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RELIGIOSITY AND MANAGERIAL DECISION-MAKING: A LATENT CONFLICT OR A SOURCE OF CONSISTENT VALUES?

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Abstract:

This study explores the relationship between religiosity and managerial decision-making, starting from the fundamental question: is religion a disruptive factor in the economic logic of decision-making, or can it be a stable source of value consistency in business management? In a socio-cultural context such as Romania's, where religion continues to play a major role in defining identity, investigating this relationship becomes not only relevant from a sociological point of view, but also necessary for understanding the subtle mechanisms that influence organizational culture and professional ethics. The study is based on the analysis of data provided by the World Values Survey (WVS), using quantitative methods of descriptive analysis and classification through cluster analysis. The dimensions investigated include religious beliefs (belief in God, heaven, hell, the afterlife), frequency of religious practices, attitudes toward religious pluralism and the relationship between religion and science, as well as the subjective meanings attributed to religion (ethical vs. ritualistic, oriented toward the afterlife or the present). The results indicate the existence of two main types of religiosity: a traditionalist, normative, and exclusivist type, which can influence managerial behavior through an ethics based on authority and conformity; and a flexible, secularized type, which shares the ideas of secular humanism and favors moral autonomy and critical thinking in the professional context. The originality of the study lies in the integration of religiosity into an applied framework of organizational interpretation, providing a valuable contribution to the literature on ethical leadership, managerial decision-making, and value management in organizations. Religion is thus approached not only as a spiritual phenomenon, but as a latent determinant of decision-making culture in business.

Key words: *religiosity, decision-making , Two Step cluster analysis, World Values Survey(WVS)*

1. Introduction

In Romania, religion occupies a central place in social life, being closely linked to tradition, culture, and public morality. Although significant changes have taken place in Romanian society in recent decades, including rapid modernization and increasing

exposure to secular Western values, religion maintains a strong presence in the daily lives of many people.

This study aims to explore how religion is experienced, understood, and expressed by the adult population in Romania, based on data provided by the World Values Survey-7 (WVS) – a large international research project on social and cultural values (Inglehart et al., 2022; Haerpfer et al., 2022). The central objective of the research is to empirically analyze *religious beliefs*, *religious practices* (such as frequency of prayer or participation in religious services), as well as *the meanings that people attribute to religion*, in an attempt to outline distinct profiles of religiosity within contemporary Romanian society.

The methodological approach starts from the premise that religion is not a static or uniform phenomenon, but a complex and dynamic construct, articulated differently depending on the socio-cultural context, education, age, and individual value systems. In this sense, the research aims not only to measure the degree of religiosity, but also to understand the *various ways in which religion is interiorized*: as a spiritual experience, as a moral norm, as a cultural tradition, or as a social institution.

Using a standardized questionnaire and quantitative and typological analysis methods, the study provides a detailed picture of religious diversity in Romania. At the same time, this research seeks to highlight the tensions and convergences between traditional religion and modern values, between dogma (dogmatics always refers to divine revelation considered infallible and timeless) and moral autonomy, between spirituality and rationalism. In addition, the results obtained provide a useful interpretative framework for understanding the implications of religion in the public sphere, in organizational culture, and in professional ethics, opening up relevant perspectives for fields such as sociology, anthropology, social psychology, and economics.

In a context where religion is often invoked in political, media, or educational discourse, but rarely analyzed in its empirical depth, this study aims to contribute to a more rigorous and nuanced understanding of Romanian religiosity, within an objective and comparative scientific framework.

2. Literature review

Religion has always been a fundamental pillar of social organization, offering people meaning, values, and models of behavior. In modern society, although religion no longer plays a dominant role, it continues to influence both personal life and social and economic structures. Studies on contemporary religiosity focus on the complexity of this phenomenon, analyzing not only religious affiliation or participation in rituals, but also the personal aspects of faith: moral values, worldviews, everyday behaviors, and the role of religion in public life.

The literature distinguishes several dimensions of religiosity. Glock and Stark (1965) proposed a five-dimensional conceptualization: belief, practice, experience, knowledge, and consequences—a theoretical framework that remains relevant today. Subsequently, other authors have distinguished between *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* religiosity

(Allport & Ross, 1967), and between authentic belief and the use of religion as a means of social adaptation.

In the European context, secularization has long been considered the dominant trend, in the sense of the withdrawal of religion from public life and the diminishing influence of religion on individual consciousness. However, recent research (Bentzen, J.S., 2021; Gebauer & Sedikides, 2021; Davie, 1990; Norris & Inglehart, 2004) have proposed more nuanced models, such as "believing without belonging" or the theory of "selective secularization," which show that religion is not disappearing, but rather transforming, becoming more individualized, flexible, and diverse in its forms of expression. These transformations are influenced by socio-economic, political, and cultural factors, but also by local historical trajectories (Höllinger, F. & Makula, L., 2021; Papaleontiou-Louca, E., 2025).

In Romania, religion has remained a major element of identity, being associated with national and moral values. The Orthodox Church, as the dominant institution, has a strong presence in the public sphere, but also in individual perceptions. However, recent studies indicate a diversification of religious affiliation, encompassing both traditionalist forms and individual or syncretic expressions of spirituality (Aivaz & Petre, 2024; Petre & Aivaz, 2024; Murgaš et al. 2023). This ambivalence is specific to a society at the intersection of cultural-religious heritage and globalized modernity (Barker, E., 2021).

In this context, the World Values Survey (WVS) provides a valuable framework for analyzing religiosity, integrating questions that cover both behavioral and attitudinal dimensions, as well as the personal meanings of religion. The proposed items allow for a nuanced exploration of the relationship between belief, practice, identity, and moral values. A less explored but highly topical dimension in research on religiosity is the relationship between religious values and behaviors in the professional and organizational sphere. In studies of business ethics and intercultural management, religion is increasingly seen as an influential factor in decision-making, working relationships, and the construction of organizational culture (Gokcekus & Ekici, 2020; Page, et al., 2020). Religious values can shape individual ethics, employee motivations, leadership style, and how corporate social responsibility is perceived (Obregon et al., 2022; McIntyre, et al., 2023; Hunjra, et al., 2021; Diaconu-Gherasim et al., 2023; Nicuță et al., 2025). Thus, understanding the typologies of religiosity becomes relevant not only from a sociological point of view, but also for areas such as human resources, marketing, or management strategy (Sholihin et al., 2021; Obregon, et al., 2024).

Therefore, the theoretical foundations of this study start from the recognition of the multidimensional and contextual nature of religiosity. The study is in line with contemporary research that no longer views religion as simply a form of institutional belonging, but as a complex network of values, behaviors, and perceptions with a potential impact on all dimensions of social life, including organizational culture and business administration.

3. Methodology

This study aims to explore the dimensions of religiosity among the adult population in Romania, based on data provided by the World Values Survey (WVS), an international

project recognized for its rigor and comprehensiveness. The analysis was conducted using the most recent wave of data available for Romania, which includes a representative sample of 1,257 respondents. Of this total, for certain statistical analyses (in particular cluster analysis), only those cases containing complete information on the relevant variables were used, resulting in a valid sample of 613 respondents.

The research adopts a quantitative, exploratory approach aimed at identifying types of religiosity. For this purpose, cluster analysis (k-means procedure) was used, which allows respondents to be grouped according to the similarity of their responses regarding religious beliefs, religious practices, and attitudes toward religion. The variables selected for cluster formation include: importance given to God, frequency of participation in religious services, frequency of prayer, belief in the afterlife, in heaven, in hell, perception of the relationship between science and religion, religious exclusivism, and self-identification as a religious person. The choice of these variables was theoretically based on the multidimensional model proposed by Glock and Stark (1965), which distinguishes between belief, practice, experience, knowledge, and consequences of religion.

Cluster analysis was used to identify groups of respondents with similar religious profiles, without assuming a priori the existence of a certain number of types. Subsequently, in order to better understand the differences between the groups formed, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied, which allowed the comparison of the mean responses to different religious variables between clusters. Although the ANOVA tests applied in this context are descriptive in nature (since the clusters are constructed to maximize differences), they provide a valuable tool for empirically validating the typological coherence identified.

The analysis showed significant differences between the two resulting clusters, particularly in terms of intensity of belief, frequency of religious practices, and doctrinal attitudes. All ANOVA tests indicated statistically significant differences ($p < 0.001$) for most of the variables investigated, except for the perception of the meaning of religion in relation to the afterlife versus the present life, where no significant differences were identified between groups.

The data were processed and analyzed using the SPSS Statistics program, using specific functions for cluster analysis and unifactorial ANOVA. The processed data were also weighted to ensure the accuracy of the estimates in relation to the socio-demographic structure of the Romanian population.

This methodology allows not only a rigorous classification of the religious phenomenon in measurable dimensions, but also a deeper understanding of how religion is experienced and expressed by people based on their attitude and behavior profile.

4. Results/findings

From the perspective of the response rate for each item, according to the results in Table no. 1, there is a relatively high level of involvement of respondents in the practical aspects of religion and religious self-identification, in contrast to a certain reluctance to answer questions concerning theological concepts or ideological attitudes. The highest number of valid responses was recorded for items assessing the importance of God in

each person's life and the frequency of participation in religious services, suggesting that most respondents feel comfortable expressing their position on their personal and visible religious commitment. Similarly, the question about the frequency of prayer received a large number of valid responses, indicating an active presence of religious practices in the daily lives of respondents.

Table no. 1 Dimensions of religiosity

	N	
	Valid	Missing
Importance of God	1248	9
Believe in: God	1197	60
Believe in: life after death	943	314
Believe in: hell	942	315
Believe in: heaven	953	304
Whenever science and religion conflict, religion is always right	1021	236
The only acceptable religion is my religion	1121	136
How often do you attend religious services	1244	13
How often do you pray	1230	27
Religious person	1197	60
Meaning of religion: To follow religious norms and ceremonies vs To do good to other people	1205	52
Meaning of religion: To make sense of life after death vs To make sense of life in this world	1081	176

Notes: Authors' calculations based on data provided by WVS.

Questions related to doctrinal beliefs, such as *belief in the afterlife, heaven or hell*, received fewer responses, suggesting theological uncertainty or a distancing from dogma. This reluctance can be explained by the abstract and sensitive nature of these topics, which involve personal and institutional positions. Questions expressing a conflict between religion and science were also avoided, possibly out of a desire not to openly adopt dogmatic or controversial positions. The moderate interest in questions about the meaning of religion—as a moral norm, social support, or source of meaning—indicates personal reflection on the role of religion in life. Therefore, religiosity in Romania is expressed mainly through practices and belonging, not through a firm adherence to dogma. Religion remains relevant as an identity and social element, but the level of doctrinal interiorization varies significantly between persons.

Table no. 2, on the importance of God in respondents' lives (measured using the Likert scale), shows a high level of declared religiosity. Over half (56.9%) consider God to be very important, indicating a deep internalization of religious belief. Other significant percentages (11.7% for score 8 and 8.6% for score 9) bring the total of those who consider God to be very important (scores 8–10) to about 77%, highlighting the centrale role of religion in personal and moral identity. At the opposite end of the scale, only 2.5% say that God is not important at all, and very low scores (2–4) are marginal (0.5%–1.7%),

suggesting that atheism or religious indifference are rare. The intermediate zone (scores 5–7) accounts for about 16%, indicating moderate attitudes, without firm engagement but also without clear rejection. With a negligible percentage of non-responses (0.4%) and *don't know* (0.3%), the data reflect a high level of consciousness of people's own religious position. Therefore, religion, through the figure of God, remains a fundamental reference point for most Romanians, not only as a cultural tradition, but as an active dimension of personal and community life.

Table no. 2 Importance of God

		N	%
Not at all important		32	2.5%
2		6	0.5%
3		15	1.2%
4		21	1.7%
5		66	5.3%
6		59	4.7%
7		78	6.2%
8		147	11.7%
9		108	8.6%
Very important		716	56.9%
Missing	No answer	5	0.4%
	Don't know	4	0.3%

Notes: Authors' calculations based on data provided by WVS.

Table no. 3 reveals a complex religiosity in Romania, where belief in God is almost unanimous (91.1%), suggesting that the idea of God remains a central, deeply rooted reference point in the collective mindset. The proportion of those who do not believe (4.1%) or do not answer is very low, indicating a clear and informed position on the part of the majority. However, when it comes to eschatological concepts – the afterlife, heaven, hell – significant differences emerge. Only 54.3% believe in life after death, 21% reject it, and 24.6% say they do not know. A similar pattern can be found in beliefs about hell (55.3%) and heaven (58.7%), accompanied by a constant level of uncertainty (around 23–25%) and rejection (17–21%).

This discrepancy suggests that Romanians' religiosity is often centered on belief in God as an element of personal identity and emotional attachment, but is not always supported by strong adherence to institutional doctrine. The large proportion of *don't know* responses reflects either a more intuitive and less theologically structured belief or a lack of reflection on dogmas concerning the afterlife. At the same time, the existence of a stable segment that explicitly rejects these concepts indicates a trend toward secularization and a diversification of religious beliefs. Thus, belief in God coexists with a variety of attitudes toward traditional Christian teachings.

These results suggest that religiosity in Romania is profound but not homogeneous: the idea of God is widely accepted, but the doctrinal content of faith is often filtered, personalized, or questioned. This profile indicates a spirituality in transition, situated between religious tradition and the influences of modernity.

Table no. 3 The structure of religious beliefs

Believe in: God			Believe in: life after death			Believe in: hell			Believe in: heaven		
	N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%
Yes	1146	91.10	Yes	683	54.30	Yes	695	55.30	Yes	738	58.70
No	51	4.10	No	260	20.70	No	247	19.70	No	215	17.10
No answer	3	0.20	No answer	4	0.30	No answer	7	0.60	No answer	7	0.60
Don't know	57	4.60	Don't know	310	24.60	Don't know	308	24.50	Don't know	297	23.60

Notes: Authors' calculations based on data provided by WVS.

The high proportion of those who choose the answer "don't know" regarding the afterlife (24.6%), hell (24.5%), and heaven (23.6%) reflects significant uncertainty, with social and psychological implications. This suggests religious ambivalence, doctrinal relativism, or a lack of assimilation of dogma, influenced by modernization, secular education, and contact with other values. In contrast, only 4.6% say they do not know about the existence of God, which reinforces the idea that this is perceived more as an existential given than as a theological issue. The differences between the four dimensions analyzed indicate a Romanian religious model in which religion is experienced more at the identity and cultural level than at the doctrinal level. This form of religiosity functions as a force for social cohesion, but does not imply a complete acceptance of dogma.

The results reflect a flexible and adaptive religiosity, possibly syncretic, marked by the partial desacralization of doctrine, but not of the idea of divinity—an aspect that distinguishes Romania from Western models of secularization. Overall, the data support the existence of a fragmented religiosity, in which cultural loyalty coexists with a selective attitude toward theological content, a phenomenon relevant to current socio-religious research.

Table no. 4 provides a relevant picture of the doctrinal and identity attitudes of respondents regarding the relationship between religion and science, as well as the degree of religious exclusivism. These data highlight how religion is interiorized in a modern context, between tradition and secular rationality.

Regarding the statement "Whenever religion and science come into conflict, religion is always right," the responses are divided: 37.2% agree, 43.9% disagree, and 17.8% do not express an opinion. This balance suggests a polarization between a traditional view, which privileges religion, and a modern one, which gives authority to science. The high percentage of indecision indicates ambivalence in the face of a perceived conflict between two models of interpreting reality. When asked whether "the only acceptable religion is my religion," the majority (55.4%) reject religious exclusivism, while 33.8% support it. Only 9.6% are undecided, suggesting a clearer awareness of the issue of religious pluralism compared to the relationship between religion and science.

Table no. 4 Doctrinal and identity attitudes of respondents

Whenever science and religion conflict, religion is always right			The only acceptable religion is my religion		
	N	%		N	%
Strongly agree	184	14.60%	Strongly agree	192	15.30%
Agree	284	22.60%	Agree	232	18.50%
Disagree	360	28.60%	Disagree	405	32.20%
Strongly disagree	193	15.30%	Strongly disagree	292	23.20%
No answer	13	1.00%	No answer	15	1.20%
Don't know	223	17.80%	Don't know	120	9.60%

Notes: Authors' calculations based on data provided by WVS.

These results indicate a flexible religiosity, in which personal belief does not automatically imply doctrinal rigidity. Although there are reservations about science among part of the population, dogmatic attitudes do not dominate. Instead, openness to religious diversity reflects a maturing religious consciousness in a democratic and multicultural context. In conclusion, a plurality of "styles of religiosity" is emerging—ranging from rigid traditionalism to tolerant spirituality and critical thinking. This diversity has important implications for religious education, public policy, and social cohesion in an increasingly pluralistic society.

With regard to questions about how religion is experienced and understood among the population surveyed (Tables no. 5-9), beyond the frequency of attendance at services or the practice of prayer, what emerges is that religion occupies an important place in the personal identity of most respondents, but this religiosity is not rigid or exclusively ritualistic, but rather flexible, interiorized, and oriented toward moral values. The majority of respondents declare themselves to be religious, which shows a clear assumption of identity. However, regular participation in institutional religious life is rather limited: those who go to church weekly or more frequently are a minority, while the largest category is represented by those who participate only in major religious holidays. This attitude indicates a rather symbolic relationship with religion, linked to cultural and family rhythms rather than active participation in liturgical life. In contrast to physical presence in religious spaces, prayer is a much more frequent practice, carried out in private spaces. Many of the respondents pray daily or even several times a day, which shows a lively, personal spiritual dimension that does not necessarily depend on the institution, but expresses an intimate relationship with the sacred. Thus, one can speak of an interiorized religiosity, in which spirituality is lived discreetly but constantly.

Table no. 5 How often do you attend religious services

	N	%
More than once a week	69	5.5%
Once a week	288	22.9%
Once a month	191	15.2%
Only on special holy days	378	30.1%

Once a year		60	4.7%
Less often		202	16.0%
Never, practically never		57	4.6%
Missing	No answer	5	0.4%
	Don't know	8	0.7%

Notes: Authors' calculations based on data provided by WVS.

Table no. 6 How often do you pray

		N	%
Several times a day		218	17.3%
Once a day		391	31.1%
Several times each week		210	16.7%
Only when attending religious services		89	7.1%
Only on special holy days		102	8.1%
Once a year		19	1.5%
Less often		157	12.5%
Never, practically never		44	3.5%
Missing	No answer	11	0.9%
	Don't know	15	1.2%

Notes: Authors' calculations based on data provided by WVS.

Table no. 7 Religious person

		N	%
A religious person		925	73.6%
Not a religious person		263	20.9%
An atheist		9	0.7%
Missing	No answer	17	1.4%
	Don't know	43	3.4%

Notes: Authors' calculations based on data provided by WVS.

Tabelul no. 8 Meaning of religion: To follow religious norms and ceremonies vs To do good to other people

		N	%
Follow religious norms and ceremonies		259	20.6%
Do good to other people		946	75.2%
Missing	No answer	12	1.0%
	Don't know	40	3.2%

Notes: Authors' calculations based on data provided by WVS.

Tabelul 9 Meaning of religion: To make sense of life after death vs To make sense of life in this world

	N	%
Make sense of life after death	269	21.4%

Make sense of life in this world		812	64.6%
Missing	No answer	21	1.7%
	Don't know	155	12.3%

Notes: Authors' calculations based on data provided by WVS.

In addition to religious behaviors, the meanings attributed to religion are revelatory for the nature of this religiosity. For the overwhelming majority of respondents, religion means doing good to other people, not following rituals or formal norms. Religion is also seen primarily as a source of meaning for the present life, not as an explanation of the afterlife. These two directions suggest a religion that is lived more as a moral code and immediate existential support than as a dogmatic system. Overall, the results reflect a complex model of religiosity, in which faith is assumed and valued on a personal level, but expressed in a manner adapted to contemporary realities. It is not dogma or ceremony that dominates this landscape, but the need for meaning, the orientation towards the goodness and the relationship with the sacred as part of everyday life. This form of religiosity, both traditional and modern, offers a picture of a society in which faith remains important but is reinterpreted through the filter of a broader moral and rational sensibility.

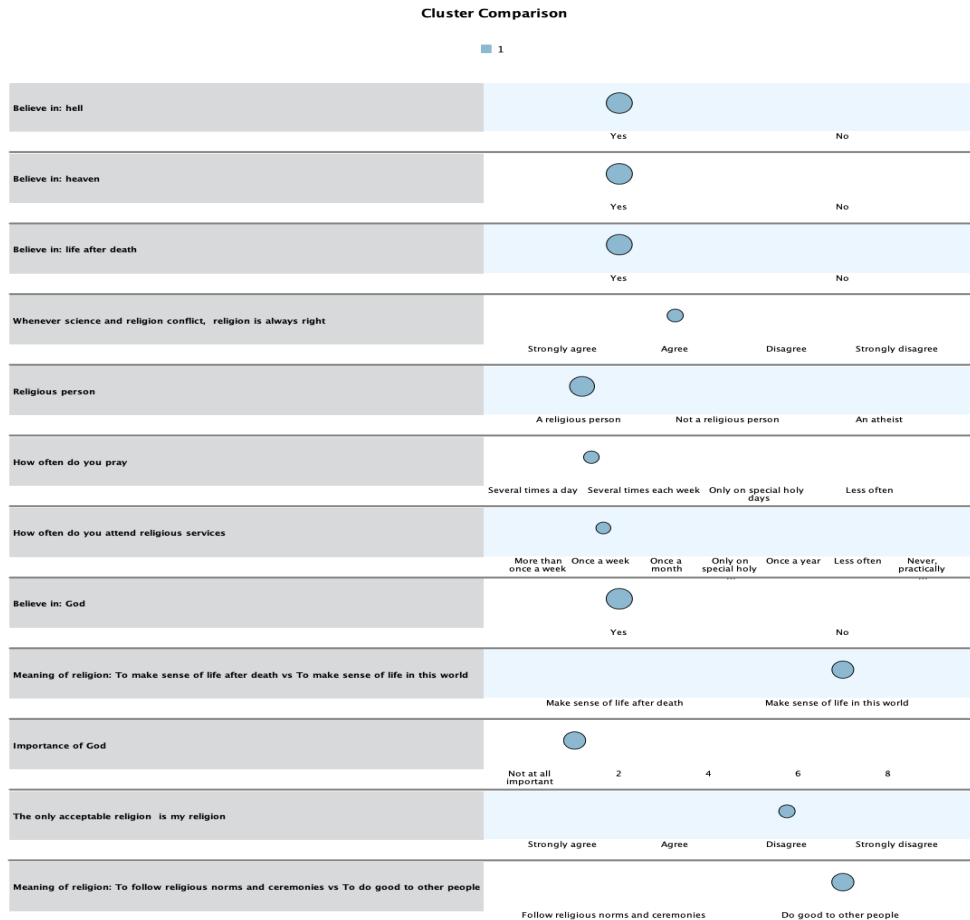
Based on these descriptive results, which highlight the nuances and general directions of declared religiosity, a more in-depth exploration of the typologies of belief and religious behavior is needed, which is why we used a *cluster analysis* to identify distinct profiles of religiosity within the studied population.

Following the cluster analysis, respondents were grouped into two distinct categories. Cluster 1 includes 469 respondents, and Cluster 2 includes 144 respondents, resulting in a total of 613 valid cases actually used in the analysis. This distribution highlights a significant difference between the sizes of the two groups, with Cluster 1 being more than three times larger than Cluster 2. This confirms the trend already observed in the previous analysis, according to which there is a majority profile of traditional or institutionalized religiosity within the sample.

It is important to note that of the total 1,257 respondents initially included in the sample, 644 cases were excluded from the cluster analysis due to missing values in one or more of the variables used for segmentation. This high proportion of missing cases should be taken into account when drawing conclusions, as it may affect the representativeness of the typologies obtained. However, the internal structure of the two clusters identified remains stable and interpretable, providing a solid basis for exploring the differences between the types of religiosity present in the valid sample.

Figure 1 provides a clear representation of the profile of one group of respondents (cluster 1), highlighting a pattern of deep, traditional, and normative religiosity. Members of this group are characterized by a firm belief in God and in central concepts of Christian doctrine, such as the existence of heaven, hell, and life after death. These religious beliefs are not only declared, but are also reflected in frequent religious practices—both through daily prayer, often performed several times a day, and through regular attendance at religious services, at least once a week or even more often.

Figure 1 Cluster 1 Deep, traditional, and normative religiosity



Note: Created by the authors using SPSS software

This intense religiosity is not limited to the personal or spiritual dimension, but also penetrates the cognitive and value spheres. Thus, when a conflict arises between science and religion, this group tends to give priority to religion, considering it the supreme authority. Religious identity is also strongly affirmed; respondents unequivocally identify themselves as religious and are often less open to spiritual alternatives or religious pluralism. This orientation also translates into an exclusivist perception of religion, with many considering only their own religion to be acceptable, revealing a conservative attitude toward diversity of beliefs. For this group, religion is understood primarily as a way of giving meaning to the afterlife, not as a guide for earthly life, and the essence of religiosity is perceived as being linked to adherence to religious norms and ceremonies rather than to altruism or ethical behavior towards others. This conservative and doctrinal understanding suggests a view of religion as a closed system focused on dogma, ritual, and spiritual authority.

From a business administration perspective, this religious profile may have relevant implications for organizational behavior and the way in which people in this cluster relate to their professional environment. In an organizational context, they tend to prefer

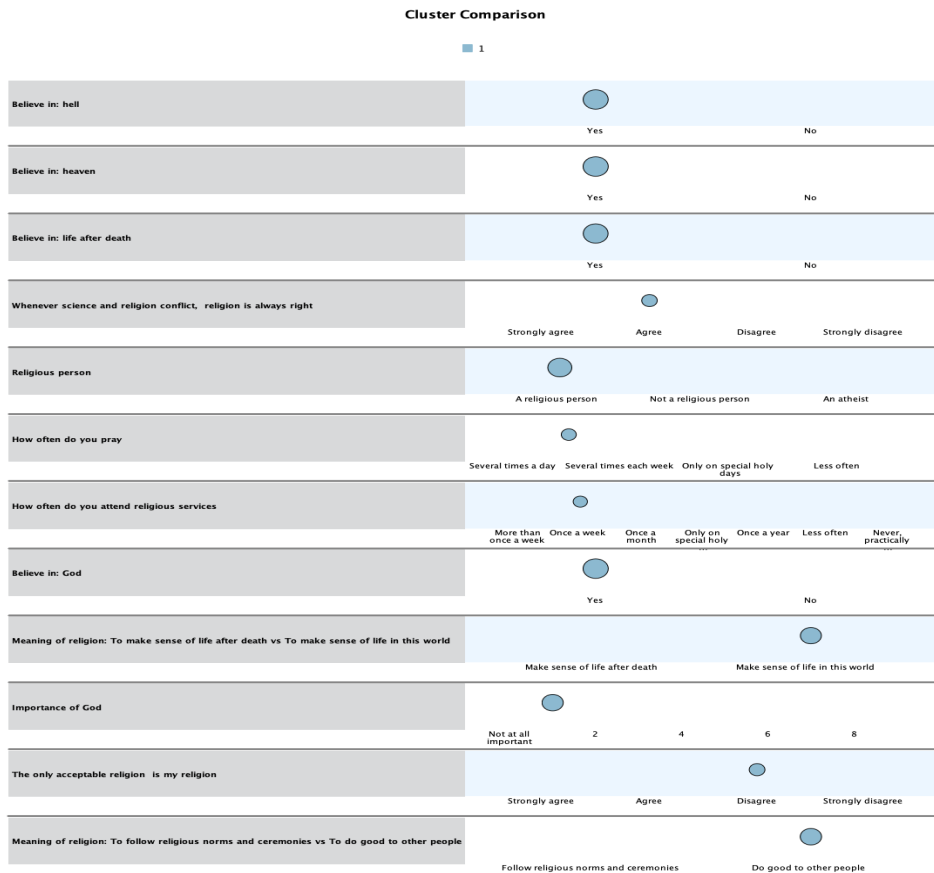
clear structures with well-defined rules and an obvious hierarchy. They will feel more comfortable in an environment that respects traditional values and provides a moral or spiritual meaning to their work. Their professional ethics are often influenced by religious principles, and their decisions may reflect a genuine concern for morality and conformity with personal values. At the same time, such an orientation may come with a certain resistance to innovation or ideas perceived as contrary to religious tradition. Emerging technologies, new forms of communication, or modern management methods may be more difficult to accept if they are not perceived as being in line with their moral or spiritual beliefs. At the same time, these people may show high loyalty to organizations that value ethics, stability, family, or religion. Thus, they can form a stable core in a company that affirms its social responsibility and cultivates values compatible with religious ones.

Figure 2 describes the second cluster of respondents, outlined by weak or non-existent religiosity, characterized by distancing from doctrinal beliefs, low involvement in rituals, and a secularized view of religion. These respondents do not believe in the afterlife, heaven or hell, and although they declare faith in God, this seems symbolic or cultural, not accompanied by other theological beliefs. God plays a marginal role in their lives, and religion is viewed with rationalism and non-dogmatism—when religion comes into conflict with science, they choose science. Religious identification is weak: they do not consider themselves religious, do not attend services regularly, and prayer is rare or absent. Religion is interpreted as a source of meaning in the present life and as ethics oriented toward the good of others, not as adherence to norms or ceremonies. This indicates a secular moral vision in which values do not depend on institutionalized religion. The group rejects religious exclusivism, expressing a tolerant and inclusive attitude toward other beliefs.

From a managerial perspective, this profile is associated with people who value autonomy, rationality, and pluralism. They prefer flexible, innovative, and secular organizational environments that are oriented toward efficiency, personal responsibility, and cultural openness, and are less influenced by religious or traditional authority. These employees may react negatively to organizational policies that favor religious symbols or rigid practices, but they will strongly support initiatives for social responsibility, business ethics, and sustainable development (Gheorghiu et al., 2017; Tasește et al., 2024; Stan & Tasește, 2023). The right leaders for this group are those who promote inclusive visions, critical thinking, and professional autonomy (Stan, Vancea & Zaharia, 2023).

In conclusion, this cluster reflects a form of *pragmatic secularism*, in which religion is not openly rejected but is marginalized as an absolute authority. The emphasis is on the present life, on moral behaviors independent of dogma, and on the acceptance of religious and cultural diversity. In an organizational context, this profile is associated with modernity, openness, and adaptability, characteristics that are essential for success in a globalized and competitive economic environment.

Figure no. 2 Cluster 2: Weak or non-existent religiosity



Note: Created by the authors using SPSS software.

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) applied at this stage of the research aimed to highlight the extent to which the two clusters identified above differ significantly in terms of essential dimensions of religiosity. The results indicate notable differences between the two groups, confirming the validity of the segmentation previously performed through cluster analysis.

Table no. 10 Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

	ANOVA					Sig.
	Cluster		Error		F	
	Mean Square	df	Mean Squared	df		
Importance of God	1151.424	1	2.781	617	414.021	<.001
Believe in: God	2.009	1	.039	617	51.555	<.001
Believe in: life after death	6.239	1	.182	617	34.292	<.001
Believe in: hell	7.413	1	.184	617	40.392	<.001
Believe in: heaven	8.187	1	.168	617	48.689	<.001

Whenever science and religion conflict, religion is always right	91.064	1	.776	617	117.364	<.001
The only acceptable religion is my religion	38.435	1	.969	617	39.652	<.001
How often do you attend religious services	448.207	1	1.696	617	264.197	<.001
How often do you pray	1337.377	1	1.517	617	881.741	<.001
Religious person	18.468	1	.143	617	129.246	<.001
Meaning of religion: To follow religious norms and ceremonies vs To do good to other people	1.446	1	.186	617	7.794	.005
Meaning of religion: To make sense of life after death vs To make sense of life in this world	.053	1	.195	617	.272	.602

Note: Created by the authors using SPSS software.

One of the most pronounced differences between clusters concerns the importance given to God in personal life. Respondents in cluster 1 tend to attach much greater significance to the religious dimension of existence. This trend is reinforced by other results: belief in God, the afterlife, hell, and heaven are significantly more common among this group, suggesting a deeply rooted, traditional-institutional religiosity. In addition to the dimension of belief, differences between clusters are also evident in religious behavior. Participation in religious services and frequency of prayer vary significantly between the two groups. In fact, prayer seems to be one of the most sensitive indicators in differentiating types of religiosity, with the results showing a very pronounced statistical difference between those who pray frequently and those who do so rarely or not at all.

Another important element is doctrinal perceptions. Adherence to the statement that "religion is always right when it conflicts with science" is significantly stronger in one of the clusters, denoting a tendency toward a conservative, authoritarian, and potentially anti-rationalist religious view. Similarly, the belief that "the only acceptable religion is one's own religion" indicates the presence of exclusivist attitudes, which are more common in one of the two groups. When it comes to self-identification as a religious person, the differences are also significant. People in the more religious cluster rate themselves as "religious" at a significantly higher rate, which reinforces this group's profile as being centered on traditional values and frequent religious practices.

Interestingly, although many dimensions showed clear differences between clusters, there is one aspect where no significant distinction was found: the meaning of religion in relation to the afterlife versus life in this world. This absence of statistical difference may suggest that, regardless of their degree of religiosity, respondents tend to see religion both as an answer to existential questions about life after death and as a guide for moral orientation in everyday life. On the other hand, when asked to choose between religion as a norm and ceremony and religion as ethical action towards others, a significant but smaller difference emerges. This shows that in the less religious cluster, the perception of religion is closer to an ethic specific to humanism, while in the traditionalist cluster, the emphasis is more on the normative and ritualistic dimension.

It is important to note that these results should be interpreted descriptively, not inferentially, as the clusters were constructed precisely to maximize differences between groups. In other words, the statistical significances highlighted ($p < .001$ in most cases) reflect the discriminating power of the variables in cluster formation rather than a test of the hypothesis of equality between groups.

Overall, this analysis supports the idea that religiosity in contemporary Romania is not a homogeneous phenomenon, but is expressed in different but internally coherent forms that can be captured by statistical typologies. A majority group appears to manifest institutionalized religiosity that is behaviorally active, doctrinally exclusivist, and centered on symbols and rituals. In contrast, the minority group is characterized by a more flexible, weaker behavioral relationship and is more open to ethical or rational interpretations of religion.

5. Discussions

The results obtained from the analysis of World Values Survey (WVS) data confirm the relevance of the multidimensional theoretical framework proposed by Glock and Stark (1965), according to which religiosity cannot be reduced to mere confessional affiliation or ritual participation. In Romania, religion continues to be a major element of identity, with a visible impact on individual beliefs, behaviors, and values, even though the forms through which it is expressed have diversified significantly.

Empirically, there is a continued high level of declarative and behavioral religiosity, especially in the practical and belief dimensions, particularly among the elderly, the less educated, and those in rural areas. This finding confirms the observations in the literature regarding the persistence of religion in the post-communist context, where the Church functioned not only as a religious institution but also as a symbolic repository of national identity (Aivaz & Petre, 2024; Gebauer & Sedikides, 2021).

At the same time, the typological analysis highlights relevant differences between intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity, in line with the distinction formulated by Allport & Ross (1967). There is a consistent segment of the population for whom religion is an internalized reference point, a source of meaning and authentic moral guidance, but there is also another category of respondents who adopt a formal religiosity, influenced rather by social norms and the cultural context.

One of the most relevant trends identified is the diversification of forms of religious affiliation, in line with recent theories on "believing without belonging" (Davie, 2002) and "selective secularization" (Norris & Inglehart, 2004). Even though the degree of religious affiliation remains high in Romania, not all individuals show strong institutional adherence; instead, there are increasingly present forms of personalized, individualized religiosity, in which faith is articulated in subjective terms, sometimes outside or parallel to institutional norms. Thus, the results reflect the transformation of religion from a rigid and collective system into a flexible network of individual meanings, a phenomenon also noted by Höllinger & Makula (2021) in their analysis of European secularization.

This polarization is also expressed in attitudes toward morality, family, work, or religious authority. While some respondents value religion as the absolute source of moral norms, others integrate it into a broader ethical system in which spirituality coexists with

rational autonomy and secular ethical choices. This dualism is specific to a society at the intersection of cultural-religious heritage and globalized modernity (Barker, 2021), where tradition and modernity are not mutually exclusive but coexist in a tense but functional way. The analysis also highlights the role of religion as a vector of influence not only in personal life, but also in the professional and organizational sphere. This dimension is supported by recent research in the field of business ethics and intercultural management (Gokcekus & Ekici, 2020; McIntyre et al., 2023), which show that religious values can shape behaviors in the workplace, leadership styles, employee motivations, and how corporate social responsibility is perceived (Florea, Mirea & Susu, 2020; Munteanu et al., 2025). Thus, understanding typologies of religiosity is not only of sociological interest, but also offers valuable insights for fields such as organizational culture, human resources, and ethical management (Obregon et al., 2022; Sholihin et al., 2021).

In this context, the applicability of the model proposed by Glock & Stark (1965) is reconfirmed, as it allows the correlation of dimensions of religiosity with other relevant social and economic variables. For example, the experiential dimension (religious experience) seems more pronounced among women and those from conservative backgrounds, while the knowledge dimension (religious knowledge) is more present among educated young people, but with a more critical and reflective relationship to religion.

Last but not least, the results indicate an increasingly evident contradiction between the visibility of religion in the public sphere—through the constant presence of the Church in political and media discourse—and the actual degree of personal and authentic involvement of citizens in religious life (Stan & Vancea, 2014; Petre & Aivaz, 2024). This discrepancy reflects what the literature refers to as "religious ambivalence" (Murgaš et al., 2023), a phenomenon characteristic of societies in transition, where traditional norms persist in symbolic discourse but are relativized in practice (Stan & Vancea, 2009).

In conclusion, religion in contemporary Romania is neither a remnant of the past nor an absolute unifying force, but a fragmented, dynamic phenomenon in constant (re)negotiation. This reality requires a complex interpretative approach that goes beyond simple quantitative measurement and integrates the historical, cultural, and socioeconomic context. Understanding these dynamics is essential not only for sociologists and anthropologists, but also for policymakers, managers, and opinion leaders who wish to harness—or critically understand—the role of religion in contemporary Romanian society.

6. Limitations of the research and future research directions

Although this research is based on a consistent sample of 613 respondents validated in the cluster analysis and has allowed us to outline clear typologies of religiosity among the adult population in Romania, it is nevertheless necessary to highlight some methodological issues that can be considered limitations. One of them is related to the fact that, of the total 1,257 respondents included in the database, a significant portion was excluded from the cluster analysis due to missing values in some of the variables used. Nevertheless, the sample size used remains large enough to allow relevant conclusions to be drawn, and the clear differences identified between the two validated groups lend robustness to the results obtained.

Furthermore, the exploratory nature of the analysis method used implies certain particularities. The clusters were constructed to maximize the differences between respondents, which means that the statistical significance tests applied subsequently are descriptive in nature and must be interpreted in context. The aim of this approach is not to generalize to the entire population, but to highlight internal patterns of coherence that can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of religious diversity in Romanian society.

Beyond these methodological issues, the research results open up interesting perspectives for further study of religiosity. The typologies identified can be developed and validated in the future by including new waves of data, which will allow tracking the evolution of these forms of religious reporting over time. Also, adding some qualitative methods could fill in the picture painted by the quantitative data, giving a deeper look at the motivations and subjective meanings linked to religion in everyday life. This could bring to the forefront things like personal experiences of faith, identity ambivalence, syncretism, or the reshaping of spirituality outside institutional structures.

At the same time, research on religiosity can be extended to other dimensions of social life, particularly the professional and organizational spheres, where religious values increasingly influence ethical decisions, labor relations, and organizational culture. In the context of a constantly changing society, where religion remains an important identity marker but is changing its forms of expression, the study of these dynamics becomes not only academically relevant but also useful for a deeper understanding of how values are reflected in individual and collective behaviors.

6. Conclusions

This study highlighted the complexity of religiosity in contemporary Romania, revealing a wide range of religious beliefs, practices, and meanings, ranging from traditionalist and normative-dogmatic forms to secularized humanistic orientations. The descriptive analysis of the responses, supplemented by cluster analysis, has allowed us to outline typologies of religiosity that are relevant not only from a sociological point of view, but also from the perspective of the impact they may have on professional behavior and organizational culture.

Religion, even when not practiced regularly, continues to play an important role in the lives of many people, influencing moral values, attitudes toward authority, perceptions of good and evil, and, implicitly, decisions and behaviors in the professional environment. This has led to the emergence of a majority religious profile that combines cultural attachment to religion with selective practice and an understanding of religion as a source of ethical values rather than a rigid doctrinal system. At the same time, the segment of those who distance themselves from religion, oriented towards rationalism and pluralism, is significant and expresses a clear need for autonomy, logical reasoning, and diversity of values.

From a *business management* perspective, these findings are essential. In an organizational environment, employees are not only influenced by formal policies or economic objectives, but also by their own personal beliefs and values. Thus, understanding the religious profiles of employees can help create an inclusive and respectful work climate in which religious beliefs are neither ignored nor imposed. People

with strong religious beliefs may demonstrate loyalty, discipline, and a focus on norms, and be receptive to leadership based on ethics and clear values. In contrast, those from less religious or secular backgrounds will prefer a leadership style based on autonomy, openness, and rationality, being motivated by merit, innovation, and diversity.

The results show that religion can influence employees' perceptions of the fairness of decisions, conflict resolution, or acceptance of diversity in the team. In this sense, managers need to be aware that religiosity can be a motivating or resisting factor, depending on the context. Human resource policies, internal communication, team building, or the approach to organizational ethics can be significantly improved when calibrated in line with the actual value structure of employees.

In conclusion, religiosity—even if it is increasingly personalized and variable—remains a significant element in the construction of individual and collective identity. A deep understanding of this dimension, through research such as that presented here, provides not only a more accurate picture of Romanian society, but also useful tools for *efficient and responsible management* in today's organizations. Thus, this paper provides a solid starting point for future investigations that can deepen and extend the conclusions of the present study, contributing to a more complete and nuanced understanding of the religious phenomenon in contemporary Romanian society.

7. References

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