



ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

Impact of Religion on Students' Performance: A Study Among Muslim Students in District Bahawalpur

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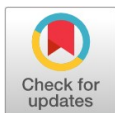
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Abstract— This research study was designed to investigate the impact of religion on students' performance: a study among Muslim students. The population of the study was secondary school students in District Bahawalpur. Multistage sampling technique was used to select the sample. Total of 480 secondary school students were included in the study. Researchers adopted Comprehensive Measure of Islamic Religion (CMIR) to measure the Islamic religion of Muslim students. A self-developed questionnaire was used to measure the student's performance at the secondary level. Religion was further divided into two subscales. 1. Religious belief and 2. Religious practice. The Significant findings of this study were: Students strongly believe in their religion and follow their religious rules. They avoid sin and do well. It was also observed that they prayed to GOD for help and ideal students maintain a balance between curriculum and co-curriculum activities. This research will open avenue for scholars and as well practioners from the religious point of view.

Index Terms— Religion, Religious belief, Religious practice, Students' performance

Received: 18 January 2023; **Accepted:** 23 March 2023; **Published:** 31 May 2023



Introduction

Religion is deep-rooted in men and women and their blood from the start of the creation of world. It is ruled by his way of wondering and behavior. Theorists and scholars faced problems in outlining faith. Defining religion isn't always an easy challenge. Less massive sort of professionals have described the faith in several aspects. Amongst them steady with King, Mc Culugh, and Lason (2001) religion is a planned tool of faith, practice, customs and symptoms.

Religion is renowned for powering human beings' awareness, questioning, way of residing and behavior (Waheed & Jam, 2010; Zamani-Fahani & Mussa, 2012). Suppose a person believes in the existence of God, social standards, rituals, customs, and way of life which a faith provides. Then no unusual experience can be seen of all that follows via a follower closer to a particular faith.

Stark and Glock (1968) outline religion as one style of cost orientation, the institutionalized systems of a way of life, principles, and practice that provide human beings with answers to their questions. Equal attitude approximately religion is described by James (2004), who considered the spiritual reports as personal and institutional religions. In step with him, institutional faith is the faith of the institution of human beings and community that has sturdy own family individuals with the sociology of faith at the same time as personal faith is a

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device to go along with their contradictory persona (Emons, 2003; Zada et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2022; Saba et al., 2021). Faith may include sizable authority on individuals' thinking, ethics, manners, attitude and behavior (Faam, Waler, & Erdogan, 2004; Delner, 1990; Kaushal, 2018; Saeed et al., 2023).

In numerous ways, faith defines the requirements for life-styles (Faam et al., 2004; Zada et al., 2023; Saeed et al., 2022). and expands proper judgment of feel and purpose for humans. On the alternative hand, the followers of Hindus and Buddhists do not eat red meat, even as Muslims ought to prepare their food in a Halal manner. Consequently, religion is the effect of life which gives the tradition and values of unique non-secular agencies.

Previous research has explored the influence of religion on students' academic outcomes, there is a dearth of up-to-date research focusing specifically on Muslim students in this geographical context. A recent citation by Naz, Hafeez, and Lodhi (2023) highlights the importance of investigating the potential impact of religious beliefs, practices, and values on academic performance, taking into account the unique socio-cultural context of Muslim students in District Bahawalpur. This calls for a comprehensive investigation to better understand the complex dynamics between religion and educational outcomes among this specific population.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

1. To know the spiritual faith of secondary school students.
2. To identify the religious practice of secondary school students.
3. To find out the impact of religion on students' performance.

Research Questions

1. How Pakistani secondary school students are affiliated with their religion?
2. To what extent the religious practice of secondary school students?
3. How students religion effect on their performance?

Review of Literature

Faith is an essential component of human existence that involves ideals, practices, and values focused across the worship of the greater supernatural beings or forces. It often affords people a sense of means and cause and can impact their behaviors, attitudes, and worldviews (Assor et al., 2021; Majeed et al., 2023; Saeed et al., 2022).

The steps and measures of human being accepted and believed to be real by a group of people without any confrontation is known religion. The individuals have firm conviction in rituals; traditions and the omnipresence of God in the domain of religion. The rationale and justification of such practices among the people of some area are believed to be religion. The prevalent of such religion is unflinching and unyielding in terms of its beliefs and dogmas. The notion of religiosity has been expounded by different researchers and experts of theology.

During the Arabic period, Muslims submitted to the desire of Allah (God) and popularity of His instructions as decided in the Holy Quran.

Inside the vision of Watt (1988) Islam claims that it is the very last faith, and that it includes in Quran and the Sunna all of the crucial non-secular and moral reality required through using the whole human race from now till the cease of time. It holds that every theological truth has come here from the first, even though it admits that the Sharia became grade by grade elaborated over three centuries of Islam through the utilization of really qualified religious students, those now referred to as Ulema.

The Social viewpoint of Islam indicates Islamic idea and opinions of life-style, customs, life-style, social values, several ceremonies, social etiquettes, institutional norms, cultural developments and structural and regular practical associations of society. Islamic philosophy of lifestyles specializes in the benefits of cleanliness, healthy life-style, right deeds, ordinary of life-styles significance of time and behavioral norms and many others. It prescribes some guide about collaboration, accommodations, integration or maybe clashes in society. There are similes of moral values, shared responsibility, kindness and humility, the position of problem, love, forgiveness, unbiasedness and its characteristic in ensuring social harmony in the society. All the above-defined developments are referred to as the religiosity of a person which may also furthermore range from person to character (Haught, 2015; Zada et al., 2023).

According to Smith, Feldwisch, and Abell (2016) religion is based on certain values, beliefs and actions that gives solutions to everyday problems related to survival, lead a balanced life and gives hope to become successful in life. Religion has two aspects, says James (2004). According to him religious beliefs are personal and institutional. The institutional religion deals with the community of people and guides the individuals how to form a healthy society of the group of people where their common cause is same and their beliefs are shared under

the umbrella of certain set of dogmas known as religion. On the other hand personal religion paves the way of individuals that leads them to face the challenges and problems of split personality (Ahmed et al., 2023; Akhtar et al., 2023; Saeed, Khan, Zada & Zada, 2023).

The theological concept of religion may be defined as an anthology of certain beliefs and convictions among the individuals about the existence of God and His commandments through scriptures and holy books. Religions harbinger success and accomplishments for the followers who abide by the set of rules and principles. The followers and believers are supposed to follow the set of principles as a message of God. By following the message of God, religions make sure the success of the devotees in this world and the world hereafter (Tsang and McCullough, 2013; Asif, Weenink & Mascini, 2023; JAMAL et al., 2023).

The sociological concept of the religion encompasses the set of beliefs and spiritual representations of the followers to present and portray their personal creed and doctrine about a certain religion. According to Unis (2018) the followers of a certain religion represent and exhibit abstract and theoretical sets of habits, behavior and attitude in a society that is accepted by the people in their surroundings. In this way, religion serves a sociological role in uniting people of common interests and attitudes.

Faith in accordance with Islam ought to not down regulate the relation of man to God, but need to manage moreover and without a doubt define the proper relation among humans and their fellow-creatures. The Holy Quran gives the softer virtues on the facet of natural mood, cordiality of accurate manners, sympathy, humanity, openness, forgiveness, mercy, equality and equity in dealing, care of orphans, serving the unwell, appreciation for superiors and girls, supporting the needy and the destitute with persuasion.

H1: Religion has positive effect on Muslim student’s performance

Theoretical Framework

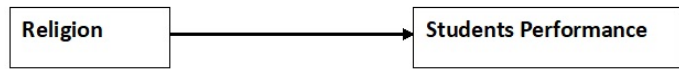


Fig. 1 Theoretical Framework

Methodology

The purpose of the study is to analyze the Impact of Religion on Students’ Performance: A study among Muslim students in District Bahawalpur. All secondary school students of district Bahawalpur were included in the population. The Researchers selected 12 secondary schools and 40 students selected in each selected school. Researchers adopted Comprehensive Measure of Islamic Religion (CMIR) to measure the Islamic religion of Muslim students. Another type of data required from the sample was regarding students’ performance. The Self-developed questionnaire used for measure the students’ performance of secondary school students. The data was collected through questionnaire from secondary school students. Researcher personally visited the schools and distribute the questionnaire with clear instructions for data collection.

Data was distributed among all students and they were guide accordingly to fill the questioners properly. To analyze the data SPSS software latest version was used to verify the results. In this study we used different data analysis techniques such as descriptive statistics, reliability analysis and regression analysis for the main variables of the study.

Result and Discussion

Factor Analysis

Table I shows that students have strong believe on their religion and then follow their religious rules. They have strong faith in GOD and the Day of Judgment. This table manifests the effect of moral stories on people life. The Accumulative mean score of 4.18 reveals that religious belief affects a person’s life.

Table I
Factor 1: Religious Belief

Sr #	Item	Statement	SDA/DA		SA/A		M
			f	%	f	%	
1	1	I live all my life according to my religious beliefs.	30	91.5	439	6.3	4.30
2	27	I pray to protection.	20	4.2	450	93.8	4.34
3	13	Life events strengthen my belief in Destiny.	47	9.8	379	79	4.03
4	33	Prophets' life stories inspire me in my life.	35	5.2	442	92.1	4.23
5	24	I spend time in private thought.	25	5.2	412	85.9	4.03
6	6	I have strong logic of God's presence.	51	10.6	405	84.4	4.20
7	29	My style to life is built on my religion.	62	13.5	360	75	3.95
8	8	Prayer is for peace and pleasure.	45	9.3	417	86.9	4.15
9	16	I take the Prophet as a model in my life.	26	7.5	436	90.8	4.34
10	10	I rely on God's help in hard times.	26	5.5	440	91.7	4.27
11	18	I often remember the Judgment Day.	39	8.2	407	84.4	4.12
12	15	I feel discomfort when missing worship time.	35	7.3	427	88.9	4.15
13		Accumulative Religious Belief (Mean)	4.18				

Table II
Factor 2: Religious Practice

Sr #	Item	Statement	SDA/DA		SA/A		M
			f	%	f	%	
1	36	My dress in accordance with religion.	104	21.7	340	70.8	3.71
2	31	I spend time with my friends at prayer place.	252	52.5	194	40.4	2.74
3	38	I begin work on the name of God.	44	9.2	425	88.5	4.27
4	41	I enjoy reading about my religion.	74	15.4	370	77.1	3.91
5	17	I often visit the prayer place.	134	28	308	64.2	3.60
6	45	I attend the religious meetings.	105	21.9	328	68.3	3.70
7	30	I make financial contributions to religious organizations.	126	26.3	242	50.4	3.33
8	20	Pay visits to relatives as a religious duty.	102	21.3	332	69.2	3.66
9	12	I Prefer to deal with people whose religious commitment is high.	70	4.6	392	81.7	3.98
10	3	I give Charity as a religious duty.	50	10.4	390	81.2	4.04
11	23	I advise others to do well and avoid crime.	25	2.5	463	90.0	4.18
12	26	I help people in their difficulties for God's sake.	19	4.30	446	92.9	4.30
13		Accumulative Religious Practice (Mean)	3.78				

Table II illustrates the students' religious practices in their daily life. They do good deeds and considered it a part of their religion. They avoid sin and do well. It was also observed that they prayed to GOD for help. The Accumulative mean score of 3.78 demonstrates that religious practice has great influence in a society.

Table III describes that students' believe in self-learning and regularity in their studies while others depend upon their luck for their success. Exams are real test of students' progress but some students considered it awful. An ideal student maintains a balance between curriculum and co-curriculum activities. Accumulative Mean score: 3.68 reveal that performance of a student depends upon his interest in studies. The reliability analysis results shows that Religion has $\alpha = 0.83$ value which is acceptable and students performance has $\alpha = 0.85$ value which is also acceptable.

Table III
Factor 3: Students' Performance

Sr #	Item	Statement	SDA/DA		SA/A		M
			f	%	f	%	
1	25	I believe on self-learning.	51	10.7	411	85.7	3.98
2	11	I actively participate in classroom activities.	72	15	384	80	3.89
3	5	I do my homework regularly.	27	5.6	442	92.1	4.21
4	28	I spend my vacant in self-learning.	60	12.5	374	77.9	3.90
5	14	I study harder to improve my performance.	72	15	369	76.9	3.81
6	7	I spend more time with my friends in school.	173	36	260	54.2	3.13
7	43	I prefer finishing my homework daily basis.	29	6.1	425	88.5	4.12
8	40	I prepared lesson on regular basis.	35	7.3	417	86.9	4.08
9	19	I want to get good marks in examination.	21	4.4	444	92.5	4.38
10	32	I have good relationship with fellows and teachers.	33	6.9	426	88.7	4.15
11	35	I only study before exam.	272	56.7	171	35.6	2.69
12	4	My academic performance based on my effort.	132	27.5	323	67.3	3.44
13	37	My academic performance depends on luck.	147	30.6	237	49.4	3.28
14	21	My academic performance depends on the teachers.	209	43.5	226	47.5	3.06
15	9	I get worried when I have anpaper.	153	31.9	266	55.5	3.30
16	42	I spend more time in games.	263	54.8	186	38.3	2.85
17	39	I spend less time in academic activities.	220	45.8	220	45.8	3.03
18	34	I use the library well.	93	19.3	337	70.2	3.62
19	22	I request classmate for help.	48	10	414	86.3	3.99
20	44	I make good use of the time.	20	4.1	435	90.6	4.21
21	2	I spend time and effort in the difficult subjects.	26	5.4	430	89.6	4.15
22		Accumulative Students' Performance (Mean)	3.68				

Table IV
T-Test

Factor	Gender	N	Mean	t	df	p-value
Religion	Boy	240	4.0543	3.057	478	.002
	Girl	240	3.9104			
	Girl	240	3.72			
Students Performance	Boy	240	3.69	.590	478	.556
	Girl	240	3.67			

Table IV shows that an Independent sample *t*-Test was run to find out the Gender-wise effects of religion on students. The result of this table demonstrates that a significant difference was observed between male and female students' performance ($t = 3.057, p = .002$).

Table V
Regression Table

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	B	t	Sig	F	R	R Square
Students' Performance	Religion	.577	15.433	.000	238.178	.577	.333

Table V indicates the Impact of religion on students' performance. The ($F = 238.178, p = .000$) value is significant. The value of the independent variables represent that one unit increase in the independent variable will increase ($B = .577$) in the dependent variable. The value of ($t = 15.433, p = .000$) is also significant.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study delved into the impact of religion on the academic performance of Muslim students in District Bahawalpur. Through an in-depth analysis of existing literature and empirical research, several key findings emerged. Firstly, religion plays a significant role in shaping the educational outcomes of Muslim students in District Bahawalpur. It was observed that religious beliefs, practices, and values have a direct influence on students' motivation, discipline, and overall engagement in their academic pursuits. Secondly, the study revealed that the impact of religion on students' performance is multifaceted and context-specific. The socio-cultural environment, educational policies, and community support were identified as crucial factors that interact with religious influences to shape students'

academic achievements. Additionally, it was found that the involvement of religious institutions and religious leaders in educational settings has both positive and negative implications for students' performance, depending on the nature and quality of their involvement. Furthermore, the study highlights the need for a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the relationship between religion and academic performance among Muslim students. Future research should consider exploring the specific mechanisms through which religious factors affect educational outcomes, as well as investigating potential moderating variables that may influence this relationship. Overall, this study contributes to the existing literature by shedding light on the complex interplay between religion and students' performance, providing valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders in the educational domain to better support Muslim students in District Bahawalpur and beyond.

Students have firm beliefs in their religion and then follow their religious rules. They have strong faith in GOD and the Day of Judgment. Students' religious practices in their daily life. They do good deeds and consider it a part of their religion. They avoid sin and do well. It was also observed that they prayed to GOD for help.

Students believe in self-learning and regularity in their studies while others depend upon their luck for their success. Exams are real test of students' progress but some students consider them awful. An ideal student maintains a balance between curriculum and co-curriculum activities.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite the valuable insights gained from this study on the impact of religion on students' performance among Muslim students in District Bahawalpur, there are certain limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the research focused solely on District Bahawalpur, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other regions or populations. Future studies should include a more diverse range of locations to provide a broader understanding of the relationship between religion and academic performance among Muslim students. Secondly, the study primarily relied on self-report measures and subjective assessments, which may introduce response biases or social desirability effects. The inclusion of objective measures, such as standardized test scores or GPA, could enhance the robustness of the findings. Additionally, the study did not explore the potential mediating or moderating variables that may influence the relationship between religion and students' performance. Future research could investigate factors such as parental involvement, socioeconomic status, or cultural norms to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the underlying mechanisms. Furthermore, this study primarily focused on the impact of religion on academic performance, neglecting other important domains of student development, such as socio-emotional well-being or character development. Exploring these aspects would provide a more holistic understanding of the influence of religion on students' overall growth and success. Finally, this study did not incorporate a longitudinal design, which could track the changes in students' performance and religious experiences over time. Longitudinal research would enable a more in-depth exploration of the causal relationships and temporal dynamics involved. By addressing these limitations and pursuing future directions, researchers can advance our understanding of the intricate relationship between religion and students' performance, facilitating the development of targeted interventions and support systems for Muslim students and beyond.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and insights from the study on the impact of religion on students' performance among Muslim students in District Bahawalpur, several policy recommendations can be put forth to enhance educational outcomes and support the unique needs of this student population.

Firstly, it is essential to promote a culturally inclusive and sensitive educational environment that respects and accommodates religious practices and beliefs. Educational policymakers should develop guidelines and resources for schools in District Bahawalpur to ensure that religious observances and practices are not only tolerated but also integrated into the curriculum in a meaningful way. This could involve incorporating religious studies into the academic curriculum, providing flexible scheduling options during religious holidays, and creating prayer spaces within school premises.

Secondly, there is a need for comprehensive teacher training programs that equip educators with the knowledge and skills to understand and address the religious and cultural diversity among Muslim students. Teachers should be trained to recognize and appreciate the influence of religion on students' performance and to create inclusive classroom environments that foster religious tolerance and understanding. Providing ongoing professional development opportunities and resources for teachers will ensure that they are well-prepared to support the academic and socio-emotional needs of Muslim students.

Furthermore, policymakers should consider initiatives to strengthen the partnership between educational institutions and religious communities. Collaborative efforts between schools, mosques, and community organizations can provide valuable support networks for students and their families. This could involve engaging religious leaders and organizations in educational activities, establishing mentoring programs, and organizing workshops and seminars that promote positive integration of religious and academic values.

Lastly, policymakers should allocate resources to conduct further research on the nuanced aspects of the relationship between religion and academic performance among Muslim students. Investing in longitudinal studies, interdisciplinary research, and data collection on a larger scale would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing student outcomes. Such research can inform evidence-based policymaking and guide the development of targeted interventions and support systems for the benefit of Muslim students in District Bahawalpur.

By implementing these policy recommendations, educational stakeholders can create an inclusive, supportive, and culturally sensitive educational environment that optimizes the academic potential of Muslim students, ultimately contributing to their overall success and well-being.

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