

Concord & Unity of Muslim Nation With Religious Motivators

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Abstract: This paper presents discussion about the development of national solidarity in which an Imam (a worship leader of a mosque) and masjid have basic status in an Islamic Society. An Imam plays his double sided role, i.e. religious as well as the mundanely. Firstly, he has to maintain the mosque updated with performing his religious duties of worship timely, while on the other side, he remains ready in teaching Holy Quran, setting marriage agreement (Nikah), funeral services and funeral prayer also. The purpose of this paper is to activate the Imam, public and the ruling authorities with comprehensive efforts so that problems of sectarianism and differences of interpretation of Islamic teachings could be resolved or might be minimized. In this way, one school of thought did respect the other school of thought and its followers without having any kind of prejudice. Therefore, Imam can unite the people of that particular area where they lead in prayers so they should lead the people in uniting and presenting the divinely, universal and eternal teachings. Furthermore, imams should not use such words or such voice, in Friday sermons or any other sermon, by which unity or peaceful conditions might be disturbed. Anyhow, the mosque is a public place; therefore, wealthy and rich people of the area must spend their wealth in maintaining the mosque, and facilitate the people according to the requirements of weather and seasons. Moreover, there should be a mosque committee of concerned people of that particular area so that incomes and expenditures might be calculated and the aspect of accountability might be promoted for attaining real benefits of social and educational institutions.

Key words: Solidarity, unity, Imam, masjid, worship, sermon.

Introduction

The word masjid or mosque has evolved from the word sajda (sujud) which refers to devoted & loyal and with bowed heads with full respect and reverence.¹ (Intan Salwani Mohamed, Noor Hidayah Abdul Aziz & et al. 2014). This may be stated that masjid is called because of sajdah (putting forehead on the

¹Intan Salwani Mohamed, Noor Hidayah Abdul Aziz & et al. (2014), "Mosques Fund Management Issue on accountability & Internal Control, Social & Behavioral Sciences, Number 145, P. 189.

earth with calling certain words) in prayer and without calling these words in certain condition in prayer, it will not be considered true sajdah. Anyhow other than prayer if someone keeps forehead before any other personality, this is not allowed whether the person tells words or not in such condition.

As concerned the word masjid (mosque) and its importance, it may be analyzed from this that, 'the word Masjid is mentioned in the Holy Quran twenty seven times: twenty one times as a singular word and seven times as the plural Masajid'.² (Zakariya Mohammad Abdel- Hadey, 2010).

Thus the Quba is the first mosque that was built in Medina around 6 K.M. far from village Quba. Its first stones were positioned by the prophet Muhammad on his emigration from the city of Mecca to Medina. During migration the migrants (Prophet & his companions) from Mecca to Medina rested at Quba. In Holy Quran, it is describes as the first mosque to be built on piety. Caliph Omer bin Abdul Aziz built mosque first market.

And it is ordained, "And the mosques are for Allah (alone)."³ (Al-Quran, 72:18). By doing worship in mosques, in actual, this thing creates humbleness among the people, therefore they eschew from arrogance and pride. This helps people in their development of personality. Similarly by saying prayers five times a day, people become punctual, self-disciplined and patient in their attitudes because of patience and humbleness.

In Islam, once a mosque is built, it does not belong to any human. Its owner is God which makes the expression, 'House of God', not only figuratively but legally true under Islamic Law.⁴ (Zakariya Mohammad Abdel-Hadey, 2010). As anyone builds mosque, it will be considered the Allah's possession only, no any person can claim about this.

Different kinds of Mosques

All mosques are not equal. Variations occur not only in theological or doctrinal differences (i.e. between shia, sunni or sulfi& sufi) but even with in the same school, mosques vary in their atmosphere. Distinction were introduced by Holy Prophet, when he stated that that a prayer performed in the sacred mosque the Kaaba in Mecca performed in the sacred Mosque the Kaaba in Mecca is equivalent to one hundred thousand prayers performed elsewhere. While prayer performed Masjid-e- Nabawi is equal to one thousand prayers while in masjid Aqsa is equal to five hundred.

In Sahih Bukhari, it is narrated that offering prayer in masjid-e- Nabawi is more thousand times more reward than offering prayer in common mosque.⁵ (Imam Bukhari, 2002). Here it should be noted that this reward is compared with prayer of mosques, in offering solitude, it will be different than this one.

In Sahih Muslim, it is narrated that first mosque on the earth is Masjid-e-haram, the second one is Masjid-e- Aqsa, and there is 40 years gap between the both mosques.⁶ (Imam Muslim, 2002). This is

² Zakariya Mohammad Abdel- Hadey(2010), " The Masjid, yesterday & today," Center of International & Regional Studies," Qatar: George Town University, Issue number2, P-2.

³Al-Quran, 72:18.

⁴Zakariya Mohammad Abdel -Hadey(2010), " The Masjid, yesterday & today," Center of International & Regional Studies," Qatar: George Town University, Issue number 2, P-4.

⁵ Imam Bukhari, (2002)"Sahih Bukhari", Mosoatul Hadith Sharif, hadith number 1190.

⁶ Imam Muslim, (2002)"Sahih Muslim", Mosoatul Hadith Sharif, hadith number 1162.

the difference of period between both Qiblas, Otherwise due to reward masjid-e- Nabawi has more reward than the masjid-e- Aqsa.

As concerned the importance of mosques in the Islamic world, they serve for prayers, for events during Islam's holiest month of Ramadan, as canters for education and information, places for social welfare. ⁷ (Editor, 2018). It is sorrowful thing that in present era, mostly people think it just place of worship. And after offering prayer, they do not sit or talk to others but actually, it is to be familiar and sharing knowledge and sharing personal issue for solution or for getting proposal for the solution.

For establishing mosque, it is considered as a reward able matter. As in another hadith, it has been encouraged to establish mosque: "Whoever establishes mosque for pleasure of God, God will establish house for him in paradise."⁸ (Ibne Majah, 2002). Actually, in this way, though the mosque, the public place can be created for the unity of people that is favorable to play societal role in the societies. And it is the main attribute of Muslim Ummah, which has been created for the welfare of people without considering that is familiar or alien.

In another hadith, it is narrated that offering congregational prayer has a reward more than twenty seven times than offering prayer lonely at home. ⁹ (Ibne Majah, 2002). This thing also encourages people to offer prayers in mosques for getting more reward. But sometime, because of unfavorable atmosphere, many people try to offer prayer in houses rather than in mosques, in such thing imam and the mosque committee and the person who does not offer in mosque, all these will be answerable about creation of suitable atmosphere.

It is narrated in Ibne Majah that offereing prayer in Masjid-e- Haram is one hundred thousand times more reward than common place. And to offer the prayer in Masjid-e- Aqsa five hundred times than a prayer of common place while Masjid Quba's prayer is equal to reward of umrah. ¹⁰ (Ibne Majah, 2002). Therefore, it may be stated that from the mosques, the highest reward of offering prayer is Masjid Haram, Then Masjid-e- Nabawi, Then Masjid-e- Aqsa and then common mosques of the earth. Besides this, Masjid Quba's prayer is equal to reward of Umrah.

In the Islamic history, it is written that in the mosque, Holy Prophet Peace upon Him was leading in prayer while maternal grandson played beside him. He did not disturb their playing while remain in the same position. This thing denotes that children should not be forbidden from mosques while in the condition of prayer, the respect of children has been taught us but in actual, by some people children are cursed on entering the mosques. But children should be encouraged because in this way, they will gain the lesson and habit of coming mosques and they will be able to learn from the elders.

From its earliest institutional inception, this was made clear. The prophet's mosque met the needs of the early religious community in addition to their political, economic & social ones. It is important to note however that as time progressed these functions have adopted and fluctuated in response to

⁷ Editor, (2018), "Importance of Mosques in the Islamic world", Dated February 3, 2018.

⁸ Ibne Majah,(2002) Mosoatul Hadith Sharif, sunan Ibne Majah, Hadith number 736.

⁹ Ibne Majah, (2002), Mosoatul Hadith Sharif, sunan Ibne Majah, Hadith number 789.

¹⁰ Ibne Majah, (2002) Mosoatul Hadith Sharif, sunan Ibne Majah, Hadith number 1406.

historical, political, economic & social realities. Thus the mosque has been a dynamic institution capable of adapting to the circumstances of the society in which it has operated.¹¹ (Hope Collins, 2011).

In another hadith, the sign of Day of Judgment is mentioned as, 'Day of Judgment will occur when people will pride on establishing mosques.'¹² (Ibne Majah, Mosaatul Hadith Sharif, 2002). It is sorrowful to note that now some people who give donation for mosque they pride on this donation within community.

Imam

The imams are leaders of the Islamic community or ummah after the prophet. Imam is most commonly used as title of "a worship leader of a mosque." In this context, imam may lead Islamic worship; services serve as community leaders and provide religious guidance.

Present era Economic condition of imams especially in villages is not so good. They have to depend on the people of village cooperation.

Qualities of Imam Masjid

- I. Authentic & genuine knowledge of the Shariah;
- II. Well Versed in the recitation of the Holy Quran;
- III. Praise worthy manner, moral & ethics;
- IV. Allah's Consciousness

Accountability & Islam

According to Islamic teachings, accountability in Islam requires every Muslim to ensure that their activities in the world are in line with Islamic rule. Man is accountable to God & his success in the hereafter depends on his performance in his life on the earth.¹³(Sulaiman, Siraj & Ibrahim, 2008). Therefore, imam and mosque committee should perform their duties with fear of God for the welfare of people by teaching Holy Quran & its translation for best understanding the divine's commandment.

Indeed, this concept constitutes a core message of Islam, which applies to the political, social & individual realm.¹⁴(Sulaiman, Siraj & Ibrahim, 2008). As through the mosque, all economic, social, political and administrative roles are fulfilled in true manner.

Al-Nahlawi (2005) stated that there are three prominent roles of mosques are as under:

An Educational Institution: The masjid was an educational center in which different activities took place. The mosque was first organized collective school for men, women& children in Arab history.¹⁵

¹¹ Hope Collins (2011), "The mosque as a political, economic & social institution 622-present, A capstone project, Renee Crown University, honors program & Syracuse University, Spring Volume 5(1), 2011, p-68.

¹² Ibne Majah, Mosaatul Hadith Sharif, (2002), sunan Ibne Majah, Hadith number, 739.

¹³Sulaiman, Siraj & Ibrahim (2008), "Internal control system on West Malaysia's state mosques, The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, 25(1).

¹⁴Sulaiman, Siraj & Ibrahim (2008), "Internal control system on West Malaysia's state mosques, The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, 25(1).

¹⁵ Al-Nahlawi, Abd- al Rahman (2005), "Usul Al- Tarbiyah Al- Islamiyah, (origin of Islamic Education), " Damascus: Dar Al-Fikr.

(Al-Nahlawi, Abd- al Rahman , 2005). Imam teaches the Holy Quran in tajweed as it must be recited. Besides this, imam guides people to unite the community by delivering universal message of Islamic teachings. Otherwise, the role of imam will be considered as doubtful if he arouses sectarianism and stress on adopting particular school of thought and neglecting other school of thought by his words and actions.

A Preventative Institution: Mosques can play an exceptional role in confronting extremism and terrorism by educating youth, filling their spare time with useful activities, dealing with their concerns, attending to their needs and having their queries answered by qualified imams.

An Administration Institution:

By the mosque & imam the personality development, political development, social development, organizational development and economic development may be promoted by punctuality, self-discipline & patience. Sharing of wealth, donation & zakat promotes the economic condition for devilmment basis.

Similarly organizational development can be done by the attributes of Taqwa, Akhlaq, Itqan & management training. Through the mosque, the lesson of equality and unity strengthens the nation. Therefore, decision making by groups guide people to the political development. Just like mosque management committees, in actual, it is the lesson to unite the community. Anyhow, in many mosque, the imam are khateeb are different while in some mosques imam is also performs the duties of khateeb as well as imam of mosque especially in villages. But in urban areas, in many mosques imams do imamat in five times a day at prayer time while khateeb do only Friday sermon or any other sermon when it is called. Therefore, they can play their roles positively for the unity and solidarity by uniting the area which mosque covers.

Similarly, the booty (maal-e-ghanimah) was also divided in the Masjid-e- Nabavi besides above mentioned services.

Difference of Superiority of mosques

In Sahih Bukhari, it is narrated as that, In Masjid-e- Nabavi, performing prayer is thousand times better than other mosques except Masjid-Haram, (Baitullah).¹⁶ (Bukhari imam, 2002). This is in actual the difference among the status of Masjid-e-Nabavi from other common mosques where ever they are built.

Entering in a mosque & Etiquettes

It is permissible for non-Muslims to enter the mosque especially if there is an advantage for dawah.¹⁷ (Editor,2021).

You can enter a mosque as a non-Muslim but you have to follow the mosque conduct.¹⁸ (Editor, 2021).

¹⁶ Bukhari imam (2002) Mosoatul Hadith, sahih Bukhari, Hadith number 1190.

¹⁷ Editor, (2021), "Non-Muslims entering a Mosque ", retrieved from www.islamweb.net, retrieved on January10, 2022.

¹⁸ Editor, (2021), "Can I enter a mosque as a non-Muslim?", retrieved from www.quora.com, retrieved on January 10, 2022.

In Hadith Sciences, it is narrated that, When any woman wants to take permission to enter in a mosque, nobody would forbid her.¹⁹ (Nisai Imam, 2004). In big cities, there is proper arrangement for ladies, especially upper portion or separate portion is fixed for women. But in mostly villages, such type of facility for women is not provided nor do they want to go in mosques to offer prayer just like men.

In another Hadith, it is narrated that, it has been forbidden to do business transaction in mosque, to do poetry & announce the lost things.²⁰ (Nisai Imam, 2004). The reason is that in these practices, there may be problem of dispute and these things are against the status of mosque.

In Masjid Nabawi, laws were made here. The Muslim army was given training. This was the camp from where armies were dispatched to warfronts. Delegations from foreign tribes & countries were received here. There first school or university of Islamic learning was located here. The prophet (P.B.U.H.) held his court here and heard and decided disputes. And the transgressors were kept in confinement here.²¹ (Karen Armstrong, 2007).

Role of Mosque in community Building & promoting good & checking wrong

It pools talents, resources and efforts for promoting good and checking wrong in society. It increases social and political capacity.²² (Editor, 2012). Mosques need to attract youth and children to make them feel at ease to participate learn, enjoy the environment of mosque and to treat them proper conduct with every one ignoring the relation and links or their religion or belonging to other school of thought.

Through the masjid, there is public place by which each one can know the others. Similarly they can do knowledge sharing with each other. This thing creates unity among the community of particular area. This thing may be fruitful for solving the problems of others. Furthermore, through proposal and suggestions many solutions of personal problems can be searched easily. Similarly, many social issue and many links may be found by meeting five times a day at mosque. By coming out of home for offering congregational prayer becomes useful for getting new knowledge, awareness about incident of particular locality or any doubted persons or suspicious activities may be supervised easily.

Imam should address the community about the problems of present time. And imam should advices the children young and old according to their ability and capability and the level of their understanding. If he will address in a same way to all, then his wordings will not be effective for the people. In this way, there will be danger of dispute as all the people have not same knowledge and same understanding about the issues and about the teachings of Islam. And it is also guided by Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) that we should talk to the people according to their status and level for best understanding. In present era, philosophers and psychiatrist also consider it favorable that effectiveness of teaching will be based on level of understanding. Similarly, it may be stated that as we talk with children just only short words and a polite manner, the child feels easy in its understanding. If we adopt rude or strict behavior, the child

¹⁹ Nisai Imam, (2004) Mosoatul Hadith Saharif, Sunan Nisai, Hadith number 692.

²⁰ Nisai Imam, (2004) Mosoatul Hadith Saharif, Sunan Nisai, Hadith number 718.

²¹ Karen Armstrong, (2007), " Muhammad & Prophet for our time," New York, N.Y: Harper Collins, p-102.

²² Editor, (2012), "The role of mosque in community building & promoting good & checking wrong", retrieved from www.musharrafhussain.com, dated 28th November, 2012.

will not only dislike this thing but he will become away from us besides any response about our talk. Therefore, imam should behave in a polite manner with the people so that people could follow him and they did not feel shyness in asking any issues relating to their personal lives. In this way, there will be atmosphere of brotherhood and unity and gaining knowledge will be created among the community. And accumulation of communities in same manners will be useful for the society. And this thing also becomes favorable for patriotism that stimulates the unity and solidarity of nation.

Mosques & National Solidarity

Mosques need to be equipped with enough resources & man power in order to function more actively within society. More crucially, there is a vital need to empower the imams with full knowledge & awareness of their surrounding and need to prove then with training and education needed to undertake their influential roles within society. It is the duty of imam that he should present such speech by which unity and solidarity may increase. Therefore, in Friday sermon, imam and khateeb should talk on the issues by which patriotism among the Muslims could be enhanced.

In promoting solidarity, the mosque and the imam has key position because imam should avoid talking such issues by which differences among the people might increase. This can be done with proper behavior.

All mosques when built and opened should be publically owned & based on a system of community control. Defined mosque areas which the mosque is supposed to serve, would elect the mosque committee, run the mosque & define & praise the work of imam. The case for another mosque in the area should be very carefully made. The use of a loud speaker should be carefully regulate for azaan only & loud enough only to cover the immediate mosque area.²³ (Imran Mahmud, Shahriar Rawshon & M.D. Jahidur Rahman, 2011)

Religious institutions provide many services: instruction about Universal and transcendental truths; opportunities for ritual & worship; guidance about how to lead an ethical & satisfying life; care for the poor, the sick, the orphaned & the alien; facilities for promoting fellowship and a sense of community; and education.²⁴ (Ann- Sophie Vanderberghe, 2019).

Role of Mosques in Present Era

The key challenge of managing mosques today is to ensure efficient & proper financial management practices.²⁵ (Intan Salwani Mohamed, Noor Hidayah Abdul Aziz & et al. 2014). As in many villages, there is no proper arrangement for income of imam and masjid expenditures. Mostly people avoid donating or cooperating in paying funds or bills. This is why imam has to depend upon the opinion of those people who cooperate in payment of bills of mosques. Furthermore, it is nature of some people that they go to mosque just in dirty or simple clothes but when they go to function or go to duty or

²³ Imran Mahmud, Shahriar Rawshon & M.D. Jahidur Rahman (2011), "Role of mosque for Human Resource Development," *I.U.C. Studies*, Vol. 9, pp-279-292.

²⁴ Ann- Sophie Vanderberghe (2019), "Regulating the relationship between state & religion", Volume 5, Issue 5, pp43-57.

²⁵ Intan Salwani Mohamed, Noor Hidayah Abdul Aziz & et al. (2014), "Mosques Fund Management Issue on accountability & Internal Control, *Social & Behavioral Sciences*, Number 145, P. 190.

bazar they wear special dress. This is not true as in mosque and in the condition of offering prayer, people are standing in front of God so they should try to adorn themselves as according to hadith mosques are the best places than any other places. This situation resembles just like women's activities of preparation at the time of going to market. As before, going to market, they do make up while they remain at home without make up and without proper dress. But wives should adorn for their husbands but they adorn for others in markets. This means both genders' actions are against the Islamic teachings.

In many mosques, rather than developing unity among Muslims, sectarianism is spread by delivering views of particular school of thought. And sometimes, in mosque of one school of thought does not allow preaching other school of thought. And in some mosques, it is written about the particular school of thought furthermore, it is mentioned no other school of thought is allowed to preach here. This type of behavior denotes that followers of Islam, not only divided but they have intolerant attitudes within the followers of Islam.

Concluding Remarks

In nutshell, if the mosques are to attain the same unique role they had in the past, the mosque must be treated as a unique institution. The imam and the members of mosque committee should not talk on such topics or issues by which there is danger to spread sectarianism among the Muslims of that particular area. It is sorrowful to note that now mosques are built fascinated with concrete material but now the people who offer prayers, have not concrete and solid belief. There are many people who comes mosque just for Friday prayer and you may find such persons who only come once or twice a year. This is why no mosques can be seen in every area of Muslim community but there will very few people who offer prayers regularly especially in the mosques. And imam masjid and khateeb should present sermons about basic teachings of Islam so that unity and solidarity might be promoted. Through the mosque the needy and orphan people of that particular area can be helped by the active role of mosque committee by requesting and encouraging the wealthy people of that particular area. About this, imam can play active role in uniting the people for cooperation and collection of donations.

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