Aspects of Religiosity and Their Relationships

To Measures of Quality of Life

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Abstract

Religion in past research has been found to be a
significant predictor of quality of life, but previous
measures used do not appear to explore the fullness of
either factors of life. Two hundred and twenty two
undergraduate students at a southern university were
given a 70 item questionnaire measuring 13 religious
and 10 quality of life variables. Results from Pearson
r correlations, chi square tests of significance, and
gamma correlations yielded significance (p<0.05) for
many of the relationships. The religious factors found
to have the greatest predictive value of quality of
life values were religious happiness, spiritual well-
being, spiritual importance, and religious experience,
all of which are meaning, as opposed to belief and
belonging, variables. Quality of life measures best
predicted by religiosity were general happiness and
purpose in life. These results may be confounded by
the high relgiosity scores of the sample population.

Factors of Religiosity and Their Relationships
To Measures of Quality of Life

Religion professes to give us, not necessarily
happiness or satisfaction with life, but a better way
to live, a path to follow for enlightenment and
salvation, which itself may lead to happiness. But
does religion actually give us this better way? Or,
acting as Freud's neurosis or Marx's opiate, does
religion simply serve to placate us, to shroud our
daily burdens from our view?

Religion has been shown to be a positive variable
in relation to happiness. Religious students are found
to be happier than non-religious students (cited in
Hadaway 1978). Church attendance and membership is a
factor in happiness, satisfaction, and adjustment
(cited in Hadaway 1978) and correlates significantly
with subjective measures of well-being during a long-
term European study during the 1970's (Inglehart and
Rabier 1986). But also in the 1970's, a survey was
taken to determine the factors involved in Americans'
quality of life (Campbell et al 1976). While marital
relations, family life and nonwork (spare time)
activities rated highly, religion did not contribute a

great amount to life satisfaction. In fact, religion
(defined as religious faith) appears to correlate
negatively with personal competence, "the degree of
control the individual feels that he can exert over the
terms of his life" (363).

In analyzing the same data and contradicting
Campbell's results, Hadaway (1978) found that
religiousness (religious mindedness, importance of
faith, religious satisfaction, and church attendance)
was significantly correlated with different measures of
life satisfaction (personal competence, index of well-
being, total life satisfaction, and rewarding or
disappointing life), though in some instances the
correlations were small. Hadaway and Roof (1978) also
found that religiousness is associated with
worthwhileness of life. However, religious meaning
(the feelings and experiences of religion, defined in
the study as the importance of faith) proves to be a
better predictor of worthwhileness than religious
belonging (church affiliation and attendance).

Other studies have indicated further associations
between religion and life quality. Denomination
(Protestant versus Catholic) as a product of intrinsic
religiousness (based on faith, not works) is found as a

determinant in coping with life stress and depression levels (Park et al. 1990). One's perception of God as wrathful is positively correlated with one's loneliness with an inverse relationship occurring between loneliness and a perception of a helpful God (Schwab and Petersen 1990). In looking at the differences among religious and personality variables between populations of Southern and Midwest students, dependency is correlated with seven of the eight variables for both groups (Maranell 1974). The nature of one's religiousness itself is seen as a factor in a study involving Indian Hindus and Tibetan Buddhist refugees living in the same area (Fazel and Young 1988). The Tibetans were found to have a significantly higher life quality than their native counterparts.

Major problems with the above research involve the measures of religiosity and quality of life. The difficulty with the latter is that the primary focus lies solely on the individual's subjective mood and emotional states, such as "How happy are you?" and "How satisfied are you with your life?". Little research has been done in integrating the positive theoretical constructs of personality theory, such as Maslow's actualization and Jung's individuation (Ryff 1990).

Religiosity has encountered the same problem, with the variables often based solely on church membership and attendance (which is not a critical identifier of religiousness (Brown 1987 p.27)), religious satisfaction, frequency of prayer, and the importance of faith. One attempt away from this narrowness of religious variables is a study looking at types of prayer and life quality (measured in terms of life satisfaction, existential well-being, happiness, negative affect, and religious satisfaction) (Poloma and Pendleton 1989). One variable in particular, prayer experience, showed a significant relationship with all but negative affect.

The original goal of the study was to determine the differences in the quality of life among individuals with different religious systems (conventional, moderate, alternative and nonreligious (Glock 1979)). However, the nature of the subject population left the latter two systems without members. The present study, then, seeks simply to fill in the gaps of religiosity and quality of life research, expanding the content and variables of both to develop a better understanding of the interactions between the two.

Method

Subjects

Data was collected from 224 college students (123 males, 101 females, average age- 19.7 years) at a southern university. One hundred and ninety-two of the individuals came from the Introductory Psychology Subject Pool. The other subjects were volunteers from three religious youth groups (Methodist- 13, Catholic- 12, Baptist- 7). Two of the surveys from the Subject Pool were discarded from analysis, one for incomplete data and the other from contradictory data (reporting both Catholicism and Baptist as religious preferences). The denominational makeup of the population was: Catholic- 72 students, Methodist- 39, Baptist- 36, Presbyterian- 16, Other Protestant- 37 (includes Lutheran, Church of Christ, Episcopalian, and "just plain ol' Christian"), other faiths- 5, no preference- 17.

Materials

The questionnaire was comprised of 71 questions along 3 general variables (age, sex, college classification), 13 religious indexes, and 10 measures of quality of life. All religious and quality of life questions use a five item scale for responses unless

otherwise indicated below. (The questionnaire, with variable headings and the means and standard deviations for each variable, is listed in Appendix A.)

The religious indexes are grouped into three categories: belief, belonging, and meaning. (Roof (1979) groups belief and meaning together in his fundamental categorization of religion into belonging and meaning, but they are separated here because belief seems to be a separate dimension with different effects than meaning.) The belief indexes involve belief in God (1 question) and orthodoxy (5 questions). All questions are taken from Stark and Glock (1968). Orthodoxy measures the belief in the existence of a personal God, the divinity of Jesus Christ, the authenticity of Biblical miracles, and the belief in the existence of the devil (Spearman-Brown reliability estimate= 0.758).

Religious belonging measures ritual and social involvement along three scales: importance of religion, religious organization, and religious friends. Religious importance is a one-item scale asking about the importance of belonging to an organized church. Religious ritual involves four questions gauging membership in a church and/ or a religious

organization, frequency of attendance, and importance of religious membership (Spearman-Brown= 0.758). Religious friendship is partially derived from Andrews (1986, p. 91). Three questions attempt to measure the number of friends of the subject who have the same and different beliefs, both general and religious. The higher the score on this variable, the greater number of friends one has with the same beliefs. Validity, however, was low (Spearman-Brown= 0.407).

The variables of religious meaning comprise several different indicators of feelings and experiences. Spiritual importance was a one-item measure similar to religious importance directed towards one's individual relationship with God. The prayer and meditation indexes involve two questions each about frequency and importance (Spearman-Brown for prayer= 0.910, Spearman-Brown for meditation= 0.953). Prayer experience is a five question measure of strength of prayer/ meditation derived from Poloma and Pendleton (1989) regarding the presence of God, spiritual insight, divine interpretation, a sense of peace, and the answering of requests during prayer and meditation (Spearman-Brown= 0.791). The single question index of religious thought asks how often one

thinks of religious topics. The spiritual well-being scale is adapted from Kauffman's measure of religious experiences (1979) (Spearman-Brown= 0.624). These questions involve the inclusion of God in everyday decisions, the progress in one's spiritual life, the awareness of a spiritual goal, and the extent of one's relationship to God. Actual religious experiences are measured by the religious experience index (the experiential index developed by Stark and Glock 1968): feeling the presence of something holy or sacred (confirming experience), being blessed (responsive-salvational), and being punished (responsive-sanctional) (Spearman-Brown= 0.497). (The confirming and responsive- salvational questions use 4 point scales and responsive- sanctional uses a 3 point scale.) Religious happiness is a one-item question concerning the enjoyment of one's religion/spirituality and was set among the happiness variables. (One other variable was used, mystical, to look at non-traditional religiosity, but was found to be irrelevant due to the nature of the sample of subjects.)

A ranking of religiosity variables according to the mean of the total correlations with each other results in the following list: spiritual importance

(mean= 0.651), spiritual well-being (0.618), ritual
(0.607), religious importance (0.606), orthodoxy
(0.605), religious happiness (0.603), prayer experience
(0.592), prayer (0.592), belief in God (0.536),
religious experience (0.531), religious thought
(0.508), religious friends (0.390), and meditation
(0.297).

The quality of life measures include six
traditional indexes (cognitive, affective, and general
happiness, optimism, self-esteem, and depression) and
four indexes gauging the level of psychological
development (autonomy, positive relations, purpose in
life, and personal growth). Cognitive happiness is a
one item measure of the intellectual evaluation of life
satisfaction, while affective happiness is a one-item
measure relating to the positive emotional feelings of
happiness (Abbey and Andrews 1986). Optimism is a one-
item question asking whether the respondent believes
the life of the average American is getting better or
worse. General happiness is a three question index
concerning the enjoyment of school, family, and friends
(Spearman-Brown=0.563). The depression variable is
comprised of six questions with four point scales taken
from Zung's depression scale which were selected on the

basis of pretesting by Bryant and Veroff (1986) (Spearman-Brown= 0.607). The self-esteem measures are from Rosenberg's self-esteem scale, selected on the basis of pretesting again by Bryant and Veroff (Spearman-Brown= 0.685).

The psychological development, or actualization, indexes involve subjective questions derived from Ryff (1990). The positive relations variable measures with four questions the number of close friends of the respondent, the level of empathy, sacrifices to friends, and openness with others. (The reliability of this scale was low (Spearman-Brown= -0.040) and will be examined in the discussion section below.) The three question autonomy index seeks to determine the levels of independence and self-determination. (Its validity was also low (Spearman-Brown= 0.290) and will also be discussed below.) Purpose in life is a four question index concerning the goals one has set and the meaning one sees in life (Spearman-Brown= 0.543). The personal growth measures, also four questions, concern the ability to grow, expand, and improve oneself (Spearman-Brown= 0.504).

The ranking of quality of life variables by the means of their correlations results in: depression

(mean= 0.470), affective happiness (0.427), self-esteem
(0.415), cognitive happiness (0.399), purpose in life
(0.383), personal growth (0.377), general happiness
(0.374), positive relations (0.266), autonomy (0.149),
and optimism (0.108).

Procedure

Subjects in the psychology subject pool were given
the questionnaire in groups, followed by debriefing
procedures. Religious groups were told of the study
and a request for volunteers went out during their
meetings. Those who picked up the questionnaire were
asked to fill them out and bring them back within a few
weeks. Return rates were: Methodist- 48.1%, Catholic-
32.4%, and Baptist- 12.7%.

Results

Analysis of the data yielded significant results
between many of the religious and quality of life
variables. Specifically, religious meaning variables
were found to have a higher correlation with quality of
life than religious belief or belonging. The best
religious predictors for life quality were found to be
religious happiness, spiritual well-being, spiritual
importance, and religious experience. The quality of

life variables best explained as a function of religion were general happiness and purpose in life. Overall, the correlations between religiosity and well-being were more significant than that found in previous studies.

As was expected, no significant results were found with age, sex, or school classification. Tests for correlations and significance between the variables included Pearson correlations, chi square tests for independence, and gamma correlations. The data analysis will be broken down into six sections, dividing religious belief, belonging, and meaning on the one hand and general well-being and actualization variables on the other.

Religious Belief vs. General Well-Being: The two measures for religious belief have highly similar, though small, effects on general well being, with significance found only in relation to general happiness and optimism, as shown in Table 1A. (Variables in all tables are listed according to their ranking as discussed in the Materials section.) Optimism is slightly correlated with both belief in God and orthodoxy negatively (tending towards pessimism) (r= -0.15, p<.05, r= -0.16, p<.05) respectively).

Gamma shows a similar correlation (-0.18 for both).
However, chi square shows no significance with either
religious variable. The effect of religious belief is
also similar on general happiness (r for belief in God=
-0.26, p<.01, r for orthodoxy= -0.24, p<.01)). Chi
square is significant for both (p<.01). Belief in God
has a more powerful effect on general happiness when
the gamma correlation is observed, being twice that of
orthodoxy. Both variables have slightly negative
effects on depression and cognitive happiness
(nonsignificant) and no effect on self-esteem and
affective happiness. Orthodoxy and belief in God seem
to correlate mainly with general happiness (in a
positive direction) and optimism (in a negative
direction), with the stronger correlation being with
general happiness.

Religious Belief vs. Actualization: Table 1B shows the
effects of belief on the actualization indexes. More
of a difference was found between belief in God and
orthodoxy than was seen in regard to general well-
being. Orthodoxy has significant correlations with
purpose in life (r=0.20, p<0.01) and autonomy (r=-0.15,
p<0.05). Chi square is significant only with purpose
in life (p<0.05), and gamma is strong (0.27) for

purpose in life. Belief in God is correlated with purpose in life (r=0.15, p<.05), personal growth (r=0.15, p<.05), and, negatively, autonomy (r=-0.19, p<0.01). No significance was found with the chi square test. Gamma, however, shows a high correlation with purpose in life, personal growth, and positive relations. The most significant relationship between religious belief and actualization, though, was found with orthodoxy and purpose in life.

Religious Belonging vs. General Well-Being: In Table 2A, the relationships between the variables of ritual, religious importance, and religious friends and general well-being is shown. Depression is not significantly correlated with any of the belonging variables, though all correlations tend towards a negative direction. Affective happiness is moderately significant with all variables for Pearson r (p<0.05 for religious importance and friends, p<0.01 for ritual) with similar gamma correlations and no chi square significance. Self-esteem and affective happiness are both moderately significant with ritual and religious friends (p<0.05), again with no chi square significance and similar gamma correlations. All religious belonging variables are significantly correlated with general happiness

(p<0.01), with significant chi square tests for ritual and religious importance (p<0.01). Optimism is not significant with any of the religious belonging variables, though it is negatively correlated with ritual and religious importance. The most important relationships between religious belonging and general well-being occur with religious ritual and friends and general happiness.

Religious Belonging vs. Actualization: Religious importance seems to have a more significant effect on actualization than either ritual or religious friends. (See Table 2B.) Purpose in life is moderately significant with all belonging variables (p<0.01). Gamma follows a similar direction. Only religious importance has a significant chi square test with purpose in life (p<0.05). Personal growth is moderately correlated with ritual and religious importance (p<0.01) but with no significance with chi square. The same two variables are correlated with the positive relations index (p<0.05) The chi square test shows only religious importance having a significant relationship with positive relations (p<0.05), and gamma for each religious variable is small. Autonomy is not significant with any of the religious belonging

variables, but the correlation is slightly negative in each instance.

Religious Meaning vs. General Well-Being: Stronger correlations occur between well-being and religious meaning than do with well-being and religious belonging and belief, as shown in Table 3A. Depression is significantly correlated ($p < 0.01$) in a negative direction with all religious meaning variables except prayer and experience. The largest Pearson and gamma correlations occur with spiritual well-being and religious happiness. Chi square is only significant with religious happiness ($p < 0.01$). Affective happiness is highly correlated (Pearson r) with all religious meaning factors except prayer ($p < 0.05$ for spiritual importance, religious thought, and meditation; $p < 0.01$ for spiritual well-being, religious happiness, prayer experience, and religious experience). The largest correlations (Pearson and gamma) occur with spiritual well-being and religious happiness. Religious happiness has the only significant chi square test with affective happiness. The self-esteem variable follows the same pattern of significant Pearson correlations as affective happiness (except for spiritual importance having a significance of $p < 0.01$). Chi square tests for

self-esteem, however, are significant for spiritual importance and religious experience ($p < 0.01$). Gamma correlations are relatively the same for the most significant variables. Significance occurs with cognitive happiness and only three religious meaning variables-- spiritual well-being, religious happiness and prayer experience ($p < 0.01$). The chi square test for prayer is significant, and gamma is highest for spiritual well-being (0.30) and religious happiness (0.28). General happiness correlates significantly with all meaning variables using Pearson r (for religious thought $p < 0.05$, all others $p < 0.01$) except meditation, with religious happiness and spiritual well-being having fairly high correlations (0.41 and 0.35, respectively). Spiritual importance, spiritual well-being, religious happiness, prayer, and religious experience all have significant chi square tests ($p < 0.01$, except for spiritual importance, where $p < 0.05$)). Gamma shows a moderate to high correlation for the same variables in the same direction as Pearson r, being highest for religious happiness (0.39). Optimism for the first time shows significant positive correlations with religious variables (spiritual well-being and prayer experience), though gamma correlations

show a negative relationship between optimism and prayer experience. Optimism has negative significant correlations with spiritual importance ($p < 0.05$), religious happiness ($p < 0.05$), prayer ($p < 0.01$), and experience ($p < 0.01$). Chi square is not significant with any variables. The strongest relationships here, then, are found with depression and religious happiness; affective happiness and religious happiness and spiritual well-being; self-esteem and religious experience and spiritual importance; and general happiness and religious happiness, spiritual well-being, spiritual importance, prayer, and religious experience.

Religious Meaning vs. Actualization: All actualization variables, except autonomy, show high correlations with most religious meaning indexes, as shown in Table 3B. Purpose in life has significance in all of the Pearson correlations with religious factors of meaning ($p < 0.01$). The largest correlations occur with spiritual well-being (0.47), prayer experience (0.43), and religious happiness (0.39). Significance with the chi square test occurs with spiritual importance, spiritual well-being, religious happiness, prayer and experience. Gamma is largest with religious happiness,

religious thought, spiritual well-being, and
experience. Religious meaning also correlates
significantly with personal growth ($p < 0.01$), with
religious happiness, spiritual well-being, and prayer
experience having the larger Pearson and gamma
correlations and also having the only significant chi
square scores ($p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$, $p < 0.01$, respectively).
The positive relations index is significant ($p < 0.01$)
with spiritual well-being, religious happiness, prayer
experience, religious experience ($p < 0.05$), and
spiritual importance ($p < 0.05$). Chi square has
significance along the variables of religious
happiness, prayer experience, and religious experience.
Gamma is highest for religious happiness (0.22).
Autonomy is significantly correlated ($r = 0.13$, $p < 0.05$)
only with spiritual well-being. Chi square is
significant for religious experience, and gamma shows
no important correlations. The Pearson correlations
for prayer and spiritual importance with autonomy are
also slightly negative. The above data shows that the
best effects occur between purpose in life and the
religious variables of spiritual well-being, religious
happiness, religious experience, religious thought, and
spiritual importance; between personal growth and the

variables of religious happiness, spiritual well-being, and prayer experience; and between positive relations and religious happiness.

Summary

If we define significant relationships between religious and quality of life variables as having significant Pearson correlations, significant chi square tests, and gamma correlations over 0.20, the following interactions are revealed.

In looking at general well being, the greatest interactions occur with general happiness. General happiness has high correlations with: religious happiness, spiritual well-being, spiritual importance, prayer, religious importance, belief in God, prayer experience, ritual, religious experience, and orthodoxy. Two general well-being measures have two significant interactions apiece. Affective happiness has a significant relationship with religious happiness and spiritual well-being, while self-esteem seems to be affected by religious experience and spiritual importance. Depression has a high correlation only with religious happiness, that being in a negative direction. Religious variables have no major effects on either cognitive happiness (the closest

relationships occurring with spiritual well-being and religious happiness) or optimism (though most variables indicate a slight negative relationship with this variable).

For the measures of actualization, the purpose in life variable shows the highest number of interactions. Spiritual well-being, religious happiness, religious experience, religious thought, spiritual importance, prayer, religious importance, and orthodoxy are all significantly correlated with purpose in life. Personal growth is affected by the variables of religious happiness, spiritual well-being, and prayer experience. Positive relations with others has only one significant relationship with religious happiness, and autonomy has no overall significance with any religious variable (though most religious variables show a slight negative relationship to it).

The variables of religiosity most often found to be correlated with quality of life lie within the meaning aspect of religion: religious happiness, spiritual well-being, spiritual importance, and religious experience.

Discussion

Before drawing conclusions from this study, some items of note must be made regarding the nature of the sample population. First, the population is composed entirely of students, and the average age (19.7) shows the sample to be late adolescent/ young adult. The applicability of results taken from students does not seem very high, as college students (on average) tend to differ from older adults, having less crystalized attitudes and lower conceptions of self, and research using only college students is discouraged for these reasons (Sears 1986). Also, the religiosity of the student population appears to be very strong and traditional. Seventy-two percent of those surveyed definitely believe in the existence of God and twenty percent have their doubts but do believe. Only two percent of the population have no belief in God. The orthodoxy index (mean= 21.43 from a range of 5 to 25) shows that the majority of subjects believe the statements to be a little more than "probably true". Stark and Glock's survey (1968) shows 58 percent of the sample population having an orthodoxy score of four or five on a five point scale. In the present study, 76 percent of the sample have the similar scores on the orthodoxy measure. Another example of the strong

religiousness of the survey is in church attendance.
The General Social Survey for 1980 shows that only 43.3
percent of respondents went to church nearly every
week, while the average mean for church attendance in
the present study (3.03) indicates that roughly half of
the subjects go to church at least nearly every week.
The high religiousness of the sample population
probably inflated the correlations between religion and
quality of life.

Another variable which may have increased levels
of religiosity for the population as a whole was the
occurrence of the Persian Gulf war while data was being
collected. The threat of war naturally increases one's
attention to religion, perhaps bringing one back to
religion. Also, subject bias may have been a factor in
the responses. Subjects may have wanted to put their
religiousness and themselves in the best possible
light, and so religious and life quality responses were
higher than they normally would be.

Religiosity: The most significant correlations found
among religious variables occurred with religious
happiness, spiritual well-being, spiritual importance
and religious experience. Variables from religious
belief and belonging are found to be not as signifcant

as meaning, paralleling Roof and Hadaway's (1978) results. Religious happiness itself tells us of the individual's enjoyment of religious and spiritual beliefs and practices, but its correlation with other religious variables is only average.

Sometimes used as a well-being indicator, the enjoyment of religion seems then to spread out into a positive relation to quality of life variables of subjective variables of happiness and actualization. Religious experience is also weakly correlated (comparatively) with other religious variables (mean correlation of 0.531), but indicates that actual experiences believed by the individual to have taken place with God or Christ relates significantly to a better quality of life. (Glock (1965) points out that confirmational experiences (being in the presence of something holy) occur before responsive experiences. However, responsive- salvational experiences (being saved) were reported as being significantly more frequent than confirmational experiences (t(440) = 2.79, p<0.01). This effect could be due to the overall fundamentally oriented nature of religious beliefs for the sample, with an emphasis on being saved or born again.

Spiritual importance and spiritual well-being have the highest correlations among religious variables. Both factors indicate the importance of one's relation to God or Christ. Their high predictive values of quality of life indexes mirrors not only religion's promise of a better life, but also the theoretical postulations that a high degree of quality of life (or actualization) naturally entails a close relationship or understanding of God or a Supreme Being.

Quality of Life: Depression's correlations with the belief variables of religious happiness, spiritual well-being, and religious thought seem to indicate that a strong religious meaning system is the best measure of non-depression. The measure of self-esteem shows similar results with the factors of religious importance, religious experience, spiritual well-being, and religious happiness. However, these findings seem to counter the results of previous research where feelings of depression, worthlessness, and meaninglessness are greater for strong religious orientations. (See Spilka et al. (1985) for a review of this research.) The reason for this effect is probably the fact that very few individuals reported themselves being depressed or having low self-esteem.

Comparing levels of happiness and satisfaction, happiness with friends, family, and school seem to be more correlated with religious variables from all dimensions than affective and cognitive happiness. Affective happiness is only significantly correlated with religious meaning variables. No religious variables are a strong predictor of cognitive happiness. What these findings seem to suggest is that subjective happiness and enjoyment of life are affected by religiosity, but satisfaction of life is not. Previous research indicates that satisfaction is significantly correlated with relgiosity, particularly religious satisfaction (Hadaway 1978).

Optimism of where American society is going was strangely independent of religiosity. In fact, religious variables tended toward pessimism. Explanations for this could be the occurrence of the Persian Gulf war and the tendencies for extremely fundamentally religious individuals to believe that the world is approaching apocalypse and that the only way to be "saved" is their religious path.

Analysis of actualization measures was confounded by the fact that the questions used to indicate positive relations with others and autonomy had low

intercorrelations with each other. Ryff (1990) reports significant validity with the two measures. One problem could be with the phrasing of the questions (many subjects reported that they did not understand the meaning of some of the questions). Another explanation of the low validity is that in theory, actualization increases as one ages. The use of late adolescents in this study then would show little validity for actualization variables, and in fact do show the lowest validity of all quality of life variables. Nevertheless, religion shows high predictability of purpose in life (only natural if religion acts as a meaning system) and moderate predictability for personal growth. Autonomy seems to be negatively correlated with religiosity, which is explained by the fact that religions emphasize a reliance upon God and Christ for help with life. The positive relations measure shows slight significance with religious importance and three religious meaning variables, though the correlations should be stronger in light of Christianity's theoretical compassion for enemies and neighbors. Religion overall seems to have an positive effect on actualization.

The results of this study give us the interpretation that religion, mainly as it pertains to the meaning it gives or allows, has a significant relevance to the individual's overall enjoyment and growth of life, even though the specific effects may be skewed in favor of religion. Future research should involve an analysis of religious versus atheist, agnostic, and alternative religious perspectives in relation to life quality. Research should also be conducted considering different meaning systems as they pertain to well-being. (See, for example, Wunthrow (1976), who finds four meaning/ value dimensions: theistic, individualistic, social scientific, and mystical.)

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Author Notes

TABLE 1A Religious Belief vs. General Well-Being
        (By r/ Chi Square (df)/ Gamma)

<u>Dependent Measures of General Well-Being</u>

	Depression	Affective Happiness	Self-Esteem	Cognitive Happiness	General Happiness	Optimism
Religious Belief						
Orthodoxy	-0.06	0.05	0.09	-0.01	0.24*	-0.16@
	349.9(342)	79.6(76)	177.7(171)	89.0(76)	335.8(76)*	81.8(76)
	-0.14	0.16	0.14	0.12	0.22	-0.18
Belief in God	-0.06	0.02	0.03	-0.06	0.26*	-0.15@
	64.4(72)	17.1(16)	37.4(36)	17.5(16)	107.1(44)*	19.8(16)
	-0.18	0.14	0.15	0.04	0.48	-0.18

    * = significant at p< .01
    @ = significant at p< .05

TABLE 1B Religious Belief vs. Actualization
         (By r/ Chi Square (df)/ Gamma)

Dependent Measures of Actualization

	Purpose In Life	Personal Growth	Positive Relations	Autonomy
Religious Belief				
Orthodoxy	0.20*	0.12	0.12	−0.15@
	323(247)*	246(228)	187.2(209)	183.0(190)
	0.27	0.09	0.11	−0.06
Belief in God	0.15@	0.15@	0.12	−0.19*
	62.1(52)	64.6(48)	55.3(44)	45.3(40)
	0.31	0.21	0.29	−0.16

* = significant at $p < .01$
@ = significant at $p < .05$

TABLE 2A Religious Belonging vs. General Well-Being
        (By r/ Chi Square (df)/ Gamma)

Dependent Measures of General Well-Being

	Depression	Affective Happiness	Self-Esteem	Cognitive Happiness	General Happiness	Optimism
Rel. Belonging						
Ritual	-0.17	0.19*	0.16@	0.15@	0.25*	-0.12
	154.8(130)	38.4(40)	74.9(90)	33.8(40)	336 (110)*	54.8(40)
	-0.14	0.22	0.14	0.17	0.20	-0.12
Religious Importance	-0.11	0.15@	0.10	0.11	0.28*	-0.13
	71.7(72)	18.5(16)	31.7(36)	11.7(16)	82.6(44)*	9.4(16)
	-0.13	0.17	0.09	0.14	0.26	-0.14
Religious Friends	-0.11	0.17@	0.14@	0.14@	0.22*	0.00
	219.9(216)	49.5(48)	102.8(108)	37.7(48)	116.4(132)	51.5(48)
	-0.10	0.22	0.13	0.17	0.23	0.02

* = significant at p< .01
@ = significant at p< .05

TABLE 2B Religious Belonging vs. Actualization
      (By r/ Chi Square (df)/ Gamma)

Dependent Measures of Actualization

Rel. Belonging	Purpose In Life	Personal Growth	Positive Relations	Autonomy
Ritual	0.23*	0.22*	0.17@	-0.01
	154.8(130)	120.1(120)	134.8(110)	102.4(100)
	0.20	0.17	0.12	0.00
Religious Importance	0.23*	0.22*	0.16@	-0.08
	70.8(52)@	51.7(48)	66.3(44)@	52.1(40)
	0.21	0.19	0.13	-0.04
Religious Friends	0.18*	0.12	0.12	-0.01
	219.9(216)	24.1(144)	121.2(132)	154.3(120)*
	0.17	0.10	0.09	-0.06

* = significant at $p < .01$
@ = significant at $p < .05$

TABLE 3A   Religious Meaning vs. General Well-Being
        (By r/ Chi Square (df)/ Gamma)

Dependent Measures of General Well-Being

Rel. Meaning	Depression	Affective Happiness	Self-Esteem	Cognitive Happiness	General Happiness	Optimism
Spiritual Importance	-0.20*	0.16@	0.20*	0.09	0.31*	-0.15@
	58.4(72)	23.4(16)	77.1(36)*	10.6(16)	66.2(44)@	19.1(16)
	-0.21	0.21	0.22	0.15	0.29	-0.18
Spiritual Well-Being	-0.33*	0.28*	0.29*	0.28*	0.35*	0.17@
	305.8(288)	111(64)*	168.6(144)	77.4(64)	308(176)*	43.0(64)
	-0.26	0.29	0.23	0.30	0.26	-0.15
Religious Happiness	-0.28*	0.26*	0.23*	0.22*	0.41*	-0.14@
	97.4(72)@	30.6(16)@	43.5(36)	22.7(16)	110.6(44)*	15.5(16)
	-0.27	0.33	0.22	0.28	0.39	-0.14

TABLE 3B Religious Meaning vs. Actualization
       (By r/ Chi Square (df)/ Gamma)

Dependent Measures of Actualization

Rel. Meaning	Purpose In Life	Personal Growth	Positive Relations	Autonomy
Spiritual Importance	0.32*	0.29*	0.15@	-0.01
	88.1(52)*	64.8(48)	56.4(44)	46.9(40)
	0.33	0.25	0.12	0.03
Spiritual Well-Being	0.47*	0.36*	0.25*	0.13@
	308(208)*	260(192)*	184.4(176)	188(160)
	0.36	0.26	0.18	0.12
Religious Happiness	0.39*	0.37*	0.24*	0.11
	81.2(52)*	68.4(48)@	66.8(44)@	41.4(40)
	0.37	0.35	0.22	0.14
Prayer Experience	0.43*	0.34*	0.22*	0.11
	287(260)	301(240)*	292(220)*	199.1(200)
	0.33	0.25	0.14	0.05
Prayer	0.31*	0.25*	0.10	-0.07
	140.2(104)*	107(96)	74.5(88)	67.6(80)
	0.30	0.20	0.09	-0.01
Religious Experience	0.35*	0.24*	0.16@	0.03
	170(104)*	109.6(96)	117.4(88)@	117.6(80)*
	0.35	0.20	0.12	0.06
Rel. Thought	0.33*	0.18*	0.11	0.13
	82.1(52)*	45.5(48)	57.1(44)	30.7(40)
	0.37	0.16	0.08	0.16
Meditation	0.26*	0.24*	0.11	0.09
	124.2(104)	105.4(96)	72.1(88)	70.2(80)
	0.22	0.20	0.09	0.07

* = significant at p< .01
@ = significant at p< .05

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Age _____
    mean= 19.7

Gender 1. Male   2. Female
    mean=1.455 std. dev.= 0.499

Classification
    1. Fresh. 2.Soph. 3. Jun. 4.Sen. 5.Grad.
    m=1.896 s.d.=1.069

Religious Belief
What is your religious/ spiritual preference?
          1. Catholic
          2. Jewish
          3. Protestant:
          4. Other (please specify _____)
          5. None (please specify _____)
    m=2.520 s.d.=1.190
If Protestant, what is your denomination?
          1. Baptist
          2. Methodist
          3. Lutheran
          4. Presbyterian
          5. Other (please specify _____)
    m=2.754 s.d.=1.570

Belief in God   m=4.554 s.d.=0.895
Which of the following statements comes closest to what
you believe about God?
          5. I know God exists and I have no doubts
             about it.
          4. While I have my doubts, I feel that I do
             believe in God.
          3. I don't believe in a personal God, but I
             do believe in a higher power of some
             sort.
          2. I don't know whether there is a God or
             higher power, and I don't believe there
             is any way to find out.
          1. I don't believe in God or a higher power.

Religious Importance m=3.572 s.d.=1.379
How important would you say your religious life
(belonging to an organized church) is?
            5. Very important
            4. Quite important
            3. Fairly important
            2. Not too important
            1. Not at all important

Spiritual Importance   m=3.982 s.d.=1.222
How important would you say your spiritual life is?
            5. Very important
            4. Quite important
            3. Fairly important
            2. Not too important
            1. Not at all important

Orthodoxy   m=21.428 s.d.=4.414
God interacts in a personal way with man.
Jesus is the Divine Son of God.
Miracles happened just as the Bible says they did.
The Devil actually exists.
There is a life beyond death.
                5. Completely true
                4. Probably true
                3. Undecided
                2. Probably not true
                1. Definitely not true

Ritual   m=9.461 s.d.=2.953
Are you currently a member of a church?
            2. Yes
            1. No
How often do you attend worship services?
            5. More than once a week
            4. Once a week
            3. Nearly every week
            2. Once in a while
            1. Never
Do you belong to any religious organizations other than
a church?
            2. Yes
            1. No

How important would you say your religious membership
is to you?
        5. Extremely important
        4. Quite important
        3. Fairly important
        2. Not too important
        1. Not at all important

Religious Friends   m=9.838 s.d.=2.648
Do you find that your friends have the same or
different beliefs as you do?
        5. Most have the same beliefs
        4. More have the same beliefs
        3. About half have the same beliefs
        2. More have different beliefs
        1. Most have different beliefs
How many close friends do you have that believe in the
same religious faith as you do?
        1. 0
        2. 1
        3. 2
        4. 3-4
        5. 5+
How many close friends do you have that don't believe
in the same religious faith as you?
        5. 0
        4. 1
        3. 2
        2. 3-4
        1. 5+

Prayer m=7.964 s.d.=2.366
How often do you pray privately?
        5. At least once a day
        4. At least once a week or more
        3. Once in a while
        2. Rarely
        1. Never
How important is prayer in your life?
        5. Very important
        4. Quite important
        3. Fairly important
        2. Not too important
        1. Not at all important

Meditation   m=4.454   s.d.=2.594
How often do you meditate?
How important is meditation in your life?
        (same scales as Prayer)

Prayer Experience   m=12.101   s.d.=5.073
How often during the past year, as the result of prayer
        or meditation, have you felt divinely inspired or
        "led by God" to perform some specific action?
How often during the past year have you received what
        you believed to be a deeper insight into a
        spiritual or Biblical truth during prayer or
        meditation?
How often have you received what you regard as a
        definite answer to a specific prayer or meditative
        request during the past year?
How often have you felt a strong presence of God or the
        Supreme Being during prayer or meditation during
        the past year?
How often during the past year have you experienced a
        deep sense of peace and well-being during prayer
        or meditation?
                1. Never
                2. Once or twice
                3. Monthly
                4. Weekly
                5. Daily

Religious Thought m=4.045 s.d.=0.964
How often do you think of religious/ spiritual topics?
                5. At least once a day
                4. At least once a week or more
                3. Once in a while
                2. Rarely
                1. Never

Spiritual Well-Being m=13.360 s.d.3.878
When you have decisions to make in your everyday life,
        how often do you ask yourself what God or the
        Supreme Being would want you to do?
                5. Very often
                4. Often
                3. Sometimes
                2. Seldom
                1. Never

In regard to the quality of your spiritual life, which
of the following best describes your progress
during the past couple of years?

     5. I am making definite progress.
     4. I am making little progress.
     3. I am staying about the same.
     2. I have lost ground a little.
     1. I have definitely lost ground.

To what extent are you conscious of some spiritual goal
or purpose in life which serves to give you
direction in life?

     1. I am not aware of such a goal or purpose.
     2. I have a rather vague feeling of purpose.
     3. I am somewhat conscious of such a goal or
       purpose.
     4. I feel fairly conscious of a spiritual
       goal.
     5. I definitely feel guided by a spiritual
       life goal.

In general, how close do you describe your present
relationship to God or a Spiritual Being?

     1. Distant
     2. Between distant and close
     3. Fairly close
     4. Close
     5. Very close

Experiential   m=8.264   s.d.=1.888

Have you ever had the feeling that you were in the
presence of something holy or sacred?

Have you ever had the sense of being saved or blessed
by God or Christ?

     1. No, and I really don't care whether I ever
       do.
     2. No, but I would like to.
     3. Yes, but it hasn't had a deep and lasting
       influence on my life.
     4. Yes, and it has had a lasting influence on
       my life.

Have you ever had a feeling of being punished by God
for something you had done?

     3. Yes, I am sure I have.
     2. Yes, I think I have.
     1. No.

Cognitive Happiness   m=3.775   s.d.=0.948
On the whole, how satisfied are you with the life you
     lead?
               5. Very satisfied
               4. Fairly satisfied
               3. Satisfied
               2. Not very satisfied
               1. Not at all satisfied

Affective Happiness   m=3.838   s.d.=0.932
Taking all things together, how would you say things
are these days? Would you say that you are:
               5. Very happy,
               4. Fairly happy,
               3. About average,
               2. Not too happy,
               1. Or not at all happy?

Optimism   m=2.759   s.d.=1.056
On the average, the life of the typical American is:
               1. Getting a lot worse.
               2. Getting a little worse.
               3. Staying about the same.
               4. Getting a little better.
               5. Getting a lot better.

General Happiness   m=12.357   s.d.=2.072
How much do you really enjoy your school life?
How much do you really enjoy your family?
How much do you really enjoy your friends?
               1. Not at all
               2. Not much
               3. A fair amount
               4. A lot
               5. A great deal

Religious Happiness   m=3.600   s.d.=1.244
How much do you really enjoy your religious/ spiritual
     life? (same scale as above)

Depression   m=12.843   s.d.=3.858
How often do you feel that your mind is as clear as it
     used to be?
How often do you find it easy to do the things you used
     to do?
How often do you feel that your life is interesting?
How often do you feel that you are useful and needed?
How often do you feel that your life is pretty full?

How often do you feel hopeful about the future?
  1. All or most of the time
  2. A good part of the time
  3. Some of the time
  4. A little or none of the time

Self-Esteem   m=12.360   s.d.=1.967
How often are these true for you?
  I feel that I am a person of worth.
  I am able to do things as well as most other
    people.
  On the whole, I feel good about myself.
    5. Always true
    4. Often true
    3. Sometimes true
    2. Rarely true
    1. Never true

Positive Relations   m= 13.748   s.d.=1.929
How many people do you feel you have a satisfying,
    close, and trusting relationship with?
    1. 0
    2. 1
    3. 2
    4. 3-4
    5. 5+
How often are you empathetic with the feelings of those
    around you?
    5. All or most of the time
    4. A good part of the time
    3. Some of the time
    2. Not very often
    1. A little or none of the time
How often do you find that you must make sacrifices to
    your friends?
    1. All or most of the time
    2. A good part of the time
    3. Some of the time
    4. Not very often
    5. A little or none of the time
How often do you have difficulty being open with
    another person?
    5. Never
    4. Not very much
    3. Some of the time
    2. Pretty often
    1. Nearly all of the time

Autonomy m=9.725 s.d.=2.108
How concerned are you with what people think of you?
1. Very concerned
2. Quite concerned
3. Fairly concerned
4. Not too concerned
5. Not at all concerned
How important is it for you to make decisions apart
   from other peoples' influences?
1. Not at all important
2. Not too important
3. Fairly important
4. Quite important
5. Extremely important
When you think of yourself as a whole, do you compare
   yourself with your inner standard or with other
   people?
1. Mainly other people
2. Mostly other people
3. Not more one than the other
4. Mostly an inner standard
5. Mainly an inner standard

Purpose in Life m=15.181 s.d.=2.866
How strong is your sense of direction in life?
5. Very strong
4. Quite strong
3. Fairly strong
2. Not too strong
1. Not at all strong
In looking at your past life experiences, do you find a
   sense of meaning and purpose?
5. I have found a very strong pattern of
   meaning.
4. I have found a fairly strong pattern of
   meaning.
3. I have found some sense of meaning, but it
   isn't very clear.
2. I have found very little meaning in my
   past.
1. I have not found any meaning in my past.
How many goals have you set for yourself both in the
   immediate and distant future?
1. None
2. A few
3. A moderate amount
4. Quite a few
5. Many

Do you feel that your life has meaning and purpose?
1. I feel that my life has no meaning.
2. I have a rather vague sense of purpose.
3. I am somewhat conscious of meaning in my life.
4. I am aware of a sense of purpose more than most people.
5. I definitely feel that my life has meaning.

Personal Growth   m=14.886   s.d.=2.642
Do you see life as being exciting or boring?
5. More exciting
4. Fairly exciting
3. About half exciting and half boring
2. Fairly boring
1. More boring
During the past year, how much do you feel that your behaviors and attitudes have changed?
5. A whole lot
4. A great deal
3. A fair amount
2. Not very much
1. Not at all
Do you believe that you are expanding and growing in life?
5. A whole lot
4. A great deal
3. A fair amount
2. Not very much
1. Not at all
How often do you have a sense of personal improvement in life?
1. Not very often
2. A little
3. Some
4. A good part of the time
5. All or most of the time