

## **Investigating the relationship between moral and ethical: Does extrinsic and intrinsic religiosity improve people's mental health?**

**Haslinda Baji Anriani**

Universitas Tadulako, Palu, Sulawesi Tengah, Indonesia

**Harmita Sari**

National Dong Hwa University, ROC Taiwan

Universitas Muhammadiyah Palopo, Sulawesi Selatan, Indonesia

**Junaidi Junaidi**

Universitas Muhammadiyah Palopo, , Sulawesi Selatan, Indonesia

**Hamka Hamka**

Universitas Muhammadiyah Kalimantan Timur, Samarinda, Indonesia

This study examines how religion affects people's ethics and morals in both extrinsic and intrinsic dimension. In order to validate how religion and mental health are related, it also considers people's ethics and morals as mediator variables. *Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)* was used to validate the research hypotheses after recruiting 570 participants. The result of this study showed that religiosity play important role on peoples' ethics and morals, which subsequently influences their mental health. Additionally, people's ethics and morals, as mediator play a beneficial effect in bridging the relationship between religion and mental health. It gives practitioners and scholars a chance to observe how religion and mental health interact with one another. Society and regulators also need to enhance communication and interaction. as well as educating people on the importance of ethics and moral principles from the social and religious fields. The recent study also contributes to literature in social and behavioral contexts towards religion, ethics, and the sociology .

**Keywords:** religiosity, peoples' ethics, moral and mental health

**Paper type:** Research Paper

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on people's social and economic lives around the world. The unprecedented disaster is very disturbing to the community, especially for people's ethics and mental health (Faize & Husain, 2021). People begin to experience anxiety and stress due to a lack of activities at home, such as direct communication and interaction with their friends and families. They spent a lot of time at home, studying, communicating, and avoiding direct interaction as COVID-19 boosted positive cases. Fear of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused 40% of the global population to suffer mental illness and psychological disorder (Aqeel el al., 2021; Faize & Husain, 2021; Kaligis, Indraswari & Ismail, 2021; Kalkin, Arum & Erdurmazli, 2021; WHO, 2022), as well as in Indonesian people

experienced anxiety (75.2%), suicidal ideation (68%), depression (67.3%) and stress (23.9%). It demonstrates that people had a high level of worry and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also has a direct correlation to their ethics and mental health as well as their communication and interaction patterns. These problems, if not treated immediately, can continue to become more serious disorders for people (Aqeel et al. 2021; Chaudhary, 2020; Farrel & Mahon, 2021; Okun & Arun, 2020). In some countries such as Indonesia, religiosity plays an important role in shaping people's behaviors, including the habit of worshiping and social interaction. Furthermore, religion and people's psychology well-being play a significant role in providing support for individual and group during the COVID-19 pandemic (Afridi & Rahim, 2020; Junaidi, 2022).

Religion has an essential role in enhancing the quality of human life. Some scholars have paid attention to investigate the correlation between religiosity and people's ethics, morals, and mental health by different indicators (Cook, 2020; Kavonius & Ubani 2020; Lapcharoen, 2021; Patterson & Foster, 2021; Peng et al., 2020; Sen & Tho, 2020). There are two types of religious orientation: extrinsic and intrinsic (Allport & Ross, 1967). Extrinsic religiosity is people's motivations as individuals or in groups, whereas intrinsic religiosity refers to a personal view of life. Some empirical studies conclude that religiosity strongly correlates with ethics, morals, and mental health (Erken, Francis & McKenna, 2020; Roth, 2017; Thomson et al., 2021). In particular, the communication and interaction patterns among people, including empathy, respect, and obedience, makes people vulnerable to moral trauma and adverse health outcomes. Hence, there is an urgent need for study in many areas of the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (Aqeel et al., 2021; Faize & Husain, 2020; Yousaf, Amin & Sami, 2022). However, there has been no research to validate the COVID-19's impact on the social field. Furthermore, the weakness of prior studies is more focused on the qualitative approach, experiment, and Western context, and they avoid applying the concept of religiosity comprehensively to solve people's mental disorders from a developing country perspective.

This study aims to uncover this gap by evaluating the role of people's religiosity as well as the effect of people's ethics and morality, which also serve as mediator between people's level of religiosity and mental health. Furthermore, (Mukhtar & Naz, 2021; Lapcharoen, 2021; Nie & Price, 2021; Phillips, Connelly & Burgess, 2021; Reece et al., 2021) suggested future studies need to be investigated based on the Eastern and social fields. Consequently, the most recent study offers response to the following research questions:  
RQ1. Does the level of religiosity play important role in people's psychological well-being (e.g., ethics and morals)?  
RQ2. Does people's ethics and moral values have a positive role in mediating the relationship between religiosity and mental health?

Some theoretical and practical contributions are made by this work. First, this study examines how, in sociological field based on social identity theory (SIT), religion, ethics, moral and mental health. Second, prior studies have neglected to investigate the role of people's ethics and morals in social contexts (Chen & Chan, 2020; Nazeer & Furuoka, 2017; Soto et al., 2018).

## **Literature Review**

### **Social identity theory**

Social identity refers to the psychological part of personal and communal life. It has two main elements, namely personal, which correlates to a sense of personal and social identity, which has a relationship to a community sense of belonging (Tajfel, 1981). All the dimensions have a strong correlation to religion. Furthermore, those dimensions play an important role in

people's communication and interaction intentions. Social identity also possibly influences people's attitudes. In the field of religion, it influences personal mental health (Williams-Gualandi, 2020). People also establish utilitarian attitudes and communication toward ethics, morals, and mental health at the cognitive level. People have positive minds and views toward developing respect and obeying others, which represents the mental health level. People also possibly had a positive attitude toward habits based on religious concepts, which result in psychological well-being at the affective level. It is possible to make people's attitudes, ethics, morals, and mental health better than before. The social identity theory (SIT) is essential for explaining how people's psychological well-being and their level of religiosity related to one another. few studies, meanwhile, have looked into how religion influence people's ethics, morals, and mental health (Cook, 2020; Junaidi et al., 2022; Philips, Connelly & Burgess, 2021).

### **Religiosity**

Religiosity refers to personal belief in linking love for God and human being (Erken, Francis & McKenna, 2020). Including attending religious activities, a good Samaritan, care of the frequent prayer as religious compliance, educated others, and enlightened a good habit. Those are extrinsic and intrinsic religiosity dimensions. It has an essential role in affecting communication and interaction patterns among people regarding a specific religious field (Stewart et al., 2019), individual ethics, moral and mental health (Phillips, Connelly & Burgess, 2021; Sen & Tho, 2020). Religion also provides a rule for the the routine activities among Indonesian people (Junaidi, 2021; Junaidi, Wicaksono & Hamka, 2022; Usman, Riaz & Ishtiaq, 2021). It has spiritual valuable due to the degradation of ethics and moral in some regions. Hence, this condition possibly influences peoples' mental health. It avoids them interacting with their peers, and the low-level empathy.

### **Ethics**

Ethics is human nature or habits shown in everyday life, which comprises two important elements: good and bad, such as norms, morals, and positive thinking. It depends on the religion and interaction pattern of a group of people. Humans may be able to live more securely and calmly thanks to good habits, and vice versa. It has many of the same moral values as the Eastern and Western culture, including liberty, justice, integrity, and compassion for the weak (Soto et al., 2018). Communication and interaction also possibly develop the people's ethics, which the community can accept. Previous studies concluded that religion plays an important role in resolving ethical issues, such as Chen and Chan (2019) and Stewart, Lawrence and Burg (2019).

### **Moral**

Communication and interaction patterns have a crucial role in building a person's morals and character. The moral condition is the mental condition of people that keeps them brave, enthusiastic, and ethical. For instance, security, comfort, and friendship. Morality has two essential dimensions: moral identity, which is retained as a personal moral character based on experience; and moral inclusion, which refers to psychological processes of social justice in the community. The government must provide a genuine moral education because it can help people develop a positive character. In Indonesia, social activities and religion are unified in the community system.

Prior studies offered the concept that religion has a close relationship with morals. As an example, moral education in American public schools needs a curriculum to help people understand the different cultures, languages, and religions. Hence, they have a sense of

belonging and mutual respect (Erken, Francis & McKenna, 2020); similarly, in England, religion positively affects peoples' psychological well-being (e.g., empathy, sympathy, and love to others). In contrarily, Italia has a different pattern where moral religion does not strong correlation with peoples' mental character (Passini, 2016). However, preliminary researches more focus on Western context. Hence the study in various cultural, religion, and regions is needed to obtain comprehensively result.

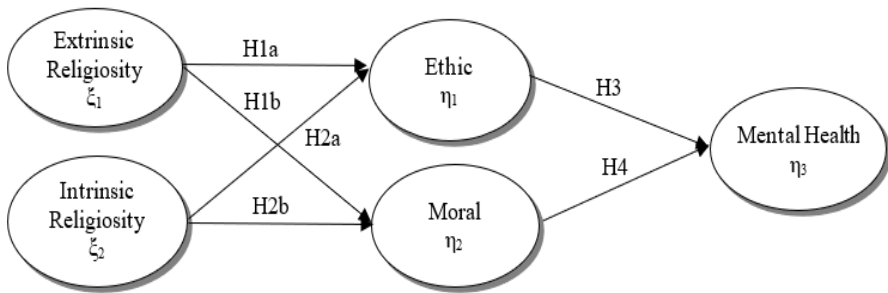
### Mental Health

Mental health is a condition when a person's mind is calm and/or feels restless. Someone who is mentally healthy can face life's challenges, establish strong relationship with others. On the other hand, people with impaired mental health find it difficult to control their emotions, eventually leading to bad behavior. People who have mental disorders can damage their interactions with others and their mental health. The social system must strengthen religious education in society. Some empirical studies conducted on religion can help overcome depression, lower stress levels, and anxiety. Praying a lot, as taught in religion, can change mental health quality (Cook, 2020; Nazeer & Furuoka, 2017).

Community interaction and religion are solutions to solve mental illness among people through combine community and religion activities as one of the unities. Including social interactions or communication. Regular prayer has a beneficial effect on enhancing people's mental health (Afridi & Rahim, 2020; Cook, 2020). Specially, how to use the appropriate language when discussing a topic with friends and parents. Besides, the other problems are social and environment (e.g., social system and religious habit).

**Figure 1**

Proposed research model



### Hypotheses

#### The relationship between extrinsic religiosity and peoples' ethics/moral.

Some scholars apply categorical scales to validate the morale of people according to their religious beliefs (Cook, 2020). Religious adherence has a strong correlation to personal adherence, while morality is a high sense of caring for fellow human beings, positive thinking, and participating in religious activities. This perspective is essential to the influence of religion on people's ethics and morals. Extrinsic religiosity, which offers direction to always apply morals in the social communication and interaction process based on religious ideas, is the foundation of instrumental and practical interests in individual and community-oriented religion. Extrinsic religiosity is related to a high concern for people's needs and desires, worshipping in religious activities that increase faith, moral and mental health. Peoples' awareness to increase positive behavior is influenced by their level of religiosity and effectively reduces bad behavior such as disrespect for fellow human beings. Prior studies concluded that extrinsic religiosity

significantly affects peoples' morals (Soleiman & Lovat, 2019) and peoples' ethics (Erken, Francis & McKenna, 2020; Phillips, Connelly & Burgess, 2021). Hence, the research hypothesis:

H1. Extrinsic religiosity play important role to (a) peoples' ethics and (b) peoples' morals.

Religiosity affects various aspects of people's psychological well-being (e.g., empathy, respect, and mental health). It has a strong correlation to personal cognitive and behavioral traits, which also influences their ethics (Erken, Francis & McKenna, 2020), and also has become an educational goal for peaceful communication and interaction among people. The intrinsic field leads to people being more friendly based on religious objectives (i.e., respect for others). People who have strong beliefs will apply positive ethics, make religion a guide in life, and become the basis for reducing bad ethics, increasing sympathy and respect for fellow human beings. People need to practice the tenets of religion in their lives, which they get from reading the scriptures and discussing with others. Those are the dimension of intrinsic religiosity. As well as the people's morals (Krettenauer, 2020; Passini, 2016; Nie & Price, 2020), the authors concluded religion, ethics, and morals have a strong correlation with each other and are indispensable. Previous studies concluded that intrinsic religiosity had influenced people's ethics (Erken, Francis & McKenna, 2020; Roth, 2017; Stewart, Lawrence & Burg, 2019). Hence, the research hypothesis:

H2. People's (a) ethics and (b) morality are significantly and favorably influenced by intrinsic religiosity.

### **The relationship between peoples' ethics and mental health.**

People's ethics have an essential role in determining the conditions of social communication and interaction. People who practice ethics in accordance with religious teachings will experience better mental health (Chen & Chan, 2020; Erken, Francis & McKenna, 2020). If a person's mental health is in good shape, they will be highly motivated to study and solve difficulties effectively. In reality, during COVID-19, several individuals saw a worsening in their mental health, including a lack of compassion for others, restricted freedom of speech, and a diminished sense of security in some nations. When exploring the connection between people's mental health and ethics and morality, this study takes into account the mediating role of those factors. Previous research found that religion improves people's ethics, which in turn enhances people's mental health (Cook, 2020; Essler & Paulus, 2021). Hence, the research hypothesis:

H3. Peoples' ethics has a positive effect on mental health.

Morality is an essential aspect in measuring people's mental health. It may guide and develop a more dynamic individual (Cook, 2020; Farrel & Mahon, 2021). Positive thinking and routinely participating in activities at the mosque can include morals that can have a positive effect on people's mental health. Furthermore, morals that do not follow religious guidelines will experience a moral decline. Thus, religion must be used as the basis and strategy in fostering people's morals to overcome the mental health decline during COVID-19. Moreover, the mediating role of people's morals is significant in examining the relationship between religion, morals, and peoples' mental health. This increases the quality of studies conducted in measuring peoples' mental health. Furthermore, a preliminary study reported that peoples' moral plays an essential role in overcoming mental health (Glazzard, Rose & Ogilvie, 2021;

Hall et al., 2021; McEwen, Alisic & Jobson, 2020; Williamson, Stevelink & Greenberg, 2018). Hence, the research hypothesis:

H4. Peoples' mental health is significantly and favorably influenced by peoples' mental health.

## Method

### Sample and data collection

From June 20 to August 10, 2021, an online survey was performed using Google Forms. The sample was drawn from a convenience sample of 570 Indonesians who experienced anxiety, despair, and stress as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, 518 samples were legitimate, representing a completion rate of 90.88%.

**Table 1**

#### *Respondent demographics*

Demographic Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	204	39.4
Female	314	60.6
Age		
Under 20 years old	350	67.6
21~25 years old	122	23.7
26~30 years old	46	8.9
Time period of using social media		
Below 4 years	242	46.7
4~7 years	148	28.6
7~10 years	54	10.4
Over 10 years	74	14.3

### Measures

For all items, this study used a seven-point Likert scale anchored between 1 and 7 ("strongly disagree" and "strongly agree"). Extrinsic religiosity emphasizes individuals's morals, such as a strong sense of empathy and concern for friends, family, coworkers, and other people. Extrinsic religious individuals, for example, engage in social activities to lessen the burden on those who are struggling. Improved communication is the key factor influencing the relationship between people's ethical religiosity, which was adapted from intrinsic religiosity, which is the frequency of people's involvement in mosques Junaidi (2021) and Junaidi et al., (2022). All items used in the study of peoples' ethics, morals, and mental health were adapted from Cohen and Cornwell (1989); Przybylski et al., (2013).

## Results

### The pilot study and descriptive statistic

It can be seen in table 2, the mean value and standard deviations above .5. It implies average, the peoples' religiosity, ethics, moral, and mental health have a strong correlation (Hair Jr et al., 2019).

**Table 2**  
Correlation matrix for all instruments

Constructs	Mean	SD	ER	IR	ET	MR	MH
ER	6.30	1.18	<b>0.906</b>				
IR	6.48	0.77	0.544**	<b>0.827</b>			
ET	5.43	1.44	0.364**	0.319**	<b>0.905</b>		
MR	5.40	1.56	0.384**	0.307**	0.458**	<b>0.908</b>	
MH	5.85	1.03	0.485**	0.359**	0.493**	0.451**	<b>0.794</b>

### Measurement result

Software AMOS 22 and SPSS 22 were used to validate the research hypotheses and using structural equation modeling (SEM) approach. Byrne (2016) and Hair Jr et al., (2019) both mention a two-stage methodology, which is also used in this work. First, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) method is utilized to assess the reliability and validity of the measuring approach. All of the CFA findings for the items showed a satisfactory fit (see table 3).

**Table 3**  
Measurement results

Constructs and Measurement items	Squared multiple correlation (SMC)	Composite reliability (CR)	Average of variance extracted (AVE)	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Extrinsic Religiosity		0,958	0.822	0.955
ER1: I enjoy reading the religion literature	0.861			
ER2: I believe it is crucial for me to have some quiet time for reflection and prayer.	0.974			
ER3: I occasionally have a powerful sense of	0.945			
ER4: On this belief, my entire life is built.	0.962			
ER5: It's crucial for me to engage in some quiet religious reflection and meditation.	0.775			
Intrinsic Religiosity		0.916	0.685	0.909
IR1: I visit the mosque because it gives me the chance to socialize, learn, and build relationships.	0.818			
IR2: My major goals in praying are relief and	0.856			
IR3: Religion provides solace through difficult	0.828			
IR4: Peace and joy are the goals of prayer.	0.876			
IR5: I attend religious events because it's fun to run	0.755			
Ethic		0.931	0.819	0.929
PE1: I think it is okay to use another person's goods if the people agree	0.866			

PE2: I think it is okay to work together with other people	0.805			
PE3: I think it is okay to help other	0.772			
Moral		0.959	0.825	0.960
PM1: Having admirable qualities would make me feel good about myself.	0.893			
PM2: I would be ashamed if I had unethical	0.866			
PM3: I often buy products that are in line with my characteristics.	0.945			
PM4: I often use products and services to identify my characteristics.	0.953			
PM5: These are things that my reading of particular books and publications reveals about	0.880			
Mental Health		0.895	0.631	0.893
MH1: I worry that others have more enjoyable experiences than I do.	0.742			
MH2: When I don't know what my pals are doing, I become concerned.	0.823			
MH3: When I learn that my pals are having fun without me, I become concerned.	0.840			
MH4: It's critical for me to comprehend the work of my buddies.	0.841			
MH5: On sometimes, I question whether I spend too much time keeping up with events.	0.717			

Fit statistics (N = 518)

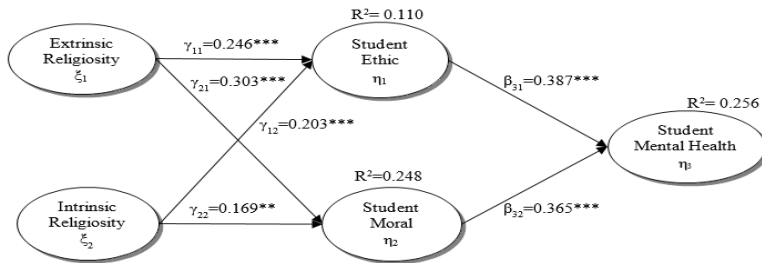
$\chi^2/df = 3.871$ , Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) = 0.864, Nonnormed fit index (NFI) = 0.924, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.942, Incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.942, and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.075

### Structural model

Extrinsic religiosity and people's ethics and morality have a positive and substantial link, as summarized in table 4 (0.246;  $p < 0.001$ , 0.303;  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting hypotheses 1a and 1b. It suggests that people's religious practices, such as regular prayer and social engagement, have a positive impact on their attitudes. The same is true for H2a and H2b, indicating a favorable correlation between intrinsic religiosity and people's ethics and morality (0.203;  $p < 0.001$ ; 0.169;  $p < 0.005$ ). Additionally, people's morals and ethics have a good impact on their mental health (0.387;  $p < 0.001$ , 0.365;  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting H3 and H4 (see figure 2).



**Figure 2**  
Structural model results



**Table 4**  
Proposed model results

Hypotheses	Symbol		Path		Coefficients	Test results
H1a	$\gamma_{11}$	Extrinsic Religiosity	→	Ethic	0.246***	Supported
H1b	$\gamma_{21}$	Extrinsic Religiosity	→	Moral	0.303***	Supported
H2a	$\gamma_{12}$	Intrinsic Religiosity	→	Ethic	0.203***	Supported
H2b	$\gamma_{22}$	Intrinsic Religiosity	→	Moral	0.169**	Supported
H3a	$\beta_{31}$	Ethic	→	Mental Health	0.387***	Supported
H4a	$\beta_{32}$	Moral	→	Mental Health	0.365***	Supported

**Note:** Significant at \*:  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*:  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*\*:  $p < 0.001$

The degree of religiousness of a person has a significant impact on how well their social life, particularly their mental health, is preserved. People’s daily activities such as social communication and interaction must be complemented by religious law and it is important to respect each other as much as possible for their mental health (Aqeel et al., 2021; Basit, Maroof & Mian, 2021; Junaidi, Wicaksono & Hamka, 2022; Stewart, Lawrence & Burg, 2019). This study uncovers the specific factors that determine people's ethical and moral quality. This is important and relevant in the social context. People's intrinsic religiosity has an essential role in ethics, which indicated that people’s religion literacy, frequent praying, and sense of belonging to God mostly influenced their daily lives. It implies that reading literature about their beliefs and religion, allocating specific time to pray, and sensing Allah's (God's) presence influences human attitude and behavior, including respect and obedience to others, as well as becomes fundamental to developing teamwork. Moreover, people's religion also plays an important role in people's morality through their awareness that religion law provides the best guide to their daily activities. Therefore, these results are in accordance with preliminary studies conducted by Cook (2020), Erken, Francis and McKenna (2020), Junaidi (2021), and Kavonius and Ubani (2020), which state that the frequency of religious activities (e.g., social activities: handling funds for disaster victims, participating in studies to increase religious knowledge) can have a positive effect on people's morals.

This study also supports Junaidi, Wicaksono and Hamka (2022), Kaligis, Indraswari and Ismail (2021), and Stewart, Lawrence and Burg (2019). The authors concluded that extrinsic religiosity dimension has positive and significant effect on people's ethics. It means that the frequent attendance of religious activities in mosques, the main objective of following religious law is to get relief and protection, and the people's belief that religion provides the best solution in their lives has a positive effect on enhancing their ethics. Furthermore, people also believe that participating in religious activities can possibly increase their peace of mind and

happiness. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the variables explaining extrinsic and intrinsic religiosity had a greater effect on people's morals than ethics. Furthermore, people's ethics and moral complete mental health for the years covered. It indicates that people's mental health in this context is determined by their frequency of religious activities, including sex, age, and education. This was particularly true among people during the COVID-19 pandemic with social and psychological problems. Moreover, the propensity of mental illness cases was mostly among people with low levels of religiosity.

Recent studies have shown that mental health has been a global problem since the colonial era and religious activities have a significant impact on people's mental health. Palk et al., (2020). Furthermore, enlightening people by including people's ethics and morals also has an essential role in mediating the relationship between religion and mental health. According to the current study, people's ethics and morals play a critical role in mediating both direct and indirect links between religiosity and mental health. Therefore, morality and ethics play a crucial role in bridging religious activities and preventing mental disease. This result confirmed prior studies by Aqeel et al., (2021), Essler and Paulus (2021), and Faize and Husain (2021), who revealed that people's ethics and morals have a strong correlation to mental health. In addition, religion, ethics, and moral and mental health are indispensable in social life (Junaidi. 2022; Krettenauer. 2020; McEwen, Alisic & Jobson, 2020; Palk et al., 2020).

### Mediation effect

Table 5 shows all mediation effects are significant (i.e., partial mediators) (Hayes, 2018). It also shown that people's religiosity level through religious has a direct effect on people's mental health. The importance of ethics and morals as a bridge between mental health and religion demonstrates that a person will be happy in life and continue to cultivate positive relationships with other people. In other words, people with high levels of religion will develop good ethics and morals, making them amenable to getting along with and helping other people. Religion may also have an impact on how people view the solutions to life's issues.

**Table 5**

Mediation effects

IV	M	DV	IV->DV (c)	IV->M (a)	IV+M->DV		Bootstrapping 95% CI	
					IV (c')	M(b)	Percentile method	Bias-corrected
ER	ET	MH	0.310***	0.446***	0.427***	0.261***	[0.020, 0.075]	[0.022, 0.076]
Standard Error			0.033	0.050	0.033	0.027		
ER	MR	MH	0.321***	0.509***	0.427***	0.207***	[0.019, 0.068]	[0.020, 0.070]
Standard Error			0.034	0.053	0.033	0.026		
IR	ET	MH	0.303***	0.602***	0.486***	0.302***	[0.029, 0.079]	[0.031, 0.115]
Standard Error			0.053	0.079	0.056	0.028		
IR	MR	MH	0.329***	0.627***	0.486***	0.250***	[0.024, 0.072]	[0.028, 0.100]
Standard Error			0.054	0.086	0.056	0.027		

**Note:** ER: Extrinsic religiosity, IR: Intrinsic religiosity, ET: Ethic, MR: Moral, MH: People Mental Health

Significant at \*:  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*:  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*:  $p < 0.001$

## Discussion

### Key findings

This study uncovers the specific factors that determine people's ethical and moral quality. This is important and relevant in the social context. People's extrinsic and intrinsic religiosity have a positive effect on their ethics and morals. Therefore, these results are in accordance with preliminary studies conducted by Cook (2020) and Erken et al., (2020), which state that the frequency of religious activities (e.g., social activities: handling funds for disaster victims, participating in studies to increase religious knowledge) can have a positive effect on people's ethics and morals. Recent studies have shown that mental health has been a global problem since the colonial era (Palk et al., 2020). In addition, the religious curriculum is applied in education and in the home environment, considering the COVID-19 pandemic, where the majority of people work from home. Likewise, enlightening people by including religious compliance tends to improve their ethics and morals. Furthermore, knowledge was developed from the discussion of the attitudes of people.

The role of ethics and morals as a mediator between religion and mental health shows that someone will be happier in life and will continue to build good relationships with fellow human beings. In other words, individuals with high levels of religion will develop moral principles that make them approachable and willing to assist others. Religion may also influence people's views on how to solve life's problems. These results imply that persons acting morally and ethically are congruent with higher levels of religion. In particular, a person's religious identification affects how they connect with their friends, and this strategy has a favourable effect on their mental health. The society environment that has religion and ethics rules to ensure that people can understand and have knowledge about it. On the other hand, people must apply ethics and morals that are in accordance with religious teachings. Similarly, someone with less awareness tends to quickly disconnect from their fellow human beings. This decision tends to cause serious problems to their mental health. Valuable social interaction is expected to strengthen religious activities in social communication and interaction. This is very important to solve social problems, one of which is the mental health of people. In addition, comprehensive methods and easy-to-understand mechanisms are important factors for improving mental health. People are not under pressure but are easy to get along with and can be accepted by society.

### Conclusion

This study shows that religion dimensions, namely extrinsic and intrinsic, play an important role in guiding people's daily activities. It means that religion is not only a ritual but also provides social value. Hence, religious people can enhance the quality of society, including respect for and obedience to others. These activities have a positive impact on mental health, just as religion affects people's ethics and morals. Another important factor in bridging the chasm between religion and the mind is the level of a person's ethics and morality. This forms the basis for people's religious empathy as well as the relevance of their religious practices, knowledge, and experiences. The findings of this study assist sociologists to analyze specific situations, such as people's ethics that are in line with religious principles (e.g., respecting and obeying others). Enlightenment also enables people to live better lives (e.g., helping each other and building polite communication). Not only social principles, but also religious ones, must be presented.

### Theoretical implications

The new study adds to the body of knowledge. First, it offers more accurate perspectives on how religion affects mental health, as mediated through people's ethics and morals. The results demonstrate a significant relationship between people's religiousness, ethics,

and morals. It improves mental health and relationships with friends and family. Second, it is demonstrated that morality and ethics act as a bridge between religion and mental health. The importance of mediator variables has greatly improved people's mental health compared to the past. This is the primary distinction between religious acts and the experiences that individuals have. Finally, this study supports the research hypothesis that predicts variables (such as mental health and religiosity) that influence people's empathy depending on their religion.

### **Managerial implications**

According to the results of this study, governments and medical professionals should take an active role in talks about improving social life quality, religion, ethics, morals, and mental health. In the context of sociology, the results of this study allow the analysis of some instances such as people's ethics that are in line with religious guidelines (e.g., respect and obeying others). It is also enlightenment that allows people to live better (e.g., helping each other and building polite communication). It is not only necessary to provide religious values but also social values.

These findings have some practical implications. Such as religion and sociology, thus developing people's ethics and morals. The government must be applying the social system based on the religiosity principle. Religion has an important role in improving the mental health of people. It is closely related to people's psychological health. The importance of ethics and morality as a mediator between religion and mental health shows that someone will be happier in life and will continue to create excellent relationships with fellow human beings. The high level of people's religiosity will form positive ethics and morals, making them easy to get along with and help fellow human beings. Religion may also influence people's views on how to solve life's problems. These findings suggest that religion principles provide guidelines with ethics and morals that people follow. In particular, people's interactions with their friends are influenced by their religious identity and mental health. Therefore, the curriculum that has been made needs to be adjusted to religious guidelines, then practiced in everyday life. The school environment that has implemented the curriculum must ensure that people can understand and have knowledge about it. On the other hand, people must slowly apply ethics and morals that are in accordance with religious teachings. Similarly, someone with less awareness tends to quickly disconnect from their fellow human beings. This decision tends to cause serious problems for their mental health.

Religion and social are expected to play an important role in religious teachings in social communication and interaction. Including interaction in community is to maintain people's activities that must follow religious teachings. This is very important to solve social problems, one of which is the mental health of people. In addition, comprehensive methods and easy-to-understand mechanisms are important factors for improving mental health. People are not under pressure but are easy to get along with and can be accepted by society.

### **Limitations and future research directions**

First, this study used social and theological context to determine people's mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. To reach a more accurate conclusion, future studies must take into account various religions in all the regions. Second, it solely employs ethics and morals as mediators. Future studies should include mediators who represent other religious perspectives and issues. Additionally, it is important to make sure that people are aware of this link since it contributes to the development of religiously based ethics and values, which in turn helps individuals feel at ease, self-assured, and in better mental health.

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