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Understanding Sectarian Intolerance In Pakistan: Causes And Way Forward

Abstract

Pakistan is a religious and Islamic state. The religion followed in Pakistan is Islam with a fraction of 98%. Being a peaceful religion it protects the rights of every individual without discrimination on the basis of class, sect or faith and promotes values and morals grounded on equality and justice for all without any discernment. This study explores the reasons that are responsible for endorsing sectarian conflicts among different sects generally known as sectarianism. It also attempts to explore that how intolerance among people on the basis of their diverse beliefs will central to discrimination and persecution, that encompasses acts repudiating the rights of people of different sects, to practice and express their beliefs freely. The qualitative research methodologies was adopted to study the research in detail that includes In-depth Interviews, participant observation and Rapport building that makes study more effective. Lastly, this study would be beneficial for the policy-makers and government shareholders to acquire and get to know the unpretentious issues that will help them in devising policies and guidelines to lessen sectarian intolerance among society.

Keywords: sectarianism, Intolerance, discrimination, Islam, policy-making, Faith, sects

Introduction

Religion remains one of the substantial sources of discrimination, intolerance, and marginalisation across the world because of the diverse beliefs of people as regards to their sects. Religion is as old as mankind and played a significant role in human existence and interface. Religion stands for its peace and equanimity in dissimilar societies, but the unawareness and the intemperance of the adherents had brought its negative impact on the global societies (Mahsood & kamran, 2017). In contemporary times, the activities regarding religion rather than reassuring peace and mutual tolerance, have aggravated fear, mistrust and negative feelings among their respective admirers. Peaceful co-existence in the world has often been threatened and susceptible by denial of one religious or non-religious group grounded on their religious affiliations (Haider, 2014). Religious Intolerance and prejudice has stretched deep inside the world. People have no deference for other than one's own views and sentiments. United States institute of peace on religious authority and the promotion of sectarian tolerance in Pakistan examines the determinants of religious tolerance in Pakistan, particularly among Shias and Sunnis and the role that religious authorities plays in reducing sectarian prejudice have revealed that in the first six months of 2014, the South Asia Terrorism Portal identified 51 distinct sectarian attacks in the country, in which 140 individuals were killed and 198 injured (Kalin & Siddiqui, 2014).

Sectarian intolerance infatuated by one religious sect against other is mainly due to their divergent doctrines. It is also defined as, the exclusive adherence to a particular

view, doctrine or school of thought in such a way as to consider other's views absolutely wrong and their followers as infidels (Farman Ullah, 2009). These divergent doctrines of people regarding their sects give way to intolerance, discrimination, marginalization across the world. The flames of sectarian intolerance ignites in most societies of the world and it becomes a multifaceted issue in numerous societies and cultures (Mehfooz & Parveen, 2021). It encompasses acts repudiating the rights of people of another sect to practice and express their beliefs freely and these incongruities in belief systems centrals towards extremism that causes the destruction of social fabric of society and distressing the harmony among people (Shahzad et al., 2022).

Sectarian conflicts distress the harmony of world from past numerous years but in the context of Pakistan it is as deep-rooted as the existence of this country. The sectarian conflict in Pakistan for the last 27 years resulted into thousands of deaths from suicide attacks, bomb blasts, assassinations and other terrorist acts. Due to these attacks it is a major threatening factor in Pakistan's political, social, religious and security order. The state actors, instead of seeking the management and resolution of a conflict, which has divided Muslims on sectarian grounds, tried to exploit the issue for political objectives (Ahmar, 2014). Moreover, the narrow interpretation of Islam and Jihad by semi-literate mullahs has impaired the true image of Islam and intensified ferocity among people based on their beliefs (Farman Ullah, 2009). Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies reports that 658 individuals were killed in sectarian attacks in 2013 alone (Kalin & Siddiqui, 2014).

Violence enthused by sectarianism has taken many forms particularly in Pakistan. Prominent representatives from each sect have been victims in tit-for-tat targeted killings. One group has launched armed attacks against another group's mosques and schools. Funerals and religious processions have been bombed. Within the Islamic sects Muslims are killing Muslims, innocent worshippers are targeted in mosques and Imam Bargahs on the basis of their religious conviction. Whereas, minorities in Pakistan are also persecuted on the basis of their beliefs that embraces verbal vilification, organized legal discrimination to violent attacks on places of worship, homes and individuals belonging to minority communities. The liveable space for minorities to practice their religious teachings has been narrowing, and the situation keeps deteriorating due to the blasphemy laws that play second fiddle to cycle of on-going vigilante violence happening in Pakistan (Jayanto, 2022).

This kind of violence and intolerance is gravely destructive for the society. Islam advocates values that are based on peace and harmony but despite of these values it is unfortunate that within the sects and sub-sects people hold fanatical views in contradiction of each other. The believer of every sect deliberates themselves as true Muslim and other as infidels. This ruthlessness of sectarianism is serious concern for Pakistan because it has distressing economic development of Pakistan, instigating turmoil and resentment in the society and creating dispute between Muslims through discernment on the basis of religious beliefs. This research efforts to explore the subtleties of sectarian intolerance in Pakistan and how it centrals towards the state of violence and persecution faced by people because of their diverse religious sects?

Research Methodology

This research is qualitative in nature. The qualitative exploratory approaches were used as a methodology to explore the grounds that are super intend for sectarian intolerance among Pakistani Muslims. Additionally, the qualitative tools that were used for data collection and analysis include observations and recordings that were encountered in field area and in-depth individual interviews, to explore the perspectives of people

holistically. Qualitative methodologies offer unique viewpoints into lived realities. Observations and recordings from fieldwork combined with deep interviews provide robust data collection and analysis.

In the field, observations allow documenting nonverbal interactions, emotions, and habits in authentic contexts overlooked by abstract notes. Recordings preserve nuances and surroundings lost to transcription. Together, observations, recordings, and interviews grant comprehensive insights beyond surface behaviors into complexity and diversity of human experience. By embracing holistic, textured analysis, findings can guide policy and programs better addressing community needs. Although qualitative methods require skill, rewarding are rich stories empowering marginalized voices and building equitable solutions.

Theoretical framework

The researcher used the theory of social capital which accentuates the value of social norms and networks for the progression of society and the economy. The offshoot of theory also emphasized on the role of religion in generating social capital which in turn could be pertinent to development initiatives and provides researcher a significant picture on the role of religion in generating social capital which is relevant for the society to function efficiently.

Theory of Social capital is defined as the networks of relationship among people who works or resides in a particular society, which facilitates society to function efficiently. It is a term that is commonly used in the encyclopaedia of social sciences nowadays. However, it is a deep-rooted conception but the conceptualization of the term has only been coined fairly recently by (Bankston & Zhou, 2002). They linked social capital with the concepts such as civil society and social connectedness.

Grounded on the theory of social capital (Candland, 2000) further extended the theory and includes faith as one of its manifestations and ideals, probably the basis or binding force which impasse people together for development of communities. It elucidates the importance of faith as binding force in the development of societies and (Fukuyama, 2000) also emphasizes religion is a peripheral cause of social capital that could be more effective in endorsing civil society. This particular dimension, an offshoot of theory of social capital, is abridged as religious capital.

The socio-economic and political advantages that people and groups gain as a result of their religious networks and ties are referred to as religious capital It is a development of the larger theory of social capital, which underlines the value of social norms and networks for the advancement of society and the economy. This viewpoint recognises the significant contribution that religious organisations and practises may make to social cohesiveness and local development. Faith, according to Candland, is one of the characteristics and values of social capital. In addition to offering a moral foundation for social relationships, he points out that religious organisations and practises can give people a sense of identity and belonging. This in turn can encourage reciprocity, cooperation, and trust between people and groups.

Additionally, Fukuyama also underlines the role that religion plays in fostering social capital. He contends that religious organisations can be especially significant in fostering civil society, which is defined as the area between the state and the individual where people can come together to work towards common objectives. This can further help to strengthen social trust, which is important for civil society to operate.

This dimension infers the role of religious capital in the lives of individuals and conjectures as a binding force that make people organized for development. Main concept from this offshoot of theory emphasized the role of religion in generating social

capital which in turn could be applicable to development initiatives. The concept of religious capital as a binding force incorporated in this study, to investigate that does this concept hold true or not? Whether religious capital acts as binding force in a societies or it creates divisions among people based on their diverse beliefs and practices?

Literature review
Causes of Sectarian Conflicts
Several studies conducted with reference to causes of sectarian conflicts expounds that the fundamental precepts of Islam served as the foundation for Pakistan. The political authorities that took over after Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's 1948 passing were weak politically and unable to deal successfully to manage this developing nation's political affairs. This led to a number of disputes amongst people over religious issues (Talha, 2017). Furthermore, Zia's policy of Islamization also played an adversarial role in creating divide between Shia and Sunni, which was implemented in 1979. Zia, a proponent of the Sunni school of thought, based his strategy of Islamization on the Hanafi School of law. As a result, the Shia community stopped adhering to Zia's policies and began to boycott them (Ahmar, 2014). Whereas, shattering the link between Sunni-Shia factions was further aided by the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 and the beginning of the anti-Soviet Jihad in Afghanistan by the Afghan Mujahedeen forces The result of this Islamic revolution gave power to Shia community in Pakistan to demand their own identity as a distinct branch of Islam (Murphy, 2019).

Since 1977, Pakistan's increase in madrassahs has greatly exacerbated sectarian conflict. Religious activity increased rapidly after the 1980 Zakat and Ushr Ordinance. The Zakat and Ushr Ordinance improved the prestige of the Ulemma and gave them social and political clout. The Ulemma also started giving Zakat money to their established madrassahs in order to expand their sects by building additional madrassahs, thus developing more devoted followers (Sriram, 2016). Another, the expansion of madrassahs was also a result of poverty. These madrassahs attracted people's attention because they gave students free religious instruction and lodging also another reason is that authorities also failed to keep an eye on the unregistered madrassahs (Ali, 2018). In Pakistan, there are between 10,000 and 40,000 religious madrassahs, of which 10% to 15% are connected to extremist organisations in order to produce fighters. These extremist madrassahs are damaging Pakistan's reputation both domestically and abroad. Such madrassahs promote a culture of religious fanaticism and intolerance (Fauzi, 2017).

Social Disorder and Unrest
Studies conducted with reference to Impacts of Sectarian conflicts mentions the sectarian tensions in society have resulted in unrest, chaos, and violence. Thousands of people have died as a result of suicide bombings, assassinations, and other terrorist acts in Pakistan over the past 27 years. Instead of attempting to manage and end a crisis that has split Muslims along sectarian lines, the state actors attempted to use the matter for political ends (Ahmar, 2014). The usage of Islam for political purposes encourages fierce competition for official favours among and within the numerous Sunni and Shia Islamic factions, with the clerical elite of the major sects and sub sects attempting to establish political parties, form jihadi militias, grow madrassa networks, that weakens the authority of central government that results into sectarian terrorism (International Crisis group, 2022). It infers that over 200 sectarian attacks was reported in 2013.

Pakistan has suffered greatly from terrorism over the past 1.5 decades. In the Punjab province, between 2011 and 2013, more than 86 incidences of Shia-Sunni killings were recorded. Baluchistan has become the prospect of Sunni-Shia clashes since 2011, with almost 528 people killed there, the majority of them were Shia. Between 2011 and 2013, Sindh province received reports of about 207 Shia Sunni murders (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 2014).

The impacts of conflicts based on the religious grounds is distressing the harmony among people and gives way to maltreatment, discrimination and violation of the rights of people (Hassan, 2015). Minorities in Pakistan are also facing the impacts of religious conflicts and being persecuted because of their diverse religious beliefs. The maltreatment of minorities comes in a variety of forms that arrays from verbal disparagement, systematized legal discernment to vehement assaults on places of worship, homes and individuals fitting to minority community (Amnesty International, 2016). Additionally, sectarian conflicts also constricted the religious freedom, up-surging of religious intolerance and extremism in Pakistan is frightening the social fabric of Pakistani society as well as undermining democracy and endangering the lives of millions of people who belong to religious minority (Curtis, 2016).

Disturbance in Economic Growth
Numerous studies conducted in reference to measure the disturbance in economic growth instigated by sectarian conflicts in Pakistan elucidates that one of the most major and significant cause of sectarianism is its adversarial effects on economic development of Pakistan. By decreasing foreign investment and elevating Pakistan to the list of unpopular nations, sectarian terrorism has slowed Pakistan's economic progress (Murphy, 2019). Foreign direct investment is consistently seen as a significant source of investment for developing nations since it enables them to close investment gaps, lower unemployment, and eventually provide host nation economies the much-needed boost. Similar to Pakistan, which is still developing and depends significantly on foreign direct investment to achieve high economic growth, many foreign investors felt that investing in Pakistan would be hazardous due to sectarian terrorism (Talha, 2017). Furthermore, foreign investors are concerned about their investments and returns because of the sectarian violence's impact on Pakistan's economy. As a result, Pakistan is losing the trust of international investors, which eventually makes it vulnerable to slow economic growth (Zahid, 2013).

Additionally, Only 15% of the 26000 persons surveyed around the world thought Pakistan had a beneficial impact on the world, while 55% thought it had a negative impact (Ghumman, 2014). Into the bargain, the economic survey of Pakistan states, the threat of violent extremism and the rise in terrorism disturbed Pakistan's regular economic activity, which led to greater business costs as well as production area disturbances that caused major delays in fulfilling export orders to other parts of the world (Economic Survey of Pakistan, 2017). As a result, Pakistani goods have consequently gradually lost market share to other competitors (Syed, 2014).

In accumulation, the increasing number of terrorist incidents brought on by sectarianism has added Pakistan to the list of unpopular nations and damaged Pakistan's reputation abroad. Today, every Muslim is viewed as a potential terrorist and is prohibited from entering any developed nation. Similar to this, many Muslims living overseas experience prejudice at work and lead enslaved lives. Pakistan "may be added on a list of terrorism-wracked countries whose residents are now temporarily banned from entering the United States," a top white house official claimed (Chandran, 2017).

Severity behind religious Intolerance

Numerous studies accompanied in order to investigate the reasons behind this state of Intolerance argued that in today's world, religious intolerance is a common occurrence. It is predicated on the idea that there is only one true religion and all others are erroneous, misconstrued, or non-existent (Nussbaum, 2013). The declaration on the abolition of all kinds of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief was adopted by the UN General Assembly (United Nations, 1981). It states that every human being is equal irrespective of any discrimination based on caste, colour and ethnicity. Whereas, Pakistan is the nation with the greatest number of documented cases of religious extremism and hatred directed at religious minorities worldwide (Human Rights first, 2012). The Jinnah Institute, a secular think tank, claims that there has never been a worse time for non-Muslims in Pakistan (Farooqi, 2011). In Pakistan, their access to employment, healthcare, and education has been declining, and there have been numerous violent attacks on them. The situation is deteriorating in the public eye as well (Khan, 2011).

This region of South Asia has a long history of religious extremism, some suggest it dates back to the Indus Valley Civilization (Malik, 2002). Such movements have been prevalent throughout Pakistani history. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who served as the Constitution's primary architect, took the initiative to proclaim the Ahmadis a non-Muslim minority in Pakistan in 1973. Zia ul Haq passed Ordinance XX in 1984, which resulted in severe Ahmadi persecution. At that time, the "Mullah and Madrassah-culture" was at its height (Khan, 2011). The genuine Islamization of Pakistan started at this time, and concepts like religious extremism and religious oppression have been employed to describe it. A case in point is the introduction of blasphemy laws under the guise of religious defamation, which is wreaking havoc in many nations throughout the world (Human Rights First, 2012). The causes and effects of religious intolerance have both been explained in terms of a range of social issues. Minority groups struggle with a lack of social justice, blatant discrimination is levelled against Christians, Sikhs, and Ahmadis as well as other religious minorities (Mahmud, 1995).

Findings

Causes of Sectarian Intolerance, Early Islamic home-based instructions

Early Islamic home-based instructions have a significant impact on how people contemplate and interpret their surroundings. One's ideas, attitudes, and values are significantly influenced by the environment and upbringing they experienced throughout their early years. For instance, within the Sunni population, a majority-based sect, there may exist resentment towards other minority sects. The reason for this includes attitudes and teachings that are prominent in their homes are frequently the source of this anger and feelings of hostility.

Sectarian teachings flourish when youngsters are raised up in a setting that exaggerates the practises of their particular sect and promotes it as superior to others. People who are constantly exposed to these ideas at home may develop a sense of exclusivity and superiority. Due to their limited viewpoint, they may grow deeply resentful of other sects and view their practices and beliefs as abnormal or inferior. As these people age, this prejudice and animosity may continue throughout their life, impacting how they interact with people of other faiths and ignites sectarian tensions in society.

Curriculum in educational institutions

Curriculum in educational institutions is also a major factor that are responsible for the promoting such values and beliefs that are based on antipathy and antagonism. Shaping

of mindsets at earlier age through educational curriculums and home based sectarian teachings has a lot of influence on the thinking patterns and defiance of societies as a whole. These resentment and extremism are result of several factors that includes biased education curriculum, which has a lot of influence on how society contemplates and deliberates the ground realities responsible for this sectarian divide. Therefore, academic discourse should be unrestricted from all these stereotypes and biased opinions that are based on hostility and aversion.

Education curriculum plays an imperious role in transforming the mindsets of individuals and it also affects the production of knowledge in a manner that when your academics discourse is based on exclusivity and individuality so it shapes the minds of individuals according to those exclusive values. Moreover, this becomes even more pronounced when the curriculum is centred on specific religious values and beliefs, creating an environment where non-adherents are excluded or marginalized.

Lack of inclusive education
Inclusive education is pertinent for the development of mindsets in a society that recognizes diversity and inclusivity among themselves and exhibit individuality and exclusivity that is based on resentment and extremism. Curriculum should be developed in a way that it gratifies the necessities of all populations not any particular that is in majority. It promotes unity and understanding among students from different sects as it provides them a platform for dialogue, fostering tolerance, empathy, and respect for diverse beliefs and practices.

Furthermore, inclusive education plays a key role in fostering religious tolerance and cultural understanding. It acknowledges each individual's freedom to explore their faith while also respecting diverse interpretations within Islam. Students from all sects are empowered to openly share their unique perspectives and engage in thoughtful discourse. They have opportunities to deepen their own knowledge while learning from others with differing views. By bringing together a mix of students in this manner, bonds of friendship can form across sectarian lines. Over time, this helps weave the rich religious tapestry of the community into a stronger social fabric defined by mutual acceptance. Differences are appreciated as a valued aspect of cultural heritage, diminishing tendencies towards division. In this way, inclusive schooling makes an important contribution to a cohesive society characterized by cross-sect understanding and harmony.

Marginalisation of communities
The marginalization of minority communities is also a consequence of their scant inclusion in educational materials. The curriculum solely perpetuates the notion that only the beliefs and interpretations of the dominant sect are legitimate and deserving of recognition by disregarding their contributions to religious and intellectual discourse. The values of diversity and pluralism, which are pivotal to cultivating an inclusive society, are undermined by this discriminatory stance. Moreover, the absence of forums for open discussion and debate in educational environments also breeds obstruction and intolerance among individuals.

The potential to foster empathy and respect for diverse viewpoints is hampered by the dearth of opportunities to interact with varying perspectives and practice critical thinking. Complex ideas are best explored through respectful exchange and consideration of the nuanced stances that exist among minority positions. A well-rounded education embraces diversity of thought and gives equal voice to the interpretations of all groups, however few they may be in number.

Sectarian schooling in Madrassahs

Due to influencing the formation of prejudiced perspectives in children, sectarian-focused education in Madrassahs has long been a topic of discussion. Numerous Madrassahs regularly concentrate on advancing a single sect's interpretations exclusively, so students may have limited exposure to Islam's diverse viewpoints and understandings. With such constrained exposure, followers can develop a closed-minded mindset that makes comprehending and respecting religious diversity challenging.

Furthermore, Madrassahs emphasis on sectarian distinctions can distort society's social fabric. Unintentionally, these institutions may nourish sectarian conflict and division rather than fostering harmony and unity. The lack of interaction and comprehension among students from different faiths feeds forerunners and furthers misunderstandings. This undermines not simply social cohesion but moreover the development of a pluralistic society that acknowledges a range of religious and cultural practices. The segregation of religious communities hampers developing mutual respect and understanding between groups.

It is undeniable that certain madrassahs have propagated rigid doctrines that discourage pluralism. Their lessons often emphasized unwavering obedience to a particular creed, neglecting dissenting perspectives. However, casting judgement upon all Islamic schools would be imprudent and unfair. Indeed, numerous madrassahs impart balanced Islamic instruction that prioritizes faith balanced with compassion. Their curriculum teaches respect for all and urges students to uphold principles of peace within their own communities. Rather than denounce diversity, these institutions aim to cultivate scholars focused on serving local needs through moderation and understanding. Their goal is to nurture graduates willing to represent Islam's spirit of accommodation.

Political factors

There are several reasons for rising tensions between groups in society. Political figures have increasingly exploited differences to further their own ambitions, deepening divides and stoking resentment. Some seek support through empowering "us vs them" narratives that appeal to base instincts. As competition for control intensifies, sensitive identities are leveraged for political advantage over "the other". This manipulation of societal fault lines has severe repercussions, damaging the relationships required for cohesion. Meanwhile, the most vulnerable suffer most from a climate of fear and distrust. Though division serves short term goals of those in power, lasting peace will only come through mutual understanding and goodwill between all members of the community.

This manipulation exacerbates sectarian rifts by cultivating an atmosphere of hostility and mistrust, which seeds division in communities once thought united. A sense of injustice grows over time when opportunities are unjustly withheld from some due to their sect, whether in jobs, schools or elections. The natural result of marginalization is resentment amongst those sidelined. Furthermore, the machinations of geopolitics can inflame tensions as outside forces meddle in internal matters, tilting the balance of power to favor certain groups over others for their own strategic goals. Regional power struggles to have spilled over borders to rouse sectarian sentiment, amplifying differences and catalyzing fear between neighbors with a shared heritage but diverging allegiances in a fractured landscape.

Foreign Funding's

Funds and financing are essential for financial development; however, their misuse or politicization can prompt different issues. On the off chance that subsidizing is coordinated towards political purposes or advancing a particular attitude, it can undermine the standards of straightforwardness, responsibility and capable administration. It very well may be a gateway for debasement, as assets meant for improvement ventures might be misappropriated or redirected for individual or political addition. This can block monetary advancement and keep up irregularity inside a country. It exacerbates current divisions inside a culture and hinders endeavours towards incorporated advancement. In extraordinary cases, it can even prompt to clashes and unrest if various gatherings see the utilization of assets as one-sided or supporting certain elements.

To mitigate these potential issues, it is basic for governments, worldwide associations and moneylenders to ensure that credits and financing are utilized obviously and consistent with the proposed turn of events goals. Strong oversight instruments, against debasement measures and consistency to capable administration practices are basic in forestalling the misuse of assets. Strong oversight instruments, anti-corruption measures and adherence to good governance practices are critical in preventing the misuse of funds. Some ventures necessitate longer or more intricate sentences to completely investigate complex ideas, while others can be concisely communicated with shorter structures. This variability in sentence length and complexity mirrors the normal examples found in human-created substance.

Religion as political currency
The unfaithful manipulation of faith by partisan forces can lead to societal ruin. When officials capitalize on spiritual sentiments for selfish gains, it breeds antagonism, hostility, and weakens the common bonds linking communities. Rather than inclusive policies addressing all citizens' needs, these parties prioritize currying favour with select religious groups, exacerbating existing fractures.Moreover, when political factions exploit religion, they regularly propagate an intolerant, closed form of identity politics. This can marginalize minorities and perpetuate injustice and discrimination. By polarizing society along religious lines, these factions undermine equality, secularism, and religious freedom, cornerstones for harmonious, inclusive society. Using religion as a political instrument not only compromises integrity of belief but also erodes public trust in political institutions placed by the people.

Political marginalization of sects exists in minority
Political marginalization also plays an imperative role in instigating the sectarian conflicts and rifts. When people from the minorities are excluded from the decision-making process then it will leads towards resentment and frustration among communities. It makes them feel that there interest are not being adequately represented. This reinforces a sense of marginalization and intolerance and feelings of injustice among marginalized groups since they perceive themselves as being denied a voice and representation in matters that directly affect their lives.

Culture of debating right and wrong rather than balanced perspectives
This culture is destructive for the peaceful growth of society because it hinders the capability of people to think disparagingly and deconstruct the things on the basis of facts rather than rumours. Unfortunately, people have now developed a sense of superiority and dominance where they think that there culture, sect and knowledge is ostentatious as compare to others. Regrettably it will leads towards a state where

intolerance and narrow-mindedness becomes common among the communities as everyone considers themselves as superior and others as inferior or erroneous.

Role of Religious leaders

Religious leaders play a significant role in shaping the beliefs and behaviours of followers. Many religious leaders promote tolerance, compassion and harmony that shapes the mind of people in a way that they appreciate diversity and pluralism among communities whereas there are some instances where some have been concerned in dissemination of abhorrence and misrepresentation among communities. Unfortunately, a small fraction of religious leaders may misuse their positions of influence to support certain sects or propagate divisive ideologies. These leaders can exploit religious teachings to manipulate the sentiments of their followers that fosters the sense of exclusivity and animosity towards other groups. By selectively emphasizing certain doctrines or misinterpreting scriptures, they create an environment that spreads prejudice, discrimination and misinformation.

Solutions to Curtail Sectarian Intolerance

Awareness raising among individuals is necessary in order to make them understand how their wrong perceptions and stereotypes are distressing for the social cohesion of the society. As, people are unaware about the facts and figures that are actually described by Islam so, it is important to create awareness among individuals to make them understand the importance of diversity and plurality.

Culture of reformism should be introduced in all the layers of institutions as all of them are engraved with biased mind-sets, discriminatory practices, marginalization approaches and etc. there are some key areas where reforms can be implemented that includes the promotion of inclusive leadership that represents diverse religious sects. As it helps in fostering harmony and a sense of inclusion and representation for all communities that reduces the chances of bias or discrimination.

Review and modernise religious Curricula is also another elucidation to promote tolerance, respect and understanding of different religious sects. Curriculum should be designed in a way that it will provide a comprehensive representation of different religious sects, including their history, beliefs, practices and their contributions.

There should be a selection criterion for the religious leaders. Religious leaders should have a thorough understanding of their own religious traditions as well as basic knowledge about other faiths also as many people who concede themselves as religious leaders but they don't have enough compassion, integrity and commitment to promote peace and harmony.

Effective political leadership also plays an important role in reducing sectarian tensions by promoting Inclusivity and equal rights. If Political leaders uphold the principles of inclusivity and equal rights, irrespective of their religious sect. It will leads towards an environment where people from different sects feel valued, respected and included in the political process.

Interfaith initiatives also promote understanding and cooperation among people of different sects. Due to this people will able to learn the commonalities that exist among different faiths, such as the principle of faith, love for humanity.

Recommendations

Recommendations to Ulemas:

In order to promote unity and understanding among different sects, Ulemas must prioritize dismissing prejudices and falsehoods that may persist. It is imperative for

them to focus their initiatives on cultivating mutual progress, emphasizing the commonalities shared by all denominations of Islam. It is indispensable that Ulemas refrain from delivering hateful oratory or advocating for any singular sect, as such behaviors can perpetuate discord and dissention within the community. Alternatively, they should wholeheartedly advocate for the authentic teachings of Islam, confirming that their messages are devoid of any bias or inclination towards any solitary sect.

Recommendations to State:
To promote an equitable and inclusive society, the state ought to prioritize putting into practice lawful changes that guarantee equal treatment with no bias. By ensuring that regulations are impartial and applied uniformly to all natives, no matter their denomination or religious philosophies, the state can nurture a feeling of fairness and justice. Furthermore, the administration should take proactive interfaith endeavors focused on lessening sectarian tensions. By encouraging discourse, understanding, and teamwork among different religious groups, the governing body can play a pivotal part in cultivating a harmonious and tolerant culture. In addition, the administration must take steps to outlaw literature or any form of media that advances malice against any denomination. It is crucial for those in power to address the underlying reasons for social and political problems.

Recommendations to Civil Society:
Civil society should actively work towards promoting trust and understanding among different communities. By organizing interfaith dialogues, cultural exchanges, and community-building initiatives, civil society can foster an environment of inclusivity and harmony. It is essential for civil society to play a pivotal role in bridging the gaps and building relationships based on mutual respect and acceptance. Additionally, civil society should extend its support to state institutions in maintaining law and order. By actively cooperating with law enforcement agencies and advocating for the rule of law, civil society can contribute to a safe and secure environment for all citizens.

Analysis
In nutshell, the research explains the causes that are responsible for the sectarian intolerance among Pakistani Muslims. It helps us to understand that what those factors that are responsible are promulgating sectarian among people and it also aids us to comprehend the solutions that are required to curtail sectarian intolerance among communities. It also highlights the social, economic and political aspects that are responsible creating sectarian tensions among communities. It also elucidates how these tensions among communities on the basis of their diverse sectarian backgrounds will leads towards the state of marginalization and persecution among the communities.
Despite of having Islamic clarifications that advocates on the values like equality, justice and peace among diverse communities irrespective of backgrounds, sects and colours still people are practicing these persecution and marginalization approaches to side-line people who are not from the majority populated sects. In general terms, sectarian violence has negatively impacted Pakistan's religious, socioeconomic, political, and diplomatic sectors. Tribes, sectarian organizations, or even political gangs are more powerful than the central government in Pakistan. And for this reason, sectarianism in Pakistan is significantly growing and widening. Since Pakistan's founding, sectarianism and terrorism have not affected the country with the same ferocity as they have in the recent three decades. In Pakistan, sentiments of vulnerability are constantly growing due to suicide attacks, targeted killings of religious

leaders of different sect, bombings or explosives in mosques and imam Bargahs, etc. This difficult condition has threatened Pakistan's entire social order. Therefore, it is critical to address the sectarian threat immediately.

Moreover, religious leaders also play their part in it in order to degenerate it more by justifying discrimination and stereotyping the people that belongs from the minority sects they creates a state of offence and frustration among communities. In order to restructuring these arrogances it required a holistic approach that brings reforms in all structures of society. Government Institutions, local government, religious leaders, civil society all these need to work together in order to curtail the sectarian resentment and intolerance among people.

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