



Social Media and Religious Minorities: Analyzing the Usage of Facebook Groups among Christian Minority to Highlight their Issues in Pakistan



Sumera Batool*

Saba Sultana†

Sana Tariq‡

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Abstract: *The issues of religious, ethnic and racial minorities are one of the major problems in modern democratic states where the majority governs. The article finds out the role of religious Facebook groups in highlighting the issues of the Christian minority. The objectives were to observe the reasons of participation, level of dependence and the nature of effects of online discussions of Facebook groups on the Christian community. Uses and gratification theory was applied to understand that how new technologies in media are used to gratify the needs of marginalized communities in a pluralist society. Data was collected through a survey method from the Christian minority, which was Facebook users and members of Facebook religion. The findings of the study revealed that usage of Facebook Groups is motivating the Christian community towards the solution of their problems; there is an association between usage of Facebook groups and awareness level regarding social issues among the Christian community.*

Key Words: Facebook Groups, Christian minority, usage, issues, Pakistan

Introduction

The groups of people based on religion, language or ethnicity living in a state but in lesser numbers are called minorities. A minority is a smaller, non-dominant group of people out of the larger population group. The

members of this smaller group, though, are the nationals of the state; have religious, cultural or ethnic characteristics differing from the larger group (Conde, 1999). Pakistan is a multicultural, multiracial country with

* Assistant Professor, Department of Mass Communication, Lahore College for Women University, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

† Lecturer, Department of Mass Communication and Media, University of Narowal, Punjab, Pakistan.

‡ MS Fellow, Depart of Mass Communication, Lahore College for Women University, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Email: sanna.tariqque@gmail.com

Muslims in the majority found in the name of religion 'Islam'. There are people from different ethnicities, cultures and religions who collectively form a society. Muslims in Pakistan are a religious majority, while among the other religious minorities, there are Christians, Sikhs, Hindus, Ahmadis and Parsis etc., (Aqeel, 2020; Malik, 2002). Pakistan's constitution guarantees its people basic rights, which are equal citizenship, the rule of law, socio-economic and political justice, freedom of expression, thinking, freedom of faith, religion and religious practices, and morality (Zaigham, 2014). The rights of individuals are to be protected by the state. In the Islamic state, the right to life, religion, property, liberty, and honor are ensured by Islamic law equally to all citizens without discrimination of caste, creed or religion (Hamidullah, 1987). Islam has forbidden all types of distinctions and discriminations on the basis of race, color, nationality, language or caste (Chahudhry, 1993). The constitution of Pakistan clearly defines the definition of Non-Muslim. According to article 260(3) (b), "A person belonging to the Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, or Parsee (Zoroastrian) community, a person of Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves Ahmadis or by any other name) or a Baha'i, and a person belonging to any of the scheduled castes". Cultural considerations are smothering religious and socio-economic practices and describing issues of perceived loyalty; the loyalty towards the state or patriotism of a non-Muslim is always considered questionable. Pakistani Christian community largely consists of the progeny of adherents from scheduled caste Hindus, and the concept of untouchability emerged from multilayered belief systems of Hindu theology

(Harding, 2008). At the time of partition, Christians decided to remain in Pakistan, while most of the Hindus and Sikhs preferred to migrate to India. (Minority right group, 2018).

According to the 1998 Census, Christians make up approximately 1.59 per cent of Pakistan's total population. In fact, the exact number is unknown, and estimates range from less than 2 million to as many as 3 million. There are Christian communities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, including around 70,000 in Peshawar, but the bulk of Pakistani Christians live in Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad and numerous small communities in Punjab. According to the demography of World Population Review, 5.83% of the total population of Lahore is Christian. The further breakdown of the demography reveals there are 368,089 total Christian populations in the Lahore district only, and 298,775 is in the urban areas, 99,314 lives in the rural areas of district Lahore. Christians are identifiable and approachable rather than the other minorities. Punjabi Christians face social, political and economic discrimination. Especially a derogatory term 'chuhra' is commonly used for them, which refers to dark-skinned, low status and untouchability (Aqeel & Gill, 2019). Moreover, Ahmadis and Christians face religious discrimination most among other communities. The violence, like discrimination and oppression, against these two communities, is documented and reported both on societal and official levels. Whereas other religious communities, i.e. Bahais, Buddhists, Ismailis and Parsis, are highly educated, with exceptional socio-economic status and live in urban areas (Malik I. H., 2002). The minority groups have been living in

Pakistan since independence and have been playing their active role in society for development, especially in the education and health sector. Despite being living in an inclusive environment as good and responsible citizens, the minority groups have been facing inequality, discrimination and victimization. These minorities have been marginalized in almost every segment of life, including employment, education and religious freedom.

Facebook provides various features to the users, so it is more likely an umbrella service providing different features to its users according to their needs [\(Smock, Ellison, Lampe, & Wohn, 2011\)](#). The feature of Facebook groups was updated and reintroduced in 2010; the 'Facebook Group' is a forum for users of mutual interest, where they can share and exchange their expertise. Since the time of the launch, it has expanded rapidly due to its social nature. Instead of requiring and maintaining the individual list, a person can set up a specific group and all members of that community can use it [\(Martin, n.d\)](#). The posts published or shared on Facebook groups have a higher reach rather than sharing on one's wall. In other words, Facebook groups increase the visibility of a message because of the larger number of group members. Facebook groups are classified on the basis of their topic and privacy; A Facebook group can be 'public' or a 'closed' depending on the access and visibility of the content. Closed groups allow sequential and intermittent communication among members [\(Meishar-Tal, Kurtz, & Pietersa, 2012\)](#). This also made it possible to exchange information such as links to web sites, text documents, images etc. thus, Facebook groups can serve as

an alternative learning management system. Social media, through its features, has enabled individuals and organizations to accumulate other people without needing formal management [_\(Shirky, 2008\)](#). One of the best reasons to speak in favor of social media is that the differences between governments and political leaders can help bring socio-political change or reforms. Facebook groups are an online space where likeminded people can communicate with each other within a similar community [_\(Shirky, 2011\)](#).

With the rapid growth of the web and emerging developments in social media, contemporary media work is changing its shifts on a regular basis. It focuses more on media consumers, their inspirations and actions in using social media [_\(Gallion, 2010\)](#). Facebook and other social networking sites were considered as a timewasting activity of youth. Now the scenario has been changed. Facebook and Twitter are used as platforms for expressing opinions and creating awareness from a common man to celebrities, religious clerics, social and human rights activists, political leaders and journalists. Like other communication tools and platforms, social networking sites have many rules; customs that users need to follow to avoid any difficulties. Social networking sites have some possible risks to navigate [_\(ofcom Office of Communication, 2008\)](#), like unintended effects of publically sharing personal details and uncertainty about privacy settings and contact with unfamiliar people.

The issues of religious, ethnic and racial minorities are one of the major problems in modern democratic states. In modern democracies, the governance of the majority is applied [_\(Kakakhel, 1984\)](#). Minorities and their

rights are always marginalized because of the safeguards and loopholes in the system. Christianity is the largest religious minority in Pakistan. In spite of the fact that Christianity makes 1.6% of the whole population of Pakistan, which is a considerable figure, they are not being provided with the basic life necessities_(Perveen, 2012). There are many open and closed Facebook groups organized and found by the Christian community. Some of them are All Pakistan Christian League, Christian in Pakistan, Dr. Jamil Nassir (The Man of God), Pakistani Christians, United Christian Youth Fellowship, Pakistan Minority Rights Commission (PMRC), All Pakistan Christian Community, etc. Christian online groups reflect the trends and criticize conventional theological conceptions of the group. The representation of the group as a network of partnerships is especially troublesome. The aim of the study is to find the role of Facebook groups in highlighting the socio-economic and political issues of the Christian minority. It is about how the Christian community living in Lahore gratifies the usage of Facebook groups according to their needs.

The issues of the minority are hardly discussed in mainstream media. In drama serials, Christians are not presented as an inclusive community in the mainstream society; they are presented separately. The Christian channels were banned in 2016 and again in January 2019 by PEMRA for going against some PEMRA laws. In this situation, Facebook groups provide an open and accessible space where like-minded people could be vocal and raise their voices. These groups are established quickly_(Jan D. F., 2016), and their access is limited to a specific

population of people. Social media can make up the undisciplined groups_(Shirky, 2008) by overcoming its drawbacks through lessening the coordination costs. The Facebook groups need no license to operate. It is a fact that the exponential increase in the influence of social media is a horrific nightmare for governments who want to have firm control over what is accessible to the public, as well as for the news and print media who give news in accordance to the agenda of their sponsors.

Objectives

- To find out the extent and reasons of participation of the Christian community in Facebook groups
- To find out the level of dependence of Christian minority on Facebook groups.
- To find out the nature of effects of online discussions of Facebook groups on the Christian community.

Literature Review

Minorities and their rights have always been marginalized by its safeguards. Religious minorities have traditionally been the starting point for the institutionalization of the global order for minority rights_(Ghanea, 2012). The dynamics of religious and racial segregation against minority groups were predominantly in social and educational domains_(Yunus, Khan, & Ali, 2012). The minorities found to be marginalized and mistreated both in social and educational indicators. Education curriculums were innately prejudiced and put the minorities at risk; they face an identity crisis, live in splintered conditions with lower socio-economic status. Foreign influence on the issues of marginalized group and survival

against increasing violent extremist militant group; is based on some hypotheses (Misra, 2015). The growing level of religious extremism resulted in aggression towards Christian minorities while exploitation of a minority, fomentation or confrontation was clearly an outcome of the articulated foundation of totalitarian aggression. The deliberate demonizing mechanism created the significant proportion-led in-group and out-group narrative leading to condemnation and oppression of a marginalized group.

Minorities raise their voices in a pluralist society on electoral procedures and legal framework for them. The presence of Christian minority in state institutions was just nominal, lacked power and influence and was reductive (Raina, 2014), which need to be modified in terms of pattern and representation. The public healthcare services were in disparity, and parents' awareness involvement, conviction and mindset towards childhood vaccine (Malik, Yousaf, Gillani, & Habib, 2012) and child healthcare surprisingly good despite the lack of resources. The struggles of the Christian community for social acceptance, victimization, freedom of religious practices, vulnerability, marginalization, biased and sensational media coverage on such issues increased in the recent past (Ahmad, Shaikat, & Saeed, 2016). It needs to be resolved on a priority basis through detailed action plans, awareness campaigns and interfaith harmony among various segments of society with the help of stakeholders, governments and clerics (Khalid & Rashid, 2019). The problems faced by minorities, i.e. Sikhs and Christians exclusively in performing their rituals in the areas of Swat and Peshawar and their efforts to adjust in mainstream

Muslim society (Jan, Rehman, Khattak, & Khan, 2019) social interactions in those areas; though they were somehow free to perform their rituals which clearly indicate the strong social interactions in a way or another but little disturbances are also reported in the targeted areas.

Another stigma and problematic concept both in scholarly and popular discourses on minorities prevailed in South Asian society is "racial minority" which connected with the caste system specifically (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2019). This based on the historical backdrop of sectarianism in the region within the wider debates on post-colonial state building, controversies over racial and religious powers and the development of a cohesive stance in Pakistan. The dialogical interviews were raised, and life history narratives of some Christian families also provided the societal level process to analyze their experiences using the lens of structural violence. The collective analysis discussed the impact of the Blasphemy Laws, violence, the attribution of impurity, and unequal citizenship (Chaudhry, 2016). Biased rules against non-Muslims, brought them to judicial and extra-judicial punishments (Rahman, 2012), when radical groups build the influence, the culture of hostility also escalated for the other cultures and religions in society. State systematically shifted the right to pursue authority through the use of Islamic representation and ideology for the purposeful justification of the law caused the major human right violation. Two different views, a Christian and a Muslim, are formed on the current situation by following the interpretation of a political sense regarding the relationship among citizenship, religion and education in the on-going religious discussions

in Pakistani schools. The madrasa program was found to propagate the biased role of religion in the curricula of government-run schools (Leirvik, 2008).

Prejudiced or biased media reporting towards minority contributed to the alienation or even more marginalization of that minority the way Israeli media isolated and damaged the image of Arabs in Israel on a social, ideological and psychological basis (Tsfati, n.d., pp. 632-651). In Pakistani English dailies, Christians were given more coverage, unlike other minorities (Ali & Jalaluddin, 2010). Leading English and Urdu newspapers though report positively, but are found to be less inclusive for minorities, the cultural sensitivity on blasphemy and the challenges media faces in reporting such sensitive or controversial matters (Sadiq, 2016). There is an unequal and biased representation of religious minorities in Pakistani print media (Batool, 2018). In Pakistani mainstream movies, there has been a discriminative approach for minorities' portrayal (Khalid & Daudpoto, 2014). Pakistani TV, especially private TV channels, actively and vocally highlighted the issues on minorities' rights and build unity among numerous ethnic and religious groups living in the country. But the role of private channels was not so effective in creating harmony in society (Mubeen & Qusien, 2017).

Facebook is one of the most famous SNS among college students to find out the human value of individuals. A positive relationship was found between the frequency of FB use and students' life satisfaction, confidence, community involvement and political activism (Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009). Facebook groups contribute to 'interact' and meet the need of 'decision making' and 'higher level of

knowledge among university students, programmers, (Ahern, Feller, & Nagle, 2016) educators and researchers interested in using social networking tools. The use of Facebook mainly gratifies the adolescents' desire of consolidation, knowledge and understanding of their virtual or digital world (Tanta, Mihovilovic, & Sablic, 2014). New technology and online means of interaction has implemented new standards. The language patterns had effect on the language pattern of users, as it had become more inclusive for oppressed groups and they benefit more from virtual space (Eslami, Jabbari, & Kuo, 2015). Facebook groups have not only proved beneficial for Y generation to discover their writing and learning skills but also as an effective tool for pre-writing brainstorming and writing (Yunus & Salehi, 2012). Online religious communities have posed many challenges to societal developments in culture, government and faiths (Campbell, 2004). The Internet has excelled in a cultural environment that encourages regulated ties in closely bound hierarchies. Religious online communities reflect the developments and question conventional religious perceptions. Religiousness affects the joining or membership of social networking sites and social cognitive behavior, organizational participation and community involvements of youth. Religious and non-religious activities impact differently on the social behaviors, and involvement in SNS (Miller, Munday, & Hill, 2013). The adults practising more religious activities are less involved or interested in SNS. Social media can also be used for civic activism, the concept of blasphemy in Islam and its incorporation in the legal system of Pakistan (Jan D. F., 2016). Effective use of social media

can affect on literacy, access to social media tools and media law policies to guarantee freedom of expression. Without freedom of expression, liberal forces cannot make full use of social media for promoting democracy and the rights of minority groups. It is the responsibility of media being the fourth pillar of the state, to present the marginalized and vulnerable groups. The gap identified that there are studies about the socio-economic conditions of Pakistani Christians and the blasphemy laws which are creating controversy. Few studies only were focused on faith-based issues, but no studies were found to examine the role of Facebook groups in highlighting issues of the Christian community.

Theoretical Framework

Uses and gratification theory was applied for the study as it was conducted to analyze the use of Facebook groups to highlight religious minorities issues. The social media gained abrupt popularity in Pakistan and Facebook groups as one of an important tool among those. The individuals from religious or marginalized communities, when had no access to the mainstream media they form Facebook groups with like-minded people to express their opinion. They raised their voices or mobilized other community members to satisfy the human need for knowledge and freedom of expression. Uses and Gratification Theory was more relevant to understand that how new technologies in media used to gratify the needs. People seek gratifications from the internet in the form of social media and going further to Facebook and Facebook groups. A number of gratifications from these Facebook

groups could be attained like sociability, mobility, affection, recognition etc.

Mark Levy and Sven Windahl offered a clear definition of what it meant to be an 'active consumer' of the media: "As generally interpreted by gratification scholars, the word 'viewer behavior' hypothesized a target viewer's or consumer's selective attitude towards the effective communication. It indicates that usage of media was inspired by objectives and inspirations defined by the audiences. So the 'active involvement in the procedure of communication can enable, restrict, or on the other hand, affect exposure-related needs and impacts. Research also indicated that audience participation was better designed and implemented as a variable structure, including consumers exhibiting different forms of behavior and levels. Unlike other media consumption theories, uses and gratification allowed consumers the authority to distinguish the media they use, assuming the user has a specific purpose and usage. Attempting to engage with religious material and cultures, it was even more significant to have a broader and clearer insight of the benefits obtained from its use. The uses and rewards that individual received [\(Miller, Munday, & Hill, 2013\)](#) by connecting with religious content on FB. There was inadequate information and perspective available on religion [\(Brubaker & Haigh, 2017\)](#), so the theory provided an insight into the driving factors that motivated FB audience to create and share religious content.

Methodology

The quantitative research design was applied to the framework of inquiry, keeping the

essential aspects of impartiality, trustworthiness, rationality and generalization keeping in view. The survey method was used for the study. The online survey was approachable considering the pandemic. The population of this study was based on Pakistani Christians who were members or participants of Christian Facebook groups. For the present study, non Probability sampling procedure was selected. Moreover, samples were selected through snowball sampling technique. The study targeted the members of Facebook groups' users of the Christian community. A sample size of 100 respondents was selected for the survey.

Data Collection

Data collection enables to answer the research question, hypothesis, determine results accurately and predict probabilities and its

accuracy affects the quality of research. The data was collected through semi structured questionnaire from the Christian minority, which were Facebook users and members of Facebook religious groups. A questionnaire was developed to obtain accurate information and transparency. In the current research, a questionnaire was formed first and then translated into Urdu (as it is Lingua Franca in Pakistan). The questionnaire was shared in Christian Facebook groups; It was even shared directly with the respondents through emails and other social media networks (Messenger & Whatsapp). Respondents were asked about their extent of use, reason of participation, dependency, reliability and effects of using Christian Facebook groups. For the present study, pre-testing was done with 30 respondents to clear any ambiguity and any possible errors.

Operational Definitions

Key terms	Operational Definitions
Facebook Groups	Religious Facebook groups created, organized and administrated by Pakistani Christians.
Religious Minority	The Christian minority in Pakistan, specifically living in Lahore, who is a Facebook user and member of Christian Facebook groups as well.
Highlighting issues	Discuss or raise the socio-political and religious issues of the Christian community through Facebook groups, to bring in the limelight the problems faced by Christine community, i.e. eradication of poverty, voting system, legislation, education and health care etc.

Findings and Interpretations of Results

Table 1. Correlation

		Christian Community	Motivating Towards the Solution of their Problem
Christian Community	Pearson Correlation	1	.204*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.042

	N	100	100
Motivating	Pearson Correlation	.204*	1
Towards their	Sig. (2-tailed)	.042	
Problems	N	100	100

*. Correlation is Significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The above table shows the correlation significance between the Christian community and their motivation towards their problem's solution. The value of correlation is .204 shows that weak positive linear relationship found. The hypothesis of the study is stated that "the usage of Facebook groups is motivating

Christian towards their solution of the problems" is accepted as their value of significance .204 is less than $p < 0.5$ value. The null hypothesis is rejected is stated that "the usage of Facebook groups is not motivating Christian towards their solution of the problems"

Table 2. Correlation

		Facebook groups are effectively creating awareness in community	Christian community
Facebook groups are effectively creating awareness in community	Pearson Correlation	1	.362**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
Christian community	Pearson Correlation	.362**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above table shows the correlation significance between the Christian community and their motivation towards their problem's solution. The value of correlation is .362 shows that moderate positive linear relationship found. The hypothesis of the study is stated that "there is an association between usage of Facebook groups and awareness level regarding social issues among Christian community" is accepted as their value of significance .362 is less than $p < 0.5$ value. The null hypothesis is rejected as it stated that "there is no an association between usage of Facebook

groups and awareness level regarding social issues among Christian community".

The survey revealed that target population was educated, varying from matric to post-graduate. Out of the sample of 100, 7% of the population consists of respondents' education level of matriculation, 12% were with the education level to intermediate, while 70% out of the sample of 100 was graduate, while 8% of the population was post-graduate. The most of the respondents were the part of multiple Facebook groups ranging from 2 to 15 groups simultaneously, 16 were members of

3 groups, and 5 respondents were member of just 1 Facebook Group. The target population joined Facebook for different reasons.

The answers of all research questions were found and all the objectives of the study were achieved through the research design and tools. These results helped to achieve first objective of the research study which was to find out the extent and reason of participation of the Christian minority to join Facebook Groups. The reasons to join Facebook groups were diversified; no noticeable differences were seen among the reasons of people to join Facebook groups, whereas majority of the Christian population, 37% joined Christian Facebook groups for information. While 29% join Facebook groups to interact with like-minded people, 11% for infotainment, 7% for entertainment and 18% for some other reasons. the friends and peer groups have had a significant role in joining the Facebook groups, as 41% which is the most of the sample population become the members through the peer pursuance. After the peers, social activists in Christian community played more important role, according to the present study social activists persuaded 29% of the population to be the members of FACEBOOK GROUPs and just 5% joined because of religious leaders or clerics. 57% of the sample population found to be very vigilant in checking their Facebook updates, 31% followed actively or frequently, only 4.5% of the population was somehow reluctant to follow or check the FB updates. The preference to join a Facebook

group by the majority opted to be member to have the interaction with other community members, 41% of the respondents joined Christian Facebook groups for this reason, 22% joined because of the group admin or organizer who could be some of their trustworthy or favorite personalities belonged from different walks of life like some social activist, any political leader or religious personality. 15% joined these groups because the larger numbers of members they take as a sign of credibility for them, 12% joined the group if their friend would invited them or influenced them to join.

Few questions were added in the questionnaire to check the dependence of the sample population and to see how much they rely on them. The target sample population relied and depended on the information shared in Facebook groups, as most of the population 41, joined the groups to be in touch with and informed about the other community members. Most of the respondents believed Facebook groups as an interactive way of information sharing discussion on any kind of issues when compared to other sources of media or information sharing, 41 were agree with it. 21 were strongly agreed on Facebook groups as the interactive way of information sharing and discussions, 34 were neutral that means they were partially agree and partially disagree. Target population did not depend or rely solely on the information shared in Facebook Groups. Participants were asked if the information shared on Facebook groups was true, 54 people out of the sample of 100

were neutral or in other words they had not any clear verdict on that, and 3 were disagree and the people who replied with the answer 'agree' were 39 and 'strongly agree' were just 4 out of 100. But when the respondents were asked about if the FACEBOOK GROUPS were 'trust worthy' source of information the answers were different, though here too the answer of the majority i.e. 41 was 'neutral', but simultaneously 34 were 'strongly agree' and 15 were 'agree' with the statement. So there was found a little contradiction in the answers of these two questions. The respondents were asked if they confirm the information shared in FACEBOOK GROUPS through other sources like TV channels, newspapers, or radio etc. the answer of 31 out of 100 was 'strongly agree', 29 answered as 'agree', again 29 answered 'neutral', while 10 answered 'disagree' and just 1 answered as 'strongly disagree' out of 100. According to the results of survey, 36 respondents confirmed that they frequently confirm the credibility of the content from other sources, the lesser majority with the count of 26 people replied that they 'rarely' check their content from other sources before sharing. Answer of 15 people was 'very frequently' and 9 said that they 'never' confirm the content before sharing in Facebook groups. So it can be said that according to the findings of the current study, people do not believe blindly in any news or content which is shared and keep in mind the credibility before they share some in Facebook groups.

The sample populations from Christian minority Facebook groups were asked about

to whom posts (individual or group) they give more importance or in other words what personalities were reliable for them, the answers were much diversified. For 27 people, law experts were more credible, for 30 people it were religious clerics, 30 answered for social activists, only 6 people answered for politicians and 8 answered 'others' and they explained that it was depended on the nature of matter. The third objective of the study was to find out the nature of effects online Facebook groups' discussions on Christian community. To identify the effects and their nature some related questions were asked, and the responses on these questions well defined the effects and the objective was fulfilled. On asking that if discussions on Facebook Groups had changed the views or perspective on any specific issues, so visibly most number of the people 43 replied 'agree', 31 were 'neutral'. 9 were 'strongly agree' with the statement. While 13 answered with 'disagree' and 4 were 'strongly disagree'. Likewise the respondents were asked in the questionnaire that the trending on Facebook Groups make them to take any kind of initiative towards any social, religious, economic or political issue. The maximum number of people; as 60 replied 'agree', 22 were 'neutral', 13 were 'strongly agree', so the results showed that those discussions were very impactful. In same way 55 people were 'agree' that Facebook groups had been harmonizing the Christian community, it also answered the one of the research questions on which the whole study was based. 50 out of the sample of 100 were

'agree', 19 'strongly agree' and 23 people were 'neutral' with the statement that through Facebook groups, Christian community is being harmonized.

Conclusion

It is concluded that Facebook Groups have been effectively highlighting the issues of Christian minority through diversified type of content and issues including social, political and religious issues. This query helped to answer the role Facebook groups are playing in highlighting the problems of Christian minority. The results disclosed that most of the people respond on the content based on social issues rather than the political or religious issues. Trending on Facebook groups urged or motivated people to take initiative or action towards a specific social, economic or religious issue. Likewise a majority of the sample claimed to become the member of Facebook Groups to be the part of social change and discussions or trending on Facebook groups change their views and perspective on certain issues. More than half of the target population claimed that Christian Facebook Groups were effectively creating civic and social awareness in the respective community and even Facebook groups harmonized the community. Back-lash and hate speech was found to be a common practice in the discussion and posts in Christian Facebook groups. 68% of the sample rarely or never shared anything in Facebook groups for this reason; though 96% participants consider Facebook groups as an interactive way of

communication. The back-lash and hate speech kept them participating in any discussion or sharing any post to avoid severe response from other members.

Some contradictions were also observed in the data collected during research. The majority was agree that Facebook groups were harmonizing their community while a significant number was not agree, but simultaneously on the other hand again a considerable large number of respondents believed that the content shared in Christian groups have been promoting sectarianism within the community and segregating the community from mainstream society. According to the survey; the participants with a slight difference believed that Facebook groups create intolerance and prejudices for other ethnic or religious groups or majorities. But on the other hand when the researcher asked if the content shared or created in Christian Facebook groups have been violating state law or constitution; again diverse results with slight difference were obtained. Creating awareness and teach the people about the ethics regarding usage of social media is needed, as hate speech was observed too much in the discussions or in the comment sections of the posts in group. The group admins should show more responsibility and vigilance towards the posts on sensitive and provocative matters which could create a conflict between majority and minority or even among the different sects within their community.

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