



Vol. 4 No. 3 (March) (2026)

Religious Affiliation and Peace and Harmony in Punjab, Pakistan: A Chi-Square Analysis

Allah Ditta (Corresponding Author)

PhD Scholar, Department of Sociology, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan Email: ad_mas09@yahoo.com

Babak Mahmood

Professor, Department of Sociology, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

Ayesha Chaudhary

Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

Abstract

This quantitative study examines the association between religious practices and values, media practices and exposure, family customs and practices, educational advantages, judicial practices, social institutions, and peace and harmony among Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs in Punjab, Pakistan. The study was conducted in Lahore, Faisalabad, and Nankana Sahib, involving 507 respondents selected through convenience sampling. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, and instrument reliability was assessed before final data collection. Data were analyzed using respondents' socioeconomic characteristics and chi-square tests to examine associations between the independent variables and the dependent variable, peace and harmony. The study conceptualizes peace and harmony as outcomes associated with multiple social and institutional factors. Religious values may encourage tolerance and mutual respect, while media exposure can promote interfaith understanding. Family socialization and educational institutions may strengthen inclusive attitudes, whereas effective judicial practices can support religious rights and equality. Social institutions collectively contribute to peaceful coexistence and social cohesion. The study provides empirical insights into interreligious relationships and highlights the importance of inclusive institutional practices in promoting sustainable peace and harmony among diverse religious communities in Punjab, Pakistan.

Keywords: Peace and Harmony, Religious Diversity, Social Institutions, Interfaith Relations, Rituals



Vol. 4 No. 3 (March) (2026)

Introduction

Religion is an important social institution that influences individuals' values, attitudes, social relationships, and interactions within society (Fuchs & and Fuchs, 2020; Hamid & and Nadeem, 2020). In Punjab, Pakistan, where Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs constitute diverse religious communities, understanding the relationship between religious affiliation and peace and harmony is essential for promoting social cohesion and interfaith understanding (Fuchs & and Fuchs, 2020; Hussain, 2020). Religious affiliation may shape individuals' perceptions of tolerance, mutual respect, acceptance of religious diversity, and peaceful coexistence. However, the relationship between religious identity and peace and harmony requires empirical investigation rather than assumptions based solely on religious differences (Nazir, 2023; Rizvi Jafree, 2022). This study examines the association between religious affiliation and peace and harmony in Punjab, Pakistan, using chi-square analysis. The analysis seeks to determine whether statistically significant differences exist in perceptions of peace and harmony among individuals belonging to different religious communities. By examining this relationship, the study contributes to a better understanding of interreligious relations and the social dynamics of peaceful coexistence. The findings may provide useful insights for policymakers, educational institutions, religious leaders, and community organizations working to strengthen social harmony and mutual understanding.

Review of Literature

Study examined the role of the madrasah system in Pakistan in shaping youth attitudes toward social harmony, tolerance, and peacebuilding. Using a convergent parallel mixed-method approach, including surveys of students and teachers and interviews with religious scholars, the study assessed how madrasahs contribute to fostering peace-oriented attitudes and mitigating extremism (Kausar & Khan, 2023). Results showed that many madrasahs emphasize moral growth, justice, reconciliation, and peace consistent with Islamic teachings, but challenges such as sectarian divisions, rote learning, and curricular disparities limit their effectiveness in peace education (Sahibzada, 2021). While some madrasahs have been criticized for ideological rigidity, the study defined significant potential for madrasahs to promote interfaith understanding and social cohesion through structured peace education programs (Riaz & Baloch, 2023). The



Vol. 4 No. 3 (March) (2026)

research highlighted the need to modernize teaching methodologies, integrate peace education into curricula, and train madrasah educators in conflict resolution strategies. The study also noted the influential role of religious scholars in shaping students' perspectives on coexistence and peacebuilding, though opinions vary due to sectarian interpretations. Policy recommendations include reforming religious curricula, fostering interfaith dialogue, and encouraging collaboration between religious and academic institutions to harness madrasahs' potential as agents of peace. The authors advocated for further research and longitudinal studies to evaluate the long-term impact of peace education within madrasahs. This study provided a balanced empirical insight into madrasahs' dual potential to both contribute to and counter extremism, highlighting the importance of education reforms for sustainable societal harmony in Pakistan (Kausar et al. 2025).

It had been observed based on the study that religion reshapes the thinking of community's organizations those influences the urban governance. The article further demonstrated how religious ideology socialize the community's organization for urban governance implementation of policies (Dahan, 2019). The idea presented in the study outlined that assembling of micro histories and innovative in research of Chinese religious history, discovers how micro histories are rewriting the learning of Chinese religious history. The paper insights three key areas: temples, writings and illustrations within the archives, and the interactions between Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism in micro contexts. It contends that research is changing from a micro focused approach to multidimensional, temple centered perspective (He, 2016). The basic analysis of the study concluded that the concept of peace and conflict and its relation with African religious philosophies and traditional practice. The crus of the research finding briefly elaborated that the religious philosophies of Africa insights valuable results of religion in cultivating peace or conflict among individuals (Appiah-Thompson, 2020). The idea of the study commissioned that religion has multiple role in diverse ways. Religion as a motivator or mobiliser in conflict resolution or peace building. The other side religion used by the religious leader to gain domination on other sects. Similarly, political leader or influential personalities used as a tool to gain more power. The research idea insights that religion encourage people to build peace, harmony and wellbeing for masses (Haynes, 2009). This study argued that the standard of religious harmony assistances to



Vol. 4 No. 3 (March) (2026)

certify that there are comparative tolerance and peace among the numerous religious groups (Tan, 2008).

The study findings asserted that the role of media in decreasing tension at macro level as well as micro. The results of the study also insights that in 2011 the conflict between Muslims and Christian citizen of Indonesian used media as a tool for reducing tension and enhance peace and tolerance between two nations by combating fake news and disinformation. (Rohman & Pitaloka, 2020). The crux of the study analyzed that media used as a strategic tool for reconciliation and recognition for accomplishing integrated peace in Kenya. The idea of the research article also established that media strategies to resolved conflict and promote peace, harmony among individuals, societies and nation through positive participation and integration (Tully, 2014). The conclusion of the study examined that the erratic encouragement of the news media in the Arab-Israeli peace process. The research article insights how media highlights the varying role in initiating peace process for Arab-Israel (W Olfsfeld, 1997).

Research explored the pivotal role of media, NGOs, and civil society in fostering pluralism within Pakistan's diverse socio-political context. The study emphasized that pluralism (rooted in tolerance, dialogue, and inclusivity) is essential for building social harmony and sustainable development. NGOs and civil society organizations have been instrumental in advocating for human rights, women's empowerment, education, and community development, while also promoting religious freedom and interfaith dialogue. These actors serve as mediators against extremism and terrorism by encouraging civic participation and cultural diversity. The research highlighted the role of faith-based groups, such as the Church World Service and the United Religions Initiative, in advancing interfaith cooperation. Media is described as a double-edged force to enhance democratic reform, address human rights abuses, and promote pluralism, but it has also been criticized for sensationalism and misrepresentation that fuel social divides. Research argued that sustainable pluralism in Pakistan requires a partnership among civil society, NGOs, and independent media, supported by democratic values and freedom of expression. Ultimately, pluralism is positioned as a pathway to peace, stability, and tolerance in a multicultural society (Sadrudin, 2012).

The research article expresses the association between independent news media in Turkey and peace journalism in the context of Armenia-Turkey relations. The idea of the



Vol. 4 No. 3 (March) (2026)

research finding explores how media enhanced positive role for peace journalism and its impact on society (Doll, Moy, & Beckers, 2023). The argument of the study pointed out that if media express fake news it leads to failure of media for public in cultivating harmony among people. The research insights that media transformation for Israel peace discourse fail due to disinformation regarding peace and harmony (Katz, 2022). The study revealed that how media contribute to reduce conflict resolution and enhanced peace for encouraging nations. The research article also explores the positive role of media for the awareness of positive events to facilitate the people for patriotism (Danso, Adjin-Tettey, Serwornoo, & Azanu, 2024). It had been observed based on the study that media insights positive and negative role in mitigating and reinforcing conflict and peace. The researcher propose that media can augment the perceived power of a weaker side, though this does not always lead to effective conflict resolution (Shinar & Bratic, 2010).

Data and Methods

A quantitative research had been conducted and population had been consisted of Muslims, Sikh, and Christians from Lahore, Nankana, and Faisalabad. A sample of 507 believers in the faith of Islam, Sikhism, and Christianity were selected using convenient sampling technique. A cross sectional survey had been used as a measurement tool. It had been worth to mention that reliability had also been measured before final data collection. Statistical analysis consists of socio-economic characteristics and Chi-Square Statistical test had been done to draw results and conclusion. In Chi-Square statistical test, peace and harmony had been used as a dependent variable. However, different independent variables had also been used including religious practice and values, media practices and exposure, family customs and practices, educational advantages, judiciary practices, and role of social institutions.



Vol. 4 No. 3 (March) (2026)

Results and Discussion

Table 1

Distribution of the Respondents by Their Socio-Economic Characteristics

Age (Years)	<i>f</i>	%	Education	<i>f</i>	%
Up to 20	42	8.3	Up to Middle	9	1.8
21 to 30	281	55.4	Matric	20	3.9
31 to 40	146	28.8	FA/FSc	21	4.2
41 to 50	29	5.7	BA/BSc	28	5.5
51 & Above	9	1.8	MA/MSc & above	429	84.6
Total	507	100.0	Total	507	100.0
Occupation			Monthly Family Income (PKR)		
Agriculturist	259	51.1	Up to 30000	37	7.3
Govt. Job	88	17.4	30001 to 40000	20	3.9
Private Job	28	5.5	40001 to 50000	12	2.4
Labour	64	12.6	50001 to 60000	28	5.5
Unemployed	33	6.5	60001 to 70000	36	7.1
Business	21	4.1	70001 to 80000	13	2.6
Any Other	14	2.8	80001 & Above	361	71.2
Total	507	100.0	Total	507	100.0
Marital Status			Children (#)		
Single	139	27.4	No child	159	31.4
Married	366	72.2	1 to 2	223	43.9
Separated	00	00.0	3 to 4	107	21.1
Divorced/Widow	2	00.4	5 & Above	18	3.6
Total	507	100.0	Total	507	100.0
Family Size			Family Structure		
Up to 2	2	00.4	Nuclear	121	23.9
3 to 4	103	20.3	Joint	374	73.7
5 to 6	278	54.8	Extended	12	2.4
7 to 8	90	17.8	Total	507	100.0
9 to 10	18	3.6	Residential Area		
11 to 12	6	1.2	Rural	325	64.1



Vol. 4 No. 3 (March) (2026)

13 & Above	10	2.0	Urban	182	35.9
Total	507	100.0	Total	507	100.0

Data presented that more than half of the respondents (n = 281, 55.4%) belonged to age category of 21 to 30 years, followed by 146 respondents (28.8%) belong to 31 to 40 years. Only 9 respondents (1.8%) were over 50 years of age. Regarding education, a majority of the respondents (n = 429, 84.6%) possessed an MA/MSc or higher degree, while 28 respondents (5.5%) held BA/BSc degrees, and only 9 respondents (1.8%) had education up to the middle level. In terms of occupation, over half of the participants (n = 259, 51.1%) were agriculturists, while 88 respondents (17.4%) held government jobs, and 14 respondents (2.8%) reported other occupations. For monthly family income, 361 respondents (71.2%) reported earning PKR 80,001 and above, whereas 37 respondents (7.3%) earned up to PKR 30,000.

Regarding marital status, 366 respondents (72.2%) were married, and 139 respondents (27.4%) were single. Additionally, 223 respondents (43.9%) had 1 to 2 children, while 159 respondents (31.4%) had no children. Family size analysis revealed that 278 respondents (54.8%) lived in families of 5 to 6 members, and the majority (n = 374, 73.7%) resided in joint family structures. Finally, 325 respondents (64.1%) belonged to rural areas, while 182 respondents (35.9%) lived in urban settings across Lahore, Faisalabad, and Nankana Sahib. The target population of the respondents had been based on Lahore, Faisalabad and Nankana Sahib. Lahore and Faisalabad were the main urban centers of Pakistan and Nankana Sahib were also main town with international migrants of Sikh religious affiliation. Hence, the socio economic characteristics in these centers were relatively high as compared to other geographic location in the Punjab Pakistan.

Table 2

Chi-Square Statistical Text (Dependent Variable=Peace and Harmony)

Sr. No.	Independent Variable	Pearson Chi-Square Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
i	Religious Practice and Values (REP)	1787.702 ^a	645	.000
ii	Media Practices and Exposure (MEP)	2714.584 ^a	1032	.000
iii	Family Customs and Practices (FAC)	2491.626 ^a	903	.000
iv	Educational Advantages (EDA)	2520.296 ^a	774	.000
v	Judiciary Practices (JUP)	2991.821 ^a	1075	.000



vi	Role of Social Institutions (ROO)	7977.174 ^a	2494	.000
----	-----------------------------------	-----------------------	------	------

Data revealed the Chi-Square statistical test of the variables. The results of the primary data analysis indicated that there was an association (Chi-Square = 1787.702, df = 645, Sig. = .000) between religious practices and values with the peace and harmony among variables. The results of the primary data analysis indicated that there was an association (Chi-Square = 2714.584, df = 1032, Sig. = .000) between media practices and exposure with the peace and harmony among variables. The results of the primary data analysis indicated that there was an association (Chi-Square = 2491.626, df = 903, Sig. = .000) between family customs and practices with the peace and harmony among variables. The results of the primary data analysis indicated that there was an association (Chi-Square = 2520.296, df = 774, Sig. = .000) between educational advantages with the peace and harmony among variables. The results of the primary data analysis indicated that there was an association (Chi-Square = 2991.821, df = 1075, Sig. = .000) between judiciary practices with the peace and harmony among variables. The results of the primary data analysis indicated that there was an association (Chi-Square = 7977.174, df = 2494, Sig. = .000) between role of social institutions with the peace and harmony among variables.

Conclusion

This study concludes that peace and harmony among Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs in Punjab, Pakistan, are influenced by multiple social and institutional factors. Religious practices and values can promote tolerance, mutual respect, compassion, and peaceful coexistence among individuals belonging to different religious communities. Media practices and exposure may contribute to interfaith understanding by disseminating messages of peace and discouraging religious prejudice. Similarly, family customs and practices play an important role in shaping individuals' attitudes toward religious diversity through socialization and moral education. Educational institutions can foster harmony by promoting tolerance, inclusivity, and respect for different beliefs. Furthermore, judiciary practices are essential for protecting religious rights, ensuring justice, and addressing discrimination. The collective contribution of these social institutions is important for strengthening peaceful relationships and social cohesion. Overall, peace and harmony should be understood as outcomes associated with the



Vol. 4 No. 3 (March) (2026)

interaction of religious, familial, educational, media, and judicial factors. Their effectiveness depends on inclusive practices and institutional commitment to equality and mutual respect.

References

- Appiah-Thompson, C. (2020). The concept of peace, conflict and conflict transformation in African religious philosophy. *Journal of Peace Education*, 17(2), 161-185. doi: 10.1080/17400201.2019.1688140
- Dahan, Y. (2019). Community-Based Organizations Motivated by Religious Ideology as A Driving Force Behind Shaping Urban Governance: The Israeli Case. *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 20(1), 64-93. doi: 10.1080/21567689.2018.1554478
- Danso, S., Adjin-Tettey, T. D., Serwornoo, M. Y. W., & Azanu, B. (2024). African Broadcast Media Participation in Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding: An Examination of Practices Across Nine Countries. *African Security*, 17(3-4), 177-204. doi: 10.1080/19392206.2024.2420544
- Doll, M. E., Moy, P., & Beckers, K. (2023). In Peace Journalism we Trust? Effects of Peace Journalism on News-item Credibility and Media Trust. *Journalism Studies*, 24(16), 1999-2019. doi: 10.1080/1461670X.2023.2274589
- Fuchs, M.-M., & Fuchs, S. W. (2020). Religious Minorities in Pakistan: Identities, Citizenship and Social Belonging. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 43(1), 52-67. doi: 10.1080/00856401.2020.1695075
- Hamid, S. N., & Nadeem, T. (2020). Religious education in Pakistan. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 42(3), 364-367. doi: 10.1080/01416200.2020.1760553
- Hussain, S. (2020). Peace Journalism for Conflict Reporting: Insights from Pakistan. *Journalism Practice*, 14(1), 1-16. doi: 10.1080/17512786.2019.1596753
- Haynes, J. (2009). Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building: The Role of Religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 47(1), 52-75. doi: 10.1080/14662040802659033
- He, J. (2016). Compilation of local chronicles and new directions in research of Chinese religious history. *Studies in Chinese Religions*, 2(1), 1-17. doi: 10.1080/23729988.2016.1161378
- Katz, Y. (2022). When media events fail: the transformation of the Israeli peace discourse at the funeral of Shimon Peres. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 39(2), 63-77. doi: 10.1080/15295036.2021.1999481
- Kausar, M., Younas, S., & Siddique, A. (2025). Synergistic interplay between religious education and peacebuilding: Navigating societal harmony through faith-driven learning. *Research Journal for Social Affairs*, 3(2), 375-384. <https://doi.org/10.71317/RJSA.003.02.0160>
- Kausar, M., & Khan, A. M. (2023). Madrasah system in Pakistan: Peacebuilding attitudes of students for bringing harmony in the society. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 30(2), 1-15. <https://ojs.aiou.edu.pk/index.php/jssh/article/view/769>
- Nazir, F. (2023). Women, blasphemy, and the religious law in Pakistan in the 1920s and 2020s. *The Round Table*, 112(5), 495-507. doi: 10.1080/00358533.2023.2268926
- Riaz, M., & Baloch, F. (2023). The role of Islamic education in promoting peace and tolerance. *Journal of Islamic Studies and Culture*, 11(2), 45-58.



Vol. 4 No. 3 (March) (2026)

- Rizvi Jafree, S. (2022). Transmitting religious values through online religious communities: case study of Pakistani Shia mothers' home education. *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, 43(4), 461-479. doi: 10.1080/13617672.2021.1992744
- Rohman, A., & Pitaloka, D. (2020). A blast from the past: memories, social media, and peace movement. *The Communication Review*, 23(3), 203-222. doi: 10.1080/10714421.2020.1829304
- Sadrudin, M. M. (2012). Study on the role of media, NGOs and civil society in promoting pluralism in Pakistan. *Dialogue*, 7(2), 160-177
- Sahibzada, H. E. (2021). The contributions and perils of madrassa education system in Pakistan: An analytical study. *The Dialogue*, 16(2), 101-114.
- Shinar, D., & Bratic, V. (2010). Asymmetric war and asymmetric peace: Real realities and media realities in the Middle East and the Western Balkans. *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*, 3(2), 125-142. doi: 10.1080/17467586.2010.531034
- Tan, C. (2008). Creating 'good citizens' and maintaining religious harmony in Singapore. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 30(2), 133-142. doi: 10.1080/01416200701830921
- Tully, M. (2014). Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation through Recognition: Assessing an Integrated Peace Media Strategy in Kenya. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 42(1), 41-59. doi: 10.1080/00909882.2013.861604
- W Olfsfeld, G. (1997). Fair Weather Friends: The Varying Role of the News Media in the Arab-Israeli Peace Process. *Political Communication*, 14(1), 29-48. doi: 10.1080/105846097199524