

Religious Orientation and Optimism: A Quantitative consideration within Pakistani Context

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The present study aimed to explore Religious Orientation and Optimism in Pakistani religious groups particularly focusing on Muslims and Christians. The instruments used in the current study were Life Orientation Test (LOT) (Scheier & Carver, 1985, translated by Ayub, 2003) and Age Universal Revised Religious Orientation Scale (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989, translated by Ghous, 2004). The study comprised of ($N = 231$) individuals. The basic objective of the study was to explore the relationship between Religious Orientation and Optimism among Muslim ($n = 118$) and Christian ($n = 113$) adults in. Overall sample incorporated 145 women and 86 men. Their age ranged from 18 - 50 years ($M = 39$, $S.D = .57$). Pearson Product Moment Correlation was computed that showed a significant positive correlation with Life Orientation Test in overall sample. Separate relationships were also studied in the Muslim and Christian sample, as well as the overall sample. Religious Orientation holds a significant positive relationship with Life Orientation Test among the Christian sample. It was obvious from the findings that Christian individuals showed more optimistic attitude as compared to Muslim individuals. Furthermore, several other demographic variables (for e.g., gender, age) were also considered. This research addressed the incorporation of religion and optimism for the prosperity of citizens. The findings are discussed in the light of relevant literature.

Key word. Religious orientation, life orientation, optimism, muslims, christians.

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Religious beliefs and practices have been present in almost all cultures since olden times. According to various approximations, 86% of the world's inhabitants identify an association with some kind of religious or holy organization (Barrett, Kurian, & Johnson, 2001). Islam is the state religion of Pakistan, which is practiced by about 95-98% of the inhabitants while the remaining 2-5% practice Hinduism, Christianity and other religions (Katchanovski, 2006). Muslims and Christians, both belong to monotheistic religion so they have same belief system of God and in both religions, the concept of religion and religious orientation holds significant importance (Hosena, Salim & Naveed, 2011). In spite of the occurrence of religious-oriented individuals and the experiential influence of religion in the lives of believers, the study of religion and its relation to optimism accounts for an extremely minute proportion in the Psychology literature (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005). Therefore, the present study is designed to fill this gap.

Yinger (1977) defined religion as a "system of beliefs and practices by means of which people can solve their problems". Pargament and Brant (1998) emphasized that religion can give a right direction to individual. Psychologists (Dittes, 1969; Hunt & King, 1971) have observed that religion is a fundamental part of one's life. Religiosity is explained as a force behind an individual who attempts to satisfy spiritual needs and services by performing religious rituals and in return get satisfaction in life and this satisfaction is expressed through acts of worship and rituals (Gallawayas cited in Kahoe & Meadow, 1981; Jami & Kamal 2017; Kalsoom, Masood & Jami 2017; Ahmed, Ahmed, Aqeel, Akhtar, & Salim, 2017; Cisheng, Jamala, Aqeel, Shah, Ahmed, & Gul, 2017).

Religious Orientation

Religious orientation differs from religious attachment, which refers to theological groups; for instance, Shia, Sunni, Catholic, Protestant, Jews, Orthodox, Conservative, Liberal or Fundamentalists (Levin & Schiller, 1998). The Psychology of Religion has explained the orientation of people towards religion for a variety of reasons and this orientation is of two different types; Intrinsic Religious Orientation

(IRO) and Extrinsic Religious Orientation (ERO) (Allport & Ross, 1967). The necessary difference between the two orientations lies in the mode in which people come close to religion and in what way they view their religiosity. The extrinsic orientation explains religious participation by an individual for gaining some extrinsic social or personal reward. Religion therefore becomes a tool or object for the attainment of materialistic rewards. The intrinsic religious orientation considers religion as an end in itself. People who score high on intrinsic religious orientation tend to figure their life proceedings and circumstances around their religiosity. These people feel contented with their viewpoints and are they are never motivated to change their faith; rather, they practice religious rituals because they find a sense of meaning and value in their religion. In other words, those individuals who are extrinsically to religion use their religion while those who are intrinsically motivated lives their religion (Allport & Ross, 1967; Khan, Amanat, Aqeel, Sulehri, Amanat, Sana, & Amin, 2017; Bibi, Sobia, Mustanir & Sana 2017; Peter, Abbas, Aqeel, Akhtar, & Farooq, 2017).

The literature has examined the relation between religion (including the beliefs that individuals hold about God and the religious rituals that are performed by individuals) and physical health (Koeing, 2013). Time spent in religious activities has been linked with positive health outcomes for individuals (e.g., less hypertension and less self-report of depression), and has been identified as a key component of emotional well-being (Hill & Pargament, 2008). Research concerning the connection between mind and body has identified many psychological and behavioral factors that influence physical health (Clements & Koeing, 2014). One of these factors, optimism, has been associated with less reporting of physical symptoms, disease prevention, recovery from physical illness, and positive approach towards life (Colby & Shifren, 2013). Optimism has also been identified as a component that enhances one's sense of well-being (Buunk, Gibbons, & Buunk, 2013).

Substantial research displayed that hope and optimism are associated with improved mental health. Optimism and hope have been connected with better psychological adjustment (e.g., Carver & Gaines,

1987; Ringdal, 1996). Furthermore, people with high levels of optimism use more adaptive coping techniques (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992; Hussain, Rohail, & Ghazal, 2017; Rehna & Hanif, 201; Aftab & Malik, 2017). Thus, hopeful, optimistic people are more likely to avoid depression, stress, anxiety, experience fewer health problems and even live longer if they suffer from serious diseases.

Optimism

Dispositional Optimism has been defined as the anticipation that the individual will get better and constructive results in life (Carver and Scheier, 2001). It is interpreted as a stable personality feature. The constructive effects of optimism have been established across varied demanding circumstances (Waldrop, Lightsey, Ethington, Woemmel & Coke, 2001; Scheier and Carver, 1985). Constructive effects of optimism could also be mediated through constructive coping styles, for instance, optimists use more problem-focused approach, information seeking and optimistic reframing or through psychosocial variables such as perception of control and perceived social support. Many other investigators found positive significant relationship between Psychological well-being and Optimism. (e.g.: Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Behrad, Kalantari & Molavi, 2012).

Seligman's theory (1991) entirely put vast stress on distrustful actions in forming one's attributional reasoning. Individuals who solve their difficult and dreadful events of life in a controlled system with external and accurate grounds are referred as optimistic while those who have inner and narrow approach are described as pessimistic. The cognitive interactive model exhibited beneficial effects of constructive thinking on optimism of individuals and has been verified across varied stressful situations (Lightsey, 1996; Scheier and Carver, 1985).

Religious Orientation and Optimism

Sahraian, Gholami, Javadpour, and Omidvar, (2013) conducted the research on religious attitude and the level of happiness among undergraduate Muslim students. The study found that individuals with a

more religious attitude experience more happiness. Koenig (2001) reported that religious beliefs and practices were related to satisfaction in life, positive effect, happiness, hope, morale, optimism, purpose in one's life, low level of anxiety and depression. It is necessary to consider literature with special context to Muslims and Christians and demographic characteristics (gender, age) to study the detail how religion and optimism are related with each other

Muslim and Christian religious groups. It has been found by history, cultural, and psychological accounts that the Christian core self is moderately individualistic but the Muslim core self is more collectivistic. Therefore, when Muslims have to face any difficult life proceeding, they mostly follow interpersonal coping style which is more oriented towards collectivism. For example, Muslims search for social support or turn towards family members, but when Christians face any difficulty in life, they mostly look for intrapersonal coping strategy, which is more oriented towards individualism, i.e., cognitive restructuring and reframing of the harmful event (Fischer, Aydin & Haslam, 2010).

In Christian mythology, God is viewed as directly responsive to human beings but Muslims avoid directly associating God with the human qualities (Gunton, 2002; Miner, 2007, Younas, 2017). Christians are happier or satisfied as compared to other religious groups can be given by a supposition that they found a personal connection with God which ultimately decrease their loneliness or isolation (e.g., Epley, Akalis, Waytz, & Cacioppo, 2008; Johnson, Li, Cohen, & Okun, 2013).

Christian's optimistic well-being and happiness scores are frequently influenced by their religious well-being (for instance Idler & Kasl, 1995; Idler, Hudson & Leventhal, 1999). One assumption that Christian religious groups may possibly be more contented as compared to other religious groups as the feeling of individually linked to divine power may lessen isolation as well as thoughts about societal segregation (for instance, Epley, Akalis, Waytz, & Cacioppo, 2008; Johnson, Li, Cohen, & Okun, 2011). Possibly, the other face of this feeling of individual association with divine power is that many spiritual and

religious groups emphasize on unity with God which ultimately brings optimism and societal support in one's life. (Cohen, Hall, Koenig, & Meador, 2005).

A comparative study on Muslims and Christians on the construct of religiosity and optimism has been done by Abdel - Khaliq and Lester, (2013). The study found that Muslim participants scored high on religiosity while Christian participants scored high on optimism and mental health. But here it is worth mentioning that a large number of studies have been conducted on the Christian population and only few studies have been carried out among Muslim populations (particularly in Pakistan). Moreover, some researchers also found that Muslims who practice religious rituals were found high on life satisfaction and both psychological and personal well-being (Tiliouine, Cummins & Davern, 2009). In another study done on Christian students, it was found that religiosity was correlated with external motives such as good exam grades (Husain, 2008).

Contentment, life contentment, and subjective health had frequently been linked with happiness and individual prosperity (Cornum, Matthews, & Seligman, 2011). In general, religious participation is linked with high levels of hope and optimism in healthy individuals. Sethi and Seligman (1993) observed that the aspects of religion were more strongly related to optimism among Christians. The researchers found that the relationship between fundamentalist religious orientation and optimism was largely the result of the greater intensity of religious involvement, social support and the greater emphasis placed on hope contained in fundamentalist rituals (Cherry et al., 2015). It is necessary to look into certain demographic characteristics to get an in-depth review of literature on religion and optimism.

Gender. Khalek (2010) demonstrated the differences in happiness and religiosity among men and women. Men scored higher on happiness and mental health, whereas women scored higher on the scale of religiosity. The level of physical health was the same between men

and women. The study also showed that women are more religious as compared to men.

A non - significant difference has been found by earlier researchers on the measure of optimism among men and women. (Zenger, Berth, Brähler, & Stöbel-Richter, 2013). These findings are also paralleled with results of an additional research which also found that men and women have equal mean scores on the measure of optimism (Honmore & Jadhav, 2015). Moreover, one more study exhibited that gender had no significant effect on explanatory styles of individuals (Smith, Hall, & Henry, 2000).

Age. People belonging from young age group practice a religious struggle (divine or intrapersonal) that leads towards feelings of detachment from God, disbelief, or judgment of God being unkind and castigatory (Pargament, Ano, & Wachholtz, 2005). James, Fine and Lester, (2015) found that young adults score high on extrinsic religious orientation. In a longitudinal study among adolescents, higher Intrinsic Religious Orientation significantly predicted less depressive symptoms and improved mental health (Posel, , Martin, Garber, Banister, Pickering, & Hautzinger 2011). Another study predicted that the protective influence of religiousness on college students against hazardous alcohol use is because of involvement in *both* quest *and* Intrinsic Religious Orientation (Jankowski, et al., 2015).

Review of literature showed that till now, no Western or Pakistani research is being conducted on Muslims and Christian adults with specific reference to demographic characteristics (for instance, gender and age wise comparison between two groups on religious orientation and optimism). So, the present research is also aimed to investigate the demographic related differences among the two groups on selected variables.

Rationale of the Study

Muslims and Christians have identical beliefs of divinity as the two groups belong to monotheistic religion. The idea about religion and

religious rituals is not only important for Muslims but also for Christians (Kunst, Thomsen & Sam 2014). Christian-Muslim relations have an intricate history sometimes marked by competition or conflict, but uniformly in many cases - though regularly elapsed - characterized by useful living together. An outstanding characteristic of our historical memories has been the way in which conflicts surpass the peaceful experiences. This has been paralleled at the stage of theological thoughts; where polemics drown the voice of truthful and sincere transaction. The Christians in Pakistan live mostly as a group of low socio-economic status that further affects their interactions. The contemporary constitutional and doctrinal stress among the two spiritual groups i.e., Muslims and Christians has increased antagonism between them. Due to low socio-economic and rudimentary religious setting of Christianity, they might have faced certain difficulties like inequality, discrimination, racism, and hatred.

Previous research on the connections between religiosity and optimism has identified several relationships between these two constructs (Kawa, Khan, Khan & Baby, 2015). Yet, all research in this domain is restricted with three major flaws: the researchers have introduced their own descriptions on the measure of religiosity; each of these researches used limited measures of religiosity; and each research used merely one religious group. The present study sought to simplify the relationships between Religious Orientation (with its multiple constructs i.e., intrinsic, extrinsic, extrinsic social and extrinsic personal) and optimism among two different religious groups i.e. Muslims and Christians. The literature lacks the investigation of religious variable in relation to a healthy personality (Almeida, Neto, & Koenig, 2006). The present study is aimed to explore the relationship of Religious Orientation and optimism which are religious and personality factors respectively. Moreover, the study also aimed to explore whether there exists any similarity or difference among Muslims and Christians on the variables of the study. The previous research documented positive relation of religiosity and optimism (Ismail & Rahman, 2012; Lelkes, 2006; Khalek& Lester, 2009) while the literature lacks the comparison of

Muslims and Christians on religiosity and optimism within the same culture.

Despite of many differences and conflicts among Muslims and Christians in Pakistan, still they live in close proximity in houses, universities, offices, religious and other social gatherings (Gill, 2011). The study at hand aimed in the direction to recognize if there is any distinction or correspondence among Muslims and Christians on the variables of religious orientation, optimism and also a step forward to promote awareness among both groups about optimism which is propensity to look forward towards positive results in future. This study will address the integration of religion and optimism for the betterment of human beings. Previous studies in this domain are restricted with only one religious group and mostly conducted on western culture having Christian sample. Moreover, the literature lacks the comparison of Muslims and Christians on optimism within the same culture.

Method

Research Design

The present research utilized the Purposive Convenient Sampling Technique to explore Religious Orientation and Optimism among Monotheistic Religious Groups i.e., Muslim and Christian adults. The relationship of gender, age, and marital status was explored with reference to Optimism. Specifically, present research has subsequent objectives:

1. To explore the relationship between Religious Orientation (intrinsic, extrinsic) and optimism among Muslim and Christian adults.
2. To explore Religious Orientation among Muslims and Christian participants.
3. To explore the optimism among Muslims and Christian participants.
4. To explore the role of demographic factors (e.g., gender, age) with Religious Orientation and Optimism.

Sample

The current research was carried out in the churches, universities and among wide-ranged localities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The study utilized Purposive Convenient Sampling Technique. It is a non-probability sampling method and it occurs when researchers have specific purpose. In the present study, the specific purpose was to select only Muslims and Christian participants who are readily accessible. Researchers often believe that they can obtain a representative sample by using a sound judgment, which will result in saving time and money. Fifty percent of Christian participants were approached from the churches of Pakistan and the remaining fifty percent were approached in Christian communities. Most Christians were ethnically Punjabis and belonged to Middle class social and economic status. On the other hand, fifty percent Muslim population was approached at Universities, and the remaining fifty percent were selected from different sectors and offices of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The majority of the Muslim participants belonged to upper middle social class and economic status. The overall sample included 145 women and 86 men. Their age ranged from 18- 50 years ($M = 39$, $S.D = .57$). All the individuals were briefly informed about the nature and objective of the study and before the distribution of the questionnaires, informed consent was received from every participating individual. The entire sample was guaranteed that the data retrieved would be kept confidential and would be exclusively used for the intention of exploration.

Instrument

The current study focused on exploration of optimism among the two religious groups, so it utilized the instrument of Life Orientation Test (LOT). Details are as follows.

Life Orientation Test (LOT). The scale was developed by Scheier and Carver (1985), and translated by Ayub (2004) to measure Optimism and Pessimism. This instrument has 12 items which are rated on a Five-Point Likert Scale. The range of Likert Scale is from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. There are four reverse score items which

include, 3, 1, 9 and 12. The filler items are 2, 6, 7 and 12. Possible score range is 8-40. The cut off score is 24 and Alpha reliability is 0.6 (Ayub, 2004).

Religious Orientation Scale (I/E- R) revised. Religious Orientation Scale was developed by Gorsuch and Mc Pherson, (1989) to check religious orientation. The current study utilized the Urdu adapted version of the Scale by (Ghous, 2003). It is a five-point Likert scale and consists of total 21 items. The possible score range is 0-70. A higher score shows a stronger religious orientation. Alpha reliability ranged from 0.4-0.7. It is a 5-point Likert Scale (1-5) corresponding to “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree.” The scale consists of two subscales; Intrinsic and Extrinsic Religious Orientation. Extrinsic Religious Orientation consists of items (2, 6, 8, 9, 11, and 13). Among them, Extrinsic Personal (EP) are 6, 8 and 9 and Extrinsic Social (ES) are 2, 11 and 13). Intrinsic Religious Orientation consists of 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21. Among them 3, 10, 14, 19 and 20 are intrinsic reversed items.

Procedure

It was assumed that the sample was comprised of general population of Muslims and Christians, so there must be variation in educational status of the selected sample. Hence, in order to facilitate participation, the translated Urdu version of LOT (Ayub, 2004) and ROS (Ghous, 2003) was used. The researcher approached the participants in different areas of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. After briefly describing the objectives of the study, they were asked to participate on voluntary basis. After their consent, questionnaires were given to individuals with instructions written/ verbal for the present study. A set of instructions was developed for field workers (where researcher was not able to approach the participants directly). It was instructed to build rapport with participants (e.g., Pakistan needs appropriate policies to ensure equal opportunities for all citizens irrespective of their religion, so we need to conduct a study on positive construct i.e., optimism among Muslims and Christians). Moreover, participants were intimated regarding importance

and implications of the study. Written instructions included purpose of research, informed consent, and instructions to fill the questionnaires. They were asked to read the questionnaires carefully and provide the genuine responses. Participants were than thanked for their cooperation.

Results

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Alpha Reliability Coefficient for Scales of the Study (N= 231)

Scales	No of Items	α	M	SD	Range		
					Potential	Actual	Skewness
					21-105	32-98	-1.09
IRO	15	.66	58.46	6.94	15-75	22-73	-1.11
ERO	6	.63	22.25	4.32	6-48	6-30	-.36
ES	3	.69	8.17	3.63	3-15	3-15	.18
EP	3	.80	14.07	1.95	3-15	3-15	-.35
LOT	12	.71	44.66	7.10	12-60	16-57	-1.15

Note. ROS= Religious Orientation Scale, IRO= Intrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, ERO= Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, ES= Extrinsic Social, EP= Extrinsic Personal, LOT= Life Orientation Test. *Note.* * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics and alpha reliabilities for the study variables. All the values of skewness came in acceptable range of -1 to +1 which indicates that the data is normally distributed and suitable for parametric testing. Moreover, reliabilities of the scales are also adequate for conducting further analysis.

Table 2

Correlation across Study Variables among Muslims (n = 118) and Christian adults (n = 113)

Scales	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. ROS	–	.93**	.73**	.39**	.82**	.09
2. IRO	.79**	–	.44**	.06	.73**	.05
3. ERO	.66	.06	–	.85**	.66**	.11
4. ES	.66**	.08	.96**	–	.17	.11
5. EP	.04	-.07	.16	-.09	–	.06
6. LOT	.25**	.17	.20*	.17	.13	–

Note. ROS= Religious Orientation Scale, IRO= Intrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, ERO= Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, ES= Extrinsic Social, EP= Extrinsic Personal, LOT= Life Orientation Test; Pearson Product Moment Correlation for Muslim sample is shown above the diagonal and for Christian sample it is shown below the diagonal * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Table 2 shows the relationship between study variables among Muslim and Christian participants. ROS has a significant positive relationship with LOT ($p < .01$) among the Christian sample but non-significant relationship among the Muslim sample. There is present negative relationship between Extrinsic Social and Extrinsic Personal Religious Orientation among Christian sample but non - significant relationship among Muslim sample. Similarly, Extrinsic Personal is also negatively related to Intrinsic Religious Orientation among Christian sample but non - significant difference is observed for the Muslim sample.

Table 3

Differences among Religious Groups (Muslim and Christian sample) on Study variables (N=231)

Scales	Religion				T	df	P	95% CI		Cohen's d
	Muslim (n=118)		Christian (n=113)					LL	UL	
	M	SD	M	SD						
ROS	79.36	11.41	82.13	6.17	2.27	229	.02	-.37	-5.16	-.30
IRO	58.02	8.60	58.92	4.62	.98	229	.32	.89	-2.70	Ns
ERO	21.33	4.61	23.20	3.78	3.34	229	.00	-.76	-2.96	-.44
LOT	42.33	7.74	47.09	5.42	5.38	229	.00	-3.01	-6.49	-.71

Note. ROS= Religious Orientation Scale, IRO= Intrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, ERO= Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, LOT= Life Orientation Test., CI= Confidence Interval, LL= Lower limit, UP= Upper limit.

Table 3 shows mean differences across study variables among Muslim and Christian participants. Significant differences are observed on ROS, ERO and LOT. Results show that Christian participants showed more Religious Orientation as compared to Muslim participants. Christian participants show more extrinsic orientation towards religion than Muslim participants as significant differences are found on ERO. Moreover, significant difference ($p < .05$) is also observed on the measure of LOT. Christian participants exhibited more optimistic behavior as compared to Muslim participants. No significant difference is observed on the measure of Intrinsic Religious Orientation among the two groups.

Table 4

Mean, Standard deviation, and t values on Study Variables among Muslim (N= 118) and Christian (N= 113) and overall Men and Women (N= 231)

Scales	Gender				T	df	P	95% CI		Cohens d
	Male		Female					LL	UL	
	M	SD	M	SD						
Muslim Sample ^a										
ROS	79.50	10.87	79.27	11.82	.10	116	.91	-4.06	4.50	Ns
IRO	57.10	8.59	58.61	8.62	.92	116	.35	-4.72	1.71	Ns
ERO	22.39	4.25	20.66	4.74	2.00	116	.72	.02	3.42	Ns
LOT	43.63	4.51	41.51	9.16	1.45	116	.11	-7.76	4.99	Ns
Christian Sample ^b										
ROS	82.82	6.58	81.75	5.95	.88	111	.38	-1.33	3.48	Ns
IRO	59.02	4.90	58.87	4.49	.16	111	.87	-1.66	1.95	Ns
ERO	23.80	4.05	22.87	3.62	1.24	111	.21	-.55	2.39	Ns
LOT	46.75	5.01	47.28	5.67	.50	111	.61	-2.66	1.58	Ns
Total Sample ^c										
ROS	81.04	9.23	80.52	9.39	.41	229	.68	-1.98	3.02	Ns
IRO	58.00	7.14	58.74	6.84	.78	229	.43	-2.61	1.12	Ns
ERO	23.04	4.19	21.77	4.34	2.17	229	.03	.11	2.41	.28
LOT	45.08	4.97	44.42	8.11	.68	229	.49	-1.24	-1.24	Ns

Note. ROS= Religious Orientation Scale, IRO= Intrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, ERO= Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, LOT= Life Orientation Test., CI= Confidence Interval, LL= Lower limit, UL= Upper limit.

n^a (men) = 46, n^a (women) =72, n^b (men) =40, n^b (women) = 73, n^c (men) = 86, n^c (women) = 145

Table 4 shows the results of gender differences on ROS and LOT. It is evident from the findings that there exists no significant gender difference on the variables of Religious Orientation, IRO, ERO and LOT with approximately equal mean values in Muslim and Christian sample. There is only a significant difference on ERO ($p < .05$) among the total sample with men

showing more Extrinsic religious orientation as compared to women.

Table 5

Mean, Standard deviation, and t values among StudyVariables along Age Groups in Muslim (N= 118), Christian (N= 113) and overall Sample (N= 231)

Scales	Age				T	df	P	95% CI		Cohens d
	18-25 years		26-50 years					LL	UL	
	M	SD	M	SD						
Muslim Sample ^a										
ROS	82.18	9.36	76.54	12.61	2.76	116	.00	1.59	9.69	.50
IRO	59.72	7.43	56.32	9.39	2.18	116	.03	.31	6.49	.40
ERO	22.45	4.26	20.66	4.74	2.70	116	.00	.59	3.87	.04
LOT	42.91	7.09	41.76	8.35	.80	116	.11	-1.67	3.98	Ns
Christian Sample ^b										
ROS	83.20	6.08	80.73	6.07	2.13	111	.03	.18	4.75	.40
IRO	59.50	4.65	58.18	4.51	1.50	111	.13	-.41	3.04	Ns
ERO	23.70	3.63	22.55	3.92	1.61	111	.11	-.26	2.56	Ns
LOT	47.05	5.43	47.20	5.47	-.18	111	.85	-2.23	1.86	Ns
Total Sample ^c										
ROS	81.20	9.67	80.17	8.92	.83	229	.40	-1.39	3.45	Ns
IRO	58.67	6.97	58.23	6.94	.47	229	.63	-.13	2.24	Ns
ERO	22.53	4.41	21.93	4.21	1.04	229	.29	-.52	1.72	Ns
LOT	44.57	7.64	44.77	6.48	-.21	229	.83	-2.04	1.65	Ns

Note. ROS= Religious Orientation Scale, IRO= Intrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, ERO= Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, LOT= Life Orientation Test., CI= Confidence Interval, LL= Lower limit, UP= Upper limit..n^a (18-25 years) = 59, n^a (26-50 years) =59, n^b (18-25 years) =64, n^b (26-50 years) = 49, n^c (18-25 years) = 122, n^c (26-50 years) = 109

Table 5 shows the results of independent sample *t* test for comparing the mean differences of age groups on Religious Orientation Scale and Life Orientation Test. From the results it is revealed that there exists a significant difference on Religious Orientation, IRO and ERO among the Muslim sample where young adults scored high on all variables of Religious Orientation (IRO, ERO) as compared to late aged adults. Across Christian sample, young age group scored high as compared to late aged

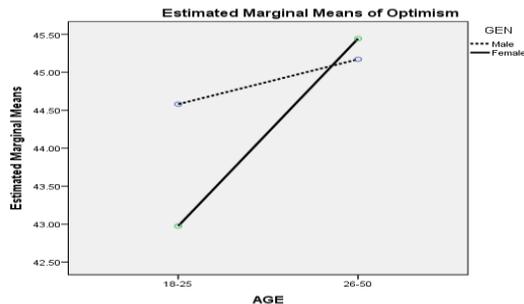
adults on ROS while across total sample, no significant difference was observed among the two age groups on selected variables.

Table 6

2×2 Factorial Table for Mean scores and Standard Deviation on Life Orientation (N =231)

Gender		Age	Life Orientation	
			<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Men	(<i>n</i> = 35)	18-25 years	44.85	4.25
	(<i>n</i> = 51)	26-50 Years	45.23	5.45
Women	(<i>n</i> = 87)	18-25 years	44.45	8.68
	(<i>n</i> = 58)	26-50 years	44.36	7.29

Table 6 shows the estimated mean scores on life orientation test in terms of gender, age, and religious orientation. Mean difference of late aged adults men is higher as compared to young aged men. Moreover, among women sample, almost equal mean differences are observed for both young aged and late aged women. But when education level is controlled, then significant interaction effect is observed on life orientation by age and gender.



Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: EDU = 4.7316

Figure shows that female participants have more positive life orientation as compared to male participants controlling the effect of educational level.

Role of Gender and Age

Three way ANOVA was carried out to find the interaction between gender, age, and religious orientation in influencing life orientation, while taking education level.

Table 7

Main and Interaction Effect of Gender, Age, and Religious Orientation on Life Orientation Test (N =231)

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Education (control)	1016.74	1	1016.74	19.72	.00
Intercept	45618.54	1	45618.54	939.79	.00
Religious Orientation (A)	1746.59	41	42.60	.82	.75
Gender (B)	18.46	1	18.46	.35	.55
Age (C)	51.96	1	51.96	1.00	.31
A*B*C	124.55	8	15.57	.30	.96
Error	7511.64	127	59.14		

Table 7 shows non-significant interaction of religious orientation, gender, and age on life orientation among study participants $F(8, 15.57) = .30, P = .96$. No other result is found significant but significant interaction effect is observed.

Discussion

In order to fulfill the objectives of the study, Age Universal Religious Orientation Scale (ROS) (Gorsuch & Mc Pherson, 1989, adapted by Ghous, 2003) was used to measure the Religious Orientation among Muslim and Christian adults in Pakistan. Life Orientation Test (LOT) (Scheier & Carver, 1985, translated by Ayub, 2004) was used to measure optimism. Alpha coefficients were calculated for each subscale of ROS to assess its internal consistency. The highest reliability was found on Extrinsic Personal (EP) Subscale .80 followed by Reliability Coefficients of ROS, LOT, Extrinsic Social (ES) Subscale, and Intrinsic Religious Orientation (IRO). The values range from .72, .71, .69 and .66 respectively. (see Table 1). The reliability estimates are also satisfactory for both the scales. The low reliability for (IRO) can be attributed to sample nonequivalence and because of Purposive Convenient Sampling Technique.

Direction of study variables and inter-subscale and subscale total correlation were assessed through Pearson Product Moment correlation. Inter-subscale and subscale total correlation further ensured the construct validity of the instruments (Smith, 2005). The correlations were separately conducted for Muslims and Christian participants and also across the total sample (see Table 2). ROS holds a significant positive relationship with LOT among the Christian sample but non - significant relationship among the Muslim sample. The results are supported by findings of literature (e.g., Khaleq, 2011). Lewis and Cruise, (2006) found that religiosity is not directly linked with optimism rather religion provides an individual with social support, purpose in life, hope, and the practices of religious rituals themselves make people happy and satisfied. That may be the reason that there exists a

small relation between religious orientation and life orientation. The positive relationship between these phenomena is consistent with the findings of the past studies. The small relation observed for Muslim sample can be attributed to some mediating factors that may have significant impact among the selected variables (hope, social support, purpose in life etc.).

There is present negative relationship between Extrinsic Social and Extrinsic Personal Religious Orientation among Christian sample but non-significant relationship among Muslim sample. Similarly, EP is also negatively related to IRO among Christian sample but non-significant difference is observed for the Muslim sample (see Table 2). These results are supported by some previous findings which indicate positive relationship between psychological well-being and intrinsic religiosity and inverse between extrinsic and psychological well-being (Garcia-Alandete & Bernabe-Valero, 2013; Mela., Marcou, Baetz, Griffin, Angelski, Deqiang, 2008).

Moreover, Christians scored high on ROS and LOT as compared to Muslims in the overall sample (see Table 3). Christians are living as a minority in Pakistan, so in order to save their individuality, social desirability may have played a significant role for Christian participants. Moreover, as the present study data of Christians was collected from Churches but Muslims were not taken from mosques and research evidences show that church goers are more religiously oriented as compared to those who do not attend religious gatherings regularly (Koenig, 2013).

Moreover, a significant difference was observed on the measure of the Life Orientation Test. Christian participants exhibited more optimistic behavior as compared to Muslim participants. There might be certain mediating factors like religious participation, physical and mental well-being, contentment, life

satisfaction, purpose in life or high self-esteem that resulted in Optimism among the religious groups (Koenig, McCullough, & Larson, 2001). The reason why Christian participants scored high on LOT again can be attributed to the fact that the majority of Christian sample was collected from Churches of Pakistan while Muslim sample was not collected from Mosques or *Deeni Madrassahs* but from Universities and public areas of the city. Further, as Christians are living as a minority in Pakistan, so in order to save their identity, social desirability may have contributed its role in giving biased findings. Mythology of Christian religion is based on love, peace, protection, wellbeing and optimism. In the Bible, it is written that God has designed you to live in a hopeful, optimistic way (Psalm, 43: 5 as cited in MacDonald, 2015).

Across gender, the findings of the *t*-test showed non-significant difference on the variables of ROS, IRO, ERO and LOT with approximately equal mean values in Muslim and Christian sample. (see Table 4). There is only a significant difference on ERO among the total sample with men showing more ERO as compared to women. On the other hand, there are previous researches in Pakistan that support our result for example, Khaleq, 2002, who found non-significant difference on Religious Orientation among men and women. The reason might be that men and women approaching from similar social and economic backgrounds have almost same religious attitudes and beliefs. Similarly, Smith, Hall, and Henry (2007) also found that gender did not affect one's explanatory style. The results are also supported by another study that showed non-significant differences among men and women on optimism (Gohm, Suh, & Oishi, 2000). The major concern with this study is the partition of men and women. There were far more women than men who participated in the study. The relationship that may have been present within the variables might be nullified by the inequity of gender. As a

consequence, the relationship between gender and optimism may be shortened and so remain vague.

T-Test was performed across Muslim and Christian sample as well as to the overall total sample to see the relationship of age with ROS, IRO, ERO and LOT. One of the major issue is how age should be categorized into different groups. According to Burt (1995), it is the free choice of researcher to categorize age into different groups depending upon the sample size. So, participants were divided into two categories as per their number; young adults (18- 25) and late aged adults (26-50). Results revealed that among Muslim participants, young adults have significant high Religious Orientation, IRO and ERO as compared to late aged adults. Moreover, young adults also scored high than late adults on Religious Orientation across Christian sample as well. While across total sample, no significant difference was observed (see Table 5). Furthermore, on the measure of LOT, no significant difference was observed among Muslim and Christian participants across the age groups. In recent years, youth is more involved towards religion, religious activities and religious education. It is said that when you suppress something, it reacts. After the 9/11 incident, anti-Muslim sentiments in some countries compelled Muslim youth to know more about their religion and seek their strength from their religious knowledge and believes. In Pakistan, young girls, receiving religious education in a more enthusiastic way definitely has affected younger age group as compared to adults. The late adults stick to their religious knowledge which they obtained some time ago and then kept static later on. Main and Interaction Effect of gender, age, and religious orientation on Life Orientation was also assessed. Mean difference of late aged adults men was higher as compared to young aged men. Moreover, among women sample, almost equal mean differences were observed for both young aged and late aged women. But when

education level is controlled, then significant interaction effect is observed on life orientation by age and gender. But here it is worth to mention that the findings are not as much generalizable as no specific matching was done at the time of selection of participants of various age groups. Moreover, non-significant results may be due to huge variation in other demographic variables (age, education, income, belief system etc.) and characteristics of men and women in the sample.

Limitations and suggestions

The findings of the study should be of attention to mental health professionals who must enlarge methods of psychotherapy that should include religious concerns. Religious Orientation provides a foundation for conceptualizing client problems in terms of successful personality development. The research is assumed to lead towards a valuable dialogue between Muslims and Christians; what the two groups hold sacred and how they differ from each other in what they hold sacred. This research, in turn, could promote mutual understanding and may generate enlarged inter-group sympathy and encourage forgiveness. The study of cognitive interactive model of optimism will help in fostering powerful cognitions (strongly held beliefs) that give meaning to difficult life circumstances and this can only be possible with the help of positive thoughts and optimistic approach. Like any empirical study, the generalizability, validity, and Purposive Convenient Sampling are assumed as few considerable limitations of the study. Future studies must be carried out with large sample size and the influence of possible moderators and mediators must be assessed for more authentic findings.

Conclusion and Implications

The present study investigated the relation between Religious Orientation and optimism among Muslims and Christian adults. Results suggest that Religious Orientation is positively correlated with Optimism among Muslims and Christian adults. Christians scored high on Religious Orientation and Optimism as compared to Muslims. Non - significant gender difference was observed on the construct of ROS among the two groups. Young adults were found high on both Intrinsic and Extrinsic Religious Orientation across Muslim sample. This presents a sound source of information for both Muslims and Christians to enhance their potentials as it is assumed that optimism is a positive step and one that can immediately help any religious group to bring constructive changes among its followers.

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