The Influence of Faith on the Psychosocial Well-Being of Mexican Americans

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MCNAIR SCHOLARS PROGRAM
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Introduction

- Religiosity

- Currently, 90% of the global population is involved in some form of religious or spiritual practice (Barrett & Johnson, 2001).

- Latinos constitute the single largest minority population in the USA (Garcia & Ellison & Sunil, 2013).
Present Study

- Examine the relationship Faith Salience and Religious Behaviors have to six dimensions of psychological well-being and five dimensions of social well-being.
Hypotheses

- Positive correlation exists between well-being and faith.

- Participants born in Mexico will have lower levels of well-being than participants born in the United States.

- Female participants will have higher levels of well-being than male participants.
Literature Review

- Social Engagement Theory
- Religious Attendance
- Private Prayer
- Faith and Physical Well-Being
- Faith and Suffering
- Men vs. Women/Place of Birth
Methodology

- 137 participants
- All participants of Mexican descent
- Self-report questionnaires
- Procedures
- Measures
Measures

- Religious Behavior Measure (RBM)
- Faith Salience Measure (FSM)
- Psychological Well-Being Measure (PWB)
- Social Well-Being Measure (SWB)
Results

- Correlations – test relationships between faith salience, religious behaviors and each dimension of well-being
- T-test – U.S. born vs. Mexico born
  - Male vs. Female
Results/Discussion

- Negative relationships to Faith Salience
  - Autonomy
  - Environmental Mastery
  - Social Acceptance

- Negative Relationships to Religious Behavior
  - Social Actualization
  - Social Integration

- Positive Relationships to Religious Behavior
  - Autonomy
Results/Discussion cont’d

- **Well-Being by Place of Birth**

  Mean Scores of PWB by Place of Birth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>Mean Scores of PWB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>85.3462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>75.3043</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Religious Behavior by Gender**

  Mean Scores of RBM by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean Scores of RBM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>74.5741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>122.5676</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Limitations

- Self-report
  - Underreport
  - Truthfulness

- 18-item version of PWB
  - Not as statistically reliable

- Socio-economic status
  - Possible explanation for our findings?
Future Direction

- Examine this relationship while controlling for socio-economic status
- Test this relationship among other ethnic groups
Conclusion

- Purpose of study

- Five negative relationships, one positive

- Found that higher levels of faith were related to lower levels of well-being

- U.S. born participants report higher levels of well-being
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