

# Positive Effect of Religion on Mental Health

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## Abstract

Religious belief, or an organized scheme of beliefs that typically refers to one's religion and confidence in a higher power, is a determining characteristic of the way many people survive and prepare determinations. A person may establish a number of life choices on religious opinions, but when aspects of a person's life conflict with spiritual ideals, it may be hard to harmonize the two, and doubt and distress may result. Research in psychology suggests that positive attitudes are good for our wellness. Religion is considered as a component which involves virtually all facts of satisfaction and the great unwashed who feel connected with spirituality are more gratified with their spirits. When it comes to youth they are forces of every land and development of any nation depends upon them and it is very important that they should be mentally healthy.

**Keywords:** Religion, Mental Health, Youth.

## Introduction

Religion is most common factor in India. Religion affects the many parts of the life of people. Many people seen in religious practices and attend religious functions. Many pre-schools teach religious subjects in school to enhance the religious values. Religion defined as a 'shared set of beliefs, activities and institutions premised upon faith in supernatural forces' (Iannaccone 1998, 1466) is then considered as part of culture. Religious people are more intuitive thinkers more responsive authority and more likely to reproduce. So religion is among countless other things- a set of way of thinking and doing that stay remarkable unchanged as they're passed down from generation to generation. For example-why do we celebrate Christmas? Well, largely because we always have, because we remember celebrating it as kids. Why do we pray towards Mecca? Well, may be because the phrophet told us to. Possessing 'resilience' is related to our conceptualization of spiritual wellbeing in that spiritual wellbeing can contribute to a young person's ability to adapt, survive and flourish during difficult times. A resilient young person is able to continue to negotiate their transitions to adulthood and function reasonably well, in spite of adversity and continued exposure to risk and difficult circumstances (Fonagy et al. 1994; Gilligan 2000). "Resilience refers to a capacity to do well despite adverse experience" (Gilligan 2000, Chandler 2013). A religion is an organized collection of beliefs, cultural system and world views that relate humanity to an order of existence. Many religions may have organized behavior, clergy. The practices of a religion may include rituals, sermons, sacrifices, festivals, initiations, meditation, prayer, music etc or other aspects of human culturereligion. Heelas and Woodhead (2005) who wrote The Spiritual Revolution perceive a distinction between religion and spirituality: religion stands for 'life as', supporting traditional social structures and a transcendent God as central to these. Spirituality, on the other hand is 'life is', which is oriented towards a subjective life, individual growth and development and a holistic worldview (Fedele and Knibbe 2013; Heelas and Woodhead 2005).

## Religion and Mental Health

In the ancient and Medieval world, the etymologically Latin root '*religio*' was understand as an individual virtue of worship, never as doctrine, practices, or actual source of knowledge, but in modern concept of 'religion' as an abstraction which entail distinct set of belief or doctrine. The origin of religion is uncertain. The association between religious involvement and spiritually, and physical health, mental health, health related quality of life and other health outcomes. In research on young people (ages 16-30), it has been noted that involvement in religious groups can provide important personal relationships and enhance senses of belonging (Hopkins et al. 2011 and Sharma & Guest 2013). Most studies

have shown that religious involvement and spirituality areas sociates with better health outcomes, including greater longevity, coping skills and health related quality of life and less anxiety, depression and suicide. Inglehart and Norris (2004) observed that during times of displacement, relocation, rapid change, economic collapse and hardship, religiosity and churchgoing can persist and provide many with a sense of security. In a study by Ellison (1983: 330), he found that "self-esteem and spiritual wellbeing were positively related," and showed that those "with a more internalized and intimate relationship with God not only had higher religious well-being but also higher overall spiritual well-being". One spiritual pathway that has been shown to reduce stress and related symptoms in war survivors is meditation on a word or phrase with spiritual significance (sometimes called a mantra) (Bormann, J. E., T. L. Smith, S. Becker, M. Gershwin, L. Pada, A. H. Grudzinski, and E. A. Nurmi, 2005). Reduced levels of anxiety associated with spiritual activity have also been found in other populations, including Medical patients in later life, women with breast cancer, middle aged people with cardiac problems and those recovering from spinal surgery (Koenig, H. G., D. O. Moberg, and J. N. Kvale, 1988; Baider, L., and M. Sarell, 1983; Ai, A. L., C. Peterson, T. N. Tice, S. F. Bolling, and H. G. Koenig, 2004; Hodges, S. D., S. C. Humphreys, and J. C. Eck, 2002). Yoga and meditation are also associated with improvements in mental health and reductions in anxiety in the qualitative literature. Despite this, there has been little quantitative research examining the association between yoga/meditation and anxiety. A recent systematic review found eight studies that specifically explored the impact of yoga on anxiety and concluded that although the results were encouraging, the extent of the methodological inadequacies meant that further research was necessary (Kirkwood, G., H. Rampes, V. Tuffrey, J. Richardson, and K. Pilkington, 2005). Individuals who share the same religious values as their family, religiosity can be a cohesive and supporting factor (Ukst-Margetic, B., and B. Margetic, 2005). Others have found that people with schizophrenia find hope, meaning and comfort in spiritual beliefs and practices (Mohr, S., and P. Huguelet, 2004; Kirkpatrick, H., J. Landeen, H. Woodside, and C. Byrne, 2001; Weisman, A. G., 2000).

**Objective of the Study**

1. To access the gender difference in religious values of science stream students.
2. To assess the gender differences in religious values of arts stream students.
3. To assess the difference in religious values of science and arts stream students.

**Hypothesis**

1. There will be significant difference in religious values of science stream students.
2. There will be significant difference in religious values of arts stream students.
3. There will be significant difference in religious values of science and arts stream students.

**Sample**

For present research a total sample of 48 has been taken. Among these 24 students are of science (12 males and 12 females) and 24 students of arts (12 males and 12 females) from different schools of Jammu.

**Variables**

**Independent Variable**

- Education
- Gender

**Dependent Variable**

- Religion

**Tool**

**Religious Value Test** developed by Tripathi

- Religious value scale contains 40 statements. Every statement has two alternative responses "Yes" and "No". A very simple procedure of scoring is there. For each item marked with response yes is given the weightage of 1 otherwise 0. Sum of total represented the religious value score.

**Statistical Analysis**

In this study t-test was used for statistical analysis.

**Results and discussion**

The gender difference in religious value among science stream students was found to be significant as shown in table 1 given below. The mean and standard deviation of the male student is 24.38 and 3.39 and for female students is 32.38 and 3.87 and T-value is 7.332, which indicates that the outcome is significant.

**Table -1**

**Table given below shows mean scores, standard deviations and t-ratio for gender difference in religious value among science stream students**

S. No.	Samples	N	Mean	S.D	t-ratios
1	Male (science)	24	24.38	3.69	7.332
	Female (science)	24	32.38	3.87	

Table-2 shows the gender difference in religious value among arts stream students was found to be significant. The mean and standard deviation of the male student is 30.88 and 4.34 and for female students is 26.77 and 5.17 and T-value is 2.59, which indicates that the outcome is significant.

**Table -2**

**Table given below shows mean scores, standard deviations and t-ratio for gender difference in religious value among arts stream students**

S. No.	Samples	N	Mean	S.D	t-ratios
1	Male (arts)	24	30.88	4.34	2.59
	Female (arts)	24	26.77	5.17	

Same was calculated among students of science and arts stream and was found to be significant as shown in table 3 given below. The mean and standard deviation of the male student is 27.42 and 3.86 and for female students is 29.33 and 6.72 and T-value is 1.212, which indicates that the outcome is significant.

**Table -3**

**Table given below shows mean scores, standard deviations and t-ratio for students of science and arts stream**

S. No.	Samples	N	Mean	S.D	t-ratios
1	Science	24	27.42	3.86	1.212
	Arts	24	29.33	6.72	

A recent ethnographic study of campus religious life (Cherry, DeBerg, & Porterfield, 2001) reached this provocative conclusion: "It is possible that young people in American culture have never been more enthusiastically engaged in religious practice or with religious ideas" (pp, 294-5). The study's findings question decades of research showing a negative effect of attending college on students' religious beliefs and practice (Bowen, 1997; Feldman & Newcome, 1969; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991), and suggest that the trend toward the "secularization of the academy" lamented by some scholars (Burtchell, 1998; Butler, 1989; Marsden, 1994; Sloan, 1994) may be in check. Other recent empirical evidence (Foster & LaForce, 1999; Lee, 2000, 2002a, 2002b; Ohme, 2002) supports the contention that students' religious development may in fact be strengthened by certain collegiate experiences. This renewed religious engagement among collegians is reflective of a broader social trend in American culture. The data are drawn from interviews and observations conducted in 1994 and 1995 in 32 early childhood settings (27 preschools, 5 child care centres) in Tokyo and the Kansai area, which includes the major cities of Osaka and Kobe, Japan. The Japanese are sometimes described in Western writing as a nonreligious people. But it is more accurate to say that Japanese people express religiosity in a way that differs from that of Americans. Japanese appear more willing to mix and match religions, often invoking Shinto at birth and marriage, and Buddhism when faced with death.

#### **Conclusion**

In present study it was found that there is significant gender difference in religious values of science students and it was also found that there is significant gender difference in religious values of arts students. Lastly it was found to be significant difference in religious values of science and arts stream students.

#### **Limitations**

There was certain limitation which was found under this study.

First one is the sample, size it consisted only 48 participants which may not be a representative of the of given schools. Sample data may increase for further researches as generalization is not possible in case quantitative work. Age bar was also limited.

#### **Suggestion for Further Work**

Following suggestions can be follow for further studies:

The sample of the study can be increased and can be done on large scale. Other age groups can also be taken into consideration. The present study can further be done on a large sample of students from other various areas and institutions.

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