RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION, FAMILIAL TIES, AND RESPECT OF URBAN ELDERS: EVIDENCE
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PJAEE, 18 (4) (2021)

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Abstract

The present study was aimed to investigate the relationship between religious orientation, familial ties, and respect for elders. Respect for elders is decreasing even in traditional, developing, and patriarchal societies because of the interplay of globalized modern ideals and traditional values. Nevertheless, this is an important area of research because respect is closely correlated withthe social, physical, and psychological wellbeing of the elders. For achieving research objectives and testing hypotheses, the researcher conducted a cross-sectional survey. The survey was conducted among 400 elders who were selected using a probability sampling technique. Data were analyzed using SPSS IBM Version 21.0.Results of the study indicate a positive relationship between independent variables i.e. familial ties, religious orientation, and

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dependent variable respect of elders. An increase in respect for elders was noted among families that were more religious and integrated in comparison to less religious and less integrated families.

Keywords: Aging, familial ties, respect, religious orientation, social status of elders in Pakistan

Introduction

In many scholarly studies, it is claimed that the aging affects the social status of the individuals both negatively and positively. It also affects their dignity and well-being (KulakçıAltıntas¸ & Aslan, 2020). It is found that elders are treated differently in different social sectors of the country. It is stated that respect for the elders is higher in rural settings as compared to urban settings. In addition, elders feel loneliness in modern housing societies as compared to rural and even urban settings (Wu & Sheng, 2020). However, cultural factors play a very important role in determining the social status of individuals. In patriarchal societies, elders often enjoy power and prestige because of cultural factors. Nevertheless, patriarchal societies including Pakistani society are experiencing a demographic transition. Similarly, traditional values and customs are also changing very rapidly all around the world which directly affects the social life of the elders. Every age group demands different requirements. On the same patterns, elders also need some basic facilities and necessities to live a prosperous life (Manor, 2020).

Elderlyis different from all the other age groups. Their needs and requirements are different based on their age and physical strength. With the increase in their age, their physical strength decreases which affects their psychological strength as well (Kaushik, 2020). From independent earning individuals they become dependent on their families for their needs and requirement. Their dependence upon their families initiates a plethora of problems for them including financial, social, and health problems them. Their social security in most of the developing countries is based on their social status in their families (Phelan, 2020).

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In the current era of social change, values, and norms are rapidly changing. Similarly, many norms and values which were linked to the respect and status of elders are changing (Haubner, 2020). Hence, the respect and status of the elders are also changing at the same pace. In most societies, even in developing societies, the value of ascribed status is decreasing, and the importance of the achieved status is increasing. Achieved status because of power and privileges is widely accepted and recognized (Reichel et al., 2020). In such societies where achieved status is practiced, the younger, energetic, and working segment of society receive higher respect and privilege. On the other hand, younger working individuals behave in a dominant and deviant manner. Elders because of their dependent position in families receive less attention and respect as compared to working and independent individuals which decrease their respect in the family (Acheson & Malone, 2020).

On the contrary, traditional, and religious families are fewer victims of this contemporary social and demographic transition. Elders in such traditional and religious families still receive enough respect and privilege because of the cultural factors. However, the traditional family system and values are also declining because of the global social change (Ibrahim & Ali, 2020). In most of the urban societies, the nuclear family system is getting more and more importancewith an individualistic approach towards the life. This change in the family system also brought some new problems for individuals mainly in urban areas. Earning power is gaining more and more reverence to the younger people and the ascribed status of the elders is losing its power on family members (Sabzwari&Azhar, 2011).

However, Khan and Fazaldad (2016) found that elders enjoy power and privilege in traditional Pakistani families. They are enjoying this power and privilege since the early years of Pakistani history. They are respected and obeyed in every matter of the household. They are given respect mainly because of their experience and wisdom. Hence, they are receiving respect, privilege, and power. However, because of the social change, now elders are

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not respected in the same way as they were before (Sabzwari&Azhar, 2011). Nevertheless, traditional, and religious values are still working in developing societies like Pakistani which might increase the respect of elders. On the other hand, respect for elders is also decreasing because of the breakdown of traditional values and norms. Similar findings were compiled by Jalal and Younis (2014) in which they claimed that the breakdown of the family system is one of the reasonsfor the lower status of elders in Pakistan.

Furthermore, Sabzwari and Azhar (2011) found that elders who live in a joint family system were found to be happier and their ties with their family members were stronger. However, the probability of living in a nuclear family in Pakistan is also increasing where elders (parents or grandparents) live in a nuclear family. Elders living in the nuclear family system felt loneliness and less respect as compared to the elders living in the joint family system. Moreover, the role of individual characteristics is also significant in determining respect and familial ties of elders (Cheema, 2011). Baars et al. (2016) found that modernization and globalization are changing the family system in many societies in which extended traditional families are turning into a modernand more and more nuclear family system. This change in family system is leading towards the breakdown of familial ties of elders with their families. Breakdown of familial ties increases disrespect for the elders. In addition, weaker familial ties also decrease the social status of the elders (Powell, 2010).

Besides cultural factors, there is a predominant religious factor for the care of elders. The majority of the religions in the world ask children to take care of elderly parents (Deaton, 2009). For example, in Islam, it is mandatory taking care and fulfilling the needs of the parents in old age for their children. This implies that Islam has very clear teachings for the children taking care of their parents and even general elders in society. Islam has made it mandatory for the youthto take care of the elders. It is also obvious from the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that parents should be treated nicely, and

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they should not be disobeyed at all. This implies that religiosity and religious orientation increase respect for the elders and vice versa (Alamri, 2016).

The present study is aimed to find out the relationship between familial ties, religious orientation, and respect for elders in Lahore, Pakistan. It is important to study the status of elders in any society because the proportion of the elder population is increasing around the globe. This increase inthe elder population increases the number of dependent people in society who are not treated nicely as they deserve. Because of losing a job, they cannot earn for themselves and, cannot fulfill their basic needs. However, Sudha et al. (2006) found that elders are not treated equally,and their respect and care are temporal and spatial. In addition, there are many interrelated factors i.e.,cultural, and religious which affect their social status and respect. Globalization and modernization arealso found affecting elders and their social and psychological wellbeing (Zelalem, GebremariamKotecho&Adamek, 2020). Therefore, it is very important to analyze respect and their familial ties in developing societies.

Therefore, the present study is aimed to analyze the relationship between familial ties and respect for elders and religious orientation and respect for elders in Lahore, Pakistan. For this purpose, the researcher will test two hypotheses i.e.,stronger the familial ties higher the respect for elders, higher the religious orientation higher the respect for eldersamong people living in urban areas of Pakistan.

Methods

A cross-sectional survey design is used in the current study which is a best-suited researcher design for collecting quantitative data with a structured questionnaire. For collecting data, the researcher selected an urbanized city and capital of one of the biggest provinces of Pakistan i.e., Punjab. Lahore was selected because it is one of the highly urbanized and culturally diverse cities of Pakistan. The researcher collected data from elders (senior citizens)

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both men and women who were the residents of district Lahore. More concretely, the researcher selected only those elders who were above 60 years of age and were living with their families. The survey was conducted among a total of 400 elders. The total sample of the study was equally divided among male and female elders.

Recruitment of the respondents

Two-staged sampling strategy was used for the selection of respondents. At the first stage of the sampling, the researchers randomly selected four union councils two from rural towns and two from urban towns of district Lahore. Two census blocks were randomly selected from each union council. Hence, a total of eight census blocks were selected to conduct the study.From each sampling site (census block) an equal number of male and female interviews were conducted by the field team. Starting from any randomly selected street, the field team started a household survey while skipping two houses. At first, the field team listed the number of people above 60 years of age and used Kish Grid method to randomly select respondents. In the case of only one person above 60 years of age, he/she was selected without following Kish Grid method. Respondents were requested to take part in the survey, and they were assured that their provided information will not be shared with anyone without their prior permission. In addition, questionnaires filling from the respondents were carried out in a separate room where none of their family members were present. These precautions were taken for avoiding any influence on the respondents from other family member.

A structured survey questionnaire was used as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire includes socio-demographic characteristics, perceived respect scale (PRS), perceived religious orientation scale (PROS), and perceived familial ties scale (PFTS).Respondents were asked to provide information about their age, occupation, marital status, job status, monthly income, family types,the total number of children, and head of household. A total of 12 items scale was used in which respondents were asked to provide their responses

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ranging from highly agree to disagree about the importance of elders in society, respect, and financial position of the elders. Similarly, a ten items scale was used to measure perceived familial ties of respondents including respect for traditions in society, the higher tendency of elder members to attend family functions, advice from elder members is valued about important issues etc. In addition, an eight items scale was ranging from highly agree to disagree was used to measure perceived religious orientation including importance of religious values, the teaching about the respect for elders, declining religiosity, link of religiosity with respect of elders, and the religiosity of the elders. After initial coding and data cleaning, scales were converted into indexes which were further used in the analysis. Individual responses were added to convert scales into indexes and for testing the hypothesis. For data coding, cleaning, indexes formation, and analysis, was done using SPSS IBM Version 21.0. The analysis was carried out in two stages. At the first stage, the researcher conducted descriptive analysis and at the second stage, inferential statistical tests were applied to test the hypothesis i.e., correlation and simple linear regression.

Results

Respondents demographics

Table 1 shows the demographic information of the respondents. It shows that about 52.5% of male elderly men and 47.5% of elderly women participated in the study. About 15 questionnaires of the female respondents were rejected because of the quality issues in the data. Three out of four respondents reported their age from 60 to 70 years and the remaining respondents were above 70 years of age. However, about 8% of the total respondents reported their age above 80 years. Most of the respondents were retired, and they were not engaged in any sort of working (67.7%) while 21.4% were self-employed and 6.1 were running their businesses. About 89.7% of the respondents reported that they were married and about 10% of the respondents reported that they were never married.

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Table-1Socio-demographics characteristics of the respondents (Base=400)	f	%
Categories	f	%
Gender		
Male	207	52.5
Female	187	47.5
Age		
60-70	293	73
71-80	75	18
Above 80	32	8
Occupation		
Retired	221	67.6
Self-Employment	70	21.4
Business	20	6.1
Services	16	4.9
Marital status		
Married	339	89.7
Unmarried	39	10.3
Job-status		
Employed	275	84.9
Unemployed	49	15.1
Family type		
Joint	169	45.6
Nuclear	202	54.4
Family Income		
10000 and below	137	34.3
10001-30000	138	34.5
Above 30000	125	31.3
Male children		
1-3	270	67.5
Above 3	130	32.5
Female children		
1-3	265	66.3
Above 3	135	33.8
Head of household		
Son	233	79.8
Respondent	35	12.0
Other	24	8.2

About 84.9% of the respondents were employed while the rest of the respondents were not employed. About 34.3% of the respondents reported that their total family income is 10,000 and below. Similarly, 34% of respondents mentioned their family income from 10,001 to 30,000, and 31% reported their

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family income above 30,000 Pakistani rupees. When asked about the number
of male and female children, more than 65% of the respondents reported that
they have 1-3 male and female children, about 32% reported that the number
of male children is above three and 33% mentioned total female children
above three. Most of the respondents reported that their sons are the head of
their household and about 12% reported that they are the head of household
(Table-1).

Table 2 is the correlation test among familial ties, religious orientation, and
respect for elderly. Data in the table shows thatfamilial ties aresignificantly
correlated with religious orientation at a 99% confidence interval (CI).It
means familial ties are stronger among family members in religious-oriented
families and vice versa. On the other hand, familial ties are also moderately
and significantly correlated with respect for elders at a 95% confidence
interval. On the other hand, religious orientation is strongly correlated with
respect for elders at a 95% confidence interval. This implies that respect for
elders is higher in religious-oriented families similar to familial ties (Table-2).
Although, correlation is a powerful test to indicatea correlation between two
variables, yet it is not possible to understand the cause-effect relationship. In
other words, it indicates the mutual relationship between the two variables.
Therefore, simple linear regression analysis is applied to understand the
predictive power of independent variables i.e., familial ties, religious
orientation, and dependent respect for elders.

Table-2 Correlation among familial ties, religious orientation, and respect for elders			
Variables	Familial ties	Religious orientation	Respect for elders
Familial ties	**1**	**.303****	**.342****
Religious orientations		**1**	**.610****
Respect for elders			**1**
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)			

**Table 3. Linear regression between respect of elders and familial ties and
religious orientation** Table 3 is the is applied to understand the predictive
power of independent variables i.e., familial ties, religious orientation, and

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dependent respect for elders. Correlation between familial ties and respect for elders is moderate. However, 31% of the variation is explained in respect for elders by familial ties. One unit increase the standard deviation increase in the strength of familial ties increased .103-unit standard deviations in respect for elders. On the other hand, there is a moderately strong correlation between religious orientation and respect for elders. Religious orientation inserted 47% variation in respect for elders. On the other hand, the one-unit standard deviation increases in the religious orientation increased .525-unit standard deviations respect of elders (Model-1). The researcher also segregated data between male and female respondents to check the association between independent variables i.e., familial ties, religious orientation, and dependent variable respect of elders.

Model	Variables	R	R Square	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.
				B	Std. Error	Beta		
Model-1	Familial ties	.342	.311	.103	.033	.142	3.072	.002
	Religious orientation	.610	.473	.525	.038	.551	12.664	.000
Model-2	Familial ties	.312	.215	.062	.055	.087	1.125	.262
	Religious orientation	.527	.348	.382	.087	.342	4.381	.000
Model-3	Familial ties	.467	.301	.141	.040	.194	3.493	.001
	Religious orientation	.512	.436	.529	.038	.695	13.743	.000
Model-4	Religious orientation	.303	.254	.326	.027	.112	3.432	.000

Table-3: Linear regression between respect of elders and familial ties and religious orientation

Model-1= All the cases, Model-2= Data from male respondents, Model-3= Data from female respondents, Model-4= regression between religious orientation and familial ties including all the cases

Model-2 indicates the results of the data collected from male respondents (elders). Correlation between familial ties and respect of elders is moderately correlated and familial ties inserted 21% variation in respect of elders. However, familial ties did not significantly predict the respect of elders. On

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the other hand, there is a moderately strong correlation between religious orientation and respect for elders among men. Religious orientation also inserted about 35% variations in respect for elders and one-unit standard deviation increase in religious orientation significantly increased .382 standard deviations in respect of elders. Model-3indicates the results of the data collected from female respondents. Correlation between familial ties and respect of elders is moderate (.467) and familial ties inserted 30% variations in respect of elders. In addition, one-unit standard deviation increases in familial significantly increased .141-unit standard deviations in respect of elders. On the other hand, there is a strong correlation (.512) between religious orientation and respect for elders among women. Religious orientation also inserted about 44% variations in respect for elders and one-unit standard deviation increase in religious orientation significantly increased .529 standard deviations in respect of elders. Model-4 presents the results of simple linear regression analysis between independent variable religious orientation and familial ties among the elders. Results indicated a moderate correlation (.303) between religious orientation and familial ties. In addition, religious orientation also inserted 25% variations in familial ties. One-unit standard deviation increase in religious orientation increased .326 unit standard deviations in familial ties.

Discussion

The results of the present study are both consistent and in contrast to the previous literature published on the relationship between familial ties, religious orientation, and respect for the elders (Acheson & Malone, 2020; Alamri, 2016;Deaton, 2016; Elsaman& Arafa, 2012). The findings of the present study are inline to the previous studies about the increasing tendencies of the nuclear family system even in traditional developing societies like Pakistan. The tendency of the nuclear family system is increasing in Pakistan as in most of the traditional, developing, and patriarchal societies (Ibrahim & Ali, 2020; Manor, 2020). In addition, young working members of the families

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are making family decisions, regardless of the presence of experienced elders in the house(Cheema, 2011; Deaton, 2016). These findings are also replicated by the current study and found that in almost three out of four households elders were not heads of household and either son or someone else was the head of household.

The present study also contributed to some new insights. There are none of the studies as per the best of the researcher's knowledge that tested relationship between religious orientation and familial ties. Stronger familial ties are found among the family members who were religious and traditional (Sabzwari&Azhar, 2011). On the other hand, there was a positive relationship between religious orientation and familial ties. Hence, the higher level of religious orientation strengthened familial ties. This implies that the practice of religious values and customs is beneficial for increasing bond between family members. In addition, this strength of familial ties is also beneficial for increasing respect of elders in traditional and developing societies like Pakistani (Cheema, 2011; Khan &Fazaldad, 2016).

The study also replicated previous studies about the relationship between familial ties and respect for elders. Results confirm the positive relationship between familial ties and respect for elders. Hence, it is proved that stronger familial ties increased the respect for elders. On the other hand, the study also replicated the positive relationship between religious orientation and respect for elders (Islam, 2020; Kaushik, 2020). Religious orientation increased the respect of elders as confirmed by scholars around the globe. This implies that familial ties and religious orientation are positive predictors of respect for elders and elders are getting more respect in those families where family members were attached and, in those families, where family members were religious (Baars et al., 2016; Elsaman& Arafa, 2012; Ibrahim & Ali, 2020). In other words, religious orientation is a proven tool to increase familial ties and respect for elders. Therefore, it is a dire need to educatethe masses about

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religious education i.e., norms and values, for increased familial ties and respect for elders.

Conclusion

The present study is aimed to find out the relationship between familial ties, religious orientation, and respect for elders. Results indicated that traditional values are changing very rapidly i.e.the proportion of the nuclear family system increasing, and in three out of four households, elders were not the head of household. This implies that the family system and decision making in the family is different now as compared to the early years of the history of Pakistan. In addition, there is a positive relationship between religious orientation and familial ties and familial ties and respect for elders. Moreover, familial ties are also positively related to the respect of elders.

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