DETERMINANTS OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE IN THE YOUTH OF PAKISTAN

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of socio-cultural and demographic factors on religious intolerance in Pakistan. The scale of religious intolerance is determined by the respondents' behaviour, perception, willingness, attitude, experience, and variability in social and demographic background. A survey isconducted in the capital cities of Pakistan's four provinces. A stratified random sampling approach is used. A random sample of 350 respondents from a religious figure, media person, youth, and students from universities, colleges, and madrassas is selected from empirical analysis. 62% of respondents are found to be tolerant religiously. They have a positive attitude andperceptionandare willingtobe religiouslytolerant.However,theyhave moderate levels ofexperience andbehaviourtowards religious tolerance.The 61%respondent believes that dialoguebetweeninterfaithandintra-faithcanbe asource ofsustainable peacein society.The 16.7%,8.7%,and31.3%, respectively,believe that social,cultural,andsectarian factorsareobstaclesinintra-religiousdialogue.

Keywords: Religiousintolerance;stratifiedrandom sampling; InterandIntra-faith dialogue; Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

Allreligions providesocietywithtolerance,harmony,unityandfraternity(Asmara, 2018). Religioustolerance iscritical to understand better other faiths and religions (RogersvandKonieczny,2018).Toget alongwithina societyis necessaryforindividuals, mainlywhenvariouscultures andpeoplewithdifferent religious beliefs live inone communityornation.There are unityandsolidityina societythat respects freedom ofreligion (Sorkin,2018).Moreover, ifgovernmentsrespectvariousreligionsand freedomof religiousconcepts,societies willbefreefromreligious minorityharassmentor sectarian violence.

Religiousextremism harms a country's society and economy. For example, the Syrian civil war is a source of racial discrimination and division of society and nation thatthey aroused terrorism and bloodshed activities (Apostolov, 2018). Thus, it is essential to allude the exhilarating traces and psychological traumas that discrimination and intolerance leave the perps targeting the minorities and the people. It seriously affects the overall recruitment process in an economy, with prejudice against employees due to the employer's different faith (Valfort, 2015). Furthermore, based on steps taken by the

World Bank and general economic competitively ranked by the World Economic Forum, religious diversity is closely affiliated with national productivity, high levels of entrepreneurship and economic competitiveness (Nikolova, and Simroth, 2015). It is also likely that openness to diversity will create economic growth because businesses will attract a broader range of talents across people of different religious beliefs. Still, they are specialists in their work and can facilitate creativity and innovation. 6 Asia Pacific economies, namely Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, China, Vietnam, and Hong Kong and 5 sub-Saharan African economies, namely, Guinea - Bissau, Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin and Mozambique have very high score on both diversity and economic prosperity. (Alexander, 2018).

InPakistan,a Pakistani citizen's social identitydepends onreligion,province,tribe,or caste.Among these,it seems that the religious divide has done the most significant damage tothe social order and the social development process. 200 million people of Pakistan are divided on religionbasis as follows: 96.28%Muslim, including 81%Sunni (Deobandi, Barelvi, Ahle-Hadith) and15%Shia,1.5%Christians,1.6%Hindus,0.25%from scheduledcastes and0.07%from other religionsincluding Sikhs, Baha'i, Parsi and Ahmadi.
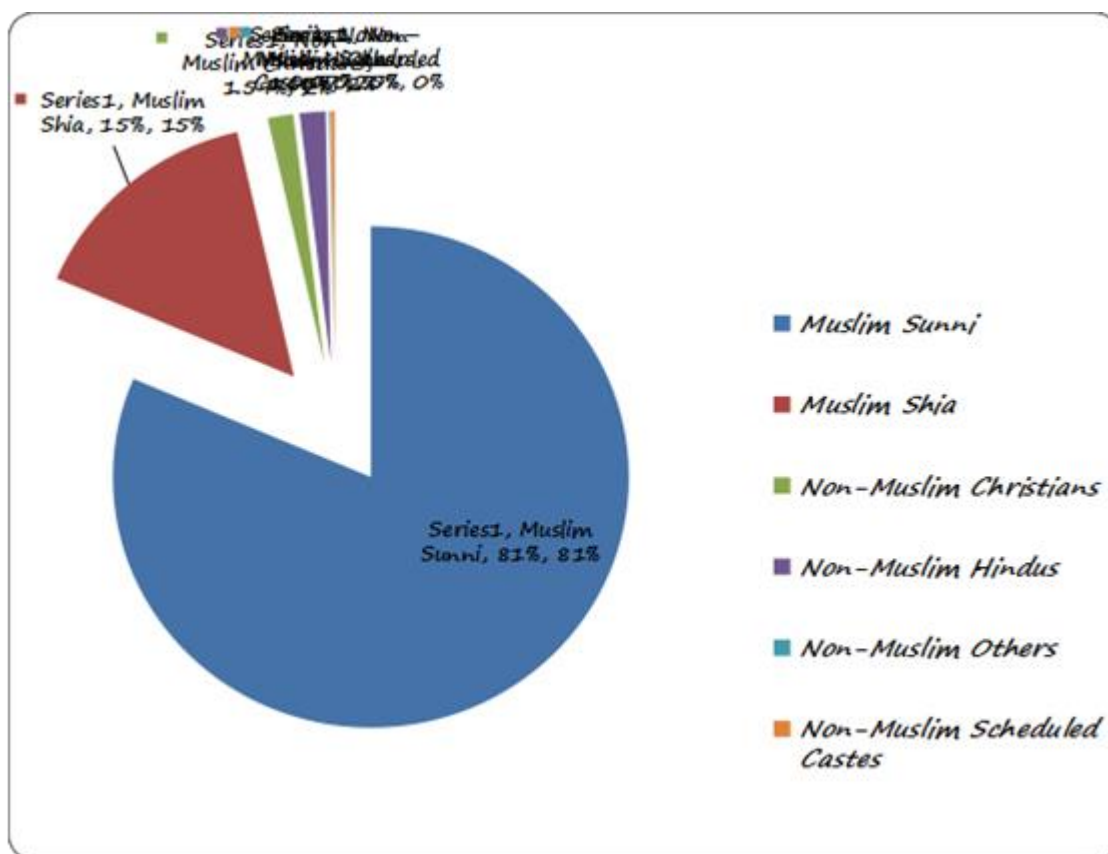

Figure 1 Community chart

Unfortunately,Pakistanis thethird leasttolerantcountryglobally,interms ofsocial affirmationofreligious diversity(Rahman,2013).MinoritiesinPakistanare the targets ofboth legalandsocialdiscrimination.Overthepasttwodecades,sectarianviolenceinPakistanhaskilled morethan4,000people(Majeed andHashmi,2014).Shiashavebeensubjected to67 attacksover eighteen monthscovering2012andpartof2013,includingterroristsuicideattacksduring Shiareligiousobservances. Also, during thatperiod, 54 lethal attacks werealso inflicted on Ahmadis,37onChristians,16onHindusandthreeonSikhs.InPakistanisociety, both the traditional ulema and the Islamistswant religiontobethe primaryandcrucial self-definingcharacteristicandhencethe"other"boundarymarker.Thehostilestruggleofnationalism is associatedwiththe certaintyoffaithin "imagining"a Muslim "millat"(nation)inwhich

disparitiesdonothappenasdiversityorpluralismbutasdissentandevenblasphemy(Kaker,2014). Asaresult,intoleranceinsocietyisrising,creatingadverseworkingconditionsforreligious minorities.OneofthemainreasonsbehindthesecasesisthepromotionbyreligiousleadersofExclus ive and sectarian interpretations of religion, particularly among youth, threaten the region's stability and peace.

Young people are the heart of any nation. But what could be intended of them when the entire nation experiences violence and religious extremism (Sattar, 2014)? These situations drive young people away from positive mobilization, constructive thinking, and global competition, pushing them toward violence, aggression, extremism, and intolerance. In their attempt to alter the system, aggression increases among youth, and failure of expected outcomes converts from time to time into intolerance. Thus, intolerance is now Pakistani youth's most significant social problem (Mushtaq and Munir, 2013). To improve social and economic conditions, these issues need to be addressed.

This study attempts to assess domains and levels of religious intolerance in terms of perception, attitude, willingness, experience and behaviour, and to identify disparities in socio-demographicbackgroundsto examinethe levelof religiousintolerance in Pakistan using survey data.

RESEARCHMETHODOLOGY

Thisresearchusedcross-sectionaldata for the period 2018 fromvarioussociety groups.Cross-sectional studydesignis appropriate for the present study as it can measureattitude,belief,opinionorpractice at a time.This studyhas enacteda quantitativeapproach todistributing surveyformsasitiseasier togain coordinationfrom participants,andmorereception willbegathered.

Sampling and Data Collection

Asample of350respondentsfrom four provincesofPakistan'scapital city,i.e.Lahore, Karachi,Peshawar, andQuetta,areselected due to theirdiversityof residing inmultiplemajorethnic groups. The age of mostof respondents is 15to24 years.The stratifiedsamplingapproachis used,and the sample consists of20religious' figures from at least 5faiths (Muslim, Hindu,Sikh,Christian,andBhai),8mediaindividuals (50percent female),161youthfrom different religiouscommunities(40percent female)and161studentsfrom universities/colleges/Madrassas(50 percentfemale).

Research Instrument

The researchinstrument was dividedintotwoparts.Part A is religious intolerance (consisting of perception, attitude, willingness, behavior, and religioustolerance). Part B isthesocio-cultureand demography of therespondents.Therearetwopartsoftheresearch instrument.Inthe first part, religious intolerance is determined by using perception, willingness, attitude, experience, and behavior. There are fiveitems ineachproxy ofreligious intolerance andfive points Likert scalefor eachitem, i.e., strongly agree to strongly disagree. The reliabilityofthe questionnairesis checkedby using Cronbach'salpha. Theresultof Cronbach'salpha isgiven in Table1. Thevalueof alpha is more significantthan 0.6; it meansall items should be included.

Table1: Thereliability of the research instrument

Part: Religious tolerance	Perception	Attitude	Willingness	Behaviour	Experience
α	0.840	0.719	0.768	0.64	0.872

Source:Authors' calculation

Data Analysis

SPSSsoftware is used for the analysis of data. Toassess the disparities betweenthe twoandmore thantwo groups, theT-test and ANOVAanalysis werecarried out.

RESULTSANDDISCUSSION

From thecollected data,the levelofreligiousintolerance(tolerance) inalltherespondents are foundto be 32%(68%).Itmeans there is a higherlevelofreligious toleranceinPakistan.The high religious intoleranceis foundinLahore (Punjab)followedbyKarachi (Sindh),Peshawar(KP), andQuetta (Balochistan).At the same time, highreligious tolerance is foundinChristianandSikh,30.3%. The levelof religioustolerance islocated very lowinMuslim.

Table2:Religioustolerancelevel

	Perception	Attitude	Willingness	Experience	Behaviour	Religious Tolerance
Mean	4.06	3.92	3.994	3.398	3.399	3.754
SD	0.772	0.751	0.793	0.945	1.004	0.689
Level	High	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	High

Source:Authors'calculation

Table3belowshowstheresultofdifferencesinreligious tolerance across background groups. On the gender group, the T - test is computed. In all background groups other than theGender group, the ANOVA test is calculated. Empirical results explain the insignificant effect of gender differences on religious tolerance among youth. This implies that the gender factor did not affect the respondents ' level of religious tolerance. On the other hand, variables such as ethnicity, religion, and occupation showed significant difference.

Table3: Thedifferencesin religioustolerance acrossthe demographicbackground group

			Mean	**SD**	**p**
Gender	Female		2.184	1.177	0.4341
	Male		1.848	1.829	
AGE	Below20 years		3.673	2.738	0.4263
	21-30 years		2.716	1.629	
	31-50 years		3.198	2.017	
	Above50 years		4.289	2.956	
Area	Urban		2.187	1.353	0.3054
	Semi-Urban		3.281	1.936	
Sects	Ahl-e-Sunnat	Deobund	4.298	2.836	0.0027
		Bravely	2.975	1.286	
		Ahl-e-Hadid	3.030	1.963	
	Ahl-e-Tashi		2.839	1.027	
Ethnicity	Christian		3.893	2.016	0.000
	Hindu		3.278	1.028	
	Bhaie		4.028	2.967	
		Sikh	3.928	1.927	
	Muslim		3.515	2.108	
Occupation	Students/Youth		3.193	1.928	0.0074
	ReligiousLeader		2.893	1.728	
	MediaPerson		4.289	.917	

Authors' calculation

Religious tolerance inDeobandi is foundto behigherthanBravely,Ahl-e-Hadis,andAhl-e-Tashi.The67.7% ofrespondentsareinfavourofInterandIntra-faithDialogue.Itisalsofound thatreligiousintoleranceishigher in religious leaders than student and media persons. Among therespondents, 61 %viewed thatInter and Intra-faith dialogue can beasourcefor sustainablepeace in thesociety.

Therespondentviewthatfactorsgiven in Table4 stop fromthe intra-faith dialogue.

Table4:ReligiousintoleranceIncreasing factors

Factors	Respondent
Social	8.7%
Sectarian	31.3%
Cultural	16.7%
Other	5.3%

CONCLUSION

Thelevelofreligious tolerance as a whole is highamong respondents.The types of religious tolerance comprise five,andthe construct ofperception,attitude and willingnessto religioustoleranceisalsoatahighlevel.At the same time,theconstructof experienceand behaviourtowards religious tolerance is at a moderate level.The level ofreligious tolerance in

thisresearchshowsnosignificantdifferenceinthegendercategory.Thesignificantdifferencesare foundinethnicgroups,religion,andtype ofoccupation.Bhai,Christians,andSikhhavethe highest level oftolerance comparedtootherethnicities andreligions.Thelevel ofreligious toleranceisfound at62%.At the same time,a higher levelof intoleranceisfoundin theMuslimcommunity. Furthermore, Deobundand Ahl-e-Tashehalso havea high levelof intolerance.

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