

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

Snežana Brumec<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Maribor

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

This research stands as a valuable contribution to the study of near-death experiences (NDEs), with broad implications spanning psychology, spirituality, religion, and philosophy. In an era where science probes the mysteries of the human mind and consciousness, this study offers unique perspectives on the profound and transcendent dimensions of human existence. Bridging the realms of empirical research and existential inquiry, this article underscores the significance of exploring personal experiences in shaping collective narratives and expanding our understanding of the human condition.

However, the researchers' study does not directly answer to the research questions of whether God exists or provide definitive insights into the objective characteristics of God. Instead, their work primarily focuses on identifying and elucidating the characteristics of experiences within an extraordinary, transcendent reality. Additionally, they explore the accompanying emotions and emotional responses of individuals who undergo these experiences.

Rather than making conclusive statements about the existence of God or the precise attributes of the divine, the study offers valuable insights into the subjective and transformative nature of these extraordinary human experiences. It sheds light on how individuals perceive and interpret encounters with the divine, emphasizing the complex interplay between subjective experiences and the emotions they evoke.

Moreover, the term "direct experience of God" should be used with caution because it signifies the experiencer's perception that they have encountered God, rather than an objective, verifiable divine encounter. Furthermore, there is a need for clarification regarding the exclusion of certain experiences. While the inclusion criteria specify direct encounters with God or Jesus accompanied by specific descriptions of their characteristics, the rationale for excluding experiences where individuals describe feelings of presence, communication with a higher being, or profound sensations of love and connection is not entirely evident.

In terms of the characteristic of light in NDEs, while the study suggests it as a characteristic of God, data from the source database reveal that light is present in the majority of cases, highlighting its significance in NDEs. The interplay between physiological and subjective factors in NDEs is also evident, with individuals often interpreting light as a spiritual entity, such as God or Jesus.

Regarding methodology, the study might have benefited from employing computer applications for qualitative and quantitative content analysis in the examination of NDEs featuring direct encounters with God or Jesus. Such an approach could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the narratives and characteristics associated with these

extraordinary experiences, enhancing our knowledge in this captivating field.