

## **Predictive Relationships between Religious Involvement, Community Involvement, Personal Values, and Moral Identity of Mizo Adults**

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### ***Abstract***

*Moral identity is the fulcrum between personal values, societal and religious obligations and comprises an individual's predispositions to act responsibly and is often determined to be closely related to psychological processes and behaviors. The present study aims to highlight the predictive association between religious involvement, community involvement, personal values, and moral identity. To meet the objectives 348 Males and 390 Females, ages ranging from 20-101, were randomly selected from different districts within Mizoram. The psychological measures as employed in the study finds applicability for measurement in the target population. The significant positive and negative correlation coefficients that emerged between the psychological measures warranted further analyses. The Structural Equation Model revealed direct predictability of the increase in community involvement to indicate decrease in moral identity, and the increase in religious involvement to indicate increase in religiousness, honesty, and intellectualism of personal values as well as the increase in symbolization of moral identity. Besides, significant indirect path emerges from religious involvement to internalization of moral identity: indicating the decrease of internalization through community involvement, as well as, indicating the increase internalization through honesty and intellectualism. The predictable increase of personal values and moral identity from religious involvement as well as predictable decrease of personal values and moral identity from community involvement are discussed and reserved for the target population, the Mizo Adults in Mizoram.*

**Keywords:** *Religious Involvement, Community Involvement, Personal Values, Moral Identity*

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## Introduction

Religion ought not be viewed as purely institutional but rather an important individual-level processes such as interpreting and constructing religious worldviews are central for child throughout adulthood pertaining to religiousness. It has been argued that religion is and has historically been a significant influence in determining a person's character and moral standards (Arthur, 2003). Religion plays a significant role in human existence and is likely to continue to do so in the foreseeable future (Williams & Berger, 1999).

Religion can influence human experience and generate strong symbols capable of conveying collective identity and community membership; religion 'binds' people together via shared beliefs and practices in order to establish a 'moral' community. The interplay of two components: subjective and behavioral, is characterized as religious involvement. The subjective component is concerned with the significance or prominence of religion in people's lives. The behavioral component is concerned with a person's religious activities. A rapidly increasing body of evidence indicates that more religious involvement is linked to improved physical and mental health, as well as improved subjective well-being throughout life (Ellison, 1994; Koenig et al., 2001; McFadden, 1995). Religious services and activities provide regular chances for social interaction between people who share similar religious views, as well as often shared social and political ideals (Clarke et al., 1990).

An important context for developing identity is involvement in religious communities (Good & Willoughby, 2006; King, 2003). King (2003) outlined three important ways in which religious involvement can serve as a context for identity formation. The first is as an ideological context, and committing to an ideology is essential to identity formation (Erikson, 1968). Religions intentionally provide systems of ideological beliefs that can help youth find meaning in life, make sense of adversity, and orient themselves in the moral domain. Second, religion functions as a social context for identity formation. Seeing others living religious ideologies, and experimenting with these ideologies themselves, helps youth experience and critically reflect on the value of such ideologies, thus aiding their integration into the youth's emerging (Good & Willoughby, 2006; King, 2003; Youniss et al., 1999). Third, religion also acts as a spiritual context for identity formation. Adolescents' engagement in spirituality provides opportunities to focus outward and connect with others—including God, fellow believers, and the world around them. It also helps them find meaning and purpose in life, locate themselves in a faith community with traditions and history, and more broadly understand their place in the universal and eternal scheme of things.

Involvement in the community, according to Abbott & McConkey (2006), entails having access to and utilizing community resources such as facilities, events, and mainstream services (e.g. doctors and dentists) and it encompasses both physical and social inclusion; however, social inclusion extends beyond physical inclusion to include relationships, membership, and

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belonging. As a result, people from all walks of life, no matter who they are, can feel a sense of belonging to the community (Bogenschutz et al., 2015). Individuals have a feeling of belonging to a community that transcends the concepts of community used by academics and engagement leaders. Additionally, they may have a feeling of belonging to several communities and their feeling of belonging may shift over time, affecting their involvement in community activities (Minkler et al., 2004).

Individuals are likely to judge people, acts, and events according to what is truly essential to them. A useful lens through which to view what is truly significant to someone is one's own value system. It has been demonstrated that personal values are effective predictors of a variety of attitudes, behaviors, and other variables, such as attitudes toward gender relations (Feather, 2004), consumer behavior (Grunert & Juhl, 1995), voting (Caprara, Schwartz, Capanna, Vecchione, & Barbaranelli, 2006), religiosity (Roccas, 2005), or personality (Roccas et al., 2002).

The relationship between a personal value priority and how they interpret, commit to, and engage with their social environment is, however, still largely unknown. It is widely acknowledged that people are basically social beings who plan their lives primarily around relationships (Brewer, 2004). Social scientists use the concept of values to describe both individuals (i.e., personal values) and cultures or societies (i.e., cultural values). Personal values are broad desirable goals that motivate people's actions and serve as guiding principles in their lives. They affect people's perception, cognition, and behavior over time and across situations. Values receive outsized attention in the everyday discourse of education, work, religion, and politics.

Personal values serve as a guiding principle in people's lives (Rokeach, 1973). Values are cognitive representations of basic motivations as goals to be pursued. People order their values into an importance hierarchy that expresses their value priorities. Values apply across situations and over time. Values are socially desirable; people can use them to gain cooperation in pursuing their own goals by communicating about them with others (Schwartz, 1992).

Moral identity is the conscious and subconscious self-regulating means by which each individual determines the moral and ethical standards for governing actions and choices as (s)he confronts the maze of complex situations of daily life (Burke et al., 2009). The criteria by which decisions are made are moral and ethical in nature because they reflect the values, priorities, and responsibilities which form a part of each person's relationships (Caldwell et al., 2021). Those relationships may be with other individuals or groups but may also be personal obligations that a person owes to herself or himself – as well as one's duties owed to God.

Moral identity can be defined as the mental representation of one's moral character held internally as a cognitive schema and expressed to others externally through one's actions

(Aquino & Reed, 2002). Moral identity formation is associated with certain individual characteristics, developmental contexts, and opportunities for moral action. Moral identity can be an important source of moral motivation (Hardy & Carlo, 2011a). Many investigations show that moral identity can be regarded as a predictor of involvement in different forms of pro-social behavior (Hart et al., 1998; Shao et al., 2008).

Moral identity correlates with moral actions, e.g., donating money to charities and altruistic helping, moral emotions and concern for out-group members (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Hardy & Carlo, 2011b). The becoming of moral identity can be regarded as the part of ego-identity development that influences moral actions (van Goethem et al., 2012). Moral identity can be regarded as the central construction of moral development. Strong feeling of moral identity will be more likely to do what they know is right, and more likely to show enduring moral commitments (Hardy & Carlo, 2011a).

The people inhabiting the state of Mizoram in the northeast of India are known as Mizos to the outside world as well as to the insiders. The word 'Mizo' is a generic term meaning 'hill men or highlanders'. Mizos are now practically all Christians and this being so, the Mizo culture also revolves around Christianity and the church playing a vital role in the life of Mizo which is in one way or the other connected with the Church and its manifold activities. One custom which has prevailed in the Mizo society is the spirit of what is called 'Tlawmngaihna' under which one is duly bound to help others. Everyone is required to be courteous and considerate in relation to others and be prepared to help, irrespective of one's inconvenience under all circumstances (Lalnithanga, 2005).

The Mizo society is a community-based society where an individual cannot exist in isolation and everyone has a role to play in the society. The communal life of the Mizo society is emphasized with the importance every individual, the humble and the great, have in contributing towards the development of the community.

Gradually, with the inroad of materialism in the face of economic development and prosperity, the spirit of 'Tlawmngaihna' is considered to be slowly dying out. However, a social organization which was established on the 15th June 1935 at Aizawl, Mizoram namely, Young Mizo Association (YMA) is making earnest and sincere endeavours to retain and preserve 'Tlawmngaihna' at all costs. The spirit of 'Tlawmngaihna' is still there in Mizo society and the YMA organization is the embodiment of this spirit and the perpetuation of the same is in its hands. Mizos, by nature, are simple, leading a quite happy life. They are contented with their lot and the society therefore is a close knit with no class distinction and no discrimination on the ground of 'sex' (Lalnithanga, 2005). Thus, with the spirit of Tlawmngaihna embedded in the mizo community, activities that require the services of the YMA in general had been and will be a part of the lifestyle in the mizo society.

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Mizo primitive religion's core elements determining what is and is not religious in a close-knit culture like the Mizos is challenging and the essential elements of the religion are what we can attempt to determine. The Mizo religion is essentially comprised of the following: the practice of sakhua; the belief in life after death and the "religious" hope of reaching heaven (pialral); the existence of numerous good and evil spirits and the associated sacrifices made in their honour; and the belief in the Supreme Being(s) (or Spirit). Although these behaviours and beliefs may first give the religion a completely unearthly appearance, it is important to remember that these practices and beliefs were driven by the society's strong communal value system and were inextricably linked to day-to-day activities (Pachauau, 2006).

The festivals held by the community, together with the moral standards and manners included in restrictions and other mystical convictions that govern and uphold the group's social life, function as resources and constitute elements of the religion. One may argue that because the communitarian character and values were so important, the religious demands were prescribed to fit the requirements of society (Pachauau, 2006).

The Mizo community has historically and now been distinguished by regular social, cultural, and religious meetings. A society is formed anywhere 10 or 20 of them exist. In light of this, the Mizo people can be described as a community with close ties in which members view other members as brothers and sisters and as part of a single, large family. In tight-knit communities, not only are individuals tied by blood, but also by culture, tradition, and even belief. In the past, people lived according to their own customs regarding home construction, village housing patterns, agricultural land management, offering sacrifices, clothing weaving, and other things. As a result, among the Mizo, living independently and being cut off from society was difficult (Laldintluangi, 2018). The Mizos' entire social life and thought process have been completely transformed and guided by religious organizations, either directly or indirectly, as a result of their intense devotion to and submission to their faith of which significantly changed their sense of values and moral identity. Thus, the study attempts to determine the predictive relationships between religious involvement, community involvement, personal values, and moral identity among the mizo adults.

## **Methods and Procedure**

### ***Sample***

For the participants of the study 738 Mizo adults (348 Males and 390 Females) between 20-101 years of age were randomly selected by employing stratified random sampling methods. Firstly, the sampling procedure resulted in the random selection of three districts (Aizawl, Mamit, serchhip). Secondly, from Aizawl district which is the capital city of Mizoram, three assembly constituencies were randomly selected followed by the random selection of one polling station from each of these constituencies were selected due its large share of the

proportion of the population. Finally, from Mamit and Serchhip district, each having only one assembly constituency, three polling stations were then selected by employing computer generated random numbers. The voters' lists derived from final electoral roll (2020) published by the Government of Mizoram were printed out for each of the selected polling station for representation along each stratum of the population and the Mizo adults 20 years and above (Santrock, 2013) were selected as participants for the study.

Informed consent was obtained from each participant and rapport was established and careful instructions how to complete the background information and the psychological measures were given with assured confidentiality to minimize the potential influence of socially desirable response sets. Thus, the background demographic information sheet along with the information sheet for socio-economic status (developed following the works of Kuppaswamy (1981) and Hollingshead (1975) adopted by Mohd Saleem (2020); Belief into Action Scale (Koenig et al., 2015) Community Involvement Scale (Staunton, 2001), The Personal Value Scale (Scott, 1965), and Moral Identity Scale (Aquino & Reed, 2002) were completed in the presence of the researcher.

The data cleaning process incorporate screening for incomplete responses, excluding outliers and social desirability responses. All the completed responses were carefully screened, cleaned, coded and analysis was done using SPSS package.

### ***Psychological tools***

1. Belief into Action Scale (Koenig, Wang, Zaben & Adi, 2015): consists of 10 questions, each rated on a 1–10 scale (except the first question, which receives a value of 1 or 10 depending on the response). The total scale score, then, ranges from 10 to 100. It was designed to increase the sensitivity in detecting differences in religious commitment by expanding response options so that both extremes of religiosity could be measured (from no involvement to a life centered on religious faith). The basis for the content of the BIAC is the importance of religion in a person's life.
2. Community Involvement Questionnaire (Staunton, 2001): It consists of 6 items and were measured on a 1 to 5 Likert scale (1 = strongly agree, 3 = neutral, 5 = strongly **disagree**). As a measure of community involvement, it is designed to be reliable for all people, regardless of age, disability, or other characteristics. The higher total sum of scores indicated higher involvement in the role and related activities required in the community to which the participant belong.
3. The Personal Value Scale (Scott, 1965): The personal values scale consists of four subscales: intellectualism, honesty, self-control, and religiousness, consisting of 4 items each to measure personal values on a 7- point scale responding to the statements on a scale from 1 = Strongly Dislike it and 7 = Strongly Like It. Intellectualism may be defined

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as individuals having the capacity for understanding, thinking, and reasoning. Honesty can be defined as the condition of being trustworthy, genuine and sincere. Self-control may be defined as the ability to exercise restraint or control over one's feelings, emotions and reactions. Religiousness is defined as the belief in worship of, or obedience to, a supernatural power or powers considered to be divine or to have control over human destiny. The four items in each of the four subscales were combined and averaged to form a single composite score to reflect overall intellectualism, honesty, self-control and religiousness.

4. Moral Identity Scale (Aquino & Reed, 2002): consists of two 5-item subscales: internalization (the degree to which the moral traits are central to the participant's self-concept) and Symbolization (the extent to which participants outwardly display a social identity based on the moral traits). It consists of a list of 9 moral character traits (e.g., caring) and respondents will be asked to picture a person with those traits while responding to 10 statements on a scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree).

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Demographics Background***

The educational qualification of the 738 participants comprises of Mizo adults who: 25% (n=186) completed their Graduation, 19% (n=142) of the participants completed their high school leaving certificate, 16% (n=115) completed their middle school, 10% (n=71) completed their post-graduation, 8% (n=61) completed primary school level, 3% (n=22) among the participants reported they are illiterate and 2% (n=12) completed their M. Phil/ Ph. D.

Furthermore, the participants from the present study having a diverse family background contributing from different socio-economic status (SES) wherein family income is coded based on the work of Kuppuswamy as modified by Mohd Saleem (2020) socio-economic scale updated for the year 2020 incorporated with occupation classification based on Hollingshead (1975). Thus, the SES total score was determined by several factors such as 'total number of family member having income', 'total number of family assets', 'total number of family household goods', derived from the demographic profile booklet designed for the present study and finally socio-economic status classification was then derived. The results (Table-1) show the different socio-economic status of the participants in the present study wherein 191 different Types of Occupation were included.

**Table-1**

**Socio-economic class classification from Family income (Kuppuswamy, 2020) of the participants.**

| Updated Monthly Family Income in Rupees (2020) | n          | Socio-economic Class |
|------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------|
| $\geq 199,862$                                 | 60         | Upper Class          |
| 99,931–199,861                                 | 113        | Upper Middle Class   |
| 74,756 –99,930                                 | 130        |                      |
| 49,962–74,755                                  | 124        | Lower Middle Class   |
| 29,973– 49,961                                 | 78         | Upper Lower Class    |
| 10,002–29,972                                  | 159        |                      |
| $\leq 10,001$                                  | 74         | Lower Class          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                   | <b>738</b> |                      |

**Table-2**

**The mean, standard deviation, and the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) as reliability of the psychological measures and the correlation coefficients of the psychological measures.**

|                          | Mean  | Std. Deviation | Cronbach's Alpha | 1      | 2      | 3     | 4     | 5     | 6    | 7 |
|--------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|------|---|
| 1. Religious Involvement | 53.42 | 13.3           | 0.78             | X      |        |       |       |       |      |   |
| 2. Community Involvement | 15.1  | 5.85           | 0.79             | -.27** | X      |       |       |       |      |   |
| 3. Religiousness         | 24.4  | 3.57           | 0.7              | .35**  | -.30** | X     |       |       |      |   |
| 4. Honesty               | 21.71 | 4.61           | 0.67             | .19**  | -0.03  | .14** | X     |       |      |   |
| 5. Intellectualism       | 24.17 | 3.71           | 0.7              | .21**  | -.11** | .22** | .24** | X     |      |   |
| 6. Symbolization         | 22.05 | 7.4            | 0.77             | .25**  | -.34** | .18** | 0.07  | 0.04  | X    |   |
| 7. Internalization       | 31.7  | 4.95           | 0.77             | .16**  | -.14** | .15** | .16** | .32** | 0.06 | X |

\*\* Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results (Table-2) show the mean, standard deviation and the Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) as reliability coefficient of the psychological measures of Religious Involvement Scale, Community Involvement Questionnaire, Religiousness, honesty and intellectualism subscales of Personal Value Scale, Symbolization and Internalization subscales of moral identity scale. It may be noted that the current study did not include the self-control subscale which is a subscale of the personal value scale because its Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) was less than .6. However, the other psychological measures used in the study are appropriate for use in the target population and all of their reliability coefficients fall within an acceptable range.

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Table-2 also revealed that Significant negative relationship between religious involvement and community involvement which shows that being involved in religious activities leads to a decline of involvement in the community which contradicts the findings of De Tocqueville (2003) that religion is a vital source of trust and community engagement. Durkheim (1995) portrays religion as an institution that nurtures solidarity by enforcing collective norms and offering believers a sense of purpose. A prediction emerging is that religious individuals, compared to their non-religious counterparts, will hold more cooperative attitudes and behave more pro-socially in the community. Stavrova & Siegers (2014), also show that individual religiosity is positively associated with charity work in the community. Bennett & Einolf (2017) demonstrate that frequent churchgoers are more likely to help strangers in the community at large.

Significant positive relationship between religious involvement and personal value (religiousness, honesty, intellectualism), as well as with moral identity (symbolization and internalization) which shows that active participation in religious activities increase personal value and moral identity. According to Durkheim (1947), to the degree that religion produces socially integrated communities, it will produce morally integrated communities. defined religion as a unifying set of beliefs that unite people into a moral community.

Significant negative relationship between community involvement and religiousness (subscale of Personal Value), intellectualism (subscale of Personal Value), Symbolization (subscale of moral identity) & internalization (subscale of moral identity) positive relationship between religiousness with moral identity; positive relationship between honesty & internalization; positive relationship between intellectualization & internalization. The significant positive and negative relationships between the psychological measures called for further analysis. The patterns of significant positive and negative relationships between the scales/subscales of the behavioral measure provided a strong support for further statistical analysis.

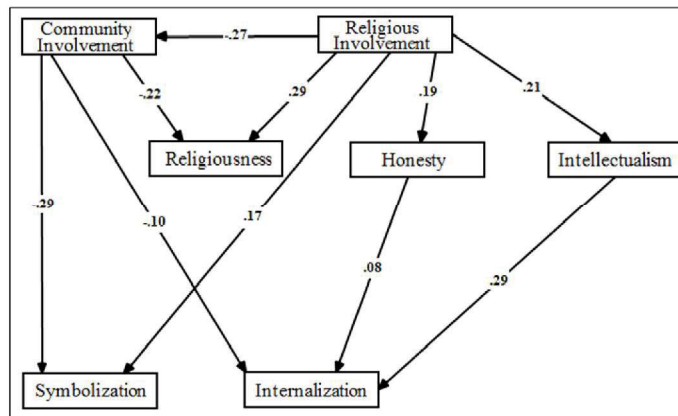
The demographic variables (educational qualification and gender) with the socio-economic status and the scores on the scales and subscales of the psychological measures (Religious Involvement; Community Involvement; Religiousness, Honesty, Intellectualism subscales of personal value scale; and internalization, symbolization subscales of moral identity scale) were subjected to structural equation modelling using SPSS 21 and Amos 21.

All the demographic variables including socio-economic status failed to provide any significant path in the structural equation modelling analysis.

The structural equation modelling for the predictive relationships between religious involvement, community involvement, personal values and moral identity revealed Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) = 10.943; df=8;  $p$ =.205 indicating that there is no significant difference in the relationships between the theoretical model and the data obtained for the study. In addition, the overall fit indices (RMSEA=.022) and other fit indices (IFI=.994; TLI=.985; & CFI=.994) warranted

the data fitting into the structural equation model. Supplementarily, to ascertain the direct and indirect pathways emerging from religious involvement and community involvement towards symbolization and internalization subscales of moral identity through community involvement as well as religiousness, honesty and intellectualism subscales of personal values maximum likelihood bootstrap analyses (2000 bootstrap samples; 95 percentile confidence intervals; and 95 bias corrected confidence intervals) was employed.

**Figure 1: The significant path with coefficients of the structural of the structural equation modelling for Religious Involvement; Community Involvement; Religiousness, Honesty and Intellectualism sub-scales of Personal Value; and Symbolization and Internalization sub-scales of Moral Identity.**



The results of the Structural Equation Modelling revealed (Figure-1) Significant negative direct effect from Religious Involvement to Community Involvement which shows that higher religious involvement predicted (Standardized Coefficient = $-.27$ ;  $p < .001$ ) decrease in community involvement. Similarly, Lam's (2002) found that being an active participant in a religious or church-related organization significantly decreased the likelihood of voluntary association membership and increased the odds of volunteering in a community-based organizations. Contrary to our findings no matter how the concept was measured, research has shown that participation in religious or church services is positively correlated with social ties and community support (Ellison & George, 1994), as well as a number of other civic and community involvement predictors, such as general volunteering (Becker & Dhingra, 2001; Ruiter & De Graaf, 2006) various types of community volunteering work (Theodori & Chyrel, 2008).

The analysis also revealed significant positive direct effect from Religious Involvement to Religiousness (Standardized Coefficient = $.29$ ;  $p < .001$ ), Honesty (Standardized Coefficient = $.19$ ;  $p < .001$ ), Intellectualism (Standardized Coefficient = $.21$ ;  $p < .001$ ), and Symbolization

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(Standardized Coefficient = .17;  $p < .001$ ) which shows that as one involves in religious activities it tends to increase religiousness and honesty which is a factor of personal value. Honesty has been linked with the value one places on the self, family, work and religion (Hyde & Weathington, 2006). Additionally, when one religious involvement increases it also increases the moral identity of the person hence it increases one's moral traits of internalization and symbolization. The relationship between symbolization and impression management and religiosity suggests that extrinsic religiosity and moral identity are likely connected. The very extrinsic definition of religiosity given by Aquino & Reed (2002) is that it is "a symbolic expression of a person's underlying commitment to certain moral principles." Nonetheless, there is a substantial and positive correlation between the two aspects of moral identity, which suggests that moral identity will probably be connected to both religious affiliation and activity ((Aquino & Reed, 2002). Intellectualism has been found to be an important predictor of religiousness and its attributes (Seldin, 1980).

The maximum likelihood bootstrap analyses revealed significant effect of religious involvement on symbolization mediated by community involvement with significant direct effect (Standardized Coefficient = .17;  $p < .001$ ), indirect effect through community involvement (Standardized Indirect Coefficient = .08;  $p < .001$ ), and total effect (Standardized Coefficient = .24;  $p < .001$ ). Regardless of the absence of significant direct effect from Religious Involvement to Internalization; significant negative indirect effect through Community Involvement as well as, significant positive indirect effect through Honesty and Intellectualism with significant total effect (Standardized Indirect Coefficient = .10;  $p < .001$ ).

Significant negative effect from Community involvement to Religiousness

(Standardized Coefficient = .22;  $p < .001$ ), Internalization (Standardized Coefficient = .10;  $p < .003$ ), and Symbolization (Standardized Coefficient = .29;  $p < .001$ ). People with high levels of moral identity internalization would be motivated by moral principles regardless of whether their actions would be considered public or private. Since these people do not need self-verification through appraisals of others in the social world and largely depend on their own sanctions, not violating the moral principles and simply an attitude of civic engagement in the community is enough to maintain self-consistency (Felson, 1985) which is also in line with the present study findings where higher scores on honesty predicted increase in internalization (Standardized Coefficient = .08;  $p < .031$ ), suggesting being true and honest with ourselves significantly increase internalization. However, for people high on moral identity symbolization, community involvement behavior may result from a desire to verify a significant aspect of self through reflected appraisals i.e. person's perception of how others see and evaluate him or her (Swann, 1987). Finally, intellectualism predicted increase in internalization, subscale of moral identity (Standardized Coefficient = .29;  $p < .001$ ). People with high levels of intelligence are better at reasoning and planning, are more competent at recognizing and

understanding situational signs, make intelligent choices more quickly, and are better at determining which approaches work best and typically view morality as being fundamental to their identity and self-concepts. (Gottfredson, 1997).

Contrasting findings emanates from religious involvement to community involvement: - Religious Involvement indicated the increase in religiousness, honesty and intellectualism sub-scales of Personal Value and Symbolization and Internalization sub-scales of Moral Identity. Increased religious involvement is likely to promote a closer relationship with a higher power in a variety of ways. Participation in religious ceremonies, particularly worship services, is a crucial aspect of religion that could influence this process. Taking part in religious rituals strengthens a person's faith in religious teachings. (Köhrsen, 2019). Religion also fosters human qualities that support and strengthen social connections, like honesty, forgiveness, gratitude, patience, and dependability. (Koenig et al., 2012) Increased knowledge of religion is a prerequisite for being an honest person, and the impact of religious activities would become the primary indicator of honest behaviour. (Ridwan, 2021). People with higher levels of intellectualism should be much more inclined to participate in religious services compared with those having lower levels of intellectualism, given social status and intellectualism are often positively correlated. (Nelsen, 1973). Family religious tradition is significant in determining the degree to which people pursue broad versus distinctive goals, while early religious practice in congregational and family contexts is primarily responsible for fostering moral identity concerned with drawing lines between right and wrong. (Graham & Haidt, 2010) Research indicates that parents' and other adults' attempts to instil religious values in their children have a significant impact on how they will behave religiously in the future. Numerous mechanisms, such as parental simulations of beliefs and behaviours, a desire to preserve peaceful relationships within families through religious agreement, ingrained habits, and a drive for moral identity consistency, connect religious beliefs and participation at different stages of life for both individuals and over time (Smith & Adamczyk, 2021)

The study also revealed that community involvement indicated the decrease of religiousness of personal value and symbolization and internalization of moral identity. Similarly, research shows that religiosity diminishes prosocial activity and trust in the community. Contrasting findings suggested that Berggren & Bjørnskov (2011), argue that individual religiosity has a negative correlation with fraud and a positive correlation with charitable giving in the community (Stavrova & Siegers, 2014), since group religious activities are nearly always socially mediated, active participation in religious groups may aid in the development of community involvement (Djupe & Gilbert, 2006). Contrasting to current study findings, Prosocial behaviours, a component of community involvement, have been found to be significantly predicted by moral identity in a variety of experimental and correlational investigations.

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Mizo culture largely dependent on their values for community involvement wherein they will go great lengths to help those in need regardless of their socio-economic status and background. The current study revealed that those who are highly involve in religious organization do not necessarily have high involvement in the community in the current study. Therefore, predominant antagonistic coexistence of religious involvement and community involvement in the mizo society

### **Conclusion:**

The traditional beliefs, values and social religious practices that the mizos have had ever since the olden times is that religious institutions played a vital role from childhood that shaped the lives of children growing up for every household. Different fellowships that are an essential element of the religious involvement inclusive of youths, women, men and regular religious involvement and participation in programs and activities had been one of the congregation platforms which enhanced the religious involvement of the mizo. (Lalnithanga, 2005) In a close-knit community, the mizo custom and social obligation 'Tlawmngaihna' a code of behaviour that requires everyone to be helpful, selfless, brave, helpful to others, and even self-sacrificing which represents giving of oneself for the benefit of others is central to the heart of the mizo community which is a forefront for the development of community involvement. Even though Tlawmngaihna is a very old value, it is still emphasized today Therefore, the strong foundation of religious and communal involvement could impact the Mizo people's moral identity and personal values (Pachau, 2006).

The major findings of the study that deserves reservation of the targeted population may be summarized as follows: Increase in community involvement indicated decrease in moral identity and. Contrasting to current study findings research indicates that moral identity can be thought of as a predictor of participation in various prosocial behaviors in the community ([Shao et al., 2008](#)). Moral identity is also associated with moral behaviors, such as charitable giving and selfless assistance, as well as moral feelings and care for members of other groups (Hardy & Carlo, 2011a). It is believed that volunteering and community service are two activities which can promote moral growth. Prosocial behavior is expected to evolve in community service and volunteer participants despite motivational variations. (Hart et., al, 2006; Ridwan & Diantimala, 2021) Whereas for the mizo, high community involvement decreases moral identity. Increase in religious involvement predicted increase in religiousness, honesty, and intellectualism of personal value as well as the increase in symbolization of moral identity. Being an honest person requires having a greater understanding of religion, and the influence of religious activities would take precedence as the main sign of honest behavior (Nucci, 2006). It is also observed from the study findings that significant indirect impact emerges from religious involvement to internalization of moral identity via honesty and intellectualism of personal value. In sum, the patterns of the interrelationships between

Religious Involvement, Community Involvement, Personal Values and Moral Identity revealed that Religious Involvement and Community Involvement that are antagonistic to each other manifested the predictable increase of personal values and moral identity and the predictive decrease of personal values and moral identity from community involvement.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

### **Ethics Approval**

Ethical review and approval were not applicable. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants prior to data collection.

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Nil

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