

A Review of Research on the Role of Different Types of Religiosity in Terror Management

Farklı Dindarlık Türlerinin Dehşet Yönetimindeki Rollerine İlişkin Araştırmalar Üzerine Bir Derleme

Kenan Alparslan¹, M. Ersin Kuşdil²

¹Muş Alparslan University, Muş

²Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa

ABSTRACT

This review paper aims to reveal the role of different types of religiosity based on research addressing religiosity in terms of in-group and out-group distinction within the scope of Terror Management Theory (TMT). Studies point out two important results of the phenomenon: the first is the fact that general religiosity focusing on only one aspect of religiosity (religious belongingness, afterlife belief, etc.) to measure religiosity increases worldview defense, supporting the hypothesis of mortality salience. The second is the fact that different religious orientations (intrinsic, fundamentalist, etc.) cause various reactions, depending on their unique characteristics when mortality is salient. In the current study, possible reasons for the differences between research findings are discussed. In order to clarify the roles that different types of religiosity play in terror management, a classification based on the strong-flexible and exclusive-inclusive poles of the "belief" and "belonging" dimensions suggested by Sarouglu has been proposed. It has been argued that religiosity types would function in terror management in different ways, depending on the classification in which they are placed. For example, when the religious worldview is threatened, the strong-exclusive pattern (e.g., religious fundamentalism) can lead to more negative reactions, while the strong-inclusive pattern (e.g., intrinsic religiosity) can be associated with positive processes in inter-group relationships. Future research on this classification and types of religiosity can provide unique contributions to developing TMT. On the other hand, knowing the roles of different forms of religiosity in managing existential concerns may be of therapeutic benefit in coping with death, bereavement, grief and related processes.

Keywords: Terror management, religiosity, religious orientation, fear of death, mortality salience

ÖZ

Bu derleme çalışması, Dehşet Yönetim Kuramı (DYK) kapsamında gerçekleştirilen ve dindarlığı iç-grup ve dış-grup ayrımı açısından ele alan araştırmaları inceleyerek dindarlığın farklı biçimlerinin dehşet yönetimindeki rolünü ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmalar olgunun iki önemli sonucuna işaret etmektedir: Bunlardan birincisi, dindarlığı ölçmek amacıyla dindarlığın sadece bir yönüne (dinsel aidiyet, ahiret inancı vb.) odaklanan genel dindarlığın kullanıldığı çalışmalarda bu değişkenin dünya görüşü savunmasını artırarak ölümlülük belirginliği hipotezini desteklemesidir. İkincisi, farklı dinsel yönelimlerin (içsel, köktenci vb.) ölümlülük belirginliği arttığında kendilerine has özelliklerine bağlı olarak farklı tepkilere neden olmasıdır. Mevcut çalışmada, çeşitli araştırma bulguları arasındaki farklılıkların olası nedenleri tartışılmıştır. Farklı dindarlık türlerinin dehşet yönetiminde oynadığı rolleri açıklığa kavuşturmak için Sarouglu tarafından geliştirilen "inanma" ve "ait olma" boyutlarının güçlü-esnek ve dışlayıcı-kapsayıcı kutuplarına dayalı bir sınıflandırma önerilmiştir. Böylece, dindarlık türlerinin, bu sınıflandırmadaki konumlarına bağlı olarak dehşet yönetiminde farklı şekillerde işlev göreceği savunulmuştur. Örneğin, dinsel dünya görüşü tehdit edildiğinde, güçlü-dışlayıcı örüntü (örneğin, dinsel köktencilik) daha olumsuz tepkilere yol açabilirken, güçlü-kapsayıcı örüntü (örneğin, içsel dindarlık) gruplar arası ilişkilerdeki olumlu süreçlerle ilişkilendirilebilir. Bu sınıflandırma ve dindarlık türleri üzerine gelecekte yapılacak araştırmalar DYK'nın geliştirilmesine özgün katkılar sağlayabilir. Öte yandan, farklı dindarlık biçimlerinin varoluşsal kaygıları yönetmedeki rollerini bilmek, ölüm, yas, kayıp ve ilgili süreçlerle başa çıkmada terapötik fayda da sağlayabilir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Dehşet yönetimi, dindarlık, dinsel yönelim, ölüm korkusu, ölümlülük belirginliği

Introduction

The Terror Management Theory (TMT), which makes the death phenomenon into an important subject of social psychology (Greenberg et al. 1986, Pyszczynski et al. 2015), was built on the idea that a unique sense of terror is evoked by the realization of mortality and that a person makes various efforts to manage this emotion. TMT was mainly inspired by the works of Ernest Becker that combine and synthesize the views of various scientific traditions focused on understanding human nature (Rosenblatt et al. 1989). According to the theory inspired by the ideas of Becker, a person who realizes that he/she is mortal develops various strategies and sense-making mechanisms to deal with this realization. Death-related fear, anxiety or uncertainty leads the person to find a foundation that will make human existence eternal. At this point, the person tries to suppress the sense of terror created by the awareness of death and to make it tolerable, adopting religious or secular beliefs and ideologies to console and comfort himself/herself. The issue of religiosity or religious belief has drawn attention from researchers and recently been studied intensely, due to its critical role in the management of fear anxiety.

TMT suggests that, unlike other animals, human beings are aware that death is inevitable. This awareness creates a sense of terror -an intense and primitive fear- in individuals thus leaving them defenseless against this feeling (Solomon et al. 2004, Greenberg et al. 2020). TMT suggests that psychological systems help manage our awareness of death and thereby take shape to control the anxiety that might otherwise arise. The theory maintains that people manage death awareness through a dual-component buffer system that consists of (a) sustaining faith in cultural worldviews and (b) acquiring self-esteem by following the standards of value provided by those worldviews (Rosenblatt et al. 1989, Pyszczynski et al. 2015).

TMT suggests evaluating both religious and non-religious (secular) beliefs together to cope with the death-related sense of terror. According to the TMT, religion is not different from other forms of belief. On the other hand, it is not surprising that religious beliefs have come to the forefront in TMT studies. Throughout history, scientists, philosophers, theologians and social scientists have thought that fear of death is an important source of motivation and that religion has helped relieve this fear (Jong and Halberstadt 2017); indeed, from this point of view, this is the most distinct psychological function of religion is to provide a sense of meaning and purpose to life and to help cope with existential problems (Batson and Stocks 2004). TMT suggests that religious beliefs afford a sense of psychological security and hope of immortality and serve to cope with the potential sense of terror caused by death awareness (Vail et al. 2010). Secular beliefs also provide benefits in terror management; however, religious beliefs, which provide “information” on life after death, address existential concerns and guide human behaviors, may be a more effective tool in this regard. Religions have been able to survive as effective cultural worldviews throughout the history of human beings, promising individuals literal immortality via afterlife beliefs (heaven, reincarnation, etc.) as well as offering symbolic immortality through the sense of belonging to a religious community (Vail et al. 2012a, Abeyta and Blake 2020, Alparslan 2022, Arrowood et al. 2022).

TMT suggests that the self-esteem of individuals depends on their belief in the standards of value they adopt, as well as their capability of actualizing them (Greenberg et al. 1990). Religion offers alternative standards of value and makes the believers feel precious in the eyes of God, thus satisfying their self-esteem needs (Batson and Stocks 2004). This sense of worth enables humans to manage the anxiety caused by this inevitable awareness of death, allowing them to live with relative equanimity in the face of this anxiety (Vail et al. 2010, Routledge et al. 2018).

Studies conducted on TMT showed that efforts to manage anxiety related to the inevitability of death lead to negative thoughts and behavior patterns, from prejudice and aggression to supporting war and acts of terrorism (Burke et al. 2010). However, the same efforts can sometimes boost positive tendencies, such as compassion, empathy, sacrifice, forgiveness and love (Vail et al. 2012b). Studies showed that the psychological and social factors such as self-esteem (Harmon-Jones et al. 1997), secure attachment (Mikulincer et al. 2003), and establishment of intimacy (Mikulincer et al. 2004) may ease the negative consequences of the sense of terror. In addition to these, religiosity, which is an important variable in TMT, have also been studied in the context of individual differences (see Vail et al. 2010). Religiosity can be seen as a defense mechanism against the fear of death by providing individuals with a sense of meaning, purpose, and continuity in life, as well as a belief in an afterlife which can mitigate the fear of death and the anxiety that comes with it (Abeyta and Blake 2020, Greenberg et al. 2020).

The function of religiosity to cope with the anxiety created by the awareness of mortality varies according to the place of religious thoughts and elements in one's cultural worldview. For example, Greenberg et al. (1990) pointed out that mortality salience leads religious people to negative reactions against those who threaten their

worldviews; Jonas and Fischer (2006) found evidence of this effect for some religious people but not others. Friedman and Rholes (2008) found that after mortality stimulation, participants who were very fundamentalist religiously defended their worldviews less than those in the control group. Again, Norenzayan and Hansen (2006) found that mortality salience encourages people to be more religious, while Burling (1993) did not reach to similar conclusion. Considering these studies showing different results, one of the points to be considered is which type of religiosity is used, and the other is whether there is in-group / out-group distinctiveness.

The findings, which show the different roles that religion can play in managing death-related concerns (Vail et al. 2010, Jong and Halberstadt 2017, Alparslan 2022), require the examination of various religious orientations among individuals and differences among religions. The abundance of religious beliefs in communities and their cultural diversity requires models able to investigate both universal and emic aspects of this phenomenon. Investigating the universal aspects of personal religiosity, Saroglou (2011) suggests four fundamental dimensions – believing, bonding, behaving, and belonging (see Table 1) – based on the primary psychological functions of religion and varying depending on religious attitudes, cognition, emotion, and behaviors (Saroglou et al. 2020, 2022).

Dimensions	Descriptions
Believing:	special beliefs relative to some sort of external transcendence and its connection with humans and the world
Bonding:	emotional bonding with the transcendent being
Behaving:	behaving in line with the rules that are perceived as specified by the transcendent being
Belonging:	belonging to a cultural group with a glorious history and ambitious future goals

The believing dimension represents the cognitive aspect of religiosity and refers to belief in transcendence and the meaning of life. This dimension is characterized by motives and functions such as beliefs about transcendence, the search for meaning, and epistemic certainty. The bonding dimension is an emotional process that occurs through connecting with the transcendent being and co-religionists and includes experiences of self-transcendence. It is characterized by drives such as unity, awe, seeking inner peace, emotional regulation, and attachment. Believing and bonding dimensions have been found to be important components of spirituality (Saroglou et al. 2020). Moreover, bonding was found to be a strong predictor of life satisfaction (Saroglou et al. 2020).

The behaving dimension is characterized by behaving in accordance with the norms, practices, and values perceived as determined by the transcendent being. Religion provides specific norms and moral arguments that define right and wrong from a religious perspective. In this dimension, which reflects the moral process, the individual aims to act in a way that achieves “virtue and purity” and resorts to the self-control mechanism to achieve this goal. The behavioral dimension of religiosity is associated with a high need for closure (Saroglou et al. 2020). The last dimension, belonging, defines being included in a community and identifying with a religious group. Throughout historical periods and geographical contexts, religious beliefs, rituals, emotions, and moral codes have been normatively organized, discussed, and shared within religious communities. An individual acquires a social identity by identifying with a particular religious tradition, group, or sect. While this social identity provides a sense of belonging, collective self-esteem, and social support to the individual, it also reveals prejudiced attitudes towards out-groups that threaten religious values. Belonging has been associated with low existential seeking and high authoritarianism (Saroglou et al. 2020).

It is thought that the reciprocal relations of believing and belonging dimensions are more decisive in intergroup relations. The believing dimension is characterized by the flexible or interpretative versus a strong or dogmatic adoption of religious ideas, beliefs, norms, and symbols. Believing is particularly strongly associated with fundamentalism and existential quest (Saroglou et al. 2020). Thus, the strong pole of believing generates negative attitudes towards the out-group, while the flexible pole generates positive attitudes towards the out-group. On the other hand, the belonging dimension can extend to an inclusive social identity that goes beyond these borders, as opposed to an exclusive social identity limited by ethnic, linguistic, and geographical ties. Individuals with exclusionary belonging may perceive religious belief as unique to themselves and may adopt prejudice and discrimination against out-groups. Individuals with inclusive belonging can perceive religious belief as universal and be tolerant of out-groups. Fundamentalism and authoritarianism are strongly associated with the dimensions of believing and belonging. Believing and belonging dimensions represent the cognitive and social aspects of religiosity and predict prejudice towards out-groups (Saroglou et al. 2020, 2022). Therefore, it is thought that these two dimensions are especially important in determining the role played by religiosity in the defense of cultural worldview.

In this review paper, it is evaluated that the role of different forms of religiosity in terror management by examining the findings of research on religiosity. To our knowledge, no systematic review has been performed with a focus on in-group/out-group in relation to how religiosity manages fear of death. The aim of this review was, therefore, to explore the role of different types of religiosity by including research conducted within the context of TMT and focusing on in-group/out-group salience. Furthermore, an attempt has been made to associate the various religious orientations addressed with Saroglou's classification.

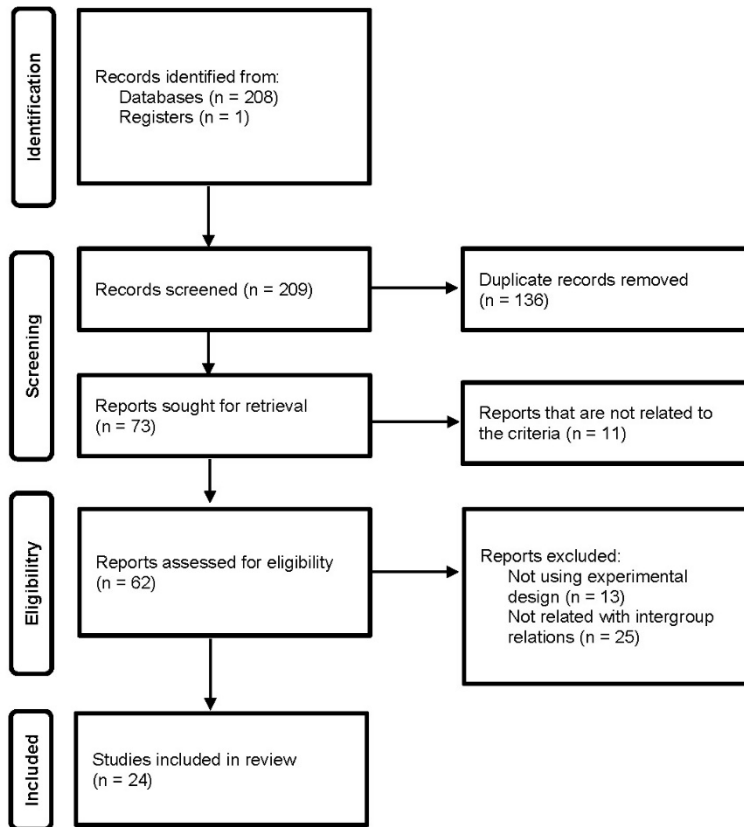


Figure 1. Flowchart of the selected studies following PRISMA guidelines

Method

Research examining religiosity within the context of TMT were obtained from the PsycINFO, Science Direct, Scopus, Web of Science, and Turkish Council of Higher Education Thesis Center databases, where the words terror management (theory), death anxiety, fear of death, mortality (salience) were matched with the words religion, religiosity, religious when searching. The databases were searched in May 2018 and then this search was repeated in December 2021 and January 2023. New articles were included from the updated searches.

Articles are selected based on the basis of three inclusion criteria of a) being an experimental or quasi-experimental study using mortality salience procedures; b) focusing on types of personal religiosity; and c) producing findings related to a discrimination or a bias between in-group and out-group. Articles were excluded if they did not meet inclusion criteria or did not include findings related to the inclusion criteria (exclusion criteria). Therefore, literature reviews, systematic reviews, or opinion articles were excluded.

Results

This systematic review was conducted based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (Moher et al. 2009). The stages followed and the number of studies eliminated at each stage are presented in Figure 1. In the first stage, as a result of the search with keywords, a total of 209 studies were found. One of these was a study realized for a master thesis (Aksüt-Çiçek 2008). In the second stage, 136 repetitive studies in this set were removed. Then, the titles and abstracts articles were screened according to the three criteria presented above and a total of 11 articles that did not meet any of these criteria were

eliminated. As a result, 62 studies that were potentially relevant to the present review were identified. In the third stage, the full texts of these 62 studies were analyzed in detail to specify if they fit to all review criteria. Twenty-five articles were excluded from the review as they lacked an in-group/out-group distinction and did not address reactions towards the out-group. Additionally, 13 studies were excluded because they did not include any experimental procedure. Consequently, 24 studies (including the one related to a master thesis mentioned above) that met all the criteria were included in the review. Information on the studies reviewed is presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2. Summary of the studies included on the role of general religiosity in terror management			
Author (Year)	Participant characteristics, sample size, country	TMT research focus	Key results
Greenberg et al. (1990, Experiment 1)	46 Christian college students (20 male and 26 female). United States	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	Mortality salience increased liking for a member of one's own religious group (Christians) and decreased liking for a member of a religious out-group (Jews).
Dechesne et al. (2003, Experiment 1)	54 university students. Netherlands	Mortality salience, evidence of literal immortality and self-esteem	Mortality salience increased the effort to gain self-esteem in participants who were exposed to evidence refuting afterlife beliefs and did not increase in participants who were exposed to evidence supporting the worldview.
Dechesne et al. (2003, Experiment 3)	138 university students (94 male, 44 female). United States	Mortality salience, evidence of literal immortality and worldview defenses	Mortality salience increased cultural worldview defense in participants who were exposed to evidence refuting afterlife beliefs and did not increase in participants who were exposed to evidence supporting the worldview
Pyszczynski et al. (2006, Experiment 1)	40 undergraduate students (26 male and 14 female; mean age = 22.46). Iran	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	Participants reminded of death preferred the student who supported martyrdom attacks against the United States.
Pyszczynski et al. (2006, Experiment 2)	127 undergraduate students (32 male and 95 female). United States	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	Mortality salience increased support for extreme military interventions to combat terrorism among politically conservative but not among politically liberal students.
Aksüt-Çiçek (2008)	160 university students (80 male and 80 female). Turkey	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	Students whose religious tendencies were threatened an increased level of aggression when their mortality was reminded.
Norenzayan et al. (2009, Experiment 1)	77 university students (18 male and 59 female). Canada	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	Participants primed with their own death evaluated the author and the essay more negatively, which denigrated Western culture. There was no significant effect among the religious participants.
Norenzayan et al. (2009, Experiment 2)	107 university students (20 male and 87 female). Canada	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	Similar results were obtained with the first study. Moreover, the more important people's religion is to their identity, the more positively they evaluated the anti-Western pro-religion essay.
Norenzayan et al. (2009, Experiment 3)	92 university students (25 male and 67 female). Canada	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	Participants primed with their own death evaluated the essay less favorably. Among religious participants, no effect of mortality salience was found.
Rothschild et al. (2009, Experiment 1)	151 undergraduate students (38 male and 113 female; mean age = 22.63). United States	Mortality salience, priming with compassionate values and worldview defenses	The combination of mortality salience and compassionate religious values led to decreases in support for excessive use of interventions to defend

			American interests among high fundamentalists.
Rothschild et al. (2009, Experiment 2)	121 undergraduate students (31 male and 90 female; mean age = 22.53). United States	Mortality salience, priming with compassionate values and worldview defenses	The presentation of the values of compassion in a secular context after mortality salience did not change the reaction of the fundamentalists.
Rothschild et al. (2009, Experiment 3)	110 undergraduate students (54 male and 66 female; mean age = 22.53). Iran	Mortality salience, priming with compassionate values and worldview defenses	Mortality salience decreased anti-Western attitudes among those primed with compassionate values from the Koran.
Juhl and Routledge (2010, Experiment 2)	52 Christian college students (22 male and 30 female; mean age = 18). United States	Mortality salience, personal need for structure and worldview defenses	In students high in personal need for structure, mortality salience increased religious worldview defense.
Juhl and Routledge (2010, Experiment 3)	82 Christian college students (35 male and 47 female; mean age = 19). United States	Mortality salience, personal need for structure and worldview defenses	Mortality salience increased aggressive religious worldview defense, but only among those students high in PNS.
Rogers (2011)	102 Christian undergraduate students (59 male and 43 female; mean age = 19.42). United States	Mortality salience, meaningful mortality salience and worldview defense	When students were primed to consider death using the usual mortality salience, their impressions of the Christian target were more positive while their impressions of the Jewish target were more negative. However, inducing students to consider their deaths in a manner that was consistent with their meaningful worldview eliminated the worldview defensive reactions.
Van den Bos et al. (2012, Experiment 1)	305 adolescents and young people (167 male and 138 female; mean age = 16.70). Netherlands	Mortality salience, personal uncertainty and worldview defenses	Reminders of personal uncertainty triggered worldview defense reactions among both Christians and Muslims, but that Christians reacted stronger to a manipulation of mortality salience.
Van den Bos et al. (2012, Experiment 3)	340 undergraduate students (178 male and 162 female; mean age = 28.20). Netherlands	Mortality salience, personal uncertainty and worldview defenses	Following mortality salience, the Christian participants reacted stronger to worldview defense, while the Muslim participants showed weak and nonsignificant worldview defense reactions.
Heflick and Goldenberg (2012)	139 university students (52 male, 87 female). United States	Mortality salience, evidence of literal immortality and worldview defenses	Evidence of the existence of the afterlife buffered the impacts of mortality salience (worldview defense), regardless of the belief system; however, evidence of the non-existence of the afterlife increased worldview defense in the mortality salience condition.
Schumann et al. (2014, Experiment 1)	89 undergraduate students (27 male and 65 female; mean age = 21.18). United States	Mortality salience, reminding the religious belief system and worldview defenses	Reminding the religious belief system when mortality was salient decreased the accessibility of words expressing revenge.
Schumann et al. (2014, Experiment 2)	111 female undergraduate students (mean age = 20.40). United States	Mortality salience, reminding the religious belief system and worldview defenses	Reminding the religious belief system when mortality was salient decreased hostile behavior towards an aggressive out-group.
Newheiser et al. (2015, Experiment 1).	223 university students (86 male, 127 female; mean age = 20.29). United Kingdom	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	In the mortality salience condition, non-religious participants reported more negative attitudes towards Muslims than religious participants.
Newheiser et al. (2015, Experiment 2)	116 adults (72 male, 94 female; mean age = 39.28). Italy	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	Mortality salience buffered negative attitudes toward Muslims but increased negative attitudes toward

			fortune tellers among Christian participants.
Maheshwari and Mukherjee (2019, Study 1)	150 pilgrims who practiced Kalpvas (mean age = 63.70). India	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	No difference was found between the attitudes towards those who did not practice Kalpvas of the pilgrims who were and were not reminded of their mortality.
Maheshwari and Mukherjee (2019, Study 2)	62 pilgrims who practiced Kalpvas (35 male and 27 female; mean age = 65.98). India	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	The pilgrims who were reminded of their mortality evaluated the Muslims more negatively.

The studies examined here showed that religiosity's protective function against the fear of death varied depending on the method of addressing the religiosity. Some research took religious belonging and afterlife belief as reference for religiosity, while others used various religious orientations (e.g. intrinsic, fundamentalist, etc.). By considering the overall content of the studies, this review classified the general religiosity studies as a first category ("the role of general religiosity in terror management") and religious orientations studies as a second category ("the role of religious orientations in terror management").

Role of General Religiosity in Terror Management

Here, selected studies on the effects of general religiosity in coping with the terror management will be reviewed with regard to two potential outcomes, namely the reinforcing or preventing the defense of these worldviews by individuals. The studies are summarized in Table 2.

General Religiosity as Reinforcing the Worldview Defense

TMT asserts that all cultural worldviews, including religious ones, are human-made concepts, and belief in those concepts is substantially dependent on their acceptance or acknowledgment by other people (Solomon et al. 2004). The individuals whose beliefs are approved by others may feel more clearly that their beliefs are true; however, the presence of opinions questioning the validity of, and conflicting with, their beliefs threatens these beliefs by implying that they may be wrong. Therefore, individuals may tend to defend their beliefs by belittling or suppressing those who adopt opposing lifestyles or imposing their own beliefs on those individuals (Pyszczynski et al. 2015). Thus, the need for the approval of death-denying beliefs comes into prominence when justifying the hostility and violence resorted to against persons with different religious beliefs.

One of the studies, conducted by Greenberg et al. (1990, Experiment 1), tested the basic claims of TMT and examined the effect of mortality reminders on the reactions to those who had similar (Christian) and different (Jewish) religious views. The findings of this study showed that Christians whose mortality was reminded perceived the Christian target person more positively but considered the Jewish person in a more stereotyped and negative manner. Rogers (2011) obtained similar findings in a more recent study. However, Rogers (2011) also revealed that encouraging the participants to think about their mortality in a personally meaningful manner, and thus in line with their specific worldview, reduced their need for worldview defense.

Research has shown that defensive reactions are not limited to verbal considerations but also extend to behaviors of hostility and violence. Various studies suggested that the participants who read a negative paragraph about their religious worldviews became more hostile towards the person who wrote this paragraph after they were reminded of death (Aksüt-Çiçek 2008, Juhl and Routledge 2010, Experiment 3). Pyszczynski et al. (2006) conducted two studies that aimed to show how persons who would normally disapprove of violence towards others are motivated to support aggressive acts and behave aggressively within the context of Islam (Iran) and Christianity (USA). Both studies found that mortality salience increased university students' tendency to aggressive actions and support to violence towards an out-group.

In a study, which examined TMT assumptions in an indigenous Indian context of the religious fair called Magh Mela (Maheshwari and Mukherjee 2019), evaluated the worldview defense attitudes of Indian pilgrims who practiced Kalpvas -performing the religious rituals while staying on the banks of Sangam for one month- towards those who did not practice Kalpvas (Experiment 1) and towards Muslims (Experiment 2) after their own death became salient. In the first experiment, no difference was found between the attitudes of the pilgrims who were and were not reminded of their mortality, but in the second experiment, the pilgrims who were reminded of their mortality evaluated the Muslims more negatively. The content of the findings suggests an in-group/out-group distinction, since the people who did not practice Kalpvas were also Indians and were considered in-group

members, while it may be thought that mortality salience did not affect their attitudes. On the other hand, the finding that the attitude towards the Muslims were considered an out-group became more negative after the mortality salience is in agreement with TMT assumptions.

It could be noted that as there can be significant differences between the core beliefs of those who share the same religious views, such differences in beliefs may lead to different reactions to existential threats. To test this claim, Norenzayan et al. (2009) set up the mortality salience and control conditions and asked Canadian participants to read an anti-Western article allegedly written by a radical Muslim student, and then to evaluate the author and the paper. These three experiments showed that, in general, under mortality salience non-religious individuals belittled the author and the content of the article, exhibiting worldview defense, but no significant difference was found in the evaluations by the religious individuals. Similarly, Newheiser et al. (2015) revealed that the attitudes of non-religious individuals towards Muslims worsened after mortality salience, but there was no difference in the attitude of the Christian participants with strong religious belonging. The fact that Islam has a similar divine understanding with Christianity and shows some similar characteristics (Newheiser et al. 2015) did not cause any change in the Christian participants' attitudes towards and evaluations of Muslims; however, the differentiation of Islam from the worldviews of non-religious individuals as members of an out-group, both in terms of belief and culture, may have led to worsening of their attitudes and evaluations.

These studies support TMT's mortality salience hypothesis, showing that religiosity in general enhances worldview defense after mortality salience, similar to secular worldviews. In other words, religious individuals positively evaluate their in-group members after mortality salience, but negatively evaluate the individuals who threaten their in-group members, as well as out-group members. The general forms of religiosity addressed here show that there is severe distinction between in-groups and out-groups, and this leads to favoring the in-group and derogating the out-group. However, there is a difficulty in determining a priori who is in-group or out-group in studies. For example, Greenberg et al. (1990) find that Christians will put their Abrahamic, monotheistic Jewish siblings in an out-group. Pyszczynski et al. (2006) also found mortality salience increased aggression to members of Abrahamic, monotheistic sibling faiths (Christian against Muslim and vice versa). However, the description of Newheiser et al. (2015) suggest that Christians would see Muslims in the in-group. A remarkable feature here is which identity the researcher makes more salience in the context of the study. For example, Muslims, who are an out-group for Christians, are considered close to the in-group in a context where faith is salience, while non-believers are considered an out-group. Depending on the context, the importance and salience of these identities change (Turner 1999, Reicher et al. 2010). It is thought that individuals' social identities will affect their perceptions and relationships with both other in-group members and out-group members when this identity becomes evident.

General Religiosity as Preventing the Worldview Defense

While religious individuals react negatively to those who threaten their worldviews in order to protect themselves from the anxiety of death, as demonstrated by the studies above, in some instances, religious beliefs can mitigate or buffer these negative reactions. Dechesne et al. (2003) found that mortality salience increased the effort to gain self-esteem (Experiment 1 and 2) and cultural worldview defense (Experiment 3) in participants who were exposed to evidence refuting afterlife beliefs and did not increase in participants who were exposed to evidence supporting the worldview. Implementing a similar procedure, Heflick and Goldenberg (2012) showed that evidence of the existence of the afterlife buffered the impacts of mortality salience (worldview defense), regardless of the belief system; however, evidence of the non-existence of the afterlife increased worldview defense in the mortality salience condition compared to the control conditions.

Reminding people of their religious doctrines has been shown to encourage them to act in line with these. Rothschild et al. (2009) found that presenting compassion doctrines from their religion to Americans or Muslim Iranians decreased their hostility towards the out-groups following mortality salience. Rothschild et al. (2009) also showed that in cases when religious compassionate values are salient and the individual needs protection against existential fear, even the fundamentalists' religious doctrines encourage a more peaceful approach to intergroup relationships. In addition, in a series of studies, Schumann et al. (2014) showed that allowing participants to identify themselves by their religions (religious prime) triggered forgiving cognitions, behaviors and evaluations. For example, it was determined that recalling the religious belief system when mortality was salient decreased the accessibility of words expressing revenge (Experiment 1) and hostile behavior towards an aggressive out-group (Experiment 2).

The findings above are in agreement with the thesis that religious primes act as an existential anxiety buffer when reminded of mortality, thus providing psychological protection. Therefore, a reminder of the values of an individual's religious group, validating or triggering the religious belief, decreases the negative attitudes and behaviors due to mortality salience towards out-groups.

Role of Personal Religious Orientations in Terror Management

Religiosity is generally referred to as individual differences in believing in, being interested in, or experiencing a religion (Saroglou 2011). In recent years, the role of religious orientations on the individual differences of experiencing existential terror has been started to be discussed more frequently. The studies here are divided into three groups, with regard to different theoretical approaches within the context of terror management: intrinsic-extrinsic religiosity (Allport and Ross 1967), religious fundamentalism (Altemeyer 2003) and defensive-existential religiosity (Beck 2004). Below, these approaches are presented according to the frequency with which they have been examined in relation to terror management. The studies reviewed in this article are summarized in Table 3.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Religious Orientations

In their study examining the relationships between prejudice and religiosity, Allport and Ross (1967) differentiated between an extrinsic religious orientation, where individuals are motivated to use their religion as a means, and an intrinsic religious orientation, where individuals are motivated to experience their religion. In extrinsic religiosity, religion is used as a means to achieve security, solace, social support, status, prestige, and self-justification. Individuals with extrinsic religious orientations generally tend to be less tolerant and more prejudiced (Allport and Ross 1967) and are less interested in the content of their religious beliefs, as well as being more afraid of death (Cohen et al. 2005). Intrinsic religiosity, on the other hand, integrates the self with a high sense of meaning and enables people to confront existential dilemmas more boldly. These individuals see their belief as a supreme value in itself, take the orders of religion seriously and try to get rid of any selfish needs (Allport 1966, Allport and Ross 1967). Intrinsic religiosity is positively associated with life satisfaction, an explicit sense of meaning and adherence to a particular belief system, and is negatively associated with prejudice and anxiety of death (Batson et al. 1993).

Table 3. Summary of included studies on the role of personal religious orientations in terror management

Author (Year)	Participant characteristics, sample size, country	TMT research focus	Key results
Jonas and Fischer (2006, Experiment 1)	78 adults (46 male and 32 female; mean age = 29.97). Germany	Natural mortality salience and worldview defense	After a naturally occurring reminder of mortality, people who scored high on intrinsic religiousness did not react with worldview defense, whereas people low on intrinsic religiousness did.
Jonas and Fischer (2006, Experiment 2)	111 university students (46 male and 65 female; mean age = 27.35). Germany	Mortality salience, affirming religious belief and worldview defense	Intrinsic religious belief mitigated worldview defense in response to mortality salience only if participants had the opportunity to affirm their religious beliefs.
Jonas and Fischer (2006, Experiment 3)	50 university students (30 male and 20 female; mean age = 24.04). Germany	Mortality salience, affirming religious belief and death-thought accessibility	Affirmation of religious belief decreased death-thought accessibility following mortality salience only for those participants high on intrinsic religiousness.
Golec de Zavala et al. (2012, Experiment 1)	158 undergraduate students (42 male and 116 female; mean age = 18.20). United States	Mortality salience and worldview defense	In the mortality salience condition, participants with a high level of intrinsic religiosity gave less support for aggressive counterterrorism.
Golec de Zavala et al. (2012, Experiment 2)	123 undergraduate students (69 male and 54 female; mean age = 23.54). Iran	Mortality salience and worldview defense	Under mortality salience, negative attitudes towards out-groups decreased among intrinsic religious participants.

Golec de Zavala et al. (2012, Experiment 3)	100 undergraduate students (10 male and 90 female; mean age = 21.27). Poland	Mortality salience, priming intrinsic religious and worldview defense	In the mortality salience condition, priming of intrinsic religious concepts decreases support for aggressive counterterrorism.
Van Tongeren et al. (2013, Experiment 1)	47 undergraduate students (15 male and 32 female; mean age = 20.55). United States	Priming religion and worldview defense	Priming religion increased intercultural tolerance among high intrinsic religious participants and decreased it among low intrinsic religious people
Van Tongeren et al. (2016, Experiment 3)	694 undergraduate students (258 male, 433 female and 3 did not report; mean age = 23.96). United States	Meaning threats and existential anxiety	Following the meaning threat, quest religiosity increased existential anxiety.
Arrowood et al. (2018)	95 undergraduate students (14 male and 81 female). United States	Mortality salience and self-esteem	Participants high in quest orientation, in comparison to low-quest-orientated individuals, reported lower self-esteem following mortality salience.
Arrowood et al. (2022, Experiment 4)	100 undergraduate students (22 male and 78 female; mean age = 18.94). United States	Mortality salience and worldview defense	Mortality salience led participants high in quest religiosity to become more culturally open-minded.
Friedman and Rholes (2007)	235 undergraduate students (109 male and 126 female; mean age = 18.63). United States	Exposing resurrection inconsistency and death-thought accessibility	Exposure to inconsistencies and contradictions in the Christian Bible increased the accessibility of death-related thoughts among highly fundamentalist participants.
Friedman (2008)	400 undergraduate students (170 male and 230 female; mean age = 18.90). United States	Mortality salience	Content analyzes of texts about death revealed that high fundamentalists' writings about death had a more positive emotional tone, were less cognitively complex, and were future-oriented.
Friedman and Rholes (2008)	122 undergraduate students (44 male, 77 female and 1 did not report). United States	Mortality salience and worldview defense	After mortality salience, the secular worldview defense increased in those with low religious fundamentalism, but the responses of those with high fundamentalism did not change.
Routledge et al. (2018)	119 adult (57 male and 62 female; mean age = 34.33). Online (Amazon's Mechanical Turk)	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	Mortality salience increased apocalyptic beliefs for participants higher in religious fundamentalism and decreased it for participants lower in religious fundamentalism.
Aksüt-Çiçek (2008)	160 university students (80 male and 80 female). Turkey	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	The level of aggression of students with a religious fundamentalism increased when mortality became salience and their religious orientation was threatened.
Beck (2006, Experiment 2)	207 undergraduate students (114 male and 93 female; mean age = 20.37). United States	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	Under mortality salience, religiously defensive participants displayed the tendency to see in-group targets more favorably than out-group targets. Conversely, existential participants tended to see in-group and out-group targets as equally attractive or capable.
Koca-Atabey and Öner-Özkan (2011)	239 undergraduate students (53 male, 184 female and 2 did not report; mean age = 20.74). Turkey	Mortality salience and worldview defenses	In the mortality salience condition, religiously defensive participants became more conservative, while the conservatism levels of existential participants did not change.

Jonas and Fischer (2006) examined the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic orientations on reactions to mortality reminders in three studies. In the first study, conducted with German participants immediately after the terrorist acts in November 2003 in Istanbul (i.e. after a naturally occurring reminder of mortality), the individuals with low intrinsic religiosity levels gave worldview defense reactions, but the individuals with high intrinsic religiosity levels did not. The second study showed that mortality salience decreased secular worldview

(adherence of the participants to their cities) defense in the participants with high intrinsic religiosity who were allowed to affirm their religious beliefs and increased such defense in the participants with low intrinsic religiosity. In the last study, it was seen that after mortality salience, the participants with low intrinsic religiosity levels accessed death-related thoughts more than the participants with high intrinsic religiosity levels.

In the three studies conducted by Golec de Zavala et al. (2012) within the context of tension between the Muslim and Western worlds, they investigated the moderating effect of mortality salience on the relationship between intrinsic religiosity and inter-group hostility. In the first study, conducted with American, Christian, and Jewish participants, intrinsic religiosity reduced the preference for aggressive methods in combating terror after mortality salience. In the second study, conducted in Iran with Muslim participants, negative attitudes towards Christians decreased following mortality salience among individuals with intrinsic religiosity. In the last study, conducted with Polish Christians, priming the intrinsic religious concepts reduced support for aggressive methods in combating terror in cases of mortality salience. These findings demonstrate that religious adherence itself is not inevitably associated with supporting intergroup differences and this may apply to different religious and cultural contexts.

These studies demonstrate that intrinsic religiosity serves as a buffer against existential terror and decreases negative responses. It can be said that, contrary to extrinsic religious orientations, individuals with intrinsic religious orientation have a deep and internalized belief system that provide information on the meaning of life and death that is not limited to the in-group.

Religiosity as a Quest

Batson et al. (1993) has added a third dimension to intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientations, in which individuals perceive religion as a quest rather than a means or goal. Individuals with a quest orientation experience religion as a search for temporary and changeable answers to daily life problems, rather than finding exact solutions to these problems (Batson and Stocks 2004). It is suggested that individuals with such a religious orientation are more open to answering existential questions and to constantly questioning many truths that form the basis of beliefs (Batson et al. 1993). Following this, Van Tongeren et al. (2016) revealed that a quest religious orientation was positively associated with showing tolerance to different persons and that individuals with a high quest religious orientation had higher death anxiety following existential threats and were less likely to search for the meaning of life. Arrowood et al. (2018) showed that individuals with high quest orientations reported lower self-esteem following mortality salience, compared to those with low quest religious orientations. In general, the results showed that quest religious orientation was not very effective in providing existential safety following threats, due to uncertainties and doubts among the beliefs of these individuals (Arrowood et al. 2018). A quest orientation therefore does not function as a reliable way to combat existential terror and increase self-esteem. On the other hand, these individuals seem to perceive out-group members as less menacing, due to the flexible nature of their beliefs (Arrowood et al. 2022).

Religious Fundamentalism

Religious fundamentalism characterizes individuals who believe that their religion is the only truth and regard it as the main determinant of their lives (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992). Fundamentalists are the individuals who strictly adhere to rules and practices imposed by their religion, argue that they should be maintained today, tend towards a definite distinction between right and wrong, and believe that their lives are approved and supported by God. Numerous studies show that religious fundamentalism is strongly associated with prejudice (Hall et al. 2010).

In a study by Friedman and Rholes (2007) to investigate whether Christian fundamentalism serves a protective function against existential anxiety, they found that being exposed to contradictory statements in the Bible increased the accessibility of death-related thoughts among highly fundamentalist participants. Content analyses on the texts written by participants about death revealed that the writings of extreme fundamentalists had a more positive emotional tone and were less cognitively complex and future-oriented (Friedman 2008). A study where the secular worldviews of university student participants were exposed to a threat by evaluating a campus tradition (lifting a cap or hat while cheering at a soccer game) found that the worldview defenses of weaker fundamentalists increased following mortality salience, while the responses of extreme fundamentalists did not change (Friedman and Rholes 2008). In a recent study, Routledge et al. (2018) tested TMT's claim that awareness of death motivates people toward cultural worldviews that offer a kind of death transcendence and showed that awareness of death increased apocalyptic beliefs derived from religious prophecies among extreme fundamentalists and decreased them among weaker fundamentalists. Although there is no comparable study

with fundamentalists from other religions, a study with a Muslim sample in Turkey found that Muslim fundamentalists with threatened religious worldviews showed increased aggressive tendencies towards the person who wrote a negative paragraph about their religious worldview when they were reminded of their mortality (Aksüt-Çiçek 2008).

Based on these studies, it can be said that the effects of mortality salience vary by religious or secular worldview among fundamentalists. Religious fundamentalism reduces negative reactions when secular worldviews are threatened, but increases negative reactions when religious worldviews are threatened. Since fundamentalists have absolute faith about the religion they adopt, and there are strict distinctions between in-groups (own religious group) and out-groups (other religious groups) for them, they can overreact to the threatening of their religious beliefs.

Defensive and Existential Religiosity

Beck (2004) suggested that TMT theorists largely ignore a belief that feeds on existential awareness and does not function as a defense mechanism. According to him, the belief can survive mostly by facing the truth of death rather than by denying or suppressing this knowledge. Thus, Beck (2004) defined two forms of religious motivation: existential religious orientation and defensive religious orientation. Defensive religiosity is an orientation that uses beliefs to prevent existential predicaments (i.e. death, meaninglessness, etc.) or minimize their effects: these individuals tend to see themselves as being protected, sanctified and special, and also believe that God has a unique plan for them and will help them even in insignificant difficulties in life (Beck 2006). This tendency serves as a defense mechanism that protects the spirit from existential realities. Contrary to defensive religiosity, existential religiosity is regarded as a tendency not to adopt religious solutions for existential problems (Beck 2004). Existential religiosity is a form of belief that includes uncertainties, doubts and suspicions, exists along with them, and closely resembles the quest religious orientation in terms of general features (Beck 2006). In existential religiosity, like the quest religious orientation, religion remains open to change, since it is not seen as an ultimate truth.

Beck (2004) alleged that defensive religionists will show an in-group bias to maintain the integrity of their worldviews, since they tend to adopt theological structures that mainly aim to produce existential consolation and relief and tested this claim within the scope of the mortality salience hypothesis (Beck 2006). It was found that when Christian participants were reminded of their mortality, those with defensive religious orientations showed in-group bias as worldview defense (they preferred a Christian writer rather than a Buddhist writer), while the participants with existential religious orientations equally evaluated the two writers. Similarly, a study by Koca-Atabey and Öner-Özkan (2011) concluded that the conservatism score of the participants with defensive religious orientations increased following mortality salience, while the conservatism score of those with existential religious orientations did not change.

In general, therefore, a defensive orientation causes individuals to protect the in-group when mortality is salient, while an existential orientation does not cause a significant difference with regard to the inter-group relations. The distinctions between in-group and out-group are clear in the defensive religious orientation, while they are not fully established in the existential religious orientation.

Discussion

TMT addresses religions as a sort of cultural worldview satisfying the basic needs of human beings. The studies conducted within the context of this theory revealed many parallelisms between the functions of religious and secular worldviews. For example, mortality salience increased the preference of Christians for another Christian rather than a Jew and increased the positive reactions of Americans to a person complimenting American culture rather than one criticizing it (Greenberg et al. 1990). Similarly, it was found that after mortality salience, the inappropriate use of a cross (a religious symbol) or US flag (a secular symbol) increased the disturbance experienced by individuals (Greenberg et al. 1995). Friedman and Rholes (2007) found that subjecting Christians to the errors and conflicts in the Bible increased death thought accessibility, while Schimmel et al. (2007) found that subjecting Canadians to articles insulting Canada caused similar effects. These findings show that the function provided by religion in managing the sense of terror is similar to the function provided by secular worldviews in many respects.

The majority of studies on the link between TMT and religiosity address the role of religiosity on worldview defense against awareness of death. Studies reviewed here can be categorized into two depending on their treatments of religiosity. One category includes the studies focusing only on one aspect of religiosity (religious

belonging, afterlife belief or one-dimensional general religiosity level, etc.). The majority of these studies verify TMT's 'mortality salience' hypothesis, supporting the conclusion that in-group and out-group distinction (the belonging dimension of Saroglou) has a salient effect. Accordingly, after mortality salience, individuals can negatively react to anyone and anything that threatens the in-group. More importantly, however, religious beliefs can also mitigate these reactions under certain circumstances, such as providing evidence of life after death (Dechesne et al. 2003), religious prime (Schumann et al. 2014), immortality prime (Williams, 2017) and a reminder of religious doctrines (Rothschild et al. 2009). Providing information to religious individuals that remind their religious beliefs and values can be an effective way of protection from existential anxiety and of prompting a positive reaction to out-groups.

The second category of studies has focused on different religious orientations that can cause various defensive reactions in coping with existential problems. Research has pointed out that distinguishing several orientations allows us to better understand the interactive effects of personal religiosity and mortality salience within inter-group contexts. Broadly speaking, an intrinsic religious orientation is beneficial to managing the sense of terror in individuals because it buffers anxiety and prevents the emergence of negative reactions against mortality salience (Jonas and Fischer 2006, Golec de Zavala et al. 2012). Since it provides protection against the fear of death, it supports the 'anxiety-buffer hypothesis,' similar to high self-esteem and secure attachment.

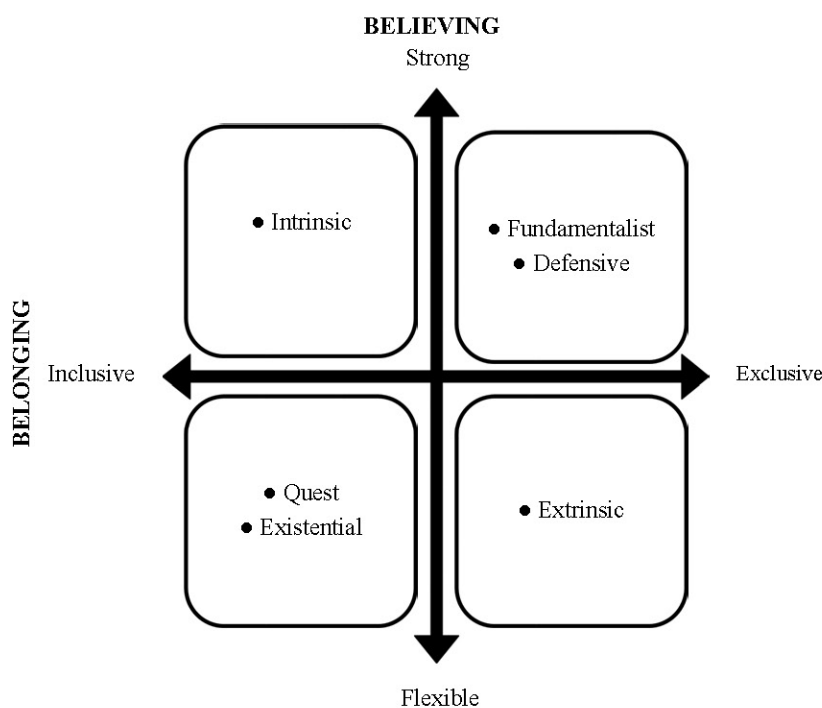


Figure 2. A classification of religiosity types in relation to Saroglou's (2011) dimensions of believing and belonging

Different functions of religions and religious orientations in managing existential terror may be due to the primary characteristics of religiosity types (Abeyta and Blake 2020, Greenberg et al. 2020). Two basic religiosity dimensions of Saroglou (2011, Saroglou et al. 2020, 2022) are highlighted in the studies reviewed here: believing (ranging from a certain, strong, literate, and solid understanding to an interpretive, flexible, questioning, or skeptical one) and belonging (ranging from an exclusive identity bounded by a person's religious, ethnic, linguistic, and geographical ties to an inclusive identity going beyond these boundaries). The strong pole of believing dimension is characterized by a certainly and strictly belief in religious scripture, doctrines, or metaphysical assertions, while the flexible pole is characterized by a skeptically and dubiously belief. The exclusive pole of belonging dimension is characterized by a strict affiliation with a religious group or tradition and limiting religion only to one's own group, while the inclusive pole is characterized by a weak affiliation with a religious group or transcending religious barriers by facilitating universal values.

The four resulting patterns classified in two dimensions (Figure 2) can provide various functions in terror management. Negative attitudes towards out-groups can be expected to be high in the patterns that are close to the exclusive identity dimension, and a death-related sense of terror will be at a low level due to absolute faith in the afterlife in the patterns that are close to the strong dimension. The strong-exclusive pattern can therefore

lead to more negative reactions if the religious worldview is threatened, while the types in this pattern also serve to manage the sense of terror experienced by individuals. More explicitly, religious worldviews defensiveness can increase when individuals are reminded of their mortality. The strong-inclusive pattern can be associated with positive processes in inter-group relationships, since it is mostly experienced at a personal level. Although the individuals included in this pattern can be sensitive to threats to their religious values, positive changes may be observed in their worldview defense levels when they are reminded of their mortality, since religiosity provides a terror management function for these individuals. The flexible-exclusive pattern can reveal the tendency of acting and thinking according to the religious community's norms. Thus, individuals with this pattern can exhibit negative attitudes towards out-groups. They can have an intense sense of terror of death, since they do not have certain and strong knowledge about their religious beliefs, and religiosity may not provide a terror management function for them. Finally, the flexible-inclusive pattern is the type of religiosity which is most relevant to positive processes in inter-group relationships. These individuals do not have certain knowledge about their religious beliefs and do not feel a sense of belonging to any religious group. Therefore, their religiosity may not serve to relieve a sense of terror of death.

Given the findings addressed in this study, it has been suggested that religious groups and religious individuals differ in the believing and belonging dimensions and bear the characteristics of one of these four patterns. For example, the intrinsic religious orientation can be classified in the strong-inclusive pattern, while the fundamentalism religious orientation can be classified in the strong-exclusive pattern. In intrinsic religious, since religion is considered as an end and an internalized belief (Allport 1966), the believing dimension is very strong and certain, but the belonging dimension is more inclusive and tolerance. Consistent with the strong-inclusive pattern, intrinsic believers see God as a source of love and support, so they believe that God is a supreme being who is benevolent, tolerant, and available when needed. In contrast, since fundamentalism is closely related to increasing belief and belonging dimensions Saroglou et al. (2022), the believing dimension is rigid and dogmatic, and the belonging dimension includes excessive religious identification and prejudices. It would therefore be expected to elicit more defensive responses to the mortality salience.

Finally, the quest and existential forms of personal faith locate in the flexible-inclusive pattern. Both religious orientations involve inclusive identities as well as flexible beliefs. Consistent with the evidence of baseline openness and inclusiveness, these types of religiosity are related to positive processes in intergroup relations (Beck 2006, Van Tongeren et al. 2016). What this means in terms of TMT and out-group derogation and how individuals with this form of faith handle existential terror is thought to be less clear. The framework provided here can be considered as an opportunity for future studies that will examine the question of how individuals with these forms of faith manage the terror in intergroup relations.

Conclusion

Religious belief can cause negative or positive reactions to death related anxiety. The findings of the experimental studies discussed here demonstrated that religiosity serves as a powerful means of coping with existential issues. It should also be noted that, as the majority of the existing literature on harmful or beneficial qualities of various religious orientations employs correlational methods, causal relationships on this issue have yet not been fully identified. Given the close relationship between death concept and the religion, the answer of why existential problems are construed in different ways may lie behind these alternative religiosity forms, corresponding to different psychological functions. As anticipated by TMT, this answer is highly valuable in reducing negative outcomes of religious beliefs of individuals, which can come to be destructive. In this study, a classification based on the strong-flexible and exclusionary-inclusive poles of belief and belonging dimensions suggested by Saroglou was proposed in order to clarify the roles that different types of religiosity play in terror management. As a basic limitation of the present review, however, it should be noted that these patterns do not cover all types of religiosity, and thus different patterns should be included if other dimensions of religiosity (e.g. bonding, behaving) are taken into account. For example, religious lives such as mysticism, asceticism, sufism, etc. strongly emphasize both the bonding and behaving dimensions. Future studies on such religious groups can provide unique contributions to the development of TMT. Although individuals have particular faith orientations beyond religions, it is also obvious that they are affected by religion, culture, and social structure. Therefore, centering studies on both various religions and various divisions within the same religion (religious order, denomination, community, etc.) is essential. In addition, knowing the roles of different forms of religiosity in managing existential concerns may be of therapeutic benefit in coping with death, bereavement, grief and related processes.

References

- Abeyta AA, Blake EN (2020) The existential implications of individual differences in religious defensive and growth orientations: Fundamentalism, quest religiosity, and intrinsic/extrinsic religiosity. In *The Science of Religion, Spirituality, and Existentialism* (Eds KE Vail III, C Routledge):351–357. Cambridge, MA, Academic Press.
- Aksüt-Çiçek, S. (2008) Dindarlık ile saldırganlık arasındaki etkileşimin terör yönetimi kuramı çerçevesinde incelenmesi (Yüksek lisans tezi). Mersin, Mersin Üniversitesi.
- Allport GW (1966) The Religious context of prejudice. *J Sci Study Relig*, 5:447–457.
- Allport GW, Ross JM (1967) Personal religious orientation and prejudice. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 5:432–443.
- Alparslan K (2022) Ölüm kaygısı ve dindarlık arasındaki ilişki üzerine bir değerlendirme. *Dini Araştırmalar*, 25:529-552.
- Altemeyer B (2003) Why do religious fundamentalists tend to be prejudiced? *Int J Psychol Relig*, 13:17–28.
- Altemeyer B, Hunsberger B (1992) Authoritarianism, religious fundamentalism, quest, and prejudice. *Int J Psychol Relig*, 2:113–133.
- Arrowood RB, Coleman TJ, Swanson SB, Hood RW, Cox CR (2018) Death, quest, and self-esteem: re-examining the role of self-esteem and religion following mortality salience. *Relig Brain Behav*, 8:69–76.
- Arrowood RB, Vail KE, Cox CR (2022) The existential quest: Doubt, openness, and the exploration of religious uncertainty. *Int J Psychol Relig*, 32:89–126.
- Batson CD, Schoenrade P, Ventis WL (1993) *Religion and the Individual: A Social-Psychological Perspective*. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Batson CD, Stocks EL (2004) Religion: Its core psychological functions. In *Handbook of Experimental Existential Psychology* (Eds J Greenberg, SL Koole, T Pyszczynski):141–155. New York, Guilford Press.
- Beck R (2004) The function of religious belief: Defensive versus existential religion. *J Psychol Christ*, 23:208–218.
- Beck R (2006) Defensive versus existential religion: Is religious defensiveness predictive of worldview defense? *J Psychol Theol*, 34:143–153.
- Burke BL, Martens A, Faucher EH (2010) Two decades of terror management theory: A meta-analysis of mortality salience research. *Personal Soc Psychol Rev*, 14:155–195.
- Burling JW (1993) Death concerns and symbolic aspects of the self: The effects of mortality salience on status concern and religiosity. *Personal Soc Psychol Bull*, 19:100–105.
- Cohen AB, Pierce JD, Chambers J, Meade R, Gorvine BJ, Koenig HG (2005) Intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity, belief in the afterlife, death anxiety, and life satisfaction in young Catholics and Protestants. *J Res Pers*, 39:307–324.
- Dechesne M, Pyszczynski T, Arndt J, Ransom S, Sheldon KM, Van Knippenberg A et al. (2003) Literal and symbolic immortality: The effect of evidence of literal immortality on self-esteem striving in response to mortality salience. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 84:722–737.
- Friedman M (2008) Religious fundamentalism and responses to mortality salience: A quantitative text analysis. *Int J Psychol Relig*, 18:216–237.
- Friedman M, Rholes WS (2007) Successfully challenging fundamentalist beliefs results in increased death awareness. *J Exp Soc Psychol*, 43:794–801.
- Friedman M, Rholes WS (2008) Religious fundamentalism and terror management. *Int J Psychol Relig*, 18:36–52.
- Golec de Zavala A, Cichocka A, Orehek E, Abdollahi A (2012) Intrinsic religiosity reduces intergroup hostility under mortality salience. *Eur J Soc Psychol*, 42:451–461.
- Greenberg J, Helm PJ, Landau MJ, Solomon S (2020) Dwelling forever in the house of the lord: on the terror management function of religion. In *The Science of Religion, Spirituality, and Existentialism* (Eds KE Vail III, C Routledge):3–20. Cambridge, MA, Academic Press.
- Greenberg J, Porteus J, Simon L, Pyszczynski T, Solomon S (1995) Evidence of a terror management function of cultural icons: The effects of mortality salience on the inappropriate use of cherished cultural symbols. *Personal Soc Psychol Bull*, 21:1221–1228.
- Greenberg J, Pyszczynski T, Solomon S (1986) The causes and consequences of a need for self-esteem: A terror management theory. In *Public Self and Private Self* (Eds RF Baumeister):189–212. New York, Springer.
- Greenberg J, Pyszczynski T, Solomon S, Rosenblatt A, Veeder, M, Kirkland, S et al. (1990) Evidence for terror management theory II: The effects of mortality salience on reactions to those who threaten or bolster the cultural worldview. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 58:308–318.
- Hall DL, Matz DC, Wood W (2010) Why don't we practice what we preach? A meta-analytic review of religious racism. *Personal Soc Psychol Rev*, 14:126–139.
- Harmon-Jones E, Simon L, Greenberg J, Pyszczynski T, Solomon S, McGregor H (1997) Terror management theory and self-esteem: Evidence that increased self-esteem reduced mortality salience effects. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 72:24–36.
- Heflick NA, Goldenberg JL (2012) No atheists in foxholes: Arguments for (but not against) afterlife belief buffers mortality salience effects for atheists. *Br J Soc Psychol*, 51:385–392.
- Jonas E, Fischer P (2006) Terror management and religion: Evidence that intrinsic religiousness mitigates worldview defense following mortality salience. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 91:553–567.

- Jong J, Halberstadt J (2017) What is the causal relationship between death anxiety and religious belief? *Religion Brain Behav*, 7:1–3.
- Juhl J, Routledge C (2010) Structured terror: Further exploring the effects of mortality salience and personal need for structure on worldview defense. *J Pers*, 78:969–990.
- Koca-Atabey M, Öner-Özkan B (2011) Defensive or existential religious orientations and mortality salience hypothesis: Using conservatism as a dependent measure. *Death Stud*, 35:852–865.
- Maheshwari S, Mukherjee T (2019) Role of social detachment in coping with death anxiety: A case of elderly Hindu pilgrims. *Omega*, 79:191–217.
- Mikulincer M, Florian V, Hirschberger G (2003) The existential function of close relationships: Introducing death into the science of love. *Personal Soc Psychol Rev*, 7:20–40.
- Mikulincer M, Florian V, Hirschberger G (2004) The terror of death and the quest for love: An existential perspective on close relationships. In *Handbook of Experimental Existential Psychology* (Eds J Greenberg, SL Koole, T Pyszczynski):287–304. New York, Guilford Press.
- Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, Altman DG, Group P (2009) Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: the PRISMA statement. *PLoS Med*, 6:e1000097.
- Newheiser AK, Hewstone M, Voci A, Schmid K (2015) Making and unmaking prejudice: Religious affiliation mitigates the impact of mortality salience on out-group attitudes. *J Sci Study Relig*, 54:774–791.
- Norenzayan A, Dar-Nimrod I, Hansen IG, Proulx T (2009) Mortality salience and religion: Divergent effects on the defense of cultural worldviews for the religious and the non-religious. *Eur J Soc Psychol*, 39:101–113.
- Norenzayan A, Hansen IG (2006) Belief in supernatural agents in the face of death. *Personal Soc Psychol Bull*, 32:174–187.
- Pyszczynski T, Abdollahi A, Solomon S, Greenberg J, Cohen F, Weise D (2006) Mortality salience, martyrdom, and military might: the great satan versus the axis of evil. *Personal Soc Psychol Bull*, 32:525–537.
- Pyszczynski T, Solomon S, Greenberg J (2015) Thirty years of terror management theory: From genesis to revelation. *Adv Exp Soc Psychol*, 52:1–70.
- Reicher S, Spears R, Haslam SA (2010) The social identity approach in social psychology. In *The SAGE Handbook of Identities* (Eds M Wetherell, CT Mohanty):45–62. Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage.
- Rogers R (2011) Conceptualizing death in a worldview consistent, meaningful way and its effects on worldview defense. *Death Stud*, 35:107–123.
- Rosenblatt A, Greenberg J, Solomon S, Pyszczynski T, Lyon D (1989) Evidence for terror management theory I: The effects of mortality salience on reactions to those who violate or uphold cultural values. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 57:681–690.
- Rothschild ZK, Abdollahi A, Pyszczynski T (2009) Does peace have a prayer? The effect of mortality salience, compassionate values, and religious fundamentalism on hostility toward out-groups. *J Exp Soc Psychol*, 45:816–827.
- Routledge C, Abeyta AA, Royslance C (2018) Death and end times: the effects of religious fundamentalism and mortality salience on apocalyptic beliefs. *Relig Brain Behav*, 8:21–30.
- Saroglou V (2011) Believing, bonding, behaving, and belonging: The big four religious dimensions and cultural variation. *J Cross Cult Psychol*, 42:1320–1340.
- Saroglou V, Clobert M, Cohen AB, Johnson KA, Ladd KL, Brandt P-Y et al. (2022) Fundamentalism as dogmatic belief, moral rigorism, and strong groupness across cultures: Dimensionality, underlying components, and related interreligious prejudice. *Psycholog Relig Spiritual*, 14:558–571.
- Saroglou V, Clobert M, Cohen AB, Johnson KA, Ladd KL, Van Pachterbeke M et al. (2020) Believing, bonding, behaving, and belonging: The cognitive, emotional, moral, and social dimensions of religiousness across cultures. *J Cross Cult Psychol*, 51:551–575.
- Schimmel J, Hayes J, Williams T, Jahrig J (2007) Is death really the worm at the core? Converging evidence that worldview threat increases death-thought accessibility. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 92:789–803.
- Schumann K, McGregor I, Nash KA, Ross M (2014) Religious magnanimity: reminding people of their religious belief system reduces hostility after threat. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 107:432–453.
- Solomon S, Greenberg J, Pyszczynski T (2004) The cultural animal: Twenty years of terror management theory and research. In *Handbook of Experimental Existential Psychology* (Eds J Greenberg, SL Koole, T Pyszczynski):13–34. New York, Guilford Press.
- Turner JC (1999) Some current issues in research on social identity and self-categorization theories. In *Social Identity: Context, Commitment, Content* (Eds N Ellemers, R Spears, B Doosje):6–34. Hoboken NJ, Wiley-Blackwell.
- Vail KE, Arndt J, Abdollahi A (2012a) Exploring the existential function of religion and supernatural agent beliefs among Christians, Muslims, Atheists, and Agnostics. *Personal Soc Psychol Bull*, 38:1288–1300.
- Vail KE, Juhl J, Arndt J, Vess M, Routledge C, Rutjens BT (2012b) When death is good for life: Considering the positive trajectories of terror management. *Personal Soc Psychol Rev*, 16:303–329.
- Vail KE, Rothschild ZK, Weise DR, Solomon S, Pyszczynski T, Greenberg J (2010) A terror management analysis of the psychological functions of religion. *Personal Soc Psychol Rev*, 14:84–94.

- Van Den Bos K, Buurman J, De Theije V, Doosje B, Loseman A, Van Laarhoven D et al. (2012) On shielding from death as an important yet malleable motive of worldview defense: Christian versus Muslim beliefs modulating the self-threat of mortality salience. *Soc Cogn*, 30:778-802.
- Van Tongeren DR, Davis DE, Hook JN, Johnson KA (2016) Security versus growth: Existential tradeoffs of various religious perspectives. *Psycholog Relig Spiritual*, 8:77-88.
- Van Tongeren DR, Raad JM, McIntosh DN, Pae J (2013) The existential function of intrinsic religiousness: Moderation of effects of priming religion on intercultural tolerance and afterlife anxiety. *J Sci Study Relig*, 52:508-523.
- Williams MJ (2017) Prosocial behavior following immortality priming: experimental tests of factors with implications for CVE interventions. *Behav Sci Terror Polit Aggress*, 9:153-190.

Authors Contributions: The author(s) have declared that they have made a significant scientific contribution to the study and have assisted in the preparation or revision of the manuscript

Peer-review: Externally peer-reviewed.

Conflict of Interest: No conflict of interest was declared.

Financial Disclosure: No financial support was declared for this study.