

A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON RELIGIOSITY: THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS OF RELIGIOUS INTENSIFICATION

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v22i2.1314>

Received: 01-11-2024 | Revised: 15-12-2024 | Accepted: 31-12-2024

ABSTRACT

Religion plays a vital role in human life, yet many studies focus on its consequences rather than the factors influencing religiosity and religious intensification. This study examines the social and economic determinants that shape religious faith through a literature review of 25 relevant studies from the Scopus database. The findings reveal that social factors predominantly drive religious intensification. These factors include the family environment (parental religiosity, closeness to parents), socialization (religious exposure in childhood), and social conditions (trauma, religious freedom, and societal attitudes). Social demographics such as gender, age, and marital status also play a role. Conversely, economic factors tend to negatively influence religious practices. These factors include income levels (relative and absolute), macroeconomic conditions (GDP per capita, trade volume, and travel costs), socio-economic status (employment, education, and social insurance), and economic development in countries of origin and destination. The study highlights the complex interplay between social and economic factors in shaping religiosity and religious intensification. These findings underscore the need for policies that balance social and economic considerations, promote religious pluralism, and address societal vulnerabilities to foster

inclusive approaches to managing religious dynamics in diverse communities.

Keywords: Macroeconomic Factors, Religious Intensification, Religiosity, Social Determinants, Socio-Economic Status

ABSTRAK

Agama memegang peranan penting dalam kehidupan manusia, namun penelitian-penelitian sering kali masih berfokus pada konsekuensinya daripada mengeksplorasi faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi religiusitas dan intensifikasi agama untuk menciptakan warga negara yang religius. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi peran determinan sosial dan ekonomi dalam membentuk keyakinan agama melalui tinjauan pustaka menggunakan basis data Scopus, menghasilkan 25 penelitian yang relevan. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa faktor-faktor sosial secara dominan mendorong intensifikasi agama, termasuk lingkungan keluarga (religiusitas orang tua, kedekatan dengan orang tua), sosialisasi (paparan agama di masa kanak-kanak, ziarah, simbol-simbol agama), dan kondisi sosial (trauma, kebebasan beragama, dan sikap masyarakat). Demografi sosial seperti jenis kelamin, usia, dan status perkawinan. Sementara itu, faktor-faktor ekonomi cenderung memengaruhi praktik-praktik keagamaan secara negatif. Ini termasuk tingkat pendapatan (relatif dan absolut), kondisi ekonomi makro (PDB per kapita, volume perdagangan, dan biaya perjalanan), status sosial ekonomi (pekerjaan, pendidikan, dan asuransi sosial), dan pembangunan ekonomi di negara asal dan tujuan. Studi ini menyoroti interaksi kompleks antara faktor sosial dan ekonomi dalam membentuk religiusitas dan intensifikasi agama. Temuan ini menggarisbawahi perlunya kebijakan yang menyeimbangkan pertimbangan sosial dan ekonomi, mempromosikan pluralisme agama, dan mengatasi kerentanan masyarakat untuk mendorong pendekatan inklusif dalam mengelola dinamika agama di berbagai komunitas.

Kata Kunci: *determinan sosial, faktor makroekonomi, intensifikasi agama, religiusitas, status sosial-ekonomi*

INTRODUCTION

The traditional intensification of religion is viewed from a psychological perspective as a coping mechanism to deal with environmental stress. Religion is seen as a buffer for stress for

people in dealing with work and home life.¹ Studies show that individuals who experience stress due to cancer can achieve a high quality of life by consistently practicing religious worship.²

The coping theory has become increasingly popular with the discovery that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a significant intensification of religion in various faiths around the world.³ Studies in Indonesia show that awareness of Islamic law is an important spiritual factor in family resilience and parenting quality during the pandemic.⁴

According to the coping perspective, humans strengthen their faith when faced with uncertain and life-threatening situations. Various reoccurring disasters in Indonesia show that religion is a method to maintain survival. A study on female earthquake survivors in Lombok, for example, showed that being close to God by praying is a source of peace in life.⁵ Sometimes,

¹ Purbo Jadmiko, Elfitra Azliyanti, and Muhammad Rizky Prima Sakti, "Religiosity as a Stress Buffer: An Investigation of Muslim Women's Work-Life Conflict and Job Stress among Minangkabau Women," *Journal of Islamic Economic and Business Research* 3, no. 2 (December 30, 2023): 181–97, <https://doi.org/10.18196/jiebr.v3i2.213>.

² Wastu Adi Mulyono and Hsing-Mei Chen, "Mindfulness, Spirituality, and Quality of Life among Cancer Survivors Undergoing Chemotherapy: Three-Month Observational Studies in Indonesia," *Jurnal Keperawatan Soedirman* 18, no. 2 (July 3, 2023): 82, <https://doi.org/10.20884/1.jks.2023.18.2.8298>.

³ Jeanet Sinding Bentzen, "In Crisis, We Pray: Religiosity and the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 192 (December 2021): 541–83, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2021.10.014>; Marta Bożewicz and Rafał Boguszewski, "The COVID-19 Pandemic as a Catalyst for Religious Polarization in Poland," *Religions* 12, no. 8 (July 26, 2021): 572, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12080572>; Victor Counted et al., "Hope and Well-Being in Vulnerable Contexts during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Does Religious Coping Matter?," *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 17, no. 1 (January 2, 2022): 70–81, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2020.1832247>.

⁴ Asrorun Niam Sholeh, Nopriadi Saputra, and Adler Haymans Manurung, "The Awareness of Islamic Law as a Spiritual Factor in Family Resilience and Parenting Quality During the Covid-19 Era," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 15, no. 2 (December 1, 2021): 329, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2021.15.2.329-358>.

⁵ Ahmad Mumtaz Tauba, Suryani Suryani, and Imas Rafiyah, "The Lived Experiences of the Lombok Earthquake Survivors," *Nurse Media*

a disaster or disease is seen as a manifestation of the fading faith among the community so that disease or epidemics are warnings that encourage people to return to religion.⁶ For example, one of the meanings of the earthquake from a Javanese perspective is that many villages experienced moral damage.⁷

In the absence of knowledge and effort, individuals may pray and increase their faith to evoke hope that they will be saved by a higher, knowledgeable and powerful entity, such as God. The COVID-19 pandemic, being a life-threatening and highly uncertain situation, has led to a significant intensification of religion as a solution for many people to seek safety and comfort in uncertain circumstances.

After the pandemic, the intensification of religion has decreased, indicating the emergence of the strength and knowledge to address the problems of life. Post-pandemic, framing religion in the psychological coping perspective becomes less relevant. On the contrary, a more sociological perspective such as secularization becomes more dominant. Secularization here must be viewed broadly, not just a separation between religion and politics,⁸ but between religion and various aspects of daily life, including in the public sphere.⁹

Journal of Nursing 10, no. 1 (April 27, 2020): 22–35, <https://doi.org/10.14710/nmjn.v10i1.24964>.

⁶ M Yo and P Purwaningsih, “From Loss to Survival: A Study on the Sumbanese Women’s Experiences during Covid-19 Mitigation,” *Jurnal Perempuan* 25, no. 4 (2020): 11–23.

⁷ Islah Gusmian, “Gempa Bumi dalam Pandangan-Dunia Orang Jawa: Studi atas Dua Manuskrip Primbon Jawa Abad ke-19 M,” *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 17, no. 2 (February 20, 2020): 241–72, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlk.v17i2.594>.

⁸ Aprillia Firmonasari, Wening Udasmoro, and Roberta Salzano, “Hybrid Perspectives: Muslim and Secular Discourses in French Politics,” *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 11, no. 2 (December 8, 2021): 299–325, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v11i2.299-325>; Aprilia Firmonasari, Wening Udasmoro, and Yohanes Tri Mastoyo, “Understanding Secularism and National Identity in French Political Discourses,” *Jurnal Humaniora* 32, no. 2 (June 1, 2020): 135, <https://doi.org/10.22146/jh.55450>.

⁹ Mohammad Takdir, “Contestation and the Roles of Islam in The Public Sphere: A Sociological Analysis of Religious Secularization in Indonesia and the West,” *Afkaruna: Indonesian Interdisciplinary Journal of*

In the perspective of secularization, the ease of economy and comfort brought by the development of information technology such as digital games or social media, and modern scientific knowledge related to cosmology and life, will encourage people to be more relaxed in religion.¹⁰ The advancement of the era and the digital world will increasingly erode the important meaning of religion as a guide to people's lives.¹¹ People become more pragmatic and religion can be more oriented towards the economic aspect, through the trade of religious items and tourism promotion programs and halal products that are more symbolic than essential. The change in religion becomes more symbolic with the practice of society experiencing religious relaxation, rather than religious intensification, becoming an important influence of the sociological and economic domains on the implementation of religion. This shift highlights the need to explore other dimensions of religious intensification beyond the psychological domain, particularly its social and economic determinants.

The social theory tends to view religion as a sociological phenomenon related to interactions among humans, including interactions between family members regarding religious issues.¹² The social factors can help in designing interventions that encourage social well-being through the intensification of religion, especially through pathways that give significant influence. The economic system can be seen as the simplest social system, where relationships are built based solely on the exchange of goods and services. In this basic situation, survival

Islamic Studies 20, no. 2 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.18196/AIJIS.2020.0119.154-174>.

¹⁰-Zaenal Abidin Eko Putro, "Enriching Religious Literacy Through Access to Religious Books by Religious Instructors in North Sulawesi," *Journal of Religious Lectures* 18, no. 1 (2020): 250–73.

¹¹ Petrus R Sianturi, Josua Navirio Pardede, and Septian Dwi Riadi, "Rebalancing Religious Policy and the Concept of Public Sphere: Indonesia Cases," *Udayana Journal of Law and Culture* 5, no. 2 (July 31, 2021): 119–37, <https://doi.org/10.24843/UJLC.2021.v05.i02.p02>.

¹² Kurniati Abidin, "Interpretation of Family Members' Involvement in Religious Groups," *Society* 8, no. 2 (December 30, 2020): 695–706, <https://doi.org/10.33019/society.v8i2.178>.

values become important, and religion becomes an essential coping means to ensure that society and individuals can endure stress and adjust, such as by acting simply and frustratingly.

This study aims to identify the social and economic factors that drive the intensification of religion. To date, no research has bridged the social and economic perspectives by examining how these factors jointly influence the intensification of religion and religiosity.¹³ By conducting a literature review on these social and economic factors, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of religious intensification.

The novelty of this research lies in its unique focus on identifying and describing the determinants of religiosity and religious intensification, whereas most previous systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses have concentrated on the outcomes or consequences of religiosity.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: Section Two describes the methodology used in the study; Section Three reviews the data and existing literature; Section Four discusses the findings; and Section Five concludes with policy recommendations.

METHOD

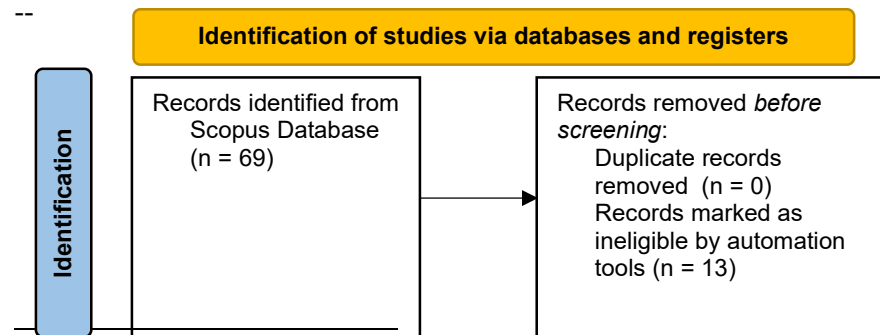
This study applies a qualitative research approach, particularly in the form of literature study, to examine the role of economic and social factors in increasing religious intensification post-pandemic. The main data source is taken from an in-depth literature review that analyzes scientific journals that examine religiosity and religious intensification. The two concepts are not too different. Religious intensification includes significant changes in religious practices and can lead to changes in social relationships. Meanwhile, religiosity is a broader concept that includes various individual religious beliefs, prac-

¹³Jinchun Zhou, "Understanding the Socioeconomic Determinants of Religiosity and Religious Participation in Asia," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, October 6, 2023, 00219096231200598, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096231200598>.

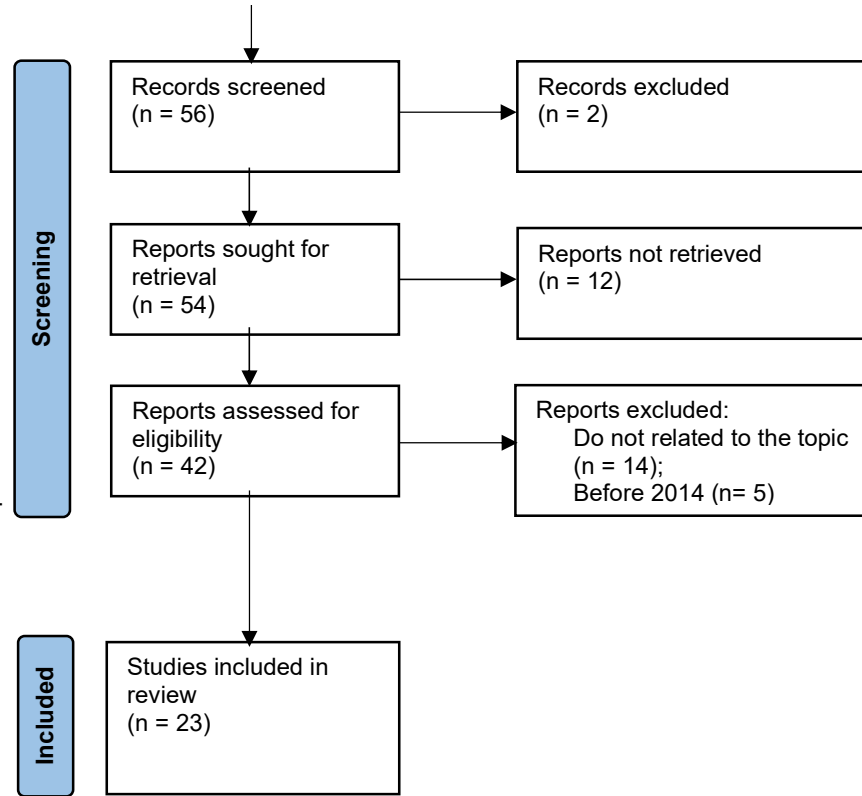
tices, and experiences.¹⁴ In this case, religious intensification is a more specific concept.

This study follows a systematic literature review (SLR) approach, where data is collected systematically, filtered based on certain criteria, and analyzed to obtain results that focus on the factors to be studied. To collect the data, the researchers used the Scopus database. Scopus will search for reputable literature that contains the search words or phrases used by the researcher in the title, abstract, and keywords of the journal article. Five phrases are used to examine the literature in the Scopus database, namely "determinants of religiosity", "determinants of religion", "determinants of religion", "religious intensification" and "intensification of religion". The word "religiosity" is used because it is a more commonly used concept than religious intensification. The word "religion" is used to capture phenomena related to religious intensification in behavior in society. The year of publication is limited to 2014-2024.

The results of data collection are journal references. The use of the phrase "determinants of religion" only produces one article, which does not relate to the topic of this research. The phrase "determinants of religious" produces 41 documents. The phrase "determinants of religiosity" produces 17 documents. Another keyword used are "religious intensification" and "intensification of religion". The keyword "religious intensification" produced 10 literatures while "intensification of religion" did not produce any literature.



¹⁴Ghada Awada, "Religion and Religiosity: A Path to War or Peace," *Polish Political Science Review* 6, no. 2 (December 1, 2018): 55–69, <https://doi.org/10.2478/ppsr-2018-0013>.



Source: Author's Document

Figure 1. Search process according to PRISMA guideline

A total of 69 research titles were obtained. The screening process was carried out following the PRISMA procedure¹⁵ as shown in Figure 1 so that in the end 23 articles were obtained for analysis. The factors identified from each document are listed and the researcher filters the factors that include economic factors and social factors from the list of factors obtained. These social and economic factors are then described as research findings.

¹⁵ Matthew J Page et al., "The PRISMA 2020 Statement: An Updated Guideline for Reporting Systematic Reviews," *BMJ*, March 29, 2021, n71, <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71>.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The results of the literature review show that the majority of previous studies reveal factors that are classified as social factors in determining the intensification of religion. Only a few studies reveal factors other than social and economic factors, such as educational factors¹⁶ and the renewed engagement of young adults with the cultural values and perspectives they were exposed to during childhood.¹⁷ Table 1 below shows the obtained papers categorized into factors of religious intensification.

Table 1. Socio-economic factors of religious intensification

No	Author/s and Article titles	Determinants+ of Religiosity discussed in the paper
1	Brian Conway, Bram Spruyt, and José Pereira Coutinho, Individual - Level Determinants of Religious Intergenerational Transmission: Evidence from Catholic Europe, 2023	Parental religiosity (especially the father)
2	Mateusz Marek and Ewa Gurba, Family Determinants of Religiosity of People in Emerging Adulthood in Poland, 2024	Mothers' and fathers' assessment of religiosity, the protective attitude on the part of the mother, the sense of closeness to the father, the attitude of acceptance on the part of the mother , and the religiosity of the mother
3	M Aleksynska and BR	Religious denomination, social

¹⁶Victor Agadjanian, “Women's Schooling and Religious Mobility: Joining, Switching, and Quitting Churches in a Christian Sub-Saharan Setting,” *Sociology of Religion* 78, no. 4 (January 8, 2018): 411–36, <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/srx027>; Guilherme Irffi, Mércia Santos Da Cruz, and Eveline Barbosa Silva Carvalho, “Reasons for Embracing a Religion: The Case of Brazilian Women,” *Economia* 18, n-o. 2 (May 2017): 168–79, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econ.2016.06.004>.

¹⁷Patricia Wittberg, “Generational Change in Religion and Religious Practice: A Review Essay,” *Review of Religious Research* 63, no. 3 (September 2021): 461–82, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13644-021-00455-0>.

	Chiswick, “The Determinants of Religiosity among Immigrants and the Native Born in Europe,” 2015	conditions in destination and origin countries (religious pluralism, religious freedom, and societal attitudes towards religion), gender, income, level of economic development in destination and origin countries
4	Meulemann, “The Secularization Theory—Not Disconfirmed, Yet Rarely Tested,” 2017	Religious denomination, secularization (differentiation, individualization, and pluralization)
5	Jian Li, “Financial Risk-Taking, Religiosity and Denomination Heterogeneity,” 2022	Religious denomination
6	A Payir, KH Corriveau, and PL Harris, “Children’s Beliefs in Invisible Causal Agents—Both Religious and Scientific,” 2023	Childhood religious exposure
7	Nadia Beider, “Religious Residue: The Impact of Childhood Religious Socialization on the Religiosity of Nones in France, Germany, Great Britain, and Sweden,” 2023	Childhood religious exposure
8	Zhenzhen Qin and Yao Song, “The Sacred Power of Beauty: Examining the Perceptual Effect of Buddhist Symbols on Happiness and Life Satisfaction in China,” 2020	Religious symbols
9	Valentina Dimitrova-Grajzl et al., “Racial Group Affinity and Religious Giving: Evidence from Congregation-Level Panel Data,” 2016	Racial group affinity
10	Karl EH Seigfried, “Children of Heimdall:	Ethnic identity politics

	Ásatrú Ideas of Ancestry,” 2021	
11	Diego Meza, “In a Pandemic Are We More Religious? Traditional Practices of Catholics and the COVID-19 in Southwestern Colombia,” 2020	Frequency of participation before the pandemic, , the type of religious practice, and gender
12	Anselm Rink and Kunaal Sharma, “The Determinants of Religious Radicalization: Evidence from Kenya,” 2018	Psychological trauma at the individual level (including historically strained social relationships) and process-related factors (especially religious identification and involvement in radical networks)
13	Volkan Ertit, “Can the Scope of Secularization Theory Be Expanded Beyond the Modern - Christian - West? Exploring the Alevi Experience in Turkey,” 2024	Secularization (differentiation, individualization, and pluralization)
14	Heiner Meulemann and Alexander W. Schmidt-Catran, “Secularization— Still Going Strong? What Remains When Cross-Sectional Differences Are Eliminated from a Longitudinal Analysis,” 2020	Secularization (differentiation, individualization, and pluralization)
15	Detlef Pollack and Gergely Rosta, <i>Religion and Modernity: An International Comparison</i> , 2017	Secularization (differentiation, individualization, and pluralization)
16	M Carreras and A Vergheese, “Violence, Insecurity, and Religiosity: A Multilevel Analysis of 71 Countries,” 2020	Personal insecurity (illness, illiteracy, unemployment, state-sponsored terror, and violence)
17	Jinchun Zhou, “Understanding the Socioeconomic	Gender, relative and absolute income, age, sex, relative income, absolute

	mic Determinants of Religiosity and Religious Participation in Asia,” 2023	income, socioeconomic status, education, and employment status
18	Guilherme Irffi, Mércia Santos Da Cruz, and Eveline Barbosa Silva Carvalho, “Reasons for Embracing a Religion: The Case of Brazilian Women,” 2017	Age
19	Jean-François Nault and E.-Martin Meunier, “Is Quebec Still a Catholically Distinct Society within Canada? An Examination of Catholic Affiliation and Mass Attendance,” 2017	Age, place of birth, and mother's tongue
20	Caroline Humphrey, “‘Intuitive Districts’: Agentive Images in a Post-socialist City,” 2024	Intuitive district
21	Fraser Macdonald, “A Thousand Eruptions: Religious Intensification in Melanesia and Beyond,” 2022	Wild affect
22	Neil Silveus and Christiana Stoddard, “Identifying the Causal Effect of Income on Religiosity Using the Earned Income Tax Credit, 2020	Income, the existence of social insurance
23	Rozina Shaheen, “Nexus Between Religious Journeys and Economic Influences – The Case of Saudi Arabia,” 2019	GDP per capita, relative prices, population size, trade volume, and travel cost

Source: Author’s Document

Social Determinants of Religious Intensification

There are four groups of factors that can be classified as social factors based on the literature review. These social factors

include family environment, socialization, social conditions, and social demographics.

Family Environment

The family environment is the smallest social factor and also determines the level of religious intensification of a person. Included in this factor are parental religiosity (especially the father),¹⁸ mothers' and fathers' assessment of religiosity, the protective attitude on the part of the mother, the sense of closeness to the father, the attitude of acceptance on the part of the mother, and the religiosity of the mother.¹⁹

Socialization

Included in the socialization factors that determine the level of religious intensification of a person is religious denomination.²⁰ Studies have tried to move away from categorization based on a particular religion in studying religiosity and claim that each religion has comparable religious values. Previous studies generally only ask whether someone adheres to an institutionalized religion or not, not specifically adheres to a particular religion. But there are also studies that are brave enough to differentiate adherents of certain religions and provide an overview of the role of religious teachings on religiosity. A study comparing financial risk taking between Catholics and

¹⁸Brian Conway, Bram Spruyt, and José Pereira Coutinho, “Individual - Level Determinants of Religious Intergenerational Transmission: Evidence from Catholic Europe ¹,” *Sociological Forum* 38, no. 3 (September 2023): 684–707, <https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12934>.

¹⁹Mateusz Marek and Ewa Gurba, “Family Determinants of Religiosity of People in Emerging Adulthood in Poland,” *Religions* 15, no. 1 (January 22, 2024): 136, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15010136>.

²⁰M Aleksynska and BR Chiswick, “The Determinants of Religiosity among Immigrants and the Native Born in Europe,” in *The Economics of Cultural Diversity* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015), 78–116, p.78; Heiner Meulemann, “The Secularization Theory—Not Disconfirmed, Yet Rarely Tested,” *Analysis & Criticism* 39, no. 2 (November 1, 2017): 325–56, <https://doi.org/10.1515/auc-2017-0018>.

Protestants showed that Protestants are more willing to take financial risks than Catholics.²¹

Socialization is social exposure to something like religious exposure in childhood (childhood socialization). So far, there are two theories about the origins of religion in humans. The first theory states that children's beliefs in the existence of invisible causal agents are natural tendencies that exist from birth. The second theory states that supernatural or religious beliefs reflect children's capacity to learn culturally. Research so far supports the second theory by showing that the main determinant of adult religiosity is their childhood religious exposure, rather than their cognitive or personality factors. In this case, children actually tend to give natural explanations for things. However, cultural influences make them start to have religious beliefs.²²

Studies on the religiosity of people who define themselves as not tied to a particular religion in Europe also provide similar findings. In Europe, there are many people who are not tied to a particular religious teaching. They are divided into two groups: those who have never known religion in their lives, and those who studied religion in childhood but abandoned it as adults. Studies in France, Germany, England, and Sweden show that those who have studied religion have higher religiosity than those who have never studied religion at all. The more committed they are to religion in childhood, the more religious they are as adults even though they call themselves institutionally non-religious.²³

²¹Jian Li, "Financial Risk-Taking, Religiosity and Denomination Heterogeneity," *Journal of Empirical Finance* 66 (March 2022): 74–98, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jempfin.2021.12.005>.

²²A Payir, KH Corriveau, and PL Harris, "Children's Beliefs in Invisible Causal Agents—Both Religious and Scientific," in *Advances in Child Development and Behavior*, vol. 65, 1–34 vols., 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.acdb.2023.05.003>, p.1.

²³Nadia Beider, "Religious Residue: The Impact of Childhood Religious Socialization on the Religiosity of Nones in France, Germany, Great Britain, and Sweden," *The British Journal of Sociology* 74, no. 1 (January 2023): 50–69, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12982>.

An interesting study in China on Buddhism shows that religious symbols play a role in increasing religiosity.²⁴ The researchers refer to Durkheim's theory of religion that religious symbols have the effect of transferring the collective energy of religion into visible objects, thus uniting and enlightening people who share the same beliefs. In their study, the Buddhist gesture symbol representing pleasure and enjoyment provided an aesthetic effect that encouraged the spirituality of Buddhists, so that they experienced an increase in religiosity.

The researchers conducted an online survey of 220 people in China. Their survey included a Buddha hand gesture holding a rose that was shown to the respondents. The researchers measured the aesthetic value of the image using the adjectives attractive, beautiful, artistic, pretty, pleasant, and evocative. Their study revealed that high and positive feelings toward the symbol were associated with high levels of users' religiosity, life satisfaction, and happiness. At the same time, religiosity was associated with life satisfaction and happiness, and life satisfaction also played a role in increasing happiness. However, the researchers were careful to note that the role of religious visual symbols in religiosity may only be effective among Buddhists, given that Buddhism has a highly figurative quality for teaching its followers and for building a broad system of meaning.

A study in the United States found that racial group affinity, loyalty to one's racial group, determines the amount of donations given to religious institutions. The researchers found that the fewer white people in a community, the less money white congregations were able to raise, especially in urban areas. This is because in In urban areas, members of a congregation interact more with people from other ethnicities and other religions.²⁵

²⁴Zhenzhen Qin and Yao Song, "The Sacred Power of Beauty: Examining the Perceptual Effect of Buddhist Symbols on Happiness and Life Satisfaction in China," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 17, no. 7 (April 8, 2020): 2551, <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17072551>.

²⁵Valentina Dimitrova-Grajzl et al., "Racial Group Affinity and Religious Giving: Evidence from Congregation-Level Panel Data," *The BE*

A study in Iceland and the United States attempted to examine the factors that determine the level of religiosity of members of a religious organization called Asatru. The researchers found that ethnic identity politics focusing on ancestry is a factor that determines a person's level of religiosity.²⁶

Socialization factors in the form of frequency of participation before the pandemic and the type of religious practice together with gender play a role in increasing the intensification of people's religion during the pandemic. A study in Southwestern Columbia found the role of these factors as factors that are in line with the perspective of religion as a coping. In this case, religion becomes more intense when hardship arises due to bad and unexpected events, in this case the Covid-19 pandemic. Religious experiences before the pandemic serve as a guide for people to decide whether to increase or decrease the intensity of their religion during the pandemic. During the pandemic, the most frequent religious activities were those that were private or personal, simple and short, including formative ones such as reading and studying holy books, rather than mass rituals. The intensification of some religious practices was more evident in women than in men.²⁷

Social Conditions

Social conditions describe the characteristics and dynamics of a broader society that influence the expression and level of individual religiosity, including deviant aspects such as radicalization. Social condition factors known to influence religious

Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy 16, no. 2 (April 1, 2016): 689–725, <https://doi.org/10.1515/bejeap-2015-0131>.

²⁶Karl EH Seigfried, “Children of Heimdall: Ásatrú Ideas of Ancestry,” in *Radical Transformations in Minority Religions*, by Beth Singler and Eileen Barker, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2021), 39–54, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315226804-3>, p.39.

²⁷Diego Meza, “In a Pandemic Are We More Religious? Traditional Practices of Catholics and the COVID-19 in Southwestern Colombia,” *International Journal of Latin American Religions* 4, no. 2 (December 2020): 218–34, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41603-020-00108-0>.

radicalization include psychological trauma at the individual level (including historically strained social relationships) and process-related factors (especially religious identification and involvement in radical networks).²⁸

At the other extreme, secularization theory is a theory that describes the very strong influence of social conditions on the intensification of religion. According to this theory, the level of human religiosity in general decreases due to increasingly widespread secularization. Societies that undergo socio-economic transformation to become more modern will allocate less significance to religion and supernatural beliefs in everyday life.²⁹ This secularization mechanism occurs through differentiation, individualization, and pluralization. Studies show that secularization factors, especially differentiation and pluralization, can reduce the intensity of religion.³⁰

A study comparing the religious intensification of refugees in European countries shows that social conditions in European countries hosting refugees play a role in determining the level of religious intensification of refugees. These factors include religious pluralism, religious freedom, and societal attitudes towards religion.³¹

Another study of 71 countries over the period 1981-2011 to explore the relationship between violence, personal insecurity,

²⁸Anselm Rink and Kunaal Sharma, “The Determinants of Religious Radicalization: Evidence from Kenya,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62, no. 6 (July 2018): 1229–61, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002716678986>.

²⁹Volkan Ertit, “Can the Scope of Secularization Theory Be Expanded Beyond the Modern - Christian - West? Exploring the Alevi Experience in Turkey,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, August 7, 2024, jssr.12937, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12937>.

³⁰Heiner Meulemann and Alexander W. Schmidt-Catran, “Secularization—Still Going Strong? What Remains When Cross-Sectional Differences Are Eliminated from a Longitudinal Analysis,” *Journal of Religion in Europe* 12, no. 3 (May 28, 2020): 231–59, <https://doi.org/10.1163/18748929-01203001>; Detlef Pollack and Gergely Rosta, *Religion and Modernity: An International Comparison* (Oxford University Press, 2017), p.20; Meulemann, “The Secularization Theory—Not Disconfirmed, Yet Rarely Tested.”

³¹Aleksynska and Chiswick, “The Determinants of Religiosity among Immigrants and the Native Born in Europe”, p.79

and religiosity found that illness, illiteracy, unemployment, state-sponsored terror, and violence determine the level of religious intensification in society.³² The researchers argued that violence increases personal insecurity as measured by stress and anxiety. Religion becomes a unique and more effective coping mechanism than non-religious mechanisms to reduce this stress and anxiety so that the higher the level of personal insecurity, the higher the level of religiosity in society. Although this study uses a psychological perspective, the factors studied are social factors.

Social Demographics

Important socio-demographic factors include gender, marital status, and duration in the refugee destination. Studies of refugees in Europe show that migrants' religiosity decreases as they spend more time in the destination country, until it reaches the level of the local population. So, even if they were initially religious, their duration in the destination country society is enough to reduce their religious intensity. Meanwhile, women, especially married women, are known to be more religious than single and married men.³³

A study of women in Brazil showed that the older they were, the more they increased their religious activity.³⁴ However, this study did not find that employment level, marital status, and child mortality determined their religious frequency. Meanwhile, a study of religiosity at the community level, namely the community in Quebec, Canada. In this study, it was found that age, place of birth, and mother's tongue were the main determinants of religious affiliation and practice.³⁵

³²M Carreras and A Verghese, "Violence, Insecurity, and Religiosity: A Multilevel Analysis of 71 Countries," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 32, no. 6 (2020): 1310–28.

³³Aleksynska and Chiswick, "The Determinants of Religiosity among Immigrants and the Native Born in Europe", p.80; Zhou, "Understanding the Socioeconomic Determinants of Religiosity and Religious Participation in Asia."

³⁴Irfi, Da Cruz, and Carvalho, "Reasons for Embracing a Religion."

³⁵Jean-François Nault and E.-Martin Meunier, "Is Quebec Still a Catholicly Distinct Society within Canada? An Examination of Catholic

Humphrey's study puts forward a new concept called "intuitive districts". An intuitive district is a geographical area in a city that exists only in imagination in the sense that it appears to have its own character and ethos that is formed not by political-administrative divisions but by everyday sensations, life activities, and events that are formed spontaneously but are evaluative and comparative. This intuitive district becomes a container for various urban processes and actions, including the intensification of religion, where people subjectively and collectively determine an area as a center of worship and religious activities.³⁶

On the other hand, Macdonald introduced the concept of "wild affect" which is the mobilization of abundant affection as a driver of religious intensification in Melanesia.³⁷ The intensification of religion in this region is shown by the emergence of various religious sects that bring innovation to previous teachings. Wild affect is irregular, emergent, becoming, mobile, and fluid, in contrast to "domesticated affect" which is regulated by religious institutions. This affect is positive such as collective euphoria and can also be negative such as feelings of injustice that overflow over the injustice of colonialism.

Economic Determinants of Religious Intensification

Known economic determinants of religious intensification include income, macroeconomic conditions, socio-economic status, and economic characteristics.

Income

Affiliation and Mass Attendance," *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religions* 46, no. 2 (June 2017): 230–48, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0008429817696298>.

³⁶Caroline Humphrey, "'Intuitive Districts': Agentive Images in a Post-socialist City," *City & Society* 36, no. 2 (August 2024): 78–90, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ciso.12491>.

³⁷Fraser Macdonald, "A Thousand Eruptions: Religious Intensification in Melanesia and Beyond," *Religion and Society* 13, no. 1 (September 1, 2022): 23–38, <https://doi.org/10.3167/arrs.2022.130103>.

Included in the income factors are relative and absolute income.³⁸ The income factor has a negative effect on religious intensification. A study in the United States showed that a \$1000 increase in annual income was associated with a decrease in one religious service per year, as compared to an average of 16 services per year.³⁹

Macroeconomic Conditions

A study on the economic factors driving Hajj and Umrah activities revealed that GDP per capita, relative prices, population size, trade volume, and travel costs are key macroeconomics factors influencing religious tourism to the destination country.⁴⁰

Socio-Economic Status

Socioeconomic status and employment status are determinants of religious intensification. A study in nine Asian countries (China, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Vietnam) found that religiosity is significantly influenced by age, sex, relative income, absolute income, socioeconomic status, education, and employment status.⁴¹

Economic Characteristics

An important economic characteristic factor in determining the level of religious intensification is the level of economic development of the country of origin and destination of the

³⁸Aleksynska and Chiswick, “The Determinants of Religiosity among Immigrants and the Native Born in Europe”, p.81; Zhou, “Understanding the Socioeconomic Determinants of Religiosity and Religious Participation in Asia.”

³⁹Neil Silveus and Christiana Stoddard, “Identifying the Causal Effect of Income on Religiosity Using the Earned Income Tax Credit,” *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 178 (October 2020): 903–24, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2020.08.022>.

⁴⁰Rozina Shaheen, “Nexus Between Religious Journeys And Economic Influences – The Case of Saudi Arabia,” *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* 7, no. 1 (2019): 26–37, <https://doi.org/10.21427/899B-HG15>.

⁴¹Zhou, “Understanding the Socioeconomic Determinants of Religiosity and Religious Participation in Asia.”

refugees.⁴² Studies in the United States show that increasing church membership is caused, among other things, by the existence of social insurance distributed by the government for the underprivileged.⁴³

Discussion

The results of the literature review above show results that are mostly in line with initial expectations. However, some findings raise further questions and provide their own surprising novelty. Traditional beliefs view that wealth and income can provide more time for someone to worship and contemplate spiritually, instead of working or surviving.⁴⁴ Kwatia et al.⁴⁵ mention that wealth allows for increased religious beliefs which in turn will increase wealth through bidirectional relationships. However, empirical studies have repeatedly found that the higher the income, which is the source of wealth, the lower the intensity of religion.⁴⁶ This means that wealth does not provide religious involvement but instead leads to secularization because individuals prioritize material pursuit over spiritual ones.

The research findings also contradict the idea that education and professional success inherently reinforce spiritual or religious pursuits. As a result, we see that not only wealth, but

⁴²Aleksynska and Chiswick, “The Determinants of Religiosity among Immigrants and the Native Born in Europe.”, p.82

⁴³Silveus and Stoddard, “Identifying the Causal Effect of Income on Religiosity Using the Earned Income Tax Credit.”

⁴⁴Holger Strulik, “An Economic Theory of Religious Belief,” *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 128 (August 2016): 35–46, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2016.04.007>.

⁴⁵ BO Kwatia, Amewu G, and M Armah, “Religiosity and Financial Development in Africa: Evidence from Panel Quantile Regression,” *Cogent Business & Management* 11, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2315313>.

⁴⁶Zhou, “Understanding the Socioeconomic Determinants of Religiosity and Religious Participation in Asia”; Aleksynska and Chiswick, “The Determinants of Religiosity among Immigrants and the Native Born in Europe”, p.83; Silveus and Stoddard, “Identifying the Causal Effect of Income on Religiosity Using the Earned Income Tax Credit.”

also education and success, are factors that distance someone from religious intensification.

Another equally important finding is that extreme religious behavior in the form of radicalization was found to have no relationship with macro political or economic conditions, but rather with aspects of social relations at the individual level.⁴⁷ Even so, the macro environment has a more important role as a mitigator by creating social stability that can prevent problematic social relations and psychological trauma in individual citizens, especially with strong religious identification.

Religion plays an important role in human life. Religion can increase work productivity,⁴⁸ improve health quality,⁴⁹ and encourage the implementation of social responsibility.⁵⁰ The existence of these benefits requires efforts to increase faith.⁵¹ In order for someone to increase their faith, they need to know what factors can increase that faith. However, almost all systematic literature review studies and meta-analyses focus on the consequences of religiosity. There is no literature review study that focuses on the determinants of religiosity, let alone religious intensification.

⁴⁷Rink and Sharma, “The Determinants of Religious Radicalization.”

⁴⁸Sandra Leonara Obregon et al., “Religiosity, Spirituality and Work: A Systematic Literature Review and Research Directions,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 179, no. 2 (August 2022): 573–95, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-021-04856-7>.

⁴⁹Manuel Litalien, Dominic Odwa Atari, and Ikemdinachi Obasi, “The Influence of Religiosity and Spirituality on Health in Canada: A Systematic Literature Review,” *Journal of Religion and Health* 61, no. 1 (February 2022): 373–414, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-020-01148-8>.

⁵⁰Mahmoud Amer, “Systematic Review of Religiosity and Social Responsibility,” *Journal of Business and Socio-Economic Development* 4, no. 3 (June 6, 2024): 254–71, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JBSED-02-2023-0007>.

⁵¹Nurochim et al., “Multikulturalisme: Analisis Wacana Kritis terhadap Teks dalam Buku Ajar Pendidikan Agama Islam,” *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 18, no. 1 (2020): 197–222, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlk.v18i1.775>; Aris Risdiana, Reza Bakhtiar Ramadhan, and Imam Nawawi, “Transformasi Dakwah Berbasis ‘Kitab Kuning’ ke Platform Digital,” *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 18, no. 1 (2020): 1–28, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlk.v18i1.682>; Putro, “Pengayaan Literasi Keagamaan Melalui Akses Buku Keagamaan Penyuluh Agama di Sulawesi Utara.”

In line with this situation, this study makes an important contribution to the study of religiosity because it describes the factors that determine the level of religious intensification of a person. The social and economic factors that determine the intensification of society's religion show that religion is a complex issue that contains not only philosophical-ideological components, but also social, psychological, political, and economic components. Theoretically, this finding has implications for the strengthening of the secularization theory which carries modernization factors such as better education, economic development, and the separation of the state from religious interference reducing the intensity of religion.

The practical implication of this study is the need for innovative approaches that align economic modernization with religious values to prevent the effects of secularization. This means the need for integration of religiosity in economic development. Religious leaders need to be involved in community-based trauma recovery programs. Governments and non-governmental organizations also need to design religious programs that bridge traditional values with contemporary needs to increase the involvement of young people and professionals who tend to have low religiosity. The integration of religious values in educational management practices can influence the moral and ethical development of students, thereby reinforcing their spiritual pursuits.⁵²

It should be emphasized that this study is limited in terms of methodology. Caution should be exercised when generalizing the results of this study, which is based on a systematic literature review of 59 previous studies. Empirical research, especially using survey methods, is needed to confirm the role of the various factors mentioned in the context of a developing country such as Indonesia.

⁵²Dawo Jane Irene and Sika James, "Religion-in-Education Management Practice: A Synthesis of Literature," *International Journal of Educational Humanities and Social Science* 07, no. 05 (2024): 150–54, <https://doi.org/10.54922/IJEHSS.2024.0790>.

Further research is also expected to identify other factors that are ignored and become research gaps in this study. Factors such as family disruption, social cohesion, social expectations, and cost perceptions have not been found in previous literature. These factors need to be examined for their impact on the religiosity of society in a collective country including Indonesia. An important study is carried out especially in the post-Covid-19 context where religion can be a system of social control and also a coping system for the difficulties of life faced by society.

CONCLUSION

In addressing the research gap, this study significantly contributes to religiosity research by identifying and explaining the factors that influence an individual's level of religious intensification. The findings from this literature review confirm that religious intensification and religiosity are influenced by a variety of interacting social and economic factors. Social factors, such as family environment, socialization, and broader social conditions, play a dominant role in shaping levels of religiosity. Economic determinants, such as income level, macroeconomic conditions, and socio-economic status, also influence religious involvement. Additionally, factors such as personal insecurity and psychological trauma highlight the importance of religion as a coping mechanism for dealing with stress and uncertainty.

These findings do not imply that the intensity of religiosity is solely caused by external factors. The inherent appeal of religious teachings to address various social and economic problems is a significant internal factor. Since religions offer solutions to different social and economic issues to varying degrees, the specific religious denomination also significantly influences the intensification of religion and religiosity. Some religions have a greater ability to attract their followers to become more religious than others.

These findings underscore the need for policies that consider both social and economic aspects to encourage religious pluralism and address vulnerabilities. This approach aims to create an inclusive strategy for managing religious dynamics in diverse societies.

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