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Religious fundamentalism in Iran: Religious and psychological adjustment within a Muslim cultural context

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Abstract

This first analysis of the Religious Fundamentalism Scale in Iran further examined findings that conservative religious commitments have positive adjustment implications outside the West. Religious Fundamentalism in a sample of 385 Iranian university students displayed direct relationships with Muslim religiosity and spirituality and correlated positively with the Transcendence and negatively with the Symbolism Post-Critical Beliefs (PCB) factors. Religious Fundamentalism, and conservative religiosity more generally, predicted better mental health in relationship with variables related to self-regulation, narcissism, and splitting. PCB factors defined a fundamentalist attitude of Literal Affirmation that also displayed some linkages with more adaptive psychological functioning. Iranians who self-identified as “both religious and spiritual” were more conservative religiously and more adjusted psychologically than three other religious-spiritual types. Conservative religiosity did predict the maladjustment of Exploitable Dependency. These data further suggested that conservative religiosity can have largely, though not wholly, positive mental health implications outside the West.

Keywords

Iran, Islam, Muslim attitudes, Muslim Experiential Religiousness, Post-Critical Beliefs, religious fundamentalism, science and religion, self-functioning