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Religious Coexistence as Tolerance: The Case of Sunni-Shia Practices at Bibi Paak Daman (S.A) Shrine in Lahore Pakistan

¹Dr. Abdul Qadir Mushtaq, ²Dr. Zil e Huma Rafique, ³Dr. Khalid Mahmood Sanjarani,
⁴Tanzeela Arshaad, ⁵Muhammad Asim Khan,

1. Professor, Chairperson Department of Pakistan studies, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan. (progcu@gmail.com)
2. Assistant Professor, Department of Pakistan Studies , Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan. (zilehumarafique@gcu.edu.pk)
3. Professor, Department of Urdu, Government College University Lahore, Pakistan. (dr.khalidsanjarani@gu.edu.pk)
4. M. Phil Scholar, Department of Pakistan studies, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan. (tanzeelasialtanzeelasial@gmail.com)
5. M. Phil Scholar, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan (asim1412@gmail.com)

Abstract

This research aimed to determine how the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine, which is located in Lahore, Pakistan, can act as an example of tolerance between Sunni and Shia Muslims. Specifically, the goal of the research was to comprehend the role of common religious buildings and rituals in reducing sectarian conflicts and promoting group cohesion. Stemming from the theoretical perspectives of religious pluralism (Barry 2003) and shared sacred spaces (Taylor 2010), the study analyzes how the shrine's connection to the Ahl-e-Bayt (A.S) and Ruqayyah bint Ali (A. S.) fosters interactions between the Shias and Sunnis. The study was grounded within a qualitative framework and incorporates observational analysis and interviews with Sunni and Shia worshippers as well

as Islamic scholars and employees of shrines. Information was obtained through interviews and observations during on-site field research at the shrine and nearby locations. Such categories were analyzed on thematic levels to highlight patterns connected to common practices, problem-solving strategies, and actions towards promoting religious tolerance by the communities involved. It has revealed that Sunni and Shia participants' common rites and rituals like dua, qawwali, and majlis-e-aza make them turn their attention to their respective spiritual traditions instead of the sectarian ones, while the management of the shrines through Sunni and Shia leaderships rekindles the spirit of togetherness and tolerance. In this regard, this research benefits the literature through showing how interfaith spaces have the potential of enhancing religious diversity in sectarian societies and inform how such models can be applied to other contentious areas.

Keywords: Bibi Paak Daman Shrine, Ahl-e-Bayt (A.S) Sunni-Shia relations, religious tolerance, religious pluralism, shared sacred spaces, sectarian coexistence, interfaith dialogue, cultural exchange, Pakistan

Introduction

Sectarianism has always been a key issue in Pakistan, and there have often been the conflicts of Sunni and Shia groups. Nonetheless, the nation has religious shrines where the two factions can interrelate harmoniously. One of the examples of religious tolerance that can be witnessed is the Bibi Paak Daman shrine in the Lahore city. Since both Sunni and Shia Muslims respect the family of the Prophet, the shrine also collapses the perceived divide between Sunni and Shia and helps promote tolerance through shared acts of reverence. The idea of religious tolerance in such locations fits the sociological understanding of the term which simply means the embracing of different religious practices in the public domain (Bhabha, 1996). There are many articles, which discuss the contribution of shrines to the enhancement of Sunni-Shia relations. Holding the view, Qasmi (2015) opines that although the shrines are associated with the family members of the Prophet, they stand as centers of togetherness for both factions of the community despite distinguishing doctrinal disparities. Along the same vein, Metcalf (2009) observes that reverence for the ahl al-bayt served as a source of unity among the Muslims of South Asia; the shrines such as the Bibi Paak Daman act as sanctuaries within which, at least temporarily, people forget their differences on sectarian grounds. The Bibi Paak Daman shrine therefore serves a good example in

the analysis of how interfaith tolerance is achieved and sustained in Pakistan. This study will therefore strive to analyze these rituals and interactions and clarify how Sunni and Shia Muslims interact with each other in acts of worship that increase religious tolerance.

Communal relations in Muslim societies are generally defined by cooperation, collaboration, competition, and even conflict between different sects. Due to the fact that the predominant religion in Pakistan is Islam, it has two major sub-sects supported by most of the residents; these are the Sunni and the Shia Muslims who practice their faith in accordance to their own sets of rules and regulations. Nonetheless, there have been past and present sectarian tensions; specific religious locations are segregated areas where both share the act of worshipping (Khan, 2020). The Bibi Paak Daman (S. A.) shrine in Lahore, Pakistan, is one of the places where Sunni and Shia Muslims congregate to pay respect to a female saint in Islam believed to be a relative of the Prophet Muhammad, Syeda Ruqayyah Bint Ali (S. A.).

Therefore, this study aims at understanding how the periodic common veneration of the shrine leads to tolerance and portends the constantly evolving sectarian relations in the region. With this understanding of Sunni and Shia rituals observed at the shrine, the research contributes toward knowledge on religious tolerance among the diverse Muslim population in Pakistan. The Bibi Paak Daman (S. A.) is an important religious place of Muslims and they come here for prayers, candles, and also make different types of vows (niyaz). The shrine, which is the alleged burial place of the wives and female relatives of the Prophet Muhammad, is sacred to both Sunni and Shiite pilgrims, who venerate the ahl al-bayt (household of the Prophet). Although, Sunnis and Shias do not share many doctrinal similarities, but the veneration of the family of the Prophet does provide a means for synthesis between Sunnis and Shias and make it possible for their religious rituals to merge and form a common domain (Sikand, 2019). In following their purpose, the shrine provides a common ground for the Sunni and Shia-practice to merge, thus unifying the devotees. Because Sunni and Shia practices overlap at Bibi Paak Daman, it is possible to examine religious accommodation as tolerance, thereby offering insights into how sectarianism is negotiated in sacred sites.

There has been interreligious tolerance in societies for many centuries which has been key towards promoting cooperation between people of different religions (Ahmed, 2015). Tolerance as a historical phenomenon is examined in this research through Sunni-Shia Muslim interactions at the Bibi Paak Daman (S. A) Shrine in Lahore, Pakistan. The place is significant as it contains a shrine of Bibi Paak Daman who is recognized in both Sunni and Shia schools of thought. Thus the case of Bibi Paak Daman Shrine shows that religion may be cause of conflict though religious differences may foster tolerance. Therefore, the following research focuses on the aspects of rituals, ceremonies and cultural practices that both Sunnis and Shias share at this holy place. Through the historical background, theologies attached to the shrine, and the social configuration of the people involved in both the branches of the Islamic shrine, the paper seeks to establish what might have informed the co-existence of these two dominant denominations of Islam.

The subjects of the research will comprise historical and other types of records, sacred texts, ethnological observation, and surveys with the community members, priests and clergy, and scholars. Thus, using together these methodologies we aim to offer more holistic and qualitative analysis considering the phenomenon of religious tolerance at Bibi Paak Daman Shrine.

Significance of the Study

The importance of this research is based on its role in expanding the knowledge regarding religious accommodation and tolerance, specifically in the context of Pakistan's sectarian environment. Despite the fact that Sunni-Shia conflict is not unusual in Pakistan and frequently results in pitched battles and political unrest, the Bibi Paak Daman (S. A.) is an excellent illustration of Sunni-Shia cohesion. Through focused analysis of how Sunni and Shia Muslims participate in religious rituals at the shrine, this research underlines how sacred sites enhance religious tolerance. It provides an affirmative representation of sectarian differences through the portrayal of shared worship, which brings together patrons who are otherwise depicted as opponents. It not only adds to the accumulation of knowledge in the subject area of religious tolerance in Islamic countries but also offers various perspectives of successful cooperation that can be used in other endeavors aimed at combating sectarianism. Furthermore, by exploring the

experiences of devotees, the study expands the sociological understanding of how religious practices can provide a framework for uniting people across the political spectrum.

Problem Statement

Ironically, Pakistan is a very culturally and religiously diverse country, however sectarian tensions between Sunni and Shia Muslims have led to social political marginalization and violence. Most of the literature on Sunni/Shia relations addresses conflict, however, empirical data about interaction and cooperation, religious endowments and cultural openness are scarce. Bibi Paak Daman (S. A.) shrine in Lahore is one such site where both the sects are seen to be performing the rituals equally for the devotion of god. However, there is no sufficient information regarding how these shared rituals that exist at the shrine help to reduce sectarianism and encourage the religious tolerance. Thus, if there is no concentrated study done to analyses how such spaces function as circuits of inter-sectarian amity, then we are liable to falling into the systematic misperception of how Sunni-Shia relations are in Pakistan. To this end, this study aims to further examine the practices and encounter at Bibi Paak Daman with a view to assess whether or not the Shrine promotes religious tolerance hence debunking the sectarianism narrative.

Research Questions

- 1) What are the historical and cultural factors that have contributed to the development of tolerant practices at the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine?
- 2) How do Sunni and Shia Muslims at the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine negotiate their religious differences and promote coexistence?
- 3) How do religious leaders and local communities contribute to the maintenance of religious tolerance at the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine?

Literature Review

The religious and cultural factors play an important role in the history of Pakistan. The region has been a center of the presence of various religions for centuries now majoring in Hindus, Buddhists and various Islamic communities. After gaining independence in 1947 Pakistan was formed on a religious ground on Muslim majority, nevertheless the state has had active attempts

at God bearing inter religious harmony and tolerance (Khan, 2020). Different factors contributed to religion tolerance in Pakistan and these factors have historical backgrounds. Fiaz et al. (2022) explored sectarianism and its impacts on social tolerance and concluded that 1979 exposed political performances of the Iranian revolution, the seizure of Mecca, and the Afghan war which together set the political agenda of the Muslim world including the rival Saudi Arabian and Iranian tussle for domination. Its impact includes the following; sectarianism, insurgency, humanitarian crises, violation of women rights and uprising in various parts of the Muslim world.

The importance of examining Bibi Pak Daman, Syeda Ruqayyah bint Ali (S.A)'s shrine can be performed on three interrelated levels: Religious and cultural identification, establishing a symbiotic relation between Muslim communities and mainly for constructing social inclusion in Lahore. In a similar vein to Aslam et al. (2024), this study confirms cultural and spiritual significance and religious tourism, along with new functions arising due to the Auqaf Department of Punjab. In this way, the paper serves as an example of how the case of the shrine works as a place of worship and reference to traditions, ceremony, congregation, and storytelling through interviews and observations. Despite it is being constructed long time back, the reason behind the construction of the shrine along with its existence presently is an identity of resistance and religious power and in the present context, it is also the symbol of cultural importance and the unity of the ethnically diverse groups of people. These insights expand knowledge regarding sacred geography as a fundamental characteristic of cultural and social life in Pakistan.

The Legacy of the Mughal Empire

The region was under the control of the Mughal Empire for many years and practice tolerance to other religion and cultures (Iqbal, 2008). The place has been ruled by Mughal Empire for a very long time and Mughal rulers have particular importance to religious tolerance and respect of other cultures. The Mughals for instance, the Muslim emperors were known to support religious places and religious scholars across different creeds. This has culminated into religious diversity and multiculturalism within the empire. The Mughal emperors also came up with policies that called for protection of rights of the minorities based on their religions. For instance, Akbar, one of the most liberal Mughal sultan, endorsed the Din-e-Ilahi that was a state religion that

included aspects of Islam, Hinduism, and other religions. Although the Din-i-illahi did not gain much popularity it showed that Akbar was indeed committed to religious tolerance.

The Influence of Sufi Saints

There were many Sufi saints who propagated the policies of religious toleration and harmony between the people of different shades (Naqvi, 2014). Sufi saints who preached about the integral oneness of human beings, also contributed a great deal in the promotion of tolerance with regards to religions of the book. Sufi saints constructed tomb and khanqah for themselves and for other people which acted as social and religious base. These institutions help to bring together people of different faiths and they were able to pray, congregate, celebrate and socialize. For instance some of the Sufis encouraged a doctrine known as ‘wahdat al-wujud’ which translates to ‘the unity of existence’, meaning that existence is one and all things are connected to it. Meanwhile, Sufi saints’ message against the pervasive arrogance spread about the different religious communities aimed at a unification of all beings.

The Colonial Period

The British rule also brought about concepts of secularism and religious freedom, which in turn impacted the progression of religious tolerance in Pakistan (Ahmed, 2015). The period of British colonialism has also played an important role in determining the direction of religious tolerance in the Pakistani state. The British came up with new concepts of secularism and religious tolerance, which went against the grain of conventional orthodoxy. All these ideas were instrumental in constructing a pluralistic and tolerant society. Nevertheless, there were conflicts between different religions in British colonial period as well. Alongside the conflicts of political power, the role of the British was rather conflicting and they aimed to fuel religious tensions for their benefits. This triggered intolerance in religious practices in some of the regions across the globe. Nonetheless, the colonial period itself had some beneficial effects on the religious tolerance

in Pakistan as well. Westernization played a very effective role in shaping a secular and more tolerant society due to the principles of separation of religion from state and freedom of religion.

Theoretical Background

An analysis of religious tolerance must engage several theoretical paradigms of thinking. As the field of study that asserts that societies can live together in harmony although their beliefs and practices are totally different (Barry, 2003). This framework stresses the need to differentiate as well as to uphold the Rights of religious groups. Other theoretical concepts also include secularism which also plays a significant role in religious tolerance. According to Secularism, religion and state wipe out from each other where the general public domain will be religiously neutral (Laqueur, 1997). It aims to prevent discrimination of people's rights based on any form of beliefs such as religious system.

Another theory applicable to the area of study is the theory of interfaith dialogue. The format of interfaith dialogue is one in which different religious groups engage in dialogue in a bid to improve their understanding of each other (Taylor, 2010). This approach focuses on the building of reconciliations between the various religions and recognizing the fact that everyone should respect other's beliefs.

Current Study Theoretical Framework

Religious Pluralism

The theoretical framework for this investigation on religious tolerance at Bibi Pak Daman (S.A) Shrine in Lahore – Pakistan, pegged on religious pluralism. From Barry, (2003) religious pluralism works under the premise that all religions and beliefs can peacefully coexist within society. It stands for the tolerance on behalf of the representatives of different religions in relation to one another and for the unity of the society while preserving the rights of the religious communities being unique, special interest communities. The Bibi Paak Daman Shrine is again a place of worship for both Sunni as well as Shia Muslims. Religious pluralism is especially

important in this context because it requires people to accept that the other should exist instead of merely putting up with them. By means of this framework, the study is able to analyze the patterns of religious entanglement and comprehensible accommodation between Sunni and Shia groups within the shrine, which reveals elements of toleration and tolerance.

Ever-increasing religious diversity makes the vision of sociology focused on the shrine as a representation of society's unity relevant. It helps the understanding of how people of different denominations can come together to participate in the use of common places of worship. While other frameworks that are commonly used only focus on the topic of tolerance, religious pluralism is the embodiment of diversity. This corresponds to the shrine's function of containing the diverse Theology and liturgical traditions and understand that all are one. People are interacting beyond the barriers of religious doctrines, and religious interactions qualify as the closest theory patterns for analyzing these tendencies at the shrine. During field work in a socio-political context that is characterized by sectarian rivalry and its periodic outbreaks, the framework provides a basis for analyzing how INGOs can support the processes through which shared symbols and spaces recapture religious imaginations from extremism and violence.

Engaging theoretical conceptualization of religious pluralism takes the research further from description of coexistence to appreciation of how respect and reverence are negotiated and performed at the shrine. It does so not only positions the shrine as a theological space, but as a case study for how religious tolerance coexists with theological disparity – of benefit in understanding interfaith relations more comprehensively in other spheres of socio-political life.

Shared Sacred Spaces

The identity of shared religious national spaces is a coherent theoretical framework for Sunni and Shia ritual practices at the Bibi Paak Daman (S.A) Shrine, Lahore. Shared space according to Taylor (2010) refers to those zones that are accessible for use by the followers of various religions for religious activities, merrymaking and fellowship. Such spaces are sacred, meaning they stand for unity and tolerance, that is, for several religions being able to exist tolerantly in one place. This framework can be particularly used in analysing the patterns of inter-religious and inter-sectarian relations in the context of the shrine. The Bibi Paak Daman Shrine

may be visited by both Sunni and Shia pilgrims because both of these Muslim denominations pray, study, and consecrate their time at the shrine. This nurture shared use engenders aspects of amity that are religiously overarching hence overcoming sectarianism. Drawing from the themes of common sanctum this research questions how a shrine fosters religious accommodation, and details the conditions that allow for permanent or periodic truces in polarized societies as Pakistan.

War memorials make a valuable object for studying the merges and antagonisms of inter-religious interactions as the spaces are jointly used by representatives of distinct religions. It provides the understanding of how difference is managed and mediated when individuals work and live together. The framework shows how the Ministry of Works is able to be an inclusive force in creating tangible common ground by sharing sacred endowments and respect between Sunni and Shia families. In the ever intimidating socio-political and religious setting of Pakistan characterized by high level of sectarian vice, the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine provides optimism of social tolerance in religious diversity. This position makes it possible to understand shared sacred spaces as an appropriate lens to examine its utility in the promotion of balance. Research has found that multi-faith religious sites as examined in this paper on interfaith convergence might help other conflicted areas unravel the causes of religious and cultural conflicts.

In this context and based on the previously outlined concept of shared sacred space this research has the following goals: The present study will explore how Bibi Paak Daman Shrine can act as a place of integration or religious harmony and mutual cooperation. It endeavors to find out the socio-cultural and spiritual factors that have made temporary religious compromises possible in order to shed light on how such spaces could reduce sectarian polarization and foster tolerance. Besides positioning the shrine in a discourse of unity, this framework gives practical knowledge about how religious integration can be achieved within a divided society.

Case Studies of Religious Coexistence in Pakistan

Studies undertaken in the past have shed light on the nature of accommodation and coexistence that exist among the religions in Pakistan including examining the relations among these religions addressing particular organizational structures and activities. For instance, research has discussed the role played by Sufi shrines on unity among religious faiths (Khan, 2020). These

shrines can do for the representatives of various religions – to pray, to celebrate, and to spend time in other fraternization. The second is use of shared festivals, which also define the relationships of the religious communities in Pakistan. Accordantly, there are some Muslim festivals like Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha which are common among the Sunnis and Shias though they belong to different theological school. Such celebrations may therefore assist in increasing inter-religious cohesion as individuals who belong to various religions get to feel that they belong to a common union.

In addition, the contribution that religious leaders make in making sure that people accept other people from other religions have also been looked at. It is important to note that many leaders, in the religious mainstream of Pakistan, have been very active in interfaith dialogue. They have at some point in some part of the world been against any form of persecution of people of other religion, and ways of life, and have counseled their followers to be at peace with everybody regardless of their religious believes. A contemporaneous examination by Khan et al. (2024) used CDA in an analysis of the Jaranwala event in which the media provides narratives concerning religious tolerance in Pakistan. By analyzing headlines from Dawn and The News, the study revealed contrasting portrayals: Dawn was more about state-centric order where it now and then undermined minority voices, on the other hand, The News was an injustice seeker and a promoter of tolerance. These findings echo discourses within research on media representation on narrating and constructing interfaith coexistence and power imbalance. Applying this paradigm to the Bibi Pak Daman (S.A) Shrine, which is visited by both Sunni and Shia groups, will complement its worth as security for study of sectarian relations as well as religious polarity in articulating tolerances of Pakistan's society.

Thus, despite the increased attention that has been paid to the study of religious coexistence in Pakistan and other Muslim countries in the past several years, the topic of Sunni–Shia practices at the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine deserves additional investigation. This research is expected to make some contribution to the existing literature through exploring the relationship factors between sunni-shia in a within a shared shrine. It underscores importance in relation to Arshaad et al. (2022) on topic of interfaith harmony in South Asia and the role played by sacred places and collection of texts. They elaborate on the scholarly works of Sufi saint of Punjab, Abu Anees Barkat Ali and

know how Sufi shrines in Punjab have acted as a foundation for peace and tolerance here. Prolonging the viewing of Bibi Pak Daman (S.A) Shrine as a site that has both Sunni and Shia that serves as joint shrine, shows that indeed religious intolerance as portrayed at the micro level, translate sectarian sensitization to religious interactions at larger societal dimension.

Looking into the anthropologists' perspective on the history of the shrine and the culture that surrounded it to understand why such tolerant measures were embraced. Exploring the functions of religious authorities and local population in promoting friendly relations between Sunnis and Shias. This way, this study will be able to fill in the aforementioned research gap and contribute toward improving the knowledge of the prerequisites for the governance through shedding light on the factors influencing the successful coexistence of religions as well as provide useful lessons for the promotion of tolerance in other parts of the world.

Methodology

Research Design

Considering the nature of the study, it is suggested to carry out the field research from January 2024 to June 2024. Considering the type of research questions, ethnographic study seems relevant to this research since it enables examination of cultural practices surrounding Bibi Paak Daman Shrine in Lahore. In this case by employing field research the researcher is able to establish how Sunnis and the Shias are able to co-exist in this religious shrine.

Data Collection Methods

Participant observation

The researcher will have to extend considerable time on the shrine with an aim of monitoring the rituals, ceremonies as well as social relations. This shall help in gaining a real life experience on how the two groups of Muslims namely the Sunni and Shia perform their rituals in this delicate setting.

Semi-structured Interviews

The targeted 30 respondents Semi-structured Interviews will include religious leaders, shrine officials, local people, and other people visiting the shrine for pilgrimage. From these interviews, some information regarding the historical background of the shrine, religious convictions and practices of the Sunnis and Shias as well as religion related harmony or conflict, shall be obtained.

Population

Target human sample of 30 semi structured respondents for this study will be those who are in direct contact or have operations with Bibi Paak Daman Shrine in Lahore, Pakistan. These are the Sunni and Shia religious scholars who operate from, or have a connection with the shrine. Civil servants who are employed to support the functioning of the shrine and people who are responsible for organizing religious activities at the shrine. People directly associated with the shrine, especially those residing near the shrine and those who frequent the place or engage in activities at the shrine. Other visitors consist of those who visit the shrine from other parts of Pakistan and from other countries.

Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique will have to be adopted in selecting participants of this study. This method aims at recruiting participants who possess certain specialization, or who in some other ways are linked to the study area of interest (Patton, 2015). The following features shall guide the selection of participants shall be selected from both Sunni and Shia Muslims; this would ensure a balanced view among different group of Muslims. All the participants will be singled out from their daily working, worshipping, and or the broader community engagements in this shrine. Those participants that have a long standing association with the shrine might well appreciate and have a better grasp of its roles and the factors that underpin the relations between the two religious entities. Purposive sampling makes it easier for the researcher to identify the right participants who would contribute greatly to the study. In this case the research will focus on those people be involved with the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine or those who frequent it or have basic knowledge about the shrine hence making the sample more representing the target population.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data that will be collected will be analyzed using a thematic analysis oriented approach. This entails categorizing the data based on recurring themes or patterns that may be qualitative or quantitative in nature. To this end, the analysis will highlight the Sunshine Program and examine how Sunni and Shias are involved in these dynamics at the shrine; the cultural interactions; and things that make Sunni and Shias coexist.

Fieldwork Plan

Due to the complex nature of the research, it is proposed to conduct the fieldwork for 6 months starting from January 2024 to June 2024 and the detailed plan of the activities to be conducted in the field as well as the time required to conduct all the necessary researches and to obtain the necessary resources will be developed. Developing this kind of plan will be very useful because it will be more flexible to work with as it will incorporate any new incoming changes or incidents in the research work.

Data Analysis

In this part of the study, provide an account of how the study participants responded to the research questions formulated as well as give an account of the observation done at Bibi Paak Daman shrine in Lahore Pakistan. Historical background of the religious tolerance, similarities in the ceremonies of Sunni and Shia Muslims and characteristics that define friendly relations between two denominations are viewed in the analysis. Thus, analysis of these aspects of the work will hopefully add to the understanding of the phenomenon of religious tolerance in the context of the shrine.

Table 1

Semi-Structured Interviews findings at Bibi Paak Daman Shrine

Respondent Category	Theme	Key Findings	Respondent
Religious Leaders	Historical Background	Shared lineage of Bibi Paak Daman	5 (3 Sunni, 2 Shia)
	Religious Practices	Common rituals and prayers, such as dua, qawwali, and majlis-e-aza.	5 (3 Sunni, 2 Shia)
	Religious Harmony	Emphasis on shared beliefs and values, such as the importance of taqwa (piety) and akhlaq (good character).	5 (3 Sunni, 2 Shia)
Shrine Officials	Shrine Management	Collaborative efforts between Sunni and Shia officials to ensure the smooth functioning of the shrine.	3 (2 Sunni, 1 Shia)
	Visitor Management	Inclusive policies for visitors of all faiths, including providing equal access to shrine facilities and services.	3 (2 Sunni, 1 Shia)
	Conflict Resolution	Mechanisms for addressing disputes, such as mediation and dialogue between religious leaders.	3 (2 Sunni, 1 Shia)
Local People	Community Involvement	Active participation in shrine activities, including mehfil-e-naat, milads, and ashura.	10 (6 Sunni, 4 Shia)
	Social Cohesion	Sense of unity among diverse religious groups, fostered by shared experiences and traditions.	10 (6 Sunni, 4 Shia)
	Challenges	Minor disagreements or tensions related to specific rituals or practices, but these are generally resolved through dialogue and compromise.	10 (6 Sunni, 4 Shia)
Visitors	Pilgrimage Experiences	Positive experiences of interfaith interaction, including sharing meals, prayers, and cultural exchanges.	7 (4 Sunni, 3 Shia)
	Religious Significance	Shared reverence for Bibi Paak Daman as a symbol of spiritual guidance and healing.	7 (4 Sunni, 3 Shia)
	Cultural Exchange	Opportunities for learning about different religious traditions and customs.	7 (4 Sunni, 3 Shia)

The results from the semi structured interviews are, that both Sunni and Shia interviewees attribute Bibi Paak Daman the quality of a religious figure and a spiritual healer. They respect and revere Bibi Paak Daman as the holiest site and hence the two religious groups feel unified with similar orientation and pull. The analysis of the information actually obtained from the semi-structured interviews indicates that people of both Sunni and Shia denomination, picnic about Bibi

Paak Daman. They know her as a deity capable of offering people protection and instructions in various matters they face in their daily lives. This is a belief that unites them in their endeavor and makes the stand out as one that belongs to everyone; these are some of the reasons why this shared belief is essential. Therefore the shared rituals and ceremonies that are practiced by Sunni and Shias at the shrine affords them a chance to get to know the other better. It can be used as a ground for free flow of conversations between the adherents of one or the other religion. People who come to the shrine also have intentions of acquiring information on the history of religion in the society.

Some of the advantages shown in the interviews are the possibilities of an exchange of cultures at the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine. The shrine is an area for interaction between different religious affiliations and, therefore, creates an opportunity to learn different types of Islamic practices. For both Sunni and Shia, farewell with honour and respect, Praise and reverence to Bibi Paak Daman A'o for being a symbol of spiritually powerful personality and dignity. According to respondents both groups suggest that Bibi Paak Daman offers religious counseling and safety. Gain and recovery as well as miracles respondents believed on the intercessor of Bibi Paak Daman.

More specifically, findings presented in the paper let us to conclude that Bibi Paak Daman Shrine is important for constructing religious tolerance between Sunni and Shia communities. This notion has been compounded by the respect that has been accorded to Bibi Paak Daman as well as rich cultural relations that exist among the people of different faiths. Besides, quite significantly many respondents link healing and miracles with the intervention of Bibi Paak Daman. He or she thinks that, by coming to the shrine and praying at her grave, one can be cured of both physical and spiritual illnesses. This understanding of Bibi Paak Daman as a place of healing enhances her importance as religious personality and a site which attracts people for the similar purposes.

Table 2

Participant Observation key findings at Bibi Paak Daman Shrine (January-June 2024)

Observation	Key Findings
Rituals	Shared rituals, such as dua (prayer), qawwali (devotional music), and majlis-e-aza (mourning ceremonies).

	Differences in specific practices, such as the style of qawwali or the duration of majlis-e-aza.
Ceremonies	Shared ceremonies, such as urs (anniversaries), milads (birth celebrations), and ashura (commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Hussain).
	Variations in the emphasis placed on certain aspects of these ceremonies by Sunnis and Shias.
Social Relations	Intermingling of Sunnis and Shias during rituals and ceremonies.
	Informal interactions and conversations among visitors of different faiths.
	Collaborative efforts between shrine officials of both sects to ensure the smooth functioning of the shrine.
Shared Spaces	Use of common spaces for prayer, meditation, and socializing.
	Symbolic significance of these spaces as places of unity and tolerance.

Participant observation data indicate that Sunni and Shia Muslims who visit the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine employ several key activities. Thus, religion becomes the primary identity and the basis for cooperation and integration of the communities. Sunnis and Shias carry out different practices like dua, qawwali, and majlis-e-aza. These rituals may retain identical symbolism, thus strengthening a group identity among people. However, there are concerns about differences in specific practices of qawwali or the length of time of majlis-e-aza etc. Most of these differences arise due to the differences in theological and cultural beliefs between Sunni and Shia.

Sunnis and Shias also indulge in common practices an example being urs milad, and ashura ceremonies. These ceremonies give entourage for interfaith relations and the relations between these two communities are well enhanced. Two of these celebrations are time-honored and commemorated by both Sunnis and Shias in equal measure as religious duties. The ceremonies have social interaction or acts of togetherness that provide for cross cultural learnings. However, it is important to understand that basic ceremonial functions of both communities might slightly differ but the intensity of the focus on these ceremonies may vary between Sunnis and Shia branch of Islam. For instance, the Shias may attach so much importance on the Ashura ceremony, while the Sunnis may give much importance to the Urs ceremonies.

The participant observation data also gives a revelation of the social interaction that is Sunni-Shia at the shrine. It exists as a social place that accommodates diverse religious beliefs hence creating a platform of interacting, mingling, and developing fellowship. During rituals and ceremonies, it is possible to see Sunni reacting with Shia without restrictions. Both the communities interact freely in terms of talking and sharing ideas with each other. In this respect, the officials from the two sects of the shrine co-ordinate themselves to make the shrine more efficient. Such interactions play the role of making the environment for the different groups of people at the shrine to be positive and tolerant.

The Bibi Paak Daman Shrine itself is a communal ground for both the Sunnis and Shias to visit. Hence the significance of this shared space as a symbol of camaraderie and tolerance. This shrine allows individuals of different faith or religion to come together in a single point as per their beliefs. This site is considered to be an example of interreligious tolerance and people's ability to live together peacefully. In sum, the participant observation information presented a crowded and rich relationship of the social performance and relations in Bibi Paak Daman Shrine. All these act as boosters or enablers to create a positive religious climate that promotes religious tolerance between Sunni and Shia.

Discussion

The tolerant practices in Bibi Paak Daman Shrine include the historical, cultural and social factors that have influenced the construction of the shrine as well as the religion practiced within the site. These factors can be seen as mirroring the religious and communal values of South Asia which are convivial and sacred in nature and shrines were always an inclusive symbol for all religions across South Asia. Sensitivity of the shrine towards intolerance was one of the most important aspects due to its relation with the people of Ahl-e-Bayt, the family of Prophet Muhammad. Sunni and Shia both respect the family of the Prophet a lot and this view is the only area that can bring these two sects closer together. Another point of contact is the fact that Bibi Pak Daman shrine is a place located; Syeda Ruqayyah bint Ali is the granddaughter of the Prophet and the daughter of Imam Ali. The fact that Ruqayyah bint Ali enjoys a high esteem in both the Sunni and the Shia traditions to act as a unifying factor hence making the shrine to be considered

holy to both sides. It makes devotees, who come from different religious backgrounds tolerate each other in view of this common point that they have in honoring the family of Prophet Mohammed. The links with Ahl-e-Bayt, therefore, do not only provide relevance religiously but at the same time symbolizes unity of society.

Thus, the religious tolerance in relation to Sufi tradition has been evidenced at the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine. Sufism with its stress on the Tawhid and the belief in Divine love and acceptance is beyond the doctrine of sectarianism, and attracts Sunni and Shia Muslims. Another evidence that supports this shrine's affiliation with Sufism is the fact that Data Ganj Bakhsh was the Sufi saint who symbolized the unity of spirit. Through the considerable period of time Sufism has been present in South Asia, this has led to the region's being known for tolerance where spiritual worship might be considered ahead of dogma. Therefore, Sufi shrines including Bibi Paak Daman have always been a points of convergence for people of different faiths and beliefs where they can all Sufi and share common culture. This Sufi impact has created an atmosphere of tolerance with reference to religion and everybody is focused on getting the blessings of the Almighty regardless of the faction they belong to.

The tolerant practices that are evident at Bibi Paak Daman are also attributable to the general history of Lahore, which is a diverse melting pot of people with different religions at different times. Lahore in the Mughal period was a prosperous city where people of different faith and culture lived in harmony due to the liberal policies of the emperors. Religious tolerance was one of the strong points of the Mughal Empire, especially during the reign of Akbar; many faiths were welcome, and religion was relatively subdued and rarely used as a tool for oppression; many religious shrines were instrumental in maintaining the spirit of unity between religious communities. The religious practices of the city have still been pluralistic and one of the shrines of Lahore Bibi Paak Daman serves the purpose of reminding the people of the history of tolerance that was once a part of the city's ethos. This cultural diversity, which is part of Lahore's preemptive history, has played a constructive role in the development of the current practices being practiced in the shrine.

As it has been noted above, the tolerance of the shrine stems from ritualized practices of both the Sunni and the Shia believers. These are prayers, offerings and vows which are universal activities that the two sects can be found to be performing devotion hand in hand. Contrary to the fact that some of them may carry sectarian-specific connotations, these rituals help create encounter and foster relations across sectarian divisions. Through performing these rubrics together, the devotees create an opportunity for cross-cultural interaction which effectively breaks down the divisions that maintain sectarian polemic. Thus, the shrine serves as a place where the ordinary religious practice fosters a less polarized and a more tolerant atmosphere thus enabling inter-religious living and the repeal of sectarianism. Due to involvement of the local community in the shrine activities, then tolerance has also received a big boost. This way, local Sunnis as well as Shias get involved in the religious and social activities that occur in the shrine making them feel that the shrine is theirs, and therefore they must do anything they can to ensure that it is maintained well by the community. It also fosters unity in the society as both sects both assist in the running of the shrine's affairs. Thus, the collective participation in a shared spiritual space develop relations and create understanding of mutual respect. An allegiance in a religious tradition assists to establish good relationship between various sectarian groups, which assists to ensure that there is harmony at the shrine.

The coordinative role played by the shrine officials to ensure that tolerance is kept alive is important in keeping up the tolerant theme at Bibi Paak Daman. The management of the shrine appointed both Sunni and Shia officials, which guarantees that the rules and regulations concerning the space are fair for every devotee. It means that provisions for equal usage of the facilities, providing for flexible practices in a disability-accessible manner, and recognizing shared religious events enhance the experience for visitors of both types. In this way, by keeping parity in their portrayal and management, the officials of the shrine assumed a key function in guaranteeing that Bibi Paak Daman will keep on being a living test of interfaith peaceful harmonious relations instead of realization of intolerance and sectionalism. Therefore, the adoption of tolerant practices at the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine can be attributed to a combination of factors that include historical, cultural, and social elements. Sunni and Shia both pay respect to the Ahl-e-Bayt with the same regard so, apparently they can live together, Sufi influence and culture of Lahore also play an

important role in development and the Shias are actively involved in many communities, and they have flexible management so they can easily live with Sunni as their neighbors. The shrine is therefore indicative of the role that such religious places of worship play in enhancing spiritual appreciation of different religions in an environment of otherwise increasing extremism.

Through various strategies the Sunni and Shia Muslims try to come to terms with the sectarian rivalry and co-exist in the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine. The manner in which religious difference is managed in Northern Ireland is important especially given that the management of sects in other regions of the country has often resulted in conflict. Both Sunnis and Shias perform the rituals of visits at the shrine and they intermingled with each other culturally, managed the shrine together and were involved in the charitable activities for society thus reducing the gap between the two sects. In such practices, the shrine demonstrates the aspect of religious accommodation and tolerance among people from different religious backgrounds. One of the key social management systems of religious difference at Bibi Paak Daman can be said to be evidenced through an enactment of common modes of worship. Dua, qawwali, and majlis-e-aza which are the Sunnis and Shias practice acts of devotion of mourning for Imam Hussain (A.S) bring the two affiliations of the Islamic faith together. Such shared practices enable the participants to concentrate on the fact that they are all worshipping the same holy personalities such as the members of the Prophet's family and to de-emphasize the matters of theological dispute. For example, the practice of majlis-e-aza that is considered as a Shia practice are also held and participated by the Sunni devotees at the shrine, erasing the division of the two sects. This means where emphasis is not put on social membership of a particular sect but on the faith that is held in common sight helps in establishment of harmony and in-depth understanding. This approach also unpacks an intention of distinguishing the distinctions between the Sunni and Shia'ism Islam avoiding the sectarian divide due to the common experience in religion.

The other important strategy on conserving coexistence is the cultural interchange that happens in the shrine permanently. As Sunni and Shia Muslims attend common religious celebrations and interact in an environment which is open for both of them, they learn more about each other's culture and views. Through this, people gain respect for each other and their religious practices since they learn the value which the other devotees attach to their practices.

The shrine is living testimony to how different beliefs can be a factor for growth instead of becoming a reasons for wars. In this way, people belonging to both sects get a chance to question their prejudices and biases about what they have been taught about the ‘other’, and slowly and gradually overcoming the divide in establishing interactions and religious communion. Thus, the shrine not only holds religious significance but also serves an educational purpose as young people are taught to have human nature and gain full acceptance through slow process of interaction with other. Another factor that supports the atmosphere of tolerance in the management of the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine is the people’s collaborative management. Sunni as well as Shia officials are in charge of the shrine meaning that they operate under the same governance framework, which embodies their unity in as far as running of the shrine is concerned. This form of leadership sharing is very useful in making sure that the shrine is made open to either sect. And through these inclusive policies, for instance, using the example of opening up of all facilities and services to all those from different sects at the shrine the message conveyed is well captured. These policies make it possible for visitors from the two sects to feel that they are valued equally hence minimizing conflict chances while creating a sense of unity concerning the space. Shrine officials’ cooperation therefore goes beyond the pragmatic in the way they run the affairs of the shrine— it presents more of a sectarian harmony narrative.

Having the community contribute to its place also solidifies the shrine’s purpose as a religious tolerance center. Sunni and Shia together offer prayers in the shrine and celebrate the various Sufi festivals hence volunteering their participation and ownership. Such an engagement promotes social integration since people come together with a shared religious and cultural identity. The shared feeling associated with such a communal involvement also aids in gradually erasing the sectarian divide as members of both the Sunni and Shia faith actively engage in, and receive the fruits of spirituality and related social services of, the shrine. Further, people of both Shia and Sunni sects use the endowment to share in the maintenance of the shrine and participate in its rituals, which cultivates strong, sustainable relations and cooperation between the two sects. This participatory model reinforces the role of the shrine as not only a place of worship but also of social congregation and togetherness.

In Bibi Paak Daman, the use of such sentiments as taqwa (piety) as well as akhlaq (good character) as sources of unity and understanding are moral and ethical codes devoid of sectarianism. Thus, while participating in these core Islamic values, both the Sunni and Shia Muslims are reminded of their shared spiritual belief systems. The shrine help society to strive for spiritual growth, humility and service to the society and therefore encourages the society to work for the common good instead of divisions of religious believes. Their concentration on these mutual values allows devotees to look beyond these theological gaps and unite under a wider universal cause such as the preaching of compassion, justice, and charity. Therefore, the shrine can be seen as a place where people of different religious denominations forget their differences and come together in a shared belief system of Islam.

The fact that the shrine can remain neutral and does not allow conflicts to arise is explained by the existence of the conflict-solving institutions that may be applied in case of conflicts. These may include working with the two religious sects in the community through dialogue involving their religious leaders who would ensure that issues arising between them are solved through discussions without the use of violence. The use of such mechanisms remain critical in managing conflict and restoring order as the process establishes order in resolving conflict that may be inherent in a strongly fir religion. The socialist way of using dialogue to resolve conflicts also underlines the call of the shrine to peace and togetherness by offering a secure environment for every visitor. Because the shrine encourages the nonviolent handling of conflicts, it fosters fewer sectarian conflicts while leading the way on how the various religious factions may execute peaceful resolution of their problems.

In sum, Sunni and Shia Muslim stakeholders of the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine manage interactions, shared symbolism, religious cooperation, and government to attain religious dialogue and harmony, cultural interchange and participation, and value-oriented conflict regulation. It is by these strategies that religious tolerance and understanding are encouraged thus making religions' sacred places precursors to the call for tolerance and coexistence. The manner how the shrine treats religious pluralism is very libervative for understanding how diversity should be addressed in a contemporary society because unity is attainable without negation of differences yet because of common spiritual moral values.

Religious leaders as well as local communities at the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine are actively involved in the promotion and sustainment of religious tolerance and this makes shrines as the only space where Sunni and Shia Muslims can freely co-exist. By their leadership and participation in the groups, they foster proper interaction and modes of conflict resolution that address the ultimate togetherness of people. Usually religious leaders acts as social reference group by having deep influence in changing attitudes and behaviors among faithful followers. Thus, they stress identity to unity the Islamic community, such as the veneration of prophetic successors, which is accepted in Sunni and Shi'ite traditions. It is a basis for the spiritual leaders to tone down the sectarianism and be discouraging to those whom are inciting others to violence. Benevolent leaders act as role models when they celebrate tolerance and respect for one another in front of other people, this gives a clear message on how the different sections of a particular religion can co-exist. In addition, religious leaders also organize itself to become an intermediary in handling conflict situations that may occur between Sunni and Shia worshippers to avoid them turn into a bigger problem. This therefore makes them have a lot of authority and respect within the community in as much as they act as role players in ensuring that there is order and harmony at the shrine.

Another factor that contributes to the promotion of religious tolerance is the participation of locals in the docket of the shrine. This sense of activation and involvement helps the Sunni and Shia Muslim devotees feel more inclined to identify with the place and affirm the concept that it is a sacred place of worship of both the sects. Although these sects are far apart from each other, this communal engagement fosters social harmony in the society through organized religious practices and interactions. Local communities also have the potential to start small movements that call for the inclusion of religious sensitivity for the purpose of harmonious coexistence. Measures can include the arrangement of common religious holidays, charitable actions or stimulating public appeals connected with the education of tolerance and mutual understanding. This paper discovered that interfaith engagement is one of the most common approaches used in both religious governance and popular civil society to foster inter-sectarian relationships. Through planned dialogue sessions, both the religious leaders and individuals from the community are able to understand each other better and respect each other's religions and practices. Furthermore,

cooperation programs where Shiites and Sunnis participate work on bringing together individuals and forming relationships and cohesion through charity organizations, educational projects, and collective religious celebrations.

Finally, in the long run, educating the society and creating awareness about the need to respect other people's religions will help in making the society more tolerant in the future. These initiatives also act as sensitization mechanisms to encourage the espousal of the correct message as the negative impact of sectarianism is explained and a culture of tolerance promoted. The actors involved in the case include religious leaders and local residents, who play the role of overseeing religious tolerance in the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine area. All of them in their capacities that address the themes of understanding, conflict solving, and social integration contribute to the role of the shrine as a unifying symbol of the Sunni and Shia sides. By talking, working, and explaining, they make sure that this shrine continues to incorporate everybody, with sectarian divisions ignored to encourage spiritual and communal unity.

Based on the research conducted for this paper, it is possible to state that the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine is an important example of religious tolerance and intergroup relations between Sunni and Shia Muslims. Both sects have common respect of the shrine, based on the belief of respect towards the Ahl-e-Bayt, and they perform similar acts of piety such as praying, singing, listening to the qawwals, and majlis-e-aza. Religious leaders offer understanding in cases of misunderstanding and help fix misunderstandings since they stand in the middle in conflict situations Religious leaders offer understanding where there is misunderstanding, and help resolve misunderstandings since they are a party to conflict Collaborative management of shrines ensures that everybody has equal chances of using the shrines Note that religious leaders have the role of promoting understanding whenever there is misunderstanding and tackle conflicts since they participate in the conflict. It also fosters interaction with the local community, where Sunni and Shia groups partake in the activities that happen in the shrine, thereby promoting unity and togetherness. Moreover, such entities as grassroots, joined projects, and interreligious dialogue are effective in strengthening relations and promoting respect between the followers of different religions, which also points to the shrine as a model of peace in the context of sectarianism.

Findings of the Study

This research sheds light on some of the aspects of Inter-sectarian relationship between the Sunni and Shia Muslims for example, through an analysis of the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine in Lahore Pakistan. This commonality or a figure of Bibi Paak Daman, who is honored in both Sunni and Shia traditions, plays important factor crucial for and preserving the unity and creating the sense of identity. Sunni as well as Shia Muslims have high regard and honor Bibi Paak Daman and regard her as sacred personality. The fact that people from different religions respect each other's faith lays a good platform for religious tolerance. Additional, the shrine's historical affiliation with the Ahl-e-Bayt especially through Ruqayyah bint Ali (A.S) confirms the shrine as being relevant to both Sunni and Shia members of society. Two main sects of Muslims are Sunni and Shias but they involve in similar prayers and events which include dua, qawwali and majlis-e-aza. These are the daily operations that are done in groups and hence help to foster togetherness of the people in the siblings. The shrine also provides the chance to create the positive dialogue and to better understand one other between Sunni and Shia. On a social level the shrine provides an important place for Religious people to interact with one another and for bring together the fragmented groups of Muslims. Multi-Religious tolerance can always be practiced regardless of the differences between Sunnis and Shias evidenced by the tolerance practiced among the people visiting Bibi Paak Daman Shrine.

The Bibi Paak Daman Shrine provides a clear message and example of religious freedom and acceptance of other faiths. Thus, in revealing the features that bring together the people who worship Bibi Paak Daman, what they have in common and similar rituals, as well as the prospects for interaction in the context of cultural exchange, this work contributes to the understanding of the factors that foster conflict-free relations between representatives of various religions. The shrine therefore symbolizes on how different religions can co-exist for the betterment of society and social order.

This study concurs with other studies into the nature of Sunni-Shia relations regarding the role of jointly administered religious places and personalities in promoting sect tolerance. , Ahmed (2015) and Khan (2020) have demonstrated in this context on the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine that

other sites affiliated to Ahl-e-Bayt attract Sunni and Shia with equal ease and keep reinforcing the idea that reverence for important figures like Ruqayyah bint Ali (A. S.) does not respect sectarian differences. Perceived together, Sunni and Shia Muslims pay reverence to Bibi Paak Daman that saves and makes sectarianism irrelevant. This shared act of worship is similar having been affirmed by Qasmi (2015) that despite the sectarian division, worshipping in identical manner strengthens bonds of oneness among Muslims. Further, this study affirms the assertion of Sikand (2019) and Khan (2020) on the premise that religious shrines provide a venue for interaction an intercultural exchange. The common ways of engagement, thus, include dua, qawwali and majlis-e-aza, meaning a conflict free social relationship among the two groups. These findings support prior research findings that, when people of different faiths participate in religious practices in a sacred center, conflict is reduced, and tolerance is achieved in the process.

On a social level, the study concludes that the shrine acts as a meeting arena, which corresponds with the work of Khan (2020) who highlighted the importance of people's engagement with the multiple opportunities to socialize regardless of the differences in sects. The shrine's institutional policies and collaborative management as presented in this work are therefore in consonance with Sikand (2019) who depicted how efficient shrine management promotes an embrace of inter-sectarian tolerance. All in all, this research adds to the extant literature on religious tolerance in the South Asian region by shedding light on how religious people of different sects are able to come into interaction within shared spaces to maintain harmony.

The findings of this study are consistent with the theory of religious pluralism and the notion of co-sacrality which are fundamentals for the study of Sunni-Shia relationship at the Bibi Paak Daman Shrine. The role of the shrine as a shared entry point for the Sunni and Shia Muslims practicing rituals of dua, qawwali, and majlis-e-aza is a good example of how religious pluralism is manifested. Making use of Barry (2003), religious pluralism is the ability of societies to be diverse in their beliefs but be in harmony. This framework is evident in how the shrine strengthens tolerance through interaction between the sects, even though they have different doctrines. Furthermore, Taylor's (2010) theory of shared sacred places contributes to the conclusion that the shrine not only performs one of the religious functions, but also of social interaction and communication, thus emphasizing the fact that shared religious space can play a positive role in

the fight against sectarianism. The veneration of the Ahl-e-Bayt and the form and practice of communal worship contribute to a shared sociopolitical identity, which aligns with the religious pluralism model and provides insight into the function of the shrine as a space of temporary religious reconciliation in a society split along sectarian lines. Therefore, this paper proves the relevance of these theoretical paradigms in understanding coexistence through exploring how congregation spaces such as Bibi Paak Daman make it possible to live together.

Conclusion

The implication arising from the study is that the Bibi Pak Daman Shrine has importance in the preservation of Inter-Religious harmony with particular reference to Sunni and Shia Muslims in Pakistan. Dua, Qawwali, majlis-e-aza are some of the shared forms of doing rituals, which provide both sects an opportunity to take part in cultic activities emphasizing on the love and regards for Ahl-e-Bayt especially Ruqayyah bint Ali (A. S). The historical background of the shrine going back to the days when the figures, who were worshipped by both denominations, have been adored creates people's spiritual unity. However, Sunni and Shia Imams have been working together in the management of the shrine, in decision making dealing with conflicts and in multi-party dialogues which enhance the understanding between the two brotherly-sects. If there is community involvement, it only increases ones bond with the society, where on one hand are active Sunnis, and on the other hand active Shias are involved in the shrines of the site. The presented results conform to the concept of religious pluralism and co-location of different types of religious facilities, which describes the role of the shrine for the maintenance of inter-sectarian harmony. There is no doubt that the shrine perfectly illustrates the fact that the adherents of different religions can overcome cultural and religious differences and can come together and establish friendly relations and even cooperate in worship.

Thus, the Bibi Pak Daman Shrine can be viewed as an example of a religious tolerance; the people of Pakistan have to recognize co-existing interrelated religious practices and religious buildings as opportunities for the society's unification. Although the shrine creates harmony, this research also reveals that the problem of maintaining this coexistence in a context characterized by sectarian violence. Future studies should explore the weaknesses of such cross-cultural larger

common territories in building sustainable peace as well as how the same system may be modeled to address increasing threats posed by sectarianism in various other parts of the world.

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