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**ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTRINSIC  
RELIGIOSITY AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS HARSH  
PUNISHMENT TO CRIMINALS**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The present study was conducted to examine the relationship between intrinsic religiosity and attitudes towards harsh punishment to criminals. Sample of the study consisted of 171 university students (n=171, males, n=86; females, n=85). The age ranged from 19-22 years (Mean age=20.76 yrs). Two questionnaires namely Punishment Attitude Scale (PAS) and Extrinsic-Intrinsic Religiosity Questionnaire (EIRQ) were administered on the sample. It was hypothesized that intrinsically motivated participants would favour punishment to criminals more than the extrinsic oriented participants. There would be significant gender differences in the attitudes towards punishment to criminals. Findings revealed non-significant gender differences in the attitude towards harsh punishment to criminals. Intrinsically religious participants favoured harsh punishment to criminals more than the extrinsic oriented participants. The implications of the study are important for improving the social order through firm implementation of the law and rules. These are the key factors for peace and stability within society.*

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**Keywords:** Extrinsic Religiosity, Intrinsic Religiosity, Punishment, Attitude

**INTRODUCTION**

Increasing rate of crimes is a global social problem, which adversely affects mental functioning as well as physical health of the people (Ikoh & Charles, 2010; Ngale, 2009). In highly developed as well as developing countries crime control and punishment is a burning issue. Public view about crime and punishment is important to understand because people whether themselves become victims of crime or experience in the near and dear ones, they demand concerned people to control it and ensure safety and stability for mental peace and stability in

the society (Lambert, Tucker & Baker, 2008; Sanders & Roberts, 2000). Several studies and public opinion polls have indicated that in the West demand for harsh punishment to criminals is high because of the fear to the victims (Bohm, 1991, 2007; Sprott, 2003; St. Amand & Zamble, 2001; Pew Research Centre, 2015). Psychologically criminal act by an individual is termed as non-conforming human behavior. It is an act of inflicting harm upon society. Crime and delinquency violate the security and stability of the society or its individual members. Different studies (Lander, 1954, Maccoby *et.al*, 1958; Ngale, 2009; Ikoh & Charles, 2010) have provided strong evidence that social disorganization (i.e., ineffectiveness of specific institutions) is one significant cause of increasing criminal or delinquent behaviour.

The impact of religiosity and attitudes toward punishment to criminals has remained a subject of interest of many empirical researches (Applegate, Cullen, Fisher, & Vander Ven, 2000; Borg, 1997; Britt, 1998; Lambert, Clarke & Lambert, 2004; Whited, 2016). Studies have been guided by the assumption that religion as an institution determines social conformity to great degree among individuals (Al-Khalifah, 1994; Whited, 2016). Religion is an influential factor which affects social cohesion and contributes in the rise and fall of the societies (Durkhiem, 1951). The empirical evidence of different studies has suggested that religion has an inverse influence on criminal behavior (Britt, 1998; Miller, 2013, Miller & Hayward, 2008). This is true regardless of any criminal behavior in question (Arthur, 1998; Ellsworth & Gross, 1994; Petterson, 1991). According to Allport and Ross (1967) religion is a bipolar dimension. One pole is extrinsic religiosity and the other pole is intrinsic religiosity. People with extrinsic religious orientation use religion to gain social benefits where as people with intrinsic religious orientation follow rules of religion in their daily life. Mostly extrinsic people have more prejudiced thinking than the people with intrinsic religious orientation (Allport & Ross 1967; Haque & Nagina, 1992; Unnever, Cullen & Bartkwoski, 2006). Some studies suggested that individuals with intrinsic religiosity have less support for capital punishment to criminals (Johnston, 2012). On the other hand, other studies suggested vice versa. The meaning of religiosity in Islam can be subsumed under two inter-related dimensions (Al Khalifah, 1994); (a) the belief (or covert) dimension, which represents an individual's full and sincere belief in Allah as the creator of the universe and as the only worthy of worship, and (b) the conduct (or overt) dimension, which emphasizes the degree to which the belief dimension of religiosity is

reflected throughout the believer's daily behaviour and action via the full obedience and compliance to Allah's command and the avoidance of those acts and behaviour forbidden by Allah.

Within the criminological framework, the social control theorists have considered religion as an important ingredient of crime prevention. They suggested that religion play important role in developing conforming behaviour to follow the rules of society and it constrains people from committing crimes. It serve major role in maintaining social-integration and social-regulation (Arthur, 1998; Krohn, 1991). Islam as both a doctrine and law is seen to dominate and permeate every minute of a Muslim life (Groves, Newman & Corado, 1987). There is no separation between law and religion in Islam rather law is the external concept of religion. Aref (1988) has explained that human behaviour is so complex that to control it in a comprehensive way, there must be an integrative synthesis of religion, morality and law.

Crime is the action of non-believers (Al-Khalifah, 1994), or of those with weak faith which makes them vulnerable to criminal temptations. Religiosity is the source of conformity and as a result a protection against criminal behaviour. Islam prohibits all minor and major offences, mischief, unlawful deeds, aggression and sins. Intrinsic religiously-oriented person would abstain from criminal activity and would consider it below his/her dignity to commit any criminal act (Qutb, 1980).

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- a) To analyze the relationship of the religious orientation with the attitudes towards punishment to criminals.
- b) To analyze the gender differences in attitude towards harsh punishment to criminals.

#### **HYPOTHESES**

- a) The participants having intrinsic religious orientation would support harsh punishment to criminals more than the extrinsically religious oriented participants.
- b) There would be significant gender differences in the attitude towards harsh punishment to criminals.

#### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Research Design:** The research design is co-relational. Study is an empirical survey research conducted through the administration of standardized questionnaires.

**Participants:** The sample of the study was drawn randomly from different departments of Sindh University, Jamshoro, Pakistan. It comprised of 171 undergraduate university students (n=171, males, n=86; females, n=85). The age ranged from 19-22 years (Mean age=20.76 yrs.). Participants belonged to different socioeconomic status i.e middle class (47%, upper middle class 22%, lower middle class 31%).

**Instruments:** Punishment Attitude Scale (PAS) and Extrinsic–Intrinsic Religiosity Questionnaire (EIRQ) were administered on the sample along with the personal information questionnaire (PIQ).

**Punishment Attitude Scale (PAS):** Malik and Haque (2002) developed this scale in Urdu language. It has forty (40) items. The response category is 5-point Likert like scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Some items are scored in reverse direction to avoid response set bias. It consists of four sub-scales namely deterrence, retribution, social attribution and personal attribution. The scale has some statements about the Islamic punishments to different crimes like theft, murder, rape etc. High score represents the favorable positive attitudes toward the punishment to criminals. It is an indigenous scale has good validity and reliability. The value of Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient ( $r=0.82$ ) is indicating the high reliability of the scale.

**Extrinsic – Intrinsic Religiosity Questionnaire (EIRQ):** The Urdu version of Extrinsic–Intrinsic Religiosity Questionnaire was administered to measure the religious orientation of the male and female students. Haque and Parveen (1992) adapted this scale, originally developed by Allport and Ross (1967). It consists of 24 items. The response category is 4-point Likert-like scale ranging from “Always True for me” to “Never True for me”. The questionnaire has good cultural validity as different researchers have used it earlier (Nagina & Haque, 1992). The highest score represents intrinsic religiosity and low score indicates extrinsic religious orientation. The reliability of EIRQ for this research was calculated again with the fresh sample of University students and value of reliability coefficient ( $r=0.80$ ) is indicating the reliable status of the scale.

**Procedure:** First of all permission was taken from the Chairmen/Directors of different departments of the Sindh University for data collection. Participants were contacted in their classrooms. First of all the rapport was developed and the purpose of research was explained. Then form of informed consent was given to those who were willing to participate. Afterwards questionnaires were administered and the procedure of attempting the questionnaires was explained to participants completely. They were asked to read the instructions carefully, and

further encouraged to ask for any ambiguity prior to attempting the questionnaire. Participants were instructed that “there is no right and wrong answer of any question. Only their opinion is important. They were asked to read each question carefully one by one. And tick only on that category of response, which they think correct and appropriate one”. Further they were instructed to select any one category for the response, and give their response on all the items. Participants took nearly 45-50 minutes to fill –up the questionnaires.

## RESULTS

First of all reliability of the scales was estimated on the sample (n=80) of university participants.

**TABLE-1**  
**ALPHA RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS OF PUNISHMENT ATTITUDE SCALE (PAS) AND EXTRINSIC-INTRINSIC RELIGIOSITY QUESTIONNAIRE (EIRQ)**

<i>Questionnaire</i>	<i>Alpha reliability</i>
<b>PAS</b>	<b>0.82*</b>
<b>EIRQ</b>	<b>0.80*</b>

df=169,  $p^* < .01$

Table 1 is showing the reliability values of both the questionnaires; Punishment attitude scale (PAS) and Extrinsic-intrinsic religiosity questionnaire (EIRQ). The reliability coefficients are indicating that both scales are highly reliable.

Then scores of the participants were analyzed on the religiosity scale EIRQ to determine the religious orientation of the participants. Table-2 is presenting the percentage of participants having extrinsic or intrinsic religiosity.

**TABLE-2**  
**PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS HAVING INTRINSIC OR EXTRINSIC RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION AS MEASURED THROUGH EIRQ**

<b>Subscales</b>	<b>Mean male</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Mean female</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
I.R	58.62	(63)	(73%)	55.39	(51)	(60%)
E.R	36.41	(23)	(27%)	37.24	(34)	(40%)

I.R= Intrinsic religiosity, E.R= Extrinsic religiosity

Table-2 is indicating that within total sample (N= 171, male = 86, female= 85), one hundred and fourteen have intrinsic religious orientation. Seventy three percent male (n=63, 73% of male sample) and sixty percent female (n=51, 60% of female sample) participants have intrinsic religious orientation or an internal faith or belief on religion.

Table-3 is presenting the relationship of religious orientation of the participants with the attitudes towards punishment to criminals. The correlation coefficient was estimated between scores on the punishment attitude questionnaire and on the religious orientation scale.

**TABLE-3**  
**DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND PEARSON CORRELATION**  
**COEFFICIENT OF THE SCORES OF PARTICIPANTS ON THE**  
**EXTRINSIC-INTRINSIC RELIGIOSITY QUESTIONNAIRE AND THE**  
**PUNISHMENT ATTITUDE SCALE**

<i>Participants</i> <i>(n=171)</i>	<i>PAQ</i> <i>Mean SD</i>	<i>EIRQ</i> <i>Mean SD</i>	<i>R</i>	
IROP.(n=114)	121.49 9.23	90.12 8.63	0.65*	
EROP. (n=57)	77.51 8.57	65.34 8.92	0.22	

df=169, \*p <.01

IROP= Intrinsic religious oriented participants.

EROP= Extrinsic religious oriented participants.

Table-3 is indicating the correlation coefficient of the intrinsic (n= 114; male =63, female= 51) and extrinsic (n=73; male = 23, female = 34) religious oriented participants on the harsh punishment attitude scale and extrinsic-intrinsic religiosity questionnaire. The values of correlation coefficient is showing that intrinsic religiosity is significantly positively associated ( $r= 0.65$ ,  $p<.01$ ) with the more favourable attitudes towards harsh punishment to criminals. Thus hypothesis-1 about the positive correlation of the intrinsic religiosity orientation and the positive attitude towards harsh punishment to criminals is accepted.

**TABLE-4**  
**MEANS, SD & T-VALUE OF MALE AND FEMALE PARTICIPANTS ON PAS**

<i>Participants</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>P</i>
Male (n=86)	180.43	13.03	1.06	Ns
Female (n=85)	178.51	15.81		

The results of the table 4 are indicating non-significant differences (mean of male participants = 180.43; mean female participants=178.51,  $t=1.06$ ) in the attitudes towards harsh punishment to criminals. Thus, hypothesis 2 about the significant differences in the attitudes of the male and female participants towards harsh punishment to criminals is not confirmed.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of the study indicated that individuals with intrinsic religious orientation including both male and female favoured the harsh punishment to criminals according to the nature of crime. These results are consistent with the previous studies (Lambert, Clarke & Lambert, 2004). Findings of the present study also revealed non-significant gender differences in the support of harsh punishment to criminals as a deterrent to crimes. Male and females both have supported harsh punishment equally. These results are in line with the previous studies (Akhtar & Ataur -Rahman, 2015, Stack, 2000). Religiosity based on two interrelated dimension; (a) the Belief or covert dimension which represent individuals full belief in God, and (b) the Conduct or overt dimension which emphasizes the degree to which the belief dimension of religiosity is reflected throughout the believers' day-to-day behaviour. Intrinsic religious oriented persons have firm belief and they practice basic principles of religion in their daily life. Crime is considered as the act of non-believers or of those with weak faith, which make them vulnerable toward crimes. On the other hand, intrinsic religious orientations act as a source of conformity and serves as protective mechanism against criminal behaviour. Intrinsically religious oriented people abstain from criminal act and consider it below their dignity to commit any crime. They not only keep themselves away from the criminal behaviour but also demand punishment for those who indulge themselves in to the immoral or criminal behavior and consider it important to maintain the social order and peace in society. Human behavior is very complex, and religion plays the role of control mechanism. Islam provides a unique social control perspective and it stresses the combination of main parameters of

religion, morality and law to control and regulate the human behaviour effectively. An environment of healthy morality and faith must be the norm, where to do wrong is discouraged and found difficult. The object of all penal system is to punish the offender and protect the society from the re-occurrence of the crimes. Punishment acts as a protective mechanism against criminal involvement.

There is weak or no implementation of laws in our society which seem as the most significant factor for increasing rate of crimes. Punishment, which is quick, decisive and reforming, is more successful in preventing the recurrent crimes than the only imprisonment method, which has been proven to be a school for hardening the criminal behaviour.

### **CONCLUSION**

Findings of the study had indicated a positive relationship between intrinsic religiosity and positive attitudes towards punishment to criminals. The deterrent status of punishment is endorsed in the study to lower the crime rate. The equal support of harsh punishment to criminals by both male and female participants reflects their uncertainty about the safety of their family and themselves. Individuals who consider religion Islam as a complete way of spending life not just the name of some rituals, stay away from the antisocial acts and favoured the system and strategies to control it. Antisocial acts and crime not only destroy the peace and stability but also ruin the moral fabric of the society. Not any society can enjoy peace, stability and economic progress without controlling crimes through different techniques. Implementation of the laws and punishment to criminals according the nature of crime is the cry of hour.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the light of the findings of the study it is suggested that:

- a) The harsh punishment is a deterrent to crimes and should be implemented to lower the crime rate.
- b) Both male and females have same level of support for harsh punishment to criminals because they want to live with psychological as well as social peace and to protect their loved ones from becoming victims.
- c) Justice for all, swift and speedy trials and indiscrimination in the implementation of the punishment to different criminals are some of the basic requirements needed most.



**LIMITATIONS**

Although the research has fulfilled all aims and objectives of the study but still there is a limitation. In the present study data was taken from the young adolescent students thus in the future it would be interesting to collect the data from the adult population of society for a more comprehensive insight.

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