Moral Literacy and Islamic Values among Students at Tertiary Level

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ABSTRACT

The present study has been designed to analyses moral literacy and Islamic values among students in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Pakistan. Moral literacy and Islamic values are taught in all educational institutions in Pakistan directly and indirectly. A sample of 1512 university students of the BS program (4 Years) has been selected through a proportionate random sampling technique from two faculties of the University of Gujrat i.e. Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Social Sciences. A cross-sectional survey has been conducted using a structured questionnaire from the students. Pilot testing has been conducted on 30 randomly selected students to proceed to the final data collection. The study findings show that moral literacy and social justice have a favorable effect on the teaching of Islamic values to students at the tertiary level of education. It is worth stating that the study also shows a similar nature of results in favour of forgiveness and kindness to predict Islamic values. It is believed that faith plays an important role in the promotion of social justice, forgiveness, kindness, humanity respect, sincerity, and moral literacy in Pakistan.

Keywords: *Social Justice, Moral Literacy, Kindness, Tertiary Education, Islamic Values.*

Introduction

The promotion of Islamic values is an integral part of higher education in universities and Degree Awarding Institutions (DAIs) across the Muslim world in general and in Pakistan in particular (Shoaib, 2021). Islamic values, which encompass social justice, forgiveness, kindness, human respect, sincerity, truthfulness, and most importantly, moral literacy constitute the guiding principles of the educational system in Muslim countries (Habibi, 1989; Halstead, 2007; Memon, 2011). It is worth stating that teachers are playing a pivotal role in inculcating these values among students (Shoaib, Rasool, & Anwar, 2021). The procedures to spread moral literacy and Islamic values have been based on multiple factors such as the direct method of teaching, indirect method of teaching, curricular and co-curricular activities, intended or blended learning, online pedagogy, cultural pedagogy, and many other interlinked factors (Lewin, 2020; Munday, 2010; Richardson, 2017; Stolk, Los, & Karsten, 2014). The present study has been designed to analyse moral literacy and Islamic values among students in Pakistan.

Study Context

Pakistan was created in 1947 in the name of Islam and for the propagation of Islamic values. Religion, therefore, forms the foundation of the sociocultural life of the common man. That is why moral literacy and Islamic values form the backbone of the social life of students in the educational system in Pakistan. Moral literacy and Islamic values are taught both directly and indirectly in tertiary-level educational institutions generally and in *Madaris* particularly (Shoaib, 2021). Hence, the educational system of Pakistan has been promoting moral literacy and Islamic values among all other interlinked factors such as social justice, forgiveness, kindness, humanity respect, sincerity, and trustfulness (Shoaib, 2021). It is worth stating that students try to adopt the values of moral literacy and Islamic values to spread their social life (Azar & Moon, 1983; Habibi, 1989; Kamaruddin, 2012). Hence, this study has been designed to examine moral literacy and Islamic values among university students i.e., University of Gujrat.

Review of literature

Several studies have found that moral literacy is an integral component of people's faith and belief system (Cameron & Cassidy, 2022; Pan & Hsu, 2022; Weaver et al., 2021). Moral literacy inculcates among students a deep and lasting love for religious values that keep guiding them throughout their lives (Mincheva, 2021; Prasetia & Najiyah, 2021; Suri & Chandra, 2021). The study of Lewis Iii and Lewis (2021) used a multimodal approach to study university students in Japan and provided insights on the subject. The study of Ali, Afwadzi, Abdullah, and Mukmin (2021) focussed on interreligious literacy learning in terms of Islamic

higher education in Indonesia. Similarly, the findings of Qoyyimah, Singh, Exley, Doherty, and Agustiawan (2020) analysed the professional identity in Islamic schools. Likewise, the study of Lu (2020) revealed the transformation of moral education and analysed the phenome. Furthermore, several studies had been conducted to analyse the subject under discussion such as the study of Lewin (2020) on moral education, Kim and Hamdan Alghamdi (2020) on the nature of science in an Islamic context, Ghamra-Oui (2020) on Islamic education of Muslims in Australia, Fuadi and Suyatno (2020) on religious values in Islamic education, Isaack (2018) on Islamic education in Kenya, and Han and Asgarkhani (2018) on the Iranian revolution.

Like other types of literacies, moral literacy creates a desire for learning Islamic values among students in higher educational institutions (Al-Aufi, Al-Azri, & Al-Hadi, 2017; Littau, 2015; Mohiuddin, 2017; Richardson, 2017). These values include social justice, forgiveness, kindness, humanity respect, and many other interlinked values (Alavi, 2013; Kamaruddin, 2012; Suleymanova, 2015). It has been observed that Islamic values have been linked with the learning process of the students and several studies have been reported on the subject (Azar & Moon, 1983; Fisher, 1906; Hervey, 1907). The study of Murphy (1985) reveals the retributivism of moral education and Meakin (1988) asserts that socio-personal factors of moral and religious education. Similarly, the study of Westerman (1996) commissioned moral education in terms of the new year. However, the argument of Cooling (2002) has been based on the reconstruction of moral education and spirituality. Likewise, the findings of Secor (2002) reveal the Islamic knowledge of the veil and urban spaces. However, the study of Liau, Liau, Teoh, and Liau (2003) analyses Malaysian secondary schools. It is worth stating that several studies focused on the interlinked aspects of moral education and Islamic values such as Islamic morality and youth culture (Ihle, 2008), resourcing moral education (Standish, 2009), moral education in Spain (Fernández Soria, 2008), Islamic values (Halstead, 2007), moral education (Barrow, 2006; Valk, 2007), passion and moral education (Munday, 2010), and character education (Kamaruddin, 2012).

Research Methodology

This section provides the procedures and mechanism to conduct the study. It consists of study design, sampling procedures, technique and tool of data collection, and data analysis process. A quantitative study design opted and a cross-sectional survey has been opted to conduct the study. The population of the study consisted of the students of BS (4 Years) studying at the University of Gujrat. However, the target population of the study has been delimited to the students of two faculties i.e., a) Faculty of Arts and b) Faculty of Social Sciences. A proportionate random sampling technique has been used to draw a sample of 1512 students from the above-mentioned faculties of the university. The sample size

determination formula [$n=N/1+N(e)^2$] has been used to draw a representative sample of the students. Further, the sample size has been distributed partially to each department and semester of the program. The cross-sectional survey has been conducted and a structured questionnaire has been administered to collect the data from the university students. The measurement tool has been divided into different sections including social justice, forgiveness, moral literacy, kindness, humanity respect, sincerity, trustfulness, and Islamic values. The tool consisted of 57 items. Pilot testing has been conducted on 30 randomly selected students to check reliability. The calculated value of Alpha has been ranging from .709 to .904 and the overall value is .928 i.e., highly acceptable in arts and social sciences subjects (see Table 1).

Table 1

Reliability Test

Sr. No.	Variables	Codes	Items	Alpha Value
1	Social Justice	SOCIA	5	.752
2	Forgiveness	FORGI	6	.709
3	Moral Literacy	MORAL	5	.783
4	Kindness	KINDN	5	.794
5	Humanity Respect	HUMAN	5	.768
6	Sincerity	SINCE	4	.747
7	Trustfulness	TRUST	6	.805
8	Islamic Values	ISLAM	21	.904
	Overall		57	.928

The data have been collected from the students of the university and a questionnaire has been distributed to the students of the relevant semester, program, and discipline of the faculties. They filled themselves and returned them to the researchers. The attitudinal response has been coded from 1 to 5 (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). After data entry, screening of the data has been done to proceed with further analysis. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis have been done to draw results and conclusions.

Results and Discussion

The primary analysis shows that there is 78 percent of the respondents belonged to the gender category of female and only 22 percent are males. Similarly, the

family occupation of the students varies from agriculture, business, government, and private job, abroad, labor, and as well as daily earners. Likewise, the majority (87 %) of the students are single and reside in a joint family structure along with 4 to 11 family members.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics (n=1512)

Variables	Minim.	Maxim.	Mean	Std. Devia.	Varia.
Social Justice	7	20	17.75	2.118	4.486
Forgiveness	10	24	20.77	2.940	8.643
Moral Literacy	5	20	15.92	2.613	6.827
Kindness	5	20	15.90	3.433	11.783
Humanity Respect	9	20	17.64	2.407	5.792
Sincerity	7	16	14.08	1.876	3.521
Trustfulness	12	24	21.35	2.557	6.537
Islamic Values	44	80	70.54	7.374	54.369

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of the variables. The data indicate the minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, and variance of the variables. The variables in the table include social justice (minimum 7, maximum 20, mean 1592, standard deviation 2.613, and variance 4.486), forgiveness (minimum 10, maximum 24, mean 20.77, standard deviation 2.940, and variance 8.643), moral literacy (minimum 5, maximum 20, mean 17.75, standard deviation 2.118, and variance 6.827), kindness (minimum 5, maximum 20, mean 15.90, standard deviation 3.433, and variance 11.783), humanity respect (minimum 9, maximum 20, mean 17.64, standard deviation 2.407, and variance 5.792), sincerity (minimum 7, maximum 16, mean 14.08, standard deviation 1.876, and variance 3.521), trustfulness (minimum 12, maximum 24, mean 21.35, standard deviation 2.557, and variance 6.537), and Islamic values (minimum 44, maximum 80, mean 70.54, standard deviation 7.374, and variance 54.369).

Table 3

Pearson Correlation Test (n=1512)

VAR.	SOCIA	FORGI	MORAL	KINDN	HUMAN	SINCE	TRUST	ISLAM
SOCIA	1	.583[**]	.520[**]	.266[**]	.286[**]	.247[**]	.336[**]	.400[**]
FORGI		1	.451[**]	.371[**]	.471[**]	.350[**]	.359[**]	.516[**]
MORAL			1	.354[**]	.292[**]	.174[**]	.343[**]	.377[**]
KINDN				1	.326[**]	.088[**]	.316[**]	.338[**]
HUMAN					1	.446[**]	.627[**]	.834[**]
SINCE						1	.480[**]	.698[**]
TRUST							1	.861[**]
ISLAM								1

Table 3 indicates the Pearson correlation statistical test among the variables. The data analysis shows that there is a moderate positive correlation between social justice with forgiveness (r=.583) and moral literacy (r=.520). Similarly, the same nature of correlation has been found between social justice and Islamic values (r=.400) among university students. However, there is a weak positive correlation between social justice and kindness (r=.266). It is worth stating that there is a high positive correlation between trustfulness and Islamic values (r=.861). Likewise, sincerity has also a high positive correlation with Islamic values (r=.698). It is important to highlight that there is a highly significant positive correlation between human respect and Islamic values (.834). It is stated that all variables have a positive correlation as presented in the table. The study findings are interlinked with the study findings of Shoaib (2021) and Kamaruddin (2012) on character education and morality. It is important to mention that moral education and Islamic values have been found very interesting subjects for research scholars (Alavi, 2013; Grant & Matemba, 2013; Grine, Bensaid, Nor, & Ladjal, 2013; Pantić & Wubbels, 2012).

Table 4

Multiple Regression Model Predicting Islamic Values among Students at Tertiary Level

Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

Social Justice	.103	.026	.030	3.955	.000
Forgiveness	.103	.020	.041	5.218	.000
Moral Literacy	.064	.020	.023	3.249	.001
Kindness	.029	.014	.014	2.114	.035
Humanity Respect	1.199	.024	.391	49.661	.000
Sincerity	1.117	.027	.284	41.963	.000
Trustfulness	1.276	.023	.442	56.147	.000
(Constant)	.958	.459		2.089	.037

R=.976, R Square=952, Adjusted R Square=.952, Sum of Squares=78202.020, df=7, F=4254.615, Sig.=.000, Number of Observations=1512

Table 4 describes the multiple regression analysis predicting Islamic values through predictors. Primary data analysis presents that social justice and forgiveness have favorable effects on Islamic values. Similarly, moral literacy and kindness variable has also significant effects on Islamic values among university students. Likewise, humanity respect and sincerity along with trustfulness have favorable effects on Islamic values among students in the university. The study findings are aligned with the argument of Richardson (2017) and Isaack (2018). It is stated that university students learn different moral activities in the classroom and from university teachers as well. However, there are other interlinked factors such as personal choices and options, previous education, familial background, socioeconomic characteristics, parental education, background socialization, peer influence, mass media exposure, educational self, and religiosity (Shoaib, 2021).
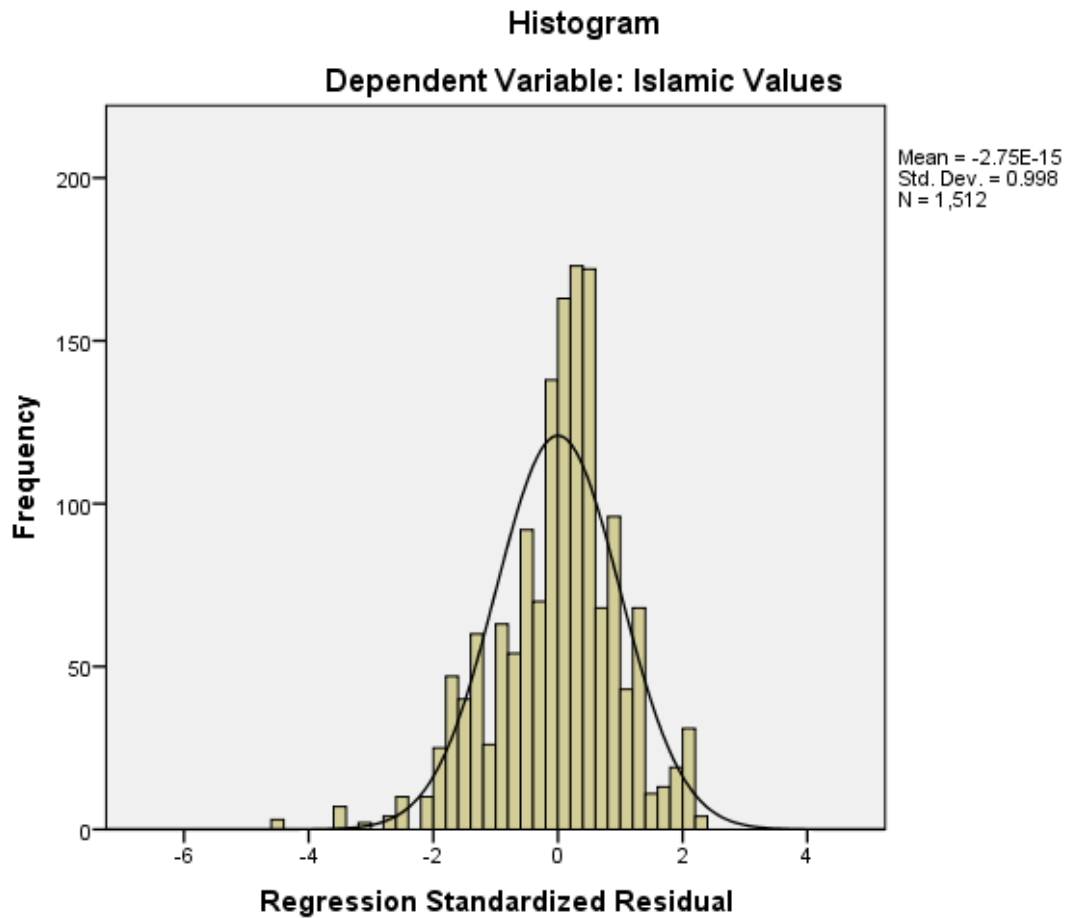
Figure 1: Histogram of the Study

Conclusion

It is concluded from the given data that moral literacy and social justice have a favourable effect on the teaching of Islamic values to students at the tertiary level of education. It is worth stating that the study also shows a similar nature of results in favour of forgiveness and kindness to predict Islamic values. This study also concludes based on the survey data that human respect and sincerity are linked with Islamic values at the tertiary level. Moral literacy and Islamic values are a core part of the lives of the people of Pakistan. The educational system also promotes moral literacy and Islamic values among students in higher education

institutions. It is believed that faith plays an important role in the promotion of social justice, forgiveness, kindness, humanity respect, sincerity, and moral literacy in Pakistan.

Delimitation of the Study

This study has been delimited to the students of the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Social Sciences. Similarly, the research paper has also been based on a quantitative study design and cross-sectional survey.

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