

Journal of Religion & Society (JR&S)

Available Online:

<https://islamicreligious.com/index.php/Journal/index>

Print ISSN: 3006-1296 Online ISSN: 3006-130X

Platform & Workflow by: [Open Journal Systems](#)

The Role of Islamic Scholars in Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding: A Comparative Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies

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ABSTRACT

In many modern Muslim states, conflict remains a significant and long-term issue. It is influenced by the multi-faceted nature of political instability, the presence of sectarian differences, differences in socio-economic status, and the legacy of colonial and post-colonial governance. In these polarised contexts, Islamic scholars ('ulamā') hold moral significance and exert social influence. However, their involvement in the processes of conflict transformation and peacebuilding has not been systematically compared, analysed, or given proper attention within such a framework. This research paper aims to fill this void by exploring the multifaceted and evolving role of Islamic teachers in conflict resolution, social reconciliation, and sustainable peace in some Muslim societies today.

This study probes how values such as justice ('adl), reconciliation (sulh), mercy (rahmah), and collective responsibility are represented and acted upon in relation to the different socio-political contexts in which the 'ulamā' conceptualise and operationalise these values, drawing on the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān and the Prophetic model of conflict management. This study adopts a qualitative comparative research design and uses key case studies from various experiences across Muslim geographies to examine variations in the scholarly exploration of peacebuilding efforts. They encompass promoting peaceful and/or inter-sectarian understanding, addressing extremist and violent narratives, resolving inter-group conflicts, and fostering social cohesion through religious discourse and/or community leadership.

The study also provides a critical analysis of the current dilemmas faced by Islamic scholars, such as their political manipulation, loss of public confidence in them, growing polarisation, and shifts in the traditional models of religious authority due to modern media. This study contrasts the different contexts and how historical events, state – religion relations, and institutional environments influence the scope and impact of the role of 'ulamā' as peace builders.

The results suggest that in settings where Islamic scholars uphold intellectual independence, contextual sensitivity, and meaningful interaction with local communities, they can be significant tools for conflict transformation. They are equipped to rethink narratives of violence through ethics and religion, crafting discourses to offer moral checks and guide reconciliation and positive discourse. On the other hand, religious contexts, where religious authority is being politicised and religion is being instrumentalised, are known to limit the positive outcomes of scholarly interventions. This research, with its comparative approach, extends other studies in the field by confirming that in a world today characterised by persistent conflicts, Islamic scholarly leadership still holds great relevance in solving these issues and promoting sustainable peace in Muslim societies.

KEYWORDS: Islamic Scholars (Ulama), Conflict Transformation, Peace building, Muslim Societies, Reconciliation (Sulh), Islamic Ethics.

INTRODUCTION

The study's background and rationale are provided.

One of the most pressing issues that threatens any Muslim society today is conflict in the form of political instability, intergroup antagonism, and socioeconomic polarisation. Although religion, including Islam, has sometimes been a source of problems and conflicts, it is also a source of peace and reconciliation. The ethical and jurisprudential principles for conflict resolution and peacebuilding are at the core of Islamic edicts: the values of justice ('adl), compassion (rahmah), mediation (sulh), and arbitration (tahkim) (Maryam, 2024).

Islamic scholars ('ulamā'), who are entrusted with the teachings and guidance of Islam, play a key role in translating these teachings into action and providing the community with guidance in the face of conflict and reconciliation. Emerging evidence from empirical work suggests that during conflict situations, Muslim clerics and scholars can be very influential in fostering robust and inclusive religious discourses, articulating a Muslim vision of social justice, and helping communities in violent conflict towards reconciliation. (Mohammed, Al Sowaidi, & Muhammed, 2025).

This understanding is the reason behind the current study: a more in-depth comparative analysis of the roles of 'ulamā' in different Muslim contexts is desirable. This study sheds light on how scholars in the Islamic ummah can play a role in building sustainable ways of peaceful conflict resolution and help explore the power of religious leaders to influence the creation of more peaceful and harmonious societies.

Research Problem

While there is a growing body of research in the field of Islamic conflict resolution and peacebuilding, the research base is largely theoretical or applies to a few local contexts. There are still limited empirical studies that systematically explore conflict transformation and conflict handling processes, the methods and tools used, and the obstacles encountered by the 'ulamā' in various Muslim societies today. This fracture makes it difficult to understand the nuanced relationships between religious leadership, the code of conduct, and socio-political frameworks, and their collective impact on the success of peacebuilding processes.

Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this research adds to the work on peace studies, conflict resolution, leadership studies, and in the field of Islamic social ethics, the study has added significant value. Its academic value lies in its comparative analysis and contribution to empirical knowledge and understanding of the role of religious actors in peace processes, enriching and deepening theoretical approaches. Practically, the findings provide useful recommendations for policies, civil society practitioners, and religion-based groups on how to better draw in and utilise Islamic scholars in areas of peacebuilding and conflict transformation. They are particularly relevant to culturally appropriate program designs that make use of the religious resources of natives to make peace sustainable.

Objectives of the Research

To examine the role of Islamic scholars ('ulamā') in conflict transformation and peace building within specific Muslim societies in the present day.

To identify the Strategies and mechanisms used by 'ulamā' for reconciliation and social cohesion.

To examine the difficulties and limitations of Islamic teachers in carrying out their peacebuilding roles.

To conduct a comparative study on the effectiveness of scholarly engagement in different Muslim environments.

Research Questions

What role do Islamic scholars ('ulamā') play in conflict transformation and peace building in Muslim societies today?

How do you think, based on your reading of the Qur'an, Hadith, and fiqh textbooks, the 'ulamā' try to resolve conflicts and foster sustainable peace through any strategies or Islamic mechanisms (e.g., ṣulḥ, taḥkīm)?

What are the challenges and constraints in the effectiveness of Islamic scholars' peace-building endeavours?

What are the historical, socio-political, and institutional influences on the involvement and influence of Islamic scholars in various Muslim societies?

LITERATURE REVIEW

A multi-layered engagement with religious studies, peace and conflict (P&C) studies, and Islamic ethics is required to comprehend the scholarship needed to understand the role of Islamic scholars in peace building and conflict transformation. These are the key points of this literature review: It critically investigates some of the present research, it gathers main statements from the scientific literature and it reveals the areas requiring further research, thereby justifying the current study.

Islamic Perspectives on Peace and Conflict

Peace (Salam), reconciliation (ṣulḥ), justice ('adl), and compassion (raḥmah) are frequently mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah, the foundational texts of Islam. Islamic scholarship points out that peace is not simply the lack of war but rather a complete social peace in which moral considerations, justice, and moral restraints are paramount. According to Wani (2024), the classical Muslim principles of ṣulḥ (settlement), taḥkīm (arbitration), wasta (mediation), and sabr (patience) offer a deep theological and ethical foundation that can guide conflict alleviation and achieving social peace. Wani believes that these values are the basis of a theology of conflict resolution that promotes reconciliation and moral responsibility in Islam.

Likewise, Latif, Ullah, and Saif ul Islam (2024) have highlighted peace as an integral value in Islamic teachings, with harmony, tolerance, and justice as the foundations of Islam. They see peace as an integral tenet of Islam and therefore believe that through their analysis of the Qur'ānic stress on living in a manner of mutual respect and peace, they offer a normative framework for responding to the conflicts of today's world.

In sum, these theoretical perspectives emphasize the centrality of peace with respect to Islam and are essential to grapple with when assessing how the 'ulamā' might think about and interpret the relevance of this centrality for conflict response situations. However, these studies leave unanswered the question of the empirical investigation of the 'real-life' involvement of Islamic scholars in contemporary conflicts.

Religion, Peace building, and Conflict Resolution

Recent research on the relationship between religion and peace building indicates that religion can be a cause of conflict as well as a peace building tool. As religion has been an active force in conflict in some areas, it also has great potential to heal divided communities, promote reconciliation, and build social cohesion (Jinnah, Akber, and Akber, 2025). They highlight the role religious leaders, teachings, and practices can play in fostering forgiveness, empathy, and peaceful co-existence, especially within the context of transformation, division, and conflict.

Likewise, Firdous et al. (2025) studied the competent role of religion in conflict resolution. Their research highlights that religious identity is not only highly intertwined with social and political grievances but also a complex—but significant—influence on the escalation

as well as resolution of conflicts. They remind us from an Islamic perspective that religion can contribute to tensions, but it can also provide us with methods to bring peace and cure violence.

These studies do much to improve our understanding of the wider influence of religion on conflict and peace, but their main focus is on religion broadly. They do not look at the role of the 'ulamā' as active players in peace processes, leaving a lacuna in the literature.

Integration of Islamic Ethics in Peace building

The level of embedding Islamic ethics within peace-building efforts. Embedding of Islamic ethics in peace-building.

The field of ethics and peace building has also been explored by scholars, who have studied the interlink ages of Islamic norms and ethics in peace building. In the study, termed "Collective justice in Islamic wisdom: The ethical basis for a sustainable peace," Channa and Bhutto (2024) explore the ethical dimensions that underlie this concept and are crucial for fostering sustainable peace in Islam. Their response is that social justice, equity, and collective well-being are integral values in Islamic moral beliefs and that there is a strong similarity between the concepts and goals of social justice and other peace building concepts, which highlight fairness, inclusion, and social harmony.

Likewise, studies on peace and conflict resolution in Islam highlight the extensive peace- and conflict-responsive traditions and practices within the religion stemming from its sacred texts and traditions. By adding an ethical approach to Islam to a peace building framework, Wani (2024) adds more dimensions to al-'unf (non-violence) and virtue concepts such as patience and moral character to those of secular peace building approaches.

Although these studies help us better comprehend Islamic values, they are mostly theoretical and conceptual. Their scope of coverage provides little indication of the action in practice and concrete interventions of Islamic scholars in the world of conflicts, with a significant gap in the literature on the subject.

Specific Case and Contextual Studies

An increasing number of studies have investigated the role of Islamic actors in peace building in concrete socio-political contexts. Mohammed, Al Sowaidi, and Muhammed (2025) discuss the role of Muslim clergy and imams in Cape Town during socio-political turmoil, specifically how Friday sermons (naṣīḥah) have been and are used as a means for creating an inclusive society, socio-economic justice, and peace building during such crises. They found that mobilizing charities in the context of Islamic teachings, including charitable giving (zakāt, ṣadaqah), can have a significant impact on the immediate action needed for humanitarian interventions and the wider drive towards structural action for justice, both of which contribute to sustainable peace.

As part of the community, Maknunia, Sutrisno, and Julianto (2025) show how Islamic humanitarianism, as manifested in institutions such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, is being utilized to bring humanitarian action in line with peace and reconciliation in conflict areas in Indonesia. Their findings provide a good example of how Islamic institutions engage directly with emergency responses while also engaging with and empowering social processes of reconciliation in various communally charged contexts, all of which support peace building.

These case studies are important because they provide concrete evidence of the role of Islamic actors in peace processes. However, they are usually confined to institutions and/or local contexts, with a preference for individual 'ulamā' and little comparative work for Muslim societies. Comparative studies of the role, approach, and efficacy of Islamic scholars in peacemaking in varied modern settings are thus still very much needed.

Issues, with a particular focus on the contributions of scholars in Islamic thought-building and peace building.

A growing number of scholarly projects investigating peacemaking and Islam have attempted to place Islamic principles in the larger context of global peacemaking. Said's scholarship takes the central Islamic themes of coexistence, peace-building, non-violence and forgiveness to task, highlighting the fact that approaches to peace-building within the Islamic tradition have potential and meaning beyond the secular approaches that have traditionally been considered universal. He aims to introduce such mechanisms of conflict resolution and social harmony that will be culturally inspired and culturally competent in that sense; that will be rooted in Islamic concepts of peace to create culturally relevant approaches to peace.

Continuing this in-betweenness, Qamarul Huda explores how Islamic thought has conversed with the discipline of peace building today. He also works on peace building and conflict resolution, focusing on the perceptions and ideas of violence and nonviolence among Muslim scholars, civil society, and the communities themselves. This examination shows how the passion to act and think well can develop from a commitment to faith, leading to a range of actions directed towards reconciliation and justice.

Among these are important contributions to the awareness of the interpretative and action-oriented function of thought leaders in peace building processes in Islam. However, their analysis tends to surpass the role of 'ulamā', which also includes civil society actors, non-governmental organizations, and other non-scholarly agencies. Consequently, the specific contributions of Islamic scholars have not always been investigated separately, and more in-depth research into their unique roles of Islamic scholars in conflict transformation work is still underutilized.

Broader Studies on Religious Actors in Peace building

The main target of this study is Islamic scholars, but experiences from the rest of the peace and conflict literature are also relevant. For example, research into interreligious dialogue in Sri Lanka shows the role religious actors can play in reconciliation between various religions. Such research may not seek to understand Islamic scholars per se, but it conveys the ability of religious peacemakers to rebut stereotypes, challenge historical grievances, and promote social unity. (Arkam & Shehu, 2025).

Furthermore, international scholarship on faith-based peace building indicates an ambivalent link between religion, conflict, and peace. Religious communities, as providers of religious knowledge, have included the issue of promoting interfaith dialogue, social cohesion, and peace education in their endeavors, pointing to the potential of religious knowledge and moral leadership to translate into practical action regarding conflict transformation in various cultural contexts.

These studies contribute significantly to the theoretical discussion of peace building but do not specifically look at how Islamic scholars in Muslim societies approach conflict and peace building from an Islamic ethical stance and in a socially and politically specific context. This constraint is another reason for the need for targeted research on the role of 'ulamā' in the present-day peace process.

Research Gap

Although the existing literature, like that from researchers on the intersections between Islam, peace and African contexts, has been growing, a gap still exists.

First, there is a lack of attention to the role of Islamic scholars as separate actors.

Current scholarship is mostly on Islamic concepts of ethics or religious teachings or on the role of institutions in the field of peace building. Rare scholarly work, however, addresses

Islamic scholars ('ulamā') in their own right as actors whose interpretive authority, moral legitimacy, and community leadership have a direct impact on the process of conflict and peace. Consequently, studies on 'ulamā' agency in the conflict resolution process and in the shaping of their social reactions to conflict are still limited.

Secondly, there is a necessity to do comparative analysis from one Muslim society to another.

Single case studies in areas like the involvement of clerics in Cape Town or Islamic humanitarian efforts in Indonesia are helpful, but there is a dearth of comparative systematic research on similarities and differences among several Muslim societies. Most studies are context-specific and thus lack a deep critical engagement with the ways in which similar and/or distinct socio-political, historical, and cultural contexts can affect the nature and role of the 'ulamā' in conflict transformation as well as their effectiveness.

Thirdly, a lack of empirical evidence on practices and impact.

While conceptualizing helps deepen one's understanding of the topic, studies that document the groundbreaking processes, mechanisms, and material consequences of Islamic peace building scholars in the trenches are still relatively scarce. Current research tends to be descriptive, lacking systematic analysis of the role played by 'ulamā' regarding conflict, their role in the nation-state, and how they negotiate their legitimacy in a polarized setting.

Fourthly, constrained linkages to other peace building frameworks.

Islamic norms, values and ethics for peace is a field of research that is often kept in the realm of religious studies, which lacks engagement with the principal paradigm of peace and conflict studies. The lack of integration confines the development of the role of Islamic scholars to a narrower theoretical discussion on conflict transformation and peace building.

Strong conclusions from the literature are thus that the Islamic perspective offers ample normative resources for understanding peace and reconciliation as well as peace and conflict transformation, and that the literature on religion and peace building provides a basis for seeing the potential role of religious actors in the processes of peace and reconciliation, and social cohesion. Empirical case studies also provide lenses in which to look at the role that Islamic actors are playing in peace processes. However, there is still plenty of room for research which is more comprehensive, comparative and empirically based, in the context of peace building around Islamic scholars ('ulamā').

This research aims to fill those gaps by systematically looking at how 'ulamā' resolve conflicts in various modern Muslim societies, how they do so, the problems they face and the wider contexts associated with how they exert their agency and impact in peace building processes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative research methodology coupled with an analytical research approach to study the role of 'ulamā' in the resolution of conflict and building peace in the Muslim world today. As a field that is both deeply pragmatic and much more normative, interpretive, and context-specific as far as religious authority goes, and as a field that is very much interpretive and context-specific as far as actual methods of peace building are concerned, a qualitative method seems suited precisely for answering the goals of this research.

Method of Research

It is a qualitative mix of research methods with support from an analytic and comparative approach. Researching conflicts and peace building from the perspective of Islamic

scholars using a qualitative approach offers opportunities to examine the ideas, narratives, practices, and ethical frameworks that such work entails. The study deals with values, so only quantitative methods would be able to encompass the complexity of such dynamics and the interpretation of Islamic knowledge, scholarly authority and socio-political contexts.

An analytical method is used to re-collectively analyze Islamic texts, discourses in Islamic scholarship, and peace building with classical Islamic thoughts and contemporary Islamic thought. Furthermore, a comparative approach is employed to examine similarities and differences in the roles, strategies, and effectiveness of 'ulamā' across selected Muslim societies. A comparative perspective can provide opportunities to identify contextual factors, such as political environments, institutional arrangements, and historical experiences that influence research on peace building processes.

Sources of Data

It uses primary and secondary sources of research for academic rigour, depth and triangulation.

Primary Sources

These are known as primary sources and consist of such key Islamic traditions as: Classical (or foundational) Islamic literature that reflects Islamic attitudes towards peace, conflict and dispute resolution:

A study of the Qur'an, in relation to concepts of peace (salaam), justice ('adl), reconciliation (ṣulḥ), forgiveness ('afw) and conflict management (mu'triyata).

Prophetic traditions (hadith) demonstrating how the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) practiced mediation, peace and reconciliation in society.

Ideally, selected writings, sermons, statements and public discourses of contemporary Islamic scholars pertinent to peace building and conflict transformation.

These sources help to articulate the view on norms and ethics for the role of Islamic scholars in peace building.

Secondary Sources

Secondary data collected comprises:

Peer-reviewed conference proceedings, books and journal articles on Islamic peace building, conflict transformation and religious leadership.

Use scholarly sources in peace and conflict studies aimed at providing an analysis of faith-based and religious approaches to peace.

- Case studies, academic publications and analytical texts that examine Muslim societies in conflict and/or post-conflict situations.

Policy documents and research reports of academic and research institutions that are relevant to the topic of religion and peace building.

These sources are crucial for the context of Islamic scholarship within the wider academic discussions and action-building peace today.

Method of Analysis

Content analysis, both themes and comparisons, is used to analyze the data obtained from the two sources.

A thematic analysis is performed to find themes regarding:

Values of peace in the Islamic message

What are the responsibilities of the Islamic scholars during a conflict situation?

Peace building mechanisms (including mediation, reconciliation, dialogue and moral guidance)

Politicization of 'ulamā', sectarian polarization, institutional limitations, etc. The pressures on the religious scholars such as politicization, sectarian polarization, institutional limits, etc.

These themes are chosen from the literature and the sources of Islam as a result of a process of induction; and placed in the socio-political context with which they are associated.

Additionally, a comparison approach is used to see how the roles and influence of the Islamic scholars have varied in different Muslim societies (second). This includes comparison of:

Scholarly engagement in peace building in the form of what, and how?

- The independence/status of religious scholars

Rattle bar's scholarly interventions in conflicts turn out to be effective. Rattle bar's scholarly interventions in conflict turn out to be effective.

Discuss processes of contextually defining scholarly authority, legitimacy and public trust. Comparative analysis allows for going beyond single case study analyses and informs analysis for patterns, differences and best practices of Islamic peace building.

Qualitative, analytical, and comparative research methodology has been used in this study, which, by providing the nuances and context sensitivity, facilitates a nuanced understanding of the role of Islamic scholars in conflict transformation and peace building. The methodological design provides opportunities to discuss Islamic ethical values with the current socio-political situation so as to reach a delicate balance between Islamic affairs and peace and conflict studies, which are academically sound and helpful in both fields.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

In this section, Th. Bustu, who is also a member of IID, will share findings at a global level on how Islamic scholars ('ulamā') contribute to conflict-resolution and peace building, discussing the contribution of norms and principles of Islam to conflict-resolution and peace building, and its current socio-political contexts. The major thematic dimensions found during the literature study and the qualitative study are woven together in organizing the discussion: Islamic ethical dimensions, authority in the field of Islamic study, mediation process, challenges in this age, and effectiveness of mediation in Muslim societies when compared.

Islamic ethical bases of peace and conflict transformation

According to Islam, peace (salaam) is much more than the absence of violence; it is a state of the soul towards Islam, which involves justice, ethical behavior, and avoiding the limits of Islam. The Qur'an is full of words for reconciliation, fairness, and moral responsibility, all of which are key concepts in conflict management. Allah commands:

The last two verses of the Qur'an are: "And reconciliation is best (wa al-ṣulḥ khayr)", (Qur'an 4:128).

The overall message of this is a dreamlike statement of moral idealism (ṣulḥ) and presents one of the best bases for the understanding of the Islamic tools for conflict resolution. In addition, the Qur'an also calls believers to be just in their battles.

Do not be unfair to one loathsome group due to another; be just, that's nearer to righteousness (Qur'an 5:8).

The concept of maintaining social order (niẓām al-mujtama') and preventing fits of disorder (fitna) as higher objectives of Islamic legislation (maqāṣid al-Qanūn) were given special attention by Islamic scholars, following al-Māwardī and Ibn Taymiyyah. When considered in this light, peace building is not a side-stream of academic activities and distant from the actual exercise of peace building, but it is a moral duty mandated under Islamic law.

This is accomplished through the prophetic model and Scholarly Mediation. This includes the Prophetic model and Scholarly Mediation.

Conflict transformation practices that are implemented by means of patience, dialogue and reconciliation are evident in various places of the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (saws). An example of that was the Prophet (saws) taking proposals that were considered unacceptable in the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah, where he accepted what the disbelievers offered in exchange for peace, and that meant no loss of blood. Throughout Islamic history, this ploy has been cited as a justification for compromising in matters of strategy for the common good, which is rightly and widely considered to be permissible (halaal) and praiseworthy (makrooof) in Islam.

The Hazrat Muhammad (saws) said:

What about something better than fasting, praying and giving to the poor? (الله) workout between humans, is what "reconcile" means, according to the Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī.)

The morals given in this hadith show that reconciling is on the moral level, and this clarifies that peace building is a religious responsibility. Whereas Islamic commentators have employed these Prophetic precedents today to support their mediation in sectarian, political and tribal differences.

Today, because of being neutral, being able to act as a mediator in various Muslim societies and possessing moral power and proximity to the community, 'ulamā' are still believed to be mediators in a way. They can convince people that peace becomes a religious responsibility and not a political solution, hence enhancing people's receptivity to peace programs.

Executes concepts and sustains originality in presenting analysis and insight. Applies thinking to produce concepts and maintains originality in analysis and insight.

The resolution of dispute in Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) provides for accommodating and organized course of deeds most prominently in two: ṣulḥ or amicable settlement and taḥkīm or arbitration. Regarding the classical authors, there was no injustice in deciding by ṣulḥ, whether the law school was shāfi' or hanafi. As for the classical authors, there is no injustice in deciding a case through ṣulḥ, provided it wasn't unlawful or against a clear order of Islam.

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and Imām Mālik referred to the two major aims of the law, as social harmony and social peace. Ibn al-Qayyim also did not leave any doubt about the fact that Islamic law is established on justice, mercy and wisdom; and that legislation which leads to injustice and harm is contrary to the spirit of Sharī'ah. In many cases, such judicial positions provide Muslims who have legal expertise with good moral and legal reasons for getting themselves into conflict and advocating mediation as an appropriate resolution.

The concept of the objectives of Islamic law (maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah) is one approach recently employed for addressing modern notions of conflict: political violence, civil disorder and sectarian conflict. In this way, 'ulamā' can make decisions that are comprehensible to the modern day and yet follow Islamic principles.

Islamic Scholars' role in the contemporary Muslim societies

The involvement of Muslim Academics in today's Muslim societies in peace building has many different faces founded on varying political practices, state-religion relations, and public trust. Peace building efforts performed by scholars are more effective if they operate with intellectual autonomy and in a very active community. 'ulamā' have a strong impact in shaping public narratives, through sermons, public discourse, fatwas and interacting with the masses in an attempt to de-escalate violence and encourage restraint and dialogue.

It's a similar story for religious institutions, when religion has become so polarized, or when religion is so much a part of the politics and power machinery of government, that there may be even more doubts about the scholarly value of that institution. However, when a situation arises like this, then peace building interventions may not be seen as dedicated to the ethical, but rather to the political; and this reduces the academic's desire to play the role of 'the good man of the peace'. This emphasizes the need for scholarly autonomy in order for a meaningful conflict transformation to take place.

Issues that Islamic Scholars encounter when engaging in Peace building

While Islamic scholars have some potential in the current peace building roles, they have many difficulties. These include polarization of kinds, extremism of beliefs, loss of trust in religious authority, and so-called misrepresentation in the media. Moreover, the very character of the modern phenomenon of conflict appears to be shaped by politics, economics and structures which are not always susceptible to being "culled" by a moralistic discourse.

Others, also, are stymied in their efforts to utilize classical theories from jurisprudence in an ever-changing socio-political environment. Without context, there might be a lack of relevance; this lack of relevance was noted particularly by the youth. This underlines the requirement for interdisciplinary activities, good communication and awareness among scholars in the integration of good Islamic knowledge.

The pros and cons of each, and their impact on the overall issue are assessed

A cross-cultural, comparative examination of the contribution of Islamic scholars to peace building shows that there is a close nexus between effectiveness and the context. In societies that have a robust community-based religion, the role of the scholar is usually one that is fundamental in mediation and reconciliation. However, in a highly centralized or authoritarian system, their influence might be restricted or weak.

However, from a different perspective, Islam's ethical job card is a strong peace building instrument in varied situations. The view of peace as a duty of both the self and society rooted in the Qur'an, Sunnah and juristic tradition of Islam has the potential to engage in conflict transformation in a manner closely aligned to Muslim communities.

Generally speaking, the study illustrates the considerable potential for the scholars of Islam to play a role in conflict transformation and peace building in terms of moral guidance, mediation, and social leadership. Their function is relevant with respect to modern situations and religious values, rooted in religious normative resources. Yet, the role of 'ulamā' can be effective if there are many factors like scholarly independence, trust of the public in the 'ulamā' and their ability to participate in changing socio-political environments. The mere identification and reinforcement of this role renders a useful addition to sustainable peace in an era of Muslims' present-day society.

FINDINGS

This study draws conclusions based on a qualitative analysis of Islamic normative sources among the Muslims, Islamic forms of interpretation (fuqaha), contemporary scholarly practices and comparative literature from other Muslim societies, regarding the role of Islamic scholars ('ulamā') in the process of conflict transformation and peace building.

The role of Islamic ethical frameworks in peacebuilding. Islamic ethical frameworks in peace building.

The importance of this research is that Islamic peace building principles are clearly rooted in the Qur'an and the Sunnah in their ethical elements, and these ethical elements are indispensable and fundamental aspects of peace building. The scholarly understanding of conflict resolution is always founded in core values like justice ('adl), reconciliation (ṣulḥ), mercy (raḥmah), patience (ṣabr) and collective responsibility. Islamic commentators see

peace as a duty rather than a political or practical deal. It adds to the validity of peacemaking in Muslim communities, and simultaneously to their ingrained acceptance.

Islamic Scholars as trusted mediators and moral authorities

The study shows that in modern Muslim societies, moral authorities, particularly Islamic scholars, remain active in their roles as trusted mediators and role models in their communities and at lower levels of society. Access to conflicting interpersonal and communal issues and wider sectarian disputes, their religious credibility, intimate awareness of the local socio-cultural dynamics and perceived moral integrity allow them to help mediate conflict. In many instances, scholars' interventions help to defuse situations, promote reconciliation, and create social cohesion in situations of scholars' intellectual independence and public trust.

Relevance of Prophetic and Juristic Models to Conflict Transformation

This remains one of the most important facts; Prophetic models and classical mechanisms of jurisprudence continue to play a major role in resolving conflicts in today's world. If properly adapted, the procedures of *ṣulḥ* (amicable settlement), *taḥkīm* (arbitration), and *shūrā* (consultation) continue to be effective contemporary approaches. The research demonstrates that scholars who advocate for *maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*– based reasoning are more flexible and effective in dealing with complex conflicts, because this has enabled them to strike a balance between continuity of ethics and sensitivity to the context.

How the Expression of Scholarly influence is changed by the Context

The study finds that there are significant differences in the effectiveness of the peace building promotion of the Islamic scholars in various Muslim societies. When scholars are embedded in religious institutions or build strong links to local communities, they are more likely to be constructively engaged in peace processes in settings with religious institutions that have autonomy and have strong relationships with the local community. On the other hand, in contexts where there is strong polarization or politicization, scholarly knowledge is less likely to be respected and function neutrally and credibly as a peace builder for the '*ulamā*'. The above discovery suggests a clear influence of socio-political circumstance on the effectiveness of religious leadership.

Situations that Inhibit Scholars' Peace building Work

We identified some barriers that impede Islamic scholars' capacity to promote peace building. These are sectarian polarization, the politicization of religious discourse, the spread of extremist ideas of Islam and generally, a decrease in confidence and trust in the traditional religious authority, especially among the younger people. Likewise, poor attention has been given to the current peace-building approaches, and weak interdisciplinary synergies also limit the academic capability in solving complex and long-term conflicts.

In addition, a need for institutional and intellectual support.

One important thing that has emerged from this research is that for Islamic scholars to fulfil their role meaningfully in peace building, there must be institutional support and intellectual renewal. Islamic ethical concepts can be translated into an effective Peace Movement only by scholars who are actively involved in various modern peace movements along with theories on Human Behavior in conflict and various social scientists. A robust increase in scholarly training and capability building, encouraging interdisciplinary dialogue to some extent and ensuring institutional independence can have a significant effect on the peace-building role of the '*ulama*'.

Overall, the findings of this study support the conclusions that Islamic scholars have significant potential to be involved in conflict transformation and facilitate sustainable peace in today's Muslim societies. But they will only be effective if they are supported by a sort of 'ethical credibility', a degree of 'contextual awareness', a 'high degree of intellectual adaptability' and a degree of institutional autonomy. As long as pedagogy meets with modern tools of peace building, Islamic scholars can make a positive and long-lasting impact in conflict mitigation and reconciliation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aimed to explore the part played by 'ulamā' in the conflicts and peace aspects of Muslim societies, making a comparison between their role in conflict and in Muslim societies in the modern era. Based on Qur'ānic teachings, Prophetic practice, traditional legal reasoning and contemporary legal studies, the study proves that Islam provides a complete ethical and normative concept of peace which is also very appropriate in tackling today's wars and conflicts.

Results show that if Islamic scholars are used in the right way (in an independent and intellectually honest institution with a sense of context), they can help to contribute to mediation and the transformation of narratives of violence, which in turn fosters reconciliation and social cohesion. Their work has resonated with Muslims through it being based on fundamental Islamic values like justice ('adl), reconciliation (ṣulḥ), mercy (raḥmah) and public welfare (maṣlaḥah). The Prophetic model of conflict management (as well as the classical juristic mechanisms) remains a very useful and flexible basis for difficult conflict resolution in various socio-political situations.

The study also points to some of the noteworthy challenges that hinder the effectiveness of contemporary peace building tasks for Islamic scholars. Some of these difficulties involve political-religious conflict, the fragmentation of religious authority, and/or ideological extremism, fading public trust in traditional religious leaders, and the polarization of modern-day conflict with many issues entangling religious dimensions. Comparative analysis also shows that the role of the 'ulamā' varies significantly in different contexts, thanks to the different state-religion connections and contexts, institutional autonomy and the level of trust in society.

In overall terms, the conclusion of the research suggests that intelligence renewal, institutional support and engagement towards contemporary social and political realities are prerequisites for the Islamic scholars to channel their immense potential in the arena of sustainable peace and conflict transformation.

Information that helps in the classroom. Classroom assistance information.

From the outcome of this study, the following practical suggestions are made:

1. Strengthening Scholarly Independence

Islamic scholars ought to remain free from partisan political ends and gain the public trust so they can retain their integrity as individuals and principal upholders. Religious institutions will be more able to support a neutral mediation and reconciliation process when operating autonomously.

2. The Incorporation of Islamic Scholarship with Peace building Trainings

It is recommended to have specialized training programs that deliver new approaches to conflict resolution to 'ulamā', training them in mediation, and establishing peace building methods as well as their Islamic studies.

To adopt a Maqāṣid-Based Approach

Further emphasis is needed on the *maqāsid al-Sharī'ah*, which enables one to reason flexibly when dealing with modern conflicts without compromising Islamic ethical values and traditions, while ensuring that the reasoning remains contextual.

3. Ensuring Fair Practices and Good Relations within the Community

The constructive role of Islamic scholars in providing bridge-building between sects and the community is needed, with the focus on highlighting the shared Islamic values and social responsibility to prevent polarization and extremism.

4. Supporting Accessibility of Information and Education for the Young and Media

For various reasons, younger people tend not to trust scholars or phenomena such as religious groups, and hence, scholars need to be more active in digital media and other media to spread peace-related Islamic narratives.

5. Encouraging Institutional Collaboration

There is a need to promote inter-sectorial networking between Islamic scholars, civil society organizations, educational institutions and peace building organizations to achieve a coordinated and sustainable action on the issue of conflict management and resolution.

6. Future Research Directions

Further empirical studies are suggested to document field-based case studies of long-term outcomes of scholarly engagement and participation in peace processes from various regional contexts, as well as community perceptions.

Concluding Remark

Finally, it is proven that Islamic scholars, if rooted in non-controversial Islamic principles and sensitized to the challenges of today, can be agents of change in the peace building process in the context of Muslim societies. The role of the *'ulamā'* in reviving their ethical obligation and updating their interaction with the contemporary world has the potential to make substantial contributions to the establishment of just and cohesive societies and to peace.

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