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## THE SANCTIFIED AND THE NON-SANCTIFIED: WHY INTRINSIC MUSLIM CONSUMERS OFTEN DIGRESS THE HALAL CONSUMPTION ETHICS?

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### ABSTRACT

West African researchers have investigated consumption and religious beliefs to explain the weight of religion on individuals' consumption behavior. However, studies that investigated intrinsic religious beliefs and consumption in the context are not common. The purpose of this research is to explore how intrinsic religious beliefs shape the Muslim consumer behavior in the sector of beverages. The approach is a quantitative one and based on a post-positivist stance. The results show that Muslims intrinsic religiosity has some sensitive effects on consumer behavior in a multi-religious environment tinted by extreme poverty, and a strong cultural heritage of consumption. Thus, the intrinsic religious beliefs effects on consumer behavior are sometimes characterized by some non-tolerant and violent attitude from the part of some consumers.

**Keywords:** Intrinsic Religiosity, Consumer Behavior, Islamic Ethics, Non-Alcoholic Drinks, Marketing.

## INTRODUCTION

The West African context is a multi-religious environment (Nassè, 2021) with some believers such as Christians, Muslims and Traditionalists and other minor religions (INSD, 2006; Nassè, 2016). There is no doubt that religious beliefs have some effects on consumption. Some previous studies have shown the influence of religious beliefs on consumption in the same context (Diop, 2012; Nassè, 2021) with some syncretic assertiveness (Nassè, 2020) and also some innovative styles (Mansori, 2012; Sahlaoui, 2016). Nevertheless, there is a few knowledge about intrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior in the context and particularly within a multi-religious African context, characterized by some cultural identities that are deeply different from western culture and Asian culture. The present research aim is to fill this gap. Thus, the research question in this study is: Why and how some intrinsic religious believers do consume non halal drinks?

The first objective of this paper is to show the relationships between intrinsic religious beliefs and Muslim consumer behavior. The second objective is to assess the relationship between intrinsic religious beliefs and consumer behavior. The third objective is to investigate the relationships between intrinsic religious beliefs, personality traits and consumer behavior.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Conceptual Framework

**Intrinsic Religiosity:** Delener (1990) defines the concept of religiosity as the high degree of commitment of an individual to a particular religious community. Nassè et al. (2016) portrays intrinsic religiosity as the highest level of commitment, dedication and engagement to the religious precepts (Nassè, 2019) and faith. Allport and Ross (1967), Bonewell (2008) make a distinctive definition of the concept of intrinsic religiosity denotes to a faith that does not consider comfortable life, status improvement but rather considers spiritual life and values.

**Consumer Behavior :** Consumer behavior is the way people consume products, goods or services ( Nassè, 2021; Yaakop, Hafeez, Faisal, Munir, & Ali, 2021; Islam & Chandrasekaran, 2020). It is also how consumers select, examine, purchase and use products and services. Consumer behavior can also be seen as the way people are motivated to purchase and to consume products and services around them.

### Theoretical Underpinning

**Culturalist Theory:** Culture affects many aspects of people life in a dynamic way (Soares, Farhangmehr, & Shoham, 2007). Thus, Culturalists' perspective of consumption emphasizes that every aspect and step of consumption is driven by his or her own culture and therefore some cultural consumption dimensions are stated by these authors (Shavitt, Torelli, & Lee, 2008; Diop, 2012; Agarwala, Mishra, & Singh, 2018; Islam & Chandrasekaran, 2020; Nassè, 2021).

#### ❖ Research hypotheses or research assumptions

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Intrinsic religiosity is strongly associated to consumer behavior.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Intrinsic religiosity is not strongly associated to consumer behavior.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Consumer behavior is strongly associated to intrinsic religiosity.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Consumer behavior is not strongly associated to intrinsic religiosity.

**H<sub>3</sub>**: Personality trait is a moderator of the relationship between intrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

**H<sub>0</sub>**: Personality trait is not a moderator of the relationship between intrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

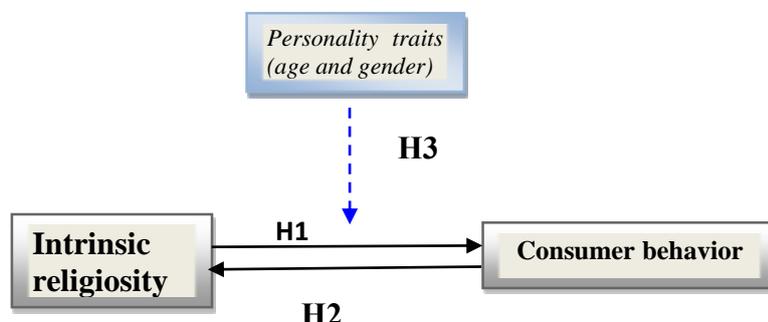


Figure1: Research Model  
(Source, Nassè, research model, 2021)

## METHODOLOGY

**Epistemological Standpoint:** The philosophical position refers to a post-positivist view depicted by Creswell (2014) as the view that challenges positivists and constructivists. For post-positivists the realization of objectivity and an irreplaceable truth in scientific research is not possible (Nassè, 2021); thus, it is a mere utopic and fallacious thought, when the researcher is particularly seeking to understand consumers' behavior in an African context.

**Research Respondents:** Respondents age ranges is between 10 to 65 years and above. Respondents are women and men who speak local languages and French or Arabic. They rarely speak English. They are public workers, and private workers. They are very poor, poor, rich and very rich.

**Research Environment:** The research is carried out in the capital city that is Ouagadougou. It is a multi-religious and a multicultural capital city with people from different nationalities.

**Research Tools:** The researcher used a paper centered questionnaire to collect the data. This questionnaire is partially adapted from the scale of (Allport & Ross, 1967) with items measured on a 4 level Likert scale. Questionnaires validation and pretest are also conducted.

**Sampling Technique:** It is a random sampling associated with snowballing technique to have a big number of respondents (Nassè, 2016; Etikan, & Bala, 2017; Nassè, 2021). Research respondents are given identical chance of being selected.

**Sample size:** The determination of the sample size is made by using the formula:  $n = (p \times (1 - p)) / (e / 1.96)^2$ ;

$p$  is the observed percentage = 50%.  $e$  representing the maximum error (Ganassali, 2009, p. 51).

$n = (0.5 \times (1 - 0.5)) / (e / 1.96)^2 = 0.25 / (e / 1.96)^2 = 6.5\%$ , and

$n = 229$  people.

The number of respondents is 235, which is convenient.

**Data Gathering:** Research data is collected for two (2) years and half in the local languages and in French. For publication purposes, this research the data is computed and translated in English.

**Data Scrutiny:** The data is respectively treated with Sphinx Survey-V5, Sphinx IQ, and Sphinx IQ<sup>2</sup>. Marketing observations techniques are used to add supplementary information.

**Validation of the Research:** The alpha of Cronbach value for the 9 items of 'intrinsic religiosity' is .78. Thus, the items are strongly interrelated between them. The alpha of Cronbach for the 9 items of 'consumer behavior' is .63. Thus, there is a strong correlation between the different items. The data is also post-validated and the majority of respondents have reiterated the same views.

Table-1

*Cronbach's Alpha Values for the Items.*

Variables	Number of items	Alpha of Cronbach	Deduction
<b>Intrinsic religiosity</b>	9 items	.78	Satisfactorily interrelated
<b>Consumer behavior</b>	9 items	.63	Satisfactorily interrelated

\* $\alpha > .60$ 

Source: Nassè (2015-2018).

**Unit of Analysis, Ethical Concerns and Privacy:** The Muslim consumer of non- alcoholic beverage is the unit of analysis. For further, ethical concerns, is that the researcher should respect the context, and also motivate the respondents to a deliberate steady contribution to the research. All the answers given by respondents are under anonymity. The high motivation of the different Muslims religious denominations to participate to the present research has brought the researcher to observe an enthusiastic concern to each religious affiliations and to avoid discrimination.

**RESULTS**

The research sample is composed of consumers that are from the Lahilaas consumers, the Shiite consumers, and the Sunni consumers (see Table 2 below). Lahilaas Muslim consumers and Sunnis Muslim consumers are more cooperative and extrovert in terms of research participation. The Shiites Muslim consumers that are more introvert in the context despite their motivation to contribute to the present research.

Table-2

*Consumers Statistics*

	Type of consumers	Numbers of respondents	Percentage
Religious affiliation	Shiites	58	24.7 %
	Lahilaas	88	37.4%
	Sunnis	89	37.9%
	<b>Total</b>	235	100%

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

Table-3

*Relationships between Intrinsic Religiosity and Consumer Behavior.*

Variables crossing	Results	Deduction
" Intrinsic religiosity" and "Consumer behavior"	p-value = < .01; $\chi^2 = 3771.06$ ; df = 400	Strongly significant.

\*p&lt; .05

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

H<sub>1</sub>: Intrinsic religiosity is strongly associated to consumer behavior.

H<sub>0</sub>: Intrinsic religiosity is not strongly associated to consumer behavior

On Table 2, "intrinsic religiosity" and "consumer behavior" crossing demonstrate a significant relationship with  $p\text{-value} = < .01$ ,  $\chi^2 = 3771.06$ , and  $df = 400$ . The null hypothesis is excluded, and the first hypothesis is confirmed.

H<sub>1</sub>: Intrinsic religiosity is strongly associated to consumer behavior.

### Consumer Behavior and Intrinsic Religiosity.

Table 4

*Results of the Different Relationships between Variables.*

Variables	Results	Deduction
"Consumer behavior" and "Intrinsic religiosity"	$p\text{-value} = < .01$ ; $\chi^2 = 3771.06$ ; $df = 400$	Strongly significant
* $p < .05$		

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

H<sub>2</sub>: Consumer behavior is strongly associated to intrinsic religiosity.

H<sub>0</sub>: Consumer behavior is not strongly associated to intrinsic religiosity.

On Table-4 the crossing of "consumer behavior" and "intrinsic religiosity" shows a strong relationship with  $p\text{-value} = < .01$ ,  $\chi^2 = 3771.06$ , and  $df = 400$ . The null hypothesis is excluded and the second hypothesis is confirmed.

H<sub>2</sub>: Consumer behavior is strongly associated to intrinsic religiosity.

### Personality traits, intrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior

Table-5

*Results of the Different Relationships between Variables.*

Variables crossing	Results	Deduction
"Personality trait" and "Intrinsic religiosity"	$p\text{-value} = < .01$ ; $\chi^2 = 2850.39$ ; $df = 320$	The relationship is strongly significant
"Personality trait" and "Consumer behavior"	$p\text{-value} = < .01$ ; $\chi^2 = 2636.49$ ; $df = 320$	The relationship is strongly significant
* $p < .05$		

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

H<sub>3</sub>: Personality trait is a moderator of the relationship between intrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

H<sub>0</sub>: Personality trait is not a moderator of the relationship between intrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

On Table-5, "personality trait", "intrinsic religiosity" and "consumer behavior" crossing demonstrates a strong relationship with  $p < .01$ ,  $\chi^2 = 2850.39$ , and  $df = 320$ . Still, on the same Table -5 "personality trait" and "consumer behavior" crossing shows a strong relationship, with  $p < .01$ ,  $df = 320$  and  $\chi^2 = 2636.49$ . The null hypothesis is excluded and the third hypothesis is confirmed.

H<sub>3</sub>: Personality trait is a moderator of the relationship between intrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior.

Finally, the graph of relationships also confirms the results.

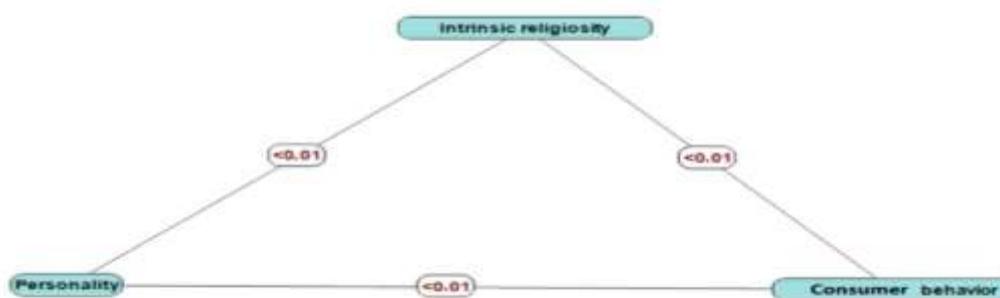


Figure-2: Graph of relationships between variables

## DISCUSSION

### ❖ Intrinsic Religiosity and Consumer Behavior

It is shown by several authors that the relationships between religiosity and the consumer behavior (Patel, 2010; Diop, 2012; Sahlaoui, 2016; Nassè et al. 2019) are very significant in different context. Research has shown that for Muslim consumers there are some ethical norms (Mustafar, & Borhan, 2013) that concern the consumption of the halal and the avoidance of the non-halal. This current research emphasizes the relationship between intrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior in a multicultural and a multi-religious geography context, particularly characterized by religious practices in extreme poverty. The present paper shows that intrinsic religious consumers are stick to their religious principles and they do consume some halal beverages. But, observations show that some of the consumers are also consuming non halal due to some reasons such as ignorance, the weight of development and modernity, shortage and lack of halal drinks, counterfeit beverages, extreme poverty, family and cultural ties. As an illustration halal drinks are often expensive, rare, and not accessible to very poor and poor Muslim consumers because of their poor purchasing power while the non halal drinks are cheap and accessible to all Muslims no matter their social status. Thus, some intrinsic religious consumers who consume halal beverages are also found to be consuming some non-halal beverages. It is also found that intrinsic religious consumers can consume or purchase some non-halal beverages due to the influence of non-Muslims consumers such Atheists, Christians and Traditionalists, that are close friends or close relatives, or again due to the proximity of a non-halal drinking spot.

### ❖ Consumer Behavior and Intrinsic Religiosity

For many authors the relationship between religiosity and consumer behavior is unidirectional relationship (Nassè, 2020). Nonetheless, the present paper also shows that the reverse effect is also evidence by showing that consumer behavior also has an effect on intrinsic religiosity. This reverse relationship or bidirectional relationship also explains the weight of consumption on intrinsic religiosity consumers. Thus, when the weight of consumption behavior is strong on intrinsic religious consumers it can also affect them in a negative way or in a positive way. The negative influence (such as over-excitation during drinking parties, enjoyment and recreating events) bring them to mix the consumption of halal and non-halal beverages, while the positive influence (such as fasting and prayer events) draws them to consume the halal beverage.

### ❖ Personality Traits, Intrinsic Religiosity and Consumer Behavior

The relationships between personality traits, intrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior have rarely been demonstrated and addressed by previous researchers. This research shows that personality traits such as age and gender can affect the relationships between intrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior. The observation is that some consumers do not consider religious prohibition of drinking non-halal drinks. Thus, the young consumers consume both halal beverages and non-halal beverages. Some observations also show that male consumers are those who consume and purchase both halal beverages and non halal beverages as compared to women who are more faithful to religious consumption norms, especially during traditionally events and multicultural events such as non-Muslim ceremonies (Nassè, 2021), where non-halal beverages and halal beverages are available (Bazié, 2011). It is found that at least 20% of the respondents have on one occasion consumed non-halal beverages. Observation show that consumers who are from traditional religious background and Christian background do consume both halal beverage and non halal beverage (Nassè et al., 2019).

### CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The relationship between intrinsic religiosity and consumer behavior is strong, and this relationship is moderated by some variables such as age and gender. The present research has contributed to the enrichment of the concept of intrinsic religiosity, and consumer behavior. In terms of theoretical contributions, this study confirms the influence of culture, and religious beliefs on consumption but in this context the influence is sequential, intermittent, seasonal, irregular, occasional, spasmodic, and sporadic. It is found that some factors such as fasting and prayer events are those that contribute to enhance the Muslim consumer purchasing choices for halal drinks. The commitment for halal drinks is higher, particularly, during the Ramadan (Eid el fitr) fasting month. Out of these events some intrinsic consumers often purchase and consume non halal drinks, thus the influence of religious beliefs on consumer behavior is not perpetual or continuous. The number of intrinsic consumer who are respectful to halal consumption ethics is few, and their consumption and purchasing attitude is found to be somehow, radical, fanatical, extremist, aggressive and sometimes tainted with violent verbal attacks towards opposite consumption views or beliefs.

For managerial contributions, it is suggested that companies should provide a rigorous and innovative hyper-segmentation to answer the need of consumers for halal drinks in a context where the non-halal is particularly found everywhere.

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## APPENDIX

Table 6  
*Age Range of Respondents*

Age range	Number of respondents	Percentage
10 to 25 years old	195	83 %
26 to 35 years old	20	8.5 %
36 to 45 years old.	20	8.5%
Total	235	100%

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

Table 7  
*Social Class of Respondents*

Social class	Number of respondents	percentage
Poor	90	38.3%
Rich	145	61.7 %
Total	235	100%

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

Table 8  
*Marital Status of Respondents*

Marital status	Number of respondents	Percentage
Single	134	57%
Married	77	32.8%
Divorced	24	10.2%
<b>Total</b>	235	100%

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

Table 9  
*Profession of Respondents*

Profession	Number of respondents	Percentage
Private sector	40	17 %
Unemployed	173	73.6 %
Public sector	22	9.4 %

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

Table 10  
*Level of Education of Respondents*

Education level	Number of respondents	Percentage
University	142	60.4%
High school	93	39.6%
Primary school	0.0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100%</b>

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

Table 11  
*Gender of the Respondents*

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage
Men	57	24.3%
Women	178	75.7 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100%</b>

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018)

Table 12  
*Nationality of the Respondents*

Nationality	Number of respondents	Percentage
Burkinabe	189	80.4%
Non Burkinabe	46	19.6 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100%</b>

(Source: Nassè, Fieldwork, 2015-2018) `

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## CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

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