
Post-Materialism in The US to The Acceptance of Religious LGBTQ+ in New Media

Annida Ul Marhamah¹

¹Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

✉: annidaulmarhamah@mail.ugm.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This research explores the interaction between traditional and postmaterialist values, focusing on how personal growth, self-expression, and identity formation have challenged long-standing societal norms. Drawing on Ronald Inglehart's post-materialism theory and Judith Butler's theory of queer theory, this paper investigates how religious LGBTQ+ individuals—often referred to as "Religious Queer"—have attempted to assert their identity representations within religious communities and public media. Their presence in New Media has prompted several reactions, some strong and some supportive, as it disrupts conventional associations between religiosity and heteronormativity, challenging long-held norms, producing critical conversations, and inviting broader acceptance of diverse identities within spiritual and digital spaces. Through qualitative research, this paper examines how religious queer individuals deconstruct inherited interpretations of religion and assert that their gender and sexuality are not inherently incompatible with their faith. Therefore, this study explores how the intersection of postmaterialist values and queer identities enables a reimagining of religious belief and personal authenticity in New Media.

Keywords: *LGBTQ+; new media; post-materialism; queer; religious*

Article information
(Filled by Editorial
Management)

Received: 12 Feb, 2024

Revised: 21 Apr, 2025

Accepted: 21 Apr, 2025

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.22146/rubikon.v12i1.94022>

Available at <https://jurnal.ugm.ac.id/rubikon/article/view/94022>

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

INTRODUCTION

Technology, communication, transportation, and trade improvements have fueled the ongoing global integration and interdependence process known as globalization. Globalization describes how countries, economies, and cultures throughout the world are interconnected and dependent on one another, erasing boundaries and forging a global web of connections. Fundamentally, globalization refers to strengthening interconnectedness between nations in the economic, social, political, and cultural spheres, leading to a global society.

Over the ages, globalization has expanded connectivity in both the economic and cultural spheres of life. However, the present state of affairs fundamentally differs from the past. Globalization is the increase in economic and cultural life over time due to global connectivity. However, many people think the present situation fundamentally differs from the past (Cuterela, 2012).

According to Turner (2010), globalization has impacted religion, particularly in the greater context. It examines how the world at significant influences change or is usually

known by the transmission of existing religious ideas, the emergence of developing religious networks, and the negotiation of religious identity.

The growing interconnectedness and interdependence of religious communities define the "globalization of religion" phenomenon. Turner examines how religious organizations, concepts, and practices have been able to transcend national boundaries due to migration, technological advancements, and cultural exchanges. Due to globalization, religious traditions frequently undergo a process of adaptation and hybridization, which brings them into contact with many cultural influences. New religious identities and customs influenced by many cultural traditions began appearing. Religious institutions address the issues brought about by globalization, paying special attention to the emergence of religious fanaticism. Certain religious groups perceive the advancement of globalization as a challenge to their traditions and convictions, prompting fundamentalist groups to mobilize and oppose the purported drawbacks of globalization. Turner's explanation lays the foundation

for understanding the complex relationship between religion and globalization. The following subjects are discussed in this essay: the rise of post-secular culture, religious fanaticism, cultural hybridity, globalization of religion, and commercialization of religion.

Religion can be readily recognized as a human activity only within the reality that religion constructs for itself (Dow, 2007). It can be understood that the logic of all that follows is that if one believes in the existence of any story, deity, spirit, or other supernatural entity that a religion suggests. However, the majority of the beings—gods or otherwise—that form the foundation of religious belief and practice cannot have their existence confirmed through direct observation. Scientists believe human behavior is influenced by understanding why people act and think the way they do, not by myths. Science has discovered, among other explanations, that they behave as they do due to evolution.

The relationship between globalization and religion reveals a dynamic interaction that helps us understand the implications and transformations that may occur. Globalization, which was introduced at the beginning of

the paragraph, mentions that there is an exchange of ideas and culture. Therefore, it is important not to dismiss the possibility that religion plays a significant role in the cultural exchange associated with globalization. As a deeply personal and widely shared belief system, religion is particularly susceptible to reinterpretation and broader influence in a global context. This raises questions such as: Could cultural exchange contribute to the emergence of new religious movements? Have existing religious movements arisen due to globalization? These and other related inquiries provide a compelling foundation for the development of this research.

The relationship between religions and globalization has significantly influenced the birth and growth of post-materialism. A change in the relationship between religion and the public sphere is called post-materialism, in which secular frameworks coexist with religious ideas and voices but with renewed significance and impact. This change is a reaction to the difficulties and transformations posed by globalization. This transformation in the public sphere, shaped by globalization and shifting values, has also brought attention to how

society addresses identity and inclusion issues, particularly gender and sexuality.

The existence of LGBTQ+ in society as a sexuality is a topic of tight discussion among conservatives. LGBTQ+ has historically been seen as a disease (Bronski, 2012). The differences between the versions show how the dominant social and cultural norms surrounding gender and sexuality at any moment are directly linked to the diagnosis of disease among LGBTQ+ individuals.

The relationships between religious identity and other identities and situations, especially those related to sexual identity are discussed in a book titled *Queering Religion, Religious queers* by Yvette Taylor, and Ria Snowdon (Taylor & Snowdon, 2014). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ+) young adults face a disproportionate risk of violence and distress, and religion is one of the therapies that help LGBTQ+ individuals in this regard. Compared to their heterosexual peers, lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGBTQ+) teens report higher rates of abuse, victimization, and bullying. Additionally, young adults who identify as LGBTQ+ report higher rates of mental illness (Gibbs & Goldbach, 2015). Thus,

the researcher has formulated questions: how has globalization contributed to the diversification of religion?, and how is the religious LGBTQ+ being represented and accepted in new media with the rise of post-materialism?.

New media is where people from many cultural backgrounds come together without obvious geographic borders (Adi, 2024). Traditional types such as those commonly used in different media do involve queers: either exclusions on the premise of association or completely distorted representations of the subject. Unlike such traditional media, the new media portals, including sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, have created spaces for other minority interests and voices to self-identify, narrate personal stories, and build networks of support. Indeed, for those queer and religious, these spaces offer a potent context for deconstructing the mainstream public narrative and for specifying their two identities to build broader understandings within a socioeconomic context. Digital storytelling and community building are ways in which the new media have become a significant resource for visibility and the redefinition of what it means to be queer

and religious in a post-materialist era.

Thus, this study examines how globalization has contributed to diversifying religious beliefs and practices in the United States and what implications this has for post-materialism. It also aims to see how religious LGBTQ+ rights are portrayed in various new media, such as social media and online forums, and to evaluate how accepting and tolerant religious communities are portrayed in these media. The researcher explores how developments and issues among the religious LGBTQ+ are represented in today's new media. With the many developments in religion, there have also been many changes. It is essential to see how LGBTQ people fight for the equality they deserve in new media.

METHODOLOGY

This research focuses on analyzing religious queer using a qualitative approach, specifically within the framework of post-materialism. The study aims to explore how the episode constructs meaning around the connection between gender, sexuality, and religion examined in this study from a Queer Theory perspective offered by Judith Butler (Butler, 2002). As Butler deals with this subject, she

critiques the traditional binary understanding of male and female gender as a socially constructed framework, which serves to reinforce heteronormative expectations. Within her theory, gender is not an innate identity but a performative act: the roles of "male" and "female" are continuously reconstituted and reinforced through the repetition of social behaviors, just as the performative definitions become effective. Whereas heteronormativity does not go challenged and queer constructions are fixed on their limits, queer identities vs. relationships sweep in outside heterosexual conformity. Such an approach gives insights into how LGBTQ+ people within such religious communities deconstruct traditional notions of gender and sexuality, providing for a richer understanding of identity in both the secular and faith-based fields.

This deconstruction of tradition is not necessarily an independent process; broader global shifts influence it. One of these, to be sure, is globalization and new value systems following Inglehart's post-materialist theory; such elements contribute to how individuals in society conceive of and express their identity.

Globalization and Inglehart's post-materialist theory have been related. According to the studies, as societies grow more interconnected due to globalization, people are exposed to a broader range of cultures, thoughts, and experiences (Norris & Inglehart, 2011). Materialist values emphasize acquiring material resources and give great weight to physical and financial well-being. It is emphasized that the other side of post-materialist ideas is about self-expression, which proves that it has more excellent value, a high quality of life, and satisfaction in high-level demands such as creativity, self-growth, and autonomy. According to Inglehart, if a country becomes richer, then the understanding of its population can change from materialist to post-materialist. The result is that many social and political problems arise, including opinions about authority, gender roles, environment, and individual autonomy, which are affected by this cultural transition.

Religious beliefs and practices have not escaped the theory of post-materialism. According to Inglehart, when society has begun to experience some changes in values,

spiritual practices that have been carried out for years, commonly called traditional, will decrease, and because of this, religious individualism grows. Often, religious views and practices can vary more and have few formal ties to organizations known to have established religious existence.

This research prioritizes focus groups to conduct in-depth research on focus groups with individuals who are on a spectrum of being religious and also a part of the LGBTQ+ community in New Media. This research examines content posted on social media and other forms of New Media to understand how conversations around postmaterialist values, religion, and LGBTQ+ rights are represented there. The analysis aims to identify nuances in how these topics are discussed, debated, or even supported in digital spaces. In doing so, the research seeks to uncover how New Media challenges and reinforces societal attitudes, particularly regarding the visibility and acceptance of religious queer individuals in the context of shifting cultural values.

DISCUSSION

Religion has been significantly impacted by globalization, which is

characterized by the increased interconnection and interdependence of societies. The alteration of religious values, particularly the move away from conventional religious rituals and beliefs and toward more secular orientations, is a significant effect of globalization. This research investigates how globalization has altered religious beliefs and looks at the reasons that have contributed to these changes. Thus, the section is divided into two subsections. The first is the diversification of religious beliefs in the rise of post-materialism, which the researcher discusses in terms of the transition in religious value, the emergence of post-materialism, the emergence of diversification of beliefs, and the implications for religion in the United States on post-materialism. The second subsection is about religious LGBTQ+ representation in new media and the acceptance of their existence. It mainly discusses the findings of religious LGBTQ+ in the New Media, talking about their identity and how people saw those events.

Diversification of Religious Beliefs in the Rise of Post-materialism

There is a change from traditional values to secular

ones. This secularization process contains changes that occur and involves globalization. The exchange of ideas, understanding, and culture in each country is one of the discussions here. Ronald's book, which explains Religion's Enduring Impact on the World's Societies, discusses how an area will follow its religious heritage (Inglehart, 2020). The title is a trigger and proof of globalization, which is why religion is an inheritance, but does not necessarily become an inheritance. Still, there is interference from the journey of the teachings of each country.

A society's trajectory is determined by the historical influence of its cultural heritage. This trajectory persists long after religious organizations have disappeared. Because of this, Protestant Europe still exhibits particular values and beliefs, even though few people attend church there. Both historically Roman Catholic and historically Islamic, Orthodox, or Confucian societies have this trait.

Globalization encapsulates the cultural differences in people's perspectives on various issues, such as politics, religion, sexual conventions, and work

attitudes. The shift from farming-based societies to industrial ones brought significant changes like secularization, urban living, organized systems, and more logical ways of thinking. These changes are reflected in the divide between traditional values and more modern, secular beliefs. Traditional civilizations have a strong emphasis on religion, which encourages large families and more respect for authority, rate relatively poorly in terms of success motivation, and oppose divorce, abortion, and homosexuality.

The conventional norms transitioning to rational secular norms here are in the realm of religion. The emergence of secular values and declining religious authority are effects of globalization. The worldview and the many alternative explanations that challenge religious orthodoxy today are very easy to find, access, and absorb by advocates such as science, technology, and secular education. As a result, people may take a more secular perspective and move on to support logic and facts that can be verified over religious dogma.

Globalization, in this case, cultivates an individualistic mindset, thus making many people doubt and reconsider the

religious beliefs that they originally held. Many perspectives and lifestyles emerge as they interact with diverse cultures and emerging ideas. People are thus encouraged to critically reevaluate their views and make decisions that are highly consistent with their autonomy. Therefore, interpreting or modifying religious ideas to suit existing interests and lifestyles according to specific environments will lead to more secular attitudes.

The spread of secularism and the tone of other Western cultural norms are strongly linked to globalization. Western secular culture means the separation of the church, the emphasis on the rights and freedoms of the individual and the state, and the rise of consumerism, which has impacted the world and the countries.

Post-materialist principles include social equality, a sustainable environment, and, most importantly, human freedom, quality of life, and self-expression. According to Inglehart (2020), prioritizing non-materialistic goals in wealthier, safer communities is at the heart of post-materialism. Inglehart claims that several variables, all of which have a role to play in post-materialism, include socialization processes,

shifting generations, educational values, and exposure to new concepts. The post-materialist view is also based on the basis planted and grown by existing socialization processes, such as increasing gender equality, an issue that has been hot in every era until now, and the spread of democratic ideals. The socialization process, educational values, and exposure to new concepts are ways globalization works.

Inglehart's post-materialist theory looks at traditional values that oppose secular-rational, survival that opposes self-expression, and materialist perspectives that oppose post-materialism. Post-materialist principles lead to demands for more individual liberties, participatory democracy, environmental conservation, and the prioritization of social issues like gender equality and human rights. These ideals impact political attitudes, voting patterns, and societal social and cultural shifts.

The emergence of the understanding of post-materialism changed to a directionless concern with materialism. This is an impact of what might be called the change in understanding that has developed due to

globalization. An example is how Inglehart included 43 countries in his research and then determined that those countries that still attach importance to materialism will enter countries that still uphold traditional values and are categorized as "poor" countries. Still, the rest that upholds self-expression are classified as "rich" countries. Therefore, from the understanding of Bryan S. Turner, there will be new religious identities and practices that borrow from other cultural traditions that begin to emerge, and all cultural exchanges and ideas that occur in the process of globalization will cause different results. The following discussion is part of the emergence of various beliefs caused by globalization, and what the other possible possibilities are. The discussion led to a diversification of beliefs discussed in the following paragraph.

The progress of religious diversity in the United States is inextricably tied to globalization movements. Globalization, defined by growing interconnection and the movement of ideas, goods, and people across national lines, has had a tremendous impact on the religious landscape of the

United States. Immigration significantly contributes to religious diversity in the United States (Cadge & Howard Ecklund, 2007). As a result of globalization, people from various cultural and religious backgrounds have moved to the United States. Immigrants bring their religious traditions and customs with them, resulting in the creation of religious groups from all over the world. As a result, religions such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and others have grown in popularity alongside traditional Christian denominations.

Religion and Globalization have promoted cultural interchange and interfaith discussion, allowing religious ideas and practices to cross-pollinate (Turner, 2010). Travel, media, and the internet have increased people's accessibility to and interest in diverse religious traditions. This has aided the emergence of ecumenical movements, interfaith projects, and spiritual discovery beyond traditional religious bounds.

Furthermore, globalization has challenged one religious tradition's dominance and given rise to religious pluralism in the United States (Eck, 2001). As people discover more religious options, they have

more possibilities to study and choose their religious affiliations or engage in spiritual practices outside of institutionalized faiths. As a result, alternative spiritualities, new religious movements, and individualized displays of faith have grown in popularity.

Globalization has made it easier for religious people and leaders worldwide to connect and share their beliefs. These networks facilitate the global dissemination of religious concepts, practices, and beliefs, particularly in the US. Many factors affect the world's religious diversity today, some of which are widespread missionary efforts, religious organizations, and accessible religious materials and literature from around the world. A sign of the larger social environment and culture in which religion functions, this has played a role in the secularization of society, resulting in decreased loyalty to conventional religion and the emergence of some of the more diverse religious landscapes. Meanwhile, traditional religious institutions need to fight harder to attract more followers. Thus, new religious expressions that were still very taboo at that time became alternative spiritual paths

free to be learned. It is possible to conceptualize syncretism, hybridization, and cultural absorption as the interaction and adaptation of various religious communities to their new cultural context. Consequently, unique religious expressions arise that incorporate elements from other faiths and mirror the heterogeneity of society.

Thus, globalization has been critical in the rise of religious diversity in the United States. Immigration, cultural interaction, interfaith discussion, and global religious networks have all contributed to the country's presence and expansion of various religious traditions. Because of the interaction of international and local influences, a dynamic and complex religious landscape has emerged, reflecting the pluralistic nature of a globalized society. The changes in religious practices in the United States from materialism to post-materialism will be discussed in the following paragraph.

In the context of post-materialism theory, which emphasizes the shift from materialistic values to post-materialistic values, several religious practices in the United States have changed over time due to globalization.

Before the rise of post-materialism, several examples belong to materialism in religious practices, such as Prosperity Gospel, Mega Churches and Financial Success, Consumerism and Religious Commodification, Televangelism and Fundraising, and Religious Tourism and Commercialization.

The essentials of consumerism and religious commodification deal with how religion participates as an object of consumption and commodification. According to Ritzer, consumerism has penetrated practically every element of modern society, changing it into a consumer culture in which people are considered mainly consumers rather than religious believers (Ritzer & Dean, 2019). Consumerism has penetrated practically every element of modern society, changing it into a consumer culture in which people are mainly considered consumers rather than religious believers.

Consumerism has resulted in the commercialization and commodification of religious activities and beliefs. Religious institutions and organizations have adopted business-like techniques to attract and maintain believers. These methods include branding, marketing, and selling religious goods and services.

Ritzer thinks that consumerism has commercialized and commodified religious activities and beliefs. He claims religious institutions and organizations have adopted business-like techniques to attract and maintain believers. These methods include branding, marketing, and selling religious goods and services.

After realizing and increasingly shifting traditional values and starting to move towards self-expression and secular rational values, there was a shift in religious practices that shifted from materialism to post-materialism, which was explained by Inglehart's understanding. People will be more concerned with rational things towards themselves and will argue as freely as possible. Several religious practices developed in America due to this exchange of ideas that changed from traditional to free expression.

The US is undergoing a profound transformation in attitudes and objectives as it enters the post-materialist era. As they achieve increasing degrees of economic security, individuals' priorities shift away from financial requirements and toward self-expression, personal growth, and quality of life. This shift has profoundly impacted how

religious activities are perceived, followed, and valued in the United States.

The implications of post-materialism in the US are essential in this research. These include the growth of individual spirituality that falls into the discussion of self-freedom, the search for meaning and authenticity, which also focuses on existing social equality and environmental management, and the problem of relevance in persistent religious institutions. Globalization, thus, has many consequences for post-materialism in religion, including shifting priorities; adaptation and cultural exchange; individualization and spirituality; global networks and movements; environmental issues; and pluralistic interreligious dialogue.

Some shifts in the goals of religious communities are a result of globalization. As previously understood, as societies grow more upward and victorious, networked people can prioritize post-materialistic goals such as spiritual fulfillment, self-expression, and personal growth over conventional materialistic values such as wealth and material possessions. This can cause individuals to reconsider their

religious beliefs more deeply and also begin to place an even greater emphasis on self-growth and inner experience.

Globalization has many diverse impacts. The most relevant here is how it facilitates the cross-border flow of religious activities and beliefs. It may shift or even change to attract new audiences when it adapts to different cultural contexts. The result here is that religious practices that could be hybrids may begin to emerge, including elements from various traditions or local cultural expressions. Therefore, the globalization process has facilitated the exchange of ideas, which has resulted in the evolution and diversification of religious practice.

Globalization can uphold the value of individuality and one's search for the spiritual path. When people choose and take a more personal approach to spirituality, it is the result of becoming more familiar with diverse religious practices and beliefs worldwide. The existing penchant for unconventional spiritual activities, so that the rejection of traditional religious institutions exists, or the creation of a very stagnant spiritual framework here with the emergence of

post-materialistic ideas, are some examples of this individualization.

Achieving social equality, promoting social sustainability, and enhancing human rights is the work of religious communities and organizations able to collaborate with like-minded people and organizations worldwide. This international network makes collaboration, resource sharing, and dissemination of post-materialistic concepts and behaviors possible.

A hopeful commitment to ecological sustainability and a deeper awareness of environmental issues are common characteristics of religious post-materialism. Globalization has led to global environmental challenges and the interdependence of ecological systems. Religious communities can incorporate environmental stewardship into their religious rituals and practices to support sustainable living and ecological justice.

The benefits of globalization here can also include increasing religious diversity and interfaith dialogue. Meeting with individuals with diverse religious backgrounds and perspectives casts doubt on

exclusivity and advances a more accepting understanding of religious pluralism. Post-materialistic principles encourage interfaith participation and collaboration on everyday social and ethical challenges, emphasizing cooperation, communication, and mutual understanding among various faith communities.

Thus, globalization affects post-materialism in religion by reorienting priorities, promoting cultural adaptation and exchange, fostering individualism and spirituality, facilitating global networks and movements, advancing environmental concerns, and fostering religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue. These consequences highlight how spiritual practices and beliefs are changing in a post-materialistic, globalized world. After discussing the first question in the research question, we will discuss the second big point: religious LGBTQ+ individuals represented in new media and the acceptance of their existence.

This shift toward post-materialist values creates more space for diverse identities, including those that challenge traditional religious and cultural norms. In this context, the visibility and

representation of LGBTQ+ individuals within spiritual communities, primarily through new media, reflect the growing emphasis on individual expression, inclusion, and personal spirituality.

In the USA TODAY YouTube channel, with a video titled LGBTQ Muslims tackle myths about their religion and sexuality, Marwa Eltahir, one of the activists in residence at the LGBTQ+ community center of NY, did an interview on the USA TODAY channel said "There's no one way to be Muslim, there's no one way to be queer." (USA TODAY, 2022, 00:04). Marwa acknowledged being a queer Muslim in the interview, bluntly saying that being two identities who did not expect to intersect with each other would be controversial.

In this case, according to Marwa as the speaker, it will be challenging to have two identities together, being queer will not be easy nor will be a Muslim, however, Marwa, said she prefers to excavate the things for her at the moment, what will be her at that time that she will embrace and said "I like to continue deepen my relationship with Islam, again, I'm bringing the joy into it." (USA TODAY, 2022, 00:12). Marwa's desire to deepen her understanding of

Islam appears to stem from an intrinsic need for psychological security. This aligns with the broader notion that religion often provides individuals with a sense of stability and reassurance. Her continued commitment to Islam can thus be interpreted as a response to her mental and emotional need for a consistent and secure foundation in life.

Then, Marwa declared something that was being shown as someone who wanted justice for her community. Such as "I've had my queer ancestors that didn't have the same privileges as me to be expressed in this way". (USA TODAY, 2022, 01:00). With New Media, this is more visible today and she feels safe to express herself as Muslim and queer. The part that feels acceptable about queer Muslims in the comments of the video is also essential to examine the aspects of the video that highlight social acceptance of queer Muslims, as reflected in the comments section in the following paragraph. A person with an account named @scarletwitch6058 supports this opinion by stating that everyone has a choice in religion.

Religion is everyone's choice. If they find some peaceful in it, then they will believe it. It's not

based about gender, age, bisexuality. It's abt humans and they are humans. What mistake did they did to be sinful? If God is there and he knows what they are doing, he should forgive them if he didn't like it. Some people harm other people lives, they are the sinful persons. But they didn't harm any person. (Scarlet, 2022, as cited in [LGBTQ Muslims tackle myths about their religion and sexuality | USA TODAY]).

From the comment above, the comment from @scarletwitch6058 was one of hundreds of comments made for Marwa as the speaker, while the other called her sick, feared God, not being Muslim, and several other repulsions. When compared to some positive and negative comments, nasty comments are given to Marwa, and comments that sink below, making those who watch still believe that if these two identities are true, there will still be much criticism because the acceptance is drowned in it.

Despite the mixed reactions Marwa received, her story is not isolated. Similar expressions of queer religious identity appear on more personal platforms like TikTok, where individuals like some people share their experiences and challenge traditional narratives in a more intimate, yet equally impactful, way.

Olive, a student at Texas University, talks openly about being gay and Christian on TikTok. Moving to a more private opinion, namely a woman with a TikTok account @digital.olive, she conveyed in her video with an obvious sentence and very inviting comments that lead to two sides. It says, "Fun fact, you can be Christian and gay, you can be religious and gay". (Olive, 2024).

Unlike Marwa who instructs the difficulty of being Muslim and queer simultaneously and she remains Olive, she feels that her religion and her sexuality can become one because afterward, she said, "these two things are not mutually exclusive events. Praise God" (Olive, 2024). She said these two things are not exclusive events; they can be the same and cannot intersect. Religion and sexuality can happen in the same way, and possibly, Olive appeared on her TikTok account, which is New Media, by clearly declaring that she is Christian and Gay.

The acceptance from the comment column of the @digital.olive account, compared to the comment section on YouTube, looks very different. The berating and rejecting are rare, as the top 20 comments are those that support and accept the

existence of @digital.olive, they say they feel comfortable on the right side of TikTok because the algorithm works well, they are relieved because some feel they find their community and feel safe. Some say they want to stay on the side of TikTok, which brings out their fellow communities. For negative comments, they repeatedly wrote that they don't understand the existence of gay Christians. There is a clear difference between the comment sections of YouTube and TikTok.

This contrast between platforms like TikTok and YouTube shows how different digital spaces shape the level of acceptance toward queer religious individuals. Expanding this to larger media platforms, we can see how organizations like Jubilee Media are also beginning to give visibility to identities that were once rarely acknowledged. A media corporation situated in Los Angeles is called Jubilee Media. As of January 2024, the Jubilee YouTube channel boasted approximately 8.5 million members. Jubilee invited a pastor who identified as gay and an important person in the church. Throughout the video, "I'm a Gay Pastor. Ask Me Anything". Just like the titles and types of videos Jubilee

offers, it allows everyone to ask their questions. Father Curt's appearance here represents that someone who is religious and part of the LGBTQ+ community exists.

Father Curt said something very influential for some of the people he would help, and he felt this had to be conveyed: "You know what? You don't have to give up. You don't have to allow people to dictate your path. You have the power to dictate your path" (Jubilee, 2022, 01:44).

For people who may feel they belong to the LGBTQ+ community and want to embrace a religion, there may be those who feel that it is not good and not worthy to be embraced at the same time, as if something is something that must be removed and let go of the other to run something well. However, for Father Curt, that is not true.

I think that in the world that we live in today, we can be more gender fluid, and if you like it, you like it, make it work. So that's how the world needs to be, make it work. (Jubilee, 2022, 03:28)

Father Curt elaborates on the passage that in today's world, Jesus does that because that is how the world should be. That is, in the old world, nothing like this would have

existed before there was enough resistance to traditional values for the LGBTQ+ community when they wanted to be religious, maybe they would have been roundly condemned. Still, Pastor Curt receives support that can open the church to everyone and accept them regardless of their sexuality.

The video featuring Pastor Curt elicited a mixed reaction from the public. Some support his view that religion is about how we act, not merely what we believe. Others commend his being there, saying that the presence of an openly gay pastor represents progress in encouraging religions to embrace and affirm those diverse identities within their communities. Sadly, for every affirmation, there is a counterpoint of denial. Many commenters are calling Pastor Curt a heretic, questioning his legitimacy as a religious figure, and some are going so far as to say that his identity is in contradiction to religious teachings. The glaring contrast between these two narratives highlights the divide between progressive and conservative strains of interpreting faith in the public square.

The most important things can be analyzed after analyzing three content items from

YouTube and TikTok. Someone with a religious nature and being part of the LGBTQ+ community is normal for some people because religion is not an exclusive event that cannot be related to their sexuality. Marwa from USA TODAY, Olive from a TikTok video, and Father Curt from Jubilee exist in the new media due to the rise of post-materialism. They deny the traditional value of the verses of each religion's scriptures that reveal the absence of their sexuality as human beings and how it becomes a value they do not accept. Then, with new media such as YouTube and TikTok, those who do not feel underrepresented feel their voices are heard.

Underrepresentation can be a disquieting and troubling experience, especially when it touches on identity facets beyond one's control. The sense of marginalization cannot be chosen, as it is nothing but a mirror for the workings of social structures. Hence, being visible and having a voice in society today is fundamentally important. Feeling seen and heard, and having a sense of inclusion, confirms one's place in the world and strengthens the fundamental right to exist without others validating or denying one's humanity.

CONCLUSION

The most important components can be reviewed after the three YouTube and TikTok contents have been examined. Father Curt from Jubilee, Olive from a TikTok video, and Marwa from USA TODAY are examples of new media resulting from the growth of post-materialism. They reject the conventional significance of the passages in the scriptures of every religion that show how their sexuality as human beings is absent and how it turns into a value they reject. Those who do not feel underrepresented believe their voices are heard thanks to modern media like YouTube and TikTok. Their presence and open appearance in the New Media show their underrepresentation in today's world. Religious queers proved their identity to open the eyes of the world that queer religion exists. Both events may intersect because religion has diversified and been modified in the United States. Seeing how their social media acceptance proves there are two sides, namely positive and negative. Positive from those who feel they have the same identity and feel safe with the existence of the community. Then the negative arises because of rejection that seems contrary to the teachings of their religion.

LGBTQ+ is not accepted in their faith, showing a steadfast commitment to the traditional values of their teachings. Therefore, this illustrates how queer religious individuals continue to negotiate a rather tough space, where acceptance and rejection often sit side-by-side. However, even online, among the increasing supportive voices that have begun to recognize and accept the connection between faith and queer identity, there is evidence of the kind of progress being made by society in these areas.

REFERENCES

- Adi, I. R. (2024). [R]evolusi sastra di era digital. Caritra Indonesia.
- Bronski, M. (2012). A queer history of the United States (Vol. 1). Beacon Press.
- Butler, J. (2002). Gender trouble. Routledge.
- Cadge, W., & Howard Ecklund, E. (2007). Immigration and religion. *Annu. Rev. Sociol.*, 33, 359-379.
- Cuterela, S. (2012). Globalization: Definition, processes and concepts. Romanian Statistical Review.
- Dow, J. W. (2007). A scientific definition of religion.
- Eck, D. L. (2001). A new religious America: How a "Christian country" has now become the world's most religiously diverse nation. HarperSanFrancisco.
- Gibbs, J. J., & Goldbach, J. (2015). Religious Conflict, Sexual Identity, and Suicidal Behaviors among LGBT Young Adults. *Archives of Suicide Research*, 19(4), 472-488. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13811118.2015.1004476>
- Inglehart, R. F. (2020). Religion's sudden decline: What's causing it, and what comes next? Oxford University Press.
- Jubilee [@Jubilee]. (2022, December 27). I'm a Gay Pastor. Ask Me Anything [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLainrKzh0E&t=4s>
- Norris, P., & Inglehart, R. (2011). Sacred and secular: Religion and politics worldwide. Cambridge University Press.
- Olive [@digital.olive]. (2024, January 22). Just vibe twin #lgbt #christian #christiantok #lesbiansoftiktok [Video]. TikTok. <https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSrpe2eJ9/>
- Scarletwitch6058 (2022). "Religion is everyone's choice. If they found some peaceful in it, then they will believe it. It's not based about gender, age,

bisexuality." [Comment on the
video "LGBTQ Muslims tackle
myths about their religion
and sexuality"].
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFc9mTzn4H4>

Taylor, Y., & Snowden, R.
(2014). Queering religion,
religious queers. Routledge.

Turner, B. S. (2010). Religion
in a Post-secular Society.
The New Blackwell Companion
to the Sociology of Religion,
649-667.

USA TODAY [@USATODAY]. (2022,
April 28). LGBTQ Muslims
tackle myths about their
religion and sexuality
[Video].
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFc9mTzn4H4>