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Abstract

Is religious morality the same across the major world religions and various cultural contexts?

This chapter makes, for the first time, a review, synthesis, and interpretation of the relevant findings from recent international, focused cross-cultural, and experimental studies.

Both striking quasi-universal features and amazing cultural differences emerge in the ways religion (individual religiosity, religious ideas, and/or religious heritage at the collective level) endorses, shapes, or privileges specific moral preferences regarding a vast spectrum of domains of human activity.

The latter include sexuality; fertility, marriage, and parenting; work- and economy-related attitudes and behavior; various prosocial attitudes and behaviors; and civic attitudes toward democracy, social engagement, the environment, and honesty in society.

The final discussion focuses on the religious conflict, across cultures, between interpersonal–consequentialist and righteous–deontological morality, and the evolutionary explanations of the transculturally strong religion-morality association and of the cultural diversity of religion and its morality.

See **next page** for **Contents**

Contents

A focus on cross-cultural research on religion and related morality

“Causal” status of the religion × morality × culture links
Chapter structure

Homosexuality

Individual religiosity across cultures
Cross-religious differences and country-level influences
Experimental evidence across cultures
Summary

(Hetero)sexuality

Individual religiosity across cultures
Country-level influences and cross-religious differences
Summary

Fertility, marriage, and parenting

Religious similarities across cultures
Country-level influences and cross-religious differences
Cross-religious and cultural differences in fertility
Cross-religious differences on abortion, divorce, and age of marriage
Summary

Work- and economy-related morality

Job preferences and organizational citizenship behavior
Valuing work and wealth: The “Protestant” work ethic
Classic surveys
International data analyses
Experimental evidence
The dark side of the “Protestant” work ethic
Pro-capitalism attitudes
Summary

Prosociality

Religious prosociality across cultures
Religiosity and religious priming across cultures
Moderators of religious prosociality across cultures
Cross-religious differences
Country-level influences
Summary

Citizenship

Support for democracy
Civic engagement
Pro-environmental attitudes
Honesty
Summary

Discussion

Sexuality, family, work, prosociality, and duties to the community: Strong universals and interesting cultural variation
Individual religiosity across cultures: Purity, care, labor, and loyalty
Cross-religious differences: Religious traditions and atheism as subcultures
Religious and cultural changes: Country-level influences
Economy, sociopolitical engagement, and environmental concerns: Weak universals and strong cultural variation
Religion and the conflict of prosocial vs. hygienic and righteous moralities
Distal cultural explanations of prosocial and hygienic religious morality
Conclusion