Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

Role of Institutional Climate in Promoting Religious Pluralism: Exploring Muslim Student's Attitudes Toward Religious Minority Students in Higher Education Institutions

Sharoon Sarosh Seerat
PhD (Education) Scholar, Department
of Education, Government College University Faisalabad
Email: sharoonjohnson2019@gmail.com

Dr. Shafqat Rasool (Corresponding Author)
Assisstant Professor, Department of Education,
Government College University Faisalabad
Email: dr.shafqat.rasool@gcuf.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

This study explored Muslim student's attitudes toward religious minority students and the role of institutional climates in shaping religious pluralism within public sector universities, in Punjab, Pakistan. A descriptive research methodology with a survey design was opted. A total sample of 800 Muslim students from eight universities was selected using voluntary sampling. The study utilized a structured and well-defined quantitative survey instrument that assessed participant's demographics, religious background (RB), interfaith interactions and perceptions of institutional climate (IC). Descriptive and inferential statistics including one-sample t-tests were utilized to analyze the quantitative data obtained from Muslim students in higher education institutions. Results indicated that Muslim students displayed generally positive attitudes toward religious minorities and religious diversity. However, a slight underlying dynamic between inclusivity and personal experiences were also reported. The study highlighted that while institutional support for religious pluralism exists, individual experiences of religious expression and acceptance varied significantly. The findings underscore the importance of enhancing institutional practices to align with students' lived experiences and promote greater interfaith understanding. Recommendations include the establishment of systematic interfaith initiatives, religious tolerance training for faculty and students and the implementation of policies to combat religious discrimination.

Keywords: Muslim students, Religious Background, Interactions with religious minority students , institutional climate, religious pluralism, higher education.

Abbreviations:
Religious Background (RB), Interactions with religious minority students (IRM), institutional climate(IC)

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

Introduction

In modern era, Interfaith engagement and interactions within the circle of educational boundaries foster mutual understanding, respect and tolerance among students of religiously diverse backgrounds. These interactions are exclusively important in culturally and religiously diverse environments, where the role of educational institutions is prominent to shape the attitudes of students toward religious pluralism.. By developing a climate that either encourages or discourages such interfaith interactions and engagements, Educational institutions not just influence the academic achievement of students but also foster social integration (Pew Research Center, 2017).

The way religious diversity is being addressed in educational environment for Muslim students , possibly can affect the comfort and willingness of Muslims students to interact and engage with students from other religions in academic settings. The atmosphere at schools, colleges and universities additionally serves as crucial role in influencing how youthful learners interpret religious pluralism and interact with individuals of different faiths (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Tummala-Narra, 2019).

The institutional context in which students reside has a significant impact on their views on interfaith involvement. According to the Pew Research Centre (2017) respectful attitudes towards religious diversity, understandingand appreciation are linked to a positive institutional atmosphere. On the contrary part, educational climates that are excessively religiously uniformed often tend to foster exclusion, mistrust, isolation and segregation (Cohen & Davidman, 2017). For enormous Muslims students who are often associated with the societal stereotypes and challenges related to religion, the role of educational institutions in nurturing religious pluralism is pivotal(Abu-Lughod, 2002). Institutions fostering interfaith dialogue and engagement and prioritize to address the religious differences through at institutions through respectful discourse tend to develop positive engagement and interactions among students of religiously diverse (Banks, 2017; Tummala-Narra, 2019).

Muslims students, just like their their counterpart experience a variety of worldviews based on their faith, which may challenge or widen their thinking and perceptions.in this case, the way how educational institutions handle and maintain religious diversity places a direct and immediate effect on the attitudes of Muslims students, that impact their ways, through which they deal either active or passive in interfaith dialogues. Institutions that foster welcoming climate for religious diverse students are more likely to develop improved engagement interactions , participation and mutual respect in interfaith engagements interactions (Banks, 2017). On the contrary part , the absence of implicit and defined policies that maintain inclusivity and support religious diversity in universities and educational institutions eventually lead to a discomforts misunderstanding, sense of isolation and segregation among students involving both religiously majority and minority students on campuses. (Pew Research Center, 2017; Smith, 2016). There is a crucial need for universities and educational institutions to bring the priority and sources to foster religious diversity to cultivate a climate holding the interactions and engagement where students from different dogmas and faiths are truly welcomed and appreciated.

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

This study aimed to better understand how Muslim students gauge engagement with students of different religions during educational exchanges. Additionally this study investigated at how the educational environment influences their perceptions and how that environment promotes or hinders religious diversity. Mainly this study focused to examine Muslim student's experiences in order to discover educational practices and policies that prioritize inclusivity and understanding for all students, regardless of religious affiliation (Pew Research Centre, 2017; Gurin et al., 2002).

Objectives of the Research

To measure the Muslim student's attitudes towards the religious minority students within the educational institutions.

Research Questions

To what extent do Muslims students exhibit positive social interactions with religious minority students?

How do institutional climates impact religious pluralism?

Literature Review:

Numerous studies have examined the ways in which social interactions, personal belief systemsand the institutional climate affect students' attitudes toward religious minorities. According to research by Gurin et al. (2002), students from different religious backgrounds are more inclined to appreciate each other's perspectives as soon as they are offered an opportunity to engage in a dialogue. In the same way, Banks (2017) emphasized that these sorts of initiatives allow students an increasingly comprehensive comprehension of religious pluralism and aid in dispelling and eliminating the preconceived notions and sterotypes.

Furthermore, Tummala-Narra (2019) demonstrated that educational institutions that keep significant emphasis on inclusion and diversity stimulate a culture to ensures that students find ease engaging with peers who come from various religious backgrounds. On the other hand, institutions who are failed to set an excessive emphasis on diversity can lead students especially individuals from minority faiths, to feel unwanted,isolated and segregated at campus. This scenio indicates that Muslim student's attitudes toward religious minorities are likely to be significantly impacted by institutional support for diversity which could improve their readiness to interact with the individuals from diverse religions.

According to the Pew Research Center (2017), Muslim students who contributed more religiously committed attitudes were more inclined to be skeptical from their fellow believers. Nevertheless, the same study highlighted, that Muslims students attitudes toward religious minorities improved when they had been provided with inclusive educational settings that promoted tolerance for their fellow students. This research lends credibility to the notion that institutional contexts are essential for reducing the potential collateral damage that makes Muslims students having religious convictions to bring endorsed interfaith interactions.

Cohen and Davidman (2017) stated that historical and political disagreements frequently impacted Muslim students' interactions with their Jewish classmates. However, same student's opinions about each other improved after they were offered

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

opportunities to participate in constructive interactions in a neutral environment, including in academic and service-learning programs at educational institutions. The result demonstrated how educational environments have the capacity to offer a safe space whereby students can interact with their religiously diverse peers in a way that transcends and bridges over social and political divides.

According to Kurtz-Costes et al. (2011) Muslim students have a variety of ethnic backgrounds expressing distinct perspectives toward religious minorities, contingent upon their cultural experiences and convictions about religion, When examining such panoramas and perspectives of the Muslims students toward religious diversity in educational contexts, these disparities demonstrated that how crucial it is to take into consideration the inter-sectionality of race, religion and ethnicity among the individuals of the other .

The degree in which Muslim students received exposure towards religious diversity in their immediate surroundings stood as the another important factor impacting Muslim students attitudes toward religious minorities. Abu-Lughod (2002) claimed that student's early socialization experiences impact the capacity of the Muslims students to engage with individuals from different religious backgrounds. When Compared the students from more homogeneous fields with the individuals who are raised in more religiously varied environments are more likely to possess favorable opinions about religious minorities. According to investigation, educational institutions have an important impact on student's opinions while offering students an opportunity to engage with peers from different religious origins.

Subsequently, The matter will prove inconceivable to disregard the importance of teachers and faculty at educational institutions. According to Smith (2016), instructors who obtain training in diversity issues and intercultural competency might develop a more welcoming classroom atmosphere on educational institution. Muslim students are more likely inclined to feel encouraged in their connections with peers from religious minorities when their instructors promote civic values and civil conversations about religious diversity. Consequently, this emphasize the dire need of faculty participation in to promoting an academic environment that embraces diversity and religious pluralism.

Methodology

The researcher explored the perceptions of Muslim students' perceptions from the students of religious minorities by using a survey-based methodology.The questionnaire obtained quantitative information on religious conducts, interfaith interactions and attitudes toward religious diversity by using volunteer sampling. For the sake of identify important trends in the opinions and experiences of Muslim students, the survey responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics (Murairwa, 2015). Additionally, one-sample t-test was employed, that revealed an accurate portrayal about Muslim students responses about religious pluralism in the educational environment.

Population

All the Universities in the region Punjab were selected as the population of the study.(Only Public Sector)

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

Target population

The target population consist of Muslim students that are enrolled eight public universities selected Purposive sampling technique (Criteria High enrollment and top ranked) in the Punjab region that included both undergraduate and postgraduate students from different academic disciplines. A diverse sample of universities was opted for, to ensure the adequate comprehension of Muslim student's perceptions and interactions with religious diversity and interfaith interactions. Muslim undergraduate and graduate students from a range of academic disciplines who are enrolled in eight public universities in the Punjab region make up the study's target group.

Sampling and Sample Size

A voluntary sample technique (Tiit, 2021) was utilized to approach the Muslim students within each university, this sampling technique was opted for to ensuring the willingness of the interested respondents to provide their answers. Target was 100 Muslim students per university that makes the total sample size of 800 Muslim students circulated across the selected eight universities in Punjab region.

Research Instrument for Quantitative Data

Each sections from the research instrument of Muslim participants for obtaining quantitative data was designed to explore the participant's demographics, religious background (RB), Interactions with religious minorities (IRM) and institutional climate (IC). Fundamental information such as age, gender, field of study, educational attainment and socioeconomic status are gathered in the Demographics section (Zurlo & Johnson, 2016). The section on Religious Background (RB) was adapted from Schwartz (2006) exploring the respondent's degree of personal adherence to Islam and taking theirs consideration about the understanding of the religion.

The section on Interactions with Religious Minorities (Batson & Stocks, 2005) gauges attitudes of Muslims students toward religious minorities at university settings, At the very foremost, the section on institutional climate (Hurtado, 1994) examined that Muslim students perceptions about religious diversity and campus support.

Factor analysis was utilized to preserve the validity of the instrument as well as pilot testing was also administered re-correct by minor phrasing and structural changes for definable clarity. Through this approach, the validity of the instrument, its linguistic clarity and contextual appropriateness was ensured.

Missing Data Handling

Data from 760 students out of the 800 sampled Muslim students could obtained due to time constraint and lack of interest and willingness of the participants, resulting in 40 missing respondents, which become 5% of the total sample. In social sciences 5% missing responses are generally considerably accepted.(Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Data Analysis

Researcher examined the obtained data while using both descriptive and inferential statistics in order to address the research questions. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the demography details of the participants that includes age, gender, field of study etc. The results provided an accurate depiction of the sample to comprehending the general patterns in the obtained data.

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

The researcher also utilized a one-sample t-test to determine whether the Mean value of the responses differed significantly from a neutral value 3 (middle value of the Likert scale). This method enabled the researcher to determine if attitudes of the Muslim students towards the religious minority students and their opinions about the particular institutional climate were whether favorable or adverse.

Results of The Study:

Table.1 Results of descriptive statistics for Religious Background (RB)

Descriptives Religious Background (RB)					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
RB1	760	3	5	3.37	.666
RB2	760	2	4	3.11	.447
RB3	760	3	5	3.50	.601
RB4	760	3	5	3.53	.596
RB5	760	3	5	3.26	.547
RB6	760	3	4	3.42	.494
RB9	760	2	4	3.32	.654
RB10	760	3	4	3.26	.441
Valid N (listwise)	760				

Table.1 presented descriptive statistics for Religious Background (RB) showed valuable results towards the respondent's religious views and practices. The items on the scale assessed various aspects of religious commitment, practices and beliefs, using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 2 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Agree Strongly), with 3 representing a neutral or no opinion response. The sample consisted of 760 participants for most of the items, with 720 respondents for RB3, indicating a small decrease in participation for that item. The minimum and maximum values for the responses ranged between 2 Strongly Disagree and 5 Agree Strongly, suggesting that respondents generally did not choose the extremes but instead leaned toward more moderate responses, especially in the middle range.

The mean scores revealed that respondents, on average, had a moderate level of agreement with the statements. For example, RB1 Religion plays a central role in my life had a mean of 3.37, indicating that, on average, participants somewhat agreed that religion played an important role in their lives. Similarly, RB3 I have received formal Islamic education had a mean of 3.50, suggesting moderate agreement that respondents had received formal Islamic education, while RB4 I have a strong understanding of Islamic teachings had a slightly higher mean of 3.53, implying a somewhat stronger consensus on understanding Islamic teachings. However, RB2 I read the Quran regularly had the lowest mean of 3.11, suggesting that respondents were less likely to read the Quran regularly or held a more neutral stance on this activity.

The standard deviations indicated the variability in responses across different variables. For instance, RB1 had a standard deviation of 0.666, reflecting greater variability in responses, meaning that some respondents strongly agreed that religion played a central role in their lives, while others disagreed. In contrast, RB2 had a

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN
3007-3197
Print ISSN
3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

lower standard deviation of 0.447, suggesting more consistency in responses, possibly reflecting a common practice or attitude. On the other hand, RB6 ("I pray all five daily prayers") had a standard deviation of 0.494, indicating relatively low variability and suggesting that many respondents practiced the five daily prayers regularly.

Overall, the results indicated that while most respondents showed moderate levels of agreement with the religious background statements, there was some diversity in religious practices and beliefs. The means suggested that most respondents saw religion as playing an important role in their lives but did not strongly commit to all practices, such as regularly reading the Quran. The variability in standard deviations highlighted that while some religious practices were widely followed such as daily prayers , others, like seeking guidance from Islamic scholars or fasting during Ramadan, showed more varied engagement.

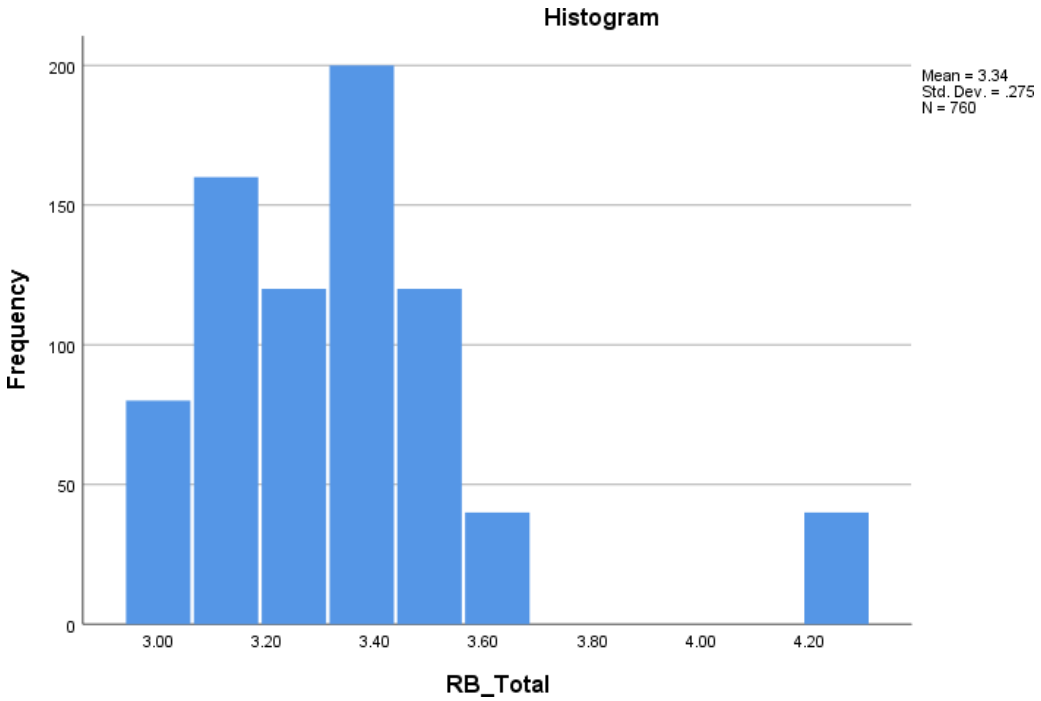


Figure 1 Religious Background (RB) indicated that most participants scored between 3.0 and 3.6, showing generally similar and moderately high religious beliefs. A small group scored around 4.2, indicating very strong religious belief compared to the rest.

Table.2 Results of Descriptive Statistics of Interaction with Religious Minorities (IRM)

Descriptive Statistics of Interaction with Religious Minorities (IRM)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
IRM1	760	3	5	4.26	.785
IRM2	760	3	5	4.30	.557
IRM3	760	1	5	4.30	.955

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN
3007-3197
Print ISSN
3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

IRM5	760	4	5	4.35	.477
IRM6	760	4	5	4.35	.477
Valid N (listwise)	760				

Table 2 presented descriptive statistics for the Interaction with Religious Minorities (IRM) indicated that respondents generally held positive views on interfaith relations, with most agreeing that they had participated in interfaith activities (IRM1, mean = 4.26) and had close friends from religious minority groups (IRM2, mean = 4.30). However, there was some variability in responses, particularly for IRM3 ("I had a disagreement with someone from a religious minority group"), which had a higher standard deviation (0.955), suggesting a range of experiences. The responses for IRM5 ("Religious minorities are different from Muslims") and IRM6 ("Religious minorities are a threat to Islam") showed stronger agreement (mean = 4.35 for both), indicating a perception of religious minorities as both distinct and somewhat threatening. Overall, while many respondents reported positive engagement with religious minorities, there was also a tendency to view them as different or a potential threat to Islam.

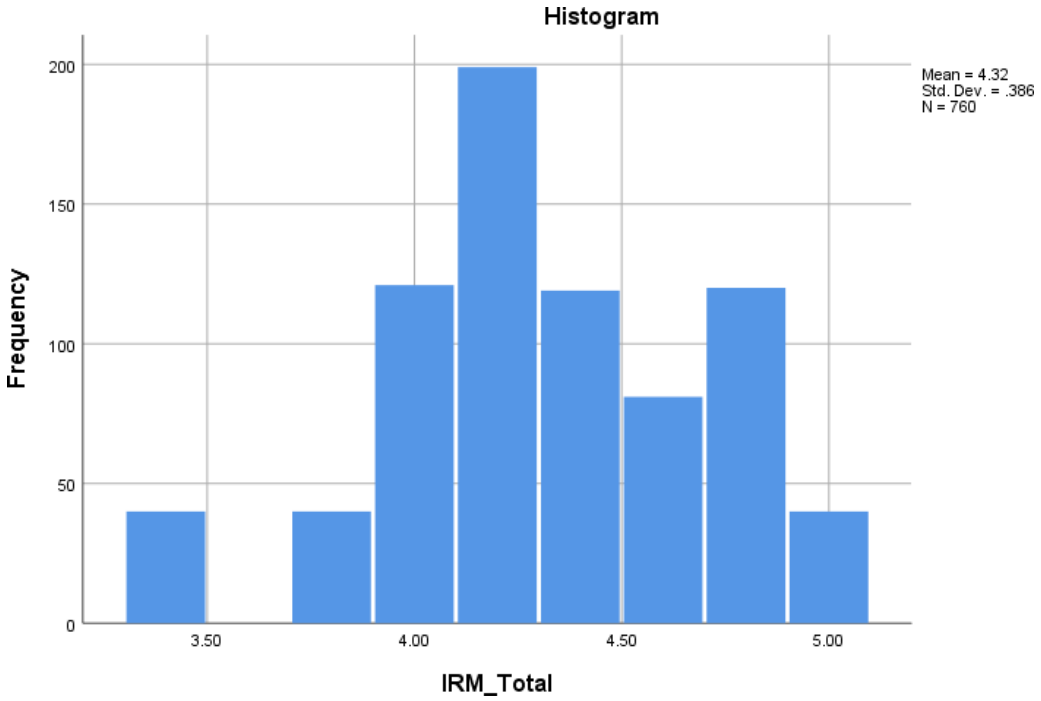


Figure. 2 of Interactions with Religious Minorities (IRM) indicated that most participants scored between 4.0 and 4.5 on the IRM scale, reflecting generally high levels of interaction with religious minorities. A smaller proportion achieved the maximum score of 5.0, suggesting very strong engagement with individuals from different religious backgrounds.

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

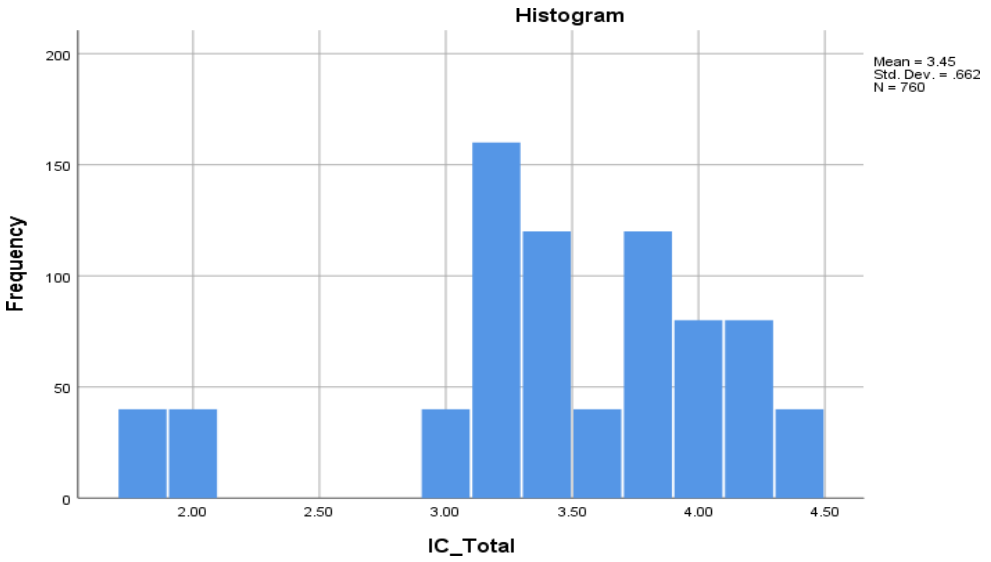
Online ISSN
3007-3197
Print ISSN
3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

Table 3 Results of Descriptive Statistics Institutional Climate (IC)

Descriptive Statistics Institutional Climate (IC)					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
IC1	760	1	5	3.05	.888
IC2	760	1	5	2.95	.888
IC3	760	1	5	3.95	.945
IC4	760	2	5	3.53	.819
IC5	760	2	5	3.79	.894
Valid N (listwise)	760				

Table 3 presented descriptive statistics were calculated for five items measuring experiences and perceptions related to religious diversity and support on campus. The sample consisted of 760 respondents. Item IC1, "I have witnessed incidents of religious discrimination on campus," had a mean score of 3.05 with a standard deviation of 0.888, indicating a moderate level of agreement. Item IC2, "I have experienced difficulties in practicing my faith on campus," had a slightly lower mean of 2.95 with the same standard deviation of 0.888, suggesting that such difficulties were reported less frequently on average.

Item IC3, "I have participated in campus events promoting religious diversity," had the highest mean score of 3.95 with a standard deviation of 0.945, suggesting relatively frequent participation in such events among respondents. Item IC4, "I think the university provides adequate support for Muslim students," yielded a mean of 3.53 with a standard deviation of 0.819, reflecting moderately positive perceptions of institutional support. Item IC5, "I feel comfortable expressing my religious beliefs on campus," had a mean of 3.79 with a standard deviation of 0.894, indicating a generally positive comfort level among respondents. The minimum and maximum scores for all items ranged from 1 to 5, with IC4 and IC5 having a minimum value of 2, suggesting that no respondents strongly disagreed with those statements.



Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

Table. 4 Results of One Sample T-Test for Religious Background (RB)

One-Sample Test Religious Background (RB)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
RB1	760	3.37	.666	.024
RB2	760	3.11	.447	.016
RB3	760	3.50	.601	.022
RB4	760	3.53	.596	.022
RB5	760	3.26	.547	.020
RB6	760	3.42	.494	.018
RB9	760	3.32	.654	.024
RB10	760	3.26	.441	.016

One-Sample Test Religious Background (RB)

Test Value = 3

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
RB1	15.246	759	.000	.368	.32	.42
RB2	6.494	759	.000	.105	.07	.14
RB3	22.311	759	.000	.500	.46	.54
RB4	24.351	759	.000	.526	.48	.57
RB5	13.255	759	.000	.263	.22	.30
RB6	23.495	759	.000	.421	.39	.46
RB9	13.320	759	.000	.316	.27	.36
RB10	16.464	759	.000	.263	.23	.29

Tale. 4 presented one-sample t-test was conducted to determine whether participant's mean responses for each Religious Background (RB) item significantly differed from the neutral midpoint value of 3 (—No opinion‖). Results indicated statistically significant positive deviations from the test value for all RB items (all $p < .001$), suggesting that participants generally expressed agreement with each statement. Specifically, participants reported significantly higher agreement with the centrality of religion in their lives ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.67$), $t(759) = 15.25$, $p < .001$ and with regular Quran reading ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 0.45$), $t(759) = 6.49$, $p < .001$. Responses also indicated strong endorsement of having received formal Islamic education ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 0.60$), $t(719) = 22.31$, $p < .001$and possessing a strong understanding of Islamic teachings ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.60$), $t(759) = 24.35$, $p < .001$. Similarly, participants expressed significant agreement with being committed to Islamic values ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 0.55$), $t(759) = 13.26$, $p < .001$, performing the five daily prayers ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.49$), $t(759) = 23.50$, $p < .001$ and frequently seeking guidance from Islamic scholars ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.65$), $t(759) = 13.32$, $p < .001$. Fasting for the entire month of Ramadan was also significantly above the neutral point ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 0.44$),

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

t(759) = 16.46, p < .001.

Collectively, these results suggest that, on average, respondents exhibit a relatively high level of religious engagement and adherence to Islamic practices, with the strongest agreements observed for formal religious education and understanding of Islamic teachings.

Table. 5 Results of One Sample T-Test for Religious Minorities (IRM)

One-Sample Test Interactions with Religious Minorities (IRM)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
IRM1	760	4.26	.785	.028
IRM2	760	4.30	.557	.020
IRM3	760	4.30	.955	.034
IRM5	760	4.35	.477	.017
IRM6	760	4.35	.477	.017

One-Sample Test Interactions with Religious Minorities (IRM)
Test Value = 3

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper
IRM1	44.377	759	.000	1.263	1.21	1.32
IRM2	65.999	759	.000	1.300	1.26	1.34
IRM3	38.521	759	.000	1.300	1.23	1.37
IRM5	80.005	759	.000	1.350	1.32	1.38
IRM6	80.005	759	.000	1.350	1.32	1.38

Table. 5 presented one-sample t-test was performed to examine whether participants' responses to the Interactions with Religious Minorities (IRM) items significantly differed from the neutral midpoint value of 3 (—No opinion‖). Across all five items, mean scores were significantly higher than the midpoint (all p < .001), indicating a tendency toward agreement.

Participants reported high agreement with having participated in interfaith events or activities (M = 4.26, SD = 0.79), t(759) = 44.38, p < .001and having close friends from religious minority groups (M = 4.30, SD = 0.56), t(799) = 66.00, p < .001. They also agreed, on average, that they had experienced disagreements with members of minority faiths (M = 4.30, SD = 0.96), t(799) = 38.52, p < .001. Similarly, participants agreed with the statements that religious minorities are different from Muslims (M = 4.35, SD = 0.48) and that religious minorities are a threat to Islam (M = 4.35, SD = 0.48), both t(799) = 80.01, p < .001. These suggest that while respondents reported substantial interaction with religious minorities, they also expressed perceptions of difference and perceived threat toward these minority students groups.

Two themes emerged from the findings. First, participants reported a high level of direct engagement with religious minorities. They agreed that they had participated in interfaith events or activities (M = 4.26, SD = 0.79), had close friends from religious

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

minority groups (M = 4.30, SD = 0.56) and had experienced disagreements with members of minority faiths (M = 4.30, SD = 0.96). Second, despite these interactions, participants expressed perceptions of difference and perceived threat. Agreement was high for the statements that religious minorities are different from Muslims (M = 4.35, SD = 0.48) and that they are a threat to Islam (M = 4.35, SD = 0.48). Taken together, these findings suggest a complex dynamic in which frequent and close interactions coexist with perceptions of distinctiveness and perceived threat toward religious minorities.

Table. 6 Results of One Sample T-Test for Institutional Climate (IC)

One-Sample Statistics Institutional Climate (IC)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
IC1	760	3.05	.888	.032
IC2	760	2.95	.888	.032
IC3	760	3.95	.945	.034
IC4	760	3.53	.819	.030
IC5	760	3.79	.894	.032

One-Sample Statistics Institutional Climate (IC)
Test Value = 3

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper
IC1	1.635	759	.103	.053	-.01	.12
IC2	-1.635	759	.103	-.053	-.12	.01
IC3	27.635	759	.000	.947	.88	1.01
IC4	17.710	759	.000	.526	.47	.58
IC5	24.351	759	.000	.789	.73	.85

Table. 6 presented one-sample t-test was conducted to compare participants' perceptions of the Institutional climate(IC) to the neutral midpoint value of 3 (—No opinion‖). Two items—reported that they had not witnessed incidents of religious discrimination on campus (M = 3.05, SD = 0.89), t(759) = 1.64, p = .103and that they had not experienced difficulties in practicing their faith on campus (M = 2.95, SD = 0.89), t(759) = –1.64, p = .103—did not differ significantly from neutrality, suggesting mixed views on these aspects of campus life. In contrast, three items reflected significantly positive perceptions. Participants agreed that the university provides adequate support for Muslim students (M = 3.95, SD = 0.95), t(759) = 27.64, p < .001; promotes interfaith dialogue (M = 3.53, SD = 0.82), t(759) = 17.71, p < .001; and fosters a supportive environment for religious diversity (M = 3.79, SD = 0.89), t(759) = 24.35, p < .001.

Overall, Most students felt the university supports Muslim students, promotes interfaith dialogueand respects religious diversity. Indicating that while participants expressed confidence in the university's broader diversity and interfaith initiatives,

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

their personal experiences regarding the absence of discrimination and ease of religious practice were more varied and did not show a statistically significant tendency toward agreement or disagreement. However, opinions were mixed about whether they had personally avoided discrimination or difficulties in practicing their faith. This shows strong approval of institutional policies but varied personal experiences.

Discussion

The results of the one-sample t-test indicated a generally positive attitude among Muslim students toward their religious practices, interfaith interactions and the institutional climate at their universities. The significant positive deviations from the neutral midpoint for the Religious Background section suggest that participants strongly agree with the importance of religion in their lives, the regular practice of religious activities such as reading the Quran, praying and fasting during Ramadan. This indicates a high level of religious engagement among the respondents (Schwartz, 2006). Similarly, the Interactions with Religious Minorities section revealed that while Muslim students are actively participating in interfaith events and engaging with religious minority groups, they also express some perceptions of difference and perceived threats toward religious minorities, reflecting a complex dynamic of both positive engagement and underlying tensions (Batson & Stocks, 2005).

Most participants strongly agreed that their university acknowledges religious diversity, supports interfaith engagement and provides adequate facilities for Muslim students. However, the inequitable and mixing responds to personal experiences of discrimination and challenges expressing religion on campus demonstrated that while institutional rules may be inclusive, individual experiences of religious expression and freedom may still fluctuate. The findings of the study demonstrated that despite of institutional setting promotes religious tolerance, still the individuals personal and environmental circumstances influence religious identity of the individuals on campuses (Hurtado, 1994). Overall, the study revealed that institutional support is crucial to develop religious pluralism in academic settings, but still remains the opportunity for improvement in addressing the particular challenges and barriers that Muslim students can encounter (Pew Research Center, 2017).

The findings of the study found consistent with literature review (Prior researches) highlighting the importance of a positive institutional climate in promoting religious inclusion in academic settings (Gurin et al., 2002; Tummala-Narra, 2019). More researches are needed covering different contexts to determine how institutional practices might be more closely linked with the lived experiences of students from various religious backgrounds.

Conclusion

The present study emphasized the role of institutional climate in influencing the attitudes of Muslim students towards religious diversity and interfaith engagements. Muslim students exhibited great willingness and positive perceptions towards religious commitments and participation in interfaith engagements at campus. Their attitudes toward religious minorities revealed both positive interactions while underlying the skeptical barriers.

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

The findings of the study highlighted the needful criticality of educational institutions to establish supportive settings in order to foster the religious tolerance and also to address the issues that Muslim students experiences at campus. Despite institutional general explicit regulations that promote diversity, Additional efforts and initiatives are needed to integrate the institutional practices to be aligned with the everyday situations of students from different faiths.

Recommendation:

Universities should establish systematic interfaith interaction initiatives to enhance the comprehension and collaboration among students of all faith while diminishing stereotypes and enhancing mutual respect.

Universities should ensure religious tolerance training programs for professors, staff and students at campuses.

Universities should ensure to formalize the implicit policies to combat the religious discrimination and divides in order to promote inclusive university environment.

References

Abu-Lughod, L. (2002). *Do Muslim women need saving?* Harvard University Press.

Azab, M. (2016). Non-proportional snowball sampling method: A practical guide. *Journal of Applied Research, 22*(3), 185-198.

Banks, J. A. (2017). *Educating citizens in a multicultural society*. Teachers College Press.

Batson, C. D., & Stocks, E. L. (2005). Religion and intergroup attitudes: The role of religious orientation and religious identity. *Journal of Social Issues, 61*(2), 305-323.

Cohen, E. R., & Davidman, L. (2017). Teaching for tolerance and understanding in religiously diverse classrooms. *Educational Leadership, 74*(4), 34-39.

Etikan, I., & Bala, K. (2017). Sampling and sampling methods. *Biometrics & Biostatistics International Journal, 5*(6), 143-148.

Gurin, P., Dey, E. L., Hurtado, S., & Gurin, G. (2002). Diversity and higher education: Theory and impact on educational outcomes. *Harvard Educational Review, 72*(3), 330-366.

Hurtado, S. (1994). The institutional climate for diversity: The role of campus climate in students' experiences. *The Review of Higher Education, 17*(3), 241-262.

Kurtz-Costes, B., Rowley, S. J., & Harris-Britt, A. (2011). The role of race, ethnicityand culture in shaping educational outcomes for diverse students. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 103*(4), 1031-1043.

Loosen, W., & Schmidt, P. (2016). Research design in the context of multi-method approaches: Theoretical and methodological foundations. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 19*(4), 365-379.

Murairwa, M. (2015). Voluntary sampling technique: Methodological considerations in social research. *Social Science Research Journal, 16*(2), 57-71.

Pew Research Center. (2017). *The future of world religions: Population growth projections, 2010-2050*. Pew Research Center.

Schwartz, S. H. (2006). A theory of cultural values and some implications for work. *Applied Psychology, 55*(1), 15-48.

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 6 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

Smith, C. (2016). Religious pluralism and student engagement in higher education. *Journal of College Student Development, 57*(3), 333-345.

Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2013). *Using multivariate statistics* (6th ed.). Pearson.

Tiit, E. M. (2021). Impact of voluntary sampling on estimates. *Papers on Anthropology, 30*(2), 9-13.

Tummala-Narra, P. (2019). The role of cultural and religious diversity in higher education: A psychological perspective. *Journal of Social Issues, 75*(2), 415-434.