

Relationship Between Religiosity and Aggression Among Indian Adults

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess if any relationship exists between religiosity and aggression among Indian adults. The study was based on the population of India. A quantitative approach was used to conduct this study. The study had 128 participants ranging in age from 20 to 45 years old. No such link was discovered, according to the findings. These findings were in direct opposition to previous findings. The religious orientation and temperament of individuals may be the source of this inconsistency. Given the fact that religion has the ability to "recode" or change how people think about certain aspects of life, and the role it plays in peoples live.

Keywords: Religion, Aggression, Violence, Religious behaviour, Religious discrimination

Many people's lives are dominated by religion. Many of the decisions that people make are influenced by religious practises. Religion can frequently assist people in improving themselves and the lives of others. Religion, on the other hand, may appear to have the opposite effect, causing people to become aggressive. Acts of aggression, such as violence, martyrdom, and terrorism, are frequently blamed on religion. Religious intolerance-inspired violence is easier to describe than to define. It includes everything from intimidation, harassment, and incarceration to terrorism and outright warfare. It usually occurs when the fundamental beliefs that define a group's identity are challenged. It is intensified by "in-group" communities against "out-group" communities, often with the assistance of fundamentalist religious leaders.

If we talk about Aggression a variety of factors have been linked to the emergence and persistence of aggressive behaviour in adults, both males and females. Understanding the relationship between these factors and aggression is crucial for developing prevention strategies.

What is Religion?

Religion is a set of organised beliefs, practises, and systems that most often revolve around the belief in and worship of a supreme being, such as a personal god or another supernatural

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Received: July 15, 2022; Revision Received: September 13, 2022; Accepted: September 19, 2022

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being. While this is a broad definition, there are many different interpretations of what religion is, and not all religions are based on the belief in a god or gods, or supernatural forces.

Sigmund Freud (1933) described religion as a form of wish fulfilment. Modern psychology, on the other hand, recognises that religion can have a significant impact on a person's life and experiences as well as improve health and well-being. Religion, in fact, has been shown in studies to help people develop healthy habits, regulate their behaviour, and understand their emotions—all of which can have an impact on one's health. Anywhere on the planet? It is a universal element of all human experience in this regard.

Religion can be used for various purposes. Religion can provide solace and direction. It can serve as a foundation for moral beliefs and actions. It can also provide a sense of belonging and a link to the past.

Religiosity

Religiosity is a term used to describe practises that are related to institutional and social expressions of sacredness. People's varying levels of commitment to religious beliefs, principles, and activities are also referred to as religiosity. It describes the personal attachments of individuals or the collective commitments of groups or nations by identifying connections to religious traditions and distinguishing subgroups or denominations within religious traditions.

Religiosity is “the degree to which a person adheres to his or her religious values, beliefs, and practices and uses them in daily living” Worthington et al. (2003). It is thought that people who endorse a high level of religiosity will view the world through a religious lens according to their religious values Worthington et al. (2003)

In many people's lives, religion is very important. Many people's decisions are influenced by religious practises. Religion can often assist people in bettering themselves and others' lives.

Religion and Behaviour

Our beliefs and attitudes are shaped by our experiences, environment, and even genetics. As a result of our beliefs, our behaviour and actions are influenced. Widely held beliefs become part of our culture and, in many ways, shape the society in which we live. Religion is, without a doubt, the most powerful belief system that has been around for thousands of years. It is, in many ways, a code of conduct, a set of rules that allow believers to live in a non-primitive or cultured manner. The earliest forms of religion were created to aid in the formation of social bonds. In fact, religious practises are thought to have evolved as a result of gene selection or gene-culture coevolution dynamics in order to maintain survival and reproductive advantages. It's no surprise, then, that this system is critical to thinking patterns and plays a critical role in self-identity and community collective identity, which shapes attitudes and cultural norms.

Religion has an impact on human behaviour in every aspect of our lives because we are required to follow certain codes, morals, and rules. Religion is ingrained in our minds as a way of thinking, acting, and choosing. When problems outstrip one's ability to handle them, people often turn to God for help. Complications have an impact. This would be around exam time, when many of my friends would start praying to God, believing that only He has control over the outcome of their grades. That is to say, he is in charge, and all they can do is

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pray and try. Religion influences humans by attempting to persuade them that they have no significant individual power norms and by influencing individual and group behaviour.

Religious Discrimination

Religious discrimination is when someone or a group of people is treated unfairly because of their religious beliefs. This includes situations in which adherents of various religions, denominations, or non-religions are treated unequally as a result of their beliefs, whether by the law or in institutional settings such as employment or housing.

Religious discrimination is linked to religious persecution, the most extreme forms of which include cases where people have been executed for holding beliefs that were deemed heretical. Mild forms of religious persecution or religious discrimination are laws that only carry minor penalties. Although the term "religious discrimination" has gained popularity in recent years, "religious discrimination" remains the most widely used term.

Even in societies where people have the freedom to express themselves,

Aggression:

- Bandura (1973) defined aggression as harmful behaviour that goes against social norms and includes the deliberate intent to harm or injure another person or object.
- Conner (2004) viewed aggression as a heterogeneous concept encompassing a wide variety of behaviours.

Aggression is a term that encompasses a variety of behaviours that can cause physical and psychological harm to yourself, others, or objects in the environment. Aggression is defined as causing physical or mental harm to another person. Aggressive behaviour must involve action in order to harm someone who does not want to be harmed; simply thinking about harming someone or feeling angry is insufficient, and accidentally harming someone does not qualify.

Aggression has the potential to harm your health and relationships. Anger has been linked to chronic inflammation, which can lead to secondary health issues such as cardiovascular issues, according to research. Anger and aggression are linked to a variety of mental health issues. However, it's unclear whether uncontrolled anger causes those conditions or if the conditions themselves make managing intense emotions like anger and aggression difficult. There are various theories of aggression proposed by different theorists like Sigmund Freud, Doll According to Freud's instinct theory, the biological drive behind aggression is innate, just like the drives behind sex or hunger. And according to Dollard's theory, frustration triggers aggression. While Albert Bandura's theory places a strong emphasis on the value of observing, modelling, and imitating the behaviours, attitudes, and emotional responses of others.

Signs of Aggression

Aggressive behaviour is meant to harm someone who doesn't want to be harmed, it must include action—just thinking about harming someone or feeling angry isn't enough, and accidentally harming someone isn't enough. Aggressive behaviour can be:

- Beating, hitting, kicking, or stabbing another person are all examples of physical violence. Property destruction is also a form of physical aggression.
- Mocking, name-calling, and yelling are examples of verbal aggression

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- Relational, with the intent of causing harm to another's relationships. Spreading rumours and lying about someone else are some examples.
- Passive-aggressive behaviour, such as ignoring someone at a social gathering or giving backhanded compliments. Instead of causing direct harm, passive-aggressive behaviour is usually intended to allow harm to come to someone.

Relationship between Aggression and Religiosity

Religiosity has been found to be positively and negatively associated with aggression, i.e., higher levels of religiosity lead to lower levels of aggression and vice versa. Theoretically, it has been demonstrated that religiosity plays a significant role in lowering people's aggressive levels. People with frequent visits to religious sites, intrinsic religiosity, and a family environment where religiosity is practised have less aggressive behaviour. On the other hand, they may appear to have the opposite effect, causing people to become violent. Suicide, martyrdom, and terrorism are all examples of acts of violence that are frequently blamed on religion.

Rationale

The current political scenario of the country finds itself entrenched in religious disputes and fanaticism. The blatant affiliations of political parties to a particular religion have made matters worse. Under the garb of religiosity, riots and protests have broken out at the cost of several human lives. It is imperative to understand whether religion alone can harbour this aggression and what part might it play in one's aggressive drives. Many people's lives are dominated by religion. Religious practises influence and guide many of the decisions that people make. Religion can frequently assist people in improving themselves and the lives of others. Religion, on the other hand, may appear to have the opposite effect, causing people to become aggressive. Suicide, martyrdom, and terrorism are all examples of acts of violence that are frequently blamed on religion. The relationship between religiosity and aggression will be discussed through the present study.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

To assess if a relationship exists between Religiosity and Aggression among Indian Adults.

Objectives:

To study the relationship between Religiosity and Aggression among Indian adults

Hypothesis

There will be a significant relationship between Religiosity and Aggression among Indian adults

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative correlational research design and used survey method to collect data on Religiosity and Aggression. Correlational analysis was used to assess Religiosity and Aggression. A sample of 128 Adults between the age group 20-45 years were selected for the purpose of the study. The tools used for religiosity and Aggression are Centrality of Religiosity Scale and Buss& Perry aggression questionnaire. Where Centrality of Religiosity scale have 15 items with the valued of five-point Likert scale and Buss& Perry Aggression questionnaire have 29 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to find the relationship between religiosity and aggression among Indian adults. The results obtained from the scales administered on the sample are discussed below:

Table 1: Mean and Standard deviation of variables

	Religiosity	Aggression
N	122	122
Mean	2.983	78.63
Standard Deviation	0.858	15.67

Table 1 shows that the average distribution of data i.e., mean was found to be 2.983 on Centrality of religiosity scale. The minimum and maximum scores that can be obtained on this scale were 1.0 and 5.0 respectively. The mean score of 2.983 which falls under religious range in central of religiosity scale implying that the average participants in the present study are Religious. The standard deviation is found to be 0.858.

On the other hand, mean was found to be 78.63 on Buss & Perry aggression questionnaire. The minimum and maximum score that can be obtained on this scale were 29 and 145 respectively. The mean score of 78.63 which falls under average range in Buss & Perry Questionnaire implying that the average population in this study shows average level of aggression. The standard deviation is found to be 15.67.

Table 2: Correlation between Religiosity and Aggression

Sr. No	Variables	Religiosity	Aggression
1.	Religiosity	—	
2.	Aggression	.032	—

According to table 2 the Pearson's correlation between religiosity and aggression came out to be insignificant at both 0.05 and 0.01 level ($r = .032$). therefore, H1 has not been supported.

Subjective well-being, happiness, a thankful attitude on life, and aggression have all been linked to higher degrees of religiosity, which has also been linked to lower aggression levels in individuals. Religiosity has been shown to help people become less aggressive, and this finding has been supported by theory. People who often visit religious sites, have an intrinsic religiousness, and are raised in a religious home context are less likely to engage in hostile behaviour. (Bhargava and Kauri, 2020)

The primary aim of the research was to examine whether there is any relationship between Religiosity and Aggression among Indian adults. Data collected from the selected population and was analysed using Pearson bi-variate correlation.

It was hypothesised that there could be a significant relationship between religiosity and aggression among Indian adults. According to the findings, no such relationship was found. These results were in contradiction to the previous findings. The reason for this contradiction can be the religious orientation and temperament of individuals. It is not difficult to believe that religion may "recode" or change the way people think about certain aspects of life, given its power and the extent to which it plays a role in people's lives.

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Religious texts and practises are interpreted differently by different people. Religion, depending on one's interpretation, can sway one's perspective on the world. Aggressive temperament is less susceptible to change later in life with the influence of religious attitudes and beliefs.

Religion has consistently been shown to reduce criminal behaviour. Nonetheless, a new wave of religious terrorism is frequently blamed for rising levels of political violence. People's attitudes in 34 African countries were studied. We look at how individual and collective religiosity influences people's willingness to engage in political violence. Individual religiosity lowers support for violent political action, whereas collective religiosity boosts it. The effects of religion are the same for Muslims and Christians, and the religious context of the country has only a minor impact on citizens' civic engagement and interest in violent political behaviour. Our research emphasises the importance of the theoretical and empirical distinction between individual and collective religiosity, and it sheds light on how civic engagement can shape support for political aggression. (Adamczyk & La Free, 2019)

Fischer, Greitemeyer, and Kastenmüller (2007) conducted a series of three experiments to examine the validity of implicit conceptions about Muslims held by the German population. Muslims were expected to be more aggressive than Christians, and consequently more supportive of terrorism, by German participants. Moreover, Muslims were considered to be more religiously inclined and to have a stronger sense of belonging to their faith than Christians (Study 1). Surveys of Muslims and Christians in the ex-Soviet Union (CIS: former Soviet Union) found that Muslims were neither more aggressive, more pious, or more likely to support terrorism. Muslims, on the other hand, had a far stronger religious identity than Christians reported (Study 2). Muslims' opinions regarding terrorism perpetrated by non-Muslims were found to be affected by a threat to their religious identity, but not Christians'. This effect was mediated by religious identification rather than greater violence potential, according to Germans' implicit ideas about Muslims (Study 3).

Intercollegiate players' self-reported religiosity was found to be adversely connected with violent attitudes and verbal hostility. (Storch and Storch, 2002)

There are very few studies which have examined the relationship between religion and aggression; some of the effects of aggression are known, while others are still unknown as humankind develops. Aggressive behaviour can have serious health and psychosocial repercussions for the offender, the victim, and any onlookers. Children who have experienced family violence may manifest problem behaviours more frequently. Infants who grow up in homes where aggression and violence are common may experience irritability, sleep problems, emotional distress, and somatic complaints. Children who live in homes where handguns are present are at a higher risk of getting hurt or killed than children who do not. Additionally, when children enter school, exposure to violence may result in misattribution biases toward inferring negative intent from neutral or unclear social cues, which can impair one's ability to form healthy, functional relationships.

Therefore, the results of the present study were in contradiction to most of the findings of previous literature. However, it also pointed to some important factors like the role of culture, and religious behaviour in aggression. The previous studies that were conducted were on the topic mostly included participants who were not from Indian population, unlike the present research. It is possible that in Indian context, these studies might not hold

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relevance and further research can be conducted to explore this relationship in the particular context.

CONCLUSION

Aim of the study was to investigate if there is any relationship between religiosity and aggression. Second phase of the research consisted of data collection. The collected sample was then analysed using Pearson bi-variate correlation. Results revealed that there was no significant relationship between the two variables. This result was in contradiction to the previous studies. However, it still has some important implications in positive psychology. The study has a few limitations such as size of data, questionnaires are not adapted to Indian population. To overcome such limitations future researchers are suggested to utilize larger size of population.

Implications

- The present study can be used by psychologists and psychotherapists.
- Spiritual and religious therapeutical approaches for aggression can be planned to use the findings of the present study.
- Understanding and identifying the potential consequences of religiosity and aggression is important because these social issues are becoming more prevalent in Indian society.
- The prevalence of aggressiveness, crime, and violence rises, finding solutions to these issues becomes more important. One viable solution might be to encourage genuine religious participation among Indian citizens, as this could be a key factor in reducing violent and aggressive behaviour.
- It can also be used by schools, institutes, and policy makers to focus on mental and the role of religiosity and aggression in human behaviour.

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Acknowledgement

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Mishra, S. & Tara, D. (2022). Relationship Between Religiosity and Aggression Among Indian Adults. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 10(3), 1033-1040. DIP:18.01.113.20221003, DOI:10.25215/1003.113