

Abstract

The present research was designed to develop and validate the construct of religious fanaticism and its impact on mental health. Research was carried out in three different distinct studies. First Study was an exploratory study to explore the construct of religious fanaticism. For this purpose, semi structured interviews were carried out with four participants PhD holder and rich knowledge about the construct. Thematic analysis was done and nine major themes were derived. Themes were, Idiosyncratic Beliefs, Necromantic, Sectarianism, social antagonism with Non-Muslims, Militaristic, Religio-politicize, Socio-cultural context, Religio-Political Thinking, Eccentric behaviors and Militaristic Powers. Second study was development and validation of Religious Fanaticism scale. Participants of the study were (N=1081) males and females students of college and university students. Four factors were derived through Principal Axis Factorial (PAF) with promax rotation, Sectarianism, Social antagonism with Non Muslims, Bigoted in beliefs and Modernity. Psychometric properties were established and score ranges were developed with ranks and percentile. Third study investigates the impact of religious fanaticism on mental health. Participants in this study were (n=60) institutionalized psychotic patients and (n=60) normal college going students. Score of the psychotic patients were high on this scale than normal population. Results of this study highlighted the positive relation between mental illness and religious fanaticism and there is no gender difference in religious fanaticism. Overall results of the research explored the construct of religious fanaticism and gave exact explanations of it. Results indicated that there were 24% moderate religious fanatic and 26 % severe religious fanatics are in general population. It is alarming situation. Results also validate that religious fanaticism in also have strong impact on mental health. The implications of the results have been discussed in light of cultural perspective.