

Impact of Religion on the Personality Development of Non-Muslims Students Living in Pakistan

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Abstract

The current study aimed to examine the impact of religiosity on the personality development of non-Muslim students living in Pakistan. Social development, Emotional control, Attitude for various situations of life, Tolerance, Attitude towards others and creativity were the major factors that have been observed. Major contribution of study was to trace out the relationship of different religious students with their personality development. It was concluded that the personality of Christian and Hindu students was directly associated with their religious beliefs and practices. The study proposed further research in the field to investigate personality development in Christian and Hindu majority population.

Key Words: Religion, Personality, Development, Attitude

Introduction

Religion is the name of style in life. According to Durkheim's definition of religion, from Elementary Forms, is as follows: "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden – beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them." (Durkheim & swain, 2008)

Religion is important for every society for their spiritual survival. Religious education provides a framework to lead a life towards meaningful destination. It demands from human beings to think and see the greatness of lord in all the elements of nature that develops strong thinking of an individual. Furthermore, people having attachment to religion above the level of understanding hold a distinctive position. They show sincerity in comparison to other people and remain optimistic in their life. Religious oriented persons have passionate approach to deal with different issues of life and have capability to solve different problems of their life with the help of religion (Fredrickson, 2002).

Reward as well as punishment means not only after this life but in present life also. As according to the Islamic teachings this world is the name of 'Mukafat e amal', people received return of actions as order of God. It has been observed that religious practices to a great extent based on the fear of 'Jahanum' and pleasure of 'Janat.' People who have positive thinking believe more on the reward than punishment. They believe that God can forgive easily than humans. Expectation from God increased as much as man bent towards religion. People who have real meanings about how to please God focused not only beliefs and practices but also on the welfare of human beings. If a man becomes successful to please people of the community and fulfill all their rights than he is the man who really wants to see God happy or who work done for the willingness of God. Previous literature shows that religion is helpful to lessen the problems of people regarding money, family marriages, decision making etc.

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Decision making in the sense of religion is helpful to enhance the confidence and one can take any decision confidently and ready to meet any challenge of life. Educational success can be related religion in the sense of confidence of self and ready to see and discourage any type problems (Brañas-Garza et al., 2013).

According to psychologist's personality means way of thinking, acting and emotions. In case of characteristics constant and unique ways of thinking, emotions and practices are arranged into suitable order. Discussion about personality mean we think about the whole image of anything or person. So the permanent and consistent attitude of a person in all circumstances is considered as personality (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1992).

Development of personality is possible in social circle. Values and tradition affect the development of personality. Nature of personality depends on the environment in which he is living. Personalities of well fame persons are the depictions of the environment in which they were living in their childhood. That is the reason parents prefer those school for their child which has produced well known personalities that represent the environment of school life. (Venham, Murray, & Gaulin-Kremer, 1979).

Scholars who are interested in personality development agree that there is influence of inheritance on the personality development. Inheridity, consider one of the majors that shape the personality. According to Freud there is no role of heredity in personality development. This process of personality development completely is related to biological process. Some theorists gave importance to social and cultural aspects in the (McCrae & Terracciano, 2006)development of personality. Some consider that it is not true to give (Venham et al., 1979) importance to heredity and environment in the personality development. Theorist believes that only 15 to 20 percent variables are related to heredity and environment in the process of personality development.

Family is the central feature in the personality development. Role family and its values cannot be denied in personality development. Child's relationship in early age is considered very important in the phase of personality development. Child's strong relationship with family especially with parents contribute to lessen the future problems. According to Freud most of the problems that a child faced in his life are due to lack of emotional control. This is because of weak relationship with his family. He also stressed upon the importance of identity that only his family can do effectively for his child (Hetherington, 1972).

Scholars who are interested in study of personality have been greatly influence by religion. Frederick Wellborn was philosopher who shared this school of thought in the area of research. According to him researchers for the development of personality theories takes help from religion. Personality theories show that that there is influence of religion (Walborn, 2013).

Research Objective and Question

- To analyze the impact of religion on the personality development of non- Muslim students living in Pakistan
- What is the impact of religion on the personality development of non- Muslim students of Pakistan?

Research Methodology

This study was designed to analyze the impact of research of religion on the personality development of non-Muslim students living in Pakistan. Current study was descriptive by nature. Survey method was used to collect the data successfully. Two types of questionnaires were used for conducting this piece of research. Population of this study was all the non- Muslims living in Pakistan.

In present study purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data and to meet the challenges of this research. From all over the Pakistan students of secondary level were selected as a sample. 631 students from Christian community and 586 from Hindu sects, were selected as sample size. Total sample size was 1217. After collecting the data, process of analysis was started. Exploratory factor analysis was used to analyze the data. Also, regression analysis was applied to find out the impact of independent variable on dependent variable.

Research Findings

Table 1. Christian Students' Personality

S. No	Item No.	Statement	Factor Loading	Variance Explained	Cronbach Alpha	Agree	Disagree
1	1	Tolerance	.77			47.2	52.8
2	2	Fears of life	.69			52.0	48.0
		Attitude for various situations of life		13.052	.831.734		
3	3		.70	11.089	.812	50.1	49.9
				9.592			
				9.017	.731	52.4	47.6
4	4	Emotional Control	.91				
5	5	Social development	.79	5.548	.871	56.8	43.2
6	6	Life activities					
7	7	Uses of senses	.80	5.413	.781	49.1	50.9
		Creativity	.97	4.324	.761	48.0	52.0
8	8	Attitude towards others	.74	3.213	.817	48.5	51.5
9	9		.77	3.112	.725	51.5	48.5
		Total	.79	7.15	.784	50.7	49.3

Christian students were not tolerant by nature. More than 47 percent Hindu students showed tolerance in their personality. As Christian students do not comment on the mistakes of others and never shows critical behavior regarding others' work. They said people of this time hesitate to accept their mistakes. 52% Christian student felt fears of life in their routine life. More than 51% respondents agree that they feel inferior in social settings, avoid meeting undesirable persons, avoid embarrassing type of discussion and avoid visiting dangerous places. In case of feeling nervous with a loaded gun and spending time with high repute, 65% and 67% participants disagree with these statements. On the whole this aspect of personality can be considered the part of secondary school students' personality. More than 50% showed positive attitude towards various situations of life. Christian students never lose their heart in troubles and easily share their different opinion to superior with 53 and 55% respectively. In case of giving decision on first impression and never lose heart if friends do not like their participation in activities, more than 51% responses received in disagree ranks. On the whole students' attitude towards different situations of life is not the part of their personality. 52% students had control over their emotions. Students want to talk about the feelings of people and 65% believes that careless people are not serious about life. On the other side 65% students disagree regarding not control over emotions on occasions. Christian students were social in their dealings with others. More than 55% participants agreed that they planned activities to influence associates and do not compromise regarding social commitments. 65% Christian students can organize different social activities and 57% students had able to overcome their feeling of loneliness in different gatherings. These students were active in their life activities. As they were ready to meet the demands of life and had confidence in their dealings unlike more than 54% participants disagree regarding interviewing people because they were shy by nature. 48% students can effectively use their senses as more than 56% participants' claim that they are sensitive, and way of talking is painful for them. In case of more than 53% said that there is no one that helps them in troubles and also, they never take tension if someone badly thinks about them. On the whole Christian students to some extent sensitive by nature. More than 48% Christian students were creative by nature. More than 53% students were agreeing in case of their memory not accept new things, not effectively put ideas into practice also not critical towards others' work. Christian students' attitude towards others was very positive. More than 52% participants agreed regarding people should continue their effort. Christian students did not like to deceive others. They thought that people did not admit their mistakes. Christian students remained their attitude positive regarding commenting on other mistakes.

Table 2. Hindu Students’ Personality

S. No	Item No.	Statement	Factor Loading	Variance Explained	Cronbach Alpha	Agree	Disagree
1		Social development	.79	11.538	.756	47.5	52.5
2		Tolerance	.85	10.052	.711	43.3	56.6
3		Emotional Control	.92	8.483	.845	55.8	44.2
4		Fears of life	.89	8.105	.789	51.1	49.9
5		Attitude for various situations of life	.73	7.592	.812	48.3	51.7
6		Creativity	.76	6.128	.713	48.7	51.3
7		Life activities	.72	5.824	.718	52.1	41.9
8		Uses of senses	.77	5.606	.801	45.3	54.7
9		Attitude towards others	.77	3.678	.837	49.0	51.0
		Total	.8	7.445	.775	49.0	51.0

Hindu students were not social in their routine life. They felt loneliness and worthlessness in social settings and cannot actively organize different activities. More than 68% respondents said they are critical by nature and so that comment on others’ mistakes along with 63% said that people never admit their mistakes. This shows intolerant behavior of Hindu students. Only 43% students tolerant in their behavior. Hindu student had emotional control. These students had emotional control over their emotions on different occasions. Only 41% Hindu participants said that they prefer to talk about the feelings of people. Emotional attitude of Hindu students helpful to stable their feelings in different gatherings. More than 51% students had fears of life. More than 52% participants agree like feel fear regarding loss of happiness; avoid visiting dangerous places and embarrassing discussion unlike 69% participants disagreed regarding feeling in public places. On the whole Hindu students’ shows fear in their personality. Only 48% students showed positive attitude towards various situations of life. Hindu participants never lose their heart in troubles and easily share their different opinion to superior with 53 and 56% respectively. In case of giving decision on first impression and never lose heart if friends do like their participation in activities, 54 and 59% responses received in disagree ranks. On the whole attitude for various situation of life is not the part of their personality. More than 48% Hindu students were creative. 63% students do not accept new things and more than 52 % students not effectively put their ideas into practice also never critical by nature. On the whole this shows creativity is not the part of Hindu students’ personality. More than 52% students were active in their life activities. More than 56% respondents agree that they are confident and ready to meet the demand of life unlike more than 54% participants disagree regarding interviewing people because they are shy persons in their daily life. On the whole students’ participation in life activities is good. 45% students had the ability to use their senses in life activities. More than 52% students agree that they avoid embarrassing type of things, disturb with horrible voices, quick decisions and guilt make them upset and way of talking painful them. More than 51% participants disagree that they are sensitive and others badly thinking makes them upset also 65% participants disagree regarding others no one see them in troubles. 49% participants had positive attitude towards others. More than 50% in favour of this aspect of personality like people should continue their effort and never deceive others, also normally people are reluctant to admit their mistakes. In other case more than 65% participant disagreed regarding comment on others’ mistakes and less interested in practical approach than spirituality. On the whole this element can be seen in Hindu students’ personality to some extent.

Table 3. Religiosity of Christian Students

S. No	Item No.	Statement	Factor Loading	Variance Explained	Cronbach Alpha	Agree	Disagree
1	1	Beliefs	.69			48.4	51.6
2				28.455	.743		
3	2	Personal Practices	.62	8.558	.815	50.5	49.5
4							
5	3	Experience based practices	.66	8.324	.817	57.0	43.0
		Total	.66	15.112	.791	51.9	48.1

More than 48% Christian students had strong beliefs. More than 53% students said, have strong feelings of God's presence, teacher's role in the development of students' beliefs, valued doubts related to religion, and there are many important things in life than religion. On the other hand, more than 52% of respondents disagree regarding, there is unseen power that govern the universe, expecting change in religion, question about religion responsible closeness to religion, and in last 53% participants agree that fear of life death kept them restless. More than 50% Christian students personally practiced religious practices. more than 53% student agreed with the prayer is for peace and happiness, life cannot be enjoyed with religion, and religious leaders are not helpful in religious guidance while more than 50% respondents disagreed with religion offers comfort in times of troubles, actions are more important than beliefs, try hard to live according to religious rules, and about 50% disagreed that doubts about religion are upsetting. 57% students had experienced based religious practices. More than 52% participants said that practical men were not created in religious environment. According to these students a purposeful life is better than mere praying. 66% agreed religious activities should be the part of school program. More than 65% person Christian students agreed that God fearing people were not helpful to needy persons.

Table 4. Religiosity of Hindu Students

S. No	Item No.	Statement	Factor Loading	Variance Explained	Cronbach Alpha	Agree	Disagree
1		Beliefs	.67			44.0	56.0
2				34.455	.718		
3		Personal Practices	.65	7.654	.756	53.7	46.3
4							
5		Experienced based practices	.73	6.881	.823	51.0	46.0
6							
		Total	.68	12.011	.766	49.5	51.5

44% Hindu students had religious beliefs. More than 53% student agree with, have strong feeling of God's presence, believe in religion that unite human beings, role model teacher can polish beliefs of students and there are many things in life more important than religion. More than 53% participants disagree regarding believe on unseen power, asking question about religious beliefs, expecting change in religion, value to doubts regarding

religion conviction, and 65% disagreed that fear of life after death keeps restless. More than 53% Hindu students had personally practiced religious practices. more than 50% respondents agree with religion offers me comfort in times of sadness, Experiences based practices of religious beliefs; prayer is for peace and happiness, life is not enjoyable with religion and about 50% said religious leaders do not guide them while 59% and 56% respondents disagreed regarding trying hard to live according religious values and life experience responsible to rethink about beliefs. On the whole Hindu students' personal practices are reflector of their personality. 51% of these students had experience based religious practices. More than 52% participants agreed regarding actions are more important than beliefs, religious activities should be the part of school program, practical men are not created in religious environment and 53% said that purposeful life is better than mere praying. On the other hand, disagree that God fearing are helpful.

Table 5. Impact of Religion of Non-Muslims on their' Personality Development

B	Std. Error	T	Sig	F	R Square
.287	.119	11.113	.000*	11.778	.077

Note. Dependent Variable: Personality Development

Significant at 0.05 level

The value of correlation (.077) shows that there is positive correlation between student's Religiosity and Personality Development. The square value of R (.077) showed that 7% total variance in the (dependent variable) by Religiosity (independent variable). The F- value (F = 11.778), p = .000) is significant at .05 level of significance so the result is significant. It suggests a linear relationship between the personality development and religiosity of non-Muslim students living in Pakistan. The value of independent variable that is school related factors ($\beta = .287$) in coefficient table represents the extent to which the independent variable contributes to the value of dependent variable which is personality development. The t-value (t = 11.113, p = .000) is also significant, which indicates that there is Impact of Religion on Personality Development of non- Muslims living in Pakistan. It means that independent variable had positive impact on dependent variable.

Discussion

[Abu-Raiya \(2014\)](#) concluded in his research work that changes in the factors like kindness, polite behavior, positive thinking, satisfaction and humanity are responsible to a great extent in order to develop the human personality positively or negatively. These factors in current study included dimensions of personality of Christian and Hindu students that are different in their own way. Abu-Raiya debated and discussed that these elements affect beliefs and practices of students on the whole. In current research, personality is dependent variable while in Abu-raiya's study personality traits are deemed as independent variable.

Religion helps to know the meanings of life and importance of others' feelings. Religious beliefs are negatively correlated with neuroticism but have positive and significant correlation with agreeableness, openness, extraversion and conscientiousness. ([Khoynezhad et al., 2012](#)) used big five factor model while the present study used HEXACO model of personality that is an extension of big five factor model. Performance in education is linked with personality traits as it affects intelligence level of students. Strong self-belief of an individual is one of the permanent traits of students' personality and they display it intensively through educational performance ([Zhang & Ziegler, 2018](#)). Results of current study concluded that there is a significant impact of religiosity on personality development.

Religiosity of socially active individuals get influenced differently as compared to an introvert. People who are active in social activities had strong religious beliefs than who shows passive behavior in their life activities. ([Kemp, 1999](#)). The current study has also shown that beliefs and practices of socially active individuals (Christians students) get influenced differently as compared to those who are not that social (Hindu students).

Personality traits like depression is different in males and females. Depression is highly observed in female community. The reason of depression is defined as the feelings of helplessness which arise when someone feels that he or she has less control over world and activities related to the life (Mogan.1986). In current study, this

issue has been reported based on the assumptions of students that male and female have different personality traits and religious beliefs. Personality traits like social development, emotional control and tolerance are differently observed in male and female personalities

Conclusion

The study concludes that social development, emotional control, fears of life and tolerance are the most prominent features of Christian and Hindu students' personality. They were not so active regarding uses of their senses and in life activities. As Christian and Hindu students were the sample of this study. Personality features in these students were different from one another. Christian students were active and confident in life activities; their attitude about others life and priorities is positive. They were social in their life activities. These students were showed honest behavior as advising others. Christian students effectively use their senses and had positive attitude towards others. These students had emotional control over their feelings. Hindu students were not social in their dealings. They had positive attitude for various situations of life. These students had emotional control and had ability to stable their emotions in different gatherings. They were also active in different life activities like Christian students. Christian students had the ability to tolerate ill behavior of other students than Hindu participants.

In this research two basic aspects of religiosity, beliefs and practices were discussed. Christian students' have faith in God but they do not have belief about unseen power. They give value to doubts and suspicions about religion. They think that there are many other important things than religion in life and get upset easily when they think about life after death. Christian seek pleasure in praying as they feel it is for peace and happiness. On the other hand, they feel that these activities are a kind of hurdle in the amusement of life. Religious leaders are not so helpful for them in guiding and answering different questions regarding religion. Their experienced based practices conclude that religious activities should be part of the school activities. Purpose of life is more important than mere praying life, it is not necessary that people who have fear of God are always be kind and helpful to other people. Purpose of religion is to unite human beings who have very strong feeling of the presence of God. They are not interested in asking questions about religion and doubts regarding religion does not change their religious values. Fears of life after death is not so upsetting for them and religion is not more important than other things of life. Practically, they realized prayer is for peace and happiness especially in times of trouble.

Hindu students also have strong belief in God's presence but not in unseen power. They believe that religion has the power to unite human beings. Religious beliefs can be observed in students' personality if teacher is a role model. Hindu students do not like to ask religious questions to others. They have no fear of life after death nor do they want change in their religious values. They give more importance to other things in life than religion. Their personal practices show that religion is a piece of happiness and comfort but they do not try to live according to their religious values. Religious leaders are not helpful for them in guiding and answering different questions about religion. Hindu students said that God fearing people are not always be helpful for others. They thought that purposeful life is better than mere praying God. According to these students' religious activities should be as part of school curriculum.

The value of correlation (.077) shows that there was positive significant relationship between religiosity and personality development. The p-value (.000*) shows that there was significant impact of religion on personality development of non- Muslims living in Pakistan.

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