

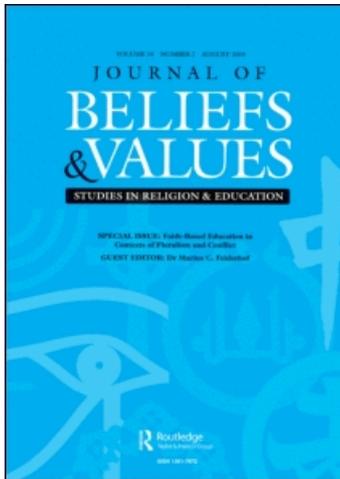
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## Journal of Beliefs & Values

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713429021>

### Muslim extrinsic cultural religious orientation and identity: relationships with social and personal adjustment in Iran

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Online publication date: 04 June 2010

**To cite this Article** Ghorbani, Nima , Watson, P. J. , Zarehi, Jamileh and Shamohammadi, Kadijeh(2010) 'Muslim extrinsic cultural religious orientation and identity: relationships with social and personal adjustment in Iran', Journal of Beliefs & Values, 31: 1, 15 – 28

**To link to this Article:** DOI: 10.1080/13617671003666670

**URL:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13617671003666670>

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## **Muslim extrinsic cultural religious orientation and identity: relationships with social and personal adjustment in Iran**

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Especially in Muslim communities, extrinsic motivations for being religious may include the use of religion to promote societal well-being. Iranian university students responded to statements designed to express an extrinsic cultural religious orientation. Four factors described this motivation, including Family and Social Order, Disorder Avoidance, Peace and Justice, and Cultural Foundations. Extrinsic cultural religious factors correlated positively with identity, displayed limited associations with personal adjustment, and broadly predicted greater social adjustment as reflected in measures of Individualist and Collectivist Values, Collective Self-Esteem, Empathic Concern, and Perspective Taking. The extrinsic cultural religious orientation also partially mediated the relationship between identity and social adjustment and slightly suppressed the association of identity with personal adjustment. These data confirmed the importance of examining the extrinsic cultural religious orientation in studies of Muslim and perhaps other religious communities.

**Keywords:** religious orientation; Iran; identity; social adjustment; personal adjustment

Research into the psychology of religion often focuses on a differentiation between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for being religious. As originally conceptualised by Allport and Ross (1967), an intrinsic form of commitment involves a sincere effort of the individual to make religion the master motive in life, whereas an extrinsic motivation reflects the use of religion for other, more primary ends. Through the years, various operationalisations of these two motivations have often, though not invariably, upheld the initial expectation of Allport and Ross that the intrinsic and extrinsic orientations would predict adjustment and maladjustment, respectively (Donahue 1985; Spilka et al. 2003).

Numerous developments have, nevertheless, led to increasingly complex understandings of the extrinsic motivation. Factor analysis has made it clear that extrinsic reasons for being religious are multidimensional (Kirkpatrick 1989; Gorsuch and McPherson 1989), and conceptual arguments along with supporting empirical observations have demonstrated that at least some extrinsic religious motivations can have positive implications for adjustment (e.g. Pargament 1997).

Greater cultural sensitivity may also be essential in efforts to understand extrinsic religious motivations. Especially in Muslim communities, for example, a normative assumption is that the religious and the nonreligious, the spiritual and the temporal,

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and hence the intrinsic and the extrinsic should not be separated (e.g. Moughrabi 1995; Murken and Shah 2002; Ghorbani, Watson, and Khan 2007). In a dialogue clarifying this kind of thinking, Shah emphasised,

Islam is not merely a religion, but a code of life. On the one hand, it establishes a relationship between the individual and his or her Creator and, on the other hand, it postulates one's relationship with the community and this world. (Murken and Shah 2002, 249)

In a theocratic society like Iran, for example, sociopolitical arrangements formally organise daily life around Islamic principles. A secular space of interaction is not promoted. The effort, instead, is to institutionalise the 'code of life' in religious terms and to make all of existence spiritual. Identity formation in such a cultural context would presumably make religious purposes centrally relevant in a wide array of so-called extrinsic motivations.

Previous studies have primarily described the dimensional complexity of the extrinsic religious orientation in terms of personal and social elements (Kirkpatrick 1989). Personal reasons for being religious include, for example, the attempt to achieve a greater sense of peace, protection, and happiness through faith. Social reasons refer to the use of religion in order to make friends and to establish wider social connections. Within Muslim society, however, such purposes may not exhaustively define extrinsic religious motivations. One study, for instance, developed preliminary measures of what might be called an extrinsic cultural religious motivation (Ghorbani et al. 2002). Items in these instruments expressed a desire to be religious in order to promote family and societal well-being. Representative statements included claims that 'my commitment to religion is based on the belief that religion is necessary if a society is to be moral', that 'family discord is the result if husband and wife are not sincerely religious', and that 'my life is grounded in religion because without religion society becomes inhumane and empty of love and affection'.

In general terms, the present investigation sought to clarify the extrinsic cultural religious motivation by reexamining its implications in Iran. One goal was to factor analyze the previously developed extrinsic cultural religious items in order to describe the principal dimensions of this motivation. Once this task was accomplished, we explored the psychological correlates of these factors. Central to this effort was the assumption that identity formation within a theocratic society would make extrinsic cultural religious purposes an important element in personal and social adjustment.

In exploring this idea, we conceptualised identity in terms of the developmental perspective of Erik Erikson (e.g. 1963, 1964, 1968). For Erikson, identity formation emerges as the critical task of adolescence, and addresses the need of each individual 'to integrate all identifications with the vicissitudes of the libido [i.e. the drives], with the aptitudes developed out of endowment, and with the opportunities offered in social roles' (Erikson 1963, 261). Avoidance of identity confusion requires the personal embrace of an ideology, 'the social institution which is the guardian of the identity' (Erikson 1968, 133). Indeed, Erikson argues, 'For it is through their ideology that social systems enter into the fiber of the next generation and attempt to absorb into their lifeblood the rejuvenative power of youth' (Erikson 1968, 134). Identity emerges as a focal concern during adolescence, but especially within the complexities and instabilities of the modern world, identity formation is a dynamic epigenetic process defined by precursor events earlier in life and by derivative developments later on (e.g. Erikson 1963, 269–74).

Central to this project was the assumption that the extrinsic cultural religious orientation reflects Muslim ideologies that attempt to ‘absorb’ future generations into the ‘lifeblood’ of Islamic societies. To examine that possibility, Iranian research participants responded to the Ochse and Plug (1986) Identity Scale along with measures of personal and social adjustment. This particular index of identity was especially germane because Ochse and Plug created their scale by using statements taken directly from Erikson’s description of identity. If the extrinsic cultural religious orientation reflects Muslim ideology, then it should correlate positively with an Eriksonian measure of identity. In addition, if both identity and the extrinsic cultural religious orientation point toward an ideologically harmonious integration of the individual into Muslim social systems then both should correlate positively with Iranian social and personal adjustment. Even more specifically, the suggestion is that the extrinsic cultural religious orientation operates as an ideology that moves Muslim identity toward adjustment. In other words, the extrinsic cultural religious orientation should at least partially mediate the relationship of identity with Muslim adjustment.

In summary, this project most importantly explored the implications of an extrinsic cultural religious orientation in an Iranian Muslim sample (Ghorbani et al. 2002). Procedures made it possible to assess the dimensional complexity of this orientation and to examine its correlations with identity and with personal and social adjustment. We tested three most important hypotheses:

First, the extrinsic cultural religious orientation will correlate positively with identity and with personal and social adjustment.

Second, identity will also correlate positively with personal and social adjustment.

Third, given the presumed ideological importance of extrinsic cultural religious motivations in the formation of identity within Muslim society, the extrinsic cultural religious orientation will wholly or partially mediate positive relationships of identity with personal and social adjustment in Iran.

## Method

### *Participants*

Students enrolled at the University of Tehran served as the research participants. An overall sample of 283 individuals included 186 women (65.7%), 92 men (32.6%), and five individuals (1.7%) who failed to indicate their sex. Average age was 21.2 years ( $SD = 3.3$ ). Participation in this project was voluntary, completely anonymous, and in conformity with institutional ethical guidelines.

### *Measures*

All psychological scales appeared in a questionnaire booklet that contained, in sequence, measures of Identity (Ochse and Plug 1986); Individualist and Collectivist Values (Chan 1994); Collective Self-Esteem (Crocker and Luhtanen 1990); Anxiety and Depression (Costello and Comrey 1967), Perspective Taking and Empathic Distress (Davis 1983); Self-Esteem (Rosenberg 1965); the Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation (Ghorbani et al. 2002); and Integrative Self-Knowledge (Ghorbani, Watson, and Hargis 2008).

Persian expression of the Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation and the Integrative Self-Knowledge items occurred during scale-development procedures (Ghorbani

et al. 2002; Ghorbani, Watson, and Hargis 2008). Translation of all other instruments took place in preparation for the present or previous projects. To confirm the adequacy of all translations, one person translated English statements into Persian, and then another translated them back into English. Meaningful contrasts between original and back-translated statements were few and easily resolved. Responding to the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale occurred along a 0 ('strongly disagree') to 3 ('strongly agree') Likert scale, and for Collective Self-Esteem, response options ranged from 0 to 6. All other measures used a 0 to 4 response format. Scoring of all instruments involved computation of the average response per item. All but the Collective Self-Esteem Scale had been administered in previous Iranian investigations and had displayed clear validity when used with such samples (e.g. Ghorbani et al. 2002, 2003; Ghorbani, Watson, and Hargis 2008).

Again, items from the Ochse and Plug (1986) Identity Scale came directly from the efforts of Erik Erikson to describe this concept in his writings. Representative statements (19 items,  $\alpha = .78$ ,  $M = 2.37$ ,  $SD = 0.54$ ) include assertions that 'I feel that I fit well in the community in which I live', that 'my worth is recognised by others', and that 'I feel proud to be a member of the society in which I live'. Reverse scored expressions of identity confusion are also presented (e.g. 'I wonder what sort of person I really am', 'I feel that what I am doing in life is not really worthwhile', and 'I feel left out'). All 19 of these Identity items appear in Ochse and Plug (1986, 1251). Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation items included 32 statements reflecting motivations for being religious in order to promote positive (e.g. 'I read the Qur'an to learn how to live with other people in the world') and to avoid negative (e.g. 'I am religious because religion is essential to avoid class divisions and warfare') societal consequences.

Collectivist Values (six items,  $\alpha = .77$ ,  $M = 2.87$ ,  $SD = 0.73$ ) included 'social order (stability of society)' and 'politeness (courtesy, good manners)'. Individualist Values (seven items,  $\alpha = .74$ ,  $M = 2.72$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ) appeared in support for such values as 'freedom (freedom of thought and action)' and 'a varied life (filled with challenge, novelty, and change)'. Reactions to each value varied from 'not important' to 'of extreme importance'. The Collective Self-Esteem Scale assessed positive self-evaluations based upon group membership. This instrument contained four subscales with four items each, with internal reliabilities ranging from .52 to .66. Given the lack of hypotheses for specific subscales plus the lower internal consistency for some of these measures, data analysis centred on overall Collective Self-Esteem as measured by all 16 items taken together ( $\alpha = .79$ ,  $M = 3.74$ ,  $SD = 0.73$ ). Illustrative of Collective Self-Esteem was the self-report that 'I am a worthy member of the social groups I belong to'. Empathic Concern (seven items,  $\alpha = .72$ ,  $M = 2.81$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ) assessed an emotional concern for others (e.g. 'I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person'). Perspective Taking (seven items,  $\alpha = .50$ ,  $M = 2.33$ ,  $SD = 0.57$ ) recorded a cognitive ability to see things from another person's point of view (e.g. 'I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective'). The lower internal reliability of Perspective Taking suggested a need for caution in interpreting data for this instrument.

Costello and Comrey (1967) scales measured dispositional Depression (14 items,  $\alpha = .89$ ,  $M = 1.33$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ) and Anxiety (nine items,  $\alpha = .74$ ,  $M = 1.73$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ). Depression appeared in, for example, the contention that 'the future looks so gloomy that I wonder if I should go on'. Exemplifying Anxiety was agreement with the self-report that 'I am a very nervous person'. The Rosenberg (1965) instrument

(10 items,  $\alpha = .69$ ,  $M = 2.08$ ,  $SD = 0.65$ ) served as a well-established indicator of global self-esteem (e.g. 'I am able to do things as well as most other people'). Integrative Self-Knowledge (12 items,  $\alpha = .80$ ,  $M = 2.57$ ,  $SD = 0.63$ ) operationalised active efforts of the individual to integrate self-experience across time. Illustrative of this adaptive psychological process was the statement that 'by thinking deeply about myself, I can discover what I really want in life and how I might get it' and the reverse scored claim that 'most of the time, I get so involved in what is going on that I really can't see how I am responding to a situation'.

### Procedures

Small groups of 20 to 40 students responded to the questionnaire booklet in a classroom setting. Factor analysis procedures involved the use of principal axis factoring with a varimax rotation. An eigenvalue of at least 1.0 served as the criterion for identifying a factor. Data analysis then focused on correlations and, for tests of mediation, on multiple regressions. Correlations included an examination of data for both the full Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation Scale and its factors. Multiple regression procedures followed the recommendations of Baron and Kenny (1986). Here, mediation is identified if three conditions are met. First, the independent variable must serve as a significant predictor of the potential mediator. In this project, Identity was the independent variable, and the Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation Scale was the potential mediator. Second, the independent variable must also predict the dependent variable in the first step of another multiple regression. Two dependent variables were examined, personal adjustment and social adjustment. Third and finally, the addition of the potential mediator in the second step of the same multiple regression should increase the overall variance explained and should eliminate or reduce the association between the independent and dependent variable. Elimination defines full mediation, whereas reduction reveals partial mediation.

### Results

Table 1 reviews the correlations among the social and personal adjustment measures. Negative linkages with Anxiety and/or Depression pointed toward all other scales as indices of relative adjustment. These variables taken together defined two factors. A first Social Adjustment factor had an eigenvalue of 3.24, explained 36.0% of the variance, and exhibited positive loadings by Individualist and Collectivist Values, Collective Self-Esteem, Perspective Taking, and Empathic Concern (see Table 1). The second Personal Adjustment factor had an eigenvalue of 1.54, explained 17.1% of the variance, and displayed positive loadings by Integrative Self-Knowledge and Self Esteem and negative loadings by Depression and Anxiety. We computed regression factor scores based upon these results and used these measures as summary estimates of adjustment in several subsequent analyses. The correlation between these summary factor scores was .12 ( $p < .05$ ).

Examination of the 32 items of the Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation Scale ( $\alpha = .97$ ,  $M = 1.76$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ) yielded four factors. Sixteen items with loadings greater than .30 defined the first factor (eigenvalue = 17.4, variance explained = 54.4%). Illustrating this Family and Social Order measure were self-reports that 'I am religious because family life becomes unhealthy if it is not based upon religion' and that 'my commitment to religion is based upon the belief that religion is necessary if society is

Table 1. Correlations among and factor analysis of social and personal adjustment measures.

Measures	Correlations									Factors	
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	1	2
1. Individualist Values	–	.47**	.26**	-.02	-.21**	.06	.20**	.26**	.31**	<b>.53</b>	.07
2. Collectivist Values		–	.41**	.01	-.26**	.08	.16**	.33**	.44**	<b>.76</b>	.01
3. Collective Self-Esteem			–	-.15*	-.50**	.33**	.38**	.30**	.43**	<b>.51</b>	.39
4. Anxiety				–	.47**	-.19**	-.42**	-.17**	-.07	.10	<b>-.59</b>
5. Depression					–	-.33**	-.56**	-.28**	-.33**	-.27	<b>-.73</b>
6. Self-Esteem						–	.26**	.23**	.14*	.15	<b>.39</b>
7. Integrative Self-Knowledge							–	.44**	.25**	.22	<b>.68</b>
8. Perspective Taking								–	.44**	<b>.44</b>	.35
9. Empathic Concern									–	<b>.61</b>	.20

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

to be moral'. Five items loaded on a second Disorder Avoidance factor (eigenvalue = 1.40, variance explained = 4.36%), which included such assertions as 'religion is necessary to avoid divorce and disintegration of the family' and 'most of the problems of society result from the failure of people to be sincerely religious'. Peace and Justice described the five items of the third factor (eigenvalue = 1.20, variance explained = 3.74%). Exemplifying these two themes were self-reports that 'my religious activities are motivated by a belief that religion helps prevent poverty and injustice in the world' and that 'my motivation for being religious is a desire to develop a human society that is peaceful, just, and happy'. The six statements of the final Cultural Foundations factor (eigenvalue = 1.02, variance explained = 3.18%) included, for example, claims that 'a major goal of my religion is to support good social relationships in society' and that 'underlying my faith is the belief that religion is essential to the moral development of the society'. (All items for each factor are presented in the Appendix.)

Correlations among the four Extrinsic Cultural Religious factors were high, ranging from .68 ( $p < .01$ ) between Disorder Avoidance ( $\alpha = .78$ ,  $M = 1.81$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ) and Peace and Justice ( $\alpha = .88$ ,  $M = 1.77$ ,  $SD = 0.79$ ) to .82 ( $p < .01$ ) between Cultural Foundations ( $\alpha = .88$ ,  $M = 1.66$ ,  $SD = 0.77$ ) and Family and Social Order ( $\alpha = .96$ ,  $M = 1.78$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ). Indeed, factor analysis demonstrated that all four measures loaded .80 or greater on a single higher order factor. Each of the Extrinsic Cultural Religious measures also correlated positively and similarly with the Identity Scale. This relationship was .28 for the full scale, .26 for Family and Social Order, .25 for Disorder Avoidance, .27 for Peace and Justice, and .26 for Cultural Foundations ( $p < .01$ ).

Table 2 presents the correlations of the Identity and Extrinsic Cultural Religious variables with all other scales. For Identity, only the linkage with Individualist Values failed to reach conventional levels of statistical significance. Correlations with the summary factor scores revealed an overall positive association of Identity with both Social (.30,  $p < .01$ ) and Personal (.57,  $p < .01$ ) Adjustment.

The Extrinsic Cultural Religious Scale and factors displayed generally comparable relationships with all other measures. The full scale and all four factors correlated positively with Individualist and Collectivist Values, Collective Self-Esteem, Perspective Taking, and Empathic Concern; negatively with Depression; and non-significantly with Anxiety. Only Peace and Justice predicted higher Self-Esteem, and only Disorder Avoidance correlated positively with Integrative Self-Knowledge. Relationships with the Social Adjustment factor scores ranged from .50 ( $p < .01$ ) for Disorder Avoidance to .41 ( $p < .01$ ) for Cultural Foundations. All relationships with the Personal Adjustment factor score were weakly positive and nonsignificant, ranging from .02 to .10.

Did the extrinsic cultural religious orientation mediate the relationship between identity and adjustment? As required for evidence of mediation (Baron and Kenny 1986), the independent variable Identity predicted the Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation as the potential mediator ( $\beta = .28$ ,  $p < .01$ ). When Social Adjustment served as the dependent variable, Identity was a significant predictor on the first step ( $\beta = .30$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and this effect was reduced but not eliminated ( $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < .01$ ) when the Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation Scale was added as a reliable predictor on the second step ( $\beta = .44$ ,  $p < .01$ ). A Sobel test revealed significant mediation ( $Z = 4.23$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

When Personal Adjustment was the dependent variable, Identity again served as a significant predictor on the first step ( $\beta = .57$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Adding the Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation Scale on the second step did increase the variance explained ( $\Delta R^2 = .01$ ;  $\Delta F [1, 270] = 4.83$ ,  $p < .05$ ); however, the significant Extrinsic Cultural

Table 2. Correlations of identity and extrinsic cultural religious measures with indices of social and personal adjustment.

Measures	Identity Scale	Extrinsic Scale	Family and Social Order	Disorder Avoidance	Peace and Justice	Cultural Foundations
Individualist Values	.11	.16**	.12*	.19**	.16**	.18**
Collectivist Values	.29**	.55**	.52**	.50**	.49**	.48**
Collective Self-Esteem	.49**	.25**	.22**	.26**	.25**	.22**
Anxiety	-.41**	.01	.03	.01	.01	-.05
Depression	-.59**	-.22**	-.18**	-.25**	-.16**	-.23**
Self-Esteem	.34**	.11	.09	.10	.12*	.10
Integrative Self-Knowledge	.45**	.09	.06	.14*	.09	.09
Perspective Taking	.21**	.19**	.13*	.25**	.22**	.18**
Empathic Concern	.29**	.35**	.31**	.43**	.34**	.26**

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$

Religious contribution to the prediction equation was negative ( $\beta = -.11, p < .05$ ) and was associated with a slightly more robust positive effect for Identity ( $\beta = .60, p < .01$ ). In other words, evidence of an Extrinsic Cultural Religious suppression rather than mediation appeared when Personal Adjustment served as the dependent variable. All of these multiple regression results remained essentially unchanged in procedures that controlled for age and gender in an added first step.

## Discussion

Much research into religious motivation has focused on personal and social forms of extrinsic commitment, but the present investigation identified an extrinsic cultural religious orientation as a potentially noteworthy concern in Muslim society. As hypothesised, factors defining this orientation correlated positively with a personal sense of identity within the theocratic society of Iran. These factors also predicted higher levels of a broad array of social adjustment variables, including Individualist and Collectivist Values, Collective Self-Esteem, Empathic Concern, and Perspective Taking. Relationships with indices of personal adjustment were less extensive; although, all four Extrinsic Cultural Religious factors did correlate negatively with Depression. A few linkages also appeared with greater Self-Esteem and Integrative Self-Knowledge. Finally, the Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation did, as predicted, partially mediate the Identity relationship with Social Adjustment. Perhaps more than any other finding, this finding of partial mediation usefully supported the contention that 'Islam is not merely a religion, but a code of life [that] ... postulates one's relationship with the community and this world' (Murken and Shah 2002, 249).

Perhaps equally important was evidence suggesting a delimited role for the extrinsic cultural religious orientation. This orientation in the theocratic society of Iran did not correlate with the overall Personal Adjustment measure, and it seemed to suppress rather than mediate the relationship between Identity and Personal Adjustment. Although not predicted, such outcomes perhaps pointed toward the discriminative validity of the Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation Scale in that an explicitly cultural expression of religious commitment was more strongly supportive of social than personal functioning. Such findings, however, cannot mean that all extrinsic religious motivations are irrelevant to Muslim personal adjustment. Numerous studies have identified the Extrinsic Personal factor as a clear correlate of psychological adjustment in Muslim samples (Ghorbani, Watson, and Khan 2007). Future research, therefore, might examine the possibility that the Extrinsic personal orientation displays discriminative validity by correlating more strongly with personal than with social functioning.

Evidence of at least some delimitation also appeared in the fact that the extrinsic cultural religious orientation failed to fully mediate the identity relationship with social adjustment. This outcome perhaps meant that additional work is necessary in order to more exhaustively operationalise the extrinsic cultural religious motivation. Perhaps more likely, however, is the possibility that full mediation requires the identification of other completely different influences on Iranian identity formation. Persian nationalism, for example, could be important. In addition, this study examined Iranian university students in whom support for more democratic 'reformist' perspectives may have been especially prominent. Future research may, therefore, need to examine whether full mediation of this relationship depends upon an accounting of multiple mediators that may include the extrinsic cultural religious

orientation, Persian nationalism, democratic political commitments, and perhaps other factors as well.

Unexpected was the finding that the extrinsic cultural religious orientation at least slightly suppressed the connection between identity and personal adjustment. Suppression effects are controversial with the suggestion sometimes made that they represent a statistical artifact (Pearl 2000). The suppression effect observed with this sample could, nevertheless, have had meaningful implications. Within a theocracy, normative social forces like those operationalised by the Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation Scale may more strongly privilege identity formation through processes of social rather than personal adjustment. Linkages of a sense of identity with personal adjustment may, therefore, reflect processes that stand outside of and perhaps somewhat in opposition to normative cultural tendencies toward collectivism. In such circumstances, an extrinsic cultural religious orientation might tend to suppress a sense of identity that manifests itself more strongly through personal than through social forms of adjustment. Such an explanation is admittedly post hoc and speculative, but may deserve additional attention in future research.

Extrinsic cultural religious factors could be of interest in a wide range of additional investigations. Relative to prominent Western research perspectives, that interest might focus on possible 'reactionary' tendencies. One Family and Social Order item says, for instance, 'Everyone should be religious because if children are not taught to be religious, they will not respect their parents'. Another adds, 'My commitment to religion is based on the belief that religion is necessary if a society is to be moral'. For some, such statements may point toward authoritarianism and fundamentalism. At the same time, however, it might be important to remember that the Family and Social Order and other factors also displayed robust positive correlations with the Peace and Justice factor. In addition to the two previously mentioned items, Peace and Justice included statements that 'the most important aim of my commitment to religion is to promote peace and justice in human society', that 'the true purpose of my religion is to help create a more just world', and that 'my religious faith is motivated by a desire to work against hate and prejudice in the world'. Such beliefs may seem incompatible with problematic forms of authoritarianism and fundamentalism and may therefore deserve empirical scrutiny as possible Muslim foundations for tolerance and nonviolence.

Conclusions based upon these data must remain sensitive to the obvious limitations of this project. Most important was the use of university students as the research participants. Already mentioned was the possibility that 'reformist' perspectives might be stronger in students than in other Iranian groups. The extrinsic cultural religious orientation might, for example, correlate more strongly with personal adjustment and might fully mediate the identity relationship with social adjustment in samples selected from other segments of the Iranian population. In addition, Islamic societies may vary in their dynamics of adjustment, and different results might appear in other Muslim countries. The responding of minority Muslim communities in completely different types of societies might also display noteworthy contrasts. Finally, this analysis of the extrinsic cultural religious orientation spotlighted Muslim commitments, but similar motivations may be evident in other religious populations as well. Indeed, extrinsic cultural religious items were developed using American Christian as well as Iranian Muslim samples, and in these Christians, extrinsic cultural religious items predicted higher scores on the Allport and Ross (1967) Religious Orientation Scales (Ghorbani et al. 2002). Full understandings of the extrinsic cultural

religious orientation may, therefore, require considerable additional research in both Islamic and other religious communities.

In summary, this project pointed toward the importance of an extrinsic cultural religious orientation in Muslim society. Correlations of this scale with an Eriksonian measure of identity seemed consistent with the idea that extrinsic cultural reasons for being religious supply an ideological foundation for integrating individuals into Muslim society. Additional support for that suggestion came in the finding that the extrinsic cultural religious orientation partially mediated the relationship between identity and social adjustment. Greater awareness of this motivation may encourage the analysis of a whole range of potentially intriguing empirical questions. Perhaps especially interesting will be the possibility that in at least some Muslim samples, this orientation will be associated not only with authoritarianism and fundamentalism, but also with tolerance and beliefs in nonviolence. These and many other issues related to the extrinsic cultural religious orientation seem to deserve sustained research consideration.

### Notes on contributors

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## Appendix. Items from four factors of Extrinsic Cultural Religious Orientation Scale (Item (Factor Loading))

### *Family and Social Order*

- (1) I am religious because family life becomes unhealthy if it is not based upon religion. (.71)
- (2) I am religious because I do not want to have an unhappy marriage. (.68)
- (3) Everyone should be religious because if children are not taught to be religious, they will not respect their parents. (.66)
- (4) A family that worships God together will be happy, and that is the most important reason why I am religious. (.66)
- (5) A religious life is important because it promotes better family relationships. (.65)
- (6) My commitment to religion is based on the belief that religion is necessary if a society is to be moral. (.65)
- (7) I am religious because religion is so important in preventing crime and other social disorders, and I want to contribute in this cultural effort. (.64)
- (8) All in the society should be religious so that children will be encouraged to respect their parents. (.63)
- (9) Family discord is the result if husband and wife are not sincerely religious. (.59)
- (10) In order to prevent and control criminal behaviour, society must support religion. (.58)
- (11) I am religious because I believe religion is a necessary element in a loving marriage. (.58)
- (12) Being religious is essential because a happy family life depends upon sincere religious commitment. (.54)
- (13) I am religious because religion is essential to avoid class divisions and warfare. (.54)
- (14) I follow the teachings of my religion as a way to help solve social problems. (.53)
- (15) I am religious because I know that religion is necessary to teach children to respect their parents. (.53)
- (16) I am religious because I want to make my small contribution to the improved relationships within a religious society. (.52)

### *Disorder Avoidance*

- (1) Religion is necessary to avoid divorce and disintegration of the family. (.58)
- (2) Most of the problems of society result from the failure of people to be sincerely religious. (.55)
- (3) From my point of view, religion is a gift from God to humanity that is designed to make the world a better place in which to live. (.52)
- (4) My life is grounded in religion because without religion society becomes inhumane and empty of love and affection. (.51)
- (5) If I were not religious, I would contribute to cultural processes that would weaken my society. (.36)

### *Peace and Justice*

- (1) My religious activities are motivated by a belief that religion helps prevent poverty and injustice in the world. (.65)
- (2) My motivation for being religious is a desire to develop a human society that is peaceful, just, and happy. (.64)
- (3) The most important aim of my commitment to religion is to promote peace and justice in human society. (.61)
- (4) The true purpose of my religion is to help create a more just world. (.57)
- (5) My religious faith is motivated by a desire to work against hate and prejudice in the world. (.51)

***Cultural Foundations***

- (1) A major goal of my religion is to support the establishment of good social relationships in society. (.65)
- (2) Underlying my faith is the belief that religion is essential to the moral development of the society. (.64)
- (3) If the people fail to be religious, a society cannot survive, and this largely explains why I am religious. (.55)
- (4) A lack of religion produces many difficulties within a society, and this is an important reason why I am religious. (.53)
- (5) I am religious because I know that the loss of religious life leads to the decline of civilization and culture. (.48)
- (6) I read the Qur'an to learn how to live with other people in the world. (.33)