INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON PAKISTANI MAINSTREAM MEDIA: AN APPLICATION OF BELIEFS INTO ACTION SCALE FOR JOURNALISTS

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Abstract

This cross-sectional survey explored the influence of religion on Pakistani journalists by applying the Belief into Action Scale. The study based on responses from 300 journalists, discovered influence of religious beliefs held by the journalists of digital and electronic media on their professional (journalistic) practices. The findings demonstrated that the Belief into Action Scale was a highly reliable measure to assess the influence of religion on Pakistani journalists. The results observed that Pakistani male journalists were more influenced by religious beliefs than their female counterparts. Similarly, the journalists employed in digital media setups displayed a greater inclination towards faith while performing their professional duties than the ones belonging to electronic media organizations. Moreover, the study participants with more experience and increasing age were found to be more practically religious and tended to be more influenced by their religious beliefs while fulfilling their professional responsibilities.

However, this research discovered that the journalists holding higher academic qualifications showed a lesser tendency to practicing religion than their contemporaries with lower educational qualifications.

Keywords: *Influence, Religion, Media, Journalists, Application, Beliefs into Action Scale*

Introduction:

Religion is a set of shared beliefs held by a large number of people in accordance with which they live life in an organized and socially acceptable pattern. Religious beliefs often are a central part of various cultures and provide ethical codes for every aspect of people's lives.[1] Religion influences individuals in various aspects of their lives, ranging from their happiness at home to their social life and workplace. A wealth of research-based evidence suggests that religious beliefs have been at the core of both personal and professional lives across the globe. Abbas et al. claim that high-quality performance is expected from individuals when parents and children have the same inclination toward religious beliefs[2]. Héliot et al. state that being religious is something that comes from inside the individuals and influences every dimension of their lives from socialization to manners and business to meetings[3].

Religion has always been central to human life with its constant influence on individuals' personalities, behaviours, and actions[4]. As is the case with Muslims with an ideological claim of Islam being the complete code of life, providing them guidance from family to social affairs and from personal development to business and work ethics, the followers of other religions and ideologies also put forward the same claim. Similarly, media has also been considered as a significant factor in determining the behaviours, values and narratives of societies across the globe[5]. Media has an agenda-setting role to play, defining the salience of issues for the people and influencing the socio-cultural infrastructure that shapes societies[6]. The journalists who are at the heart of information collection, news and content formation and dissemination process and perform a key role in guiding editorial decisions and agenda setting for the media users, are part of the same society, they carry and observe the same religious, cultural and ethical values with them as other members of the society do. These values have a significant role to play in the professional life of the individuals associated with different media organizations in any society.

The influence of religious values on media has remained a point of consideration, debate and scrutiny, particularly in

societies like Pakistan where religion is central to individuals' life and holds substantial socio-cultural importance. The media ecosystem in Pakistan has significantly transformed during last two and half decades, from being state-run media to a vibrant private-sector industry that has witnessed noteworthy growth and diversification. Religion infuses multiple facets of mainstream media industry in Pakistan, ranging from news reporting and editorial perspectives to entertainment programming. Religious values are likely to influence editorial decisions including content selection, as well as portrayal of social issues. Furthermore, religious sensitivities often impact the limits of acceptable expression, with some issues deemed controversial[7] (Flensner, 2020). Pakistan, having its rich religious heritage with predominantly Muslim population, provides an exciting case study to understand the influence of religious beliefs on professional roles or practices of the journalists. Ahmed and Shah[8] in one of rarest of its kind studies in Pakistan have explored the influence of religious beliefs on Pakistani news reporters documenting that the religion has an influence on various journalistic functions and roles including civic, service, loyal facilitator, disseminator interventionist, and watchdog performed by the new reporters. However, scarcity of literature on the subject in terms of the influence of religious beliefs on mainstream journalistic community provides a research gap fulfilled by this study, as it explores the influence of religious beliefs by taking into account the mainstream media community involving the sample of journalistic community as a whole with representation of news reporters, news editors, and other related journalistic staff and that too from electronic and digital media which are widely practiced in Pakistan. This research focuses on the application of the "Beliefs into Action Scale", an established and validated measure by Koenig et al. to understand the manifestation of religious beliefs among the journalists working in Pakistani media[9]. The Beliefs into Action Scale has been a wide-ranging measure to evaluate the religious involvement by assessing how individuals decode their religious beliefs into actions. This research has adopted this scale as this framework provides a systematic pattern of measuring the way beliefs are translated into perceptible actions and behaviours. Moreover, Rammouz et al. adapted and validated the Arabic version of the Muslim Belief into Action Scale in Morocco, reporting its reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.81$, test-retest ICC = 0.87) by testing the scale on 132 Moroccan students, and demonstrating its applicability in context of Muslim-majority nations like Pakistan. Furthermore, Ahmed and Shah also applied the same scale in Pakistani context that too conducting a research on Media functions.

As the religious beliefs are often linked to people's perceptions of society and translated into commitments, journalists' prioritization of religious beliefs, religious information consumption, and potential financial contributions in terms of charity may shape the media content and also impact individual biases. Application of the "Beliefs into Action Scale" in the context of the journalists in mainstream media in Pakistan may provide an insight into the facts of how the journalists under the demographic factors of gender, age, academic qualification and the type of media served by them, get influenced of their religious beliefs and practices while performing their professional duties in media.

This study attempts to understand the influence of religious beliefs held by journalists on their professional practices concerning gender (male/female), age (21-30 years/31-40 years/41-50 years), academic qualification (under-graduate/graduate/post-graduate) and the type of media (digital or electronic) served by them[10].

Understanding the influence of religious beliefs on journalists working with digital and electronic media set-ups in Pakistan is crucial to promoting responsible reporting, accountability and transparency. The study limited its scope to the journalists serving in digital and electronic media organizations in Pakistan since the modern time have witnessed a decline of print media and exponential growth of electronic media and digital media industries in the country (Jang, 2024). Furthermore, the journalists working on television and various digital media platforms are more likely to appear on screen, interact with people and ultimately known to them that can further influence the community at large. The study helps in understanding the influence of religious beliefs on the professional practices and assignments of journalists. It provides a base to further investigate religion-media nexus, particularly in context of globalization, digital advances and Islamophobia. Furthermore, the study also provides a guide for managers of media organizations to understand and mitigate the influence of religious beliefs on news formation and agenda setting.

Objectives of the Study:

Since religion has been the most dominant and instrumental force influencing almost every segment of the society in Pakistan and the role of media in shaping perceptions, opinions and personalities is also undeniable, the religion-media interplay requires a thorough investigation of the influence of religious beliefs on professional practices of those (journalists) who shape public agenda. In view of this, the study set its objectives as under:

1. To measure the influence of religious beliefs on journalists in Pakistan
2. To examine the influence of religious beliefs on journalists in Pakistan with respect to various demographic factors (gender, type of media served, age and qualification)

Literature Review:

The scholarly research "Media and Religion" involves exploring the scholarly works and research conducted on how the mainstream media interacts, influences, and represents various religious beliefs and practices. This research encompasses the examination of the relationship between media and religious communities, the impact of media on religious discourse, and how media shapes public perceptions about religion and religious groups. Here is a brief overview of the key themes on media and religion that will be covered in the following mentioned literature review:

Patrick Eisenlohr, while exploring research on media usage in contexts with religious diversity, in his paper "Media and Religious Diversity" explains three methods, including media politics of diversity, religious diversity and the public sphere, and the diversity of religious mediations. As opposed to the first line of research, which focuses on the management of representations of religious variety and difference, the second line of research analyzes how religious diversity, public discourse, and image circulation interact. The third approach looks at the various ways that religious practitioners communicate with the religious afterlife and how these connections impact social life. He begins by looking at the inescapable links between media and religious pursuits. This article argues that a perspective awareness of the innate linkages between religion and media is the only approach to address the issues generated by the intersection of media usage and religious diversity[11].

Khojaste and Kalantari in an article on "The Media Rituals: The Relationship between Media and Religion" try to answer the following questions: What connection is there between modern media and religion? Is the media fundamentally hostile to religion and a tool for its eradication, or does it function as a neutral medium that can also promote religion? These queries are under the umbrella of the category of the connection between religion, modernity, and the essence of modernization, for which Iran has a vast literature. According to them, two similar approaches can be taken in terms of the connection between religion and modernization: 2) A philosophical approach, and 1) a historical-sociological approach. Under the impact of either strategy, one would come across a range of viewpoints that, on the one hand, lead to "technological dogmatism," and on the other hand, lead to "instrumentalization." Which of these viewpoints we embrace relies on our historical

situation (our destiny), how we define dichotomous sides (faith and media), as well as how we approach this issue historically, sociologically, and philosophically? They covered these issues in this article[12].

Hoover submits in his paper that the relationship between pop music and urban space gives rise to a dialectic that affects both the definition of music genres and the social concept of the spatiality of major cities. In this article, he examines the representation of different places in Madrid in various video clips, analyzing their discursive meaning and their articulation of identity-related to the values associated with certain artists and repertoires. That is to say, we explore the configuration of the urban ethos through its representation in musical production[13].

Kyuhoon raises concerns about the configuration of religion in the media sector of modern Korea. With globalization in the modern world, mass media has increasingly become a diverse field of communication through which various interpretations of religion and spirituality in a given society are processed. In this article, he focuses on how religion is presented in the news media, such as newspapers and broadcasters, in contemporary South Korea. Since the 1990s, the media industry in Korean society has rapidly turned into an autonomous profession as the nation-state has made great progress toward democracy and social reformation. In this new social context, a majority of media workers have internalized the standards of liberal or even progressive journalism. Reflecting on the socio-political shift, media professionals have actively produced information and assessments about different religious groups, many of which are concerned with cultural, anti-social, and sensational dimensions of religion. The author studies the underlying trends and logic in the media's articulation of religion, which are selectively intertwined with the Korean society secular and religious constellation[14].

Schoemaker in his PhD thesis on Digital Faith: social media and the enactment of religious identity in Pakistan presents a theoretically grounded and historically contextualized sociological examination of how digital technologies shape religious identity in Pakistan. To clarify this, he presented an examination of how Facebook shapes the enactment of religious identity by young people in three cities in Punjab, Pakistan, drawing on theoretical literature, the literature on Pakistani religious identity, and twelve months of fieldwork (2014–2015). He views technology as assemblages of discursive and material pieces that, when put together, produce actionable opportunities. He views identification as the performativity enactment of subject positions constituted by discursive regimes of knowledge and power. He used a mixed-methods strategy that included a survey, document collecting, in-depth interviews, and observation of young Facebook users while

adopting an agential realism methodology. His empirical findings demonstrate how social media, mobile internet, and mobile phones interact with ordinary life and public debate to construct religious identity[15].

Rashid explores the broader scene of disruptive technologies concerning Muslims and Islam, looking at Pakistan's social media scene in the context of more general disruptive technologies. Through four case studies drawn from recent events in Pakistan, the research aims to investigate the effects of disruptive technologies on Pakistani society while investigating the interaction between religion and religiosity in the era of disruptions. The article uses secondary sources to assess the social media landscape more broadly before critically analyzing these case studies to understand the effects of social media. These case studies show that social media is a potent tool used by both social activists and religious organizations, a recent development in Pakistan[16].

Soukup examines three broad strands of communication research on media and religion. He starts by reviewing some new frameworks for studying media and religion to understand where the subject is at the moment among experts. The second part of his analysis focuses on how scholars have examined about the ways various media and religion interact, with a particular emphasis on journalism's treatment of religion, entertainment media's content and critical analysis, and information media, notably the Internet. He concludes by examining Christian media reflection, which some refer to as Communication Theology[17].

According to Herbert, the relationship between religion, popular culture, and politics in contemporary societies is changing in ways that are not adequately accounted for in the existing sociological theories of religion and are still largely neglected in sociological theories of media and culture. This is because of the rapid development and dissemination of media technologies, the liberalization of national media economies, and the expansion of transnational media spheres. In particular, he draws attention to media-enabled social processes that reflect and oppose those associated with the secularization of religion in secularization theory, interrupting their secularizing effects and tending to spread religious symbols and discourses more widely in society, a process known as "publicizing" religion. Contrary to neo-secularization theory, these processes have ramifications for religious authority, which is reconfigured in a more diffused form but not necessarily weakened. Additionally, contrary to rational choice theory, the increased public presence of religion depends not only on competition between religious "suppliers," but also on the work that religions do outside the limited religious sphere that secular modernity attributes to religion, in supposedly secular spheres like entertainment, politics,

law, health, and welfare. This has implications for the crucial cultural studies relationship between politics and popular culture[18].

Safdar and Khan explain the impact of media on female students because they are heavy consumers of digital media. Unrestricted access to digital media regularly could have several negative effects. The primary goal of the current study was to determine how digital media impacted the religious, moral, and cultural beliefs of female university students from Punjab, Pakistan. Female students at universities experience enormous changes as a result of gender equality since they are the symbolic expression of any community and are the greatest place to evaluate religious, moral, and cultural aspects. The study was carried out in public universities in Punjab, Pakistan. Data from 1157 female students who participated in the survey-based study were gathered. "Social Learning Theory" was traditionally the study's central subject. The survey found that practically every aspect of students' lives had been captured by digital media, which has established itself as an essential component of life. The internet is a fantastic resource for learning about religion, and it affects women's participation in religion in both positive and unfavourable ways. Internet usage also has conflicting effects on female students' moral principles. Additionally, among Pakistani women, digital media is a major source for the import of foreign culture and the decline of Pakistani culture[19].

Moberg and Granholm explore how paying close attention to the modern nexus of religion, media, popular culture, and consumer culture would greatly benefit from a more empirical and context-oriented understanding of the concept of the post-secular. It aims to deepen and improve the idea of the post-secular into a more comprehensive interpretive framework for the investigation of religious transformation in modern Western countries, with a focus on Western European societies. Even while the study of religion, in general, has arguably understudied the historical and modern links between religion and larger social structures. The current connection between religion, consumer capitalism, and consumer culture emphasizes even more how the places and types of religion themselves are changing significantly in late modern times. The chapter ends with some intriguing insights on how the post-secular idea might be given more weight and distinguished from other comparable current theoretical conceptions[20].

The interplay between media and religion has been a point of attraction for research scholars, both in religion and media around the world. In Pakistan, religion carries a central role to play in people’s lives and journalists are no exception. The influence of religious beliefs on the mainstream media (journalists, as they are at the grassroots level of agenda-setting) is very critical. Islam, the state religion, as being an influential force in Pakistani society, permeates

the content of media and raises questions about the extent to which it influences media workers and eventually, the narratives built by the media. Over the years, a growing curiosity has been about how religious beliefs outline the content, editorial decisions, and narratives among societies across the globe.

Research Methodology

Nature of the Study

The study is cross-sectional in nature. Studies conducted under cross-sectional research designs collect data from the sample under investigation at a single point (time) to measure the pervasiveness of desired characteristics or explore relationships between variables. Such designs guide the researchers to inexpensively and quickly document the phenomenon under study and provide valuable understandings for further research.

Approach of the Study

The current cross-sectional research employed quantitative approach. Studies adopting quantitative research involve a systematic way of data collection and analysis of quantifiable/numerical data to identify and explain the phenomena under investigation such as a pattern or relationship between different variables. Application of the quantitative research approach helped the researchers carry out descriptive statistics to summarize the data about respondents' demographic characteristics, Cronbach's alpha to measure the reliability of the Beliefs into Action Scale, independent samples t-test to compare the means, and One-way ANOVA followed by Tukey's HSD post-hoc test to analyze the variance across demographics under investigation. While using SPSS.

Method (Survey)

This quantitative research has been a cross-sectional survey. Cross-sectional survey method collects data from a sample (individuals or entities) at a single point (time) to examine their attitudes, behaviours, characteristics, or opinions. This study used an already developed and validated survey instrument, the Beliefs into Action Scale by Koenig et al., which is a standard and well-established measure to investigate the influence of religious beliefs in people's actions in the organizational context. However, reliability analysis was carried out using Cronbach Alpha through SPSS. The study considered demographic characteristics of gender, age, academic qualification, and the type of media served by the journalists. Survey was administered online using Google Docs.

Study Population, Study Sample and Sampling Frame

The population of the study was journalists working in Pakistan. The sample of the study comprised journalists working in

electronic and digital media organizations in Islamabad, the Federal Capital of Pakistan. The sampling frame maintained the scope of the study to the journalists working in digital and electronic media set-ups including Gender (male/female), age (21-30 years, 31-40 years and 41-50 years), academic qualification (under-graduation, graduation, post-graduation), and affiliation to the type of media organizations (digital media/electronic media). Limiting scope of the research to Islamabad was based on convenience of the researchers. Convenience sampling is a non-probability technique of sampling that helps the researchers select participants of the study based on their convenience, accessibility and proximity, usually choosing the ones who are easy to reach or voluntarily available for documentation of response. Through convenience sampling technique, 563 journalists working in electronic and digital media set-ups in Islamabad, the Federal Capital of Pakistan were approached. Out of the approached journalists, 300 individuals consented to be part of this study. Logic behind adopting convenience sampling was that the journalists are busy professionals and approaching them through any of the non-probability techniques such as simple random sampling would not have yielded desired number of responses.

Ethical Considerations:

The researchers approached 563 journalists with an informed consent form through WhatsApp and Facebook to request them to be part of this study. Out of the total approached potential respondents 300 were willing to be part of the study. Moreover, with a request for informed consent, the respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity regarding personal information as well as responses they provided against the survey questionnaire statements. This confidentiality and anonymity have been maintained by the researchers.

Hypotheses of the Study:

Several following four hypotheses were devised by the study:

1. H_1: Pakistani male journalists tend to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than their female counterparts.
2. H_2: The journalists in Pakistan working in digital media tend to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than the ones working in electronic media.
3. H_3: The journalists in Pakistan with older age tend to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than the ones with younger age.
4. H_4: The journalists in Pakistan with higher academic qualifications tend to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than the ones with lower academic qualifications.

Data Analysis

The study measured the tendency of the journalists to be influenced by their religious beliefs while performing their professional duties through the application of the Belief into Action Scale devised by Koenig et al. on the variable of religious practices.

	No of items	(α)	M	SD	Range	
					Minimum	Maximum
Belief into Action Scale	10	.94	52.60	16.20	29	73

Table 1: Reliability Analysis of the Belief into Action Scale as Adopted by the Study (n=300)

Table 1 demonstrates the reliability of the applied scale as an excellent one with (α) value of .94. The study applied Reliability Analysis of the Belief into Action Scale, which it adopted to measure the influence of religious beliefs held by the journalists on their professional practices. Reliability analysis is applied to determine the consistency of a process (Taherdoost, 2018). Table 1 also reflected the means and standard deviation along with minimum and maximum ranges for the scale.

Variables	**Categories**	**(f)**	**(%)**
Age of the Journalist	21-30 Years	150	50
	31-40 Years	95	31.7
	41-50 Years	55	18.3
Gender of the Journalist	Male	200	66.7
	Female	100	33.3
Qualification of the Journalist	Undergraduate	55	18.3
	Graduate	153	51.0
	Post Graduate	92	30.7
Media the Journalist serves	Digital Media	145	48.3
	Electronic Media	155	51.7

Table 2 : Frequencies and Percentages of the Demographic Characteristics of Sample (n=300)

Table 2 presented the demographic characteristics of the sample. The data showed that a total of 200 male and 100 female journalists from Pakistan made up a sample of 300 participants. Moreover, 50% (150 journalists) of the study participants were between 21-30 years of age, followed by another 31.7% (95

journalists) of 31-40 years and 18.3% (55% journalists) of 41-50 years respectively. The study took into consideration the academic qualification of the journalists, involving three categories under-graduation, graduation and post-graduation. The largest category of the respondents (51% journalists) held graduate degree, followed by 30.7% participants holding post-graduate and 18.3% journalists with undergraduate degrees. Two main categories of the media served by the journalists i.e., digital media and electronic media were also taken into account with the majority of the respondents (51.7% journalists) serving in electronic media organizations and another 48.3% of their contemporaries associated with digital media platforms.

Hypothesis 1: Pakistani male journalists tend to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than their female counterparts.

	Male (*n=200*)		Female (*n=100*)		*t*	*p*	95% CI		
Measures	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			*LL*	*UL*	Cohen's d
Religious Practices	57.98	15.15	41.85	12.5	-9.19	.00	-19.58	-12.68	1.16

Table 3: t-test analysis between Male and female cases on variables of Religious Practices (n=300).

Table 3 showed the application of independent sample *t*-test analysis, a statistical technique applied to determine any significant differences between the means of two unrelated groups under study. The results indicated statistically significant differences between male and female groups of journalists on the variable of religious practices. The results revealed that the male journalists scored higher than their female counterparts on the variable of religious practices, reflecting the tendency of the former to be more inclined towards getting influenced by their religious beliefs more than the latter while performing their professional (journalistic) duties. Given the statistics presented at Table 3, hypothesis 1 that claiming male journalists are more influenced by their religious beliefs more than their female counterparts has been supported.

Hypothesis 2: The journalists in Pakistan working in digital media tend to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than the ones working in electronic media.

	Digital Media (*n=145*)		Electronic Media (*n=155*)		*t*	*p*	95% CI		
Measures	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			*LL*	*UL*	Cohen's d
Religious Practices	57.92	12.53	47.63	17.65	5.79	.00	6.79	13.78	0.67

Table 4: t-test analysis between media organizations on the variable of Religious Practices (n=300).

Table 4 also demonstrated the application of independent sample t-test analysis to depict that the differences based on different media organizations served (digital media or electronic media) on the variable of religious practices were statistically significant. The findings suggested that the journalists who worked in the digital media set-ups tended to be more influenced by their religious beliefs as compared to the group of respondents working in the electronic media as the former scored higher than the latter. As per the statistics presented at Table 4, hypothesis 2 that the journalists working in digital media are more influenced by their religious beliefs than the journalists working in electronic media has been supported.

Hypothesis 3: The journalists in Pakistan with older age tend to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than the ones with younger age.

Variables	21-30 (n=150) M SD		31-40 (n=95) M SD		41-50 (n=55) M SD		*F*	*P*
Religious Practices	46.66	16.31	54.29	15.13	65.89	6.11	35.91	.00

Table 5: One-way ANOVA among the Age Categories on the Variable of Religious Practices (n=300).

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
21-30 years	31-40 years	-7.64*	1.91	-12.14	-3.13

	41-50 years	-19.23*	2.29	-24.65	-13.81
31-40 years	41-50 years	-11.59*	2.47	-17.42	-5.77
Note: P<.01					

Table 5(a): Post-hoc Analysis among the Age Categories on the Variable of Religious Practices (n=300).

Table 5 reflected the application of One-way Analysis of Covariance (ANOVA), a statistical test applied to compare the means of more than two (three or more) groups while controlling for the impact of one or more continuous variables, also known as covariates, between different age categories (21-30 years, 31-40 years, and 41-50 years) on the variable of religious practices to show the results as being statistically significant. The Post-hoc Tukey's Analysis (Table 5a), also described as Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) test, an advanced statistical technique applied after ANOVA to explore significant pairwise group differences, demonstrated statistically significant differences for the category of the journalists falling in 21-30 years of age (M=46.66, SD=16.31) with 31-40 years (M=54.29, SD=15.13) and 41-50 years of age (M=65.89, SD=6.11) categories respectively where both of the latter categories. Similarly, statistically significant differences were also found between 31-40 years (M=54.29, SD=15.13) and 41-50 years of age (M=65.89, SD=6.11) categories where the latter category of the journalists scored higher on the variable of religious practices as compared to the former one. These results reflected that the journalists falling in older age categories tended to show more tendency to get influenced by their religious beliefs as compared to their younger colleagues. As per the results presented at Tables 5 and 5a, hypothesis 3 which claimed that journalists in Pakistan with older age tend to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than the ones with younger age, has been supported.

Hypothesis 4: The journalists in Pakistan with higher academic qualifications tend to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than the ones with lower academic qualifications.

Variables	Undergraduate (n=55) M SD	Graduate (n=153) M SD	Post Graduate (n=92) M SD	*F*	*P*

Religious Practices	64.40	10.32	49.84	15.60	50.15	17.01	20.16	.00

Table 6: One-way ANOVA among the Academic Qualification Categories on the Variable of Religious Practices (n=300).

(I) Academic Qualification	(J) Academic Qualification	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Under Graduate	Graduate	14.56*	2.39	8.91	20.21
	Post Graduate	14.25*	2.60	8.12	20.37
Note: P<.01					

Table 6(a): Post-hoc Analysis among the Academic Qualification Categories on the Variable of Religious Practices (n=300).

Table 6 also depicted the application of Analysis of Covariance (ANOVA) between different categories of journalists based on differences of their academic qualification on the variable of religious practices to demonstrate the results as being statistically significant. The Post-hoc Tukey's Analysis (Table 6a) also showed statistically significant differences in the category of undergraduate journalists with graduates and post-graduates. The undergraduate journalists (M=64.40, SD=10.32) scored higher than the graduate (M=49.84, SD=15.60) and post-graduate (M=50.15, SD=17.01) journalists. The results reflected that both the journalists with graduate and post-graduate academic qualifications tended to be more influenced by their religious beliefs as compared to the journalists with undergraduate qualifications. As per the data presented at Tables 6 and 6a, hypothesis 4 that claimed, the journalists in Pakistan with higher academic qualifications tend to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than the ones with lower academic qualifications, has been rejected.

Discussion

The study has established Beliefs in Action Scale as a reliable measure for research in context of religious influence on individuals in the society, conforming with existing body of literature. The results of the study present valuable insights into the complex interplay

between religious beliefs and journalistic practices in the specific context of Pakistan. The study considered demographic characteristics of the journalists including age, gender, academic qualification and the type of media they served. By doing so, the study unveiled nuanced patterns and intricacies, underlying the influence of religious beliefs held by the journalists on their professional practices. The research found out that the male journalists were more influenced by their religious beliefs than their female counterparts. Similarly, the digital media were found to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than their fellows working in electronic media. Moreover, the older (with respect to age) journalists were inclined to be more influenced by their religious beliefs than the younger ones. Finally, the highly qualified (graduate and postgraduate) journalist tended to be less influenced by their religious beliefs as compared to the journalists with lower (undergraduate) qualification. The findings of male and older age journalists being more influenced by the religious beliefs as compared to their counterparts fall in conformity of existing research whereas the aspects of lower academic qualification and digital media journalists being influenced by their religious beliefs contributes to the already available literature on the subject. By doing so, this study fills a gap in the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on how religious beliefs influence journalism practices in digital and electronic media in Pakistan. This study recognizes the journalists as being central to shaping public perceptions and discourse by highlighting the intricate relationship between religious beliefs and journalists' professional practices. Understanding these influences is critical for media organizations to maintain standards of fairness, objectivity and accuracy and respect for communities. Based on these findings, the media organizations should take necessary steps to preserve journalistic integrity. They must acknowledge the influence of religious beliefs on reporting by the journalists, and editorial decisions by senior editorial staff. Media outlets should consider implementing training programs that address religious diversity, ensuring journalists can balance personal beliefs with professional obligations to maintain fairness and objectivity in their reporting.

The study sensitizes media organizations about the complex nature of relationship between religion, media and Pakistani society that holds religious identity as central to cultural and political relevance, exploring the way the journalists navigate religious beliefs while performing their professional roles is of significance to foster a diverse and inclusive media landscape.

While the quantitative findings provide insight into the relationship between religion and journalistic practice, the limitations of this approach point to the need for future research that incorporates qualitative methods. This could provide a deeper understanding of

how religious beliefs affect journalists on a personal and professional level. Although quantitative approaches provide statistical insights into the relationship between religion and journalistic practice, qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups can provide deeper insights into individual motivations, beliefs and their impact on everyday reporting decisions.

Conclusion:

This research has yielded fruitful results by confirming religion-media interplay in view of the influence of religious beliefs on professional practices of the journalists. The study concludes that the digital and electronic media journalists in Pakistan are widely influenced by their religious beliefs while performing their professional (journalistic) duties. However, this influence varies in terms of gender, age, affiliation to either type of media setup (digital/electronic) and academic qualification. The male journalists, the ones who work for digital media, are of older age, and/or with undergraduate academic qualifications tend to get more influenced by their religious beliefs while performing their professional tasks than the journalists who are female, work for electronic media organizations, are of younger age, and/or with graduate and post-graduate academic qualification. These aspects point out that male members of the society might study religion more than females and that is reflected by the study findings as well. Similarly, the digital media platforms are more diverse and heavy influx of information on various aspects of life including religion may also contributing to influence on the journalists serving digital media platforms. Moreover, with higher qualifications and more knowledge, a rationale evaluation of events may come into play that may lead to lesser influence of religion on journalistic reporting. Finally, the older people are emotionally more concerned with religious ideologies and beliefs and compared to younger generation that is also reflected in journalistic reporting of events. The media organizations should take necessary steps including sensitization of journalists about influence of religious values and beliefs to lessen the biases and ensuring fair reporting of events. Furthermore, news must be fact-checked to eliminate any religious, social, or cultural influence on the news stories.

Limitations and Recommendations

The study has been limited to exploring the influence of religious beliefs of Pakistani journalists in terms of their professional work (news assignments), aspects of gender, age, academic qualification and the type of media (digital/electronic) served with a consideration to explore differences between various demographic groups. Future research may focus on exploring the influence of religious beliefs on beat-wise professional roles performed by

journalists as well as the inclination of journalists towards religion and its further impact on news content or religious bias of journalists. It may also include religious and sectarian backgrounds, socio-income status, journalistic and non-journalistic staff, and geographic ethnicity (rural/urban). Moreover, the future research may explore the influence of religious beliefs on media functions in context of public interest of the society. Similarly, it is a cross-sectional survey. Future research may enhance the scope and consider correlational surveys to measure the relationship between the religious beliefs and professional roles of the journalists. Furthermore, longitudinal and qualitative studies may also be valuable additions to existing body of literature. The researchers working on the intersection of media and religion may also examine how journalists handle or resolve difficult situations (ethical dilemmas) when their personal religious beliefs conflict with professional standards that require them to be objective and impartial in news coverage. Finally, the studies may also include audience perspectives as well as comparisons between religious influence on journalists and patterns of audience reception and interpretation of news to understand how religious bias is coded in the news and perceived and interpreted by the audience.

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