

Religious Beliefs and Identity Formation as a Predictor of Life Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to investigate religious beliefs and identity formation as a predictor of life satisfaction. Religion experiences, culture, and choices greatly influence how we practice our faith. Religion and identity are a two-way street. A strong sense of identity is linked to feeling satisfied with your life. The research will delve into potential mechanisms explaining these connections, such as the provision of social support networks, meaning-making frameworks, and sources of comfort and purpose. A sample of 132 students aged between 18-25 years, volunteered to participate in the study. The Religiousness Measure, Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-1V), and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) were the tools used to measure religious beliefs, identity formation and life satisfaction respectively. The result showed a positive significant correlation between religious beliefs and life satisfaction ($r=0.176$; $p< 0.05$ level), a positive significant correlation between religious beliefs and identity formation ($r=0.276$; $p< 0.01$ level), in life satisfaction and identity formation correlation ($r=0.164$; $p>0.05$).

Keywords: *Religious Beliefs, Identity Formation, Life Satisfaction*

Religion involves beliefs, ceremonies, ethical standards, holy books, symbols, and activities that shape views and values. It provides comfort, understanding, and belonging. Life satisfaction is an individual's judgement of their life, associated with happiness, hope, purpose, humour, support, confidence, resilience, and adaptability. Identity formation is the process of gaining a distinct sense of oneself.

Religious beliefs: Religion involves a diverse range of beliefs, ceremonies, ethical standards, holy books, symbols, and activities that shape individuals' views and values. It helps people understand complex concepts, provides comfort, and fosters a sense of belonging. Rituals and ceremonies, such as prayer and meditation, connect followers with the divine. Investigation suggests that religious beliefs might improve life happiness by providing a consistent worldview and purpose. However, the quality of this bond depends on the individual's level of conviction and dedication within their religious group.

Life satisfaction: Life satisfaction represents a personal and holistic appraisal of a person's life. It is a multidimensional notion that incorporates many aspects of existence, involving

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intimate, financial, social, and ecological issues. Research suggests that life satisfaction is influenced by a range of factors, including personality traits, age, gender, cultural background, and life circumstances.

Identity formation Identity formation is a complicated mental procedure in which a person's perception of self develops in response to both internal and external influences such as personality, culture, family, society as a whole and past events. Here's a more detailed breakdown of the key components and theories related to identity formation: The **Identity Status Model** presented by James Marcia is a psychological theory based on Erik Erikson's work. The paradigm divides people into four identity statuses depending on the presence or lack of exploration and commitment. **Identity Diffusion** is defined by a lack of commitment and inquiry in a person's life. **Secondly Identity Foreclosure**, on the contrary hand, is distinguished by a profound feeling of commitment that lacks antecedent exploration. **Identity Moratorium** refers to the stage of investigation without commitment. They may also feel overwhelmed and nervous while navigating their sense of self. **Identity Achievement** is defined by a successful commitment following an investigation. Individuals in this stage have considered their alternatives and made an informed decision about their principles, opinions, and goals.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Anjum Ara et al. (2023) studied the association between religious beliefs and satisfaction of life. The results revealed that only religion's impact was strongly connected with life satisfaction.

Majeed et al. (2023) conducted a study that examined the relationship between personality traits, religion, and life satisfaction. Christian women reported higher levels of extraversion and life satisfaction, while Muslim women reported higher levels of agreeableness, neuroticism, and communal religious practice.

Tavares A. I. (2022) conducted a study that aims to identify factors that influence health and life satisfaction. Findings show that despite low health, the elderly in Portugal are highly satisfied with life.

Lien (2022) discovered that spirituality and spiritual health were positively associated with satisfaction of life among 228 medical students of different religions.

Scheitle (2021) examines religious identity among scientists and whether it affects their work. The findings contribute to the understanding of identity conflict.

METHODOLOGY

Aim: To examine the correlation between religious beliefs, identity formation and Life Satisfaction.

Objectives

- Objective 1: To study the correlation between religious beliefs, identity population and life satisfaction among young adults
- Objective 2: To study identity formation as a predictor of life satisfaction among young adults

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- Objective 3: To study religious beliefs as a predictor of life satisfaction among young adults
- Objective 4: To study religious beliefs and identity formation as predictors of life satisfaction among young adults.

Hypothesis

- H1: There will be a significant correlation between religious beliefs identity formation and life satisfaction among young adults
- H2: Identity formation will be a predictor of life satisfaction among young adults
- H3: Religious beliefs will be predictor of life satisfaction among young adults
- H4: Religious beliefs and identity formation will be a predictor of life satisfaction among young adults

Variables

- Independent variable (I.V): Religious beliefs and identity formation
- Dependent variable (D.V): Life satisfaction

Sampling Design

The study utilized convenience sampling and Snow-ball sampling technique. The questionnaire was shared with young individuals from various universities and was forwarded to different groups. The purpose of the study was conveyed in clear words to the participants and consent was taken.

Measures:

- **The Religiousness Measure:** Seligman and Sethi in 1993 developed the Religiousness Measure to link faith, attributing style, and positivity. The test assessed three characteristics of faith: religious impact in everyday life, spiritual engagement, and spiritual hope. The questionnaire includes 17 items.
- **Aspects of identity questionnaire (AIQ-IV):** Briggs, S. R. and Cheek, J. M., (1989) developed the (AIQ-IV). Identity inclinations relate to the comparative emphasis that people put on certain identity features or characteristics when defining themselves.
- **Satisfaction with life scale (SWLS):** The SWLS, developed by Diener, Ed, and associates in 1985, is a quick self-reported measure with 5 items. Participants were requested to rate how much they concur or disagree with every claim on a Likert scale of one to seven, that goes from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Procedure

At the beginning of the study, I obtained consent from the participants who wanted to take part. I explained how to fill out the questionnaire and the scales to be used. Once the participants completed the questionnaire, I collected the responses offline. I calculated the raw score for both males and females and then imported the response data into an Excel sheet. I used this sheet to perform data analysis using Pearson correlation and regression. Finally, drew out the results and conclusions in the discussion.

ANALYSIS OF RESULT

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for three variables: "religious belief," "identity formation," and "life satisfaction."

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
religious belief	132	34.00	93.00	57.0303	13.34220
identity formation	132	67.00	231.00	168.8106	26.33175
life satisfaction	132	5.00	25.00	17.6818	3.38456
Valid N (listwise)	132				

Table 2 showing Pearson Correlations between religious belief, life satisfaction and identity formation

Correlations

	TRB	TLS	TIF
TRB Pearson Correlation	1	.211*	.302**
TLS Pearson Correlation	.211*	1	.739**
TIF Pearson Correlation	.302**	.739**	1

**The correlation has significance at the 0.05 level. **The correlation has significance at the 0.01 level.*

Table 3 shows the regression between Life satisfaction, Identity formation and Religious belief

The abbreviations are as follows

IF: identity formation **LS:** life satisfaction **RB:** religious belief

Regression

Model	R	RS	ARS	F	significant(2-tailed)	p
IF AND RB	.164 ^a	.027	.019	3.383	.061 ^b	significant
RB AND LS	.176 ^a	.031	.024	4.165	.043 ^b	significant
RB AND IF	.176 ^a	.031	.024	4.165	.043 ^b	significant
	.213 ^b	.045	.031	3.068	.050 ^c	

DISCUSSION

The aim was to investigate Religious Beliefs and Identity Formation as a predictor of Life Satisfaction. Four hypotheses were created in total. Religion involves beliefs, ceremonies, ethical standards, holy books, symbols, and activities that shape views and values. It provides comfort, understanding, and belonging. Life satisfaction is an individual's judgement of their life, associated with happiness, hope, purpose, humour, support, confidence, resilience, and adaptability. Identity formation is the process of gaining a distinct sense of oneself.

The first hypothesis **H1:** There will be a positive correlation between religious beliefs, identity formation and life satisfaction was accepted.

The second hypothesis **H2:** There ought be a positive relationship amongst identity formation on satisfaction of life was proved correct and The findings supported the mediation hypothesis, with calling indicating identity accomplishment as a better predictor of life happiness (Hirschi, A., & Herrmann, A. 2012)

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The third hypothesis **H3**: Religious beliefs and life satisfaction will be positively related was also proven right. This study shows that the relationship between religiosity and life satisfaction is bimodal (Okulicz-Kozaryn, A. 2010)

The fourth hypothesis **H4**: Religious beliefs and identity formation will have a positive effect on life satisfaction was also proved correct

CONCLUSION

Religious beliefs and identity formation significantly impact an individual's life satisfaction whether positively or negatively. The study aimed to find whether religious beliefs and identity formation are predictors of satisfaction of life. The study found a positive significant relationship between religious belief and life satisfaction.

Findings The analysis shows significant indicating meaningful relationships between the variables. Specifically, there are significant correlations between religious belief and life satisfaction, Religion belief and identity formation, and a correlation between Life satisfaction and identity formation, highlighting the interconnectedness of these aspects of an individual's life.

Limitations of the study The study's limitations involve an insufficient sample size, a shortage of gender balance, and limited generalizability due to its geographical or community-specific character.

Future implication According to the findings of the research it was observed that there is a low level of correlation however the level of significance is below 0.05 which means the sample is able to detect a small level of correlation at the significant level of 0.05. In future research if the sample size is increased the correlation level would rise.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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