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RESEARCH PAPER

Religious Motives and Facebook Usage in Pakistan: A Case of Teenagers

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
	Given research study aimed to found Religious motives, needs and engaging with the religious contents on social networking site gratifies among Facebook users depending on their behavioral tendencies, time patterns and other demographic Convenient sampling technique was used under non-probability sampling through offline survey to collect 405 Muslim students from different academic institutions of Lahore. Information of demographic characteristics of participants was collected using demographic information sheet. Participant's behavior of using Facebook and their Religious Motives, time periods, and type of content they used to watch and share were measured suing self-developed scale of Facebook using behavior. Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was used to found relationship between Facebook use and Religious motives along with the correlation to participants' demographics. Significant correlation was found between Facebook using behaviour and sharing of content on Religious Motives. Significant positive correlation was also found between Facebook using tendencies and participants demographic. Discussions of the study were included, Facebook use among population was directly linked time period they spent using Facebook and their motives to share religious content and motives.

Introduction

Social network sites are the web based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, these sites articulate a list of other users with whom they share connection, and view and traverse their lists of connections and those made by others(Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

These social networking sites vary in their structure, access and features. Facebook was first accessible to high school students but the commercial organizations started to take interest in Facebook .This platform is public now. Facebook was found to be the most popular social network among university students in Lahore followed by WhatsApp, the smart phone was found to be the most prominent factor for Facebook usage and these students were found to be using this platform to communicate with friends followed by family (Hussain & Saleem, 2016).

This means that Facebook is widely used for belonging. Considering the rapid adoption of social network sites, it is not surprising that individuals, religious leaders, religious groups and even students have used these networks for spiritual guidance and enlightenment by seeking the faith-based content. The influence of religiousness on social network sites' membership and frequency of use for the emerging adults (between the ages of 18 and 23) was explored and it was found that Catholics and Evangelical protestants were more likely than the "not religious" to be social network sites' members, and more Bible reading was associated with lower levels of social network membership and use (Miller, Mundey, & Hill, 2013).

The motivations for Facebook usage have been found to be ministering, spiritual enlightenment, seeking faith-based information and for relaxing entertainment. Ministering is actively reaching out to others by sharing-faith based information, the spiritual enlightenment is to enhance one's own spirituality by accessing content that enlightens and uplift the user, the faith based information include the inspirational content and the relaxing entertainment motives means to unwind, relax and being entertained (Brubaker & Haigh, 2017).

In Pakistan, university students are observed to be using this social networking site not only for the educational purposes but also for the religious gratifications because Pakistan is an Islamic democratic republic with the diverse religious groups. The picture about the individual differences and the social categories for the religious motives for Facebook use is still burred because the results being produced are focusing on the educational, political, social interaction and the overall communication motives for Facebook usage which marginalize the research for the religious motives for Facebook usage in context of Pakistani culture. Therefore, it is aimed to research the associations of Facebook usage with the religious motives. The other aspects which make the study unique are the exploration of the interaction effects of the time patterns and demographics specifically for the religious motives.

Literature Review

Technological Affordances of Facebook

The social network of Facebook in particular and other social networks in general facilitate the online echo and ecology for faith for individuals and groups.

In the online space of Facebook and other social networks, users can engage in the reciprocal exchange of information about religious or non-religious topics. Wok and Misman (2015)had argued that youth were motivated to vast knowledge available and accessible in the social networking sites (SNSs) for their benefits. The top three social networking sites found among Malay adolescents wereFacebook, Yahoo and Skype and most of these SNSs were found to be used for social, educational and communication motives followed by religious, entertainment, business and politics(Wok & Misman, 2015). Hussain and Saleem (2016)had proposed a generic model for the association of social demographics, personality traits and motives for Facebook usage with the problematic Facebook usage and in their descriptive analysis about the motives for Facebook usage they had explored that in Pakistan, university students were using utilizing Facebook for features like chatting, calling, status update, tagging, liking, commenting and sharing. Majority of the university students were found to be using Facebook for the educational and political motives and least mean score was found for the religious motives for Facebook usage (Hussain & Saleem, 2016). The detailed discussion was being done about the educational and political motives but there was limited discussion about the religious motives for Facebook use.

Shahnaz and Wok (2011) have explored the religious motives for Facebook usage among Muslim students in Malaysia. They found, that the students in Islamic culture, use Facebook for sharing reminder based on Al-Quran (Islamic religious book) and Al-Hadith (sayings of Holy Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him), sharing wisdom from *Hukamah* (religious scholars), sharing *nasheed* (vocal music sung individually accompanied by a single musical instrument like daf); for preaching people to do good things and forsharing notes on religious values.The spiritual, travel, friendship, self-presentation, and status motives are also found to be positively related to intentions to visit pilgrimage destinations and sharing pilgrimage experiences on social networking sites among adults of United States (Park, Seo, & Kandampully, 2016). Christians in United States who had frequently used Facebook for posting, liking, commenting, and sharing faith-based content and who were more religious were more likely to minister to others; the frequent use also predicted seeking religious information; further the affiliation with the likeminded people afforded by Facebook had provides faith-based users with supportive content and communities for obtaining spiritual guidance and being entertained (Brubaker & Haigh, 2017).

Difference in Time Patterns and Demographics for Facebook Use

Youth have been consuming conflicting time for Facebook use. The duration of having a Facebook account is found to be between one and twelve months among majority of Malay students who had used it either once in a day or twice per day, and fifty one percent had used it between thirty and sixty minutes (Shahnaz & Wok, 2011). In Pakistan fifty one percent university students are found to be using Facebook for less than half an hour (Hussain & Saleem, 2016). Shahnaz and Wok (2011)also found that students were using Facebook even for less than

fifteen minutes. Both these studies have not told about the daily and weekly time patterns for Facebook use for the religious motives.

There is conflict in literature for which gender between male or female frequently utilize the Facebook. Wok compared the youth profiles for using the social networking sites and the users were more likely to be found of male gender. In the International Islamic University Malaysia, majority of introvert female students (22 and above)were found to be heavy Facebook users and were highly connected with others and they had mostly used this website, "to preach people to do good things;"(Shahnaz & Wok, 2011).The female religiosity and the internet addiction relationship is found to be mediated by psychological escape motives for three religious groups (Charlton, Soh, Ang, & Chew, 2013). However, in context of Pakistan, Hussain and Saleem (2016) have found that male university students are using Facebook more than the female students. The time for Facebook use is well-documented however the time for the religious motives is not adequately explained in the literature.

Dhaha and Igale (2014) had researched the predictability of religious motives along with other motives, to the Facebook addiction. In a similar study, Hussain and Saleem (2016) explained the predictability between the religious motives and the passive Facebook usage. Both these studies (Dhaha & Igale, 2014; Hussain & Saleem, 2016) have not provided the satisfactory rationale for the association between motives and the problematic Facebook usage. The association between religious motives and Facebook use (specifically with the features for Facebook use e.g., like, share, comment) is justified when it is researched in empowered paradigm particularly in context of uses and gratifications theory. In the previous research Shahnaz and Wok (2011) had used only the descriptive statisticslike frequency and percentage to explain the results. The difference in limited demographics is explained in these studies. In Pakistan, Hussain and Saleem (2016) did not explain the difference in male and female gender for the specific religious motives for Facebook usage.

Theoretical Framework

The "needs" selected by youth also come from the institutional areaof "religion". Gratifications attract and hold audiences to the kinds of media and the types of content which satisfy their social and psychological needs and people bend the media to their needs more readily than the media overpower them (Katz, Haas, & Gurevitch, 1973). There is a difference in activity and activeness, former refers to more what audience does and latter means what the uses-and-gratifications audience had in mind (Baran & Davis, 2013). Activity on Facebook includes like, share, comment or the status update. The activeness in context of Facebook is the extent to which people use it for the social interaction or the religious motives.

The individuals select Facebook or its features in their roles as Muslims in context of Pakistani Culture. The researchers in Pakistan can gain insight into the relationship between the real or perceived attributes of Facebook and the social and psychological functions of Islamic motives which this social networking site serve for university students in Pakistan. Therefore the hypothesis is formulated to research the association of Facebook usage with the religious motives.

Hypothesis

- Facebook usage is likely to be associated with religious motives among youth.

- Individual's behavior and time period of using Facebook would likely to be associated with Religious Motives among youth.

Material and Methods

Research design, sample and sampling technique

Causal research design was followed by present study and sample of 405 university (University of the Punjab; University of Central Punjab) student were selected using the non-probability convenience sampling technique. The data was collected during class room settings of these educational institutes after taking prior permission from the institutes.

Measures

Questionnaire measuring participant's extent behavior and tendencies for attracting different features of Facebook in four aspects (Status update, for liking different posts, to comment on activities, to share new updates) was measured. Participant's behaviors of using Facebook for religious motives were measured through the wisdom with Islamic experts, advised contents; religious values; and preaching people good things with the help of messages/Islamic voice notes etc. participants demographic characteristics i.e. age, gender, religion, education, monthly income, family system and their average time spend using Facebook was also measured using nominal and categorical scale for measuring personal properties.

Table 1
Participant's Motives of Facebook Use and Personal Characteristics

Variable	Response Category	Response Ratio
Age	20-22	1
	23-25	2
	26-28	3
Gender	Male	1
	Female	2
Education	BA/BSC	1

	MA/MSc;"	2
Monthly Income	Less than 20, 000	1
	30, 000- 50, 000	2
	51, 000-100,000	3
	More than 100, 000	4
Family System	Nuclear	1
	Join	2
Time Spend using Facebook	More than three hours	1
	More than two hours	2
	Two hours	3
	Thirty to Sixty minutes	4
	Less than thirty minutes	5
Frequency of weakly access to Facebook	Almost every day	1
	After two days' interval	2
	Once a week	3
	Twice a week	4
Motive of Using Facebook	Status Update	1
	Like posts	2
	Comments	3
	Share	4
Tendencies of sharing Religious Motive	Hukama	1
	Nashido	2
	Purdah	3
Facebook usage promoting Religious Motives	Strongly Disagree	5
	Disagree	4
	Neutral	3
	Agree	2
	Strongly Agree	1

Results and Discussion

Reliability of the scale was measured in form Cronbach was also supported by the previous research, the Cronbach Alpha values for the scale of religious motives Facebook usage in two different studies are found to be .835 (Dhaha & Igale, 2014) and .848 (Hussain & Saleem, 2016). The Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 21 is used to analyze data. The descriptive statistics like frequency and percentage were used to report the demographics like gender, level of education, family system, age and social economic status and for time patterns. The mean and standard deviation values for the items in the continuous scales are reported along with the reliability of scales. Pearson correlation test is run to see the correlation of Facebook usage with religious motives. Two ways between Groups ANOVAs are run to analyze the difference which the independent variables (e.g. daily time, weekly time, gender, educational level, age, family system and social economic status) make in the scores of dependent variable of

religious motives for Facebook usage. The interaction effects of the selected variables are also explained.

Table2.
Demographics of Students and Time Patterns for Facebook usage (N = 405)

Construct	Variable	Attribute	f	%
Social Demographics	Gender	Male	149	36.8
		Female	256	63.2
	Educational Level	Bachelors	204	50.4
		Master	201	49.6
	Social Economic Status	Low	199	49.1
		Mediocre	93	23.0
		High Mediocre	61	15.1
		High	52	12.8
	Age	20-22	285	70.4
		23-26	76	18.8
		26-28	44	10.9
	Family System	Nuclear	253	62.5
		Joint	152	37.5
Time Patterns for Facebook Usage	Daily time	More than three hours	61	15.1
		More than two hours	76	18.8
		Two hours	26	6.4
		Thirty to sixty minutes	75	18.5
		Less than thirty minutes	167	41.2
	Weekly Time	Almost every day	269	66.4
		After two days' interval	71	17.5
		Once in a week	45	11.1
		Twice in a week	20	4.9

Table3.
Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Variables (N = 405)

Variables	Items	M	SD	a
Facebook Usage	use 'status update' feature of Facebook	3.314	1.179	.731
	use 'like' feature of Facebook	3.324	1.129	

	use 'comment' feature of Facebook	3.388	1.141	
	use 'share' feature of Facebook	3.370	1.154	
Religious Motives	to share wisdom from *Hukama*/religious scholars	3.220	1.083	.786
	to share *Nashido*/advised contents, videos or songs	3.069	1.126	
	to share notes on religious values like purdah or helping others	3.195	1.112	
	to preach people to do good things by sending them text messages	3.022	1.168	

The Cronbach Alpha value of .7 is considered good value for the reliability of a scale according to (Nunnally & Berstein, 1994). In Table 2, these values are above .7. Comparatively, the scale for the religious motives for Facebook usage (α = .786) has shown better reliability the scale for Facebook usage (α = .731). All the items in these scales have mean score higher than 3. For Facebook usage, the highest means score is for the comment feature (M = 3.88, SD = 1.141). The share feature (M = 3.70, SD = 1.154) high mean score. Other features, like (M = 3.324, SD = 1.129) and status update (M = 3.314, SD = 1.179) also show good scores. For the religious motives for Facebook usage, the highest mean score is for sharing wisdom from *hukama* or religious scholars (M = 3.220, SD = 1.083), then for, sharing notes on religious values like purdah or helping others (M =3.195, SD = 1.112); sharing *nashido* or advised content in the form of contents, videos or songs (M = 3.099, SD = 1.126), and to preach people to do good things by sending them text messages (M = 3.022, SD = 1.168).

Table 4
Correlation between Facebook Usage and Religious Motives (N = 405)

	Religious Motives	
	r	**p**
Facebook Usage	.285**	.000

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

To determine the strength of relationship between variables the recommendations of Cohen (1988)are used who interpret the correlations (r) between .10 and .29 as small correlations. There is found a small correlation between the variables of Facebook usage and the gratifications of religious motives from this social networking site (r = .285, n = 405, p <.0005)in the positive direction among university students in Lahore.

Table 5
Difference in Time Patterns, Demographics for Religious Motives (N = 405)

Independent Variables	p	η²
Gender	.347	.002
Weekly access to Facebook usage	.001	.040

Interaction effect of gender and weekly access to Facebook usage	.178	.012
Educational Level	.004	.021
Social Economic Status	.434	.007
Interaction effect of educational level and social economic status	.279	.010
Age	.001	.036
Family system	.675	.000
Interaction effect of age and family system	.009	.023

*dependent variable: religious motives for Facebook use

To interpret the significance value of the main effect of individual variables and the interaction effect of the variables the guidelines provided by Pallant (2007) are followed who recommend that the difference is significant if the significance value is less than or equal to .05. Table 4 reports that gender, social economic status and the family system do not make any difference for the religious motives for Facebook usage, however, weekly access to Facebook usage, educational level and age do show difference for the religious motives from the website of Facebook. The interaction of gender and weekly access to Facebook usage do not make any difference for these religious motives. Secondly, the interaction of educational level and social economic status also do not make any difference in the religious motives seeking among students. But the interaction of age and family system do make difference for the religious motives for Facebook usage among selected university students in the educational institutions of Lahore city.

To explain the effect size (partial eta squared = η^2) for the difference which the independent variables make for the dependent variable of religious motives , the recommendations of Cohen (1988) are followed who interpret the eta squared value of .01 (1%) as small difference and .06 (6%) as medium level of difference. The main small effects for the difference are found to be for the weekly access to Facebook usage (η^2 = .040) with higher 4%, age of respondents (η^2= .036) with higher percent (3%) and the educational level (η = .021) with 2 %. The small level of interaction effect for difference in religious motives for Facebook usage is found to be for the interaction of age and family system (η^2= .023).

Discussion

The study has contributed to uses and gratifications theory by researching the relationship between religious motives and Facebook usage. The small level of correlation is found between Facebook usage and religious motives among university students in Lahore. The difference in daily and weekly time patterns along with the diverse demographics of gender, educational level, social economic status, age and family system are also explained for the religious motives for Facebook usage.

Although there is small correlation between the variables but there is found to be the significant difference in the time patterns and demographics of students for these religious motives gratified through Facebook. Weekly access to Facebook usage makes significant difference for the religious motives for Facebook usage among students.
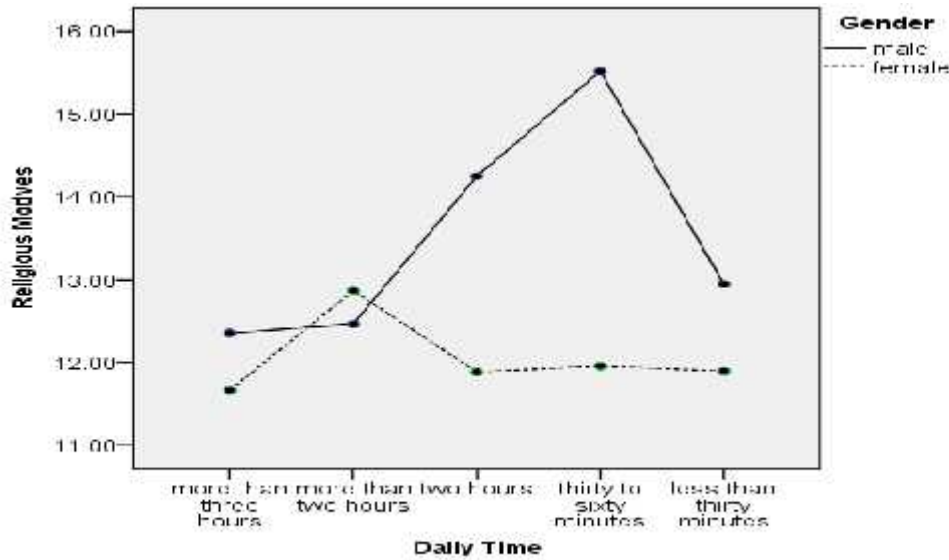

Figure 1. Difference in Mean Scores of Religious Motives for Facebook Usage for Gender and Daily Time

Figure 1 displays that male students are using Facebook for the religious motives more than the female students. The male students have the tendency for using Facebook for the religious motives from between thirty minutes and two hours. This inclination is evident from in the figure.
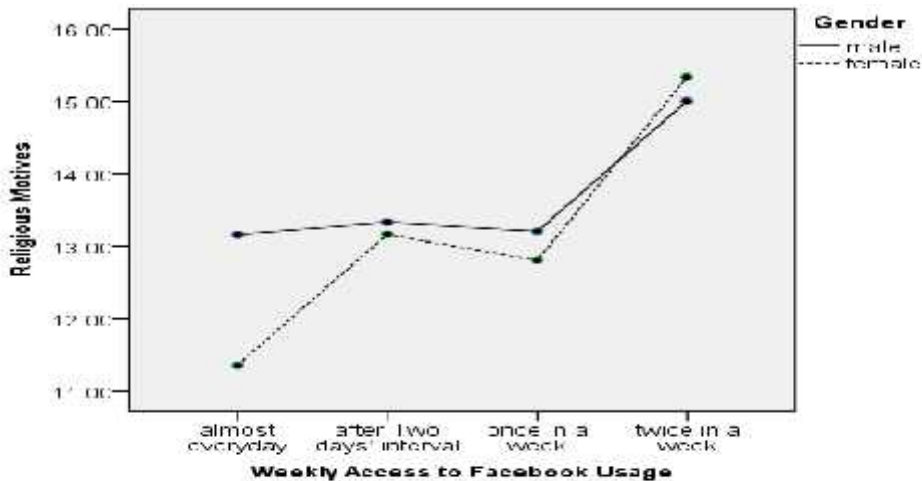

Figure 2. Difference in Scores of Religious Motives for Facebook Usage for Weekly Access and Gender

Figure 2 demonstrates the difference for Facebook usage for the religious gratifications on weekly bases among male and female students who use it daily and those who use it twice in a week. There is high mean score for usage of Facebook for religious gratifications among those who use this website twice in a week. There is a high mean score for students who use Facebook daily for the religious gratifications when compared with female students. In a particulate week male students are using Facebook more for the religious motives than female students but the difference is not significant. However, the findings are contradictory to results of Feltey and Poloma (1991) who have found that females in US are more close to God than males. These findings are also contradictory to results of Shahnaz and Wok (2011) who have found female gender using Facebook more than male gender.

The interaction of age and family also make significant difference with small effect size for the religious motives for Facebook usage among university students in urban Lahore. The main effect is visible for the senior age group.
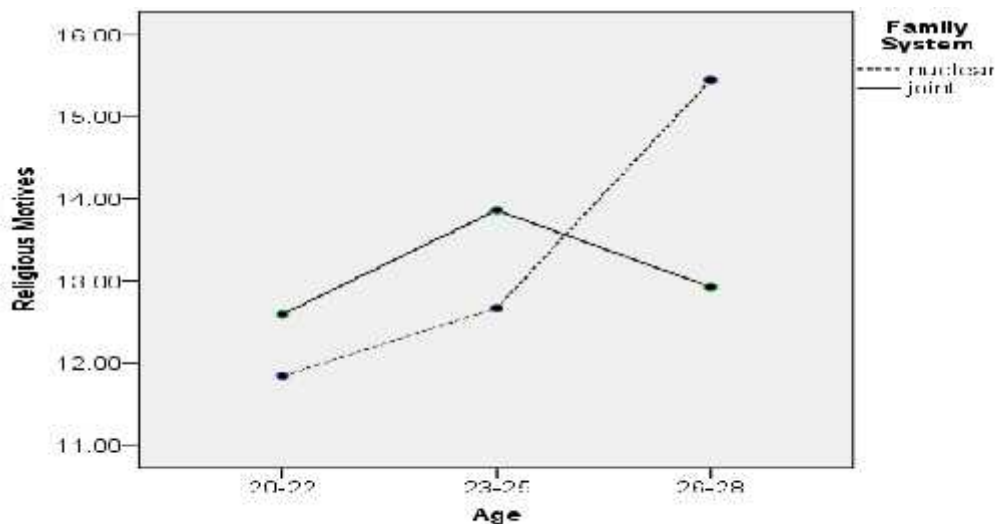

Figure 4. Difference in Scores of Religious Motives for Facebook Usage for Age and Family System

Figure 3 demonstrates the difference between two age groups (e.g. 20-22 and 26-28). There is a visible increase in Facebook usage for the religious motives among older age group when compared with younger age groups. There is an increase in Facebook usage for religious motives among older students who are between the ages of twenty six and twenty eight years who belong to nuclear families but there is a decline in the Facebook usage for religious motives among these students.

The level of education makes a significant difference with small effect size among students who belong to groups of bachelors and masters.
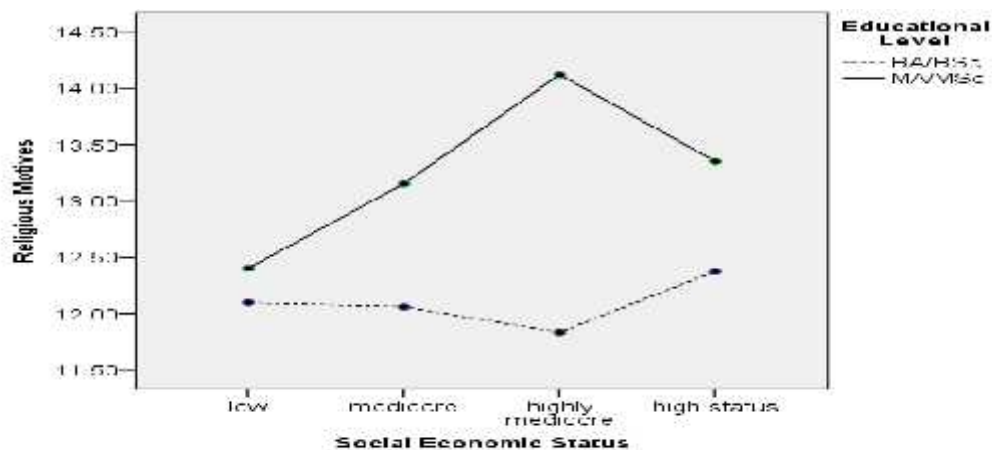
Figure 3. Difference In Scores of Religious Motives for Facebook Usage for Social Economic Status and Educational Level

Figure 4 demonstrates that senior students at the master level of education are using Facebook more for the religious motives when compared with the bachelor level students. It is also observed an increase in that usage among students of higher social economic status groups.

Facebook use is growing in popularity for both religious and non-religious purposes. It is interesting to understand the roles Facebook play in lives of people with Muslim faith. Gratifications of Islamic faith-based content satisfy needs beyond those fulfilled for a normal Facebook user. This study found uses of Facebook for religious gratifications for ministering. The students had used it to share wisdom from religious scholars; for sharing songs, videos and contents to advise others and for preaching people to do good things. The findings are consistent with the factor of ministering identified by Brubaker and Haigh (2017)for the religious Facebook motives. Students in Pakistan who are the Facebook users are sharing Islamic contents because they want to inspire others by offering spiritual comfort.

At the beginning of the study it was predicted that there will be medium to large levels of correlations between the variables of Facebook usage and the religious motives among university students because Pakistan is an Islamic country and majority of people here adhere to the religion of Islam. But, Facebook is a global medium and the small correlations of religious motives for Facebook usage indicate that university students in Pakistan are using this site for the religious motives but they are also using this site for other motives. It will be interesting to compare the religious motives with the non-religious motives with the help of secularization theory.

Conclusion

Although there are small correlations between the variables of Facebook usage and religious motives for this social networking site among students in

Lahore, however, there are main effects found for the difference in religious motives for Facebook usage for the variables of weekly access to Facebook usage, age and the educational level with small effect size. There is also found an interaction effect of weekly access to Facebook usage and gender with small effect size which makes difference in the religious motives for Facebook usage among university students in Lahore in Pakistan. The small correlation of religious motives for Facebook usage is an indicator that students are not only using this social networking site for the religious motives alone.

Suggestion/Recommendations

- Participant's social affiliations and increased level of faith on Islam should be studies in future by keeping present research as ground theory.

- Emergence of Religious beliefs and type of content serves as reinforces the positive behaviour towards religion should address in future studies.

- Vast population with different personal characteristics should be adding as research sample to increase validity of the research.

- Religious Attributes through other means of social networking sites should study to check their moderating role with Facebook users.

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