

Periodic Research

A Study of Religiosity among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in Kashmir

Abstract

Religiosity or religiousness is commonly viewed as society-based beliefs and practices in relation to God. It is a multidimensional construct involving cognitions, emotions, and behaviors in the search for the sacred religious beliefs and practices may contribute to decreased stress and increased sense of well-being, but not everyone draws on religion in times of stress. People are more likely to use religious coping when religious beliefs and practices form a large part of their life orientation and when religion is seen as a compelling source of solutions to life problems. The present study was focused on the religiosity among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in Kashmir. The research was carried out by survey of 400 families in 10 districts of Kashmir. The data was collected with the help of readymade scale namely Religiosity Scale by Dr L.I. Bhushan, (1990). The results of the study revealed that majority of respondents agree with the view that God sent his messengers to save the religion from evil. Result also shows that bulk of respondents among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs strongly agree that respect should be given to those who are firm on their religion.

Keywords: Religiosity, Spirituality, Belief.

Introduction

Life and death are inter-related and are often seen as two sides of the same coin (Chuin & Choo, 2004). Fear of death is a universal and widespread type of fear among humans. There are many factors that worsen, or help to cope with the fear of death. It is known, that low self-control, low self-esteem and life failures raise the levels of anxiety connected with the knowledge of certain mortality. The other factors positively associated with the fear of death are, for instance; higher age, death thought in individuals, lacking of meaning of life, searching for the meaning in life or the discrepancy between desired and expected time left to live (Demuthova, 2013). Religiosity offers answers to existential and death related questions and provides individuals with a sense of predictability and control that may protect against overwhelming anxiety provoked by the perspective of death. (Dezutter et-al, 2006). The main task of religion is to make sense of life and death. Moreover, religious people are presumed to be less afraid of death because they often believe that they will be rewarded for their religious behavior in afterlife (Ardelt, 2008). Religiosity plays a major part in the life of an individual. It can provide hope in despair (Joshi, Kumari & Jain, 2008). Some may find their hearts at rest when bowed down in prostration to their lord. Others may find comfort within religious sermons where different religious books are read and recited. Still others may find their souls at peace when they submit entirely to their creator with an unshakeable belief that he has full control over all that is happening in their lives (Ismail & Desmukh, 2012). Religious beliefs provide a sense of meaning and purpose in difficult life circumstances, they offer a community of support, both human and divine, to help reduce isolation and loneliness, unlike many other coping resources, religion is available to anyone at any time, regardless of financial, social, physical or mental circumstance (Harold, Koenig & M.D,2008). Religious beliefs play a significant part in sculpting social behavior. Differences in religious affiliations tend to influence the way people live, the choices they make, what they eat and whom they associate with. (Fam, Waller & Erdogan, 2004).

Review of Literature

Vaijayanthimala, et.al (2004) examined a study on socio-economic heterogamy and marital satisfaction. The sample comprised of 150 working women working as doctors, nurses and lecturers from Orissa. The study shows that in providing a relatively comprehensive analysis of

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some heterogeneous factors like age, education, occupation and religiosity in marital satisfaction. In the present study heterogeneous occupation is one of the strongest variables which influence marital satisfaction. It also suggests that marital dissatisfaction is high among couples with heterogamous age and education. However, religious heterogamy suggests that the risk of marital instability is very less or not at all significant. In Orissa, no other empirical explanation has found for marital satisfaction with heterogamous variables.

Dezutter, et.al (2007) carried a study on the role of religion in death attitudes. The sample consists of 476 adults. The study shows the importance of taking a multidimensional perspective to both religiosity and death attitudes. Whereas the extent to which individuals are religious is related to a stronger belief in afterlife, the qualitative different ways of processing religious contents is related to one's level of defensiveness and death. Irrespective of whether people adopt a religious worldview or not, a literal, closed-minded and dogmatic approach to religious contents is associated with more death anxiety and with a stronger tendency to avoid and suppress death-related thoughts.

Rudaliviciene, et.al (2008) assessed religious delusions related to religiosity in Schizophrenia. The sample consists of 295 respondents. The results bring out that delusions of

Results and Discussion

religious content were reported by males and by females. Male patients most often considered themselves as God, while female patients most often considered themselves as saints. Religiosity and personal importance of the faith were not confirmed as independent predictors of religious content of delusions in Schizophrenia patients. Marital status and educational level independently predicted religious content of delusions in patients with Schizophrenia.

Objectives

1. To assess the level of religiosity among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in Kashmir.
2. To observe religious faith and religious obligations in various religions in Kashmir.

Methodology

The sample for the present study comprised of 400 respondents in which 100 were from Hindus, 200 were from Muslims and 100 were from Sikhs. The scale divided into two dimensions namely religious faith and religious obligations. Random sampling technique was used. Religiosity Scale by Dr. L.I. Bhushan, (1990) was used for collecting data. The data obtained through scales was consolidated, analyzed and interpreted as per the requirement of the objectives; using specific statistical tools for example percentage and chi square analysis. The p-value at ≤ 0.05 was considered significant. IBM SPSS 20 Software was used for data analysis.

Table 1
Religiosity among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs

Religiosity	Hindus (N=100)		Muslims (N=200)		Sikhs (N=100)		Total (N=400)		χ^2 (df=4)	p-value
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Very high	6	6	21	10.5	7	7.0	34	8.5	4.27	0.63
High	10	10.0	31	15.5	18	18.0	59	14.8		
Medium	64	64.0	120	60.0	38	38.0	222	55.5		
Low	20	20.0	28	14.0	33	33.0	81	20.2		
Very low	0	0	0	0	4	4.0	4	1.0		
Total	100	100	200	100	100	100	400	100		

Source: Based on Field Survey
N=400

Table 1 depicts religiosity among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in Kashmir valley. The table reveals that maximum of the respondents i.e. 64.0 per cent (f=64) among Hindus, followed by 60.0 per cent (f=120) among Muslims and 38.0 per cent (f=38) among Sikhs have medium level of religiosity. This result is found to be statistically not significant at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 4.27, p > 0.05$. Joshi and Kumari (2011)

found that religion has tremendous effects on personality, attitudes, behavior and overall outlook of life. It is closely related with the development and change of attitudes and beliefs, the arousal and reduction of anxiety and guilt and the determination of cognitive and motivational processes. Religion is an important dimension of people's lives around the world.

Table 2
Religious faith among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs

Religious Faith	Response	Religion			Total	χ^2 (df=4)	p-value
		Hindu	Muslims	Sikhs			
Soul is the part of God	Strongly Agree	F	33	68	13	78.527	0.00
		%	33.0	34.0	13.0		
	Agree	F	10	24	30		
		%	10.0	12.0	30.0		
	Undecided	F	13	35	41		
		%	13.0	17.5	41.0		
Disagree	F	9	33	13			

Periodic Research

Religious Faith	Response	Religion			Total	χ^2 (df=4)	p-value	
		Hindu	Muslims	Sikhs				
	Strongly disagree	F	9.0	16.5	13.0	13.75		
		%	35.0	20.0	3.0	19.5		
God created us for help of others	Strongly Agree	F	86	130	45	261	55.070	0.00
		%	86.0	65.0	45.0	65.25		
	Agree	F	10	54	42	106		
		%	10.0	27.0	42.0	26.5		
	Undecided	F	0	0	6	6		
		%	0.0	0.0	6.0	1.5		
	Disagree	F	0	4	0	4		
		%	0.0	2.0	0.0	1		
Strongly disagree	F	4	12	7	23			
	%	4.0	6.0	7.0	5.75			
God sent his messengers to save the religion from evil	Strongly Agree	F	75	110	45	230	65.428	0.00
		%	75.0	55.0	45.0	57.5		
	Agree	F	17	79	25	121		
		%	17.0	39.5	25.0	30.2		
	Undecided	F	8	11	20	39		
		%	8.0	5.5	20.0	9.8		
	Disagree	F	0	0	10	10		
		%	0.0	0.0	10.0	2.5		
Strongly disagree	F	0	0	0	0			
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0			
Respect to those who are firm on their religion	Strongly Agree	F	67	131	49	247	15.526	0.017
		%	67.0	65.5	49.0	61.8		
	Agree	F	31	68	47	46		
		%	31.0	34.0	47.0	36.5		
	Undecided	F	2	1	2	5		
		%	2.0	0.5	2.0	1.2		
	Disagree	F	0	0	2	2		
		%	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.5		
Strongly disagree	F	0	0	0	0			
	%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0			
Luck of a human being is the hands of God	Strongly Agree	F	11	35	11	57	53.400	0.00
		%	11.0	17.5	11.0	14.2		
	Agree	F	22	56	48	126		
		%	22.0	28.0	48.0	31.5		
	Undecided	F	26	50	27	103		
		%	26.0	25.0	27.0	25.8		
	Disagree	F	5	27	12	44		
		%	5.0	13.5	12.0	11.0		
Strongly disagree	F	36	32	2	70			
	%	36.0	16.0	2.0	17.5			
Pious person is near to God	Strongly Agree	F	76	132	53	261	30.617	0.00
		%	76.0	66.0	53.0	65.2		
	Agree	F	13	42	40	95		
		%	13.0	21.0	40.0	23.8		
	Undecided	F	8	12	7	27		
		%	8.0	6.0	7.0	6.8		
	Disagree	F	0	5	0	5		
		%	0.00	2.5	0.00	1.2		
Strongly disagree	F	3	9	0	12			
	%	3.0	4.5	0.0	3.0			
After death soul remains alive	Strongly Agree	F	26	25	30	81	33.617	0.00
		%	26.0	12.5	30.0	20.2		
	Agree	F	16	37	20	73		
		%	16.0	18.5	20.0	18.2		
Undecided	F	24	42	17	83			

Periodic Research

Religious Faith	Response	Religion			Total	χ^2 (df=4)	p-value				
		Hindu	Muslims	Sikhs							
	Disagree	F	24.0	21.0	17.0	20.8					
		%	7	57	20	84					
	Strongly disagree	F	7.0	28.5	20.0	21.0					
		%	27	39	13	79					
		Strongly Agree	F	27.0	19.5	13.0		19.8			
			%	3	5	13		21			
Believe in God lacks self confidence.	Agree	F	3.0	2.5	13.0	5.2	46.192	0.00			
		%	5	14	19	38					
	Undecided	F	5.0	7.0	19.0	9.5					
		%	17	29	10	56					
	Disagree	F	17.0	14.5	10.0	14.0					
		%	14	36	27	77					
	Strongly disagree	F	14.0	18.0	27.0	19.2					
		%	61	116	31	208					
	Sacrifice everything in the path of God	Strongly Agree	F	61.0	58.0	31.0			52.0	55.541	0.00
			%	70	97	55			222		
		Agree	F	70.0	48.5	55.0			55.5		
			%	16	79	12			107		
Undecided		F	16.0	39.5	12.0	26.8					
		%	4	7	8	19					
Disagree		F	4.0	3.5	8.0	4.8					
		%	6	16	14	36					
Strongly disagree		F	6.0	8.0	14.0	9.0					
		%	4	1	11	16					
Person do good for others is very near to God		Strongly Agree	F	4.0	0.5	11.0	4.0	29.63	0.00		
			%	73	93	40	206				
	Agree	F	73.0	46.5	40.0	51.5					
		%	20	84	41	145					
	Undecided	F	20.0	42.0	41.0	36.2					
		%	0	5	3	8					
	Disagree	F	0.0	2.5	3.0	2.0					
		%	6	15	13	34					
	Strongly disagree	F	6.0	7.5	13.0	8.5					
		%	1	3	3	7					
	Visit holy places make heart pure	Strongly Agree	F	1.0	1.5	3.0	1.8			31.58	0.00
			%	63	103	28	94				
Agree		F	63.0	51.5	28.0	48.5					
		%	16	60	44	120					
Undecided		F	16.0	30.0	44.0	30.0					
		%	19	29	23	71					
Disagree		F	19.0	14.5	23.0	17.8					
		%	2	5	4	11					
Strongly disagree		F	2.0	2.5	4.0	2.8					
		%	0	3	1	4					
World is run by God		Strongly Agree	F	0.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	18.19	0.20		
			%	90	164	76	330				
	Agree	F	90.0	82.0	76.0	82.5					
		%	9	25	18	52					
	Undecided	F	9.0	12.5	18.0	1.0					
		%	1	5	4	10					
	Disagree	F	1.0	2.5	4.0	2.5					
		%	0	0	2	2					
	Strongly disagree	F	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.5					
		%	0	6	0	6					
	Without the intention of God not a single	Strongly Agree	F	0.0	3.0	0.0	1.5			12.10	0.146
			%	76	145	66	287				
F		76.0	72.5	66.0	71.8						
	Agree	F	15	37	23	75					
		%									

Periodic Research

Religious Faith	Response	Religion			Total	χ^2 (df=4)	p-value
		Hindu	Muslims	Sikhs			
	Undecided	%	15.0	18.5	23.0	36.01	0.00
		F	7	7	5		
	Disagree	%	7.0	3.5	5.0		
		F	2	9	2		
	Strongly disagree	%	2.0	4.5	2.0		
		F	0	2	4		
Feel God by making his eternal soul pure	Strongly Agree	%	59.0	32.0	38.0	34.95	0.00
		F	59	64	38		
	Agree	%	32.0	48.0	42.0		
		F	32	96	42		
	Undecided	%	2.0	3.5	12.0		
		F	2	7	12		
Disagree	%	5.0	11.0	7.0			
	F	5	22	7			
Person's comfort is the Gods grace	Strongly Agree	%	70.0	56.5	40.0	5.240	0.732
		F	70	113	40		
	Agree	%	20.0	36.0	48.0		
		F	20	72	48		
	Undecided	%	6.0	1.5	10.0		
		F	6	3	10		
Disagree	%	1.0	3.5	0.0			
	F	1	7	0			
Worshipping God	Strongly Agree	%	48.0	41.5	39.0	45.96	0.00
		F	48	83	39		
	Agree	%	41.0	48.0	46.0		
		F	41	96	46		
	Undecided	%	5.0	2.5	4.0		
		F	5	5	4		
Disagree	%	5.0	5.5	7.0			
	F	5	11	7			
Real peace in the worshipping of God.	Strongly Agree	%	89.0	79.5	55.0	12.32	0.055
		F	89	159	55		
	Agree	%	7.0	11.0	35.0		
		F	7	22	35		
	Undecided	%	3.0	3.0	2.0		
		F	3	6	2		
Disagree	%	0.0	3.0	2.0			
	F	0	6	2			
Universe is deceptive only God is truth	Strongly Agree	%	70.0	61.0	64.0	12.32	0.055
		F	70	122	64		
	Agree	%	25.0	29.5	19.0		
		F	25	59	19		
	Undecided	%	5.0	8.0	13.0		
		F	5	16	13		
Disagree	%	0.0	1.5	4.0			
	F	0	3	4			
Strongly disagree	%	0.0	0.0	0.0			
	F	0	0	0			

Source: Based on Field Survey
N=400

Table 2 shows level of religiosity in Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. The table reveals that 41.0 per cent (f=41) Sikhs are unable to decide that soul is the part of God; whereas as 34.0 per cent (f=68) Muslims strongly agree and 35.0 per cent (f=35) Hindus strongly disagree with it. The parameter shows a significant difference among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for this level of religiosity at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 78.52, p < 0.01$. Majority of the respondents i.e. 86.0 per cent (f=86) Hindus and 65.0 per cent (f=130) Muslims and 45.0 per cent (f=45) Sikhs strongly agree that God created us for help of others. The difference among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs is statistically significant at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 55.07, p < 0.01$. God sent his messengers to protect the religion from evil. This is perceived by 75.0 per cent (f=75) Hindus, followed by 55.0 per cent (f=110) Muslims and 45.0 per cent (f=45) Sikhs. This result is found statistically significant at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 65.42, p < 0.01$. Majority i.e. 67.0 per cent (f=67) Hindus and 65.5 per cent (f=131) Muslims and 49.0 per cent (f=49) Sikhs strongly agree that respect should be given to those who are firm on their religion. This result is found statistically significant at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 15.52, p < 0.01$. It is found that maximum of the respondents i.e. 48.0 per cent (f=48) Sikhs followed by 28.0 per cent (f=56) Muslims agree that luck of a human being is in the hands of God; whereas 36.0 per cent (f=36) Hindus strongly disagree with it. There is highly significant difference among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for this religiosity at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 53.40, p < 0.01$. Another religiosity is that pious person is near to God. This is strongly agreed by 76.0 per cent (f=76) Hindus, followed by 66.0 per cent (f=132) Muslims and 53.0 per cent (f=53) Sikhs. The data shows significant relationship among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for this religiosity at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 30.61, p < 0.01$. About 30.0 per cent (f=30) Sikhs strongly agree that after death soul remains alive; whereas 28.0 per cent (f=57) Muslims and 27.0 per cent (f=27) Hindus strongly disagree on the same fact. This shows significant relationship among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for this religiosity at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 33.61, p < 0.01$. Believe in God lacks self confidence. This is strongly disagreed by 61.0 per cent (f=61) Hindus, followed by 58.0 per cent (f=116) Muslims and 31.0 per cent (f=31) Sikhs, which is found statistically significant at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 46.19, p < 0.01$. Majority i.e. 70.0 per cent (f=70) Hindus, followed by 55.0 per cent (f=55) Sikhs and 48.5 per cent (f=97) Muslims strongly agree that a person should sacrifice everything in the path of God. There is significant relationship among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for this religiosity at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 55.54, p < 0.01$. About 73.0 per cent (f=73) Hindus, followed by 46.5 per cent (f=93) Muslims and 41.0 per cent (f=41) Sikhs perceive that a person who do good for others is very near to God. The differences recorded are significant among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for this level of religiosity at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 29.63, p < 0.01$. Maximum of respondents i.e. 63.0 per cent (f=63) Hindus, followed by 51.5 per cent (f=103) Muslims and 44.4 per cent (f=44) Sikhs strongly agree that visit holy

places make our hearts pure. This shows a significant difference among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for this religiosity at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 31.58, p < 0.01$. The table also reveals that world is run by God. This is strongly agreed by 90.0 per cent (f=90) Hindus, followed by 82.0 per cent (f=164) Muslims and 76.0 per cent (f=76) Sikhs. However, there is significant relationship between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for this religiosity at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 18.19, p < 0.01$. Maximum of the respondents i.e. 76.0 per cent (f=76) Hindus, followed by 72.5 per cent (f=145) Muslims and 66.0 per cent (f=66) Sikhs strongly agree that without the intention of God not even a single leaf makes a movement, which is found statistically insignificant at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 12.10, p > 0.05$. A person can feel God by making his eternal soul pure. This is perceived by 59.0 per cent (f=59) Hindus followed by 48.0 per cent (f=96) Muslims and 38.0 per cent (f=38) Sikhs. This result is found to be statistically significant at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 36.01, p < 0.01$. It is found that majority of respondents i.e. 70.0 per cent (f=70) Hindus and 56.5 per cent (f=113) Muslims and 48.0 per cent (f=48) Sikhs feel that a person's comfort is the Gods grace, which shows a significant difference among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for this level of religiosity at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 34.95, p < 0.01$. Most of the respondents i.e. 48.0 per cent (f=96) Muslims and again 48.0 per cent (f=96) Hindus, followed by 46.0 per cent (f=46) Sikhs agree that worshipping God is the only way to get rid of social evils, which is found statistically insignificant at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 5.24, p > 0.05$. Majority i.e. 69.0 per cent (f=69) Hindus, followed by 66.0 per cent (f=66) Sikhs and 49.5 per cent (f=99) Muslims, strongly agree that it is painful who disrespects parents. There is significant relationship among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for this religiosity at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 16.93, p < 0.01$. Real peace lies in the worshipping of God. It is found that 89.0 per cent (f=89) Hindus, followed by 79.5 per cent (f=159) Muslims and 55.0 per cent (f=55) Sikhs strongly agree with it, which is found statistically significant at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 45.96, p < 0.01$. Highest percentage of respondents i.e. 70.0 per cent (f=70) g Hindus, followed by 64.0 per cent (f=64) Sikhs and 61.0 per cent (f=122) Muslims think that universe is deceptive only God is truth. The data shows a significant difference among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs for this level of religiosity at $\chi^2(4, N=400) = 12.32, p < 0.01$.

Conclusion

It is concluded that religious beliefs effect human lives in positive ways. For Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs particularly, religion might be an important pliability factor in coping with everyday stress. It is found that majority of respondents strongly agree that a person should sacrifice everything in the path of God. Majority of people agree with the view that world is run by God. Furthermore, it is found that maximum of respondents strongly agree that real peace lies in the worshipping of God. On the whole religious values, beliefs and traditions can provide a meaningful thread of integration which enhances the adjustment process among people.

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