

Two days International Conference

Gender, Inclusivity, and Harmony in Sufism: Role, Challenges and Future Prospects

Department of Islamic Studies, Ghazi University, Dera Ghzi Khan, Punjab, Pakistan

Major Them: Equality by Saints, Sites & Spirituality

Conference Overview

In an era marked by religious polarization, intolerance, and identity-based conflicts, the need for meaningful interfaith dialogue has never been greater. Spiritual traditions that emphasize love, compassion, and universal human values offer important resources for building peaceful and inclusive societies. Sufism, the mystical tradition of Islam, has historically played a significant role in fostering harmony among diverse religious communities. Sufi saints, poets, and spiritual movements have transcended rigid religious boundaries by promoting inner transformation, humility, service to humanity, and devotion rooted in love rather than fear. Across regions and cultures, Sufism has acted as a bridge between faiths through shared sacred spaces, literature, music, and ethical values.

This conference aims to explore the historical, philosophical, cultural, and contemporary relevance of Sufism in promoting interfaith harmony and peaceful coexistence.

Conference Objectives

- To explore Sufism as a spiritual framework for interfaith harmony
- To examine historical and contemporary contributions of Sufi traditions to peacebuilding
- To encourage interdisciplinary dialogue among scholars, students, and practitioners
- To highlight Sufism's relevance in addressing modern challenges of religious intolerance

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons:

Academic Importance

It contributes to the fields of religious studies, peace studies, and sociology by offering insights into non-political and spiritual approaches to interfaith harmony.

It helps students and researchers understand Islam beyond stereotypes by focusing on its inclusive and humanistic dimensions.

Social and Cultural Relevance

In societies facing religious polarization, Sufism provides a framework for unity based on shared human values rather than doctrinal differences.

The study promotes appreciation of cultural traditions such as Sufi poetry, music, and festivals that bring people of different faiths together.

Contemporary Relevance

At a time when religious extremism and intolerance are growing, Sufism offers an alternative narrative centered on peace, love, and coexistence.

It can inform interfaith initiatives, educational curricula, and community dialogue programs.

Moral and Ethical Significance

Sufi teachings emphasize ethical conduct, empathy, and service to humanity, which are universal values shared by all major religions.

Expected Outcomes

The study is expected to achieve the following outcomes:

A clearer understanding of Sufism's role in interfaith harmony, highlighting its spiritual and ethical foundations.

Identification of historical and contemporary examples where Sufi teachings helped reduce religious tensions and foster cooperation.

Increased awareness of shared values among religions, such as love, peace, humility, and service to others.

Recognition of Sufism as a constructive force in promoting dialogue and mutual respect among diverse faith communities.

Practical insights for educators, policymakers, and community leaders on how Sufi principles can be used to strengthen social harmony

Major Sub-Themes

1. Philosophical and Spiritual Foundations of Sufism

Core Sufi concepts of love, compassion, and unity

Inner spirituality and ethical transformation

Sufi views on religious diversity and pluralism

2. Historical Role of Sufism in Interfaith Relations

Sufi saints as mediators of peace

Shared sacred spaces and inclusive religious practices

Sufism's contribution to communal harmony in different regions

3. Sufi Literature, Poetry, and Aesthetics

Sufi poetry as a universal spiritual language

Music (Sama, Qawwali) and collective spiritual experience

Symbolism and metaphor in promoting interfaith understanding

4. Comparative Mysticism and Interfaith Dialogue

Parallels between Sufism and other mystical traditions

Shared ethical and spiritual values across religions

Mysticism as a meeting point for faiths

5. Sufism in the Contemporary World

Sufism as a response to extremism and intolerance

Role of Sufi values in peace education and youth engagement

Future prospects of Sufism in interfaith initiatives

Shrines as spaces of interfaith interaction

Sufism and social harmony in multicultural societies

6. Gender, Inclusivity, and Harmony in Sufism

Role of women in Sufi traditions

Gender equality and spiritual authority in Sufism

Inclusive spirituality beyond social hierarchies

Female Sufi saints and interfaith influence

Compassion-based ethics and social justice

7. Cultural and Social Dimensions of Sufism

Sufi shrines as centers of communal harmony

Festivals, rituals, and shared religious spaces

Sufism's role in local cultures and identities

Sufism and social service (Khidmat-e-Khalq)

Preservation of intangible cultural heritage

8. Challenges and Future Prospects

Misinterpretations and marginalization of Sufism

Sufism under modern political and ideological pressures

Reviving Sufi ethics in contemporary society

Digital spaces and the transmission of Sufi teachings

Future directions for Sufism in interfaith peacebuilding

Submission Guidelines (paper will be accepted on peer review basis)

Abstract length: 250–300 words

Keywords: 4–5 keywords

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt, 1.5 spacing

Language: English/ Urdu/Arabic

Mode: [Online / Offline / Hybrid – customizable]

Selected papers may be considered for publication in an edited volume / conference proceeding (subject to review).

Important Dates

Last date for abstract submission:	23-02-2026
Notification of acceptance:	27-02-2026
Full paper submission:	10-03-2026
Conference dates:	6 & 7 April 2026

Target Participants

Academicians and researchers

Students and research scholars

Interfaith practitioners and peace activists

Social scientists and cultural historians

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