

## Theological Extremism and its Effects: Pakistan Perspective

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### Abstract <sup>2</sup>

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This article aims to discuss theological extremism and its effects on Pakistani society. It defines extremism and examines the causes behind the intrusion of theological extremism among different Muslim sects. In this context, this article aims to explore the common and as well as different beliefs of four major religious sects of Pakistan such as *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jma`at* (Braylvi) *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jma`at* (Deo-Bandi), *Ahl al-Hadith* and *Shi`it Ithna `Asharah*. After a thorough study about the beliefs and the disagreements of these sects this article concludes that no fundamental contradiction existed among them rather the root cause of all aggression is extremism which made the whole society disturbed, confused and afraid of target killing. (161)

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**Keywords:** Pakistani society, different religious sects, theological extremism, effects and recommendations

### Introduction

The English word extremism leads holding of a view or a feeling different from another as possible. It is also used in the meaning of either end of anything (Oxford Advance Dictionary, 2007, p.427). In Arabic language the term extremism is translated in the meaning of **افراط و التفريط** which is used to express the either end of anything.

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<sup>2</sup> This paper was presented at International Conference organized by the Shari`ah Academy, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan titled as "Role of Moderation in the Stability of a Muslim Society", held on **January 21-23, 2014**.

It is said *afraṭa Yufritu* which lead excess of or immoderation. **افراط** means excess of anything while **التفريط** is taken in the meaning of end point of declining something (Ibn Manzur, 1300 A.H., Vol.1, p.435).

Theological extremism means excess of prescribed limits of a religion (Oxford Advance Dictionary,p.537). In Arabic it is used in the meaning of **غلو في الدين** and the Holy Prophet (pbuh) condemned extremism by advising to avoid extremism in the religion in the wording: **”إياكم و الغلو في الدين**” (Wahid, n.d., Vol.3, p.67). The opposite of **افراط و التفريط** is **اعتدال** which means absence of **افراط و التفريط** (Ibn Manzur, 1300 A.H., Vol.1, p.435). The synonym of the word **اعتدال** in English language is moderation or temperance (Oxford Advance Dictionary, p.544). It is also defined as a middle way between two ends (Zamakhshari, 1378 A.H., Vol.1, p.650). The English word sect in Arabic is used in the meaning of **فرقة** or **طائفة**, a group of followers of a specific juristic doctrine (Ibn Manzur, Vol.3, p.354). The term sectarianism (**الطائفية**) leads a tendency to split up into many sects and is used to indicate extreme thinking or lack of tolerance concerning opponent in views (Oxford Advance Dictionary,p.677). Talking about the history of the human beings, throughout the world’s history they ever divided into many sects and tribes on the basis of their casts and ethnic identification. Likewise, the Arabs were divided into many tribes and the feelings regarding superiority and inferiority of genealogy and lineage (*silsilah al-nasb*) were existed among them. This practice has been acknowledged by Allah Almighty Himself Who declares: “O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female and made you into clans and tribes” (The Qur’an, XLIX:13). This practice however, often caused to create extremism among different tribes and led them condemnation of others and fighting (Sa`d, 1958, Vol. p. 12). The *fatwa* of *takfir* (as a non-Muslim) due to theological extremism however, first initiated by the Jews and the Christians of that time who often declared each other as non-believers which has also been described by Allah Almighty: “The Jews said that the Christians follow nothing (i.e. are not on the right religion); and the Christians said that the Jews follow nothing, though they both recite the scripture” (Qur’an: II: 113).

## 1. Theological Extremism and Islam

Taking about the religion Islam it is the last religion that has been revealed to the human beings of all nations till the Day of Judgment. To warn the believers not to be extreme in the religion and to make it clear that extremism is misleading and destructive for both the religion and the society God revealed: “O people of the scripture do not exceed (extreme views) in your religion, nor say of Allāh aught but the truth” (The Qur’an: IV:171).

Another verse declares: "They took their rabbis and monks to be their lords besides Allah (by obeying them in things which they made lawful or unlawful according to their own desires without being ordered by Allah" (The Qur'an: IX: 31). Allah Almighty rather ordered the Muslims to hold fast to the rope of Allah and be not divided by saying: *واستصموا بحبل الله جميعا ولا تفرقوا* (The Qur'an: III: 103). The Holy Prophet (PBUH) also condemned extremism and advised the companions to avoid extremism (Imam Bukhari, 1978, Vol.8, p.627). Another *hadith* declares that during the concluding period of this world, a group of adolescents will appear who will talk to the people in good manners and will impress them by recitation of the Qur'an but will not follow it (Imam Muslim, 1956, Vol.6, p.134). During the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH) however, some persons like ذو الخويصره from Banu al-Tamim expressed theological extremism by advising the Prophet (PBUH) to do just on the occasion of the distribution of booty of war after battle of Hunayn (Imam Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, 1998, Kitab al-Mghazi, Bab Ba`th Ali, no.3166).

Keeping in view the importance of the unity of Ummah in the light of the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), the companions avoided extremism and showed great respect to the opponents of their juristic views. (Al-Tabari, 1956, Vol. 3, p.541). To eliminate tribal conflict Hadrat Umar prohibited by law satirical or defamatory poetry on the reason that it might recall the old inconsistencies. To lessen the religious extremism and to create harmony among different religions, he made the law that both Muslims and Christians should host for three days a passer-by (Abu Yusuf, 1367 A.H., Kitab al-Kharaj, pp.78-79). However, after the assassination of Hadrat Umar extremism rose again and it was due to extremism that the Caliph Uthman was assassinated and Hadrat Ali was forced to fight with Hadrat Ayesah and Hadrat Muawiyah respectively. Under that particular scenario, Khawarij appeared (during the fighting with Hadrat Muawiyah) by holding extreme views against the decision of Hadrat `Ali on the issue of *Tahkim* (arbitrator) and declared him a non-Muslim (Al-Tabari, Vol.3, p.543). Ibn Khaldun (1375 A.H.) mentioned in his writing "Muqaddimah" that Hadrat Ali also condemned extremism in these wording: " لا يرى الجاهل إلا مفرطا ومفرطا " that an illiterate person is either extremist or create extremism (Vol.1, p.256). As Sayyed Razi (n.d., p.184) stated that when Hadrat Ali heard about the views of Khawarij (La Hukm Illa Lilahi) that there is no ruling except of Allah, commented that they used true statement but misinterpreted it and took in the meaning of a government administered directly by Allah Almighty Himself.

No doubt sovereignty is for none but for Allah alone but there must be some ruler good or bad who establish the commands of Allah". Consequently, on 21<sup>st</sup> Ramadan,40 A.H., one of the Khawarij Abdur Rahman bin Muljim attacked Hadrat Ali which caused his death (Al-TabariVol.3, p.547). Thus, the Shahadah of Hadrat `Ali can be declared as the first bloodshed took place due to theological extremism. The unfortunate event of Hadrat Hussayn also happened due to extremism of Yazid (Al-Tabari,Vol.3, p.355). The traditional Muslim jurist however, adopted moderate policy and focused to the scientific study of the Qur'an, Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) and practices of the companions and took all the things in broader sense with open mind and thus, introduced many legal theories and developed a structure of flexible Islamic law. Like the companions, they differed frequently but never followed extremism rather established the principle of moderation by admiring the juristic opinions of their opponents and by condemning extremism. For instance, at the end of the first century of Hijrah, almost 13 legal theories established on the basis of different interpretive methodologies such as madhhab Imam Ja`far Sadiq, madhhab Imam Abu Hanafah, madhhab of Mu`tazilah and Madhab of Imam Dwud al-Zahiri etc (Ibn Qayyim, Vol.1, pp.123-167).

On the issue of *takfir*, Imam Abu Hanifah declared that if ninety nine percent of an issue indicates to the *takfir* (un Islamic) of a person but only one leads that he is not so then it is duty of the jurist to issue fatwa in favour of such person on the basis of one percent as one thousand *Kafir* (non-Muslims) can be covered by Islam but only one case of apostasy cannot be covered" (Fatawa Alamgiri,Vol.3, p.301). To eliminate extremism, Imam Malik rejected the proposal of Caliph Haroon al-Rashid who suggested that *al-Muwatta* should be enforced as a uniform legal code throughout the Muslim state and that it should be hanged in Ka'aba (Ibn Khaldun, Vol.1, p.341). As Iswi (1978, p.112) pointed out that Imam Malik was strongly in opinion that no single *madhhab* should be binding on all the Muslims and that for a Muslim scholar it is necessary to have keen understanding of the contemporary issues and their background philosophy. It was in later period when the followers of the traditional Muslim jurists started to show extremism regarding their sectarian affiliations and confined themselves to the study of the *fatawa* not of the traditional Muslim jurists but of their disciples which closed their minds and made them just blind imitators (Ibn Qayyim, Vol.1, p.45). As Allamah Iqbal (1924) pointed out that misuse of intellectual capacity and declination of spiritual belief led the Muslims to worship their theologians (p.274).

## 2. Sectarianism and Extremism in the Sub-Continent

In the subcontinent, the theological extremism started during the 13<sup>th</sup> century when Chishti order of *tasawwuf* (sufiism) developed which caused to create conflict between fiqh and *tasawwuf*. The conflict reached its climax in the time of Khawajah Nizam al-Din al-Awliya' and Qadi Dia al-Din Sunami and during the 16<sup>th</sup> century Bhakti movement sought the spiritual penetration of Islam by Hinduism. Some of the scholars however, attempted to amalgamate various sufi orders to bring the Sufism into conformity with orthodox Islamic teachings. During this period some legendary scholars like Shah Wali Allah tried to reform the existing educational, socio-economic and political conditions of the Muslims (Ghazi, 2002, pp.5-6). Overall, the Muslim scholars of the sub-continent issued many *fatawa* without scientific understanding of the concerned problems such as use of loud speaker, posted money order and its tax and many more and declared them prohibited (Zafir ad-Din, 1967, Vol.1, p.34). Meanwhile, certain innovations penetrated in the lives of the Muslims which resulted in the division of the Muslims into many sects such as Ahl al-Shi'it, Ahl al-Hadith, Deo-Bandi and Braylvi etc (Raza Khan, 1994, p.655). The development of these sects can be discussed as:

### 2.1 Development of the Sect Shi'it Ithna`Asharah

The sect Shi'it Ithna`Ash`ariyyah came into existence on the issue of first Caliphate of the Muslim Ummah after the death of the Prophet (PBUH). The concept of 12 Aimmah is based on a *hadith* according to which the Holy Prophet declared that after me there will be twelve Aimmah/Caliphs from Quraysh ( Sayyed Riyaḍ Hussain Najafi, 2004, pp.248-249). In the sub-continent, Chishtia Qadriah Silsilah contributed to preach this sect. The last Mughal ruler Akbar showed great respect to Shi'it and appointed a Shi`ah scholar Sayyed Nur Allah Shoshtari as chief justice of the state. The Shi`ah sect however, managed by Sayyed Dildar Ali who established certain madaris to spread Shi`ahism but Shi`ah as an independent political party came into existence after the establishment of Pakistan (Saqib Akbar, pp.257-258).

## 2.2 Development of Ahl al-Sunnah and Ahl al-Hadith

The Ahl-e-Hadith is the sect which came into existence on the difference of opinion regarding status of logical reasoning and preference of logic over *Khabr al-Wahid*. They declare themselves as Salafi which means to follow the practices and Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) and the practices of the Companions and their successors (Saqib Akbar, pp.257-258). In this way, Ahl-e-Hadith differed with Ahl al-Sunnah over the issue of *taqlid* Shakhshi or a particular traditional legal doctrine. In the sub-continent, Shah Wali Allah and his sons worked for the renaissance of the *maslak* al-Salfiyyah. The sect Ahl al-Hadith differed with Ahl al-Sunnah on the status of consensus of juristic opinions (*ijma`*). Ahl al-Hadith thus, adheres only to the Qur'an, Sunnah (PBUH) and Athar unlike Sunni (Deo-Bandi and Braylvi) do not follow any traditional opinion derived through logical reasoning (Saqib Akbar, pp.167-68). It is fact that over such a minor difference of opinion both sects started sever critics of each other by ignoring the fact that after all the opponent is also Muslim. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the religious conflict between the followers of Hanafi sect and Ahl al-Hadith in the sub-continent was so entrenched that the killing of each other and kidnapping of the wife of the other *maslak* was declared permissible. Once a mawlvi of a mosque kidnapped the wife of a person belonged to another *maslak*. The intelligentsia of the village tried to resolve the issue. Amazingly, the verdict of the mawlvi was "that the killing of the followers of this *maslak* (Hanafi) is permissible, their property is booty of war and their wives are permissible for us" (Abdul Haye, 1939, p.99). The so called Muslim scholars frequently called their opponent in *maslak* as (Badtar as Hunud) worse than Hindus (Ashiq Ilahi, n.d., Vol.1, p.178). The Muslims could not imagine saying their prayers in any mosque other than their own *masalk*. Certain books were written to prove with arguments that the people of a *maslak* could not enter in the mosques of others (Abdur Razzaq, 1960, pp.120-122)

## 2.3 Development of Deo-Bandi and Braylvi Sects

Over the time, the conflicts among the sects became worse to worse and thus, many innovations established among the Muslims which resulted in the further division of the Muslims of sub-continent. For instance, the followers of Imam Abu Hanifah divided themselves into two sects; Deo-Bandi and Braylvi.

The origin of Deo-Bandi maslak is found in an organization/madrisah founded by the Muslims of a village Deo-Band.<sup>3</sup> After the war 1857, a religious pious Muslim, Muhammad Abid (d.1912) suggested to establish a madrisah at Deo-Band to motivate people to get religious education. (Tayyab, 1369A.H., pp.34-56). Consequently in 1866, Mawlvi Mehmood (d.1886) on the advice of Mawlana Muhammad Qasim reached and started to teach the people in a mosque of Deo-Band called as Chatta and the syllabus of Dars-e-Nizami was adopted which was already established at the Madaris of Delhi and Lucknow (Hussain Ahmad,1954,p.13). After nine years of its inauguration an independent building of Dar al-Ulum Deo-Band was established with the help of private donations in 1875. (Mehboob Rizwi, 1972, pp.24-25). It leads that the purpose behind the establishment of Deo-Band madrisah was just to motivate the people to the study of religious knowledge and to provide them a platform not to establish a sect aim or to counter the influence of British system of education (Rashid Ahmad, 2004,p.118).

However, some writings of Deo-Bandi scholars caused to create extremism among the contemporaries. For instance, Mawlana Qasim Nanutawi wrote a book "Tahzir al-Nass in 1874 which was criticized by some contemporaries and in response to that Allamah Sayyed Ahmad Sa'ied Kazmi wrote Al-Tabshir wa al-Tahzir. Likewise, some scholars criticized the book "Barahin Qati'ah" written by a Deo-Bandi scholar Mawlana Khalil Ahmad in 1887. (Saqib Akbar, p.11). This issue later caused to create extremism between the scholars of both views and consequently, a fourth sect Braylvi appeared on the scene. The Braylvi sect has its origin in the thinking and philosophy of Mawlana Ahmad Raza Khan who belonged to a village Brayli of the sub-continent. However, hate between the both established during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After 30 years of the writing of Tahzir al-Nass (1874), Mawlana Ahmad Raza Khan wrote Hashiyah of "Al-Mu`taqid al-Mutanaqqid" named as "Al-Mu`tamid al-Mustannad" and issued a fatwa of takfir against some well known scholars of the Deo-Band such as Mawlana Qasim Nanutawi, Rashid Ahmad Ganguhi, Khalil Ahmad Inthawi and Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thaniwi ect along with the fatwa of takfir against Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiyani and got commendation from 35 scholars of Sa`udi Arabiyyah (Haramayn al-Sharifayn) and thus published under the title "Hassam al-Haramayn ala Munharif al-Kufr Dalmin"

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<sup>3</sup> Deo-Band was a village of Distract Saharanpur 22 miles away from it and 90 miles from Delhi. Befoe Dar al-Ulum Deo-Band, In 1507 a great Jame` Mosque was built there with the order of Sikandar Lawdhi and in1664 Awrang Zeb also built a mosque.

It later received verification from almost 250 scholars of the sub-continent who declare Mawlana Ahmad Raza Khan as their leader (Saqib Akbar, pp.11-12). In this way just due to extreme thinking of the scholars of the sub-continent, Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama`ah itself has been divided into two contradictory groups (1906) but this division was not based on some legal theory or some rulings of Abu- Hanifah rather it was based on the practices of some innovations/Bid`ah. Unlike the traditional *masalik* which differed over the methodologies and the modes of interpretation (*ijtihad*) of the Qur`anic legal texts and the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH), the religious sects in the sub-continent developed in the light of the innovations practiced by the Muslims. Both sects adopted extreme views regarding celebration of birth of Holy Prophet (PBUH) /Eid milad al-Nabi, Mehfil Na`at, issue of the limit of the respect to the saints (*wali*) and their graves and difference over the concept of Bid`ah Hasanah and Bid`ah Siyyi`ah and started condemnation and fighting with each other. They frequently started to say each other as Kafir. (Ashiq Ilahi, n.d., Vol.1, p.180).

### **3. Contemporary Situation of Sectarian Extremism in Pakistan**

Pakistan came into being on the basis of two nation theory which has been incorporated by the Law-giver Himself. The Muslims of the sub-continent migrated to Pakistan to live in accordance with the Islamic norms. In order to fulfill this desire almost each government of Pakistan paid great respect to the `Ulama and gave them unlimited freedom of expression and union. This later caused to the development of extremism among these sects and created biasness against their opponents in views. Talking about the population of Pakistan it is exceeding from 180 million. The religious demography (based on the census, 1998) shows that approximately 97 % of the population is Muslim, 2 % consists of Hindus, Christians and 1% includes Ahmadis and others. The majority of Muslims in the country are Sunni with a Shi'a minority ranging between 10 to 20 %. However, there is no census data regarding the followers of different religious sects and each sect claims for a considerable strength. Some of them thought that Deo-Bandi and Barelvis are equal numbers while others believe that at least 60% of the Sunnis are Deo-Bandi and 25% are Barelvis ([www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)). Now days, the extremism among religious sects has sabotage the whole country and many deaths occur daily in the name of target killing due to this extremism. The sectarian extremism is so well-established among the sects that it seems that condemnation of others is their prime object.



They do not allow their followers or the followers of their enemy sect to say prayers in the mosque of each other ([http.Tribune.com](http://Tribune.com)). Both have issued *fatawa* of takfir against each other ([http.Tribune.com](http://Tribune.com)). The Braylvi consider mehfil-e-na`at and *milad* conferences along with qawwali, ziyarat of mazarat, celebration of death by fixing daswan, chaliswan and many more as Bid`ah Hasanah and permissible while Deo-Bandi and Ahl al-Hadith declare them as Bid`ah Sayyi`ah and do not allow mehfil-i-na`at and milad celebration at their mosques. This issue made them enemy of each other which often resulted in serious fighting, killing and imprisonment and both of them consider that they are doing jihad.<sup>4</sup> To eliminate theological extremism in 1954, the government of Punjab authorized a Court Inquiry to inquire into the facts regarding law and order situation in 1935. The report of the court declared that no two `ulama' agreed before us as to the definition of a Muslim and the net result of all this is that neither Shi`as nor Sunnis nor Deo-Bandi nor Ahl al-Hadith nor Braylvi are Muslims. During this inquiry, it was suggested by the Ulama that any change from one view to the other must be accompanied in an Islamic State with the penalty of death if the Government of the State is in the hands of the party which considers the other party to be *kafirs*. The report concluded that the grounds on which a person may be indicted for apostasy are too numerous to count. Thus this effort resulted in vain (Report of the Court of Inquiry Constituted Under Punjab Act II of 1954 to Enquire Into the Punjab Disturbances of 1953, p. 219). Over the time, this aggression about the opponents in view resulted in the killing of the opponents and led to the destruction of the socio-economic and religious structure of the country. This the reason that for many years the most critical issue of the Pakistani society is target killing in the name of sectarian protection. On every occasion of `Eid Milad al-Nabi wall-chalking with counter-chalking can be seen against each other. The last year also witnessed grave riots, protests and rallies in due course of sectarian violence. Likewise, extremism can also be noticed in the relationship between Shi`ah and Sunni and on every occasion of Muharram al-Haram, the citizens of Pakistan became afraid of killing and law enforcing agencies became high alert to counter any threat or target killing.

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<sup>4</sup> For instance, in 2011, a serious conflict arose between Bralvi and DeoBandi at a mosque in Lahore on the issue that Imam of mosque converted into DeoBandi Maslak and stopped Mehfil milad and Na`at at the mosque. See, [http.Tribune.com](http://Tribune.com) Recently Maulana Shamsur Rehman president of ASWJ in Punjab was **shot dead as** sectarian violence by **unidentified motorcyclist assailants opened fire at his car at Ravi Road on Friday afternoon which resulted in** country-wide protest against the incident. See for detail, The Express Tribune, Published: December 6, 2013.

The example of sacrifice and shahadah of Hadrat Hussain (R.A) is mentioned by each sect in favor of its argument but all of them ignored an important matter that Hadrat Hussain (Razi Allah anhu) did not declare his opponent as *Kafir* rather during fighting when time of prayer appeared, he offered the army of Yazid to say prayer altogether and they accepted it and performed their prayer behind Hadrat Hussain.<sup>5</sup> Sometimes, political clashes led the muftis to issue fatwa of takfir against political parties. Each of the religious sects declares itself as holder of Islam and what is done against it is declared as attack on Islam and opponent of the sect (who is also a Muslim sect) is declared as the enemy of Islam. For instance, in a recent protest against sectarian violence in the garrison city of Rawalpindi, the Mawlana who led the rally pronounced: "We know how to fight against enemies of Islam and we are fighting against them" (Dawn.com,22 Nov.,2013). Whenever, a rally particularly of religious sects is organized it requires extra security arrangements, extra police forces, paramilitary rangers and soldiers in major cities such as Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, Lahore, and Multan. Further, schools, shops and restaurants and gas stations are kept closed and roads are made deserted as well.

This entire countdown the economy of the country but no one agrees to consider the socio-economic condition of the country. Further, it caused to degrade the status of Ummah among the developed nations of the world who highlight these issues in the front of their newspapers (American World News Site, Nov 16, 2013).<sup>6</sup> However, to reconcile among the religious sects an initiative took by the Council of Islamic Ideology in 2005 to invite the notable scholars of all the Muslim religious sects of Pakistan to express their views and beliefs. After a long term efforts, the drafting was prepared in 2009 and published in 2010.<sup>7</sup> The notable thing is that all the noted religious scholars of each school of thought have concurred on all the fundamental elements of Islam by acknowledging that there is no fundamental controversy among them which cause to blame *takfir* against other sects (Saqib Akbar,140,132,110).

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<sup>5</sup> This happened at the time when army of Yazid under the commandment of Hīrah bin Yazīd reached to counter him and meanwhile time of prayer appeared. See for detail, Shaykh Abbas Qammī, *Muntahā al-Āmāl* (Qamm: Mu'assisah Intishārāt, 1377A.H.), 1: 615.

<sup>6</sup> Pakistan: Rawalpindi locked down after violent sectarian clashes. Eight people died after Shia Muslims staged a procession during the religious festival of Ashura. See, Elexendar Besant, GlobalPots: American World News Site, November 16, 2013 10:05.

<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, this report could not be published by the Council of Islamic Ideology rather a member of the Council Saqib Akbar published it privately with the help of Ministry of religious affairs

## Conclusions

This research concludes that in Pakistan sectarian extremism is a continuation of the situation developed among the scholars of the sub-continent before partition. Illiteracy, lack of scientific understanding of philosophy of Islam, and about different sects caused to enhance extremism among the Muslims. It is also concluded that the leaders of the religious sects in Pakistan show less concern to resolve their disagreed issues. It is concluded that sectarianism not only combating the fundamental principles of Shari'ah such as unity, equality and justice but humiliating the claim of Islam as a peaceful religion. Extreme association with a particular *maslak* and the efforts of the leaders to keep away their followers from the teachings, writings and history of the other sects are great hurdles in the way of harmony and reconciliation. Sectarianism has made the whole society disturbed, confused and afraid of target killing. However, a thorough study about the common beliefs and the issues of disagreement among different sects reveals that no serious and fundamental contradiction existing among them. All the religious sects have their origin in the general principles of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (PBUH). Sectarianism however, has become a part of the belief (*Iman*) of all the sects, the elimination of which seems impossible so, efforts should be made to create harmony among them by way of tolerance, reconciliation and legal measures.

## Recommendations

As sectarian extremism has become one of the most critical issues to resolve thus, each segment of Pakistani society such as the religious leaders, common men and the government has to play its role in the creation of harmony. Thus, this research suggests reformation at three levels such as reformation in the behavior and role of the religious leaders, reformation in the scheme of studies at *madaris* and the role of the government to create harmony among different religious sects: **(I)** The religious sects can play a constructive role in the creation of a peaceful environment if they start to participate in the *majalis* and *mahafil* (meetings and celebrations) of each other. For instance, there is no harm if Sunni start to participate the *matimi majalis* (mourn) of their Shi'ah brothers keeping in mind the cause and objective of these meetings (*majalis*) after all each of the religious sect has deep affection with Ahl al-bayt (family of the Prophet (pbuh) and has the same feelings against Yazid's tyranny and inhumanity.

Admiration of the cherished people by way of poetry (Marsiyah goe) is a tradition practiced throughout the Muslim history. For instance, during the era of Hadrat Umar, Mutammim bin Nuwayrah was a great poet of the Muslims who often had to cry over the faulty murder of his brother and had to say mourned poetry (marsiyah) among the people and thus, people also felt regret and had to cry over his sadness. Once he came to Hadrat Umar and after hearing *marsiyah* from Mutammim, Hadrat Umar wished might he knew poetry to recite over the death of his brother Zayd (Allamah Shibli Nu`mani, 1988, Al-Farooq, pp. 383-84). Likewise, the tensions among Deo-bandis, Braylvis and Ahl al-Hadith can be removed by way of admiration. The Deo-Bandi and Ahl al-Hadith should not be so strict regarding Eid Milad al-Nabi and Mehfil-e-Na`at rather should consider them Bid`ah Hasanah by admiring the objectives of these *majalis* as they provide a platform to remember the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and to recite Drud Sharif over there. Further, the religious leaders of all the sects should arrange get together at their *madāris* and should invite the leaders of the opponents over a cup of tea to show brotherly relationship among them. **(II)** As all the sects utilize their *madaris* to preach their ideas and practices, so reformation in the scheme of studies at *madaris* can play a positive role in educating the masses and preserving Islamic identity. In order to promote reconciliation and exchange of views, the study at *madaris* should not be confined to the study of their particular *Aimmah* and their theories rather theories of all traditional Muslims jurists should be taught in scientific and comparative manners.

Further, the Qur'ānic sciences should be taught scientifically with the help of the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) , companions and traditional *tafas̄r* in the light of the changed context and public interest. Reading of newspaper should be declared compulsory for the children at *madaris*. The scholars of each sect should not condemn others rather should establish an environment of harmony at their *madaris* and teach their disciples to respect the opponents in views. It is suggested that the minimum level of required education for getting admission in a *madrasah* particularly, to become a *mufti/Alim* should be enhanced from primary/middle to at least graduation level because the Qur'anic sciences are not easy to understand and only a person of scientific understanding can understand them correctly. **(III)** With a view to fight the curse of sectarian extremism and to save the nation from the resultant ignominy throughout the world, it is duty of the government that all acts of violence should be dealt with an iron hand. All the religious sects should be taken on board in a proactive and positive manner for effective action.

To lessen the extremism the government should prohibit all types of processions and meetings by the religious sects during the month of *muharram* and Rabi al-Awwal (Eid Milad al-Nabi). The use of loud speaker at *masajid* and *madaris* should be restricted and if someone uses it to condemn other sects should be dealt according to the Anti Terrorist Act. It is suggested that all the mosques should be declared sect-free by way of legislation. Lastly, to create moderation and to spread correct knowledge about all the sects conferences, seminars and lectures should be arranged at all *madaris*, schools, colleges and universities throughout the country to tell the students that controversies among the religious sects are minors and do not affect the faith of any Muslim.

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