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The Effects of Religiosity on Near and Distant Possible Selves and Goals

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Honours Psychology Thesis
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Abstract

The effects of religiosity on goals and decision-making remain poorly understood. Essentially, motivation guides one's goals, and therefore, it is necessary to understand what motivates people. This study looks to investigate further, the role of religiosity as a motivational factor in determining goals and decision-making processes. A survey was used to gather data on 51 female undergraduate students from Brescia University College. Students were enrolled in a first year introduction to psychology class and participated by completing a package of focused scales and questionnaires regarding religiosity, ideology, goals and decision-making. Data was gathered and analyzed using a series of linear regressions to determine the predictive value of religiosity. The results displayed a significant regression equation between religiosity and goals, ideology, and spirituality as well as between spirituality and ideology. Results can be interpreted to show that the more religious one is, the more predictive it is that one will be spiritual, conservative, and family goal-oriented.

The Effects of Religiosity on Near and Distant Possible Selves and Goals

Human beings are complex, varying vastly person to person. However, there are notable psychological similarities between people, which can follow a particular pattern. Identifying these specific similarities and patterns will bring significant insight into understanding and predicting behaviour (Snygg, 1949). One of the complex adaptations of human behaviour is motivation (White, 1959). Essentially, motivation guides one's goals (Toure-Tillery & Fishbach, 2011), and therefore this goal-formulating process is a topic of great interest among many psychologists. Goals can be of different nature, but can be simply divided into immediate (near) or long-term (distant) goals (Brown & Diekmann, 2010). Possible selves can be defined as how one ideally envisions oneself in the future and can also be divided into near and distant (Brown & Diekmann, 2010). In a study conducted by Brown and Diekmann, two complementary theories were identified to predict possible selves. These theories were social role theory and role congruency theory (Brown & Diekmann, 2010). They believe that the underlying motivation that guides all goals (Toure-Tillery & Fishbach, 2011) is based on the gender expectancies underlying these theories (Brown & Diekmann, 2010). Social role theory broadly states that self-representation is directly linked to the gender expectancies set by society (Eagly, Wood & Diekmann, 2000). Role congruity theory predicts a set of positive feelings that accompany gender role fluency and negative feelings when stereotyped gender roles are broken (Diekmann & Goodfriend, 2006). Both help in identifying specific similarities between groups of people (Snygg, 1949). These theories represent an approach-avoidant motivational schema, later discussed in detail, as predicted by Elliot & Covington (2001), where people should feel motivated to approach role congruent selves, and are motivated to avoid role incongruent selves. The two major findings of Brown and Diekmann's study concluded that participants showed

gender differences predicted by the social role theory in future possible selves, but not near selves, and that both genders hoped for role-congruent selves and feared role-incongruent selves (Brown & Diekman, 2010). Although there was a difference between distant possible selves, it was a small difference, and there was variation within genders (Brown & Diekman, 2010). This study was conducted nearly seven years ago, and gender norms are increasingly being revised, which is now evident to many theorists (Haddock & Bowling, 2002). They constantly need to update themselves with new literature regarding gender biases and norms (Haddock & Bowling, 2002). Therefore, using gender as means to predict behaviour will often be unsuccessful (Haddock & Bowling, 2002). On the contrary, gender norms presented in scripture and the doctrines of any particular religion have not been changed (Durkheim, 1994). According to Durkheim, all religion shares three components which guide behaviour: “a meaning for life,” “authority figures,” and reinforcement of “the morals and social norms held collectively by all within a society” (Durkheim, 1994). Because religion dates back to the beginning of human experience (Lash, 1996), current views and norms are not accurately reflected in the inner workings of religion. Traditional religious norms have women remaining in the home and focused on ‘family’ while men are the ‘breadwinners’ and focused on ‘careers’ in order to support the family economically (Brown & Diekman, 2010). Although many people in society have diverged from the social norms and set morals of the past (Haddock & Bowling, 2002), components of religion presented by Durkheim have not (Lash, 1996). Consequently, it is possible that people who practice strong religious beliefs are more likely to maintain these traditional ideologies resulting in forming different possible selves or goals (Vaidyanathan et al., 2011).

Religion is a multidimensional phenomenon that has deep roots in history and evidently

plays a significant role in guiding human behaviour (Alavi, 2013). An important component of religion is the ideologies it holds as true. These ideologies are the bases of a person's religious beliefs, and therefore understanding them will aid in developing a philosophy on the interaction of religiosity and behaviour (Desmond & Kraus, 2014). A study conducted by Vaidyanathan, Hill & Smith confirmed the large influence religiosity ideologies have on information processing and goals (2011). They suggest that the level of participation one devotes to religion directly predicts numerous behaviours and beliefs such as political preference (Vaidyanathan, Hill & Smith, 2011). The relationship between religion and political ideology is examined, in a correlation between religion and conservatism in which is mediated by practice (Vaidyanathan et al., 2011). Therefore, the more one is motivated to practice a religion (Toure-Tillery & Fishbach, 2011), the more likely they are to also believe in a conservative ideology (Vaidyanathan et al., 2011). An exception here lies with the extremely spiritual religions such as Buddhism, and people who classify as purely spiritual (Garces-Foley, 2006). The differences arise in the nature of the beliefs, with spirituality revolving around truth and authenticity, and religions around strict doctrines (Garces-Foley, 2006). Differences between the two can be seen when comparing ideologies (Vaidyanathan et al., 2011). Their motivations differ and therefore so will their goals (Toure-Tillery & Fishbach, 2011), resulting in the difference in political ideologies that were identified (Vaidyanathan et al., 2011). In order to understand the resulting differences and relationships, it is essential to understand the core values of religion, spirituality, conservatives, and liberals. By looking at current ideological issues in the society, there is a trend between conservative notions and religions, even when there is a majority push the other way (Olson, Cadge & Harrison, 2006). In this context, religion refers to the common factors across the major religions. Similar opinions on controversial, important issues including same-sex marriage

(Olson et al., 2006), ambivalent sexism (Christopher & Mull, 2006), and abortion (Clements, 2015) have been consistently agreed upon within the conservative and religious ideologies. The correlation between two is due to the moral guidelines provided by the religious doctrines (Garces-Foley, 2006) and the traditional conservative stances (Clements, 2015). This supports the finding that conservatism is supported by increased participation in religion (Vaidyanathan et al., 2011) due to the strengthening of ties to the religious doctrines. This leads to the conclusion that someone who is spiritual, and guided by truth and authenticity (Garces-Foley, 2006), will most likely identify with liberal ideologies in opposition to the opinions supported by the conservative ideology. This may simply be because they are unaffected by the doctrines a religion holds (Garces-Foley, 2006). This logic stands true for someone who is non-religious. Religion supports tradition, and therefore a conservative ideology (Hirsh, DeYoung, Xu & Peterson, 2010). Spirituality supports equality, and therefore a liberal ideology (Hirsh et al., 2010). Although there is extensive research on motivation and goals, there is still a significant research gap in understanding what role a person's religiosity plays.

Understanding the interaction of religion and behaviour appears to be best understood by looking at a third component, motivation (Toure-Tillery & Fishbach, 2011). Sherratt & MacLeod found that when compared, people who were not depressed and people who were depressed didn't differ in their actual goals, but differed in the underlying motivation (Sherratt & MacLeod, 2013). This suggests that interaction between motivation and goal formulations is not as clear-cut as once believed (Toure-Tillery & Fishbach, 2011). It was found that that when an individual's motivation was coded as 'avoidance' or 'approach' motivation, there was a significant difference between the depressed and non-depressed individuals (Sherratt & MacLeod, 2013). This signifies that motivation has a multifaceted relationship to goal setting (Toure-Tillery &

Fishbach, 2011). Approach motivation can be defined as a strong pull towards a certain outcome and in contrast, avoidance motivation can be best described as a strong push away from an undesired outcome (Elliot & Covinton, 2001). Using this knowledge, religion can be understood as both avoidance and approach motivation, also noted above. For example, Muslims determine behaviour using the moral code of Halāl and Haram which when translated means “permitted,” therefore coded as approach motivation, and “forbidden,” therefore coded as avoidance motivation (Halstead, 2007). All religions have a strict moral code entrenched in their scripture which is translated to real life circumstances to promote ‘correct’ behaviour. An example of this is a religion’s moral reasoning applied to traditional education (Alavi, 2013). For example, Islamic opinions on education are interpreted through the scripture of the Qur’an as a search for truth, growth, and ‘real’ knowledge, not as a means to benefit for personal gain (Alavi, 2013). Confirmation of the assimilation of these beliefs into the real world was found in a study assessing the effect of higher education on religiosity in general (Schwadel, 2015). They predicted that the importance schools in post-secondary education places on science would result in a decrease of religiosity among post-secondary school because of the direct opposition science has to the fundamental beliefs of many religions (Schwadel, 2015). The study supported their predictions, results showing low levels of religiosity reported in people who had obtained university degrees, and that particularly religious states suffered from a negative decline in religiosity due to increased enrolment in university (Schwadel, 2015). It appears that avoidant motivation guides religious students. It guides them away from the contradictory beliefs held by the schools, and as a result, there tend to be fewer strongly religious students in post secondary education (Elliot & Covinton, 2001). This shows the impact religiosity can have on real life motivation and goals.

In addition to the effect religion has on motivation and goals, people of religion have also demonstrated a different manner of formulating decisions than those who are classified as non-religious or spiritual (McCormack, Brinkley-Rubinstein & Craven, 2014). The understanding behind the differences in processes is relatively weak, but it is understood that it may be resulting from different motivational drives (Elliot & Covinton, 2001), moral doctrines held (Durkheim, 1994), or possible selves (Brown & Diekman, 2010). Likely it is an interaction between multiple factors (McCormack et al., 2014). McCormack, Brinkley-Rubinstein & Craven (2014) researched decision-making in the work place and found a strong correlation between an employees goal formulation perspective used and their religion. In congruence with the logic behind Vaidyanathan, Hill & Smith's conclusion linking religious practice to behaviour and beliefs, it was found that people who practiced prayer and other religious behaviour were more likely to form a "heterodox" view when formulating an answer to a problem (McCormack et al., 2014). A "heterodox" view is when a person relies on their own personal outlooks evolving from experiences, morals, and beliefs as their primary guidance (McCormack et al., 2014). Using this knowledge, during the task of formulating a decision such as a possible self or a goal, a religious person would be more likely to call upon their personal beliefs arising from the three components of religion in which direct their behaviour (Durkheim, 1994) as a guide to an outcome. In addition, Desmond & Kraus discuss the correlation between strong moral beliefs and the participation in and importance of religion (2014). If one is commonly participating and demonstrating the importance of a religion by regularly attending church or services, they are more likely to develop and display the moral guidelines provided to them accordingly (Desmond & Kraus 2014).

Motivation can also guide behaviour through the 'dimension' a goal presents (Toure-

Tillery & Fishbach, 2011). If one is motivated purely by their desire to achieve a goal then they hold an ‘outcome-focused dimension’. If a person is driven by their desire to ‘do things right’ to achieve a goal then they hold a ‘means-focused dimension’ (Toure-Tillery & Fishbach, 2011). The ‘means-focused dimension’ relates back to the “heterodox” view in that there is an emphasis on what is right and it differs for each person (McCormack et al., 2014). It was found that the ‘means-focused dimension’ typically follows a U-shape pattern with the greatest dedication at the beginning formulation and the end goal (Toure-Tillery & Fishbach, 2011). Thus, it is more likely for people who classify as highly religious by means of church attendance (Desmond & Kraus 2014), and participation (Vaidyanathan et al., 2011) to use their ideological values while making decisions (McCormack et al., 2014) throughout the whole process and be correctly identified as having “heterodox” views. This is also supported through the approach and avoidance theory of motivation by understanding the decision making process as either attempting to approach the right decision as defined by ones religion, or the attempt to avoid breaking any rules set by the religion (Elliot & Covinton, 2001). If this approach-avoidance schema serves as ones motivation, logically a “heterodox” view would be undertaken due to its personal nature (McCormack et al., 2014). Because the nature of spirituality, revolves around truth and authenticity as opposed to strict doctrines surrounding religion (Garces-Foley, 2006), it is likely presumed that one classified as spiritual would not follow the same patterns as someone classified as religious (McCormack et al., 2014). Other decision-making views include “orthodox”, which utilizes a scientific method through appropriate research in developing an understanding, and “integrated” which is essentially a mix of both “orthodox” and “integrated”, varying depending on the situation (McCormack et al., 2014). The conceptual differences in the ideologies and values any particular religion puts forth is quite small in the general sense

proposed by Durkheim. It appears the main differences lie between the ideologies of people who are religious, non-religious, or purely spiritual and this is what needs to be further researched in order to understand goal formulation.

Looking at and measuring religiosity is in itself difficult, particularly because of its complex nature. As a result, many scales, questionnaires, and experimental designs have been developed to measure its different dimensions. However, there are many conflicting findings due to inaccurate definitions, low-validity categories, and numerous other reasons. One must either be careful in choosing the correct scale in order to accurately measure exactly what is intending to be measured, or one must develop and enhance previous attempts that do not perfectly match intended dimensions. Keeping this in mind, evaluation of the Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS-10; Huber & Huber, 2012) proves itself to be a valuable way of measuring levels of religiosity. Specifically, it measures a person's relationship to a religious doctrine by evaluating its "centrality" in one's life, and its "importance or salience" with comparison to other aspects of one's life (Huber & Huber, 2012). This scale is well established and used commonly across different fields of study as well as in many different contexts (Huber & Huber, 2012). It is five dimensional, meaning it takes into account what Huber & Huber consider the five determining factors on level of religiosity (Huber & Huber, 2012). Importantly, one of the five factors is ideology (Huber & Huber, 2012), which has been made clear is an important aspect of motivation and goals (Durkheim, 1994). Secondly, the NonReligious – NonSpiritual Scale (NRNS; Cragun, Hammer, Nielsen, 2015) provides excellent definitions of dimensions being measured and has been adequately tested for validity (Cragun et al., 2015). Specifically, it was created as a solution to the lack of measures accurately able to distinguish religious from nonreligious, and spiritual from nonspiritual (Cragun et al., 2015). It demonstrates "high internal

consistency” as well as “high test-retest reliability” in determining a person’s level of religious, spiritual or lack of beliefs (Cragun et al., 2015). It differentiated itself from other tests by clearly identifying religion as institutional, and spiritual as individualistic, and therefore minimizing the misrepresentations otherwise assumed (Cragun et al., 2015). Ideally, it is a 17-item scale with simple coding instructions (Cragun et al., 2015), making it ideal to use in an undergraduate thesis. In contrast, near and distant future selves are a newer field within psychology, and therefore, the readily developed scales are limited. In “What Will I Be? Exploring Gender Differences in Near and Distant Possible Selves” by Elizabeth Brown and Amanda Diekman, two separate studies were conducted. In the first study, they used coding to identify the key words the participant used in an open-ended list, instructing them to pinpoint their top eight near and top eight distant selves (Brown & Diekman, 2010). These would be coded into career-oriented selves or family-oriented selves (Brown & Diekman, 2010). In their second study, they developed a questionnaire in which the participants rated the certainty of a particular future self (Brown & Diekman, 2010). Both these methods resulted in similar findings, however, the questionnaire utilized in study two proved to be less subjective (Brown & Diekman, 2010). Similarly, the study “Intuition, Prayer, and Managerial Decision Making Processes: a religious based framework” by McCormack, Brinkley-Rubinstein & Craven avoided the use of scales, instead implementing a case-study approach in order to understand the differences in decision-making (McCormack et al., 2014). This strategy was used in order to obtain a large amount of detail about the participants being studied and resulted in a complex understanding of people on a case-by-case basis, however correlational insight between cases was difficult to determine (McCormack et al., 2014). Interestingly, due to the lack of information on “orthodox”, “heterodox”, and “integrated” decision-making, there are virtually no valid scales available.

Many have been constructed but have yet to be adequately tested or differ by definition on one or more of the features being tested. It seems as though there is a common theme between studies. Finding an appropriate measurement for the different dimensions within their study is essential to accurately collect and analyze findings. However, research is incomplete in multiple areas, and the development of new scales is needed.

Many differences between people who are religious, nonreligious, or spiritual have been presented throughout previous studies. Of particular interest are the differences in decision-making (McCormack et al., 2014), political preferences (Vaidyanathan et al., 2011) and possible selves (Brown & Diekmann, 2010) because they all, as previously mentioned, play an important role in devising goals. Although the exact mechanism between interactions of motivation and ideologies is unknown, research gives us insight on the correlations to expect in different situations. Inevitably, it is still largely unknown if these aspects of decision-making applied to the findings of religiosity can be assumed valid. More research needs to be done.

In the current study, the effect of religiosity on near and distant possible selves and goals was addressed. Near and distant selves were classified in terms of career-oriented or family-oriented, similarly to Brown & Diekmann's study in 2010, and decision-making was evaluated based on criteria from McCormack & Brinkley-Runinstein's 2014 study creating "heterodox", "orthodox", and "integrated" categories. In addition to religiosity, measured by the CRS-10 (Huber & Huber, 2012), spirituality and nonreligious was measured, using the NRNSS (Cragun et al., 2015). In attempt to fill current gaps in research, this study used only female participants and expands on findings from both Brown & Diekmann's study (2010), and McCormack & Brinkley-Runinstein's study (2014). By eliminating a variable (gender), it allowed a more comprehensive and in depth understanding on the specific mechanisms that guide decisions and

goals. Directed from the assumption that motivation truly guides goals (Toure-Tillery & Fishbach, 2011), it was hypothesized that:

1. Spiritual people, such as those who classify as Buddhist, or that are non-religious will identify with liberal goals and values, whereas those who are classified as highly religious will identify with more conservative ideologies in both near and distant goals.
2. The goals of religious students will be more heterodox in nature, with a greater importance on family goals.
3. Those who simply identify with a religion or are non-religious will be attending school primarily in order to build a career, whereas those who are highly religious will be there to gain knowledge for its own sake.

More specifically, it was predicted that those who scored high on the NRNSS (Cragun et al., 2015; see appendix B) or who identified as non-religious on the Background Information Questionnaire (see appendix A) would identify with career oriented goals in both their near and distant selves by agreeing with more career oriented questions on the Family-Career Scale (FCS; see appendix F). Those who scored high on the CRS-10 (Huber & Huber, 2012; see appendix C) would score higher on the Social and Economic Conservative Scale (SECS; Everett, 2013; see appendix D) and appendix A of the Liberal and Conservative Political Scale (LCPAS; Chawke, 2016; see appendix E), which both measure one's conservative-liberal ideological preference. Students who scored high on the CRS-10 (Huber & Huber, 2012) (see appendix C) will also show "heterodox" decision-making views on the Orthodox, Heterodox, and Integrated Decision Making Questionnaire (OHIDMQ; see appendix G) and the How Good is Your Decision-Making (HGYDMQ; MindTools, 2016; see appendix H), and prove themselves to be interested in school to gain knowledge for its own sake by their

responses on the FCS (see appendix F). In opposition, students who score low on the CRS-10 (Huber & Huber, 2012; see appendix C) religious scale will show their interest in a career and identify with school as a life or career stepping-stone through the FCS (see appendix F).

Method

Participants

Participants included 51 female undergraduate students at Brescia University College enrolled in an introductory psychology class. Participants were recruited using the SONA sign-up system and received one credit for participation. There were 27 (52.94%) participants who self-identified as Christian/Catholic, 17 (33.33%) who self-identified as non-religious/Agnostic/Atheist, 3 (5.88%) who self-identified as Islamic, 1 (1.96%) who self-identified as Hindu, 1 (1.96%) participant who self-identified as Vietnamese, 1 (1.96%) who identified as Jain, and 1 (1.96%) participant who self-identified as Pagan. The average age of participants was 17.6 years old.

Materials

All participants were given a letter of information to initial, and an informed consent form to sign, date and return. Following, a paper package consisting of three questionnaires and four scales in the order presented was administered, and participants were given the remaining 20 minutes to complete it. A Background Information Questionnaire (see Appendix A) including six questions regarding information on age, education, and religious identification was first. Second was The NonReligious-NonSpiritual Scale (NRNS; Cragun, Hammer, Nielson, 2015), a 8-item Likert scale used to assess the participant's level of spirituality from 1 Strongly Agree to 5 Strongly Disagree. Third, The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS-15) (Huber & Huber, 2012), a 10-item scale used to assess participant's level of religiosity from 1 (Several Times a Day,

Absolutely, or Most Important) to 7 (Never, Absolutely Not, or No Interest). Following included both The Social and Economic Conservative Scale (SECS; Everett, 2013) and Appendix A of the Liberal and Conservative Political Scale (LCPAS; Chawke, 2016) to gauge participant's ideology as liberal or conservative. The SECS is a 12-item scale asking participants to rate their feelings on an issue from 0 (negative) to 100 (positive) (Everett, 2013), and the LCPAS is a Likert scale asking participants for their opinions on 14 statements using 1 (Strongly Agree) to 7 (Strongly Disagree) (Chawke, 2016). An original scale called The Family vs. Career Scale (FCS; see Appendix B) followed, and included a series of eleven statements asking participants to rate their feelings towards an issue on a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 7 (Strongly Disagree). This allowed for participant identification as career-or-family goal-focused. Following was the Orthodox Vs. Heterodox Vs. Integrated Questionnaire (OHIQ; see Appendix C), a 5-item original questionnaire asking participants to select a scenario out of three options in which they believed most ideal for solving a problem. Lastly, in addition, The Orthodox, Heterodox, and Integrated Decision-Making Questionnaire (OHIDMQ; MindTools, 2016), a 20-item questionnaire, was used to assess participant's decision-making style. After participants' package was collected, a debriefing document was handed out outlining the purpose of the study, hypotheses, further reading, and researcher contact information. Package materials were statistically analyzed using multiple linear regressions using IBM SPSS.

Procedure

Once participants were recruited through the SONA website, they signed up for available time slots to complete a participant package. A maximum of two participants were allowed per time slot, and each were instructed to meet at the front door of the Ursuline Hall building during a specified meeting time. Upon arriving to the Ursuline Hall foyer, participants were directed up

to the PURL Study Room where two places were set up for participants with pens and the letter of information. After allowing them to read and initial the bottom of the two pages, they were given a consent form and instructed to sign and date if they would like to continue with the study. Following collection of the completed consent form they were given a stapled, paper package of the questionnaires and scales previously listed, reminded of the time remaining in their time slot, and told to ask researcher if they had any questions. Lastly, subjects returned their completed package and in return were given the debriefing document, thanked for their participation, and granted their credit through the SONA website.

Results

Religiosity ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.08$), spirituality ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 1.11$), goal-focus ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.67$), ideology ($M = 55.16$, $SD = 12.40$) and decision-making strategies were identified in participants ($N = 51$). The correlations between variables can be seen in Table 1. Eleven participants were classified by the CRS-15 as highly religious ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.32$), 35 participants were classified as religious ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 0.68$), and 5 participants were classified as non-religious ($M = 1.62$, $SD = 0.39$). There were 27 (52.94%) participants who self-identified as Christian/Catholic, 17 (33.33%) self-identified as non-religious/Agnostic/Atheist, 3 (5.88%) self-identified as Muslim, 1 (1.96%) self-identified as Hindu, 1 (1.96%) self-identified as Vietnamese, 1 (1.96%) participant identified as Jain, and 1 (1.96%) participant self-identified as Pagan.

Religiosity vs. Spirituality

A linear regression was conducted to evaluate the predictive value of religiosity on spirituality scores (see Figure 1), and a significant correlation was found, $r(50) = .80$, $p < .001$.

Table 1

Correlations between Religiosity and Spirituality with Criterion Variables

Measure	Spirituality	Religiosity	Ideology	Goals	Decision-Making
Spirituality	-	.64**	.44**	-	-
Religiosity	.64**	-	.44**	.45**	.04*

Note. $n = 51$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .001$.

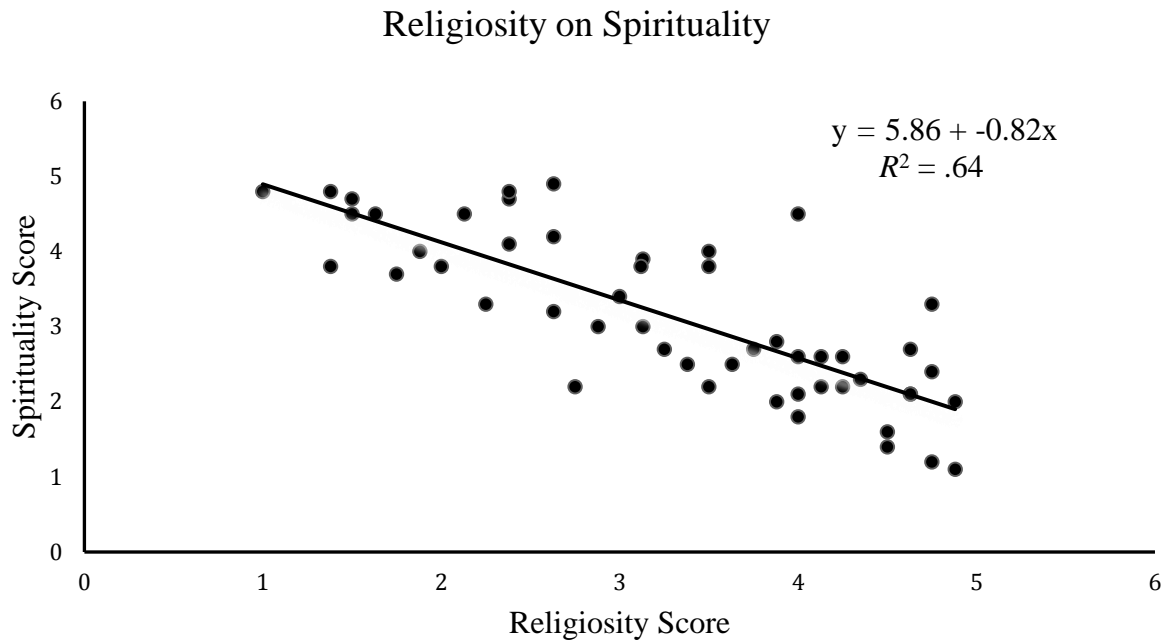


Figure 1. Correlation between Religiosity and Spirituality scores. Higher religiosity (higher Religiosity scores) correlated with high spirituality (lower Spirituality scores).

Religiosity scores accounted for a significant amount of variance in spirituality scores, $F(1, 49) = 85.13, p < .001$. The analysis shows 64% of the variance in spirituality scores is due to the participant's level of religiosity, $R^2 = .64$. With every 1.00 score increase on the religiosity scale, there is a .82 score decrease in spirituality, $\beta = -.82, p < .001$.

Religiosity vs. Ideology

A linear regression analysis revealed that religiosity was a significant predictor of ideological scores, $R^2 = .44, F(1, 49) = 39.90, p < .001$ (see Figure 2), accounting for 44% of the variance in liberal/conservative scores. As predicted, a positive relationship was identified. With every 1.00 score increase on the religiosity scale, there was a 7.71 score increase in ideological scores, $\beta = 7.71, p < .001$.

Spirituality vs. Ideology

A linear regression was conducted to analyze the predictive value of spirituality on ideology (see Figure 3). Similar to the results found regarding religiosity and ideology, the analysis revealed that spirituality score was a significant predictor of ideological score, accounting for 44% of variance in ideology, $R^2 = .44, F(1, 49) = 38.99, p < .001$. Unstandardized beta values indicated a 7.41 score decrease in ideological scores with every 1.00 increase in spirituality scores, $\beta = -.741, p < .001$.

Religiosity vs. Goals

A linear regression was calculated to predict goal scores based on religiosity (see Figure 4). It revealed that 45% of variance in goal scores is accounted for by religiosity, $R^2 = .45, F(1, 49) = 23.40, p < .001$. Goal score decreased by .35 for each 1.00 score increase participants received on the religiosity scale, $\beta = -.35, p < .001$,

Religiosity vs. Decision-Making

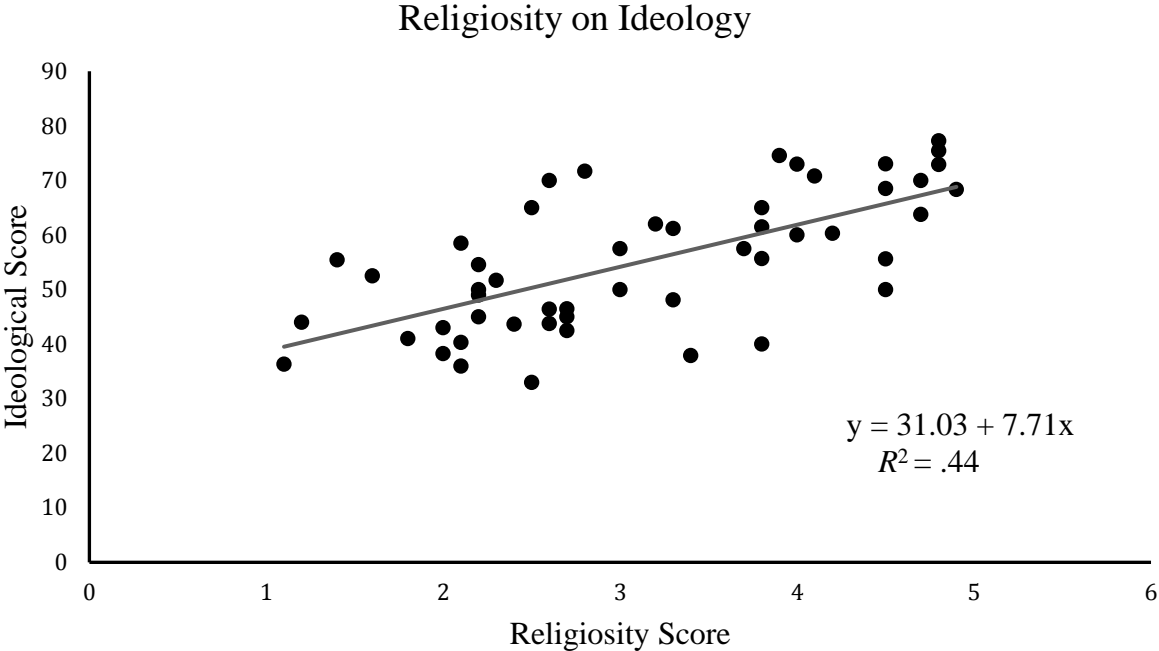


Figure 2. Correlation between Religiosity and Ideological scores. Higher religiosity (higher Religiosity scores) correlated with a more conservative ideology (higher Ideological scores).

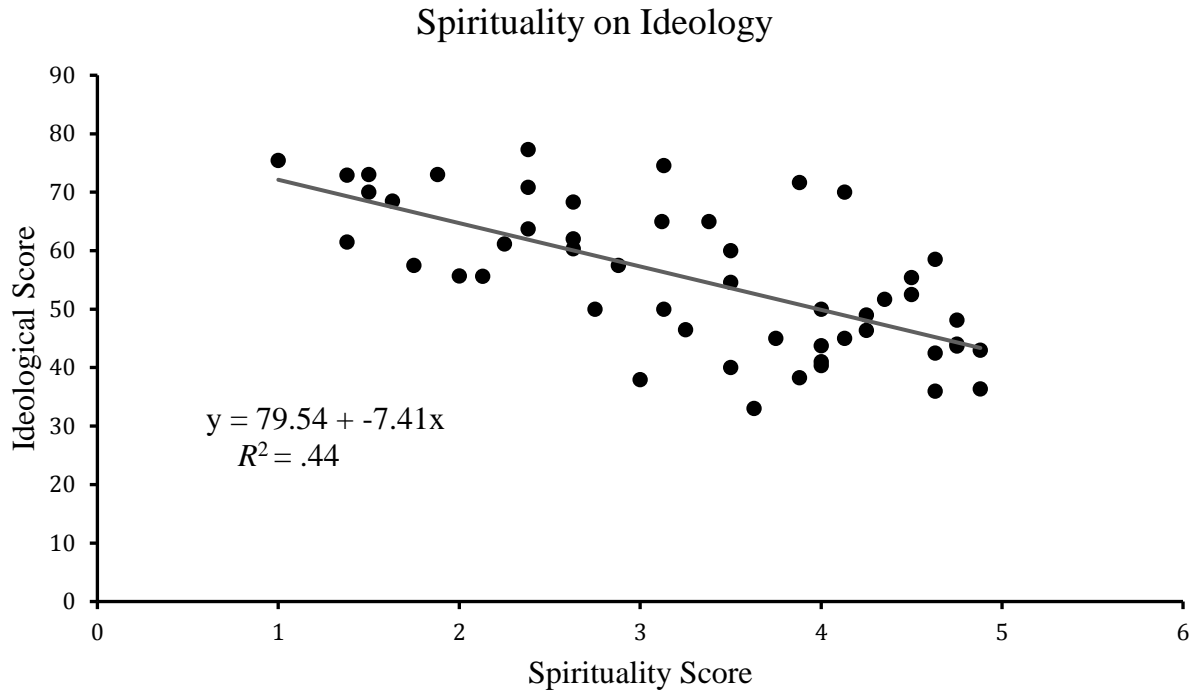


Figure 3. Correlation between Spirituality and Ideological scores. Higher spirituality (lower Spirituality scores) correlated with a more conservative ideology (higher Ideological scores).

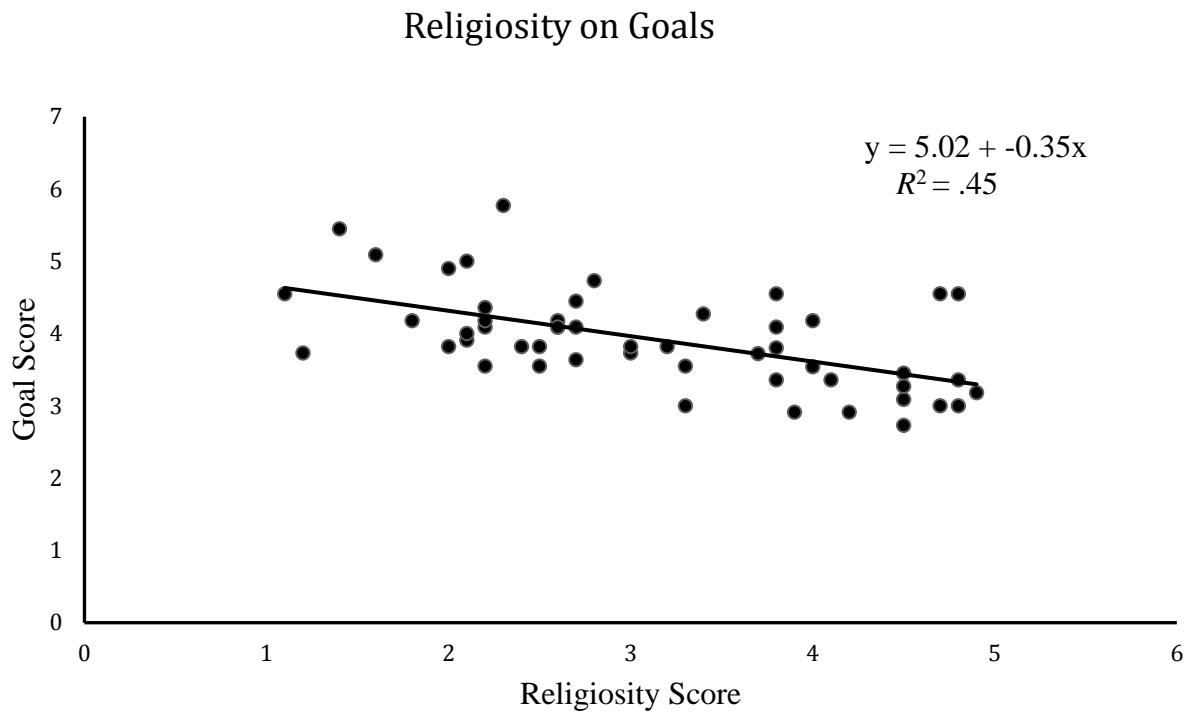


Figure 4. Correlation between Religiosity and Goal scores. Higher religiosity (higher Religiosity scores) correlated with family-oriented goals (lower Goal scores).

A linear regression was conducted to evaluate the prediction of religiosity on decision-making (see Figure 5). The correlation revealed was not significant, $r(50) = .30, p = .035$. Religiosity, accounted for 9% of variance in the spirituality scores, $R^2 = .09, F(1, 49) = 85.13, p = .04$. With every one point increase on the religiosity measure, participants showed a 2.19 score decrease in decision-making scores, $\beta = -2.19, p = .04$.

Discussion

This study aimed to evaluate the effects religiosity plays on near and distant possible selves and goals. Firstly, it was hypothesized that spiritual people, such as those who classify as Buddhist, or that are non-religious will identify with liberal goals and values, whereas those who are classified as highly religious will identify with more conservative ideologies in both near and distant goals. Results partially supported this hypothesis, showing religiosity and spirituality as a significant predictor of ideology. Those who scored high on the religious scale (4.0-5.0) also scored higher on the ideological scales (above 50), indicating a conservative ideology and those who scored low on the religious scale (1.0-2.0) indicating non-religious, scored low on the ideological scales (below 50), indicating a liberal ideology. However, contrary to the hypothesis, those who scored highly spiritual (1.0-2.0) also scored highly on the ideological scale (above 50). This suggests that those who are spiritual either follow similar belief systems as those whom are religious, or participants who were religious were also classified as spiritual, and vice versa. A linear analysis indicated the latter, denoting those who scored highly religious (4.0-5.0) or religious (2.1-3.9) also scored highly spiritual (1.0-2.0) or spiritual (2.1-3.9). Secondly, it was hypothesized that the goals of religious students would be more heterodox in nature, with greater importance on family goals. Again, this hypothesis was partially supported. Religiosity was not a significant predictor of decision-making, only accounting for 9% of the variance in the type of

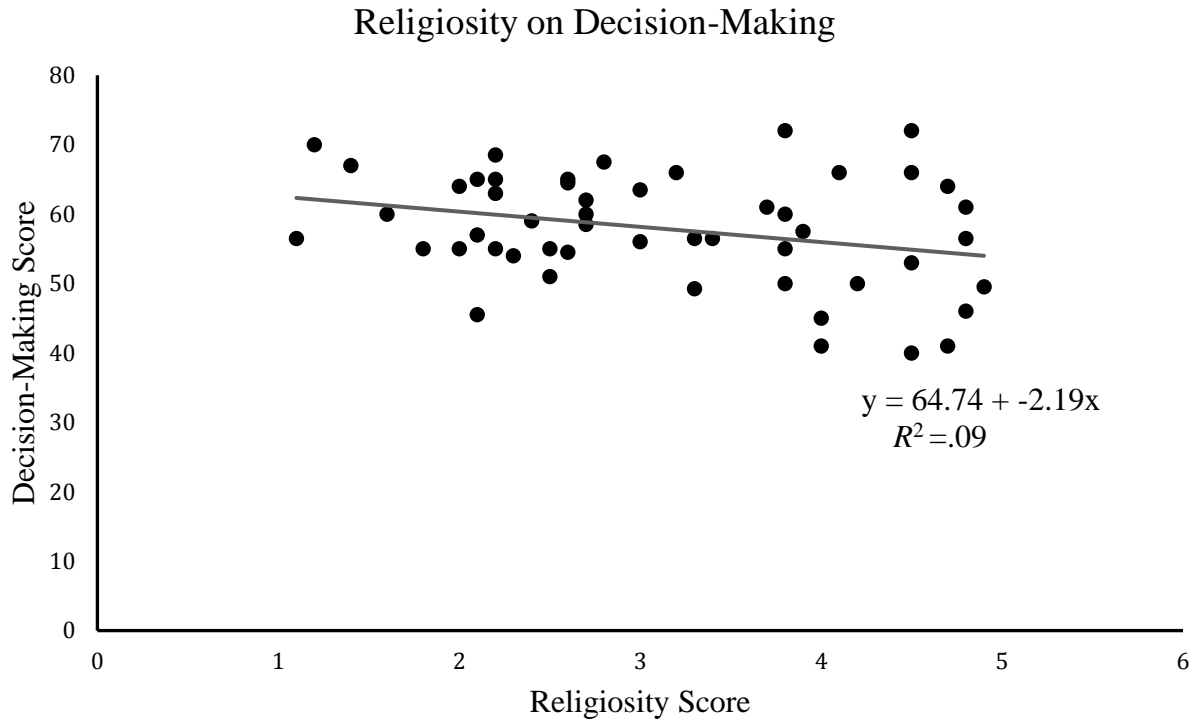


Figure 5. Correlation between Religiosity and Decision-Making scores. Higher religiosity (higher Religiosity scores) correlated with a more integrated strategy (mid range Decision-Making scores).

decision-making strategy implemented by the participant. However, there was a significant relationship between religiosity and goals. The level of religiosity identified through the CRS-15 was significantly predictive of the type of goals participants identified in having. Therefore, the higher one scored on religiosity measures, the more likely they were to have a more family goal-orientation. Lower religious scores were predictive of a career orientation. Lastly, it was hypothesized that those who simply identify with a religion or are non-religious will be attending school primarily in order to build a career, whereas those who are highly religious will be there to gain knowledge for its own sake. This hypothesis was supported through the data collected from the FCS, however, the interpretation is slightly more complicated. Although those who classified as highly religious were significantly more likely to be more family-oriented, this did not necessarily mean they were attending university to gain knowledge for its own sake. The scale was designed in an either-or layout with family-orientation meaning the participant was attending school in order to gain knowledge for its own sake, and career-orientation meaning participant the participant was attending school in order to build a career. Evident through the individual questions of the scale, many participants who received a high family-orientation score, also choose 1 (Strongly agree) for question K, "I am attending school to get a job." This shows that the two are not mutually exclusive as originally thought. Therefore, this hypothesis needs to be investigated further utilizing another method.

Findings are consistent with motivational theories such as approach/avoidance motivation (Sherratt & MacLeod, 2013), dimensional motivation (Elliot & Convington, 2001), social role theory (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000), and role congruency theory (Diekman & Goodfriend, 2006) discussed earlier in the introduction. In essence, motivation directs people to strive to reduce cognitive dissonance in all aspects of their life. Motivation evidently is the role religiosity

seems to have played in this study, significantly predicting spirituality, ideology, and goals. As predicted, seen through the lenses of each of these individual theories, religiosity meets all requirements to effectively push or pull an individual towards a certain outcome (Sherratt & MacLeod, 2013), provide a means-focused dimension to 'do the right thing' (Elliot & Covington, 2001), set expectancies (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000), and provide positive feelings accompanied with following expectations (Diekman & Goodfriend, 2006).

Brown & Diekman (2010) used social role theory and role congruency theory to explain gender differences in near and distant possible selves. Similarly, using these constructs, this study demonstrated how individual differences within females could be explained by religiosity. Results suggest that religiosity provides expectancy for how an individual should be forming opinions and goals. This is demonstrated through religiosity's predictive value particularly in ideology and goals. As mentioned earlier, religion is very traditional, and therefore goals are set as an expectation to those practicing (Hirsh et al., 2010). These expectations of religion tend to represent the practices and beliefs of a conservative ideology (Vaidyanathan, Hill & Smith, 2011). This conclusion proves consistent with Vaidyanathan, Hill & Smith's (2011) study, regarding the large influence religiosity has on the processing of information and goals. This assumption led to the finding that more religious individuals tend to develop a conservative ideological mindset (Vaidyanathan, Hill & Smith, 2011). On the contrary, spirituality is more loosely defined but is seemingly representative of equality (Hirsh et al., 2010), and therefore, was predicted to align with a more liberal ideology. This was not demonstrated in the results. The opposite was found with spirituality positively correlated with religiosity, and related to a conservative ideology. It is more likely that there is more than one type of spirituality, and in this study spirituality is directly linked with religiosity and believing in a higher power. Finally,

findings are inconsistent with the decision-making paradigm claiming that people who are highly religious will implement a heterodox decision-making strategy, and those who are non-religious will utilize an orthodox strategy (Brinkley-Rubinstein & Craven, 2014). This study showed religiosity having only an insignificant predictive value on decision-making strategy implemented. The study done by Brinkley-Rubinstein & Craven (2014) was done on adults and in a work place setting. These variables may have affected their participants, putting a greater importance on their decisions and strategies than would have occurred in this questionnaire study. The conclusions in their study were formed by looking in depth at their decision-making process, decision, and conclusion than could be done in this study.

Limitations of this study include the use of original scales, the lack of clarity between spirituality and religiosity, and the age group being tested. Including original scales in this study presented methodological difficulties because they had not been adequately tested for validity and reliability. The scales were themselves easily interpreted and completed, however, they were short and assumed correct answers were potentially too obvious. These were necessary as no other scale was available adequately measuring family-career orientation or decision-making strategy, and now could be altered to improve the potential issues. In addition, differentiating spirituality and religiosity posed an issue. They may be directly linked or essentially the same concept, however, it is more likely that the scale used, failed to clarify the differences. In previous research, separating the two terms has been noted as a struggle that needs clarity, which is essentially what the NRNSS sought out to do (Cragun, Hammer, Nielson, 2015). Updating this scale by using different terminology and adding in additional questions, the validity may improve and the separation between the terms should be more evident. Lastly, the participants' age and point of life may have a large effect on their understandings of some of the ideological

constructs. There were numerous questions regarding the meaning of terms on the SECS (Everett, 2013) such as ‘limited government,’ ‘fiscal responsibility,’ and ‘the family unit.’ In addition, many of the concepts on the LCPAS (Chawke, 2016) are more complex and resulted in 4 (Neither Agree nor Disagree) potentially because they did not yet have an opinion regarding these issues. Considering the majority of the participants were not yet of age to vote, it is understandable that stronger results may have been obtained if the participants were slightly older and more educated regarding conservative and liberal ideologies.

Overall, this study provides valuable information into all aspects of life, as religiosity affects everyone. It provides motivation as an explanation for the role religiosity plays in determining future possible selves and goals, and demonstrates the large effect it has on the information processing and in the development of personal values. Future research should include furthering our understanding of the implications religiosity can have on real-life decisions and goal formulation. In doing so, researchers should focus on more specific situations as well as look at different age groups. This will allow researchers to understand if religiosity’s motivational impact is amplified or reduced, as people get older vs. younger and what specific situations are affected most.

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Appendix A

Background Information Questionnaire

1. What is your age? 17-19 20-23 24-30 30<
2. How many years have you lived in Canada? 1 or less 2-4 5-10 11-15 16<
3. What is your place of birth? _____
4. Which religion do you most strongly identify with? _____
5. What is your current degree? _____
6. Do you have any previous degrees? Y/N
 If yes please specify _____

Appendix B

Family vs. Career Scale

Please rate statements A-K with the following scale:

- 1 - Strongly Agree
- 2 - Agree
- 3 - Slightly Agree
- 4 - Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5 - Slightly Disagree
- 6 - Disagree
- 7 - Strongly Disagree

- A. Family is the most important thing to me. _____
- B. I want to have a child/children in 10+ years. _____
- C. I want to have a child/children within the next 1-5 years. _____
- D. I plan on attending a graduate program after my undergrad. _____
- E. I identify myself as the primary caregiver in my future. _____
- F. Having a career is the most important thing to me. _____
- G. It is important for you to make a minimum amount of money per year. _____
- H. I am OK with my partner working, and me staying at home and supporting. _____
- I. I am attending school for the experience. _____
- J. I am attending school to gain knowledge. _____
- K. I am attending school to get a job. _____

Appendix C

Orthodox vs. heterodox, vs. integrated

Please select the best way to solve the following problems:

1. You are dealing with the homeless population of London, and your boss tells you to address the issue of starvation and attempt to reduce it. You:
 - a) Give everyone a monthly allowance until they can get on their feet because that feels like it's the right thing to do.
 - b) You crunch numbers and find that the best solution for the city and these people is to schedule "feed the homeless" nights at churches and community centers around the city.
 - c) You do research and understand that giving money to the poor can lead to money being spent on drugs and not food but you don't think feed the homeless nights around the city are enough. Instead you pass a law that gives the homeless a significant discount at all food locations around town.
2. You are approached by your boss and told you need to fire the pregnant lady in HR that has been working for the business for 10 years. You:
 - a) Know that you will likely get be fired instead if you rebut, so you fire the lady.
 - b) You know that it is morally wrong, and refuse to do so.
 - c) You spend hours digging up labour laws and attempt to propose a solution although you know it may fail.
3. You are about to buy a house with your fiancé. You:
 - a) You look at your family income and have a feeling that with hard work you will be able to get a raise and pay for a home you are comfortable in for the long term.
 - b) Rationalize your money, the economy, and goals to buy a house that you feel financially secure with.
 - c) You find the perfect home and something is telling you that this is the one. You buy it without hesitation.
4. Your two best friends are in a fight and are looking to you to choose sides. You:
 - a) Choose your favourite friend.
 - b) Listen to both sides of the story but stay neutral regardless of who is right or wrong.
 - c) Look at the external circumstances and rationalize who is in the wrong and choose them.
5. You are graduating high school this year and need to decide on what program to apply to at university. You:
 - a) You way your options on what you like most, what your friends are in, and what will make you most successful.
 - b) Choose what most of your friends are doing so you can stay close.
 - c) You focus on your future and success in the program and choose the most statistically sound option.