

Review of: "God's characteristics as reported by near-death experiencers"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The authors present an interesting and appealing title. The abstract could be better structured in accordance with the organization provided by the authors in the text. When the authors state that the primary objective was to replicate the study by Long & Perry (2016), they must maintain the original characteristics in order to later compare the results obtained by the original authors. In this case, even though they are using the same scale, they have a new study because they are adding new variables and different inclusion criteria for the sample. To increase rigor regarding the consulted articles, they could have adapted the PRISMA flow diagram (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses). It would help the reader understand how many articles were found, how many were rejected, how many were duplicates, and how many were selected. It would be interesting for the authors to mention the terms of acceptance and explain why. The text lacks explanations of the concepts. It also lacks a theoretical-philosophical basis where expressions like "Light, Oneness (...)" for example, have a specific meaning for this study. The results and the discussion could be substantially improved. Some limitations of the study prevented the authors from conducting certain statistical tests necessary for a better understanding of the results. As **Yoshija Walter (reviewer)** mentioned earlier, there are some issues to be clarified - "It is not clear whether the authors make a clear distinction between the perceived experiences of "God" and of "Jesus" – do they categorize both concepts together?"; "The authors do not present a clear research question and hypotheses for analysis. Later on, they state that it is an exploratory study. Since this is not the first study of its kind (they indicate that it is a replication study), clear research objectives should have been provided." [...] data generation, which should be subject to more critical discussion."; "There are several well-established methods for content analysis (for example, Philipp Mayring and others), but it appears that the authors are pursuing their own approach as they see fit. It would have been a stronger case if they had utilized established methods for qualitative analysis and referenced them."

Strengths of this paper:

- The text offers a comprehensive explanation of various sources and approaches to gaining knowledge about the existence and characteristics of God and Jesus. It covers religious texts, personal experiences, and even scientific investigations into spiritual experiences.
- The text provides historical and cultural context by referencing notable figures and mystics from different religious and spiritual traditions, such as Francis of Assisi, Emanuel Swedenborg, and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. This adds depth to the discussion and highlights the universality of spiritual experiences.

- It references recent research studies and authors, indicating that the text is up-to-date with the current state of research in the field of spiritual experiences.

Overall, the text is well-rounded and provides a balanced perspective on the topic of knowing the existence and characteristics of God and Jesus, incorporating religious, experiential, and scientific viewpoints.

Thank you to the authors for their interesting study. I hope that their ongoing efforts will further enhance the text to ensure a clearer understanding of the results.