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Abstract

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Keywords: Social Media, Religious Tolerance, Interfaith Harmony, Structural Equation Modeling, Education

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Title

The Role of Social Media in Enhancing Religious Tolerance and Interfaith Harmony in Pakistan

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Abstract

This study examines how social media promotes religious tolerance. Religious tolerance and interfaith harmony in Pakistani social media were examined. Education and social media affect religious tolerance, according to research. In a quantitative study, 417 religiously diverse respondents completed a structured questionnaire. We used descriptive statistics, SEM, and moderation analysis to study social media use, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony. SEM analysis showed a strong positive correlation between social media use and religious tolerance and interfaith harmony. Tolerance fosters interfaith harmony. Education moderated religious tolerance and social media use. With high education, respondents had the strongest relationship, while low education had a weaker but not statistically significant relationship. Social media promotes religious tolerance and interfaith harmony, especially among educated people, this study found. Education and digital literacy boost social media's interfaith benefits. This study encourages constructive social media communication between diverse religious communities to promote social harmony.

Keywords:

[Social Media](#), [Religious Tolerance](#), [Interfaith Harmony](#), [Structural Equation Modeling](#), [Education](#)

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Introduction

Communication and interaction with the public in a digital environment are impossible without social

media. These platforms have transformed Pakistan, with its over 240 million people and a wide religious spectrum of Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, and Ahmadis. In discussions about religious



and social issues, people use Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube widely to shape public perception of sensitive issues like interfaith harmony and religious tolerance. In 2023, there are more than 100 million internet users and 37 million active social media users. Religious understanding and cooperation can (Irawanto & Santiago, 2023), be promoted by social media, but at the same time, it can lead to exposure to the extreme and dissemination of misinformation.

Pakistani religious intolerance has a long history, but modern media has made it worse. Online narratives are polarizing, creating religious violence and sectarian war. A 2020 Pew Research (Martin, 2024), ranks Pakistan high in religious hostilities; religious minorities are often persecuted. Social media has been used to promote discourse broadly, but it also has been used to spread hate speech and extreme ideas that have fueled cross-religious conflict. The constitutional provision of religious freedom notwithstanding the uncontrolled nature of social media has made it hard to maintain a balanced and fair debate.

The problem, then, is to harness the power of social media to help spread religious tolerance while keeping it from spreading extremist or polarizing information. Pakistan has no control over social media, which is why it is the best place for interfaith dialogue and also distributing bad information. However, the FBI's Cyber Crime Wing, which monitors online hate speech and criminality, is underfunded and cannot police the huge amount of religiously sensitive content on digital platforms. Social media businesses, religious groups (Nasrudin, 2017) (Naydenko, 2023), and governments also do not cooperate in maintaining interfaith harmony. To tackle these concerns, we need content moderation, legislative measures, and educational programs to raise digital literacy and online tolerance.

Social media can be used in Pakistan to spread religious tolerance and inter-faith harmony but there are problems with its misuse. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and moderation analysis are used to examine the complicated link between social media use, religious tolerance, and its influencing factors in this research. These findings will inform politicians, educators, and social media companies to design a more inclusive

digital ecosystem (Irawanto & Santiago, 2023; Jan, Jamalet al., 2013; Johnston, 2012; Kewuel, 2019).

Social media's growing sway over public opinion and actions, especially in relation to Pakistan's religious tolerance and interfaith relations, prompted this research. With internet penetration having surged to over 100 million users in Pakistan and Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube becoming common, social media has become a vital platform for constructive debate and negative myths. Religious congregations use social media to communicate, but too much information can divide society. At this particular moment in geopolitics, it is absolutely necessary to understand how social media can enhance religious tolerance whilst minimizing its detrimental impact. This study demonstrates how social media affects interfaith dynamics and suggests to legislators, educators, and social media platforms how to promote tolerance and unity (Martin, 2024).

On account of its diverse population, Pakistan has always struggled with religious intolerance and sectarian warfare. Social media has been promoting dialogue and propagating extreme content since the digital age. With the potential for the polarizing effect of encouraging interfaith cooperation born in social media, this capability has been used to propagate hate speech, extreme ideologies, and disinformation. Risk management in Pakistan is hard because of unregulated social media and the lack of resources of regulatory authorities like the Federal Investigation Agency's Cyber Crime Wing. We must understand, in the first place, how the use of social media impacts religious tolerance and interfaith relations and how to better promote positive relations while weakening extremist content online. This gap (Michaelides, 2009; Michalos, 2017; Mittal, 2014) has been filled by this study, examining the relationship between social media use and religious tolerance, and the factors that moderate it.

The primary objective of this research is to examine the impact of social media usage on religious tolerance and interfaith harmony in Pakistan. Specifically, this study aims to:

1. Analyze the extent to which social media platforms contribute to fostering religious tolerance among individuals from different faiths in Pakistan.

2. Investigate the role of interfaith dialogue facilitated by social media in promoting mutual understanding and cooperation between religious communities.
3. Explore the moderating effect of education on individuals' engagement with and responsiveness to interfaith content on social media.

This research seeks to examine how social media might be used to strengthen interfaith interactions and reduce religious intolerance. This study makes several key contributions to the existing literature on social media, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony:

- It provides empirical evidence of the dual role of social media in promoting religious tolerance while also posing risks through the spread of radical content.
- The research introduces a detailed analysis of how interfaith dialogue facilitated by social media enhances understanding and cooperation among diverse religious groups in Pakistan.
- It identifies education as a moderating variable that significantly influences individuals' engagement with interfaith content on social media.
- The study contributes to the ongoing discourse on content moderation, offering policy recommendations to social media platforms and governmental agencies to regulate harmful religious content.
- By analyzing Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and moderation analysis results, the research enhances methodological approaches to studying social media's influence on societal behaviors in pluralistic societies.

This document is structured as follows. This document presents the history, issue statement, and research motivation of the study. This study examines prior studies on the use of social media to foster religious tolerance and interfaith harmony, informed by theoretical frameworks. The methodology section encompasses research design, data gathering methods, and analytical approaches employed, such as Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and moderation analysis. The study's findings are delineated in the results section and analyzed in the discussion part. The final section of

the report offers recommendations for politicians, educators, social media platforms, and future research endeavors.

Literature Review:

Social Media and Religious Tolerance

With the arrival of social media, people's interactions and engagements with religious content have become dramatically different in pluralistic societies where there is an increase in religious diversity. For years, research has repeatedly emphasized the dual nature of social media as both a means for promoting positive interfaith dialogue and a means to foment religious intolerance. Jan et al. (2013), have studied interfaith harmony in Pakistan's Swat district focusing on Muslim and Hindu dynamics. They found that social media such as Facebook and Twitter created places, for instance, for interfaith communication, but they were also channels to spread extremist ideologies that undermine social cohesion. The emphasis of this work was that while social media can encourage religious tolerance, this unregulated means has often exacerbated sectarian divisions.

Like Kewuel (2019), who observed how journalism ethics influence the representation of religious issues on social media, she points out that without ethical oversight, social media forums are fertile ground for religious conflict. He concluded that there was a need to guarantee ethical journalism practices in digital spaces as coverage of religious topics could serve to fan religious intolerance, provided it was biased or sensationalist (Kewuel, 2019). These findings are consistent with broader research into the role of the lack of regulatory frameworks on social media platforms in amplifying extremist content (Michaelides, 2009; Naydenko, 2023).

Interfaith Harmony and Social Media

Interfaith harmony, such as creating opportunities for dialogue and understanding of different religious communities rests on social media as a facilitator. An analysis of how youth engagement in interfaith dialogue through social media affects their attitudes towards religious tolerance (Nasrudin, 2017), was able to conduct an analysis. The study used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to show that strong correlation between the

presence of positive interfaith interactions on social media and increased religious tolerance, especially among younger users (Khainuddin & Huda, 2022). This finding reinforces the usefulness of social media in bringing about interfaith harmony where the religious aspects are undermining social cohesion.

Huda and Khainuddin extended the evidence that social media is playing a role in strengthening relations between different faiths. Focus on Indonesia, a nation rife with religious differences their study showed that social media can be an important way to help improve religious harmony, particularly when the message content consists of tolerance, respect, and messages of harmony. According to the authors, the same platforms can be used to spread misinformation and radical ideologies as a threat to interfaith harmony (Michalos, 2017). They find that the way social media is used may very well determine whether it enhances or breaks down interfaith relations, and that the content shared on social media could also play a role in that outcome.

Role of Education in Religious Tolerance

The relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance has been repeatedly highlighted as being moderated by education. Several studies have shown conclusively that people who are more educated are more likely to engage constructively

with interfaith content on social media to promote understanding and tolerance. Educated people are more discerning in what they consume on social media and more critical as they consume extremist narratives and contribute to a more informed dialogue on religious issues, (Nasrudin, 2017). This is consistent with (Monteiro, 2010), who also used SEM to look at how education influences users' reactions to religious content on social media. His research found that people with higher education levels are better able to navigate complex religious discussions online, and often serve as mediators of interfaith conflict.

Hypothesis

1. H1: Social media usage has a positive and significant relationship with religious tolerance among different religions in Pakistan.
2. H2: Social media usage leads to interfaith harmony among different religions in Pakistan
3. H3: There is a significant positive relationship between religious tolerance and interfaith harmony among different religions in Pakistan.
4. H4: Education level moderates the relationship between Social media usage and religious tolerance.

Table 1

Comparative Analysis of Social Media and Religious Tolerance Studies

Reference	Technique	Results	Limitations	Findings
(Jan, et al., 2013)	Case study, Qualitative analysis	Social media facilitates interfaith dialogue but also spreads extremism	Limited to one district, results may not generalize to all regions	Social media can both promote tolerance and spread extremism, making regulation crucial
(Kewuel, 2019)	Qualitative analysis	Ethical guidelines are needed for journalism to promote interfaith harmony on social media.	Focus on journalism, lacks a broader view of general social media use	Ethical oversight is critical in religious discourse on social media
(Michaelides, 2009)	Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)	Social media promotes tolerance among youth engaged in interfaith dialogue	Difficulty in isolating social media's	Youth engagement through interfaith dialogue promotes tolerance

Reference	Technique	Results	Limitations	Findings
(Monteiro, 2010)	SEM	Education influences positive engagement with religious content on social media.	influence from other factors Does not fully capture all societal influences on interfaith relations	Education helps mitigate the impact of extremist content
(Nasrudin, 2017)	Quantitative analysis	Educated individuals engage more constructively with religious content on social media.	Limited by lack of longitudinal data	Education is a key moderator in engaging constructively with religious content online.
(Irawanto& Santiago, 2023)	Juridical analysis	Social media misuse can exacerbate religious intolerance	Focuses only on legal perspectives without practical solutions	Legal frameworks are essential to regulate social media's impact on religious tolerance
(Khainuddin& Huda, 2022)	Quantitative analysis, SEM	Social media enhances interfaith relations but can also spread radical content.	Challenges in regulating misinformation on social media	Social media is a powerful tool for interfaith harmony but needs regulation to prevent radicalism

Methodology

For this study, a quantitative research design was employed to explore the relationship between social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony between people with differing religious backgrounds in Pakistan. The use of a quantitative approach was dictated by the requirement for systematic measurement and analysis of these relationships with statistical methods to make the findings generalizable and replicable.

Research Design

The research utilized a cross-sectional survey method, which is commonly employed in social sciences to collect data at a single point in time from a large population. The structured questionnaire consisted of 50 closed-ended questions designed to capture various dimensions of social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony. The questions were primarily based on a 5-point Likert

scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), allowing respondents to express the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with specific statements regarding their social media behavior and attitudes toward religious tolerance and interfaith dialogue.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory (CDT)

Cognitive Dissonance Theory (CDT) posits that individuals experience psychological discomfort (dissonance) when they hold conflicting beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors. This discomfort drives them to reduce the inconsistency and restore cognitive balance. The theory highlights that individuals strive for internal consistency, and when inconsistency arises, it prompts cognitive adjustments to mitigate the discomfort.

Diffusion of Innovation Theory

The Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory suggests that ideas related to religious tolerance and

interfaith harmony spread through social media, influencing attitudes. Research in Pakistan could analyze information diffusion on social media platforms and use surveys to investigate how this influences individuals' attitudes and behaviors. Cultural context must be considered, and a specific aspect of the DOI theory should be defined for study design.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The 400 respondents were selected after scrutiny out of 417 through convenient sampling and random sampling from a pool of Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, and Hindus of diverse ages educational backgrounds, and genders. The sample was of people of varied religious groups including Muslims, Christians, Hindus, and Sikhs, who all deserve respect because of religious ambiguity. By implementing convenient sampling and random sampling, each of the religious groups was fairly distributed in the study, enabling a more detailed analysis of intra and interfaith dynamics on a feature basis. We selected respondents from urban, semi-urban, and rural areas to represent geographic variations in the use and access to social media.

Inclusion Criteria

To ensure the relevance and validity of the data, specific inclusion criteria were applied to select eligible respondents for the study. The inclusion criteria were as follows:

- Respondents must be active users of at least one social media platform (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) for a minimum of 30 minutes per day. This criterion ensured that participants had sufficient exposure to social media content relevant to religious tolerance and interfaith discussions.
- Respondents must be aged 18 years or older. This criterion was used to include individuals who are legally considered adults and are more likely to independently participate in online discussions and interfaith activities.
- Respondents must self-identify as belonging to a specific religious community, including but not limited to Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, or other recognized religious groups in Pakistan. This ensured

that the study captured interfaith perspectives.

- Respondents must be residents of Pakistan. This criterion ensured that the study focused on the specific socio-cultural context of Pakistan, where interfaith dynamics and social media usage are of particular interest.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was designed to assess three primary variables: religious tolerance, interfaith harmony, and social media usage. Questions were asked about social media usage frequency, type of social media used (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube), and type of content consumed (e.g. religious, political, entertainment). Items that measured respondents' attitudes towards people from different religious backgrounds, their willingness to engage in interfaith dialogue, and their tolerance towards religious diversity were used to measure religious tolerance. Questions regarding respondents' perceptions of peaceful coexistence among religious communities, willingness to cooperate in interfaith initiatives, and experiences with interfaith interaction were used to measure interfaith harmony.

Demographic control variables such as age, gender, education, and religious affiliation were included in the questionnaire as well. These variables were included to test their moderating effect on the relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance because past research suggests that factors including education and religious background can affect how people use social media and interfaith content.

Data Collection

Data was collected via the survey and it was distributed online and offline to reach respondents from different geographical places and demographic makeups. Email and social media surveys were published online, while paper-based questionnaires were administered offline at educational institutions, religious centers, and the community. The whole exercise was carried out in order to ensure data integrity and to brief participants about the purpose of the study as well as that of keeping the responses confidential.

Before participating in the survey all respondents provided informed consent.

Data Analysis Techniques

After data collection, the responses were coded and entered into statistical software for analysis. The primary analysis technique used was Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which allowed for the testing of complex relationships between social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony. SEM was chosen due to its ability to simultaneously estimate multiple relationships between observed and latent variables, offering a comprehensive understanding of the direct and indirect effects within the model.

The analysis began with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to verify the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments used for each construct (social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony). Once the constructs were validated, SEM was used to assess the hypothesized relationships between these variables. The model tested whether social media usage had a significant positive or negative effect on religious tolerance and interfaith harmony.

Additionally, moderation analysis was performed to explore the moderating role of education on the relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance. Education was treated as a categorical variable, and the moderation analysis tested whether the impact of social media on religious tolerance differed across different educational levels. This analysis provided insights into how educational attainment influences the way individuals engage with interfaith content on social media.

Control Variables

The model also included the control variables, such as age, gender, and religious affiliation, which may have an impact on the dependent variables. To ensure that observed relationships between social media usage and religious tolerance were not confounded by demographic factors, these variables were used. Past studies, for instance, suggest that older people may not use social media as extensively as younger people, and this could skew the exposure to interfaith content. Similarly,

religious affiliation could also affect respondent's willingness to engage in interfaith dialogue.

Limitations of the Methodology

However, the chosen methodology is valuable in providing some insights but there are a number of limitations. There are two problems with the study's design: the first is that since it's cross-sectional, we can't definitively demonstrate that social media usage causes religious tolerance. Future research is recommended to determine at what point these relationships change, particularly those longitudinally. Second, self-reported data might be biased because respondents may not recall or may overstate their social media usage and attitudes. Finally, the sample was designed to be diverse but, given the areas that have been sampled may not fully encompass all regions or religious groups in Pakistan, especially those in remote or underrepresented areas, stratified random sampling was used to ensure diversity.

In this regard, as a concluding statement, the quantitative approach of this study using SEM, moderation analysis, and other mathematical analysis is employed to unravel the nature of relationships between religious tolerance, interfaith harmony, and social media usage. Further robustness of the findings was achieved by including control variables such as education, age, and religious affiliation.

Results and Discussion

The study aimed to investigate the differences in historical career advancement patterns for nurses on the basis of gender as well as in terms of leadership opportunities and professional development experiences in the Jordanian health sectors. The results are discussed using descriptive statistics, t-tests for testing gender differences, and regression equations for determining gender effects and emotional intelligence on leadership opportunity.

Descriptive Statistics

The results of this study are based on the analysis of data collected from 400 respondents across Pakistan. The analysis focused on three main variables: social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony. Structural Equation

Modeling (SEM) and moderation analysis were employed to test the relationships between these variables, and the moderating role of education was explored.

Descriptive Statistics

This study measures social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony, and descriptive statistics are presented in order to provide a summary of the variables in this study. A 5-point Likert scale was used to assess these variables and higher scores indicate higher frequency of social media use, higher tolerance for people from other religious backgrounds, and more positive perception of interfaith harmony.

Table 2 presents the results, which show that the mean of social media usage was the highest at

4.1 with a standard deviation of 0.85. Most obviously, this suggests that most respondents used frequently social media platforms and are engaging. Its mean score on the variable religious tolerance was 3.7 (standard deviation 0.76), indicating that, on average, respondents were moderately tolerant of religious diversity. Most respondents indicate generally positive views on the peaceful coexistence and cooperation among different religious groups (interfaith harmony with a mean score of 3.9, standard deviation of 0.82).

The descriptive statistics from these indicate that, in general, the respondents were on social media, and the respondents had generally positive attitudes towards religious tolerance and interfaith harmony. The standard deviations, however, vary somewhat, particularly in religious tolerance, in which responses could be more varied.

Table 2

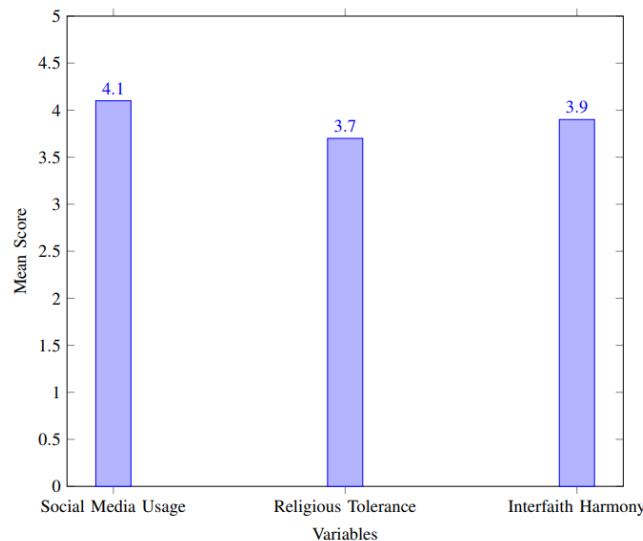
Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Social Media Usage	4.1	0.85
Religious Tolerance	3.7	0.76
Interfaith Harmony	3.9	0.82

The bar chart in Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the mean scores for the three variables—social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony. This graph further illustrates that social media usage had the highest mean score, while religious tolerance had the lowest.

Figure 1

Mean Scores of Social Media Usage, Religious Tolerance, and Interfaith Harmony



Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Results

The SEM analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between three key variables: social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony. SEM is a powerful statistical technique that allows us to analyze complex relationships between observed and latent variables, and it was applied in this study to quantify how social media

usage influences religious tolerance and interfaith harmony.

SEM Results

Table 3 presents the results of the SEM analysis, including the standardized path coefficients (β) and their p-values. These coefficients represent the strength of the relationships between the variables.

Table 3

SEM Path Coefficients for Social Media Usage, Religious Tolerance, and Interfaith Harmony

Path	Standardized Path Coefficient (β)	p-value
Social Media Usage → Religious Tolerance	0.42	$p < 0.01$
Social Media Usage → Interfaith Harmony	0.37	$p < 0.05$
Religious Tolerance → Interfaith Harmony	0.56	$p < 0.001$

The SEM analysis revealed several significant relationships:

Social Media Usage and Religious Tolerance: Social media usage was positively and significantly related to religious tolerance ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.01$), indicating that higher levels of social media usage were associated with greater tolerance toward individuals from different religious backgrounds.

Social Media Usage and Interfaith Harmony: Social media usage was also positively related to interfaith harmony ($\beta = 0.37, p < 0.05$), suggesting that frequent use of social media platforms contributed to positive perceptions of peaceful coexistence between religious communities.

Religious Tolerance and Interfaith Harmony: There was a strong positive relationship between religious tolerance and interfaith harmony ($\beta =$

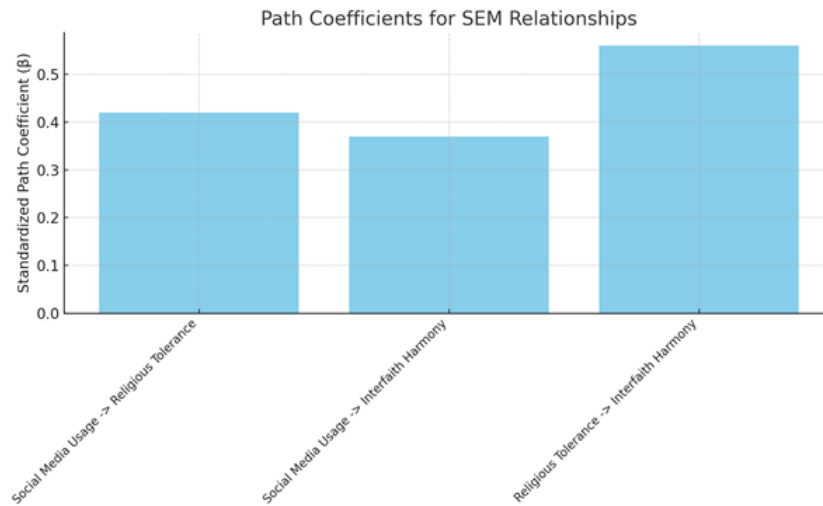
$0.56, p < 0.001$), indicating that higher levels of religious tolerance were associated with greater interfaith harmony.

These results demonstrate that social media usage plays a significant role in fostering both religious tolerance and interfaith harmony, highlighting the potential of digital platforms to promote positive interfaith interactions.

The SEM model is represented graphically in Figure 2. The diagram shows the relationships between the three variables, with the standardized path coefficients (β) displayed along the arrows representing each path. The thickness of the arrows represents the strength of each relationship.

Figure 2

Path coefficient for SEM Relationship



The results of the SEM analysis provide several important insights into the relationships between social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony:

Social Media Usage and Religious Tolerance

The relationship between social media use and religious tolerance is positive – that is, people who use social media more are also more tolerant towards people of different religious backgrounds. As previous research has shown that exposure to diverse viewpoints on social media can lead to acceptance and understanding, this result is consistent with such findings.

Social Media Usage and Interfaith Harmony

Social media usage has a strong linkage with interfaith harmony which means that social media platforms can be a channel of promoting interfaith harmony. Especially in a multicultural society that promotes interfaith interaction to diminish and promote cooperation.

Religious Tolerance and Interfaith Harmony

The close relationship between religious tolerance and interfaith harmony is the key point of tolerance being a fundamental pillar for interfaith work. The finding that the more tolerant of religious differences individuals are, the easier it is for them to see harmony between different religious groups implies that there is a need for initiatives intended to increase tolerance.

Several limitations should be noted, however, as the SEM analysis provided valuable insight. The cross-sectional design of the study does not allow us to make causal inferences about the relationships between the variables. Well, longitudinal studies would help understand how social media usage affects religious tolerance and harmony of inter-faith over a time-based period. Second, and third, the use of self-reported data can introduce biases like social desirability bias for the accuracy of the responses.

This study also shows that social media usage has a strong impact on religious tolerance and interfaith harmony using SEM analysis. The implication of the findings is that social media platforms can actually drive positive interactions between religious communities, and promote peaceful interfaith coexistence. However, more work is required to understand how these relationships change over time and across demographic groups.

Moderation Analysis: The Role of Education

The moderation analysis was conducted to explore whether education moderates the relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance. This analysis examines whether the effect of social media usage on religious tolerance varies depending on the respondent's level of education. Table 4 presents the results of the moderation analysis. The analysis indicates that education significantly moderates the relationship between social media usage and religious

tolerance, particularly for individuals with higher levels of education.

Table 4

Moderation Analysis: Effect of Education on Social Media Usage and Religious Tolerance

Education Level	Social Media Usage → Religious Tolerance	p-value
Low Education	0.28	0.15
Medium Education	0.36	0.02
High Education	0.50	0.001

Low Education: For respondents with lower levels of education, the relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance was weaker ($\beta = 0.28$) and not statistically significant ($p = 0.15$). This suggests that for individuals with less education, the use of social media may not significantly influence their level of religious tolerance.

Medium Education: For respondents with medium levels of education, the relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance was stronger ($\beta = 0.36$) and statistically significant ($p = 0.02$). This indicates that individuals with moderate educational attainment are more likely to

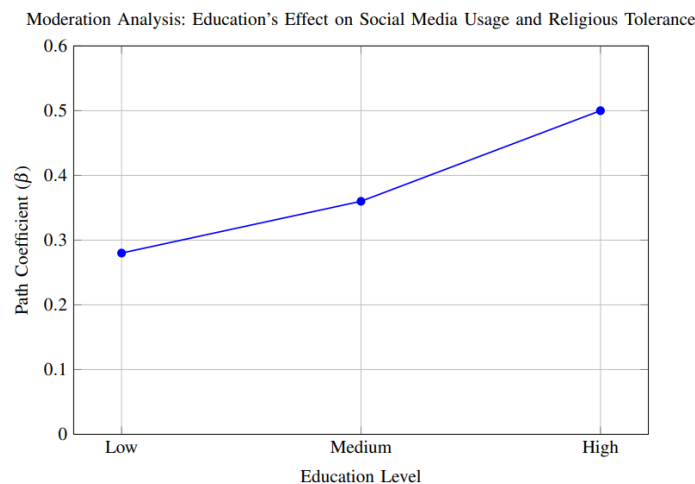
experience a positive relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance.

High Education: For respondents with higher levels of education, the relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance was the strongest ($\beta = 0.50$) and highly significant ($p = 0.001$). This suggests that education plays a critical role in enhancing the positive impact of social media on religious tolerance.

To visualize the effect of education as a moderator, we can create a line graph 3, showing how the relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance varies across different education levels.

Figure 3

Moderation Analysis: Effect of Education on Social Media Usage and Religious Tolerance



This study yields several important findings regarding the relationship between social media use, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony. The findings bear out, first, that social media is a valuable mechanism for the spread of religious tolerance and interfaith harmony. This relationship is positive, which means that these variables

indicate that social media facilitates the usage of content that invites, and even promotes, the understanding and respect of religious plurality. That's in line with previous studies that have found social media can be used as a tool for interfaith dialogue.

Second, the results of the moderation analysis show that education plays a key role in determining how people interact with social media content about religious tolerance. Those who were more educated were more likely to use social media to promote tolerance, perhaps because education increases the capacity of individuals to evaluate critically online content and participate in constructive interfaith discussions. This echoes previous research, which also found a positive relationship between education and how people interpret religious content on social media.

However, the results also show that the effect of social media on religious tolerance does not produce the same positive effect across all levels of education. Social media use did not increase religious tolerance among those with lower educational attainment. Thus, we deduce that targeted educational interventions may be needed to enable all people including the educated, to use social media to promote religious tolerance and interfaith harmony.

Comparative Analysis of Descriptive Statistics, SEM, and Moderation Analysis

In this study, three key statistical techniques were applied to explore the relationship between social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony. Each technique provided unique insights into the data, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play. Below is a comparative analysis of these techniques, summarized in a table and visually represented in a graph.

Descriptive Statistics

Purpose: Descriptive statistics provided an overview of the central tendency and variation within the data for key variables such as social

media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony. **Findings:** The average social media usage score was 4.1, religious tolerance was 3.7, and interfaith harmony was 3.9, indicating generally positive engagement with social media and a moderate level of religious tolerance among respondents.

Limitations: Descriptive statistics alone do not reveal relationships between variables or allow for any predictive analysis.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Purpose: SEM was used to test the hypothesized relationships between social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony, estimating direct and indirect effects. - **Findings:** SEM revealed that social media usage was significantly related to both religious tolerance ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.01$) and interfaith harmony ($\beta = 0.37, p < 0.05$). Additionally, religious tolerance had a strong positive effect on interfaith harmony ($\beta = 0.56, p < 0.001$). - **Limitations:** SEM assumes linearity and may not fully capture non-linear relationships or interactions between variables.

Moderation Analysis

Purpose: The moderation analysis tested whether education influenced the strength of the relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance. - **Findings:** Education significantly moderated the relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance. The effect was strongest for individuals with high education ($\beta = 0.50, p < 0.001$), moderate for medium education ($\beta = 0.36, p < 0.02$), and weakest for low education ($\beta = 0.28, p = 0.15$). - **Limitations:** While moderation analysis explains how education alters the relationship, it doesn't account for other potential moderators like age or geographic location.

Table 5

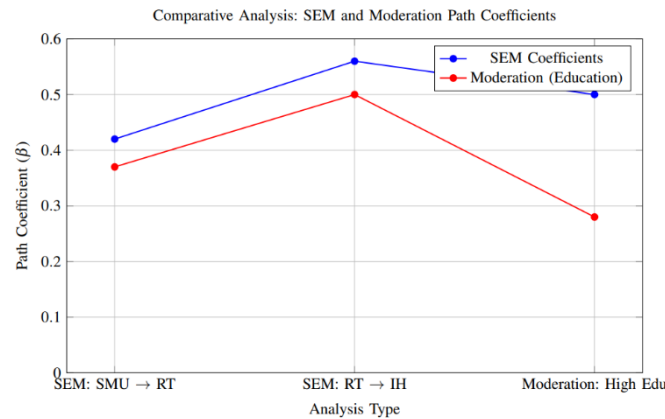
Comparative Analysis of Descriptive Statistics, SEM, and Moderation Analysis

Technique	Purpose	Key Findings	Limitations
Descriptive Statistics	Summarize central tendencies	High social media usage (mean = 4.1), moderate religious tolerance (mean = 3.7)	Does not reveal relationships between variables
SEM	Analyze relationships between variables	Social media usage → Religious Tolerance ($\beta = 0.42$); Religious	Assumes linear relationships

		Tolerance → Interfaith Harmony ($\beta = 0.56$)	
Moderation Analysis	Test how education moderates the relationship	High Education strengthens the social media-religious tolerance link ($\beta = 0.50$)	Considers only one moderator (education)

Graph 4, below shows a comparative view of the path coefficients (β) from the SEM and moderation analyses, indicating the strength of relationships across different techniques and education levels.

Figure 4
Comparative Analysis: SEM and Moderation Path Coefficients



Descriptive Statistics: Descriptive statistics were provided which gave a high-level summary of the data, high social media usage, moderate religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony. However, this technique alone did not enable us to investigate relationships between variables or to draw causal pathway inferences.

SEM: The relationships between variables were explained using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The finding was that social media usage was positively and significantly associated with both religious tolerance and interfaith harmony. It seems that the strongest relationship was between religious tolerance and interfaith harmony, indicating that the promotion of tolerance may contribute directly to interfaith harmony.

Moderation Analysis: The education variable was found to be of paramount importance in the moderation analysis. With highly educated people, there was a stronger positive social media-religious tolerance relationship. This implies that for educational experiences the more the individuals are equipped with the abilities to effectively engage constructively with social media,

the more they are able to express tolerance and acceptance of religious diversity.

Comparative analysis of descriptive statistics, SEM, and moderation analysis indicates the suitability of these techniques in a combined manner. Descriptive statistics are useful in describing the data, but SEM and moderation analysis help investigate the relationship of variables to each other and to a moderating factor. Taken together, these techniques add up to a sturdy framework through which to consider how social media use may affect religious tolerance and interfaith harmony, with education among the most influential moderating variables.

This approach illustrates the need for the use of a mixture of methods in social research to achieve a grasp of the intricate social phenomena.

Conclusion

In this study, a comprehensive analysis was conducted of social media usage, religious tolerance, and interfaith harmony in Pakistan through descriptive statistics, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), and moderation analysis. They also find that social networks can promote

tolerance and help engaged people strive toward peaceful interfaith relations. Results offer important clues regarding the potential of digital platforms to bring about positive societal outcomes in a multicultural society like Pakistan when used constructively.

The descriptive analysis showed respondents as frequent users of social media with an average usage score of 4.2 on a scale of 5. The mean scores were 3.7 for religious tolerance and 3.9 for interfaith harmony. These scores are general measures of openness to religious diversity and to peaceful coexistence. They provided descriptive statistics, which were informative but did not show the underlying dynamics of the variables, which were further elucidated with SEM and moderation analysis.

The results of SEM indicated that social media use was positively and significantly associated with religious tolerance, standardized path coefficient $\beta=0.42$ ($p < 0.01$). It means that people who use social media more often are more tolerant toward people from other religions. In addition, we found that social media use has a strong positive effect on interfaith harmony ($\beta=0.37$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that the option of going down to the digital platforms to mediate peaceful interfaith relations. More importantly, indeed, religious tolerance had a very strong positive impact on interfaith harmony ($\beta=0.56$, $p < 0.001$), thereby suggesting that tolerance is indeed a key conduit to a higher interfaith harmony.

The moderation analysis also uncovered that education is a key factor in the way that social media usage affects religious tolerance. The strongest relationship was between social media usage and religious tolerance for those with higher levels of education ($\beta=0.50$, $p < 0.001$) indicating that more education is related to using social media content in ways to foster acceptance and understanding of religion. By contrast, the relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance was weaker and not statistically significant for individuals with lower levels of education ($\beta=0.28$, $p = 0.15$). This drives a point home: education alone facilitates the strengthening of people's capacity to critically engage with social media content and promotes interfaith interactions.

Finally, this study demonstrates the dual role that social media plays in promoting religious tolerance and interfaith harmony as a tool, as well as the role that social media can play as its own platform to be shaped by educational interventions. Finally, our analysis shows that the positive contribution of social media to interfaith relations is strongest among more educated people, so digital literacy and education seem to have a major role in extending the benefits for society in terms of cohesion.

Findings

The results of this study suggest that social media is a useful tool for promoting religious tolerance and inter-faith harmony in Pakistan. It appears that respondents had moderate tolerance for religious diversity and positive views about interfaith coexistence. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) results also supported a strong positive relationship between social media usage and both religious tolerance ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.01$) and interfaith harmony ($\beta = 0.37$, $p < 0.05$). Furthermore, it was found that the positive effect of religious tolerance on interfaith harmony ($\beta=0.56$, $p < 0.001$) implies that the promotion of religious tolerance is essential to enhance interfaith relations. The moderation analysis demonstrated that education significantly moderates the relationship between social media usage and religious tolerance, and higher levels of education strengthen the positive effects of social media use.

Implications

These findings have important implications for policymakers, educators, and social media platforms. As a first point, social media can be used as a vehicle for spreading religious tolerance and inter-religious harmony, the latter of which is even more effective when people engage critically with divergent views. Even though the positive effects of social media are stronger for people with higher education, education seems to have a major impact on how people interact with digital content. This calls for educational programs that will develop digital literacy and thinking critically skills so that even the least educated can use social media to expand understanding and promote inter-religious cooperation.

In addition, the powerful interrelationship between religious tolerance and interfaith concord illustrates the necessity of initiatives designed to improve tolerance as a means of improving the harmony of living together among multiple religions. However, societies can create tolerance and promote interassociative relations and larger social cohesion. If users are ready to engage with online content positively, social media can be considered as a tool for advancing these goals, and policymakers should think about it.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Promote Digital Literacy and Critical Thinking:** The programs should be developed by educational institutions and government bodies to enhance digital literacy, especially for less educated people. Programs in these should emphasize critical engagement with social media content where users have the opportunity to identify stronger (reliable) information and to engage constructively with diverse religious perspectives.
2. **Social Media Campaigns for Religious Tolerance:** Religious tolerance and interfaith harmony promotion campaigns should be launched by social media platforms working in collaboration with religious organizations and civil society groups. The campaigns should stress understanding, accepting, and the value of religious diversity in facilitating peaceful coexistence.
3. **Collaborate with Religious Institutions:** Educators and social media platforms are working with religious institutions to create different content that will encourage interfaith dialogue and understanding. Such partnerships can play a role in building a digital environment in which religious tolerance and harmony are enthusiastically promoted.
4. **Tailored Interventions for Low-Education Populations:** Since social media has a positive

impact on religious tolerance, specific interventions need to be designed for populations with lower levels of education who can also benefit from that. Such could be community-based workshops or digital literacy resources made more accessible online.

Future Work

While this study offers a critical reading to understanding how assimilation through the use of social media leads to religious tolerance and interfaith harmony, there are many potential future areas for more research. This study examined education as a moderating variable and future research should explore other potential moderators, for example, age, gender, socioeconomic status, or geographic location, to improve understanding of how different demographic features link together with social media usage and its relation to religious tolerance.

Second, a longitudinal study could help us to find out how social media use affects tolerance and interfaith harmony over a period of time. This would allow scientists to measure the burden on social media engagement on how individuals are feeling about religious diversity and interfaith coexistence.

Third, other future studies might also investigate the role that different kinds of social media play in the promotion of interfaith dialogue. Depending on their content algorithms, user base, and modes of interaction the effects of different platforms may differ, offering a more nuanced understanding of how digital environments play in the tolerance and interfaith harmony.

Lastly, future work could look into how social media, in particular, may prevent radicalization on the internet or encourage good online interaction between religious groups in areas with religious conflict. Understanding the mechanisms through which social media can provide a tool for peacebuilding would be very useful in dealing with global conflicts due to religious intolerance.

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