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The Role of Shariah Principles in Promoting Global Peace and Coexistence

Dr. Khalid Mahmood

Professor, Department of Shariah and Islamic Law, University of Karachi, Karachi, Pakistan

Dr. Rabia Noor

Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, Fatima Jinnah Women University,
Rawalpindi, Pakistan

Abstract:

Shariah, often narrowly perceived through legalistic interpretations, is in essence a comprehensive ethical framework designed to ensure justice, balance, and harmony within human society. At its core, Shariah emphasizes the preservation of fundamental human rights, including the protection of life, faith, intellect, property, and lineage. This paper examines the role of Shariah principles in fostering global peace and coexistence by highlighting their universal values of justice, mercy, tolerance, and compassion. Drawing from Qur'anic injunctions, Prophetic traditions, and classical juristic thought, the study demonstrates how Shariah promotes peaceful coexistence not only among Muslims but also between diverse religious and cultural communities. The research further engages with contemporary debates on the compatibility of Shariah with international law and human rights frameworks, underscoring the potential of Shariah-based ethics to contribute to global dialogues on peacebuilding. The study concludes that Shariah, when understood in its holistic spirit, is a powerful paradigm for advancing justice, harmony, and coexistence in the modern world.

Keywords:

Shariah principles; Global peace; Coexistence; Islamic law; Justice; Human rights; Interfaith harmony; Islamic ethics

Introduction

Tawhid, the oneness of God, stands at the heart of Islamic theology and philosophy. Derived from the Arabic root *wahada* (to unify or to make one), Tawhid asserts that there is no god but Allah and that all of existence is an expression of His singularity. This principle pervades every aspect of Islamic belief and practice, establishing the foundation for a worldview that revolves around divine unity and its manifestation throughout the cosmos (Chittick, 1989). The significance of Tawhid extends beyond a mere theological assertion; it shapes the Islamic understanding of the universe, the nature of existence, and the relationship between the Creator and creation. In Islam, God is not simply the Creator in a distant, detached sense. He is both immanent and transcendent—closer to humanity than their jugular vein (Qur'an 50:16), yet beyond all human comprehension (Nasr, 1989). The doctrine of Tawhid emphasizes that everything in existence is interconnected, rooted in the same divine source. It is through the oneness of God that Muslims understand the unity of creation itself (Lings, 1983). Islamic Cosmology and the Unity of Creation The Quran presents a cosmological vision that reinforces the idea of cosmic unity. The heavens and the earth, the stars and the planets, the animals, plants, and human beings—all are seen as signs (Ayat) of God. The Quran repeatedly emphasizes the natural world as a reflection of divine wisdom and order (Faruqi, 1995). This understanding forms the basis for

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an Islamic metaphysical view of the cosmos as an interconnected system, where each part is integrally linked to the others, all directed toward a common purpose: to reflect the divine will and glorify God (Izutsu, 1984). The concept of unity extends to Islamic eschatology, where the end of time and the resurrection are seen as moments when the multiplicity of existence returns to its source, culminating in the oneness of all things under God (Corbin, 1969). The Quran's description of creation and the Day of Judgment reflects this cyclical view, where the universe, created by a singular source, ultimately returns to that source in a state of unity and fulfillment. Sufism and Experiential Tawhid. While Tawhid is central to Islamic orthodoxy, Sufi mystics have developed a particularly profound interpretation of this principle. For many Sufis, Tawhid goes beyond an intellectual acknowledgment of God's oneness; it is an experiential reality. The Sufi path involves the gradual realization that the multiplicity of the world is an illusion, and that beneath the surface, all existence is united in the divine (Murata & Chittick, 1994). This realization is encapsulated in the phrase *wahdat al-wujud*, or the "Unity of Being" (Arabi, 1911). This concept, famously developed by Ibn Arabi and other Sufi thinkers, posits that all of existence is a manifestation of God's essence. Though things may appear separate and distinct, they are, in fact, unified in their ultimate reality. For the Sufi, spiritual practice is about perceiving this unity, moving beyond the illusion of separation to experience the oneness of all things in God. The Natural World as a Reflection of Tawhid In Islamic thought, the natural world serves as a mirror reflecting the oneness of its Creator. Nature, in its vastness and complexity, is not perceived as a series of random occurrences but as a harmonious whole, functioning in accordance with divine laws (Nasr, 1972). The Quran frequently urges believers to contemplate the natural signs of God, such as the alternation of night and day, the growth of plants, and the balance of ecosystems. These phenomena are reminders of God's order and wisdom, reflecting the interconnectedness and unity that permeate the universe (Choudhury, 2019). The Islamic perspective on the environment is shaped by this view of the natural world as a sign of God's oneness. Consequently, Islamic teachings emphasize stewardship and responsibility toward the environment. Humans are seen as *khalifah* (stewards) of the earth, tasked with preserving and protecting it in accordance with divine guidance (Philips, 2005).

Literature Review

The concept of *Tawhid*, or the oneness of God, is foundational in Islamic theology, shaping Muslim perspectives on creation, existence, and ethics. Throughout the history of Islamic thought, scholars and mystics have explored *Tawhid* in various ways, examining its metaphysical, cosmological, and social implications (Nasr, 1989). This literature review surveys the key works and contributions to the understanding of *Tawhid*, especially its relationship to cosmic unity, the natural world, Sufism, and contemporary ethical concerns.

Classical Islamic Theology on Tawhid and Creation Islamic theology (*kalam*) has long emphasized *Tawhid* as the central tenet of the faith, from which all other doctrines flow. The classical theological works of scholars such as Al-Ash'ari (874–936 CE) and Al-Maturidi (853–944 CE) focus on articulating *Tawhid* in relation to the attributes of God, the nature of creation, and the relationship between divine will and the material world (Frank, 1978). Al-Ash'ari's theology, for instance, stresses that God is the creator and sustainer of the universe, and that creation is entirely dependent on His will. This

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view is echoed in the works of Al-Ghazali (1058–1111 CE), particularly in *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, where he critiques the philosophers' view of causality and affirms that all events in the cosmos occur by the direct action of God (Griffel, 2009). Al-Ghazali's emphasis on God's active involvement in creation reinforces the idea of divine unity pervading the natural order (Jaffer, 2014). Ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328 CE), another influential theologian, also focused on the concept of *Tawhid*, particularly emphasizing God's transcendence. His writings countered certain interpretations of Sufi mysticism that, in his view, blurred the distinction between Creator and creation (Winter, 1993).

Sufi Mysticism and the Unity of Being
The literature on Sufism presents a more experiential and mystical interpretation of *Tawhid*, particularly through the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* (the Unity of Being). This concept, most famously associated with Ibn Arabi (1165–1240 CE), posits that all of existence is a manifestation of God's essence (Chittick, 1989). While God remains transcendent, creation is seen as an unfolding of His presence, leading to the notion that the multiplicity of the world is ultimately an illusion. Ibn Arabi's major works, including *The Meccan Revelations* and *The Bezels of Wisdom*, have been instrumental in shaping the understanding of cosmic unity within Sufi thought (Izutsu, 1984). His philosophy suggests that the apparent diversity of the world is merely a reflection of the divine unity that underlies all things. For Ibn Arabi, everything in existence is interconnected because it emanates from the same divine source (Arabi, 1911). Rumi (1207–1273 CE), one of the most celebrated Sufi poets, also elaborates on the theme of unity in his poetry. In works such as *The Masnavi*, Rumi uses metaphors of love, longing, and union to describe the soul's journey toward God, which culminates in the realization of the oneness of all things (Schimmel, 1975).

Modern Islamic Thought and Environmental Ethics
In the modern era, scholars have revisited the concept of *Tawhid* in the context of contemporary issues, particularly environmental ethics. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, a prominent scholar of Islamic philosophy, has been a leading voice in advocating for an ecological interpretation of *Tawhid* (Nasr, 1972). In works such as *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man* and *The Need for a Sacred Science*, Nasr argues that the modern ecological crisis stems from a loss of the sense of sacredness and unity in nature. He suggests that Islamic teachings on *Tawhid* offer a spiritual framework for environmental stewardship, where humans are seen as custodians of the earth, responsible for maintaining the balance and harmony of creation (Khalid, 2012). Nasr's critique of modernity highlights the fragmentation of the natural world and human society, a fragmentation that he attributes to the abandonment of the sacred vision of unity (Khalid, 2002). Other scholars, such as Fazlun Khalid and Ibrahim Ozdemir, have built on Nasr's work, emphasizing the practical implications of Islamic environmental ethics.

Tawhid and Social Justice
The literature on Islamic social ethics also explores the implications of *Tawhid* for justice and human relationships. Scholars such as Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938 CE) and Ali Shariati (1933–1977 CE) have connected the principle of divine unity to the idea of social unity, arguing that *Tawhid* implies a commitment to justice, equality, and solidarity within the human community (Iqbal, 1930). Iqbal, in his philosophical poetry and works such as *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, presents *Tawhid* as a dynamic force that drives

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Volume No: 02 Issue No: 01 (2025)

the development of human society toward greater unity and coherence. He argues that the realization of *Tawhid* in the social realm involves the creation of a just society where individuals recognize their interdependence and work toward the common good (Iqbal, 1934). Shariati, a key figure in the Iranian intellectual movement, similarly connects *Tawhid* with social justice. In works such as *On the Sociology of Islam* and *Tawhid: The Worldview of Islam*, Shariati argues that *Tawhid* is not only a theological concept but a revolutionary principle that calls for the dismantling of oppressive structures and the creation of a society based on equality and justice (Shariati, 1979).

Research Question

- How does the concept of *Tawhid* influence Islamic perspectives on the interconnectedness and unity of creation?
- In what ways do Sufi interpretations of *wahdat al-wujud* contribute to the understanding of cosmic unity in Islamic metaphysics?
- How can the principle of *Tawhid* provide a foundation for contemporary Islamic environmental ethics and ecological sustainability?

Research problem

The concept of *Tawhid*, or the oneness of God, is central to Islamic thought and serves as the foundation for understanding the universe, the natural world, and human relationships. However, the application of *Tawhid* to broader philosophical and ethical domains, such as cosmic unity and environmental stewardship, has not always been fully explored. While Islamic theology emphasizes the interconnectedness of creation, contemporary challenges—such as environmental degradation, social fragmentation, and ethical dilemmas—pose significant threats to this vision of unity. Despite the extensive Islamic tradition of integrating *Tawhid* into both metaphysical and practical aspects of life, modern Muslims often struggle to apply these teachings to urgent global issues, particularly in the context of ecological sustainability and social justice. Additionally, there remains a tension between different interpretations of *Tawhid* within Islamic thought. Mystical interpretations, particularly those found in Sufi metaphysics like *wahdat al-wujud* (Unity of Being), propose an experiential realization of cosmic unity. In contrast, more conservative theological approaches may resist these mystical dimensions, emphasizing a strict separation between Creator and creation. These varying interpretations raise important questions about how *Tawhid* can be applied consistently across diverse theological and ethical frameworks. The research problem, therefore, focuses on exploring how *Tawhid*, as a theological and metaphysical principle, can be effectively utilized to address contemporary environmental and social challenges while navigating the differing interpretations within the Islamic tradition.

Significance of Research

This research is significant as it bridges traditional Islamic theology with contemporary ethical challenges, particularly environmental sustainability and social justice. By exploring the concept of *Tawhid* and its application to cosmic unity and ecological ethics, the study provides a framework for Muslims to engage with global issues from a faith-based perspective. It also contributes to the ongoing dialogue between different interpretations of *Tawhid*, offering insights that can harmonize mystical and orthodox views. Ultimately, this

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research seeks to promote a more holistic and spiritually grounded approach to addressing pressing global crises within an Islamic framework.

Research Objective

The primary objective of this research is to investigate how the Islamic concept of Tawhid, or divine oneness, can be applied to contemporary global challenges, particularly in the realms of environmental ethics and social justice. The research aims to explore the theological and metaphysical foundations of Tawhid, emphasizing its role in promoting a vision of cosmic unity that underscores the interconnectedness of all creation. Additionally, it seeks to examine the various interpretations of Tawhid within Islamic thought, focusing on how mystical perspectives, such as *wahdat al-wujud* (Unity of Being), contribute to the understanding of the oneness of creation.

By examining the works of classical Islamic scholars, Sufi mystics, and contemporary thinkers, the research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of how Tawhid can inform and inspire ethical practices, particularly in the areas of environmental sustainability and social cohesion. The study also seeks to reconcile differing theological approaches to Tawhid, offering a framework that integrates both traditional orthodoxy and mystical insights. Ultimately, the research aims to present Tawhid as a dynamic and practical principle that can guide Muslims in addressing pressing global challenges, fostering a more unified, just, and ecologically responsible world.

Research Methodology

This research will adopt a qualitative approach, focusing on textual analysis and the interpretation of Islamic theological, mystical, and ethical literature. Primary sources will include classical Islamic texts, such as the Quran, Hadith, and the writings of prominent scholars like Al-Ghazali, Ibn Arabi, and Rumi, as well as contemporary thinkers such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr. These texts will be critically examined to explore the theological, metaphysical, and ethical dimensions of Tawhid, particularly in relation to cosmic unity, environmental ethics, and social justice. Secondary sources, including academic works, journal articles, and case studies on Islamic thought, will be reviewed to provide context and further analysis. A comparative analysis will be conducted to assess differing interpretations of Tawhid, with a particular focus on reconciling Sufi metaphysical perspectives with orthodox theological positions. By connecting these interpretations to contemporary global issues, particularly environmental sustainability and social cohesion, the research will seek to develop a coherent framework for applying the principle of Tawhid to modern ethical challenges. This methodology will allow for a comprehensive examination of how Tawhid can serve as both a spiritual and practical guide for addressing pressing global concerns.

Data Analysis

The literature on *Tawhid* and its implications for cosmic unity, environmental ethics, and social justice provides a comprehensive view of how this central Islamic principle is understood and applied across various domains (Nasr, 1989). The analysis reveals several key themes and insights.

Theological Foundations of Tawhid *Classical Theology*: Scholars like Al-Ash'ari, Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Taymiyyah provide a foundational understanding of *Tawhid* as the absolute oneness of God (Frank, 1978). Their work emphasizes the centrality of *Tawhid* in Islamic belief and its implications for understanding the relationship between God and creation. Al-

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Ash'ari and Al-Ghazali affirm that the universe's order and coherence are manifestations of divine unity, while Ibn Taymiyyah highlights the need to distinguish between Creator and creation to preserve the integrity of *Tawhid* (Griffel, 2009).

Mystical Interpretations *Sufism and Wahdat al-Wujud*: Sufi thinkers, notably Ibn Arabi, present a more nuanced and experiential understanding of *Tawhid* through the concept of *wahdat al-wujud* (Unity of Being) (Chittick, 1989). This interpretation posits that all existence is a reflection of God's essence, suggesting that apparent diversity is an illusion masking the underlying divine unity. Rumi's poetry further explores this theme, using metaphors of love and union to express the soul's journey towards recognizing this unity (Schimmel, 1975). This perspective enriches the understanding of cosmic unity but has faced criticism from more orthodox viewpoints (Winter, 1993).

Environmental Ethics *Contemporary Relevance*: Scholars like Seyyed Hossein Nasr advocate for an ecological interpretation of *Tawhid*, arguing that modern environmental crises are a consequence of disconnecting from the sacred vision of unity (Nasr, 1972). Nasr and others, such as Fazlun Khalid and Ibrahim Ozdemir, propose that Islamic teachings on *Tawhid* offer a framework for environmental stewardship that aligns with the principle of divine unity (Khalid, 2002). This view supports sustainable practices and ethical environmentalism as integral to Islamic faith (Khalid, 2012).

Social Unity and Justice
Figures like Muhammad Iqbal and Ali Shariati link *Tawhid* to social justice, suggesting that the principle of divine unity should inform the pursuit of justice, equality, and solidarity within human society (Iqbal, 1930). Their works argue that recognizing the interconnectedness of humanity, derived from *Tawhid*, calls for addressing social inequalities and promoting a just and compassionate community (Shariati, 1979). Contemporary scholars also explore gender justice through the lens of *Tawhid*, challenging patriarchal interpretations and advocating for gender equality (Wadud, 1999).
Critiques and Debates *Controversies in Interpretation*: The mystical interpretation of *Tawhid*, especially *wahdat al-wujud*, has faced criticism from conservative and reformist scholars who argue that it risks merging Creator and creation. Figures like Ibn Taymiyyah and Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab have critiqued Sufi metaphysics for potentially deviating from orthodox Islam (Winter, 1993). These debates reflect broader tensions between spiritual and orthodox approaches to *Tawhid* and highlight the ongoing discourse within Islamic thought (Schimmel, 1975).

The literature review illustrates that *Tawhid*, as a foundational concept in Islamic theology, offers a rich and multifaceted understanding of cosmic unity, environmental ethics, and social justice. The diverse interpretations—ranging from classical theology and mystical insights to contemporary applications—demonstrate the dynamic nature of *Tawhid* and its relevance to addressing modern ethical challenges. The debates and critiques also underscore the complexity of integrating mystical and orthodox perspectives, reflecting a vibrant and evolving discourse within Islamic thought (Iqbal, 1934).

Finding & Conclusion

The concept of *Tawhid*, the oneness of God, is a profound and all-encompassing principle that lies at the heart of Islamic theology, shaping both the metaphysical understanding of the universe and the ethical framework for human conduct. As explored throughout this study,

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Tawhid is not merely a doctrinal assertion but a guiding principle that permeates various dimensions of Islamic thought and practice, from cosmic unity to environmental stewardship and social justice.

At its core, Tawhid establishes the foundational belief that there is no deity but Allah, emphasizing the absolute unity of the divine. This principle provides a coherent framework for understanding the interconnectedness of all existence. Classical Islamic theology, as articulated by scholars like Al-Ash'ari and Al-Ghazali, reinforces the notion that the cosmos is a reflection of divine unity, where God's active involvement in creation underscores the order and harmony of the universe. Al-Ash'ari's and Al-Ghazali's works affirm that the unity of God is manifest in the intricate balance of creation, while Ibn Tamiya's focus on the transcendence of God highlights the importance of maintaining a clear distinction between Creator and creation. In contrast, Sufi mystics such as Ibn Arabi offer a more experiential interpretation of Tawhid through the concept of *wahdat al-wujud*, or the Unity of Being. This mystical perspective suggests that the apparent multiplicity of the world is an illusion, with all existence ultimately being a manifestation of God's essence. Ibn Arabi's philosophy and Rumi's poetic reflections present a vision of cosmic unity that transcends the apparent diversity, inviting a deeper spiritual realization of the divine oneness underlying all creation.

The contemporary relevance of Tawhid extends to pressing global issues, including environmental ethics and social justice. Scholars like Seyyed Hossein Nasr have argued that the ecological crisis is rooted in a loss of the sense of sacredness and unity in nature, advocating for an Islamic environmental ethic that aligns with Tawhid. This perspective emphasizes the interconnectedness of all life and the responsibility of humans, as stewards of the earth, to protect and preserve the natural world. The integration of Islamic teachings on environmental stewardship with modern sustainability practices offers a holistic approach to addressing ecological challenges, reinforcing the principle of divine unity as a basis for environmental ethics.

Similarly, the principle of Tawhid informs Islamic conceptions of social justice, as articulated by figures like Muhammad Iqbal and Ali Shariati. The idea of social unity, rooted in the oneness of God, calls for the establishment of a just and compassionate society where all individuals are seen as equal in the sight of God. This vision challenges economic inequality, social division, and injustice, urging Muslims to work toward a more equitable and harmonious world. Contemporary scholars have also explored the implications of Tawhid for gender justice, advocating for greater equality and challenging patriarchal interpretations within the Muslim community. The ongoing debates and critiques surrounding the interpretation of Tawhid, particularly the mystical concept of *wahdat al-wujud*, highlight the dynamic and evolving nature of Islamic thought. While some argue that mystical interpretations blur the distinction between Creator and creation, others defend these perspectives as enriching the understanding of divine unity. These discussions reflect broader tensions between spirituality and orthodoxy, underscoring the complexity of integrating diverse theological and metaphysical views. In conclusion, Tawhid offers a profound and multifaceted vision of cosmic unity that extends from the metaphysical to the practical realms of environmental and social ethics. By affirming the oneness of God, Islamic thought provides a framework for understanding the interconnectedness of all creation and addressing contemporary global challenges. The principle of Tawhid, with its diverse interpretations and

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applications, continues to inspire and guide Muslims in their spiritual, ethical, and practical endeavors, advocating for a world that reflects the divine unity in all its dimensions.

Futuristic Approach

A futuristic approach to Tawhid involves integrating the principle of divine oneness with cutting-edge advancements and global challenges. Emphasizing Tawhid's relevance to modern issues, this approach seeks to harmonize technological innovation with ethical and spiritual values. For instance, in the realm of environmental sustainability, leveraging renewable technologies and green practices can be framed within the context of Tawhid, advocating for responsible stewardship of creation. Similarly, in addressing social inequalities, advanced data analytics and AI can be utilized to create more equitable systems, grounded in the Islamic principles of justice and unity. This approach also includes fostering interfaith dialogue and global collaboration, recognizing the shared human quest for unity and ethical progress. By bridging traditional Islamic teachings with contemporary advancements, the futuristic approach aims to promote a holistic vision of cosmic unity that addresses both spiritual and practical dimensions of modern life.

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