

# The Interplay of Religion and Social Dynamics: Effects on Individuals, Gender, Society, and Political Structures

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## Abstract

*Social development is a process that includes a dedication to volunteerism and personal well-being as well as giving citizens the power to identify their own needs and impact decisions that affect them. This qualitative study examines how Pakistanis' religious practices affect the socioeconomic development of their nation. The social conditions in Pakistan, the impact of religion, the deterioration of social institutions, religious exploitation, religio-political conduct, the religious practices of the ruling class, religious divisions, and religious militancy are explored in this context. Examined are the dogmatic, conservative, and irrational characteristics of religious attitudes and behaviors. Additionally, covered are the aspects of religious behavior that promote and aid in the process of social development. "Religion and the individual," "religion and society," "religion and gender," "religion and politics," and "intolerance and militancy" make up the paper's subtopic structure.*

**Keywords:** Pakistan, religious behaviors, social development, militancy, sectarianism

## Introduction

Religion is one of the most significant features of Pakistani society. People in Pakistani society are taught about religion from the moment they are born. Children hear parents and other family members recite passages from the Quran while they sit on their moms' laps. Islamic Studies is required in schools starting at the entry-level and continuing through graduation. Religious teachers who visit children at home or through programs offered in mosques and madrassahs teach most children how to read and recite the Quran. Most mosques in the country have speakers. Broadcasts are typically used to announce the call to prayer (*a'zan*). However, until the early 2010s, loudspeakers were also used to deliver sermons on Fridays and other religious occasions. Speakers were frequently employed by clerics and students at madrassahs housed in mosques to recite verses from the Quran, to sing hymns honoring God and the Prophet Muhammad, or to deliver speeches meant to remind people of their religious obligations and prohibitions.

Consequently, it is common for people to teach others in casual social situations how to practice their religion and follow the guidelines established by God, His Prophet, and religious leaders. Election-related voting behavior is also influenced by religious factors. In light of this, one can only speculate as to the degree to which religion shapes people's lives and behaviors in Pakistan. The majority of people misunderstand "secular" to mean "atheist." Seldom do people dare to identify as secular in public. In order to evade radical attacks and the fury of society, seculars also pose as religious.

In this paper, analysis is done on how religion affects people's lives, changes behavior and affects politics, how the ruling class uses religion, how social institutions deteriorate, and how religion is exploited for profit, sectarianism, and religious militancy. Aspects of religious behavior that are dogmatic, conservative, and irrational are also covered. Examined are also the aspects of religious conduct that uphold and facilitate social growth.

## Theoretical Framework

Religion and development intersect in four distinct domains. First, they shape the character formation of individuals engaged in development initiatives. Second, religion serves as a counterforce, challenging prevailing conceptions of development. Third, it acts as a constructive driver, contributing to a robust and meaningful understanding and process of development. Finally, religion functions as a transnational institutional actor, exerting influence on developmental agendas (Wilber & Jameson, 1980, p. 477). Social development includes a dedication to volunteerism and personal well-being as well as giving

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citizens the power to identify their own needs and have an impact on decisions that affect them. When creating social policies and economic projects, social development takes public concerns into account (“Social Development and Social Change,” n.d.).

Social development encompasses the processes that enhance human well-being and advance the attainment of desirable social objectives. It seeks to assist individuals through the pursuit of three primary goals. First, it focuses on establishing inclusive institutions that enable active participation and equitable access to opportunities for all. Second, it strives to foster cohesive societies where diverse population groups collaborate to address shared challenges. Third, social development emphasizes the accountability of institutions, ensuring they operate efficiently and effectively in serving the public interest (Viden et al., 2014). Moreover, social development necessitates the promotion of social justice for marginalized and disadvantaged groups, including backward classes, women, children, and the elderly (Matin, 2011, p. 158).

Social development refers to the process through which individuals cultivate the competencies necessary to conduct themselves in alignment with societal expectations (Saracho & Spodek, 2007, p. ix). This process enables individuals to acquire the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions that render them acceptable members of their communities. It fosters group loyalty, mutual dependence, cooperation, and social cohesion. Social development also equips individuals to conform to social norms, traditions, and mores, thereby facilitating their adjustment to the social environment (Rather, 2010, p. 110). Furthermore, it emphasizes prioritizing people in the pursuit of sustainable growth and an enhanced quality of life. By addressing the intricate relationships between societies and communities, social development demands collective efforts from all stakeholders, ensuring that each contributes according to their interests and capacities (*Social Entrepreneurship: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications*, 2019, p. 984). The welfare of the populace and the ensuing establishment or modification of institutions to foster the ability to meet human needs on all fronts as well as to enhance the caliber of interpersonal connections and the interactions between individuals and societal institutions constitute the aim of social development. All levels of social processes are included in the term “social development.” It also implies how individuals, organizations, and their surroundings are developing. Four key themes related to social development are: institutional renewal, socioeconomic integration, institutional development, and structural change (Paiva, 1977).

Theorists contend that a network of social structures, procedures, and norms that support one another is the only way that development can continue. Political will, an ideology that views man as a human being, and cooperation are necessary for social growth to occur. For social growth to proceed, adjustments must be made to the current institutions (Paiva, 1977). Interactions between members of the same species in which one or more of the participants get an advantage are referred to as social behavior (Caldwell & Albers, 2024, p. 110). Acts that cause others to suffer bodily or psychological pain, material loss, or damage are considered antisocial behavior. It is conduct meant to diminish the quality of life for other people (Veenstra, 2006, p. 93).

Challenges in social development and deficiencies in social cognition have the potential to affect interpersonal behavior and hinder the process of identity formation (Wright et al., 2023). Social development cannot occur in the absence of individuals who possess a defined sense of faith, clear aspirations, and an understanding of their roles and rights within society (Khabibullayevna, 2021). Religious beliefs and practices have an impact on societal development. Theorists in the field of development studies and research largely agree on the significance of religious behaviors and attitudes. Development models that draw on the social development experiences of Europe and Japan also consider religious attitudes and behaviors as a factor in development and change. In any civilization, religious practices and social advancement are intertwined and cannot be fully comprehended apart. The social cosmos, according to Calhoun (1925), is an actual universe rather than a collection of discrete divisions.

In their pursuit of identity development, young individuals often look beyond themselves to find a sense of belonging and connection to something larger than their individual existence. Simultaneously, they seek validation of their distinctiveness and intrinsic personal worth. Faith communities, while serving as

potentially valuable resources in the process of identity formation, can also act as impediments (King, 2019, p. 202).

### Religion and Social Dynamics

Pakistan has a large population of about 240 million people living in its vast and diverse area (796,095 sq km). There are significant differences in religious practices between different geographical areas and among adherents of different philosophical traditions. Since Islam sets rules for social, political, and economic elements of life as well as social behavior, understanding the relationship between religious behavior and social growth necessitates a study of the personal, social, political, and economic aspects of behavior in a Muslim community.

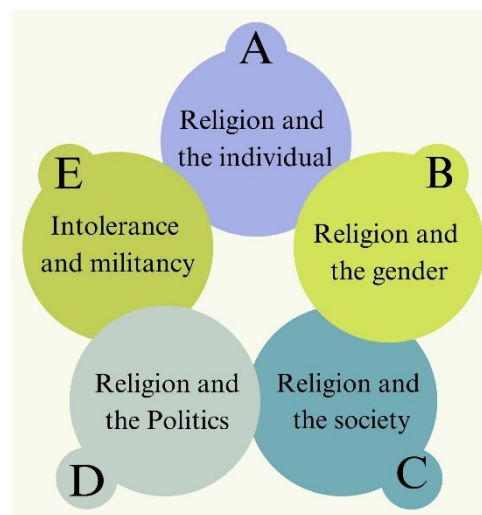
There are various positive features of religious behavior in Pakistani society that contribute to societal development and stability. Without a doubt, religious institutions and charities' social welfare initiatives and programs greatly aid in the process of societal development. These types of programs mostly work in the fields of education, health, and post-natural catastrophe humanitarian support. Children from low-income families receive free basic education, room, and board. Several religiously oriented organizations organize free medical camps and operate free hospitals and dispensaries. Religious organizations are always at the forefront of relief efforts following natural disasters like floods and earthquakes. On certain occasions, a lot of people volunteer due to their religious beliefs. The impact of religion on the person, society, politics, and gender is discussed in the pages that follow. Additionally, the topic of religious militancy is covered.

### Religion and the Individual

An individual's outlook, worldview, and behavior are primarily shaped and reshaped by their religious beliefs and attitudes. The following paragraphs address this issue, emphasizing false religious conceptions, a feeble religious spirit, a dislike of financial progress, room for complacency, and a willingness to shirk familial responsibilities.

*Imbalanced conceptions.* The majority of individuals who identify as religious often highlight and debate over overt actions including praying, fasting, adhering to a dress code, growing a beard, performing the Hajj (the journey to Makkah), and abstaining from alcohol. They, in general, do not think values like decency towards others, the sanctity of human life, and service to humanity are so essential. Many people think that adhering to the Western dress code detracts from religion.

**Figure 1. Religion and Social Dynamics**



*Weak Religious Spirit.* The aforementioned aspects of Pakistani society do not imply that religion serves as a complete guidance for everyone in every aspect of life. If the matter in question does not directly impact their personal interests, then most individuals will act in a religious manner. Religion is put on hold

if anything is thought to be depriving them of something. The majority of people disobey religious precepts yet nevertheless wish to be seen as acting morally upright. There are very few exceptions to this kind of generalized duality in society.

*Distaste for Material Advancement.* Many people view those who put in a lot of effort to better their financial circumstances but are unable to dedicate adequate time for religious ceremonies as irreligious or materialistic. They are frequently charged with neglecting God and devoting insufficient time and effort to carrying out their religious duties.

*Space for Complacency.* Max Weber concluded that the emotional and non-rational aspects of the Moravian religion tended to hinder the development of a rational attitude toward economic action in regard to adherents of the Protestant denomination, who originated in Bohemia (present-day Czech Republic) (cited in Gollin 1967, 91). That is also, for the most part, the case in Pakistan, where the issue lies not with religion as such, but rather in how its adherents understand and interpret its precepts. Like many other societies, Pakistani society views religion irrationally. People frequently believe that the great divine design is what led to their situation. Most Pakistanis, many of whom come from low-income backgrounds, believe that life on earth is only temporary and that life after death is permanent and ideal in every way. They do not make the best use of their mental, physical, and temporal resources when they have this mindset. Additionally, it breeds complacency and inaction, which prevents these people from improving academically, socially, or economically. As a result, it prevents them from participating in the social development process. It prevents individuals from being able to make a significant contribution to the advancement of their family and community. Many religious leaders and adherents have a tendency to think dogmatically, which eventually affects how they behave. Such actions seldom allow for societal change and typically stifle it.

## **Religion and the Society**

Since society is made up of individuals, religion has an indirect impact on it. Put another way, religion affects society via its members. The majority of Pakistani Muslims are resistant to change, which keeps things as they are in social institutions. In addition, a few of the religious establishments are in decline. Family planning is not favoured by most Pakistanis. Religious exploitation is a common occurrence.

*Opposition to change.* In Pakistan, the vast majority of people adhere to the religious authorities' understanding of the faith and acknowledge their righteousness. The truth is that most religious leaders impede the occurrence of transformation in specific social institutions. One example is the institution of violence committed in the name of "honour" against both men and women. Generally speaking, women are viewed as the honour of their male family members, such as their father, brother, spouse, and son, rather than as independent beings. Male family members frequently kill female relatives if they believe that the woman's behavior or very existence has betrayed their "honour" and that killing the lady will restore their "honour." Women are often married against their will to men selected by their male relatives. Most religious leaders who preach in mosques or other places of worship condone crimes done in the name of "honour." This has significant ramifications for women's rights and empowerment as well as for societal development.

*Social institution status quo.* In order to transform the social structure and promote social growth, three options have been proposed: creating new institutions, altering or restructuring current ones, or doing away with detrimental institutions (Paiva, 1977). Any social development merely indicates that a process of change is occurring inside the society and its institutions. With rare exceptions, Pakistani religious behavior is typically anti-change. In general, the religious forces support the status quo. It is difficult to envision Pakistani religious establishments accepting reform. Instead, they stand for opposition to change.

*Decline in particular religious' institutions.* Over time, certain religious institutions have gotten worse. One example is the curriculum known as Dars-e-Nizami, which is utilised in many madrassahs in South Asia. When it was first introduced, some three centuries ago, it was far more extensive and innovative than other curricula. It included religious topics as well as the most cutting-edge fields of the social and natural sciences. These days, Dars-e-Nizami does not contain any contemporary subjects of study or branches of knowledge. Another illustration of decline is the institution of *tasawwuf*, or mysticism. The majority of

people who identify as Sufis (mystics) or who are viewed as such by the community hardly ever engage in *tasawwuf*. Sufis were known for their excellent moral character and were formerly seen as the champions of tolerance, peace, love, and respect for humankind. For the most part, such is no longer the case with today's most Sufis, whose actions only exhibit their ignorance and frailty. Over the past few decades, society has regressed and grown more inflexible and conservative (Mirza, 2010).

*Distaste for using family planning.* In seven villages in Canada, Peru, Thailand, Burma, India, Japan, and the semi-autonomous Native American Navaho Reservation, Leighton and Smith compared social and cultural transformation. They discovered that family sizes were smaller everywhere they looked, and they connected this to shifting beliefs and values, particularly the secularization movement (Leighton & Smith, 1955). Very few cases in Pakistan have seen a decrease in family size despite some efforts by the government, which has received assistance from foreign organizations. The bulk of families in the country remain large. That suggests that societal norms and ideas have not changed at the required rate. The main cause of this situation is religious behavior because birth control and family planning are still viewed by many as un-Islamic and disgusting. Some contend that God has made it His mission to provide for and protect all living things. As a result, Pakistan's population is growing rapidly, but the country's infrastructure is not keeping up with the demands placed on it by such a large population.

*Exploitation in the name of faith.* Another obstacle to the advancement of society is the exploitation of people in the guise of religion. With very few exceptions, myths manufactured by themselves and, occasionally, by their followers are the lifeblood of many modern-day *pirs*, or so-called spiritual leaders. Individuals show *pirs* respect and loyalty, give them money, and follow their instructions. Many of these *pirs* deceive their followers about their commitments in terms of religion, personal life, work, and society in addition to taking advantage of them. They may seize total control of the lives and households of their adherents, who see it as divine favour. There are plenty of other ways to exploit people in the name of religion besides this one. The exploited fall for the pretense that their abusers are acting in the service of religion.

## Religion and Politics

In Pakistan, religion has a big impact on politics just like it does on other aspects of life. A lot of people think democracy is not Islamic. Many believers oppose and criticize the phenomenon of globalization. Numerous academics in the field of religion defend feudalism.

*Democracy is considered un-Islamic.* According to theory, human development and human rights are more successful in places where democracy is strong than in autocratic regimes, where policies tend to suppress diversity and fail to acknowledge cultural identities (W. Kegley, Jr. 2008, 227). Most religious parties have been supporting unelected governments in Pakistan. In the 1970s, the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) leadership mobilized the populace against Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's elected government in the name of Islam (Hassan, 1985). This effort played a major role in Bhutto's ouster from office and the subsequent 11 years of rule by General Zia ul Haq, which severely damaged the nation's nascent democracy.

*Politics based on religion.* Almost throughout Pakistan's history, a few religious-political parties have been involved in agitational politics. They assert that their agitation-dominated politics is intended to further Pakistani and Islamic interests. However, this kind of behavior serves neither party well since it takes people's focus and energy away from the concerns and problems that affect societal development. Sectarian tendencies within society were heightened by Zia ul Haq's Islamization effort, which was supported by religious groups (Hassan, 1985). The Punjab government employed print media to spread extreme religious beliefs in the early 1950s.

*Globalization is seen negatively.* Many of the religious communities frequently perceive the spread of global culture and globalization as a danger to their faith. In the case of Pakistan, this is especially true. Most religious leaders and preachers criticize globalization for creating a monoculture. Society is subjected to conflicting pressures from both the forces of globalization and religious extremists. Even if globalization has a number of negative effects, it has also produced positive results in a number of areas, including healthcare, education, free media, human rights, and personal freedoms, as well as more awareness and

personal empowerment for individuals. Religious elites generally are unwilling to accept any advantages of globalization.

*Deep-rooted religious divides.* A Pakistani citizen's social identity is primarily determined by their (a) religion, (b) province, and (c) caste or tribe. Similar to the other pillars of social identity, religious identity is further subdivided into countless groups, primarily according to sects. However, compared to identities based on caste and province, differences based on perceived religious identities are larger. Intolerance towards other religious groups appears to have done the most harm to the social fabric and the process of social development, although differences based on caste and province have fostered enmity and resentment among Pakistanis.

Religion-based sociopolitical divides have widened over time. Once more obstructing the path to social cohesion and development, a significant portion of prayer leaders and *khateeb*s—religious leaders who deliver sermons or *khutba* ahead of Friday prayers and on other religious occasions like Eid—contribute to widening rather than narrowing the already-existing divides through their sermons. The vast majority of religious organizations, groups, and the clergy who belong to them incite enmity towards one another. Many of them promote violence and label members of rival sects as “heretics” or “infidels.” Such animosity towards other sects and religions is disseminated by a plethora of religious periodicals and publications in addition to sermons and speeches. Religious organizations and parties also threaten and attack mainstream media, sometimes for publishing specific news stories and other times for failing to provide enough coverage of the opinions and actions of religious organizations (Azam, 2008).

*Allowing feudalism to continue.* Pakistan was unable to eradicate feudalism partly due to the declaration of land reforms by many religious scholars as being un-Islamic. The biggest barrier preventing the nation's socioeconomic growth is still feudalism. Feudal lords profit greatly from their tenants' illiteracy and simplicity. They oppose human growth on the enormous swaths of land they hold and govern by using their influence and power. As a result, the majority of feudal lords represent opposition to progress. When the government intended to implement land reforms to guarantee a fair distribution of land, many religious scholars stepped in to save the feudal lords.

## Religion and Gender

The way that men, women, and transgender people are treated differs significantly depending on religious beliefs and practices. Men dominate nearly every aspect of life in Pakistani society.

*Aversion to women's education.* Many Pakistani Muslims think that teaching girls could lead them astray. When their daughters hit puberty, usually at the middle or matriculation level, several parents either forbid them from attending school altogether or end their education early. Though these days, letters have been supplanted by the phone and the internet, some of them contend that if a lady learns to read and write, she may have romantic affairs with males that, in their view, are not in line with Islam. In several regions of the country, it is customary to prohibit women from participating in organized voting, sometimes as a result of an understanding amongst all of the candidates running for office.

*Dislike for women in the workforce.* Many people believe that a woman who works outside the home to support her family is dishonoring her family. A man is referred to be *beghairat*, or one who lacks honour, if his wife or sister works and he is unemployed and subsists on the earnings of female family members. To maintain family honour, most men will not put up with their female family members working to support themselves. Consequently, a great deal of women is prevented from advancing politically, financially, or socially. Because over half of the population is unable to work outside the home, these constraints both deny individuals the opportunity to reach their full potential and impede the advancement of social development.

*Transgenders.* The worst predicament is that of transgender people. Their parents, who typically despise and reject them, subject them to the worst kind of discrimination. So much so that they are denied the right to stay at home and continue to be family members. Transgender people are compelled to live in groups as an underworld apart from the neighborhoods inhabited by men and women. In general, it is not accepted for

them to be present at places of employment or education. The religious scholars generally do not speak out against serious abuses of their rights.

### **Intolerance and Militancy**

Pakistani society has been a breeding ground for radicalism stemming from religious influences over decades. Heretics are not accepted at all, whereas unbelievers are frequently not tolerated. Radicalism is replacing Sufism in society, and religious militancy has grown to be a major problem.

*Intolerance for unbelievers and heretics.* In Pakistan, the majority of people first view man as a religious being. One effect of it is that these kinds of groups think murdering “heretics” and “infidels” is legitimate. Such conduct obstructs the advancement of society. Any philosophy in Pakistan, according to Islamists, has to be a religious ideology. Generally speaking, rational and creative thinking is not accepted. This presents the challenge of advancing socioeconomic development without sacrificing the society’s Islamic identity.

*Shift from Sufism to radicalism.* Pakistan’s religious landscape has undergone a noticeable change in the last several years. Religious violence has been ingrained in the culture. Islam in Pakistani society is changing from a spiritual to a violent form, spread by individuals and organizations that follow extremist religious doctrines. Intolerant religious behavior is increasing while religious tolerance is declining. With a few notable exceptions, different interpretations of Islam are becoming increasingly dogmatic, which also makes religious behavior more extreme and uncompromising. In 2009, in the Punjab province’s Gojra town, more than fifty Christian-owned homes were set on fire, resulting in the deaths of seven Christians and the injuries of another eighteen. This incident demonstrated one aspect of extremist behavior. In a packed Lahore market in February 2024, police rescued a teenage girl who was being attacked by a frenzied mob on suspicion of blasphemy while she was wearing a dress with Arabic calligraphy written on it (Chaudhry, 2024). A Christian guy was hurt by a lynch mob in Sargodha city in May 2024, and police intervened to save him. A week later, he passed away from his wounds (Gabol, 2024).

*Militancy.* The most significant challenge in terms of social development is the radicalism and religious extremism that are consuming Pakistani society in the name of religion. Particularly significant harm has been done to the social process by violence in places affected by militancy. There have been bombings on mosques, shrines, schools, colleges, universities, and even hospitals. There have been millions of internal displacements. Regarding militancy, religious groups in Pakistan can be divided into four categories: (a) militants, (b) militant sympathizers, (c) militant critics, and (d) neutrals.

The opposites of violence, sectarianism, and militancy are the ideals of tolerance, peace, love, and respect for humanity. Sufis and poets are well-known for promoting such ideals. In Pakistan, prominent Sufis’ mausoleums have been targeted by militants. In May 2005, a bombing at the shrine of the well-known mystic Bari Imam resulted in at least 20 fatalities and 150 injuries. In March 2009, there was an explosion in Peshawar at the shrine of Pashto Sufi poet Rehman Baba. One of the oldest Muslim Sufi shrines in South Asia, Data Darbar, was the scene of a suicide attack that claimed the lives of at least nine individuals in 2019 (BBC, 2019). Earlier, in July 2010, suicide bombers also hit the site, leaving 175 people injured and 36 dead. In Pakistan, sectarian violence resulted in approximately 4,000 deaths between the 1990s and 2010s (Huma, 2010). Bombers and gunmen have targeted churches, mosques, shrines, protests, congregations, Eid prayers, and other religious events. A suicide bomber struck the Ashura procession of Shia Muslims in Karachi in 2009, leaving at least 43 people dead and over 50 injured. In February 2010, an explosion occurred in the same city, striking another Shia procession. Not long after the initial explosion, another bomb went off at a hospital where the previous explosion’s victims were being treated. The two explosions resulted in thirty-three fatalities and over one hundred injuries.

*Nonstate actors’ jihad.* The Government of Pakistan under Zia ul Haq, the United States, and its allies launched a “jihad” campaign to drive the Soviet Union out of Afghanistan in the wake of the Soviet invasion in December 1979. Known as the “Afghan Jihad,” this campaign was justified as a Muslim religious duty to fight the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, stating that Islam was in danger due to the Soviet Union’s godless

presence in the nation. Non-state actors were given weapons, money, and combat training as part of the “jihad” campaign against the Soviet Union. Later, many of the non-state actors turned on the state that had supported their expansion. At the price of the country’s and society’s advancement, the state was thus forced to refocus its efforts and resources in an attempt to put an end to the rebels.

## Conclusion

Public concerns are taken into account while creating social policies and economic projects through social development. The wellbeing of the populace and the ensuing establishment or modification of institutions to generate a capacity for satisfying human wants at all levels and for enhancing the caliber of interpersonal interactions as well as those between individuals and societal institutions constitute the aim of social development. Without a doubt, religious institutions and charities’ social welfare initiatives and programs greatly aid in the process of societal development. These types of programs mostly work in the fields of education, health, and post-natural catastrophe humanitarian support. In madrassahs, impoverished students receive free basic education, board, and lodging. Several religiously oriented organizations bring together free medical camps and operate free hospitals and dispensaries. Religious organizations are always at the forefront of relief efforts following natural disasters like floods and earthquakes. On certain occasions, a lot of people volunteer due to their religious motivation.

Understanding the relationship between religious behavior and social development requires an examination of the personal, social, political, and economic facets of behavior in a Muslim society, as Islam establishes norms and values for not only social but also political and economic dimensions of life. One of the most essential aspects of Pakistani society is its religious heritage. There is a substantial correlation in Pakistan between religious behavior and socioeconomic growth. The evidence and arguments presented in this paper show that several religious practices have impeded Pakistani society’s progress. The social fabric is being harmed by patterns and trends in shifting religious behavior. The humanitarian side of Islam has been marginalized due to misguided interpretations of the faith.

When a matter does not directly impact their interests, most people behave religiously. In Pakistan, the vast majority of people adhere to the religious authorities’ understanding of the faith and acknowledge their righteousness. The truth is that most religious leaders impede the occurrence of change in specific social organizations. Many Muslims think that teaching girls could lead them astray. When their daughters hit puberty, usually at the middle or matriculation level, several parents either forbid them from attending school altogether or end their education early.

Many religious leaders and adherents tend to think dogmatically, which eventually affects how they behave. Such actions seldom encourage creativity; more often than not, they stifle it. In Pakistan, several groups prioritize treating men as religious beings. The fact that these groupings suppress “heretics” and “infidels” is one of its effects.

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