

CONCEPT OF GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE RELIGIOUS THOUGHT OF SHAH WALI-ALLAH

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Abstract. Shah Wali-Allah occupies a prominent place among the Muslim scholar who evaluated the society as a whole. He was the only Muslim scholar during his times who endeavored to provide the solution for religious, political, social, economic and moral aspects of Muslim society. His time period witnessed religious unawareness, economic exploitation, political downfall and moral degradation of the Muslims. The main reason was carelessness of the Muslims towards Islam. So, accordingly, Shah Wali-Allah initiated his religious activities. He attempted to bring the Muslims close to Qur'an and *Sunnah*. He resisted against all the innovations, superstitions and un-Islamic elements. He presented a pure concept of all the aspects of Islamic teachings. In the present manuscript we concern ourselves with Shah Wali-Allah's concept of God-consciousness from his different compilations by applying analytical and critical research method.

Keywords: *Consciousness, God, morality, religion, society.*

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Received: 4 December 2024;

Accepted: 27 January 2025;

Published: 11 February 2025.

1. Introduction

Qutb-u-Din Ahmad b. 'Abd-ur-Raḥīm also known as Walīyullāh, was born on Shawal 1114 A.H./1702 C.E. in Delhi (Jalbani 1978, p. 1). His lineage is traced to Hadrat 'Umar and Hadrat 'Ali by his father and mother respectively. Jalbani says that, because of his association with these two companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Shah Wali-Allah mentions his name as Ahmad b. 'Abd-u-Rahim al- 'Umarī².

Shah Wali-Allah Muḥadith Dehlvi was born in a family where an Islamic religious atmosphere was prevalent. This religious environment became primary foundation for the intellectual growth of Shah Wali-Allah. He was man of knowledge, an intellectual and a Sufi. He played an outstanding role in the intellectual, religious and political history of the India (Walī-Allah, 1762, p. 7).

While analyzing the religious environment during Shah Wali-Allah at historical perspective, we find that, during his times, the politico-religious conditions were not enough satisfactory. Crushing of the Muslim political authority, disintegration of the country and aggressions of the foreign powers pushed the Muslims back. At religious level, Muslims were not taking an active part in comprehending the things; rather they

How to cite (APA):

Lone, N.A. (2025). Concept of God-consciousness in the religious thought of Shah Wali-Allah. *Islamic History and Literature*, 3(1), 27-37 <https://doi.org/10.62476/ihl3.127>

² Ibid, p.4

were emulating their predecessors unquestionably. Similarly, the impact of rationalism and philosophy on the Muslim minds were deviated them from the original teachings of Islam (Jalbani, op. cit., pp. 50-51).

Muslims were more inclined towards jurisprudential issues by neglecting the basic sources of Islam. Besides, sectarian issues also raised their head during Shah Wali-Allah's times. All the sects within Islam were not tolerable to each other. So, it was another cause of poor religious environment. Hence, all these reasons became a snowball which led to the declination of the Muslim religious as well as political system (Sheikh, 2005, p. 598).

The revolutionary feature of Shah Wali-Allah's religious ideas is that, he left a profound impact upon all the contemporary and subsequent Muslims. Initially, he turned towards Holy Qur'an and attempted to make Muslims conscious about the teachings of Qur'an with regard to human life both at individual as well as collective level. He highlighted the utility of Holy Qur'an as a book of guidance (Jalbani, op. cit., p. 52).

2. Research methodology

By applying the historical, analytical and critical research methodology, the current work aims to explore the concept of God-consciousness by evaluating some of the main compilations of 18th century Islamic scholar Shah Wali-Allah of Delhi.

3. Results and discussions

3.1. Discussions

3.1.1. Concept of God: A general review

Being a fundamental belief of the Muslim theology, concept of God-consciousness has remained an interesting debate among multiple Islamic theologians. But, to examine the general approach of perception of God-consciousness, we have confined ourselves up to the ideas of Imam Ghazzālī and 'Alam Iqbal. Holy Qur'an declares that, God's attributes are not resembled to that of others³. In another, place Qur'an explicitly says that, God is alone. He is neither father nor son of anybody⁴. Whenever, Imam Ghazzālī speaks of uniqueness of God, he talks in a comprehensive way. According to him, neither anything is like Him nor could He belong to any group. Hence it can be concluded that, Qur'an constitutes primary source of Imam Ghazzālī's concept of God (Shehadi, 1964, p. 17). Here it seems that according to Ghazzālī, individuals are inaccessible to God. However, on the other hand, he approached to Islamic spiritual phenomenon in order to trace God because Islamic spiritual dimension seeks a communion of the individuals with God (Gibb, 1953, p. 139). Apparently, there is contradiction in the ideas of Ghazzālī about God. However, he says that, by pondering on the universe, one can find the existence of God. Although, Ghazzālī's principle of knowing of God through knowing the world has been explained in multiple ways by Fadlou Shehadi, yet, the Qur'an is explicit about experiencing of God's existence through universe⁵. Hence, Imam Ghazzālī finds a way to approach God through mystical experiences (Shehadi, op. cit., pp. 50-51). But 'Alama Iqbal says that just like German philosopher Immanuel Kant, Ghazzālī gave less

³ al-Qur'an, "Nothing can be compared with Him, al-Shura, 42:11, Eng. Transl. of the Qur'an by Mawlana Wahiduddin Khan

⁴ al-Qur'an, al-Ikhlāṣ, 112:1-4

⁵ al-Qur'an, On the earth and in yourselves, there are signs for firm believers, al-Dhariyat, 51:20-21

importance to human reason to understand the things. He says that Ghazzālī, could not understand the unity of thought and intuition and consequently could not accommodate the analytical thought as a source of knowledge and compelled to approach to mystical experience for receiving acquaintance about God. Iqbal says that, both Kant and Ghazzālī could not understand the utility of thought to understand the truth. But differ in about the knowledge. The former shows no possibility about knowledge of God, the later, on the other hand, believed in knowledge about God through mystical experience (Iqbal, 1930, pp. 5-6).

Now moving towards Alama Iqbal's concept of God-consciousness, Iqbal says that, Islamic teachings base all its system on the concept of God-consciousness. The primary objective of the Qur'an, according to Muhammad Iqbal, is to awaken the consciousness of the relation of human beings with God the rest of the universe⁶.

Iqbal firmly believes in the existence of God which runs the whole universe. He says that surely there is a power behind the function of the universe. In his lectures, Iqbal says "We have seen that the judgment based upon religious experience fully satisfies the intellectual test". Iqbal calls this power as Ultimate Ego. He then quotes *Surah al-Ikhlāṣ* (112:1-4) for the support of his argument. For the individuality of God, Iqbal quotes Bergson⁷ who says that for the perfect individuality, it is must that no its single part can exist separately. Iqbal says that Individuality of God is above all. He the quotes a part of a Qur'anic verse, "God is the light of the heavens and the earth. His light may be compared to a niche containing a lamp, the lamp inside a crystal of star..."⁸ Here, according to Iqbal (1930), light is an argument of the existence of the individuality of God.

3.1.2. Concept of God-consciousness in the religious ideas of Shah Wali-Allah

Shah Wali-Allah treats *Tawhīd* as a fundamental principle for a pious life. He says that because of this doctrine of *Tawhīd*, an individual gets humility. Through this doctrine individuals become aware about the unseen. Self-purification also achieves through this doctrine. In this regard Prophet (SAW) have highly emphasized on *Tawhīd*. Depending upon this doctrine, individuals will be judged in hereafter. Shah Wali-Allah says that there are four stages of *Tawhīd*:

- To accept that necessary being is Allah alone.
- To acknowledge that heavens and earth and all that which exists between these two has been created by Allah.
- To accept that Allah alone runs the whole system of the universe.
- To witness that no one is worthy to worship except Allah. Shah Wali-Allah lays emphasis upon the fourth stage. He discusses about previous people who transgressed because of their association of creatures with Allah (Wali-Allah, 2009, pp. 175-176).

Shah Wali-Allah speaks that the primary aim of the Prophethood was to aware people about purification of the self. Therefore, they did neither involve people in comprehending the names and attributes of God and nor allowed them to use analogical deductions to know God because it was impossible for people to gain knowledge about God through analogy. Rather, Prophets asked the people to ponder on the creation of God. They simply contemplate on the blessings and signs of God. Besides, Prophets were asked

⁶ Ibid, p.8

⁷ Henri-Louis Bergson (1859-1941) was a French Philosopher

⁸ al-Qur'an, al-Nur, 24:35

to talk with the people according to their comprehension level which has been bestowed to them as an instinct. Here, Shah Wali-Allah seems to differ knowledge about God from knowledge about universe, though both are same because attainment of knowledge about universe implies the realization of God⁹.

Similarly, Shah Wali-Allah also deals with the phenomenon of God-consciousness. He says that the existence of God is proved through reason. It is not the revelation only which represents the existence of a supernatural power, rather reason also witnesses that nothing exists without any cause. Hence, what Shah actually means to say that, Islam as a religion is not something beyond the human comprehension and it is not impossible for human beings to act according to Islam. Moreover, according to him, the human nature also holds that God exists. He says that, now humans are abided to comprehend the unity of God. Hence, the need of unity of God is indispensable part of human nature and it is pertinent for humans to have a firm belief on the existence of God. Basically, Shah rejects the arguments of rationalists who do not believe in the existence of God. It is worth to note that according to Shah Wali-Allah, humans as well as animals possess the knowledge about of the process of cause and effect in the universe. He says that, it is because of this phenomenon that when an animal hears any sound, it becomes conscious about the imminent incident. Shah Wali-Allah says that because of this God-consciousness human excels to other species because humans utilize this concept of God-consciousness at every aspect of the life. In fact, human beings spend their lives according to the divine principles through this concept. They learn to differentiate between right and wrong, between useful and useless and between prohibited and permissible through this concept. Human beings subdue the whole universe through this concept. They ponder on the universe in order to search the reality. Shah Wali-Allah calls these characters of human beings as wisdom which differentiates them from animals. He says that when humans know about the universe, they come to a conclusion that the system of the universe is subordinate to a power which runs it systematically in an organized way. They become conscious about this power, which is the culmination of the phenomenon of God-consciousness (Wali-Allah, 2015, pp. 384-387).

He says that the people differ only in the methods of God-realization. Because, according to him, since some people possess a little knowledge about the universe, so they accordingly got acquainted about the truth partially. Some of them say that there is a natural force behind the universe because they possess knowledge about the natural phenomenon. Hence, they did not attempt to discover the causes of other aspects of the universe, though they possess some knowledge about other aspects of the universe as well. Similarly, some people say that physical force of the elements is the main source of the creation. To some others, movement of the planets and other heavenly bodies causes this and some says that the spiritual power of the pious people is behind it. Shah Wali-Allah says that these different levels of understanding of the universe are according to their knowledge. He says that consequently these people cannot gain consciousness of the God because these refer to their intellect only for the search of truth. Here, it appears that Shah Wali-Allah have attempted to undermine the role of human intellect and have could not maintain a balance between intellect and revelation¹⁰.

⁹ Ibid, pp.255-256

¹⁰ Ibid, pp.387-389

3.1.3. Ways of achieving God-consciousness

Although human intellect is one of the main sources of attaining and understanding truth and as Islam also gives a high place to human intellect for comprehension of the universe, yet according to Shah Wali-Allah, human intellect alone is inadequate to achieve the higher level of God-consciousness. He says that when individuals ponder on their nature, they find the truth, but through heart and they get understanding according to the needs of their nature because God has already bestowed humans with an adequate knowledge about the absolute truth. He says the humans have been bestowed with two sorts of the intellectual power. One is intellectual power which serves the purpose of the physical and carnal needs, though here humans differ from other creations because of good qualities of the physicality. Another is intellectual power which God has bestowed for a pious and great purpose. He says that God bestows this when individual proceeds towards ('*Ālam-i-jabrūt*) Almighty by shunning this (*Nāsuti*) material world. He further says that the intellectual power of physical needs ('*Aql-i-ma 'āsh*) gives rise to God-consciousness in human beings. Shah Wali-Allah says that God-consciousness is must for the blessings and salvation of this world as well as world to come. He says that the concept of God-consciousness should be according to one's affirmation through heart and tongue and there should be no doubt in this regard. He says such type of a firm belief can be achieved through the intellect of physical needs. He further says that to know the truth through the intellectual power of human needs is not something astonishing. He speaks that in case of inaccessibility to the truth, the individuals will accept their shortcomings and will content on the general God-consciousness in case of inaccessibility to God-consciousness in detail and will get familiarity about God. He utters that through this general awareness they will achieve the higher level of God-consciousness. Here it seems the Shah Wali-Allah focuses on the importance of human intellect along with the knowledge of human nature for knowing truth¹¹.

One thing is clear that Shah Wali-Allah gives an interesting place to human intellect while comprehending the universe. He says that Allah has equipped human intellect with the abilities to know the things. Like bee and other birds has been bestowed with the natural abilities to survive themselves¹². Yet, he says that the concept of God-consciousness basically originates from human nature as well as the curiosity to know the things is also tendency of human nature. He articulates that primarily to achieve God-consciousness, it is imperative to know that there is a power behind the universe which is absolutely different from all the creations in all the aspects and all the humans are beyond the comprehension of this power. Here, Shah Wali-Allah contradicts with himself, because first he accommodated human reason as a source to know the reality, but on the other hand he denied any sort of possibility of knowing the truth. In fact, he could not understand the unity of human nature and human reason¹³.

Then he says that the concept of God-consciousness becomes firm gradually as human mind develops further. He says that when human mind proceeds towards imagined from sensible, there it finds the Lord present in the imagined world. Similarly, when human mind proceeds towards unseen world from seen world, there it finds Lord in the unseen world also. Similarly, when human mind observes the universe and its system, there also it finds Lord. So, in these entire stages human mind finds itself perfect

¹¹ Ibid, pp.389-390

¹² Ibid, pp.391-392

¹³ Ibid, pp.392-393

with regard to the knowledge of God and finds that there is a reason behind the whole system of the universe. Therefore, Shah Wali-Allah says that, this is the explanation of the general concept of God-consciousness and this concept develops from general to detail in human mind¹⁴.

Shah Wali-Allah says that, human conscience frequently becomes aware when it experiences some extraordinary event and becomes conscious to search its causes and consequences. This causes to ponder about God and which consequently inculcates a sense of mental, spiritual and psychological association of humans with Allah or it brings human close to Allah both esoterically as well as exoterically. Then humans disassociate themselves from mundane concerns and inculcate a relation with divinity. Shah Wali-Allah says that, it is the way to achieve God-consciousness in detail¹⁵.

Again Shah Wali-Allah talks about the obstacle in the way of achieving the concept of God-consciousness and says that, fundamentally the people who achieved partial knowledge about the universe, they could not gain full knowledge about Allah. He says that these people look at the external causes of the universe only. He says that, furthermore, these people pay no attention to the human nature and consequently they remain unaware about Allah. Similarly, he says that their inherent beliefs, blind adherence and inclination towards materialism also became obstacle in the ways of their journey to God-consciousness. They mingled these elements with the actual concept of knowledge of Allah because these things badly affect the human nature¹⁶.

Again Shah Wali-Allah places human intellect at a high level and says that when humans do ponder on the present universe, they can aware about Allah¹⁷. He says research is must to gain God-consciousness because through research one's intellect can attain the highest level of God-consciousness. When humans experience any natural phenomenon, they understand that phenomenon according to its emergence. In the same way, Shah Wali-Allah says that whenever the greatness of Allah appears through such signs, it also should be comprehended accordingly. For example, when human deliberate on the physical futures of the universe, they can attribute Allah with the name of artist. Similarly, Allah nourishes all the creatures and provides power to weak one. So, Allah should be attributed with different names and qualities accordingly. Similarly, Shah Wali-Allah says that, when humans observe the impurity of the world, they consider Allah as a pious power and Allah is above the human needs and says that "*He begets not, nor is He begotten and none is His equal*"¹⁸. Moreover, he says that when they praise Allah with good words and the intention is to praise the beauty and greatness of Allah and they say Allah is the great, the high, the glorious and all-encompassing which are the beautiful names of Allah. Again, Shah says that when they observe the universe keenly through their intellect, they find the function of Allah in this universe and attributes Allah with a suitable name, though the humans like to give it some another name when their knowledge encompasses the universe. Like they say that, *Qudrat* (power) means somebody's will power of doing or not doing work. He says that by this comprehension, human intellect has neglected a deep issue. He says that human intellect possesses the meaning of *Qudrat* only doing or leaving anything. Shah says that, but human mind did not consider it that the greatness of Allah makes existence of the things obligatory. Thus,

¹⁴Ibid, p.393

¹⁵Ibid, p.416

¹⁶Ibid, pp.393-394

¹⁷Ibid, p.398

¹⁸al-Qur'an, Ikhlaṣ, 112:03-04

human intellect knows that Allah do anything, even though He can leave it and attributed this quality with the power of Allah. So, Shah Wali-Allah says that the concept of God-consciousness is bestowed to all the humans in their nature both in general as well as in detail and need is to refer to the nature and to achieve detailed knowledge of Allah through the general concepts (Wali-Allah, 2015a, pp. 401-403).

Shah Wali-Allah says that to achieve God-consciousness it is imperative to accept the Allah is constant being, no one is associated in His existence, no one is parallel to Him in his attributes and no one is equal to Him is His unity¹⁹. He says that when human beings became aware about the attributes of Allah and its realities, here two situations arise; one is explanation of this reality and separate awareness of every attribute and will reach up to *Ism-i-A 'Azam*(great name) in the terminology of *Shari 'ah* or *Ḥaqīqat-i-Muhammadiyah* in the terminology of *Taşawwuf* or *'Aql-i-awal* (first intellect) in the terminology of *Ishrāq*. Shah says that here, in this stage reality becomes clear without any obstacle. Another one is that when any of the conditions appear like fear, courage or discouragement in the *'Ārif*(seeker of the truth) spiritually, so, the part by which *'Ārif* succeeds, the reality becomes clear here to the *'Ārif* also (Wali-Allah, 2015c, pp. 42-43).

3.1.4. Reality of Human Being

Shah Wali-Allah says that everything is perfect according to its species. Or we can say that, to Shah, God have created everything perfect according to its position and function in the universe. Yet human being differs from others due to some reasons. One is that human beings has been bestowed with the faculty of comprehension and knowledge and intellect due to which human heart possess the divine perceptions and consequently differs and excels from other creatures. Shah calls it *Imān* (faith). Another reason is that human being possesses capacity to mould their personality according to the will of Allah. They are inclined towards divinity. He says that this state is called *Ihsān*²⁰. He says that *Ihsān* is the essence, aim and result of faith and *Imān* is its base. He says that *Ihsān* is must to achieve the highest degree of faith because due to the attainment of the state of *Ihsān*, one's inner, self and spirit becomes complete. Then he says that to achieve the state of *Ihsān*, it is must to neglect all the problems coming from the world and to focus more and more on the faith by avoiding all other things. Moreover, it is must to ponder on the signs of Allah. It is must to make the whole personality according to the divinity. Shah Wali-Allah says that, such type of worship brings human beings close to Allah, like they are seeing Allah with their eyes. In nutshell when their hearts become completely subordinate to the will of Allah so their external aspect of the personality becomes like it. He says that, it is the real success (Wali-Allah, 2015a, pp. 420-421).

3.1.5. Human Nature (*fitrah*)

Shah Wali-Allah explains *fitrah* through an example and says that, human beings in this world are restricted and has no way to free from it. However, any human being whenever achieves the state of *Ihsān*, some opportunity achieves to pay attention to the divinity and the effect of this opportunity will be appeared in the world to come. He says

¹⁹ Ibid, p.404

²⁰ *Ihsān* is highest level of one's faith

that what is necessary for human beings in this world is to achieve any stage of *Ihsān* which will appear in their deeds and other relations with each other²¹.

Although Shah says that God-consciousness is in the human nature, yet he articulates that there are some obstacles in the way of God-consciousness. He says that mainly there are three types of obstacles. First is physical obstacle. He says that humans have some physical needs besides the needs of self. Therefore, the self becomes subordinate to these needs and neglects the aspect of nature where there is needs to turn towards divinity. Gradually when these physical and carnal or sexual desires becomes more dominant, they do not follow the *Shari 'ah* and fulfil their needs without differentiating between right and wrong way. In this way their whole personality becomes subordinate to their carnal desires. The next obstacle according to Shah Wali-Allah is the cultural aspect of the human society. He says that every community has their own ways of living and the people are abiding those ways. But those people who are strictly follow these ways of life they do not care about the religious values. They do not accept religious values. Shah says that even they neglect their physical needs due to dominance of these customs. The third obstacle, according to him is the poor knowledge of humans about the reality because of their limited intellectual power. So, they become victim of many issues. Sometimes they associate others with the attributes of Allah. Moreover, they frequently accept things blindly, which according to him is ignorance. But Shah Wali-Allah forgets to know that, physical needs and cultural enthusiasm both are natural entities, hence it cannot be separated from human personality. When the individuals care about their physical needs and have a passion about their cultural dimension, it is not necessary that these can make them to ignore God. However, lack of knowledge can lead humans towards ignorance as Shah Wali-Allah himself asserts²².

Shah Wali-Allah says that these three obstacles come in the lives of the human beings gradually. Initially human beings possess some animal instincts which become hurdle in the way of attainment of God-consciousness. When they move forward they develop their own way of life, they develop their own customs and follow these customs instead of religious values. So, this also keeps humans away from achieving God-consciousness. Similarly, when the humans develop furthermore, they use their intellectual power and ponder on the universe. Then they gain knowledge about Allah. But in this stage of development, they become victim of ignorance about Allah²³.

Nevertheless, Shah Wali-Allah says that there is remedy to remove these obstacles. Like, for first hurdle, they have to exercise more and more worship and should effort to control their sexual and other physical needs and to spend a pious life. Similarly, for another barrier, they had to obey their customs but with sincerity. If these customs are good, they should follow and the intention should be to achieve the pleasure of Allah rather than to follow these customs. If these customs find to be repugnant to Islam, then these should be avoided. About the third obstacle, Shah says that people should remember Allah and should purify their minds because it brings them close to Allah. Recitation of Qur'an, pondering upon the signs of Allah and hearing of the sermons can also assist them in this regard²⁴.

Then Shah Wali-Allah says that when the human beings attain real God-consciousness, they find all the blessings both internally as well as externally from Allah

²¹ Ibid, p.422

²² Ibid, pp.423-425

²³ Ibid, p.426

²⁴ Ibid, pp.426-427

who is great and above all the creations. This genuine God-consciousness inculcates a sense of humility and respect towards Allah. Then he elaborates it more and says that there is a natural inclination of all the living beings to that power who provides them the basic needs of life; food, shelter, etc. In the same way human beings have love and obedience to Allah and gives preference to the pleasure of Allah over all their interests. Shah Wali-Allah says that, subsequently the love of Allah penetrates in their body parts. In fact, their heart and tongue witness the greatness of Allah²⁵.

Shah Wali-Allah talks about God-consciousness through divine essence. He says that, the biggest achievement of the *Hikmah*(wisdom) is to achieve God-consciousness through the attributes of Allah and to achieve the conscious about His attributes and commandments. Then the knowledge about the world should be achieved and the position of attributes of Allah in this world should be identified. He says that, the final stage of God-consciousness is to achieve knowledge about *Asmāi* ' *Awdiyah*(attributes) their commandments. He says that those who has been bestowed with such knowledge through real knowledge and intuition, they have been blessed with immense good. He says that the only way to achieve God-consciousness is *Zāt-t-Tajali* (self-manifest) but it is beyond comprehension. Here, it is clear that according to Shah-Wali-Allah, the primary way to achieve God-consciousness is to comprehend the commands of Allah and act upon them. Then, to ponder on the universe also brings individual close to God-consciousness (Wali-Allah, 2015b, p. 487). He says that the actual God-consciousness can achieve those who are right-minded and are close to God. He says only Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was bestowed with this blessing. Other prophets were bestowed according to their capacity. However, he says that other pious people also can realize this according to their temperament²⁶.

Then Shah Wali-Allah discusses about *Sa'adat* (good fortune). He says that human possess some rich qualities like, civilized, high morality, high position, etc., which differentiates them from other animals. Shah Wali-Allah says that this is the *Sa'adat*. He says that because of this, the richest intellectual people are curious to inculcate these qualities. He says *Sa'adatis* that, the animal instincts should be subordinate to rational and desires should be under intellect. Here also Shah Wali-Allah says that a real *Sa'adat* cannot be attained without God-consciousness because it appeals human to inculcate rich and high qualities (Wali-Allah, 2009, op.cit., pp. 147-150).

3.1.6. Theoretical framework of Shah Wali-Allah's concept of God-consciousness

The fascinating aspect of Shah Wali-Allah's religious understanding is that he interpreted Islamic teachings in the context of contemporary needs and demands of the society. He presented these teachings as a remedy for the socio-political and religious ills of his times. Hence, his concept of God-consciousness entails the meaning of a pure relationship between God and individuals. During his times, dominance of materialism, emergence of philosophical issues and crushing of Muslim political support were some primary reasons of deviation of the Muslims from Islamic teachings. So, his concept of God-consciousness was to converge people with the teachings of Islam and this concept was contextual of the socio-religious atmosphere of his times.

Shah Wali-Allah says that inculcation of rich qualities in human beings are subject to the attainment of God-consciousness. Similarly, attainment of God-consciousness is

²⁵ Ibid, pp.428-429

²⁶ Ibid, p.487

must for *Sa'adat*. Human beings who do not possess real knowledge about God, does not enjoy happiness which consequently affects their psychological aspect. Shah Wali-Allah says that the people who are far from the real knowledge of God are materialists and are more inclined towards their physical needs and hence neglect the spiritual or religious requirements (Halepota, 2021, pp. 211-213).

His perspective of comprehending Qur'an was unique. He understood Qur'an in the context of society and its moral degradation. Shah Wali-Allah says that, Allah (SWT) have bestowed me with a lot of blessings. One of them is comprehension of the Qur'an. He says that it was because of the Prophet (SAW) and his succeeding generations that through which the teachings of Holy Qur'an came to us (Wali Allah, *Fauz-ul-Kabir*, p. 13). Shah Wali-Allah speaks that while understanding the background of revelation, we have to take in to account the main objective of Qur'an with regard to the humanity. He says the main aim of Qur'an is to purify people and to modify their beliefs, action and to aware them about their bad actions. He disagrees with those *mufaserin* (those who wrote exegesis of Qur'an) who associates any incident as the reason of revelation of any verse. He says that *mufaserin* unnecessary entangle in the minor incidents. However, he says that, there are some incidents which are associated with any verse, they must mention in order to understand the verse properly²⁷.

The unsatisfactory socio-religious and political atmosphere of the society surrounded to Shah Wali-Allah aware his intellectual conscious and induced him to reform the pristine image of Islam from all the alien elements. The conservative sort of *'Ulma* and *Sūfīs*, according to him, were primarily responsible for religious decay. *'Ulmā* were contented on the blind submission to the things which was a macro hurdle in the way of Islam. The *Sūfīs* were involved in un-Islamic practices in the name of *Taşawwuf*. Consequently, the religious aspect of the Muslims was in decay. Hence, accordingly Shah Wali-Allah initiated his Islamic religious activities and services and he primarily focused on bringing Muslims close to the Qur'an. Moreover, he presented Islam on logical and rational arguments because Islam is neither irrational nor illogical. The contextual concept of God-consciousness framed and developed by Shah Wali-Allah was undeniably an effective religious mechanism for the Muslims of his times in order to restore the religious legacy and maintain a relationship with God. *Tawhīd* (oneness of God) constitutes the most insisting aspect of the Islamic teachings. It forms the base of the whole Islamic theological structure. So, God-consciousness is primary step towards fulfilling the demands of relationship of individuals with God. Since Islam has a situational and circumstantial character, hence, it has to be comprehended accordingly and the ideas of Shah Wali-Allah in this regard were compatible with the situation of his times and have legitimacy in the current times as well (Jalbani, 1973, pp. 2-4).

4. Conclusion

Shah Wali-Allah emerged in such an atmosphere where Muslim political, religious and moral aspect was in a state of decline. Due to the fall of Muslim political power, Islamic religious leadership did not made efforts to reform the Muslim society; rather they submitted themselves to the already conventional religious system. In such conditions, Shah Wali-Allah felt a need of religious reform. He attempted to uplift the Muslims at intellectual level. For that very purpose he saved the religious aspect of the

²⁷Ibid, pp.15-16

Muslim society. His primary focus was to bridge the dichotomy between Qur'an and Muslims. He explored different aspects of Qur'anic teachings with regard to the human life. One of these aspects is God-consciousness which constitutes fundamental and most insisting aspect of the Islamic teachings and which occupies a high place in the religious teachings of Shah Wali-Allah. He says that God-consciousness is primary religious mechanism to achieve the pleasure of Allah and other fortunes. Shah Wali-Allah focused more on the modification of human nature to achieve God-consciousness because human nature possesses knowledge about Allah. But the need is to comprehend that knowledge properly. He gives a high place to human intellect also along with the revelation to achieve the concept of God-consciousness. Nevertheless, sometime in the ideas of Shah Wali-Allah, there arises a controversy. Because in one place he gives importance to human reason, but in another place, he seems to neglect the importance of human reason.

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