

## **Religious Orientation and Emotional Intelligence as Determinants of Academic Performance of College Students: A Mediation from Psychological Wellbeing**

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### **Abstract**

This study explored the mediating effect of psychological wellbeing on the relationship between religious orientation and emotional wellbeing; and their impact on learning performance of college students. It was conducted on 414 college students aged 18-21 years conveniently approached at public colleges of Multan city. Data collected on a booklet comprising the measures of religious Orientation, Emotional Intelligence, Psychological wellbeing, and Learning achievement was analyzed by computing correlations and mediation effect through path analyses. Findings suggested the significant positive effects of religious orientation and emotional intelligence on psychological wellbeing and learning performance. Results supported the hypothesized model and psychological wellbeing was found as a significant mediating factor for the effects of religious orientation and emotional intelligence on learning achievement of college students.

**Keywords:** Religious Orientation, Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Wellbeing, Learning Achievement, Academic Performance

### **Introduction**

Learning achievement and academic performance of students seems to be associated with different factors which have direct and indirect effects. Amongst religious orientation appears as one of the main factors to have an impact on learning achievement of students. Carroll (1963) viewed different internal and external factors including individual differences among students to have an impact on their academic performance; whereas, Walberg and Paik (2000) viewed environment and environmental factors affecting learning performance of students. Similarly, Rosen shine and Stevens (1986) found association between psychological wellbeing and academic performance. Rode et al. (2005) saw the possibility of student's performance to be influenced by circumstantial and attitudinal factors.

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The studies of different educationist, sociologists and psychologists including Chamorro-Premuzic and Furnham (2005), Smetana, Campione-Barr, and Metzger (2006), Steinberg and Morris (2001) found relationship of academic performance of student's achievement with their religious orientation, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being in their respective perspectives.

According to Shafranske (1996) religion assists individuals and plays an effective role in dealing with their daily-life or routine matters. Religious orientation determines or directs one's choices, decisions and actions (Giddens, 2002) by playing a crucial role in developing and enhancing competency and [learning] achievement (Hathaway & Pargament, 1990) among students. According to Astin and Astin (2004) religious factors including religiosity, religious orientation, practices affect academic performance of students. Likewise, Jeynes (2002) observed schooling, academic performance and behaviours of students to be positively affected by religiosity. Psychological wellbeing seems to be closely associated with academic performance of students. The researcher like Andrews and Wilding (2004), Daugherty and Lane (1999), DeBerard, Speilmans and Julka (2004) in their respective studies found higher grades of students with higher psychological wellbeing and vice-versa.

However, emotional intelligence can be considered as the ability to observe and regard one's own and others' emotions for directing one's thinking and actions. It is an effective tool for effective living (Goleman, 1995). The educational and psychological researches including Celik and Deniz (2008), Sharma, Deller, Biswal, and Mandal (2009) acknowledged emotional intelligence to be affected by cultural and environmental factors.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to examine the relationship of student academic achievement with their religious orientation and emotional intelligence and mediating effect of psychological wellbeing.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Participants of the Study**

The participants of the study were 414 college students aged between 18 to 21 years with a mean age of 19.6 (1.03). Among them 198 were males and 216 were female students. Participants were approached from public colleges of Multan city through convenient sampling technique.

#### **Instruments for Data Collection Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religious Orientation**

**Scale:** developed by Allport & Ross (1967). It has two subscales, intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientation. This instrument is consisted of 20 items (nine are

based on intrinsic religious orientation and eleven are related to extrinsic religious orientation). It is five point likert scale ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). For intrinsic religious orientation score ranges 9 to 45 and for extrinsic religious orientation score varies from 11 to 55. High internal consistence has been reported for both intrinsic and extrinsic subscales i.e.  $\alpha > 0.80$  and  $\alpha > 0.70$ , respectively.

**Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire:** This scale was developed by Schutte et al., (1998). It is consisted of 33 items with five point likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Its score ranges from 33 to 165 and higher scores represent higher level of Emotional Intelligence. This scale has high internal consistency with cronbach's alpha ranging from .87 to .90, and also good test-retest reliability i.e.  $r = .78$ .

**Short Measurement of Psychological Well-Being:** This scale was developed by Clarke et al., (2001). This shorter version is based on Ryff's (1989) Psychological Well-Being scale. This short version contains six subscales; these are Self-acceptance, Positive Relations with Others, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life, and Personal Growth. This scale comprises of 18 items, 3 for each subscale. This is one of best measure that objectively evaluates psychological well-being. The total score provide overall well-being and higher scores indicate higher wellbeing. Its scores range from 18 to 126.

### **Procedure of the Study**

Institutional permission and informed consent were taken prior to the collection of data. A booklet containing all questionnaires and information was administered to the Students. Data collected on a booklet comprising the measures of religious Orientation, Emotional Intelligence, Psychological wellbeing, and Learning achievement was analyzed by computing correlations and mediation effect through path analyses. Assurance was given to the participants about the confidentiality of their responses. Collected data was analyzed using SPSS 21.

### **Results of the Study**

**Table 1**

*Correlations among Religious Orientation, Emotional Intelligence, and Learning Achievement (N=414)*

No	Variables	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5
1	Intrinsic Orientation	30.68	6.57	1				
2	Extrinsic	42.22	7.03	.11*	1			

	Orientation							
3	Emotional Intelligence	127.29	10.28	.46**	-.26**	1		
4	Psychological Wellbeing	99.17	9.46	.51**	-.31**	.71**	1	
5	Learning Achievement	3.43	0.54	.68**	-.57**	.44**	.53**	1

\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.001

According to table-1, the correlation coefficients show the significant positive relationship of intrinsic orientation with emotional intelligence, psychological wellbeing, and learning achievement while extrinsic religious orientation is found significantly negatively correlated with emotional intelligence, psychological wellbeing, and learning achievement. There is also a significant positive relationship between psychological wellbeing and students' learning achievement.

**Table 2**

*Standardized Coefficients and t-values from Path Analysis of the Trans-contextual Model*

Hypothesized Paths	Path Coefficients	Statistics
Intrinsic Orientation Psychological Wellbeing →	.313	3.13**
Extrinsic Orientation Psychological Wellbeing →	-.102	-1.99*
Emotional Intelligence Psychological Wellbeing →	.304	3.67**
Psychological Wellbeing Learning Achievement →	.326	4.10**

\*p<0.01, \*\*p< 0.001

According to table-2, path analysis shows that there are significant positive effects of intrinsic religious orientation and emotional intelligence on psychological wellbeing. Regression coefficients also shows that extrinsic orientation has significant negative influence on psychological wellbeing. Concerning the effect of emotional intelligence on learning achievement, a significant positive effect is found.

**Table 3**

*Mediation from Psychological Wellbeing for the Effects of Religious Orientation and Emotional Intelligence on Learning Achievement*

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Paths	B <sub>A</sub>	SE <sub>A</sub>	B <sub>B</sub>	SE <sub>B</sub>	Sober Tests	P
IOWBLA	.051	.015	.257	.028	2.734	0.00*
EOWB LA	.167	.021	-.234	.127	-1.128	0.15
EIWBLA	.039	.017	.348	.026	3.723	0.00*

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\*p>0.01, Note; IO: Intrinsic Orientation, EO: Extrinsic Orientation, EI: Emotional Intelligence, LA: Learning Achievement

According to table-3, there is significant mediation from psychological wellbeing for the effects of religious orientation and emotional intelligence on learning achievement. Results from Sobel test indicate that psychological wellbeing mediates the relationship of intrinsic orientation, extrinsic motivation, and emotional intelligence with learning achievement.

### **Conclusion**

Findings suggested the significant positive effects of religious orientation and emotional intelligence on psychological wellbeing and learning performance. Results supported the hypothesized model and psychological wellbeing was found as a significant mediating factor for the effects of religious orientation and emotional intelligence on learning achievement of college students.

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