



ELSEVIER

Available online at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

SCIENCE @ DIRECT®

Personality and Individual Differences 38 (2005) 891–902

PERSONALITY AND  
INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

[www.elsevier.com/locate/paid](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/paid)

## The relation between fearfulness, disgust sensitivity and religious obsessions in a non-clinical sample

Bunmi O. Olatunji <sup>a,\*</sup>, David F. Tolin <sup>b</sup>, Jonathan D. Huppert <sup>c</sup>, Jeffrey M. Lohr <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *Department of Psychology, University of Arkansas, 216 Memorial Hall, Fayetteville, AR 72701, USA*

<sup>b</sup> *The Institute of Living, USA*

<sup>c</sup> *University of Pennsylvania, USA*

Received 10 February 2004; received in revised form 4 May 2004; accepted 8 June 2004

Available online 10 August 2004

---

### Abstract

The present study sought to determine the relation among fearfulness, disgust sensitivity, and religious obsessions in a non-clinical sample. One hundred participants completed two measures of fear (Fear Survey Schedule, Padua Inventory) a measure of disgust sensitivity (Disgust Scale) and a measure of religious obsessions (Penn Inventory of Scrupulosity). Overall, the data were consistent with an additive relation among fearfulness, disgust sensitivity and religious obsessions. Inconsistent with recent notions in the research literature, the relation between disgust sensitivity and religious obsessions remained significant even after controlling for general fearfulness and cleanliness fears. Stepwise multiple regression analyses indicated that interpersonal and contamination fears as well as disgust sensitivity specifically towards sex and death best predicted religious obsessions. It is suggested that an additive model consisting of symptoms of both fear and disgust should be considered in future research and treatment of religious obsessions.

© 2004 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

*Keywords:* Fear; Disgust sensitivity; Religious obsessions; Obsessive–compulsive disorder

---

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +1 479 575 5819/4258; fax: +1 479 575 3219.

E-mail address: [oolatun@uark.edu](mailto:oolatun@uark.edu) (B.O. Olatunji).

## 1. Introduction

Intense religious scruples appear to serve as a risk factor in obsessive–compulsive-related mental health concerns (e.g., Greenberg, Witzum, & Pisante, 1987; Rassin & Koster, 2003). Clinical observation and research has identified a specific subtype of obsessive–compulsive disorder (OCD), often called *scrupulosity*, consisting of religious obsessions and compulsions (Foa et al., 1995; Greenberg et al., 1987; Rachman, 1997) accounting for an estimated 24.2% of obsessional concerns reported in clinical samples (Summerfeldt, Antony, Downie, Richter, & Swinson, 1998). Religious obsessions often extend beyond the common requirements of religious law and are focused on less important aspects of religion to the point of excluding other more important areas (Abramowitz, 2001; Greenberg, 1984). Common religious obsessions include the fear that one has or will commit sin (i.e., swallowing saliva on a religious fast day), intrusive mental images of a sacrilegious or blasphemous nature, and fears of punishment (i.e., going to hell) by God (Abramowitz, Huppert, Cohen, Tolin, & Cahill, 2002). Obsessive blasphemous thoughts are warded off through repeated compulsive rituals such as prayer or repeated confessions (Sica, Novara, & Sanavio, 2002).

As with other obsessions, religious obsessions may interfere significantly with general functioning (Abramowitz, 2001). However, relatively few studies have investigated the affective correlates of religious obsessions that may better facilitate the specificity of treatment interventions. The available research does suggest that the degree of religious devotion in OCD is significantly related to feelings of guilt about committing sinful acts (Steketee, Quay, & White, 1991). In addition to excessive feelings of guilt, research findings suggest that religious obsessions may be associated with poorer insight, more perceptual distortion, and more magical ideation than are most other types of obsessions (Tolin, Abramowitz, Kozak, & Foa, 2001). Individuals with intense religious scruples have also been shown to present with significant elevations than those low in religiosity on measures of obsessionality, overimportance of thoughts, control of thoughts, perfectionism and responsibility (Sica et al., 2002; Tek & Ulug, 2001). Thought-Action Fusion (TAF; Rachman, Thordarson, Shafran, & Woody, 1995) may also contribute to the inflation of moral responsibility in individuals with intense religious scruples (e.g., Rassin & Koster, 2003). TAF is the assumption that inappropriate thoughts are equivalent to the actions they symbolize. Such assumptions are more likely to result in the catastrophic appraisal of sexual, aggressive, or other morally suspect fantasies.

In general, obsessive thoughts have been conceptualized as being functionally related to symptoms of fear and anxiety (e.g., Salkovskis, 1985). However, recent findings of OCD research suggest that sensitivity (individual differences in the propensity to experience disgust) may also mediate specific obsessional thoughts (e.g., Mancini, Gragnani, & D'Olimpio, 2001). For instance, Thorpe, Patel, and Simonds (2003) found disgust sensitivity to be significantly correlated with checking, doubting, orderliness, neutralizing, and washing obsessions. Research findings suggest that disgust may serve a disease-avoidance function by protecting the organism from contact with contaminated stimuli (Matchett & Davey, 1991; Ware, Jain, Burgess, & Davey, 1994). Behavioral avoidance or aversion promotes sanitation while preventing direct contact and subsequent infection (Izard, 1993). Consistent with a hypothesized link between disgust and OCD, recent studies have also implicated the role of disgust sensitivity in

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

**ISI**Articles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات