Principles of Conflict Resolution: A Quranic Perspective

Khalil ur Rahman
Assistant Professorin Sociology, Department of Political Science & Sociology,
Hazara University Mansehra
Phone: +923459155365, Fax: 0997-414165
Email: khalilskt@gmail.com

Dr. Muhammad Fayaz
Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic & religious Studies, Hazara
University Mansehra

Abstract

The pre-Islamic era especially the Arab society was plagued by blood feuds, conflict and violence. People used to resolve conflicts with unrestricted power and dominance therefore Allah has revealed the Holy Quran to guide humanity to resolve conflicts with justice, equality and peace. The universal principles and values mentioned by Allah in the Holy Quran were adopted by various judicial systems across cultures and societies in order to avoid conflict and minimise the negative outcomes of conflicts. This article was organized to document those verses and texts directly narrated by Allah in the Holy Qur'an regarding conflict and conflict resolution mechanisms. The study was based on secondary method of research by quoting only those narrations and texts of the Holy Quran which deals with conflict and conflict resolution in human society. This study found that Allah has narrated that conflict is always harmful which weakens the morale and dilute the social and moral strength of the individual, group and communities. Moreover, Quran urges to avoid conflict, social rifts, and dissension and want us to remain in love, peace, brotherhood and avoid conflict and confrontation. Furthermore, Quran not only urges for peace but also suggest practical ways and means how to effectively deal with any given conflicting situation. It is concluded from the study that Quran negates fundamentalist, rigid and violent approaches of conflict resolution while approves mediation, negotiation and reconciliation as the best possible conflict resolution mechanisms.

Key words: Conflict, Society, Quran, Peace, Reconciliation

Introduction

i.   The word conflict is originated from a Latin word"confligere" the English translation of which is smashing or collision together[1]. Scholars and researchers have defined conflict variously and argued that conflict might be having negative and positive connotation but perhaps the

concept is mostly taken in negative connotation by popularizing the idea that two physical objects cannot be accommodated in a single space until a new location or space is created [2].Considering the negative dimensions, conflict is a form of a struggle or competition between individuals, groups or parties having contrasting needs, ideas, beliefs, goals and values. From a broader perspective, conflict depicts the incompatibility of subject position[3].This definition only explains the element of opposition and do not explain the nature and level of conflict in the first instance that whether this incompatibilities found at the level of individuals, groups, or larger society. Moreover, it also does not explain whether the conflict is based on ideological ground or having any material basis[4]. Given the other dimension, conflict has been portrayed as negative experience nevertheless; it is neither is positive or negative in itself. It could have a great intensity and potential for destruction, or much creativity and certain other constructive outcomes[5].

As a matter of fact, conflict is always been characterized by violence, and is considered as a protracted series of encounters or a short term clash between opposing groups or parties. It is mostly comprised of mutually exclusive desires, impulses, tendencies, controversies and disagreements[6]. Furthermore, conflict is branded by hostility, and a discord of action and feelings of individuals and groups. Being complex phenomena, conflict is human interaction which comprised of clash, scuffle, war, disagreements, deadlock, obliteration, fear, quarrel, debate, hate, and wrongdoing. The founder and champion of conflict and peace studies "Galtung" have put forward a comprehensive definition of conflict which involves contradiction, attitudes, and behaviour. Other scholars have also defined conflict but the most relevant definition in the context of this study is as an incongruity of purpose, ideals, and standards between two or more individuals, groups, or parties in their relationships combined with attempts to have power over the hostile position of one another. It is an interaction between two or more individuals, parties or groups within which each one recognize and perceives the other goals, interests and behaviour as adverse to its own benefits. Furthermore, these disagreements are the real or perceived inappropriateness of goals between the opposing parties. Considering all the definitions and explanation, we conclude that conflict is a social situation in which at least two parties or actors struggle to achieve their own objectives simultaneously which is often difficult for the parties to arrive a suitable solution.

Theoretical Perspective on Conflict

Major exponents from various fields of social sciences particularly sociology, economics and political science have developed theoretical and grand level assumptions about the nature, causes and forms of conflict. Among them, Karl

Marx, a social philosopher has asserted that the extent of unfairness in the allocation of the available resources creates innate conflicts among different social classes in society. His theoretical assertion explains the phenomena of conflict from a very broader perspective as he viewed that more the level and degree of inequality in the distribution of the scarce resources in the society, the greater will be the chances of conflict between the upper and lower social classes. He further argues that the more the subordinates, powerless and the exploited ones are aware about their social existence the more likely they will question the legitimacy of the superior classes. Marx opined that ideology and leadership are very important in the unification of the poor class which further intensify the process of social polarisation among social classes. The more the polarisation among the classes, the intensive and violent will be the conflict and thus there will be more chances of structural changes in the system.

Likewise, Max Weber, another exponent of the conflict model who sees that conflict among groups of people having differential authority in any given system is more likely to be occurred when the power of the leader is so compelling that can mobilise bitterness among his subordinates. He argues that when those influential leaders are successful in mobilising the public, pressures mount to replace the existing system through new rules and administration. Another major exponents of conflict theory is that of Ralf Dahrendorf who posits that conflict in any given society or social system is functional because it determines the social goals. He outlined two types of conflict exogenous and endogenous conflict. The endogenous conflict is generated within a system, organization or society while exogenous conflict comes from the outward environment and guided from the external factor[7]. Furthermore, Tolcot Parson,[8] a structural functionalist theorist projected the notion that change in any system, organization or institution leads towards social rift and conflict which destabilised the organization and institutions. He further asserted that conflict in any given system is dysfunctional, abnormal and a disease for the smooth functioning of the system. He posited that such changes and conflict in the system must be addressed in such a manner to maintain the social equilibrium and stability in the system.

Nature and Types of Conflict

The phenomena of conflict is very complex because of the complexity and variation involved in human interaction[9].The multidimensional phenomena of conflict can be easily understood if we can fully understand the nature, modes and forms of conflict in various context. At the basis of analysis, conflict arises because of the variance in the attributes of human personalities, and diversification in society, cultures, rituals and traditions. It is a social product of diversity in ideas, beliefs, values, attitudes and perceptions. Conflict can be occurred at micro level such as individuals, social groups, vested interest groups,

and at macro level including social groups, classes, ethnicities, states and nations[10]. Furthermore, verities and types of conflict have also been explained in various academic fields like psychology, sociology and political science. For instance, Psychology is mostly concerned with intra personal conflict; sociology is mainly focusing on inter-personal, intra group or intra-unit conflict while political science has identified inter-ethnic, intrastate on international conflict. From psychological point of view, intra-personal conflict is a state of mind of an individual shaped by his own way of thinking which is mostly shaped by the situation and social circumstances around that individual. In such circumstances, individual are experiencing anger, frustration, depression, anxiety, aggression, erratic behaviour and in worse cases tendencies of committing a suicide. This is a type of a conflict in which is described as "a man against himself"[11].[12]. Another popular form and types of conflict is that of inter personal conflict which is also termed as man against man. It is mostly occurs between two or more individuals found in more subtle opposition against each other [[13]]. This type of conflict may be found in more subtle form like exchange of words, giving blows, robbery or gunfight which can also be termed as explicit hostility.

Other popular types of conflict are that of man against society or system which often occurred when a man challenges a man-made institution or practice. This may include against the institution of slavery, prostitution, child and other human right abuses and corruption. Furthermore, another conflict is man against nature which shows a state of contention between man and environment including forces of nature such as global warming climatic changes, rainstorm, deforestation, killing the insects etc within which a man combated with the environment and nature to overcome its dangers[14]. Another form of conflict is that of family conflict which is described by sociologists raised in the family with respect to certain roles, obligations and expectations. It is generally aroused between close kin relatives motivated by factors such as rudeness, seniority, laziness, property, claims inheritance and other family disputes. Another popular form of conflict is intergroup conflict which often occurs between two or more individuals, religious group, ethnic groups, communities or interest groups.

Possible Negative and Positive Outcomes of Conflict

Though, people tend to view conflict as a negative occurrence, yet it has both positive as well as negative consequences depend upon the situation, time and place. Considering the other dimensions, conflict can also lead towards certain possible positive outcomes. Pruitt and robin (2003)[15]has outlined the positive possible outcomes of social conflict.

> Conflict depicts the interpersonal, group and community dynamics, reflects its interests and realities and also may contribute to social changes. In any given conflicting situation, the process ultimately leads towards reconciliation and thus benefitting both the parties by serving

the needs through enhancement of the relationships between the conflicting parties. Furthermore, it also improves the unity of the concerned groups because it increases the intra-group cooperation.

Weeks (1992), a famous writer in conflict studies have outlined about the positive outcomes of conflict as

> Conflict is perhaps a possible source of personal growth and social transformation which is also helpful in creating some opportunities for individuals to cope with some diversified social situation and circumstances. It also leads towards the creation of alternative thinking to utilize the differences of our opinion for our mutual growth.

Besides, Dean Pruitt and Jeffery have outlined the negative consequences of conflict as

> Conflict leads towards distraction among individual from their primary goals and also leads towards wasting their valuable time and resources. It also harms the physical health and psychological comfort and in some instances leads to traumatic conditions for the individuals involved and also for the coming generation.

Resolution of Conflict

The concept of conflict resolution is open to be interpreted in different ways. It is generally referred to certain set of procedures, methods and modalities for eradicating the sources of conflict or to mitigate the possible hazardous impact of the ongoing conflict. From one perspective, conflict resolution may be looked as a process that resolve or settle a dispute with such a modus operandi which include aggression and rivalry. Alternatively, it may be also a non-violent procedure that settles the disputes through conciliation among disputants or with the involvement of third parties who either facilitate or enforce a settlement or resolution. Furthermore, conflict resolution mechanisms are many and can be ranging from collaborative, participatory, informal mechanisms including mediation, reconciliation, and negotiation. It may also be adversarial in nature often legally binding that impose decision on concerned individuals or parties that often arise from institutions such as the courts and tribunals[16][1.] Conflict resolution mechanism normally works in phases including mechanisms of conflict prevention, reduction in the intensity of conflict and the complete resolution of conflict[17]. The term conflict resolution mechanism is often viewed interchangeably with conflict settlement or management, dispute resolution, alternative dispute mechanisms and conflict mediation.

As mentioned earlier that because of universality, ubiquity and complexity of the phenomena, nature, causes and types of conflict are not the same in time and

places. Owing to these facts, only one method is not sufficient to address conflict everywhere in all times. Conflict needs some specialised techniques and methods to be resolved effectively therefore we witnessed that a number of conflict resolution procedures have been introduced.

Considering all the dispute settlement techniques, it has been commonly noted that cooperation and coercion are the two facets in the dispute settlement process. Generally, the means and ways based on which individuals, groups, and communities identify and act in response to the conflicting situation are the conflicting viewpoints. The most commonly noted attributes in conflict resolution are assertive, cooperativeness, dominating/competing, accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, compromising, avoidance/denial, and confrontation/fighting. We reviewed that the most vitally advocated techniques and mechanisms are the peaceful settlement of disputes including toleration, prevention, negotiation, conciliation, and adjudication[9] The widely known informal mechanisms use for dispute settlement are negotiation, mediation and arbitration[18].

Islamic Concept of Conflict Resolution

The word "Islam" is an Arabic word which is derived from "Salem" which means peace. It is a religion of peace and harmony and demands to create a just and peaceful atmosphere around the globe. Islam teaches humanity to create and flourish an atmosphere of love, respect, tolerance, patience and forbearance. Peace occupies an essential position in Islamic injunctions because it is conditioned with righteousness and human progress, dignity, happiness and overall ecological balance. In Islam, peace is (Al Salam), one of the names of Allah. Conflict is a permanent and ubiquitous aspect of human life which is opposite to peace and Islam provides a complete guidance to define conflicting situation and also guide ways and means to resolve conflicts peacefully.

In order to eradicate conflict and ensure peace, we see a number of verses from the Holy Quran directly revealed by Allah. A detail study of all these verses suggests a peaceful resolution of conflict at all levels. Besides, we can also observe a number of other Islamic traditions along with those verses of the Holy Quran. Islamic history reveals that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) led an exemplary life to teach and guide his followers how to settle disputes amicably. Those are the basic and permanent values of Islam revealed by Allah and practiced by prophet in his deeds and expressed in the words which are called Sunnah. The most noted of the peace settlement of disputes by our Prophet are "Helfulfazul" Madina Pact and accord of Hudabia with the infidels[19].

Methodology of the Study

The aim of this study was to understand the phenomena of conflict from Quranic perspective. This study is purely based on secondary level academic sources including published articles and verses of the Holy Quran with translation. Firstly, the concept of conflict was briefly introduced followed by causes, modes, forms and types of conflict. Besides, certain theoretical underpinnings given by various exponents from different field was reviewed to explain the phenomena of conflict and its causality. Secondly, a detail and thorough study was performed to read those verses of the Holy Quran narrated by Allah regarding conflict and conflict resolution.

Quranic Principles of Conflict Resolution

The Muslim's Holy Book "Quran" mentions both inter-personal and intra-personal level conflicts. In all the mentioned definitions and forms of conflict, very little attention has been paid to the intra-personal conflict. Quran gives a special emphasize to the spiritual and psychological faculties of human interactions to the extent that some scholars have the opinion that the basic aim of Iman is to restrain individuals from wrongdoings and to make them just and a well-disciplined Muslim. This purpose could be only served only with Tazkiya, which is one of the splendid values mentioned in the Holy Quran. Likewise, Quran also reveals about the inter- personal conflict like Al-Ifsad (Corruption and Mischief) and Al-Islah (Reconciliation and reformation. On numerous occasions, The Holy Quran mentioned Sulha as the supreme moral path to be adopted by conflicting parties. The word "Sulh" means pacification or resolution; the active mode of which is "Islah" connotation to make right, good and proper to resolve and settle amicably. At one point, the Quran outlines a universal principle of conflict resolution by enunciating that "Reconciliation is best, وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ[20]Although individuals are often motivated and guided by greed (وَأُحْضِرَتِ الْأَنْفُسُ الشُّحَّ)[21] however, the Quran advises the opponents to refer to an amicable solution to certain outstanding material conflicts, difference over inheritance and injury cases.

Quran Encourages Reconciliation and Discourages Conflict

The basic purpose of Islam is to create an atmosphere of love, peace, unity and respect. Before the advent of Islam, the Arab society was conflict laden and every individual was the enemy of other individual and the communities and tribes were engaged in relentless conflict for decades. The society was divided and social fragmentation was rampant based on tribal and ethnic lines. Quran has purified their soul and converted them into one Ummah and their lives were completely changed as mentioned by Allah
"And hold the rope of Allah (The Holy Quran) determinedly, all of you, and do not be divided among you. And recall the favour of Allah which is endowed upon you, when you were rivals, and Allah created love/affection in your hearts

therefore you become like brothers by the Grace of Allah. And you were on the brink of a fire, and then Allah protected you from it. Thus Allah clearly shows his signs to you, that you may be directed"[22].

"وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ"

On many occasions, Allah has mentioned in the Holy Quran that peace and reconciliation is the superior way to be taken by the disagreeing parties or groups. It has been clearly mentioned that those who are willing to adopt the way of Allah and obey the prophet will be following the path of reconciliation and will be kept themselves from conflict and this is the sign of a true believer. As Allah says "And follows Allah and His Prophet, and don't quarrel with one another, in that case you should lose your courage and your power will be departed, and be tolerant. Certainly, Allah favours those who are tolerant"[23].

"فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ ۖ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ"

The negative impact of conflict and the positive outcomes of peace and reconciliation have been clearly elaborated by Allah in the Holy Quran. Allah gives us clear direction that unity, peace and brotherhood leads towards success while conflict, dissensions and enmity leads toward weakness and fragility. As mentioned by Allah: "Peaceful settlement is best" وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ

Why people have been taught to refer to peaceful method of resolving conflicts is also explained further by Allah that reconciliation is the best course. Choosing the violent means for resolving the conflict leads towards further violence, dissension and social rift among conflicting parties which further results in blood-shed and killing. People have also been motivated to stay away from conflict because it dilute the spirit and courage and leads towards reducing unity and weakens the strength in any community, group or society. Regarding this, Allah says "And follows Allah and His Prophet, and don't quarrel with one another, in that case you should lose your courage and your power will be departed, and be tolerant. Certainly, Allah favours those who are tolerant"[24].

"وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ ۖ وَاصْبِرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ"

In the above verse, Allah reveals that true believers who fear and obey the commandments of Allah will be those who prefer to set things amicably. The peaceful settlement of things is attributed to the acceptance of Allah which will be resulted in the ultimate success of those who practice it. In the time of the Prophet (PBUH) all the companions were living like brothers and there was an atmosphere of love and respect among them however if there was any disagreement occur they used to quickly refer to the guidance of Quran and Sunnah of the prophet. Furthermore, the companions have a mutual trust and

respect for one another as a result Allah has termed them as the blessed and selected one in the earth. As mentioned in the Holy Quran. "Certainly, the true followers are brothers, so reconcile the matter between your brothers and fear Allah so that you may be bestowed with mercy"[25].

"إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ"

It is deduced from the above verse of the Holy Quran that the salient characteristics of Muslim is their peaceful co-existence with one another. If they have even any slight argumentation amount them they amicably and politely solve their conflict and always trying to avoid bad and insulting language. Allah has directed the Muslims to decide their issues and conflict amicably. Peaceful settlement of disputes is again attributed to the Mercy of Allah because it unites the believers and followers of Islam into brotherhood. It is highly advisable to all the Muslims that ensure to flourish a peace process among Muslim because it leads towards the mercy of Allah on the followers. Quran says "If someone do a wrong action however later on turn to Allah by reconciling his/her own acts so certainly Allah accept his/her pledge because Allah is Compassionate"[26].

"إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَبَيَّنُوا فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنَا التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ"

If a person commit bad action which incurred the wrath of Allah but if he regret his mistakes and refer to Allah on the condition that he or she is sincere in this repentence "Islh" and continou to seek forgiveness in his life. On the contrary, if a person is involved in wrogdoing and does not regret for his committed actions, he is inviting the curse of Allah. Furthermore, in case of any dispute occures between groups and parties, they should quickly refer to the commandments of Allah or the injunctions of the Prophet (PBUH) and if they still find it difficult to reach any agreeble solution then the best way which is suggested by the Holy Quran is to refer it to وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ Those who have been given authority in earth as mentioned in the Holy Quran "O believers and followers of Allah, and conform the Prophet of Allah, and the one who is in power amongst you. In case if you have a clash regarding any matter, state that to Allah and to the Prophet of Allah if you are firm believers in Allah and believe in the day of resurrection"[27].

"يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا"

Quran also suggest some practical ways and means how to resolve conflict. It urges that the best way to deal with any conflicting situation is to resolve it in the light of commandments of Allah and Sunnah of the Prophet. In case of any further discrepancies among parties, they should refer it to the Khalifa or Ameer who will mediate their case. In the light of these narrations of the Holy Quran, mediation has become an effective and useful means of conflict resolution in the modern world.

Family Conflict

Peace and conflict may occur everywhere and every time at various levels including interpersonal, community, tribal, organizational and international level. Family conflict is one of the rampant conflicts in various societies. Family and marital life is considered in Islam as kindness, guided human beings how to avoid family conflict. Islam wants to ensure a peaceful and prosperous marital life because marital ties and a family life cannot be possible when there is no love, affection and care between spouses. A marital tie based on force, jealousy and compulsion cannot build a family neither can establish a society therefore Allah commands us to have a family based on love, respect and sympathy. As mentioned by Allah in the Holy Quran. "O believers, it is not justifiable for you to hold women by coercion. And do not place restrictions upon women that you may carry what you have provided them, unless they conduct an open profanity. And treat them with sympathy. For if you do not like them, it is the case, you do not like an entity and Allah has placed in much better (Al Nisa)"[28].

"يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرْهًا وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِينَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا"

It is not allowed for any individual to keep spouse (women) in their Nikah through force and compulsion because marital bond must be based on love and mutual respect. Allah has directed us to live with their wives with recognized manners. Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be upon Him) also taught the companions to respect and honour their spouse. He further emphasized that the best among the people are those who are the best to their spouse. If anyone avoids such injunctions, love, peace and respect will not be attained in that family circle. Sometimes a dispute can occur between the spouses and it is become very difficult for the spouses to reach a possible and suitable solution. Such situation has been described by Quran "Shiqaq" which means dissension or social rift. The Arabic word "Shiqaq" the etymological meaning of which is carving out a portion of land into different portions and suggesting that one portion of the land is not sufficiently wide to house both conflicting parties simultaneously. In such circumstances, Quran describes a mechanism for the disputants to settle the matter through mediation and negotiation. As mentioned by Allah:" If a woman worries about unkindness or abandonment from her life husband then there is no sin that they may reconcile the matter by themselves and peaceful settlement is the best course. And the souls are persuaded by greediness but if you conduct best and fear Allah, then certainly, Allah is All-knowing of what you commit"[29].

"وَإِنِ امْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُوزًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا ۚ وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ ۗ وَأُحْضِرَتِ الْأَنْفُسُ الشُّحَّ ۚ وَإِنْ تُحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا"

If a man is unable to maintain justice between the wives in every aspects of life despite his efforts, there can be still some possibilities of difference on the part of husband in the degree of love, inclination and intimacy with one wife. In such circumstances, Allah guides that the better way for them to settle the matter with reconciliation, kindness, good faith and mutual understanding. Allah further reveals that"and you will not be capable to deal impartially between the women even if you desire it….but you should not be completely inclined towards one wife and leaves the other in hanging position. And if you resolve peacefully and fear Allah – then surely, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful"[30].

"وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ فَتَذَرُوهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ وَإِنْ تُصْلِحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا"

In the above verse, Allah reveals that a husband must not be inclined towards one wife to such an extent that the other wife may remain in a hanging position. This is commonly observed in the family with polygamous marriages that most of the husbands are unable to strike a successful balance in equally treating their wives thus creates some social dissensions, conflict which further creates inferiority, loneliness, and anxiety in the entire family circles. Furthermore, conflict is present everywhere and family has no exception. Family matters are considered as very sensitive in every society and especially the issues pertaining to wife and husband must not be publicized and dramatized. Allah has persuaded us to resolve the family conflict in such a manner that the privacy and integrity of the concerned family and spouses may be kept intact. Allah has revealed in the Quran: "And if you dreadful of conflict between them (spouses), then engage a mediator from his (husband) family and a mediator from her (wife) family. If the arbitrators are willing to reconcile, Allah will make the reconciliation between wives and husband. Certainly, Allah is ever All-Knower and Well-Conversant"[31].

"وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا"

The best way to reconcile a family conflict is to mediate the process peacefully. Allah has mentioned a practical and suitable way that family members must interfere in the mater to negotiate the problems for mitigate and resolve tension. This way is suggested because family members of both spouses are able to know about the personality attributes and psychological characteristics of the spouses, so they can easily identify the problems area easily and may quickly reach to a just and fair decision. In comparison, an outsider person cannot easily understand the root cause of the conflict and also do not have complete knowledge about the personality traits of the spouses. Furthermore, involvement of the outsider can also be harmful for the integrity of the entire family. Allah says "For divorced women, (they) should wait to get remarried until passing of three menstrual periods. And it is not legitimate that they may hide what Allah

has formed in their wombs, if they believe in Allah and the Last Day. And it the right of their husbands to take them back during this period), if they want to settle amicably. And the women have also similar rights to those who having the rights over them according to what is equitable, and men have a degree over them. And Allah is All Mighty, All Wise"[32].

"وَالْمُطَلَّقَاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ ۚ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ وَبُعُولَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا ۚ وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ"

Quran has specifically described the disputes among spouses especially those related to marital disputes i.e. interpersonal and sexual relationships among spouses and divorce and separation matters. Further, Quran does not only describe the dispute situation but urges to follow the dispute with amicable and peaceful resolution. The basic teaching of Allah in such circumstances to the disputant parties is to behave appropriately and decently by sticking to the principles of patience and forgiveness. Allah says "Men are the custodians of women, Allah has preferred some over the others, and because of the wealth they have spent. So, the virtuous women are obedient and guard (the assets and honour of their husband) in (their) absence with the protection bestowed by Allah. And if you fear disobedience on their part, reprove them and leave them alone in their beds, and punish them. If they show obedience, do not go against them. Surely, Allah is High, Great"[33].

"الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ ۚ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ ۚ وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ۖ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا"

It is generally observed that most conflicts between spouses occur just because of domestic division of work, rights, roles, obligations and privileges of the spouses. Islam gives equal rights, status and privileges to both men and women. The women have no superiority over the husband and neither the husband has any superiority over their wives. In Quran, Allah has mentioned الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ which does not imply any superiority but it simply means taking full care. The distinction between men and women is just based on the capability of bearing children by women who make it binding on men to provide for her needs and for the needs of children at least during the period of child procreation but this hindrance for women may not be the reason to restrict them to home permanently.

Murder

Before the advent of Islam, blood feuds were rampant and people used to deal blood feuds with unprecedented and unrestricted manner. In case, if a person

from a stronger tribe killed a person from the weaker tribe, then the weaker tribe was unable to impose similar punishment on that tribe. On the other hand, tribal egotism and supremacy demanded many victims as the equivalent of a single person of their fellow tribesman. Such feelings of superiority and inferiority triggered retribution due to which the blood feuds sometimes lasted for years. In such scenario, Quran urges to maintain equality and justice in the dispensation of justice and to avoid discrimination in blood feuds. As mentioned in the Holy Quran "O believers, legal retribution is mentioned for you in (the case of) a murdered, (the revenge must be practiced as) free (individual) for the free, and the slave (person) for slave, and the women for the women. So if the murderer is pardoned by his (victim's) brother (or the relatives), then (there should be) a succeeding up with justice, and compensation (of the blood money) toward him (to the heir) in gentleness. This is easing from your Lord and kindness. So whoever disobeys after that, then for him is a severe chastisement"[34].

"يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلَى الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأُنْثَى بِالْأُنْثَى ۚ فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتِّبَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ فَمَنِ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ"

Islam has clearly abolished the evils of the system prevailed in the pre Islamic era by introducing a justifiable punishment system. Islam urges that only the guilty person but not the fellow tribesmen will be liable to be punished or revenged. It was a common practice among the Arabs that punishment of equal magnitude was not given to the individual of a prestigious family or tribe. Moreover, in most of the cases, the slain family used to inflict harm on the opponent by killing that person who they think is the best among the family members or the tribesmen. It is unreasonable that a family or tribe may lose a person and that the killer will be still going scot free. Furthermore, Allah also mentioned the alternate peaceful way of resolving the murder case by stating that the brother or other inheritor of the slain can willingly show flexibility to the murderer then the blood money should be decided according to the prevailing common law which will be respectfully given to the family of the slain. Allah has given a complete power to the testator to decide about the murderer. If the inheritor show no mercy and wants retribution, the court is liable to give a death penalty and if the inheritor choose to accept blood money, then the court is bound to execute accordingly. This is a relaxation and mercy from Allah and there will be painful chastisement for those who transgresses the limits after the commandments of Allah.

In case of any misappropriation on the part of the testators, Allah says that "But those who fear that the testator will conduct some unfair or evil clause then reconcile between them, then there is no evil upon him. Surely, Allah is Forgiving and Most Merciful"[35].

"فَمَنْ بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَمَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ"

A detail peaceful resolution scheme in the case of unintentional killing of a believer is also mentioned by Allah in the Holy Quran. If a person killed another unintentionally and the slain was a Muslim then the murdered is liable to free a believing slave and he must also pay blood money to the family of the slain. However, the degree and intensity of the punishment is mild if the slain person was found as hostile to the killer then he needs only to set a believing slave free in compensation. In case, a middle man was killed by any party, then the compensation must be paid to the family along with freeing of the believing slave. Furthermore, if the murder has no means to compensate for the crime he committed, he needs to keep fast as repentance to Allah. The basic purpose of such compensation is to bring the culprit under the law and to protect the families from inflicting further harm. As mentioned in the holy Quran.

"وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَأً ۚ وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَأً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَّدَّقُوا ۚ فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ ۖ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا"

Allah says "And if someone kills a believing person by fault, then he needs to free a slave, and some compensation in the form of money to his (slain) family, unless they (family of the slain) give (it up as) a charity. But if he (the slain) was antagonistic unto you, and he was a believer, then it is required that he must free a believer slave. And if the (murdered) was between you and them, then payment of blood money to his family will be needed along with freeing of a believing slave. Those who having no means), then he needs to keep fast for two successive months. While seeking atonement from Allah, Allah is All Knower, All Wise"[36].

Conclusions

Conflict and cooperation, peace and violence are the salient features of human society. Human has entrusted with the capability to promote good on the one hand while they have also been given the capacity to inflict harm and create conflict in the society. It is pertinent to refine the violent instinct and capabilities of man and enshrine peace, tolerance and forbearance to create a just and peaceful society. The basic and supreme source of this guidance is the actual texts and words of Allah who revealed the Holy Quran to guide humanity to overcome their bad inclination and put them on the right path. Quran advises how to effectively deal with conflict at various level. It highlights the importance of individual personal and psychological traits in avoiding conflict and also describes its role in mitigating the negative outcomes of conflict. In this regard, Quran urges us to act peacefully, avoid conflict and mitigate the possible negative outcomes of conflict through Islah or Sulha, Maa'ruf and Tazkia. At collective level, Quran encourages us to create unity and discourages the dissension, social rifts, tension and conflict. The suggested remedies under the

Quranic scheme for mitigating the negative outcomes and resolving conflicts are reconciliation, mediation and negotiation among the conflicting parties.

References & Notes

[1]   Barash, D.P. & Webel, C.P. (2002).Peace and Conflict Studies, California:Sage Publications, Inc.

[2]   Monjur, M. (2011). An Analysis on the Practices of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Resolving Conflicts.Journal of the Bangladesh Association of Young Researchers 1(1), 109-125.

[3]   Diez, T., Stetter, S., & Albert, M.(2006). The European Union and Border Conflicts: The Transformative Power of Integration. International Organization 60(3), 563-593.

[4]   Pia, E., & Diez, T. (2007). Conflict and Human Rights: A theoretical Framework. Human Rights in Conflict: The role of civil society a STREP project 6th Framework program.

[5]   Kriesberg, L. (1988). Strategies of Negotiating Agreements: Arab-Israeli and American-Soviet Cases. Negotiation Journal 4(1), 19-29.

[6]   Weeks, D. (1992). The eight essential steps to Conflict Resolution, Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc.

[7]   Dahrendorf, R. (1958). Toward a theory of social conflict. The Journal of Conflict Resolution, 2(2), 170-183.

[8]   Boskoff, A. (1960). Structure and Process in Modern Societies. By Talcott Parsons.Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press,1960. 344 Pp. Social Forces 39(1), 84–85.

[9]   Monjur, M. An Analysis on the Practices of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

[10]   Rashid, H.U. (2005). An Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies, Dhaka: The University Press Limited.

[11]   Ross, E.i.(1993). Write Now. Barnes and nobel publishing

[12]   Lamb, N. (2008). The Art and Craft of Storytelling, (F+W Media, Inc.)

[13]   Nikolajeva, M. (2005) Aesthetic Approaches to Children's Literature: An Introduction (Scarecrow Press).

[14]   Weeks, D.The eight essential steps to Conflict Resolution,

[15]   Pruitt, D , Rubin,J., & Hee Kim, S. (2003) Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, And Settlement (3rd Edition). Mcgraw-Hill Education.

[16]   Boulle, L. (1996).Mecliotio: Principles, Process, Practice (Sydney: Butterworths, 1996).

[17]   Monjur, M. An Analysis on the Practices of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

[18]   Rashid, H.U. An Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies,

[19]   Monjur, M. An Analysis on the Practices of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

[20]   AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa, 4: 128

[21]   AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa, 4: 128.

[22]   AlQuran, Soora Ale. Imran 3: 103

[23]   AlQuran, Soora Al Anfaal. 8: 01

[24]   AlQuran, Soora Al Anfaal 8: 46

[25]   AlQuran, Soora Al Hujarat. 49: 10

[26]   AlQuran, Soora Al Baqara. 2: 160

[27] AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa. 4: 59
[28] AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa.4: 19
[29] AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa. 4:19
[30] AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa 4: 128
[31] AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa. 4: 35
[32] AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa. 2: 228
[33] AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa, 4: 34
[34] AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa.2: 178
[35] AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa.4: 181
[36] AlQuran, Soora Al Nisa. 4: 92