

Gender Differences in the cognition of Religious Orientation and Psychological Well-Being: An Analysis of Muslim Populations in Western Maharashtra

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Abstract

This study investigates gender differences in the cognition of religious orientation and psychological well-being among Muslim Individuals in Western Maharashtra. For this study, a total of 600 participants (350 males and 250 females) were randomly selected from five major districts. Using a survey method, data were collected with Dr. Daniel Batson's Religious Orientation Scale and Dr. Carol Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale. Descriptive statistics and t-test analyses were used to compare means between genders. In this study, the findings revealed that females exhibited a higher level of intrinsic religious orientation ($M = 73.692$) compared to males ($M = 69.402$). Also, the t-test analysis sustained with a significant difference indicated by a t-statistic of -5.83 and a p-value of 1.547 . On the other hand, males showed a higher level of extrinsic religious orientation ($M = 72.697$) than females ($M = 63.768$). Similarly, it is supported by a t-statistic of 13.918 and a one-tailed p-value of 1.1929 . Ultimately, females reported greater psychological well-being ($M = 171.684$) compared to males ($M = 163.834$), with a t-statistic of -9.8256 and a one-tailed p-value of 1.5928 . These results indicate significant differences in both religious orientation and psychological well-being based on gender. Consequently, these findings highlight that the role of gender plays a crucial role in religious orientation and psychological well-being of Muslim community in Western Maharashtra.

Keywords: Gender Differences, cognition, Religious Orientation, Intrinsic religious orientation, Extrinsic religious orientation Psychological Well-Being, Muslim Populations, Western Maharashtra.

Introduction:

Religious orientation means several different ways in which people identify as well as get inspired by their religious beliefs and actions. This contributes to a person's psychological well-being and has long-term consequences for mental health. (Allport and Ross, 1967). Religion has an extreme effect on the lives of people, whether a person is intrinsic or extrinsic religiously inclined. The individual with an intrinsic religious orientation. He or she holds a strong belief in their own religious ideology and attempts to put it into practice in their daily lives. People with an extrinsic religious orientation, on the other hand, work to improve their social relationships by visiting prayer centers, social agencies, or charities. Religious views are strongly related to general life pleasure. In different cultures and spiritually active areas, religious

attitudes and beliefs may differ greatly in culturally varied and religiously vibrant regions such as Western Maharashtra. Knowing the link between religious orientation and psychological well-being is important, especially in Muslim communities where religion has an important role to daily life (Khan & Sharma, 2018).

Gender disparities in religious orientation are observed in various cultural contexts. Women appear to have a greater innate religious orientation, whereas men are more prone to choose religion for external reasons (Miller & Stark, 2002). These disparities reflect broader social and cultural standards, which have a major impact on psychological well-being. Women with intrinsic beliefs frequently report higher life satisfaction, reduced anxiety, and greater resilience, but men with extrinsic motivations may experience increased stress and mental health problems (Ansari & Qadri, 2019).

Gender variances in religious orientation are especially significant among Muslims in Western Maharashtra. The region's socio-cultural context, which places a high importance on religious activities and community life, creates an environment in which religious orientation has a clear impact on mental health. Research from similar regions such as Hyderabad and Pune has shown that religious orientation affects mental health, with intrinsic orientation leading to better outcomes, particularly for women. This suggests that intrinsic religious orientation is strongly linked to positive mental health, particularly among Muslim women. (Naseem and Begum, 2020; Ali and Patil, 2019).

The purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze gender disparities in the cognition of religious orientation and their impact on psychological well-being among Muslim communities in Western Maharashtra. It will look at how men and women practice their religions and how those practices affect their mental health. By doing so, the study hopes to gain a better understanding of the cultural and gender-specific aspects influencing psychological well-being in this group. The findings will contribute to our understanding of the relationship between religion and mental health, as well as educate the development of culturally relevant mental health therapies for Muslim men and women throughout the region.

Significance of the Study

The current study's primary goal is to better understand gender disparities in religious inclination. Previous research has shown that women have a stronger and more personal connection to their beliefs, known as intrinsic orientation. Men, on the other hand, were drawn to religion for external reasons, such as extrinsic motivation. This study attempts to confirm these findings in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra. Furthermore, religious practices and beliefs might vary depending on the culture of the region, and western Maharashtra has a distinct cultural background that may influence religious attitudes that differ from other locations. That is the reason why understanding these distinct characteristics becomes essential for providing a more accurate description of Indian cultural contexts.

Second, the investigation attempted to investigate the relationship between their religious orientation and psychological well-being. Individuals' life experiences and religious beliefs may have an impact on their mental health. According to Dr. Carol Ryff (1989), an intrinsic orientation is frequently related with improved mental health. As a result, the purpose of this study is to determine how gender variations in religious orientation affect mental health in Muslim individuals living in Western Maharashtra. Furthermore, this study investigates how gender affects religious beliefs and mental health. As a result, this study will help to develop more effective mental health support programs that are culturally appropriate and suit the needs of both men and women in this community.

Finally, the current study intended to investigate the association between gender, religious faith, and mindset among Muslim individuals in Western Maharashtra. Despite previous extensive study on religious orientation and mental health. However, Muslim persons in Western Maharashtra know very little about these topics. As a result, this study will help to close the gap in understanding the relationship between gender, religious faith, and mental health.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To assess the level of intrinsic religious orientation among females compared to males in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra.
2. To evaluate the level of extrinsic religious orientation among males compared to females in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra.
3. To investigate the differences in psychological well-being between males and females in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra.

Hypotheses

Based on the objectives, the following hypotheses are proposed:

1. Females in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra will exhibit a higher level of intrinsic religious orientation compared to males.
2. Males in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra will exhibit a higher level of extrinsic religious orientation compared to females.
3. There will be a significant difference in psychological well-being between males and females in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra.

Research Methodology:

This study uses a cross-sectional research design. The cross-sectional method enables the observation and analysis of gender disparities in religious orientation and psychological well-being among Muslim communities at a single point in time. This design is appropriate for discovering and evaluating these differences across a broad sample of districts (such as Pune, Satara, Sangli, Solapur, and Kolhapur) in Western Maharashtra.

The study's participants were selected using a random sampling technique. This strategy assures that everyone in the population has an equal probability of getting chosen. It reduces selection bias and increases the applicability of the results. The sample was selected from five districts of Western Maharashtra: Pune, Satara, Sangli, Solapur, and Kolhapur.

The total sample size for the current study is 600 participants (350 males and 250 females), gathered from five districts in western Maharashtra. This distribution provides a full a representative sample of Muslim persons in Western Maharashtra, ensuring that the findings are representative of the larger population. Data was gathered using a survey method. Additionally, two standardized tools were employed to collect the data, such as.

1. Dr. Danial Batson's Religious Orientation Scale: This scale evaluates and classifies Muslim individuals in western Maharashtra based on intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientations.
2. Dr. Carol Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale: This scale assesses the psychological well-being of Muslims living in western Maharashtra. Furthermore, the independent and dependent variables are

specified as follows: The dependent variables are psychological well-being and religious orientation, while the independent variable is gender (male or female).

The data was gathered through surveys distributed in each of the five districts: Pune, Satara, Sangli, Solapur, and Kolhapur. The data was gathered from individuals utilizing standardized tests such as the Religious Orientation Scale and the Psychological Well-Being Scale. More precisely, 120 samples have been selected from each district to make sure that the study area was represented equally. Later, the obtained data was systematically put into an Excel spreadsheet for statistical data analysis. Finally, data analysis was carried out using statistical approaches to investigate the associations between gender, religious orientation, and psychological well-being. The following statistical tests were conducted: **t-Test:** To compare the means of religious orientation and psychological well-being in men and women. **ANOVA (Analysis of Variance):** To measure the differences in psychological well-being and religious orientation between male and female.

Result Analysis

1. Females in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra will exhibit a higher level of intrinsic religious orientation compared to males.

Table: 01: Descriptive Statistics - Intrinsic Religious Orientation

Descriptive Statistics	Male - Intrinsic RO	Female - Intrinsic RO
Mean	69.40285714	73.692
Standard Error	0.490967928	0.534215395
Median	72	76
Mode	78	80
Standard Deviation	9.185168864	8.446687048
Sample Variance	84.36732706	71.34652209
Kurtosis	-0.984422307	-0.076023573
Skewness	-0.41100577	-0.843294525
Range	41	38
Minimum	45	48
Maximum	83	86
Sum	24291	18423
Count	350	250

Table: 02: t-Test analysis – Intrinsic religious orientation among male and females.

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances			
	Male - Intrinsic RO	Female - Intrinsic RO	
Mean	69.40285714	73.692	
Variance	84.36732706	71.34652209	
Observations	350	250	
Pooled Variance	78.94562064		
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0		
df	598		

t Stat	-5.8295481		
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.5476655		
t Critical one-tail	1.6474057		
P(T<=t) two-tail	3.0953311		
t Critical two-tail	1.963938		

* Significance Level 0.05

2. Males in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra will exhibit a higher level of extrinsic religious orientation compared to females.

Table :03: Descriptive statistics – Extrinsic Religious Orientation

Descriptive Statistics	Male - Extrinsic Religious Orientation	Female - Extrinsic Religious Orientation
Mean	72.69714286	63.768
Standard Error	0.41940153	0.481072163
Median	73.5	63
Mode	77	70
Standard Deviation	7.846284165	7.606418765
Sample Variance	61.56417519	57.85760643
Kurtosis	0.158679928	-0.505397629
Skewness	-0.502650309	0.236290389
Range	38	34
Minimum	47	48
Maximum	85	82
Sum	25444	15942
Count	350	250

Table: 04: t- Test analysis of extrinsic religious orientation between male and female.

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances		
	Male - Extrinsic Religious Orientation	Female - Extrinsic Religious Orientation
Mean	72.69714286	63.768
Variance	61.56417519	57.85760643
Observations	350	250
Pooled Variance	60.02080459	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	598	
t Stat	13.91833439	
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.192904197	
t Critical one-tail	1.647405712	

P(T<=t) two-tail	2.38580839		
t Critical two-tail	1.963938898		

* Significance Level 0.05

3. There will be a significant difference in psychological well-being between males and females in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra.

Table: 05: Descriptive statistics – Psychological well being

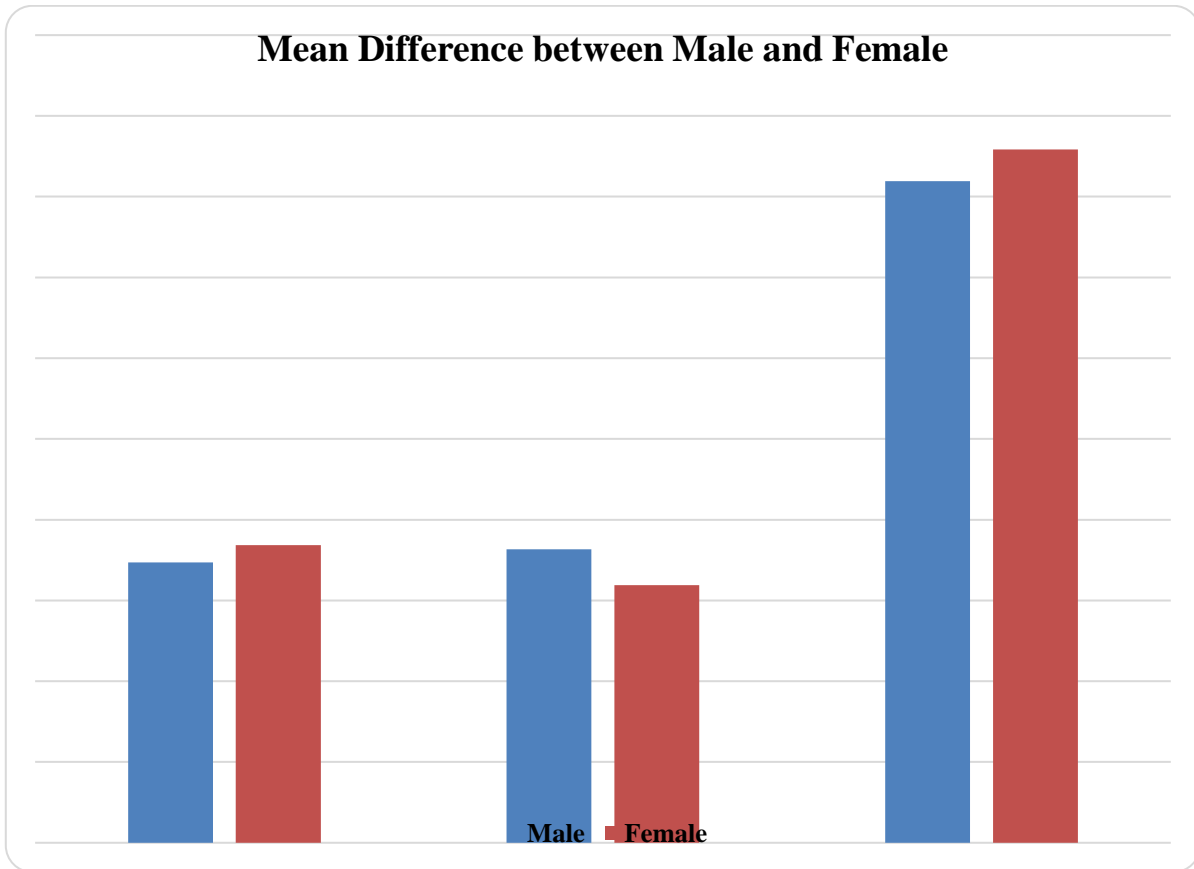
Descriptive Statistics	Male – Psychological well Being	Female – Psychological well Being
Mean	163.8342857	171.684
Standard Error	0.54188758	0.563865546
Median	163	171
Mode	163	179
Standard Deviation	10.13778834	8.91549709
Sample Variance	102.7747524	79.48608835
Kurtosis	0.601848079	5.32133431
Skewness	0.363977144	1.117853359
Range	66	70
Minimum	135	159
Maximum	201	229
Sum	57342	42921
Count	350	250
Largest (1)	201	229
Smallest (1)	135	159

Table 06: t- Test analysis of psychological well-being between male and female.

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances		
	Male	Female
Mean	163.83428	171.684
Variance	102.77475	79.486
Observations	350	250
Pooled Variance	93.0776	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	598	
t Stat	-9.825611	
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.592843	
t Critical one-tail	1.647405	
P(T<=t) two-tail	3.185686	
t Critical two-tail	1.9639388	

* Significance level 0.05

Figure: 01: Depicted a mean difference between male and females among the Muslim community in Western Maharashtra.



Discussion

1. Females in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra will exhibit a higher level of intrinsic religious orientation compared to males.

As the data displaying in descriptive statistics (Table no. 01), there has been detected a significant difference in mean scores of intrinsic religious orientations between males and females. However, the mean intrinsic religious orientation for females was 73.692, whereas for males, it was 69.402. This mean difference indicates that females had a higher level of intrinsic religious orientation.

Further, according to the t-test analysis (Table no. 02), the t-statistic is -5.83. Consequently, it is indicating a significant difference between the male and females. Similarly, the p-value in one-tailed test is 1.547, which reflects a significant difference with standard significance level of 0.05 that highlights the statistically significant. This evidence supports the hypothesis that females exhibit a higher intrinsic religious orientation than males in the studied population. Additionally, the p-value in the two-tailed test is 9.0953. This value is also indicating the difference in intrinsic religious orientation between males and females.

2. Males in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra will exhibit a higher level of extrinsic religious orientation compared to females.

According to the descriptive statistics (Table no. 03), there was found substantial mean difference in extrinsic religious orientation between males and females. The mean extrinsic religious orientation score for males (72.697) was notably higher than that for females (63.768). This finding suggests that males we-

ere detected with higher levels of extrinsic religious orientation compared to females.

Further, as per the data showing in t-test analysis (Table no. 04), the t-statistic of 13.918 shows a substantial difference between the male and female. In t-test analysis, p-value in one-tailed test was detected p-1.1929 that is below the 0.05 significance threshold. This value indicates a highly significant difference. Similarly, the p-value in two-tailed was found p- 2. 3858 that shows the statistical significance of the difference in extrinsic religious orientation between males and females.

3. There will be a significant difference in psychological well-being between males and females in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra.

As the data depicted in descriptive statistics (Table no. 05), it is indicating a significant difference in psychological well-being between males and females in the Muslim population. However, the mean score for females (171.684) was higher than for males (163.834). It is showing that females have a higher level of psychological well-being compared to males.

Additionally, as per the t-test analysis (Table no. 06), t-statistic is -9.825611. It indicates a significant difference between the male and females in terms of their psychological well-being. However, the one-tailed p-value is 1.5928. This value indicates a strong significant difference with the standard significance level of 0.05. It means that there is a statistically significant difference in psychological well-being between males and females. Similarly, in two-tailed p -value is 3.1856, which is confirming that the difference is statistically significant. Therefore, we can conclude that there is a significant difference between males and females in terms of their psychological well-being.

Conclusion

The results clearly show that females in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra have a higher level of intrinsic religious orientation than males. Females scored an average of 73.692, while males scored 69.402. The t-test results support this, with a t-statistic of -5.83 and a p-value of 1.5476, indicating a significant difference. This confirms that women in this group tend to be more intrinsically motivated in their religious beliefs.

The analysis supports the idea that males in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra show a higher level of extrinsic religious orientation compared to females. Males had an average score of 72.697, while females scored 63.768. The t-test results, with a t-statistic of 13.918 and a one-tailed p-value of 1.1929, indicate a strong significant difference. This suggests that men in this group are more likely to engage with religion for external benefits.

The findings also indicate a significant difference in psychological well-being between males and females in the Muslim population of Western Maharashtra. Females had a higher average score of 171.684 compared to males at 163.834. The t-test shows a t-statistic of -9.825611 and a one-tailed p-value of 1.5928, which suggests a strong significant difference. This means that women in this population generally report better psychological well-being than men.

Abbreviation:

RO	Religious Orientation
IRO	Intrinsic Religious Orientation
ERO	Extrinsic Religious Orientation
PWB	Psychological Well Being

Acknowledgement:

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