

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION AND PERSONALITY IN LGBTQI INDIVIDUALS

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Abstract

The links between personality and religious orientation have been studied in various religions and populations across the globe. However, an important limitation is that the relationship was not researched in LGBTQI populations. With this study, we aimed to fill this gap. 128 LGBTQI individuals responded to two questionnaires measuring the Big Five personality factors and the bi-dimensional model of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Religious Orientation. Our results show that men reported higher levels of Religious Orientation than women and non-binary participants. Neuroticism and Conscientiousness were significantly related to Intrinsic religious orientation, but only the former was a significant predictor of it. The results are discussed in terms of theoretical and practical implications.

Cuvinte-cheie: Personalitate, Big Five, Orientare religioasă, LGBTQI

Keywords: Personality, Big Five model, Religious orientation, LGBTQI

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the struggle for greater representation and more rights for LGBTQI individuals has increased. Many improvements were made as a result of legislative changes, whereas others have been forced by judicial rulings (Helfer & Voeten, 2014). As a result, there has been a lot of progress on the legal status of LGBTQI individuals, notwithstanding the pockets of setbacks and stagnation (Corrales, 2015). Historically, it has been difficult to reach LGBTQI individuals (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Kim, 2017), making scientific research on this community a daunting task. The legal progress and the increasing acceptance of LGBTQI individuals therefore present an opportunity to investigate various aspects, such as the interaction of religion and personality factors in these individuals, who make up a substantial part of our societies (Fredriksen-Goldsen & Kim, 2017; Gary, 2012). Since the interaction between these variables has been studied in the non-LGBTQI

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population (Aghababaei, 2013; Francis *et al.*, 2010a; Taylor & MacDonald, 1999), the omission of a study investigating these variables in the LGBTQI population makes this paper important.

Previous research has investigated the relationship between religious orientation and personality differences (Aghababaei, 2013; Buzdar *et al.*, 2018; Laher, 2010; Moltafet *et al.*, 2010; Robbins *et al.*, 2010). The designs of these studies differ, as do the specific variables measured, as well as the populations studied. However, we could not find any studies on the relationship between religious orientation and personality in LGBTQI+ individuals. Consequently, this paper set out on an important task to explore the nature of the relationship between personality and religious orientation in the LGBTQI population.

1.1 RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION

The bi-dimensional model of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Religious Orientation proposed by Allport and Ross (1967) has gained significant recognition. Allport and Ross (1967) explained that persons who score high on Extrinsic religious orientation are characterized by a higher tendency to use religion as a means to an end, to facilitate their personal goals. Religion to these individuals is utilitarian. According to Francis (2007), individuals who score high on Extrinsic religious orientation place their economic and social well-being above their religious beliefs and see religion as a means to facilitate the former. Intrinsic religious orientation is characterized by a true belief in religion, not as a means to an end, but as an end in itself. Individuals with this orientation internalize religion and every other thing becomes secondary to their religion (Allport & Ross, 1967). Intrinsically religiously oriented individuals value their religion as a way of developing a closer relationship with God for the sake of it. These individuals don't pursue religion as a means for personal or social gains. Although other models, such as the three-dimensional model of religious orientation (Intrinsic Religiosity, Extrinsic Religiosity, and Quest Religiosity) have been proposed (Batson, 1976; Batson & Ventis, 1982), they aren't without criticisms. Research has suggested that the conceptualization of Quest Religiosity is erroneous (Hood Jr & Morris, 1985). Others have suggested that Quest Religiosity is not a construct of religious orientation but rather measures non-religiosity as expressed by agnosticism or anti-orthodoxy (Kojetin *et al.*, 1987) It is the validity of these criticisms, as well as the wider acceptance of the bifactorial model that informed the decision to employ this model in this research.

Some studies have suggested that there is a difference between the male and female genders in religious orientation, especially regarding Christianity (Francis, 1997). The difference between males and females in religious orientation was also found to be statistically significant when investigated in a multid denominational context, with women being more religiously oriented than men (Flere, 2007).

1.2. PERSONALITY

It can be argued that the five-factor personality model has established itself as the dominant personality inventory in psychology. Taken together, these five factors – Agreeableness(A), Openness (O), Neuroticism (N), Conscientiousness (C), and Extraversion (E) - do a good job of capturing the essence of personality, as well as personality differences in individuals, and have been tested over time and on diverse populations (Terracciano *et al.*, 2006). Multiple studies on diverse populations (Hee, 2014; Morsunbul, 2014), using different versions of the five-factor questionnaire (Thalmayer *et al.*, 2011) have proven the validity of the five-personality model. Owing to its proven reliability over time and across multiple populations, the decision was made to employ the five-factor model for this paper.

2. THE CURRENT STATE OF THE LITERATURE (A MINI LITERATURE REVIEW)

This review serves to give the reader an overview of what other studies have done, as well as provide a detailed understanding of what is known about the relationships between personality and religious orientation. This section presents the findings of the literature review.

2.1. INCLUSION CRITERIA

A decision was made to only include peer-reviewed studies because they are an invaluable source of current knowledge in science (Spencer *et al.*, 2013). In addition, for a study to be included, it had to: (1) Be peer-reviewed and published in a peer-reviewed journal; (2) Be published in English; (3) Discuss religious orientation in the context of the Intrinsic-Extrinsic religious dimensions; (4) Discuss personality in the context of the five-dimension personality model.

2.2. RESULTS

Nine studies were selected for this review (Aghababaei, 2013; Buzdar *et al.*, 2018; Francis, 2010; Henningsgaard & Arnau, 2008; Hills *et al.*, 2004; Laher, 2010; Moltafet *et al.*, 2010; Robbins *et al.*, 2010; Taylor & MacDonald, 1999). A summary of the reviewed articles is presented in Table no. 1. The studies reviewed explored religious orientation and personality using self-reported questionnaires. A total of 3630 participants were included in the studies, mostly university students.

Table no. 1.

Characteristics of the studies

SN	Study	Country	Design	Sample characteristics	Measures	Result
1	Aghababaei , 2013	Iran	Cross-sectional, correlational.	n= 481. Two different samples of Iran University students. The samples numbers are 300(65.3% female), 181(66.9% female)	The IPIP-Big Five (Goldberg, 1999). Religious Orientation Scale Revised (Tiliopoulos et al., 2007), and the single item indicators of religious orientation (Aghababaei, 2012).	In the first sample, Intrinsic religious orientation had positive relationships with A, C and N. Extrinsic personal religious orientation had positive relationships with A and C. Extrinsic social religious orientation had a negative relationship with O. In the second sample, Intrinsic religious orientation had positive relationships C. Extrinsic personal religious orientation had positive relationships with A and C. Extrinsic social religious orientation did not correlate significantly with personality.

SN	Study	Country	Design	Sample characteristics	Measures	Result
2	Buzdar et al., 2018	Pakistan	Cross-sectional, correlational	N=400. Students of public sector university in Punjab, Pakistan	Questionnaire containing Religious Orientation Scale (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989), and Big Five Inventory (John & Srivastava, 1999).	Intrinsic religious orientation had positive relationships with E, A, C and O. Extrinsic personal religious orientation had positive relationships with E, A and C. Extrinsic social religious orientation had a negative relationship with E, A, C, N, and positive with O.
3	Francis, 2010	Wales	Cross-sectional	n=517 (134 males, 383 females). 70% were aged 18-19; 12% were aged 20-21; 6% were 30-39; 4% were aged above 40	Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (B. G. Eysenck et al., 1985), and New indices of Religious Orientation Questionnaire (Francis, 2007).	Extrinsic religious orientation is positively associated with N, but had no relationship with E. Intrinsic religious orientation showed independence from E and N.

SN	Study	Country	Design	Sample characteristics	Measures	Result
4	Henningsgaard & Arnau, 2008	United States	Cross-sectional, correlational	n=230 psychology students at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM)	The Big Five Inventory (John et al., 1991), Revised religious life inventory (RLI-R) (Hills et al., 2005)	Intrinsic religious orientation had positive relationships with A and C and a negative relationship with N. Extrinsic religious orientation had no significant associations with personality
5	Hills et al., 2004	Wales	Cross-sectional, correlational	n=400 (110 males, 290 women). 65% under 20 years old, 17% between 20-30	Religious Life Inventory (Batson & Schoenrade, 1991) and Eysenck Personality Profiler (H. J. Eysenck et al., 1992).	Extrinsic religious orientation is negatively associated with N, but had no relationship with E. Intrinsic religious orientation showed independence from E and N.
6	Laher, 2010	South Africa	Cross-sectional, correlational	n=91 (17 to 24 years old). The participants were 80.21%	The NEO-PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and the Religious Orientation Scale (Genia, 1993).	Intrinsic religious orientation had positive relationships with A and a negative relationship with O. Extrinsic religious orientation had a negative relationship with O.
7	Moltafet et	Iran	Cross-sectional,	n= 301 (110 males	The NEO-FFI	Intrinsic religious orientation had a

SN	Study	Country	Design	Sample characteristics	Measures	Result
	al., 2010		correlational	and 191 females).	(Hoekstra et al., 1996), Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale (IEROS) (Allport & Ross, 1967)	negative relationship with N. Extrinsic religious orientation had negative relationships with A and C.
8	Robbins et al., 2010	England	Cross-sectional	n=198 undergraduate students (100 female and 98 male). Mean age=42.4 years, sd=18.4	Allport and Ross(1967) measures of Intrinsic and Extrinsic religiosity, and Goldberg's lexicon approach to personality assessment (Goldberg, 1990, 1992).	No association between extrinsic religious orientation and any of the five factors of personality. Intrinsic religious orientation was only correlated with A, showing a positive correlation.
9	Taylor & MacDonald , 1999	Canada	Cross-sectional, correlational	n=1129 first and second-year psychology	NEO-PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992), Intrinsic-Extrinsic	A and C showed positive and significant relation to Intrinsic religious orientation. O showed a

SN	Study	Country	Design	Sample characteristics	Measures	Result
				students at the University of Windsor. 302 males and 827 females. Mean age= 20.98 years, sd=4.13	Religious Orientation Scale (IEROS) (Allport & Ross, 1967) , and a demographic sheet.	negative relationship with Extrinsic religious orientation and N showed a positive relationship with Extrinsic religious orientation

2.2.1 Conscientiousness and Religious Orientation

Most studies that investigated the relationship between conscientiousness and religious orientation found a positive relationship between the variables (Aghababaei, 2013; Henningsgaard & Arnau, 2008; Taylor & MacDonald, 1999). These results are contrary to Robbins *et al.*, (2010) who found no association between Extrinsic and Intrinsic religious orientations and Conscientiousness. Also, Moltafet *et al.*, (2010) found a negative association between Extrinsic Religious orientation and conscientiousness.

2.2.2 Agreeableness and Religious Orientation

The analysis of the relationship between Agreeableness and religious orientation was significant in seven studies (Aghababaei, 2013; Buzdar *et al.*, 2018; Henningsgaard & Arnau, 2008; Laher, 2010; Moltafet *et al.*, 2010; Robbins *et al.*, 2010; Taylor & MacDonald, 1999).

Some studies found a significant and positive correlation between Agreeableness and Intrinsic Religious orientation (Henningsgaard & Arnau, 2008; Laher, 2010; Robbins *et al.* 2010; Taylor & MacDonald, 1999). Moltafet *et al.* (2010a) found a negative correlation between Agreeableness and Extrinsic religiosity. Both Aghababaei (2013) and Buzdar *et al.*, (2018) found a positive relationship between Agreeableness and Extrinsic Religious orientation.

2.2.3 Openness and Religious Orientation

Laher (2010) found a significant negative correlation between Extrinsic religious orientation and Openness, as well as between Openness and Intrinsic religious orientation. The former finding was also replicated by Aghababaei (2013).

Buzdar *et al.* (2018) found that Openness has a positive relationship with Intrinsic and Extrinsic religious orientation. Taylor and MacDonald (1999) concluded that low Intrinsic orientation is associated with high Openness.

2.2.4 Neuroticism and Religious Orientation

Moltafet *et al.* (2010) found a negative correlation between Neuroticism and Intrinsic religious orientation. Similarly, Henningsgaard and Arnau (2008) indicate that individuals who score low on Intrinsic religious orientation have high scores on Neuroticism. A reversed relationship was found by Aghababaei (2013). Buzdar *et al.*, 2018, Francis (2010), and Hills *et al.* (2004) showed a negative association between Neuroticism and Extrinsic religiosity. Taylor and MacDonald (1999) found a positive relationship with Extrinsic Religious orientation.

2.2.5 Extraversion and Religious Orientation

Buzdar *et al.* (2018) found a significant and positive association with Intrinsic and Extrinsic personal religious orientations and a significant and negative association with Extrinsic social orientation.

2.3 CONCLUSION AND DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As can be seen from the above analysis, many scholars have tried to do justice to the subject matter, with different degrees of success. Analyzing the available literature, however, there is a glaring gap in the literature. While some studies have investigated personality differences and religious orientation, as well as other aspects of religion in samples of university students (Laher, 2010; Robbins *et al.*, 2010), or national representative samples (Stronge *et al.*, 2020), to our knowledge, no study has been done to examine the links in the LGBTQI community. As a result, the relationship of personality and religion in this population is unknown. This is the gap this paper seeks to fill.

3. THE PRESENT STUDY

The omission of LGBTQI individuals in the literature exploring the variables we are concerned with is not an omission of inconsequential proportions. A survey of adults across 30 countries revealed that 1 in 10 adults identify as LGBTQI (Ipsos & Advisor, 2023; Moreau, 2023). This is 9% of the world's adult population. It is not difficult to see why omitting 9% of the population in the available knowledge on the relationship between personality differences and religious orientation creates a glaring knowledge gap.

Together, these observed faultlines have created the need for this research as well as inspired its objectives. To distill these objectives into clear and concise statements, they are (1) to explore the gender differences between genders on the religious orientation scale; (2) to explore the relationship between personality based on the Big Five personality traits and religious orientation based on the bi-dimensional (Intrinsic/Extrinsic religious orientation) model in LGBTQI individuals; (3) to answer the question of how much a person's religious orientation is determined by their personality.

4. METHOD

4.1. PROCEDURE

Questionnaires measuring religious orientation and personality were used in this study. The questionnaires were administered in English and online, between 1st April and 12th June 2023. They could be completed in about 5–10 minutes, and completion is a straightforward process as the questionnaires were digitized in

Google Forms. The questionnaire was divided into three sections; the first section collected basic data about the respondents including age, gender, and location. The second and third sections contained the religious orientation and personality questionnaires respectively. The questionnaire was distributed on social media platforms, especially Facebook. All information in the form was collected under conditions that guaranteed the anonymity of the respondents, and this was made clear at the beginning of the form. The introduction of the form also informed the respondents of the reason for the research, informed them of their right(s) to withdraw from the study at any time, as well as provide a contact email address for use in the case that any respondent(s) wished to get in contact with the researcher due to any concern(s) arising from the use of the questionnaires. The questionnaire was engineered so that all the respondents confirmed their understanding and provided consent at the beginning before they could proceed with the rest of the form.

4.2. PARTICIPANTS

A total of 143 respondents filled out the form. 15 respondents had to be excluded from use in the final analysis because they responded “NO” to the question “Are you a member of the LGBTQI community?” In the end, 128 respondents were included in the final analysis. 47.7 % (n=61) of the respondents resided in Romania, 33.6 % (n=43) resided in Nigeria, 5.5 % (n=7) in Ghana, 3.9 % (n=5) in the United Kingdom, and the rest in various countries including Turkey, The United States, Poland, Cyprus, Kenya, Belgium, The Netherlands, Uganda, Greece, Canada, and Germany. 56.3 % (n=72) of respondents identified as male, 30.5 % (n=39) identified as female, and the rest (13.3 %, n=17) identified as non-binary. Their ages ranged from 18 to 55 ($M = 26.29$, $SD = 7.61$). 57 % (n = 73) of the respondents were Christians, 3.1 % (n = 4) were Muslims, and 39.8 % (n = 51) were included in the “other” category (this included the Atheist/Agnostic individuals).

4.3. MEASURES

4.3.1. The Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale-Revised(I/E-R)- (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989)

This scale is a revised version of the Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale, which was created by Gordon Allport and Michael Ross (Allport & Ross, 1967). As the name implies, the scale measures religious orientation based on the bi-dimensional construct of religion; Intrinsic and Extrinsic religious orientations. The revised scale is made up of 14 items, with 3 reversed scored items. All the reversed scored items form the subscale that specifically measures Intrinsic religious orientation. The scale utilizes a five-point response system, ranging from

strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). In total, eight items measure Intrinsic religious orientation, and six items make up the Extrinsic religious orientation measure of the scale. For this study, the psychometric properties of each subscale were analyzed. The Extrinsic religiosity subscale yielded a good Cronbach's α of .818. Initially, the Extrinsic religiosity factors produced a Cronbach's α of .511. After further analysis, items 10 and 14 were eliminated. After the removal of these items, Cronbach's α of the Extrinsic religiosity subscale improved to .797.

4.3.2. The Big Five Inventory (BFI) (John & Srivastava, 1999)

The BFI is a 44-item inventory created to measure an individual on their personality dimensions based on the Big Five Personality model (Goldberg, 1992; John & Srivastava, 1999). Its 44 items are short sentences or phrases, based on personality traits descriptions that are considered to describe the Big-Five personality (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness). These items are scored on a 5-point scale, from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), with some of the items being reversed scored. For this study, the psychometric properties of the scale were analyzed. The reliability of each subscale was good: Extraversion subscale (Cronbach's α = .759), Agreeableness subscale (Cronbach's α = .717), Conscientiousness subscale (Cronbach's α = .757), Neuroticism subscale (Cronbach's α = .767), and Openness subscale (Cronbach's α = .751).

The English-language versions of each scale were validated and were used according to the instructions.

5. RESULTS

We first present three relevant case studies for each category regarding the participants's religion (Christian, Muslim and other). For this, we randomly selected three participants, one from each category, and created profiles from their answers to the Intrinsic-Extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale-Revised (excluding items 10 and 14 which were removed from all the further analyses) and the total scores for Extrinsic and Intrinsic Religious Orientation (please see Figure no. 1). Participant A was included in the other category and was 27 years old, from Nigeria, and identified as a man. Participant B was Muslim, 32 years old, from Nigeria, and, in regards to gender, identified as other. Finally, Participant C was Christian, 22 years old, from Poland, and identified as a man. Participant A generally scored lower on the individual items and in total scores. Participant C scored the highest in both total scores.

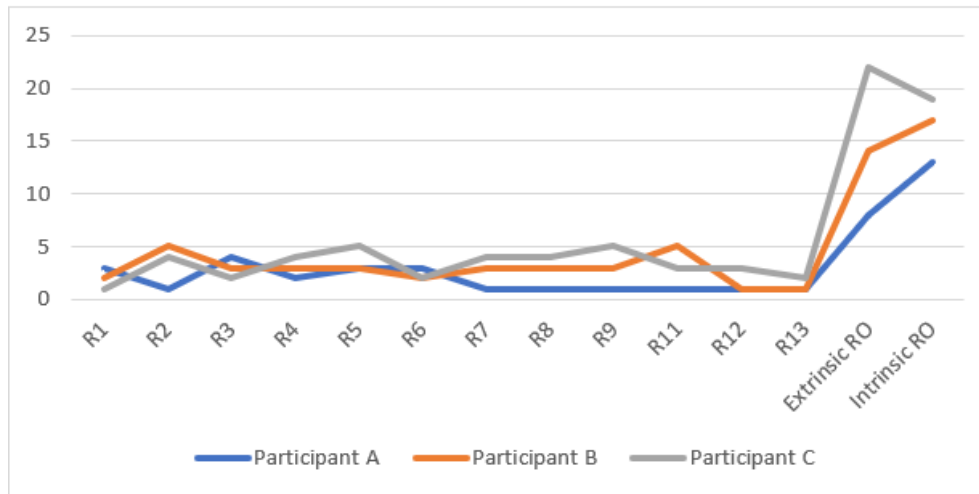


Figure no. 1. Religious orientation profile for three randomly selected participants

A One-Way ANOVA was used to determine if there are any differences in religious orientation, based on gender. The results were significant for both Extrinsic religious orientation ($F(2,125) = 9.89, p = .001$), and Intrinsic religious orientation ($F(2,125) = 16.98, p = .001$). The Post Hoc analyses shows that men have significantly higher scores than women on Extrinsic religious orientation ($MD = 4.16, p < .001$). There were no differences between men and non-binary participants and between women and non-binary participants on this religious dimension. On Intrinsic religious orientation, there was a significant difference between men and women ($MD = 5.33, P = 0.00$), with men displaying higher scores than women. There was a statistically significant difference between men and non-binary participants, with men reporting higher scores ($MD = -5.04, p < .001$). We found no significant differences between women and non-binary participants.

Next, we used Pearson correlations to test the association between the variables. No statistically significant relationship was observed between Extrinsic religious orientation and any of the personality factors. In terms of Intrinsic religious orientation, the results were somewhat different. A statistically significant relationship was observed between Intrinsic religious orientation and 2 of the 5 Big Five factors. Specifically, Intrinsic religious orientation correlates significantly with Conscientiousness ($Pearson's\ correlation = .210, p = .017$) and Neuroticism ($Pearson's\ correlation = -.241, p = .006$). The results show no statistically significant relationship between Intrinsic religion and either Extraversion, Agreeableness, or Openness. The results are presented in Table no. 2.

Table no. 2.
Means, standard deviations and correlations between the study's variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Extraversion	23.16	5.49	-					
2. Agreeableness	32.71	5.52	.17*	-				
3. Conscientiousness	29.72	5.83	.18*	.32**	-			
4. Neuroticism	25.57	5.76	-.37**	-.25**	-.39**	-		
5. Openness	37.20	6.02	.14	.38**	.19*	.06	-	
6. Extrinsic RO	12.34	5.22	.15	.03	.07	-.10	-.14	-
7. Intrinsic RO	14.16	5.66	.11	.05	.21*	-.24**	-.13	.67**

Note. RO = religious orientation; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Lastly, a regression analysis was done to test whether personality traits can predict one's religious orientation. Because significant correlations were only observed between Intrinsic religious orientation and 2 of the personality factors, only these 2 factors (Conscientiousness and Neuroticism) were loaded into the regression analysis along with Intrinsic religious orientation. As per the result, the independent variables significantly predict religious orientation, $F(2,125) = 4.990$, $p = .008$ (see Table no. 3). Moreover, the adjusted $R^2 = .059$ shows that the model explains 5.9% of the variance in Intrinsic religious orientation.

Table no. 3.
Regression analysis

Predictors	b	S.E.	β	t	p	Fit
Intercept	14.89	4.23		3.51	.001	
Conscientiousness	.13	.09	.13	1.47	.144	
Neuroticism	-.18	.09	-.18	-2.00	.047	
						$R^2_{aj} = .059$

When analyzing the model, the result showed that conscientiousness does not have a significant relationship with Intrinsic religious orientation ($\beta = .13$, $t = 1.47$, $p = .14$). However, neuroticism has a significant but negative link with Intrinsic religious orientation ($\beta = -.18$, $t = -2.00$, $p = .04$).

6. DISCUSSION

The first objective was the test the gender differences in religious orientation. The results show that male LGBTQI individuals score higher than females on both Extrinsic and Intrinsic Religious Orientation. This result was contradicted by previous studies in which women scored higher Extrinsic religious orientation (Flere, 2007; Francis, 1992; Pierce *et al.*, 2007). LGBTQI individuals show a different pattern than that observed in non-LGBTQI populations. One explanation for the findings in non-LGBTQI samples was that the women had higher levels of death anxiety, which made them more religious (Pierce *et al.*, 2007). However, LGBTQI men suffer from significantly more stigmatization, self-stigmatization, victimization and identity concealment than women (Bariola *et al.*, 2016; Bettinsoli *et al.*, 2020; Fasoli *et al.*, 2021). Thus, they can develop higher levels of death anxiety (Sarfraz *et al.*, 2022) which will reflect in stronger religious orientation.

The second objective of this study concerned the exploration of the associations between the bi-dimensional model of religious orientation (Intrinsic and Extrinsic religious orientations) and the five-factor model of personality (Extraversion, Neuroticism, Conscientiousness, Openness and Agreeableness) among LGBTQI individuals. Our results show that Conscientiousness has a positive correlation, and Neuroticism has a negative correlation with Intrinsic Religious Orientation. This result is supported by the available literature (Aghababaei, 2013; Moltafet *et al.*, 2010). Aghababaei (2013) considers that the link with Conscientiousness, which can be viewed as a moral character trait, and highlights one of religion's main functions, namely promoting personal stability. When Neuroticism is concerned, our results show that people who develop a true belief in religion and value their religion as a way of developing a closer relationship with God also tend to be more emotionally stable, and less anxious and self-doubting. It is, however, important to note that the links between Neuroticism and religious orientation were volatile in previous studies (please see Gabauer *et al.*, 2014 and Saroglou, 2002), and the current results can be an outcome of the particular sample. There was no correlation found between Intrinsic Religious orientation and the other factors of personality, nor between personality and Extrinsic Religious Orientation.

The last objective was to test whether personality can predict religious orientation. The results show that only Neuroticism has a significant effect on Intrinsic religious orientation, in the negative direction. In our LGBTQI sample, Neuroticism proved to be the stronger predictor of Intrinsic religious orientation, compared to Conscientiousness. Again, this can be a particular outcome for this

sample. Previous research found that organized religion can make LGBTQI individuals experience significant psychological and emotional harm (Beagan & Hattie, 2015). Thus, more neurotic individuals are less inclined to develop an Intrinsic orientation towards the religion that can be oppressive towards them. However, the more emotionally stable individuals might be less affected by the negative experiences with the organized religion and still be intrinsically oriented toward the religion (but not necessarily toward the organization).

6.1. LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

As has been mentioned earlier, this study is the first to investigate the relationship between the Big Five personality factors and religious orientation in LGBTQI individuals. Participants from over 10 different countries were included in this study. This diversity in cultures ensures that the differences observed in the variables are not just a cultural trait of LGBTQI individuals in a particular culture or country.

The current study has some limitations. The first limitation is the sample size. Due to the closed nature of the LGBTQI community based on safety and anonymity concerns, we could only get 128 participants for this study. The participants were majorly Christian, and other religions were not adequately represented. Future studies with more participants might increase the validity of the results. From a theoretical standpoint, other conceptualizations for the main variables could have been used. Batson et al. (1993) proposed a third dimension of religion - Quest religious orientation. Future research should consider this broader dimension, as well as other models of religious orientation. Also, other models of personality, such as HEXACO or Eysenck's three-factor models can be used (Ashton & Lee, 2007; Eysenck *et al.*, 1992).

The study can be useful to both practitioners and policymakers alike. The results here linking personality to religious orientation, provide a useful tool in the practitioner's set of knowledge to manage individuals who are having challenges defining their sexual orientation in a way that is compatible or least not antagonistic to their religious beliefs. With regards to policymakers, the results showing that certain personality profiles correlate with certain religious orientations show that religion can be important for LGBTQI individuals. Therefore, policies made to ostracize or punish non-heterosexual individuals based on religious grounds are poorly informed.

In conclusion, our results show that personality traits including Neuroticism and Conscientiousness are related to Intrinsic religious orientation in LGBTQI individuals. This can have noteworthy implications both in therapy, as well as in social policy development.

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REZUMAT

Legăturile dintre personalitate și orientarea religioasă au fost studiate pentru diferite religii și populații de pe tot globul. Cu toate acestea, o limitare importantă este că relația nu a fost cercetată la populațiile LGBTQI. Prin acest studiu ne-am propus să acoperim golul existent în literatură. 128 de persoane LGBTQI au răspuns la două chestionare care măsoară modelul Big Five al personalității și modelul bidimensional al orientării religioase intrinseci și extrinseci. Rezultatele noastre arată că bărbații au raportat niveluri mai ridicate de orientare religioasă decât femeile și participanții non-binari. Nevrotismul și conștiinciozitatea au corelat în mod semnificativ cu orientarea religioasă intrinsecă, dar nevrotismul a fost un predictor semnificativ al acesteia. Rezultatele sunt discutate în termeni de implicații teoretice și practice.