

Analytical Study of Peacebuilding Knowledge, Values and Skills in Islam

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Abstract

Islam gives the lesson of peace. The concept of peace given by Islam is the global peace, it is not only limited to the Muslim countries. The major objective of this research study is to analytical study of peace related knowledge, values and skills in the light of the Holy Quran and Sunnah (SAW) which are helpful and main pillars of peacebuilding in the world. Islam does not give the lesson of wars and fighting but also permits the wars and fighting for maintaining peace. The Muslims are allowed to fight conditionally for defending and the protection of their faith. Islam does not like the persons who have desire for fighting and loves those people who live peacefully in the society. According to Islam, the concept of peace ,conflict, war, jihad, terrorism, extremism, human rights, justice, patience cooperation, non-violence and managing strategies of conflicts (Mediation, Critical thinking (Ijtihad, shura (decision making),Sulha (Reconciliation) and Treaties were presented in details.

Key Words: Peace, Knowledge, Values, Skills, Islam

Introduction

Islamic teachings regard peace work as a collective responsibility. As Abu-Nimer (2003) states, “peace- building in Islam is based on a framework of deeply embedded religious beliefs regarding individuals' responsibility for their actions and their active participation in larger social contexts. Peacebuilding is a long-term process of encouraging people to talk, repairing relationships, and reforming institutions. For positive change to last, everyone affected by a destructive conflict has to be involved in the process of building peace. Transforming relationships is key to putting an end to violence.

Silm is the root word of Islam and its meaning is peace (salamati).Islam teaches us that how to sustain peace in the world. The Muslims are not allowed to fight against those people who are not participating in the fighting. It gives permission of fighting to their followers for the protection of their faith (Munir, 2011).Majority of the people in the world follow the Islam religion. As the name of this religion Islam shows/indicates itself the peace and how can it permit to 7prevail violence moreover Allah is the creator of this this religion and orders to be peaceful and kind for the people and does not allow to cross the limits in the matter of religion. Islam is the religion of peace and it allows fighting and wars only for the purpose of defending and bringing peace in the world. The Quranic verses related to the fighting (Qital) usually are misinterpreted (Munir, 2009).The significance of peace in Islam has been mentioned in the Holy Quran and Hadith at multiple times.

وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ

“And prevailing contention is greater than murders”.
(Al-Baqra, 2:217)

وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

“And negotiate logics and in a good manners with the people”.
(Al-Nahl, 16:125)

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وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ۤأَلَّا تَعْدِلُوۡا ۚ اِعْدِلُوۡا ۚ هُوَ اَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى

“And let not (even) the extreme enmity against any nation aggravate you into refraining from justness or fairness (in their case).”

(Al- Maaiada, 5:8)

وَقَاتِلُوۡهُمْ حَتّٰى لَا تَكُوۡنَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُوۡنَ الدِّيۡنُ لِلّٰهِ ۚ فَاِنۡ اَنۡتَهَوۡا فَلَا عُدُوۡاۤنَ اِلَّا عَلٰى الظّٰلِمِيۡنَ

“You may also fight them to eliminate oppression, and to worship Allah freely. If they refrain, you shall not aggress; aggression is permitted only against the aggressors.”

(Al-Baqra, 2:193)

لَا اِكْرَاهَ فِى الدِّيۡنِ ۚ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ ۚ

“No force in the matter of religion.”(Al-Baqra, 2:256)

Islam delivers unconditional right to live for everyone. Allah says in the Holy Quran

مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ اَوْ فَسَادٍ فِى الْاَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ۚ وَمَنْ اَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا اَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا

“He who kills a soul unless it be (in legal punishment) for murder or for causing disorder and corruption on the earth will be as if he had killed all humankind and he who saves a life will be as if he had saved the lives of all humankind.”(Al- Maaiada, 5: 32)

The significance of peace is also mentioned below in the Hadiths Rasool (SAW):

Hazrat Abu Huraira (R.A) described: The Holy Prophet (SAW) said to us:

لَا تَدْخُلُوۡنَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتّٰى تُؤْمِنُوۡا وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوۡا حَتّٰى تَحَابُّوۡا اَوْ لَا اَدَلُّكُمْ عَلٰى شَيْءٍ اِذَا فَعَلْتُمُوۡهُ تَحَابُّبُنُّمُ اَفْشُوۡا السَّلَامَ بَيْنَكُمْ

“Your belief is incomplete without love for one another and if your belief is incomplete then you don’t deserve Paradise. The only way to grow love among yourselves is to promote peace within your community.”

(Sahih Muslim : 54)

Hazrat Ali Ibn Abu Talib (R.A) stated: The Holy Prophet (SAW) said:

اِنَّهُ سَيَكُوۡنُ بَعْدِىَ اِخْتِلَافٌ اَوْ اَمْرٌ فَاِنۡ اسْتَطَعْتَ اَنْ تَكُوۡنَ السِّلْمَ فَاَفْعَلْ

“Verily, after my leaving the world, there will be clashes or differences, therefore if it is possible for you then try to solve the conflicts peacefully.”

(Musnad Ahmad: 697)

Abdullah Ibn Amr (R.A.) said: Hazrat Muhammad (SAW) described:

اِعْبُدُوۡا الرَّحْمٰنَ وَاَفْشُوۡا السَّلَامَ

“Worship the Most Benevolent Allah and promote peace.”

(Sunan Ibn Majah: 3694).

Abu Umamah(R.A.) narrated:

اَمَرَنَا نَبِيُّنَا صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اَنْ نُفْصِي السَّلَامَ

“The Holy Prophet (SAW) said in orderly to us for indorsing peace.”

(Sunan Ibn Majah : 3693).

Hazrat Abu Umamah (R.A.) narrated: The Holy Prophet (SAW) said:

اِنَّ اَوْلٰى النَّاسِ بِاللّٰهِ مَنْ بَدَاۤهُمُ بِالسَّلَامِ

“Behold? Allah dears those persons who 54y6stimulate peace while they meet each other”.

(Sunan Abu Dawud : 5197).

Now peace related knowledge, values and skills are discussed in the light of the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

Research Area

The research area of this article is to highlight the knowledge (content), values and skills of peace building in Islam.

Purpose of the Study

To investigate the peace related knowledge (content), values and skills in Islam

Methodology:

The paper is based on analytical mode, so that the literature of this article is searched in the Holy Quran and Hadees-e- Rasool (SAW)

Knowledge related Peace in Islam

Peace

Peace means no fear and stress in the environment. (Edikpa, 2006).we can say that peace is specific place or area of the world in which terror, fear, violence and disputes are not found. Social and financial development can be promoted through peace. Now it is the time of building mutual understanding and a sustainable environment. The positive thinking, behavior and attitudes among the people of the world lead to peace. (Waterkamp, 2006) It is stated by Hazrat Abu Huraira (R.A.) that the Prophet of Allah (SAW) said:

“Don’t wish of war with enemies and pray to Allah for peace.” (Sahih Bukhari: 2863).

Conflict

The term of “conflict” can be applied on various situations with its variety of forms like gender, political, religious, ethnic and racial and different types including between two groups, within a group, between two individuals and within an individual etc. Conflict can occur in different places like war field, organizations and homes etc.(Hartwick & Barki, 2004). Researchers are of the view that this terminology is similar in the cases of clashes, physical fights, arguments, disputes and disagreements between group and individuals.(Salleh & Adulpakdee, 2012). Conflict is a natural phenomenon and is unavoidable. It is not possible to eliminate it permanently and its outcome is mostly negative (Peter, 2006).

In the Holy Quran,Allah says,“ “Absolutely Allah dislikes the disputers”(Al-Qasas 28:77).

Causes of War

If we study the wars of Islam, we will come to know that those wars were fought for the purpose of peace. Those wars were not fought for the elimination of other religions of the world but however we can say that those were fought for defending of Islam from external attacks. In Islam, people of the world or the followers of the other religions were compelled to accept Islam They were given freedom in the matter of religion (Munir,2009).

Allah says in Quran

“Fight in the path of Allah, those who fight against you but don’t transgress, Allah does not love transgressors.”(2:190).

The another cause of war was to preserve and defend his faith. Islam was not spread through the war and non-believers were not compelled to change their religions. In Islam , wars were just to response of attacking of enemies or if they break their agreement with the Muslims.

Terrorism and Fighting (Jihad)

Jihad and terrorism are two different terms. Jihad is fighting in the path of Allah for eradication of harmful trends and maintaining peace in the world. The civilians, children, old, women, buildings and fields are not destroyed (Latif, & Munir (2014).

The terrorism term is used for creating fear and horror in the society. According to Jenkins, Terrorism is a force for prevailing fear and violence among the people for achieving their specific goal. Common civilians, children, old and women are targeted and tortured physically by terrorists. Islam condemns the terrorism and permits the Jihad against terrorists because terrorists use unjustified force and weapons for their political purposes (Ghellani,1993).

Extremism

Extremism is a process of strong and unlimited opposition of universal values for getting their specific goals. There is no permission of extremism in Islam. Islam condemns extremism, Muslims are only blamed .Allah says in the Holy Quran,

“And let not (even) the extreme hostility against people provoke you into abstaining from justice (in their case)”.(Al-Maaida,8:5)

Allah says in Quran at another place,

“Oh, the followers of the Book don’t cross the limits in the matter of religion” (17:4)

Human Rights

Islam does not claim only for human rights but it also orders to fulfillment of human rights. If we study the last sermon of the Holy Prophet (SAW) which is known as Hajja-tul-Widda.We will come to know that human rights are defined clearly in it.Islam gives the guarantee of right to live and respect human, right of freedom, equal rights of human beings, right to justice, security of life and property and protection of religious sentiments etc.(Tahir,2006).

Peace related Values in Islam

Forgiveness (Afw)

Forgiveness means to leave the option of taking due revenge from someone who has taken some unjust actions against you. Forgiveness is a great virtue than taking the revenge. Forgiveness eliminates the conflicts at all level of life. Islam gives forgiveness over revenge. Allah says in sura Shura

“The person who tolerates and forgives, there is no doubt, it is a matter of great determination”(42:42)

The Holy Prophet (SAW) showed a model of forgiveness for humanity at the time of conquest of Makkah and announced

“It is a guarantee of protection and peace for all .Today the persons who will enter the Kaaba or close the door of their house or enter in the house of Abu Sufiyan (R.A)”.

Patience (Sabar)

Patience means the ability to tolerate or accept the difficult time or problems.The Arabic word “Sabar”is used for patience in the Arabic language.Wahiduddin ,the popular research scholar explains the patience that it is a more response of any state whereas impatience is a strict and rigid reaction. (Khan,2010).

Allah says in Sura Al-Imran,3:146)

“And Allah loves the patient (Sabar)”

At another place,in Sura Baqara Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

“Believers! Search help from forbearance and prayer, Allah is with the patient” (2:153)

The best example of patience (Sabar) was Safar-e-Taif of the Holy Prophet (SAW). When he (SAW) went to Taif for preaching of Islam to chiefs of the local tribes. They did not listen to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and treated rudely. On the order of chiefs, children threw the stones on the Holy Prophet (SAW) and his (SAW) whole body was injured with blood. The Holy Prophet (SAW) tolerated them and did not curse. (Malik, 2017).

Kindness

In Islam kindness is a great virtue. Kind deeds are mandatory for attaining Allah's blessing. Kindness is not limited to the human beings but all living things should be treated with kindness.

Allah says in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

“No doubt, Allah is benevolent and compassionate to the folks.” (2:143)

It was stated by Hazrat Aisha, The Prophet of Allah (SAW) described: “O Aisha, Allah is benevolent and likes benevolence in all matters”. (Sahih Bukhari, 6528)

Benevolence (Ihsan)

Benevolence (Ihsan) is described as the action which gives/ provides some benefits or favour to someone without claiming any reward from that person. It is another salient feature of Islam. The Holy Prophet (SAW) adopted the action of benevolence (Ihsan) against those people who committed disgraceful and harmful activities against him (SAW) and his (SAW) family. The Holy Prophet (SAW) did not take revenge from those persons. (Beekun, 2012).

And Allah says in Quran

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ

“No doubt gives the order of justice and benevolence (Ihsan).”

(Quran 16:90)

Justice

In Sura Hujrat, Allah states:

فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

“Through justice and impartiality make settlement between them. No doubt, Allah loves just people.” (Surah Al-Hujurat 49:9)

Hazrat Abu Saeed (R.A) described: The Prophet of Allah (SAW) says:

إِنَّ أَحَبَّ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَأَدْنَاهُمْ مِنْهُ مَجْلِسًا إِمَامًا عَادِلٌ وَأَبْغَضُ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَأَبْعَدُهُمْ مِنْهُ مَجْلِسًا إِمَامًا جَائٍ

“There is no doubt that just ruler will be the most beloved of Allah and nearest to Him on the day of resurrection. The cruel ruler will be the most disliked by Allah.” (Sunan al-Tirmidhī, 1329)

Brotherhood

Allah says in Quran:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ

“No doubt, all the followers of Allah and Rasool (SAW) are your brothers, so make Sulha (Settlement) between them.”

(Surat al-Hujurat 49:10)

It is reported by Hazrat Anas (R.A): The Prophet of Allah stated :

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ

None of you has faith till he likes for his brother what he likes for himself.

(☉ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 13)

Piety

Piety (Taqwa) means to fear from Allah Almighty and does not committing sins. Piety is a virtue that can be achieved by obeying the orders of Allah and refraining His prohibitions. The pious people are considered as respectable person of the society in Islam.

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْتَأَمُّكُمْ

“No doubt, the noblest person in the eyes of Allah who has piety.”(Quran, 49:13).

Cooperation

In Islam, cooperation with one another is considered very important but it should be in fair and good deeds like helping the poor and needy people and it should not be in unfair and bad deeds .Allah says in Quran:

“And cooperate in virtue and piousness and don’t cooperate in evil and sin with one another”.(Quran, 5:2).

Respect for others

It is reported by Hazrat Ibn-e- Masood (R.A)AAthat The Holy Prophet (SAW) said:

لَيْسَ الْمُؤْمِنُ بِالطَّعَانِ وَلَا اللَّعَانِ وَلَا الْفَاحِشِ وَلَا الْبُذِيِّ

“The followers of Allah and Rasool (SAW) do not degrade and abuse others, they are not ill-mannered and bald-faced.” (Sunan al-Tirmidhī 1977)

Peace related Skills in Islam

Mediation

Mediation is an Islamic skill for resolving the conflicts. In this process, third party or person is appointed as a neutral for the decision of the conflicting matters of two or more than two groups. The decision of mediator must decide with honesty, fairness and insight (Moussalli, 1997).

The Holy Prophet (SAW) as a mediator resolved the bloody conflict at the age of 35. At the time of reconstruction of Kaaba Sharif, all the tribes of Makkah started to fight with one another for putting the Black Stone. At this occasion, it was proposed for resolving that dispute, the person will enter in the Kaaba first in the morning. He will be considered as a mediator and his decision will be accepted. The next day, the Holy Prophet (SAW) came first in the Kaaba, So He (SAW) was considered as a mediator. The Holy Prophet (SAW) spread the cloth and the Black Stone was kept on it and all tribes were invited to hold that cloth. In this way, the blood clash was resolved (Malik, 2017).

Treaties/Agreement

Treaties are the skills in Islam for removing clashes, conflicts and wars between the nations or tribes. Treaties were made by the Holy Prophet (SAW) for maintaining peace in the world. In the Holy Quran, Allah says:

“If they (enemies) incline to peace, incline you as well to it and trust in Allah”. (8:61)

On the another place, Allah says in Quran,

“Accomplish your agreements with them till the end of their term, surely Allah loves the pious”. (9:4)

In Arabic language, Muahadah word is used for treaty or agreement. In treaty, commitments of both the groups were ensured (Munir, 2011).

After the migration of The Holy Prophet (SAW) from Makkah to Madina, the treaty was signed between the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the tribes of Aws, Khazraj and Jews who were living in the area of Madina. Sulah e Hudahibia took place on 6th Hijri, it was another treaty or agreement between the Holy Prophet (SAW) and the people of Makkah. He (SAW) taught us a lesson of peace through treaties (Malik, 2017).

Critical Thinking (Ijtihad)

Critical thinking is also an Islamic skill for resolving the conflicts. Critical thinking is based on knowledge and it provides ability of analyzing any issue or problem. In Islam, critical thinking or ijtihad is given priority for decision when the solutions of those matters are not found in the Holy Quran and Sunnah (Syed & Kramar, 2009).

In Tirmizi Sharif, an Hadith (1327) is reported about the critical thinking (or Ijtihad)

When Hazrat Muahaz Bin Jabal (R.A) was sent to Yemen by the Holy Prophet (SAW), he (R.A) was asked by the Holy Prophet (SAW), How will you decide the matters of the people as per Religion? Hazrat Muahaz Bin Jabal (R.A) replied, “I will give decisions according to the Holy Quran.” The Holy Prophet (SAW) says if it is not found in the Holy Quran, how will you decide? Hazrat Muahaz Bin Jabal (R.A) said, “I will decide according to the Sunnah.” The Holy Prophet (SAW) says again if it is not found in the Sunnah then Hazrat Muahaz Bin Jabal told that I would decide through ijtihad (critical thinking).

Reconciliation (Sulha)

Islam teaches us to promote peace in the world. All the Muslims are advised to settle their nissues or clashes in peaceful way through dialogue process. Reconciliation (Sulha) means to move from violence to peace (Sulaiman, 2020).

Allah says in Quran (Sura Shura, 40:42)

“So who forgives and comes to the reconciliation, Allah will give him his reward”.

Reconciliation is a process of bringing friendly or positive relations among the people. According to the study of Irani and Lebanon, reconciliation (Sulha) is a social contract or agreement among the groups or nations for resolving any conflict (Irani, 2000)

Allah gives clear directions of conflict resolutions and says in Sura Hujrat in verse no.9

“And if the groups of believers fight with one another them make settlement (Sulha) between them” Sura Hujrat (49:9).

Sulah Hudabia and Meesaq-e-Madia are the best examples of reconciliation in the history of Islam which were conducted by the Holy Prophet (SAW).

Mutual Consultation Decision Making (Shura)

Mutual Consultation (Shura) is a mandatory skill for launching or implementing new situation in the society or state. It is being used in Islam for conflict resolution. This procedure brings all the stakeholders almost on one point without any discrimination (Moussalli, 1997).

Allah says in Quran (shura, 42:38)

“Who conduct their matters through consultation”.

Consultation (Shura) removes the conflicting issues of the state during decision making. All the members of shura must be honest and having abilities of decision making (Beekun, 2012).

Hazrat Abu Huraira (R.A.) stated: The Prophet of Allah (SAW) said, “One who is consulted is in a position of trust.”

(Sunan al-Tirmidhī ,2822)

Conclusion

At the end of study, it is concluded that wars are not only the solution of the problems. Islam is the religion of peace and gives the lesson of peace to its followers. Conflicts, clashes, disputes and violence are found everywhere in the world. Peace related knowledge, values and skills are presented in the light of the Holy Quran and Sunnah for peacebuilding in the world. The conflicts, clashes and disputes can be resolved through the implementation of peace related knowledge/content (peace, conflict, non-violence, jihad, terrorism, extremism, human rights), values (patience, piety, brotherhood, cooperation, equality, justice, honesty) and skills (mediation, shura, treaties, reconciliation, critical thinking (Ijtihad)). These content, values and skills are presented by Islam for bringing peace in the world.

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Al-Baqra 2:153
(Al-Baqra, 2:256
Al- Maaiada, 5: 32

Al-Imran, 3:146

Al-Maaida, 5:8

Al-Qasas 28:77

(Bani Israel 17:4)

(Al -Nahl 16:90)

Al-Hujurat 49:13

Al- Maaiada 5:2

Al –Anfal 8:61

AT-Tawbah 9:4)

Sura Shura, 42:42)

shura,42:38)

(Sahih Muslim : 54)

(Sunan al-Tirmidhī ,2822)

(Sunan al-Tirmidhī 1977)

Sunan al-Tirmidhī, 1329)

Sahih Bukhari: 2863)

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 13)

(Sahih Bukhari, 6528)