

Comparing Religious Maturity of Hindu, Christian and Muslim Secondary School Students

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ABSTRACT

The current study attempted to examine the religious maturity of Hindu (N=1050), Christian (N=1073) and Muslim (N=1394) adolescents studying at secondary level in Pakistan. This research is based on the theory of religious orientations presented by Allport (1950). Age universal I-E scale (revised version of ROS – Religious Orientation Scale) developed by Kirkpatrick (1988) and Maltby (1999) was adopted as research instrument. Findings contribute in establishing associations among students' religious faiths and orientations. The study concludes that the students' religious affiliations are significant predictors of their religious maturity.

Keywords: Age universal I-E scale, religious orientations, Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

The Religious Orientation Scale (ROS) developed by Allport and Ross (1967) started a tradition of Allportian research in the field of religious psychology. Allport (1950) has divided individuals' religious orientation into two major forms i.e. intrinsic

and extrinsic religious orientations. Intrinsic religious orientation has intension to follow the religion as a self-serving agent. Allport denoted it as mature religiousness. The concept of intrinsic religiosity is referred to genuine, heartfelt and devout faith of a person in his religion. McFarland and Warren (1992) assert that intrinsically religious persons have commitments to their religious beliefs and values for their internal self-satisfaction. Extrinsic religious orientation, in contrast, refers to the use of religion as a means of getting security, sociability, and status. Motives for being religious, in this category, rest on social or

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external values. Allport expressed extrinsic religious orientation as immature religion. Kirkpatrick (1988) and Maltby (1999) divide extrinsic religious orientation into two further categories i.e. extrinsic personal and extrinsic social religious orientations. Extrinsic personal religiosity is to use religion for gaining personal acceptance in society whereas extrinsic social religiosity aims to ensure social security of its followers and protect their societal interests.

Research demonstrates that people with different cultural backgrounds show variations in the levels and directions of their religious orientations. Gorbani, Watson, Ghramaleky, Morris, and Hood (2002) and Flere and Lavric (2008) reveal that students with religious differences demonstrate different levels of religious maturity in different socio-cultural environments. Wald, Silverman, and Fridy (2005) Wald and Wilcox (2006) and Olson (2011), also, verify that culture, politics and society are among the major determinants of individuals' religious orientations. It raises the importance to measure and compare religious orientations of persons with different religious faiths who are living in a common socio-cultural environment.

THE CURRENT RESEARCH

Variations in people's religious orientations were observed majorly in their social, cultural, and political backgrounds. The current study challenged this idea and examined religious orientations of secondary school students who had religious affiliations with Hinduism, Christianity and

Islam. It explored the religious orientations of Hindu, Christian and Muslim Secondary school students and attempted to determine their religious maturity. The commonality among the three groups of students was their Pakistani citizenship and regular studentship of Pakistani schools (public and private) that follow Government prepared curricula.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study aimed to verify the null hypothesis that students' religious affiliations have no impact on their religious orientations. The concept of religious orientations/maturity presented by Allport (1950) was adopted in this regard. To further shape the research methodology, the study compared the religiousness of the Pakistani secondary school students who were affiliated to three major international religions i.e. Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. The trace out relationship among different aspects of the students' religious orientations was accepted as a supplementary objective of the study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Three samples of Hindu (N=1050) Christian (N=1073) and Muslim (N=1394) secondary school students were selected from 10 districts of the country. The mean ages of the Hindu, Christian and Muslim secondary school students were 13.95, 14.95 and 14.32 years respectively. The revised edition of ROS entitled age universal I-E (intrinsic-extrinsic) scale presented by Kirkpatrick (1988) and Maltby (1999) was used to assess religious orientations of the samples. Maltby and Day (2000) reported high

internal reliabilities for the subscales of age universal I-E scale in previous research.

FINDINGS

In the initial phase of the statistical analysis of data, consistency and accuracy of the adopted instrument were estimated on the Pakistani sample. Average scores of split-half reliability and Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for three subscales on separate and combined samples were highly satisfactory (Table 1).

The three factors model for age universal I-E scale was tested applying Confirmatory

Factor Analysis (CFA) on the data (Table 2). The values of Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Goodness-of-Fit Statistic (GFI), Root Mean Square Residual (RMR), and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) are sufficiently appropriate for the scales according to criteria presented by Jaccard and Wan (1996) and Hu and Bentler (1999).

It is important that Pakistani Hindu, Christian, and Muslim secondary school students demonstrate reserved attitude toward extrinsic social religious orientation (Table 3). Results show that the presence of extrinsic personal religiosity is

TABLE 1
Average scores of split-half reliability and Cronbach’s alpha coefficients

Sub-Scales	Hindu	Christians	Muslim	Combined
IR	0.77	0.79	0.80	0.78
EPR	0.69	0.68	0.66	0.67
ESR	0.68	0.70	0.70	0.70

IR=Intrinsic Religiosity, EPR=Extrinsic Personal Religiosity, ESR=Extrinsic Social Religiosity

TABLE 2
Basic statistics from confirmatory factor analysis testing the goodness of fit of three factors model of religious orientations

Sample	RMSEA	90% CI for RMSEA	GFI	RMR	CFI
Hindu	0.069	0.063-0.074	0.94	0.054	0.92
Christian	0.066	0.060-0.072	0.94	0.062	0.90
Muslims	0.061	0.056-0.066	0.95	0.058	0.93

RMSEA=Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, GFI=Goodness-of-Fit Statistic, RMR=Root Mean Square Residual, CFI=Comparative Fit Index

TABLE 3
Comparison of Mean Scores Revealing Religious Orientations of the Students

Students	N	IR	EPR	ESR
Hindu	1050	2.99	3.26	1.92
Christians	1073	3.07	3.47	2.07
Muslims	1394	3.16	3.39	1.97

IR=Intrinsic Religiosity, EPR=Extrinsic Personal Religiosity, ESR=Extrinsic Social Religiosity

comparatively higher than intrinsic and extrinsic social religiosities in the three samples.

Values of adjusted R^2 to demonstrate the impacts of students' religious affiliations on their intrinsic, extrinsic personal and extrinsic social religious orientations are 0.030, 0.026, and 0.028 respectively (Table 4). It reveals that according to Cohen's classification of effect size, the students' religious affiliations have small size effects on their religious orientations (Cohen, 1992). The results of ANOVA and multiple comparison tests reject the null hypothesis and verify the impacts of students' religious affiliations on their religious maturity.

Statistics demonstrate that the students' religious faiths have significant impacts on their religious orientations. Muslim secondary school students possess more intrinsic religious orientation than their Christian (MD=0.091) and Hindu (MD=0.177) fellows. The Christian students have more extrinsic personal religious orientation than their Muslim (MD=0.080) and Hindu (MD=0.208) fellows. The Christian secondary school students also possess higher extrinsic social religious orientation than their Muslim (MD=0.095) and Hindu (MD=0.146) fellows.

Values of Pearson correlation coefficient reveal that intrinsic religious orientation of the three groups of students has direct and significant relationship to their extrinsic personal religiousness (Table 5). Students' intrinsic religiosity, in contrast, has significant and indirect correlation with their extrinsic social religious orientation in the

three samples. Extrinsic personal religiosity has significant indirect correlation with extrinsic social religiosity only in the Hindu sample. The Pearson's values indicate that students' intrinsic religiosity has strong correlation with their extrinsic personal religious orientation. However the correlation between students' intrinsic religious orientation and extrinsic social religiosity is of medium size (Cohen, 1992).

DISCUSSION

Scale wise description of the data reveals that Hindu, Christian, and Muslim secondary school students possess higher extrinsic personal religious orientation than their intrinsic and extrinsic social religiousness. Flere and Lavric (2008) found similar presence of extrinsic personal religious orientation among Slovenian Catholics, Bosnian Muslims, and Serbian Orthodox. US Protestants, in contrast, reported stronger affiliation with intrinsic religious orientation than extrinsic personal and extrinsic social religiosities. Khan, Watson and Habib (2005) claimed that Pakistani Muslim university students demonstrated higher extrinsic personal religiousness than their intrinsic and extrinsic social religious orientations. It shows symmetry of religious orientations among Slovenian Catholics, Serbian Orthodox, Bosnian and Pakistani Muslim university students, as well as Pakistani Hindu, Christian and Muslim secondary school students. However the exclusion of US Protestants university students from this cohort urges to investigate driving factors of religious orientations in

TABLE 4
Impacts of Students' Religious Affiliations on their Religious Orientations

Religious Orientations	(I) Religion	(J) Religion	Mean Difference (I-J)	<i>F</i>	Adj. <i>R</i> ²
Intrinsic Religiosity	Christians	Hindu	0.087*	54.686*	0.030
	Muslims	Hindu	0.177*		
		Christians	0.091*		
Extrinsic Personal Religiosity	Christians	Hindu	0.208*	31.395*	0.026
		Muslims	0.080**		
	Muslims	Hindu	0.128*		
Extrinsic Social Religiosity	Christians	Hindu	0.146*	9.196*	0.028
		Muslims	0.095***		

*The value is significant at the 0.001 level.

**The value is significant at the 0.01 level.

***The value is significant at the 0.05 level.

TABLE 5
Relationships among Different Religious Orientations of the Students

			Intrinsic Religiosity	Extrinsic Personal Religiosity	Extrinsic Social Religiosity
Intrinsic Religiosity	Hindu	1050	1		
	Christians	1073	1		
	Muslims	1394	1		
Extrinsic Personal Religiosity	Hindu	1050	0.419*	1	
	Christians	1073	0.462*	1	
	Muslims	1394	0.423*	1	
Extrinsic Social Religiosity	Hindu	1050	-0.288*	-0.110*	1
	Christians	1073	-0.214*	-	1
	Muslims	1394	-0.332*	-	1

Note: *= Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed), **= Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

different cultures and subcultures.

To verify the research hypothesis, One-way ANOVA and multiple comparison tests were applied in General Linear Model (GLM). Values of adjusted *R*² reject the null hypothesis and show small size effects of the students' religious faiths on the three religious orientations. Multiple comparison tests confirm that the Muslim students are comparatively more intrinsically religious

than their Hindu and Christian fellows. It indicates comparatively higher presence of religious maturity among the Muslim students. The Christian students are strongly affiliated with extrinsic personal and social religious orientations than their Hindu and Muslim fellows. The correlations among the three religious orientations in Pakistani Hindu, Christian and Muslim secondary school students verify the results of previous

studies conducted on non-Pakistani samples. Religious orientations demonstrate similar correlations in the three samples.

CONCLUSION

Results support the use of age universal I-E scale on Pakistani sample and validate its Urdu translation. They also contribute in exploring religious orientations of Pakistani secondary school students having three different religious faiths. Confirmatory factor analysis endorses three factors model for measuring religious orientations of Pakistani Hindu, Christian and Muslim secondary school students through age universal I-E scale.

The study concludes that religious affiliations of the Pakistani secondary school students have significant impacts on their religious orientations. There are variances among the Hindu, Christian and Muslim secondary school students in the levels of their religious maturity. The Muslim students are more intrinsically religious than their Hindu and Christian peers. They are inclined to utilize their beliefs and religious commitments for their self-satisfaction. They prefer to accept faith for the sake of faith. In contrast, the Christian students are comparatively more intended toward extrinsic personal and social religious orientations. They prefer to create religion based groups and social cohorts to serve and secure their social and societal interests. The religious attitude of Hindu secondary school students is balanced among intrinsic, extrinsic personal and extrinsic social religiousness. Intrinsic Religiousness in

all three groups of samples is directly associated with students' extrinsic personal religiousness and inversely correlated with their extrinsic social religious orientations. Extrinsic personal and extrinsic social religious orientations of Hindu secondary school students are inversely correlated whereas this relationship is insignificant in Christian and Muslim samples.

Significant correlations between religious orientations of Hindu, Christian and Muslim secondary school students and their directions endorse the findings of previous research conducted on non-Pakistani samples. Major contribution of the current study is exploration of variances among the religious orientations of Hindu, Christian and Muslim secondary school students. Sampled students were studying the same curricula in similar educational institutions and living under common social, political and cultural environments. However findings reveal that the Muslim students are more intrinsically religious whereas the Christian students demonstrate themselves comparatively more extrinsic personal and extrinsic social religious. It elaborates the assumed role of adolescents' religious affiliations in strengthening their religious orientations. The study also suggests examining the process of developing religious orientations of Hindu, Christian and Muslim students beyond the impacts of their religious affiliations. It proposes to find out exclusive factors which play a role in developing religious orientations among the three cohorts of Pakistani students separately.

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