Abstract

The present study aimed at exploring the experiences of Pakistani elderly people and to find out the determinants of death anxiety. In order to meet the objectives, the current research project was completed into two parts. Part I included a qualitative study. Sample of the qualitative study comprised of eight old adults. Men and women were given equal representation in the sample. A semi-structured interview technique was used to collect the data. Fourteen superordinate themes (viz., Recapitulation of past, Attitude towards aging, Transformed self, Religious growth, Sources of satisfaction, Major concerns, Coping strategies, Sense of achievement, Old age complications, Perception of community resources, Needs, Gist of life, Afterlife belief, and Death anxiety) were emerged during the analysis by following the guidelines of interpretative phenomenological analysis. Part II was quantitative in nature and comprised of 3 studies. It aimed at assessing the role of religious orientation, religiosity, afterlife belief and ego integrity as the determinant of death anxiety. Urdu translated Revised Religious Orientation Scale (Rasheed & Obaid, 2012), Short Muslim Practice and Belief Scale (AlMarri, Oei & Al-Adawi (2009), Ego Integrity Scale (Ryff & Heincke, 1983), and Arabic Scale of Death Anxiety (Abdel- Khalek, 2004) were used to measure religious orientation, religiosity, ego integrity and death anxiety respectively. In Study II, Short Muslim Practice and Belief Scale (AlMarri, Oei & Al-Adawi (2009), Ego Integrity Scale (Ryff & Heincke, 1983) and Arabic Scale of Death Anxiety (Abdel- Khalek, 2004) were translated in to Urdu Language by using forward backward translation method. Psychometric properties of all translated scales were ensured. In the Study III, Afterlife Belief scale for Muslims was constructed. Items were generated empirically. The scale was subjected to exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis on a sample of 504 individuals (235 men

and 269 women) recruited from different cities of Punjab, Pakistan. After exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis 16 items were retained with a 3 well defined factor structure of afterlife belief: positive, negative, and extinction. The alpha coefficients of the subscales ranged from .65 to .78. Convergent and discriminant validity of the subscales of afterlife belief scale was determined by finding its relationship with Pleasant Afterlife Belief Scale (Spilka, Stout, Minton, & Sizemore, 1977), Unpleasant Afterlife Belief Scale (Hui, 2012), Anxiety Subscale of DASS (Farooqi & Habib, 2010) and Belief in Equitable World Scale (Flannely, Ellison, Galek, & Silton, 2009). In Study IV, data were collected from 515 old adults, recruited from different urban and rural areas of Punjab (Pakistan). Men (n=304) and women (n=211), were given representation in the convenient sample. The age range of the participants was 60 to 93(M=65.3, SD=6.17) furthermore on the basis of age sample was classified into two groups young old (n= 397) and old old (n=118). Initially Confirmatory Factor Analysis applied on all the measures revealed good fit to the data and then other rigorous statistical analyses were carried out. Linear regression analysis revealed that ego integrity and negative afterlife belief were salient predictors of death anxiety and explained 14% and 11% variance in death anxiety respectively. Intrinsic religious orientation, religious belief and positive afterlife belief appeared also as significant predictors of death anxiety. Extrinsic religious orientation, religious practice and extinction dimension of afterlife belief appeared as non-significant correlate of death anxiety. Structural Equation Modeling was carried out through AMOS and results revealed that negative after life belief fully mediates the positive relationship of death anxiety with intrinsic religious orientation and religious belief. Results also revealed that negative afterlife belief mediates the negative relationship of intrinsic religious orientation and religious belief with ego integrity. Analysis also revealed

moderational role of gender in relationship of religious belief and extrinsic religious orientation with death anxiety while relationship of religious practice and intrinsic religious orientation with death anxiety did not appear as moderated by gender. Multivariate analysis of variance revealed significant main effect of education on negative afterlife belief and ego integrity. Moreover significant differences in extinction subscale of Afterlife Belief Scale were also found among different age groups. MANOVA also revealed interactive effect of various demographic variables on the variables of current study. Implication of the current research are discussed.