational sectors of Pakistan.
- The day of ethics as well as accountability must be observed at national level in order to revive our behaviors together with the attitudes.

International Journal Of Pukhtunkhwa || Volume 6 | Issue I | January-June 2021

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- Seminars, awareness walks, and ethics symposium should be conducted in public to encourage the living standards in accordance with the Islamic moral superiority.

Conclusion

Humanity is associated spiritually with the Almighty Allah. Nevertheless, in this monetary world, we associate ourselves with several other entities including parents, community, country, family, society etc. with the passage of time, new relations gets added at every stage of life. Islam endorses the believers to maintain healthy relations with their brothers. It focuses on the civility, tolerance, fair dealings, and humility with other human beings. Such values subservient the self, also lay emphasis upon others. Moreover, they are important for non-violent and cordial existence of humans in the society¹⁷. According to the moral concepts of Shah Wali Ullah, feeling a closed association and reciprocated compassion is very important being a human. Every human is responsible of respecting other's rights.



¹⁷Amin Valliani, Social ethics in Islam, dalilyDawn, Karachi, December 30, 2011

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¹⁸ Narrated by Muslim on the authority of Qays ibn Saad and Sahl ibn Hunayf, chapter of Al-Janā'iz

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¹⁹Al-Baqara: 256

²⁰ Mahmud Hamdi Zaquq: Man caliphate of Allah- Thinking is duty, article published in Al-Ahram

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