

Religiosity and Body Image

A comparison between Catholics, Muslims and Atheists in Italy

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Purpose and aim

Definitions:

- **religion:** a set of traditions and cultural practices that allow the individual to feel in relationship with God;
- **religiosity:** an inner experience that constitutes the individual's need to feel close to God.

Study the relationship between

- religiosity
- self-esteem
- body image (appearance, fitness, health, satisfaction)
- look modesty

in 3 Italian religious groups: Catholics, Muslims and Atheists

Measures

	Various socio-demographic question	items
RSE*	Rosenberg Self-Esteem	10
SCL*	Santa Clara Streight of Religious Faith Questionnaire	12
MOC*	Modesty of Clothing Scale	13
MBS*	Multidimensional Body Self Questionnaire	69

* Previously used with Muslim sample (but not in Italy)

Santa Clara Scale (item No. 5)

Original version

“I consider my self active in my faith or church”

Italian version

“I consider myself active in:”
“- my faith (religious beliefs)”
“- religious practices typical of my faith”
“- social activities related to my faith”

Measures, internal consistency

Measuring instrument	N. item	Cronbach's α	
		Original	Italian sample
SCL - Santa Clara Scale	12	0,95	0,97
RSE - Self-esteem	10	0,84	0,85
MOC - Modesty of Clothing Scale	13	0,88	0,86
MBS - Multidimensional Body Self	69	0,85	0,90
<i>AE - Appearance Evaluation</i>	7		0,85
<i>FE - Fitness Evaluation</i>	5		0,7
<i>HE - Health Evaluation</i>	6		0,67
<i>AO - Appearance Orientation</i>	12		0,85
<i>FO - Fitness Orientation</i>	12		0,82
<i>HO - Health Orientation</i>	12		0,74
<i>OWP - Overweight Preoccupation</i>	4	unreliable	
<i>SCW - Self-Classified Weight</i>	2	-	-
<i>BASS - Body Areas Satisfaction</i>	9		0,81

Sample description

	N	%	
Respondents	359		
with only socio-demographic question	47	13,4	discarded
with partial or complete responses	311	86.6	

Age					
Gender	N	%	Mean	SD	range
male	94	30,3	30,37	10,25	16-68
female	216	69,7	30,77	11,10	15-77
	Total		30,621	10,832	16-77

Sample description

Religion of reference			
	N	%	
Catholics	139	44,7	
Muslims	64	20,6	
Atheists	46	14,8	(merged)
Agnostics	39	12,5	
Christians	7	2,3	(discarded)
Other religion	16	5,1	(discarded)

Christians

- Waldensian
- Lutheran
- not recognize himself in the Roman Catholic Church

Other religion

- Buddhist
- Taoist
- “in research”
- personal religious or spiritual vision

Sample description

Nationality	N	%	Living in Italy from	N	%
Italian	259	83,3	Born	284	91,3
Italian & other	7	2,3	Less than 10 years	4	1,3
Other	40	12,9	At least 10 years	20	6,4
Not responding	5	1,6	Not responding	3	

Muslims

Living in Italy from	N	%	Nationality	N	%
Born	41	65,1	Italian	23	36,6
Less than 10 years	4	6,3	Italian & other	4	6,3
At least 10 years	18	28,6	Other	36	57,1

Sample description

	Total		Catholics		Muslims		Atheists/ Agnostics	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Believer and committed	125	40,5	68	49,3	51	79,7		
Believer but not committed	90	29,1	67	48,6	12	18,8		
Unbeliever	94	30,4	3	2,2	1	1,6	84	100

$\chi^2(4)=291.38; p<.001; \text{Cramer's } V =.714$

Santa Clara Streight of Religious Faith Questionnaire

Religiousness			
	N	Mean	
Catholics	137	30,2	(*)
Muslims	64	40,6	F(2, 281)=170.593; p<.001
Ath./Agno.	83	15,0	
Believer and committed	123	39,5	(*)
Believer but not committed	89	24,9	F(2, 300)=312.738; p<.001
Unbeliever	91	15,5	

(*) each group statistically different from the others

	F(2, 275)	sig
Religious groups	29.096	n.s.
Level of belief	3277.334	p<.001
Interaction	51,799	n.s.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem

	Self-esteem		
	N	Mean	
Male	93	33,7	t(215.251)=3.302; p<.001
Female	215	31,4	
18-25 y.o.	129	28,3	F(2, 298)=6.788; p<.001
26-45 y.o.	139	31,0	
>45 y.o.	33	32,8	

Gender and Age are independent: ($\chi^2(2)=.285$, n.s.)

		Does you do physical activity?			
r	RSE	Mean		Sig	
		Yes	No		
SCL	0,009	Self-esteem	33,0466	30,8592	p<.001

Modesty of Clothing Scale

	N	Mean		
18-25 y.o.	115	34.6		
26-45 y.o.	126	31.7	=↑=↓	F(2, 271)=5.007; p<.01
>45 y.o.	33	28.8		
Catholics	129	30.3		
Muslims	55	42.6	≠	F(2, 259)=40.402; p<.001
Ath./Agno.	78	29.6		
Believer and committed	112	37.2	≠	
Believer but not committed	82	29.5		F(2, 277)=20.719; p<.001
Unbeliever	86	29.5		

=↑ mean equal to previous (↑), next (↓) group; ≠ group mean different

Multidimensional Body Self

	Male (N=87)	Female (N=195)	
	Mean	Mean	sig

Evaluation

<i>Appearance</i>	23,9	21,7	p <.01
<i>Fitness</i>	18,0	15,8	p<.001
<i>Health</i>			

Orientation

<i>Appearance</i>	35,7	41,0	p<.001
<i>Fitness</i>	37,9	33,9	p<.001
<i>Health</i>	35,5	37,5	p<.05

Multidimensional Body Self

		Health scale	
		Evaluation	Orientation
	N	Mean	Mean
18,25 y.o.	117		36,0
26-45 y.o.	126		37,1
>45 y.o.	33		40,6 $\neq p<.01$
Catholics	130	21,6	
Muslims	54	19,5 $\neq p<.001$	
Ath./Agno.	81	22,0	

Symbols, accessories and clothes

Wear regularly ... typical of your religion?

	Accessories/symbols		Clothing	
	% (yes)		% (yes)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Catholics	25	23,5	0	1,1
Muslims	9,5	32,5	4,8	72,1
Ath./Agno.	0	0	0	0
Believer and committed	27,5	36,6	2,6	40,8
Believer but not committed	8	12,5	0	1,6
Unbeliever	0	0	0	0

	Accessories/symbols			Clothing		
	Mean		sig	Mean		sig
	No	Yes		No	Yes	
SCL	29,9	40,3	p<.001	30,14	43,76	p<.001
MOC				31,33	49,02	p<.001

Attitudes healthy / unhealthy

	% (yes)			
	Smoking	Wine	Bear	Alcool
Male	36,9	62,8	69,3	66,3
Female	29,8	57,9	53,2	51,4
Catholics	31.7	69.5	68.6	66.7
Muslims	16.6	5.0	5.0	5.0
Atheits	39.2	78.7	76.3	74.4
Believer and committed	13.1	40.5	38.3	40.0
Believer but not committed	36.4	62.8	64.2	60.4
Unbeliever	39.6	80.3	75.6	70.8

Correlation: Self-esteem and Body image

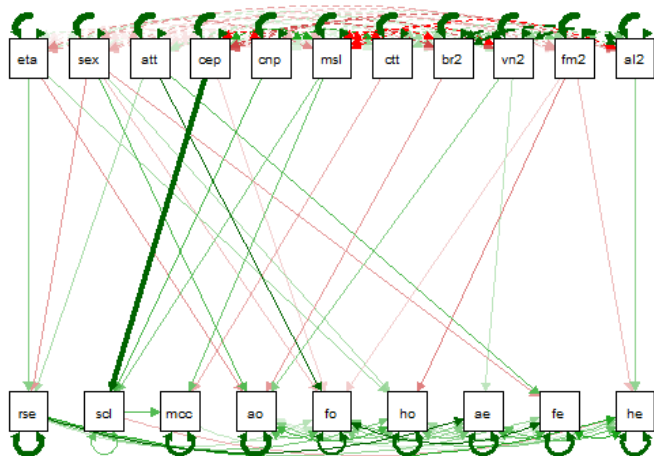
	Total	Catholics	Muslims	Atheists
Evaluation				
- Appearance	.414**	.398**	.441**	.372**
- Fitness	.252**	.318**		.276*
- Health	.372**	.440**	.293*	.266*
Orientation				
- Appearance	-.128*	-.210*		
- Fitness	.214**	.334**		
- Health	.229**	.261**	.386**	

Only statistically significant correlations

Correlation: Self-esteem, Religiousness, Modesty

	RSE/SCL	SCL/MOC	RSE/MOC
Total	0,009	0,432	-0,1
Catholics	0,089	0,154	-0,071
Muslims	0,09	0,473	-0,076
Atheists	-0,246	0,384	-0,267

More complex view 1



More complex view 2

Variable	influenced by
RSE - Self-esteem	-
SCL - Religiousness	Believer(.845), Not committed(.313), Muslims(.234)
MOC - Modesty	Muslims(.344), SCL(.226)
AE - Appearance Evaluation	RSE(.436)
AO - Appearance Orientation	Gender(f,.321), Age(-.186)
FE - Fitness Evaluation	Physical activity(.292), RSE(.191), Gender(m,-.185)
FO - Fitness Orientation	Physical activity(.553), RSE(.123), Gender(m, -.113)
HE - Health Evaluation	RSE(.384), Alcohol(.160), SCL(-.127)
HO - Health Orientation	RSE(.245), Age(.182), Gender(f,.165)

RMSEA = .035 CI(.000-.055); CFI=.984; TLI=.972