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Religion and Interpersonal Trust: An Individual Differences Analysis

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RELIGION AND INTERPERSONAL TRUST: AN INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES
ANALYSIS

by

KAITLYN SAWYER

(Under the Direction of Michael Nielsen)

ABSTRACT

Several factors including experience, group membership, and religious involvement can have an impact on trust. The purpose of the current research was to examine religion as a possible factor in an individual's trust behaviors. Researchers hypothesized that (1) individuals who identified themselves as being religious would trust strangers more easily than those who did not identify with a religion, and (2) that individuals would more easily trust strangers if the strangers were presented as being religious. Seventy-two participants were presented with three vignettes and were asked to respond to a series of scales measuring general trust, religiosity, conservatism, social distance, and demographics. Descriptive statistics, a multiple regression analysis, correlations, a mixed ANOVA, a repeated measures ANOVA, and a chi-square analysis were conducted to examine the data. Findings indicate that individuals who identified themselves as being relatively more religious did not report being able to trust strangers more easily than those who were relatively less religious and that individuals reported trusting the strangers more easily if the other person was presented as being religious versus nonreligious.

INDEX WORDS: Religion, trust, strangers

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A.S., Darton College, 2011

B.S., Georgia College and State University, 2013

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Trust -- the expectation that others will act with good intentions and show good will towards others (Glanville & Paxton, 2007) -- is an essential aspect of life, as throughout our childhood and into our adulthood we are required to trust others (Righetti & Finkenauer, 2011). Trust can be considered to be an attitude, belief, behavior, or intention (Riedl & Javor, 2012) and is exclusively an interpersonal occurrence that requires some form of interaction or imagined interaction between one or more other people (Koehn, 1996). Cooperation becomes extremely challenging without trust (Koehn, 1996). Trust is important for areas such as economics and the political system as one must place a certain amount of trust in the individuals controlling the country (Glanville & Paxton, 2007).

Human behavior is complex as individuals do not behave in consistently predictable ways. The uncertainty that results from this ultimately can lead to distrust, but much behavior can also indicate that an individual is worthy of trust. Generally, people are careful in whom they trust as people may have something to lose if the person or institution turns out to be untrustworthy. This is especially true for disadvantaged individuals who may have much to lose (Addai, Opoku-Agyeman, & Ghartey, 2013). A person's actions can indicate to others whether or not that person can be trusted. Oftentimes, we must make the decision regarding whether or not we can trust someone virtually instantly upon meeting them. One can study trust at a social level, psychological level, or a biological level.

Social Aspects of Trust

Trust has the potential to be affected by an individual's social or cultural environment (Glanville & Paxton, 2007). Research suggests that participation in society and involvement in

different social groups has a positive influence on trust (Addai, Opoku-Agyeman, & Gharthey, 2013). Trust also has been seen to differ greatly across societies and countries (Paxton, 2007), adding the research suggesting an individual's social and cultural environment can affect their trust attitudes. For example, those in societies who experience disadvantage may be less likely to trust as compared to others who have more of an advantage in life (Paxton, 2007).

Trust may be difficult to establish, especially with someone you may not know very well, or have just met. Previous research suggests that having shared interests or common identities with someone may facilitate feelings of the connectedness needed to build a certain level of trust (Cwir, Carr, Walton, & Spencer, 2011). A connection with someone can begin with something as simple as attending the same school, being neighbors, sharing a hobby, or being of a similar religious background. Welch, Sikkink, and Loveland (2007) showed that when individuals have prominent values in common, a sense of familiarity may develop, resulting in a promotion of trust and predictability. This connection can expand further into a peer relationship or friendship and create a group phenomenon.

Group identification of this sort may influence reciprocal behaviors in a situation when the individuals may not know one another well (Fitzgerald & Wickwire, 2012). If one individual exhibits helping and trusting behaviors, others may act in a kind and helpful way in return, especially if shared interests are present. Research indicates that if more information is known about the individual, one is more likely to interact with them and see them as trustworthy (Dunning, Anderson, Schlösser, Ehlebracht, & Fetchenhauer, 2014). People also tend to assume that those in their in-group are more trustworthy than those in an out-group (Posten & Mussweiler, 2013). As important as an individual's in-group seems to be, when a situation arises in which one must decide whether another individual is worthy of trust, the approval of

peers does not seem to be a factor in one's trust behavior, but parental approval does appear to be important (Dunning, et al., 2014).

Sometimes we elicit trusting behaviors so that others will feel they can trust us (Jones, 1996). An example of this could be having new neighbors move in next door. An individual may elicit trusting behaviors towards the neighbors, such as being friendly or offering to collect mail or water plants when they are away, so that the new neighbors may feel as though they can trust the individual. This action aids in the creation and maintenance of social groups because membership, or association, with a group can increase trust (Paxton, 2007). Social category memberships are often used as a determinant on the trustworthiness of an individual (Posten & Mussweiler, 2013). In fact, participation in these societal organizations, such as being a member of a sports team or what field one works in, can generate a certain level of trust (Addai, Opoku-Agyeman, & Gharthey, 2013).

Psychological Aspects of Trust

Trust also has notable psychological worth (Koehn, 1996). One psychological perspective that explains an individual's trusting behaviors is social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), which suggests that individuals develop trust at differing levels based on prior interactions with others, with their expectations of how they will be treated being based on these previous experiences (Glanville & Paxton, 2007). The reputations of others, and any anticipated future interactions, tend to shape our interactions and guide the way we perceive individuals, showing that hearing that someone is a bad person or that they cannot be trusted may influence our decision on whether or not to trust that individual (Posten & Mussweiler, 2013). Additionally, if individuals have had an encounter in the past in which their trust was shaken or shattered, they may feel that

every situation and relationship will have the same issues and that ultimately no one can be trusted.

For some, it may be difficult to trust and even more difficult to trust someone unknown. Trusting others is a scary concept because trusting opens one up to potential harm (Jones, 1996). For example, in seeing a new physician, one expects him or her to act in a professional manner and to provide the best care possible. A patient wants to be certain that the physician knows what he or she is doing well enough to help in whatever predicament the patient may be in. A patient's expectations guide the amount of trust shown to a physician (Jones, 1996). Patients are also aware that trusting this individual can open them up to potential harm, such as a procedure not going according to plan and causing significant physical or psychological harm.

Positive trust experiences can influence generalized trust, especially in a familiar setting with a known group of people (Glanville & Paxton, 2007), whereas negative experiences may lead to distrust (Posten & Mussweiler, 2013). Social learning theory suggests that interactions play an important role in the development of trust, specifically interactions in familiar places, such as schools and churches (Bandura, 1977; Glanville & Paxton, 2007). Individuals rely on these past experiences when making decisions about how to feel or react to new situations (Glanville & Paxton, 2007). For example, if an individual has had an encounter with someone in the past in which his or her trust was disturbed, this may affect the amount of trust bestowed upon a new person, especially if the new individual is similar to the previous one in some aspect. This example demonstrates how distrust is often considered to be a reaction to deception (Posten & Mussweiler, 2013). Also, simply observing how other individuals, whether they be family, peers, or people of power, talk about others' trustworthiness may also have an impact on one's trust attitudes and behaviors.

Biological Aspects of Trust

Trusting behavior in humans has a biological basis in addition to environmental components (Riedl & Javor, 2013). An individual's willingness to trust can be quite similar to that of his or her parents' willingness to trust others (Dohmen, Falk, Huffman, & Sunde, 2006) as genetics have been shown to influence an individual's social attitudes (Waller, Kojetin, Bouchard, Jr., Lykken, & Tellegen, 1990). This raises the question of possible genetic cues on the topic of trust as trust is formed primarily in childhood (Glanville & Paxton, 2007). Hormones and several brain regions have been discovered to also be linked to trust. For example, Kosfeld and associates (2005) found that the hormone oxytocin increases trust, and in turn is highly important for prosocial behaviors. Testosterone also correlates highly with distrust as when high levels of testosterone are present, distrust is heightened and a decrease in interpersonal trust occurs (Zak, Borja, Matzner, & Kurzban, 2005).

Previous research has investigated differences in trustworthiness among several demographic categories. Variables such as education, race, and age are related significantly to generalized trust (Hempel, Matthews, & Bartkowski, 2012). For instance, people have been shown to more easily and willingly show trust towards women over men because women are believed to be more cooperative (Fitzgerald & Wickwire, 2012). Associations also have been found between ethnicity and trust levels (e.g., Mencken, Bader, & Embry, 2009). Specifically, research shows a notable lack of trust within the African American community, but this may be circular as the lack of trust is driven by low economic performance, but this economic performance also seems to be driven by a lack of trust, stemming from the group's history in the United States (Koehn, 1996).

Additionally, those who are more educated, older (Welch, Sikkink, & Loveland, 2007), and employed (Paxton, 2007) are more likely to trust others more easily. There also appear to be differences in trust among individuals within different religious groups and affiliations, such as Baptists and Catholics being found to be less likely to trust than other people (Fitzgerald & Wickwire, 2012). Demographic variables will be examined in this study for any possible relationships between the variables being measured and an individual's demographic factors.

Factors Affecting Religion

Religion is one important factor to consider in understanding trust (Edgell, Gerteis, & Hartmann, 2006; Hempel, Matthews, & Bartowski, 2012). In order to better understand religion's role in trust, it is important to review religion and the individual. An individual's religious attitudes, values, and interests are neither solely genetic nor solely environmental (Waller et al., 1990). Biological and environmental factors have also been shown to have a significant role in individuals' church attendance across cultural groups (Kirk et al., 1999). Further research indicates that religiousness has a heritable factor as well as an environmental factor; having a common environment results in greater similarity of religious belief (Koenig, McGue, Krueger, & Bouchard, Jr., 2005).

Research suggests that environment and experience are the most profound influences on religiousness in childhood, whereas genetic influences are the largest influence on religiousness in adulthood (Koenig, McGue, Krueger, & Bouchard, Jr., 2005). Interestingly, of parents and guardians, mothers have been shown to have more of an influence on the religiousness of their children (Koenig, McGue, Krueger, & Bouchard, Jr., 2005). Having a mother who is strongly religious can influence the child to be strongly religious as well. On the other hand, having a mother who is religiously unaffiliated may influence the child to also be religiously unaffiliated,

even later in adulthood. These genetic influences on religiousness tend to increase with age (Koenig, McGue, Krueger, & Bouchard, Jr., 2005).

An individual's environment can play a large role in the person's religiousness. In fact, shared family environments are likely to produce similar religious attitudes among the family members, especially children (Waller et al., 1990). Individuals who live in an environment where attendance at worship services is commonplace may attend worship services far more frequently than those who do not grow up in a particularly religious environment. For example, United States citizens show a generally higher frequency of church attendance than those in Australia (Kirk, et al., 1999).

Religion in the United States

Because environmental factors have been shown to affect religiousness, it is important to understand the social environment in the United States, where the current study takes place. According to data collected by the Pew Research Center (2014b), the average American knows members of at least four different religious groups, which speaks of the religious diversity in this country. Nevertheless, the American public has been found to react differently to people of certain religions, or those of no religion. Specifically, Christians and Jews are viewed quite warmly and positively while Muslims and atheists are rated among the most cold and negative by the American public (Pew Research Center, 2014a). Between 3.6 and 5.2 million people identify as atheists in the United States, making them a minority (Cragun, et al., 2012). Americans tend to exclude atheists from both their public and private lives as atheists are believed to be problematic and threatening to society, although these attitudes may be due to lack of exposure to differences in specific religious teachings (Edgell, Gerteis, & Hartmann, 2006).

Most groups have experienced discrimination at some time but, atheists especially have long experienced great amounts of discriminatory behavior (Cragun, et al., 2012). Atheists are disliked in many areas of the world with the public's feelings ranging from slightly intolerant to utter disgust (Gervais, Shariff, & Norenzayan, 2011). In fact, racial and religious minorities are deemed to be more acceptable than atheists in many cases (Edgell, Gerteis, & Hartmann, 2006). Interestingly, atheists were found to be more untrustworthy, yet less disgusting than gay individuals in a recent poll (Gervais, Shariff, & Norenzayan, 2011). If individuals have known an atheist in the past that was less than kind, this experience along with any theological teaching, could result in the distrust of other atheists, regardless of whether an interpersonal encounter actually occurred.

Research from the Pew Research Center (2014c) indicate that religious individuals (Christians) would be quite unhappy if a family member married someone who was an atheist, whereas religiously unaffiliated individuals and atheists would not mind if a family member married someone who was religious. Additional findings indicate that those who are identified as religiously unaffiliated tend to be less likely to exhibit trust in general (Dillon & Henly, 2008). If family members grew up in the same environment and were exposed to the same religious beliefs, one may be shocked if the other marries someone of another faith because it seems to go against what they may have been taught.

Religion and Trust

Religion can be viewed as an example of a type of subculture or social membership that invokes a sense of inclusion (Edgell, Gerteis, & Hartmann, 2006) and can be considered one of the most noted in-group identifiers (Fitzgerald & Wickwire, 2012). Several studies point to the role of religion in establishing group membership and facilitating interpersonal trust. For

example, a study by Fitzgerald and Wickwire (2012) shows that participants tend to trust others who are within the same religious denomination, as individuals are more likely to engage with someone they believe to be in their in-group as opposed to someone in the supposed out-group (Paxton, 2007). Specifically, individuals rate members of their own religious group more favorably than people in other religious groups (Pew Research Center, 2014a).

Religion is a basis for trust in a society (Edgell, Gerteis, & Hartmann, 2006) as religion encourages sociability within the community. This involvement creates a level of trust within the community, showing a heightened generalized trust in religious individuals (Hempel, Matthews, & Bartkowski, 2012). Religion can directly influence trust, with those high in religiosity being shown to be more trusting of others in general than those low in religiosity (Tan & Vogel, 2008). Additionally, Glanville and Paxton (2007) have found a significant positive relationship between religious involvement and trust indicating that the more an individual is involved with a religion, the more trusting they appear to be.

Historically, the United States has been a religious country with social expectations derived from said religiousness (Edgell, Gerteis, & Hartmann, 2006). Today, over two-thirds of people in the United States believe in a personal God, creating quite a large in-group (Cragun, Kosmin, Keysar, Hammer, & Nielsen, 2012). Many of the world's religious groups teach their followers about gratitude and reciprocity (Berggren & Bjørnskov, 2011). This may contribute to the mentality of religious individuals to trust others with more ease because they may believe this trust will be reciprocated and that one should treat others as they would want others to treat them. Additionally, belief in a deity or higher power may be responsible for an increase in prosocial behavior as individuals feel as though they are being watched and judged not only by

other members of the community, but also a higher power (Gervais, Shariff, & Norenzayan, 2011).

Religious individuals may feel as though they are being watched by a higher power, possibly increasing an individual's self-control (Gervais, Shariff, & Norenzayan, 2011) and self-regulation (Watterson & Giesler, 2012). Individuals with high self-control are considered more trustworthy than are those lacking in self-control (Righetti & Finkenauer, 2011). A study conducted by Randolph-Seng and Nielsen (2007) showed that when primed with religious words, individuals cheated less on a task and felt more compelled to be honest as opposed to those primed with words related to sports or neutral words, exemplifying the connection between religion and self-control. Additional evidence of self-control and self-regulatory religious behavior is prayer. Prayer can often be a daily occurrence for highly religious individuals. Specifically, research shows that regular prayer helps to promote one's self-control (Watterson & Giesler, 2012).

Highly religious individuals show more self-regulatory behaviors than those who are less religious or nonreligious (Watterson & Giesler, 2012). Further findings indicate that the higher one's self-regulation, the more likely he or she is to attend a worship service or more strictly adhere to expectations and behaviors (Watterson & Giesler, 2012). Correlations also exist between church attendance and trust levels (Mencken, Bader, & Embry, 2009) as the more that individuals attend a place of worship, the more willingly they will trust others. For the purposes of this study, religious groups and affiliations, as well as frequency of worship service attendance, will be examined as demographic factors, as research has shown that trust on the interpersonal level can be determined by one's religious affiliation (Addai, Opoku-Agyeman, & Ghartey, 2013) and regular attendance at a place of worship (Welch, Sikkink, & Sartain, 2004).

People are more willing to trust others whom they feel will reciprocate (Fitzgerald & Wickwire, 2012). Religious individuals appear to be more intolerant of others who do not share in their religion, whereas those who are not religious are more accepting of religious individuals (Tan & Vogel, 2008). Religious individuals may feel that because those who are not religious have not had the same theological teachings of generosity, empathy, and gratitude as they have, that they will not know how to act (Tan & Vogel, 2008). However, this trend of disapproval may diminish with younger generations, as younger people tend to view religious differences more positively than do other people (Pew Research Center, 2014a). It seems that as religious diversity in the country has increased, so has tolerance for religious groups of the minority (Edgell, Gerteis, & Hartmann, 2006). In fact, recent research by Shen, Haggard, Strassburger, and Rowatt (2013) indicates that religiosity is connected with positive views towards several out-groups, such as African Americans, Arabs, gay individuals, and atheists. However, religious individuals' overall acceptance of atheist individuals is still lower than their acceptance of other religious groups (Gervais, Shariff, & Norenzayan, 2011).

Welch, Sikkink, and Loveland (2007) found that connections between religion and trust vary depending on the person to whom that trust is directed as well as the type of person that individual is. Specifically, individuals tend to place more trust in those with whom they are more acquainted with or are most similar to (Welch, Sikkink, & Loveland, 2007). This demonstrates the finding that religion can be used to guide decision making (Tan & Vogel, 2008) as one must decide who is worthy of trust. Individuals have been shown to be more trusting of a religious person, especially if they themselves are religious as well, over someone who is not described as being religious (Tan & Vogel, 2008). This could be due to people's expectations of religious individuals to be kind, honest, and generous.

Additional research indicates that nonreligious individuals experience more discrimination based on their status of religiosity in family and social settings than at the workplace or at school (Cragun et al., 2012). Additionally, having parents of two different religious groups was found to be related to social discrimination (Cragun et al., 2012). If an individual decides that another person is not worthy of trust, discriminatory behaviors may occur, regardless of whether the decision to trust this individual occurs in a public or private setting (Dunning et al., 2014).

Purpose

For the purpose of this study, I examined if people who identify themselves as being religious would trust individuals perceived to be strangers more easily than those who did not identify themselves as being religious. Previous research shows that religiosity has an influence on trust (Berggren & Bjørnskov, 2011); however, little research has examined religion as a factor of trust in strangers specifically. Additionally, prior research has primarily examined trusting behaviors in terms of conduct in groups, such as Catholics, Muslims, and atheists (e.g. Glanville & Paxton, 2007; Fitzgerald & Wickwire, 2012; Addai, Opoku-Agyeman, & Ghartey, 2013). The present research examined religion as a potential factor in the amount of trust an individual may place in someone they are not familiar with. This was done by issuing vignettes that present scenarios introducing three new people. Studying individuals in the vignettes allowed the researchers to examine trust attitudes on an individual level rather than a group level. Being that the participant was asked about an individual with whom they have no history, the researchers can also examine to what extent religion is a factor in determining a stranger's trustworthiness.

Based on research suggesting that religiosity has an influence on trust, it was predicted that individuals who identified themselves as being religious would trust strangers more easily

than those who did not identify with a religion. Additionally, the extent to which people trust strangers who identify themselves as being religious, compared to strangers who are identified as being nonreligious was also examined. Therefore, based on previous data that suggested religiosity influences individual trust, it was predicted that individuals would more easily trust strangers if the strangers are presented as being religious. Together, the tests of these hypotheses have informed us of the role that religion plays in trusting in other people.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Participants

A total of 72 individuals participated in this study. Of the 72 participants, the majority classified themselves as White and of the Christian faith. Additionally, ages ranged from 18 years to 32 years old ($M = 19.49$, $SD = 2.33$). Descriptive statistics of the participants are provided in Table 1. These participants are currently enrolled as undergraduate students at Georgia Southern University and were recruited through the Sona Systems online recruitment and study database. In return for their participation, extra credit was granted for a Psychology course.

Design

This study examined the importance of participants' religiousness and target's religiousness's impact on trust. Measures assessing participant religiousness, participant trust, participant conservatism, and social distance were used. Target religiousness was determined by the use of three vignettes, each with identical accompanying questions. When assessing the vignettes, participants were randomly assigned into two groups: religious condition and nonreligious condition. The degree of trust that people placed in the individuals described in the vignettes served as the dependent variable and the target's religiousness (religious or nonreligious) as identified using the vignettes, and participant religiousness served as the independent variables. The following covariates were used: the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (McCrae & Costa, 2004), the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (Everett, 2013), a modified Social Distance Scale (Bogardus, 1933), participant age, and participant gender.

Materials

Several measures assessing general trust, religiosity, conservatism, social distance, and demographics were used. Five measures were distributed, along with two ratings and a demographics questionnaire. The first measure, the Situational Trust Survey was developed for this study and assessed attitudes towards strangers presented in several specific situations that one may encounter in life (Appendix A). Participants were asked how trust would be a factor in the given situations. Three brief vignettes of situations in which trust could be a factor were given to the participant and he or she was then asked to respond to seven items for each situation. These vignettes included situations involving a neighbor, a doctor, and a family member's future spouse. For each situation, the target in the vignette was described as being either nonreligious or religious, as determined by randomization. This scale included one item per vignette that was reverse-worded and was therefore transformed for the analysis.

The Centrality of Religion Scale was used to assess participant religiosity (Huber & Huber, 2012; Appendix B), and was chosen as a measure due to its high reliability ($\alpha = .93$) and validity, demonstrated by high correlations between this scale and self-reports of religious identity (Huber & Huber, 2012). Items measuring frequency, such as "How often do you think about religious issues?" were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale with 1 representing "Never" and 5 representing "Very Often." Items measuring intensity, such as "To what extent do you believe that God or something divine exists?" were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale with 1 representing "Not at All" and 5 representing "Very Much So." This scale has been used in over 100 studies in fields such as sociology, religion, and psychology (Huber & Huber, 2012; e.g. Koenig, McGue, Krueger, & Bouchard, 2005). This scale was found to be statistically reliable in the current study ($\alpha = .95$).

The Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Appendix C) was used to assess general trust of participants and was also chosen due to its high validity and reliability ($\alpha = .86$; McCrae & Costa, 2004). In addition, the Trust Subscale was chosen for this study because of its use in many studies, including Mooradian, Renzl, & Matzler's (2006) research on knowledge sharing and environmental factors, which found that interpersonal trust and knowledge-sharing are related to agreeableness among employees in the workplace. Items on this scale, such as "I trust others" and "I find it easy to trust someone again after trust has been broken" were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale, with 1 representing "Strongly Disagree" and 5 representing "Strongly Agree." This scale was found to be statistically reliable in the current study ($\alpha = .82$). This scale included five items that were reverse-worded and therefore were transformed for the analysis.

The Social and Economic Conservatism Scale was used to assess participant conservatism (Everett, 2013, Appendix D) and was chosen due to its high validity and reliability ($\alpha = .88$). Participants were given a list of 12 words, or groups of words, in which they were asked to rate on a sliding scale how positively or negatively they felt about the given items on a scale of 0 to 100, with 0 representing "Very Negative" and 100 representing "Very Positive." Items include "Abortion," "Traditional Marriage," and "Patriotism." This scale was chosen based on research findings that suggest religiosity and conservatism are closely related; namely, that those who are reported as being highly religious have more conservative views in political issues (Malka et al., 2012). This scale was found to be statistically reliable in the current study ($\alpha = .66$).

Additionally, the Social Distance Scale was used (Bogardus, 1933, Appendix E) to examine social distance, or the degree of intimacy a person would be willing to allow to certain

individuals (Shaw & Wright, 1967). This scale was chosen because of its high reliability ($\alpha=.90$) and validity (Shaw & Wright, 1967). In the original version of the scale, participants were presented with a list of 30 varying out-groups, including “Canadians,” “Jews,” and “Mexicans”; and were asked to mark on a scale their attitudes about the group, choosing from seven choice statements, the choice statements being “Would marry into group,” “Would have as close friends,” “Would have as next door neighbor,” “Would work in same office,” “Have as speaking acquaintance only,” “Have as visitors only to my nation,” and “Would debar from my nation.” For the purposes of this study, however, the above items were altered so that they included items involving religious and nonreligious individuals. For example, items for the current study included “How willing are you to work in the same office as a religious person?” and “How willing are you to have a nonreligious person as a speaking acquaintance?” These items were rated on a 6 point Likert scale with -3 representing “Definitely Unwilling” and 3 representing “Definitely Willing”. This scale was found to be statistically reliable in the current study ($\alpha = .77$).

To assess for the attitudes towards general religious groups, two rating items were used. For the first rating item, the participants were asked to rate the following: an atheist, a nonreligious individual, and a religious individual on general likeability using a slider style format (Appendix F). They were asked, “How would you rate the following, on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being ‘Not at All Liked’ and 10 being ‘Highly Liked.’” Participants then used a slider function for each of the three choices. Following this item, participants were presented with a second rating item and were asked to rank order the following: the atheist, the nonreligious individual, and the religious individual, with 1 being “The Most Preferred” and 3 being “The Least Preferred.” Using these ratings allowed the participants not only to rank their choices, but

also to allow the differences in their preferences to be easily seen. Additionally, a brief set of questions regarding demographic characteristics such as age, ethnicity, and religious affiliation was completed by the participant (Appendix G).

Procedure

Participants were asked to complete a series of surveys online. Participants could either take the surveys completely online, or come into a laboratory setting to complete the surveys. Forty-six participants completed the study completely online, whereas 26 participants completed to study in the computer lab. Surveys completed in the lab were identical to those presented to participants who chose to complete the study online. Upon entering the lab, the participants were instructed to take a seat at a computer on which the link to the study was already loaded and minimized. Upon completion of the surveys, participants reported their name to the researcher in order to obtain proper credit. Interaction with the researcher was minimal in the lab setting and nonexistent in the purely online setting. The Situational Trust Survey was presented first. Four of the remaining measures were presented in a randomized order for each participant, so as to decrease any possible order effects. The two ratings items were then presented before the demographic measures, which were always presented last. These measures assessed general trust, religiosity, conservatism, social distance, trust in specified situations, and demographics.

Participants gave informed consent (Appendix H) and completed the series of surveys online. Participants completed the Situational Trust Survey to assess trust in specific situations. , Participants received and answered items for each of three vignettes. These vignettes were counterbalanced with a resulting six different variations of presentation order for the three vignettes. Each participant was randomly assigned as to the religiosity of the individuals being presented and asked about. The individuals could either have been described as being religious

or nonreligious, with each participant being exposed to one religion classification for all three vignettes. For instance, a participant may have been asked to answer questions pertaining to a doctor who is religious, followed by a neighbor who is a religious, and then a family member's marriage to a religious person.

Upon completion of the Situational Trust Survey, the Centrality of Religion Scale was used to assess participant religiosity (Huber & Huber, 2012), the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory to assess general trust (Costa & McCrae, 1992), the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (Everett, 2013) to assess participants' conservatism, a modified version of the Social Distance Scale (Bogardus, 1933) to assess participants' attitudes towards certain groups, and two rating items were distributed. Finally, a survey containing demographic items such as age, ethnicity, and religious affiliation was completed by the participants. The order in which the Centrality of Religion scale (Huber & Huber, 2012), the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992), the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (Everett, 2013), and the Social Distance Scale (Bogardus, 1933) were presented to each participant was randomized, with the rating and demographic items being presented last. This process took less than half an hour. Upon completion of the study, the participants were thanked for their participation and received extra credit for a psychology course. Active deception was not be used in the present study.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Using SPSS statistical software, descriptive statistics, a multiple regression analysis, correlations, a mixed ANOVA, within-subjects ANOVA, and a chi square analysis were conducted to examine the data. As an initial step in the analyses, descriptive statistics of all variables were computed. As shown in Table 1, participants were predominantly Christian (77.8%), White (68.1%), and female (59.7%). Approximately 23% indicated a race or ethnicity other than White, and approximately 14% indicated no religious affiliation. Descriptive statistics for the variables of interest, including Social Economic Conservatism Scale, Social Distance Scale, the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory, and the Centrality of Religion Scale, are show in Table 2. Also in Table 2 are descriptive statistics for participants' age and their estimates of the target's religiousness.

A multiple regression analysis was used to examine how well reported levels of trust, participant religiousness, and target religiousness predicted degree of trust a person places on another individual, namely a stranger, as measured by participant responses to the Situational Trust Survey. The predictors for this analysis include participants' religiousness as reported in the Centrality of Religion Scale (Huber & Huber, 2012), the target's religiousness (religious or nonreligious, averaged across the three vignettes), and the interaction between the two (Participant Religiousness x Target's Religiousness). Additional predictors include the participants' general trust as measured by the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992), the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (Everett, 2013), the modified Social Distance Scale (Bogardus, 1933), as well as age and gender.

An initial step in the regression was to first enter a set of control variables, including participant general trust, as measured by the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992), participant scores on the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (Everett, 2013), participant scores on the modified Social Distance Scale (Bogardus, 1933), participant age, and participant gender. The results of this analysis are shown in Model 1 of Table 3. Next, the variables of interest, including participant religiousness as measured by the Centrality of Religion Scale (Huber & Huber, 2012), the target's religiousness (religious or nonreligious), and the interaction between the two (Participant Religiousness x Target's Religiousness), were entered into the equation. The results of this analysis are shown in Model 2 of Table 3.

The research hypotheses were partially supported by the results of the regression analysis. Results indicate the predictors of participants' general trust ($\beta = .34, t = 2.47, p < .05$) and the target's religiousness ($\beta = 1.15, t = 2.59, p < .05$) significantly predicted the level of trust that participants placed in another individual [$R^2 = .452, R^2_{adj} = .330, F(3,36) = 3.71, p < .05$]. The interaction between the Centrality of Religion Scale (CRS) and target's religiousness was not significant ($\beta = .89, t = 2.00, p = .053$), and the Centrality of Religion Scale was not shown as a significant predictor ($\beta = .19, t = 1.27, p > .05$). Other variables, including age ($\beta = -.13, t = -.97, p > .05$), gender ($\beta = .12, t = .93, p > .05$), scores on the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SEC) ($\beta = -.14, t = -.97, p > .05$) and the Social Distance Scale (SDS) ($\beta = .01, t = .10, p > .05$), failed to predict the level of trust a participant places in a stranger. This model accounted for 45.2% of the variance in the amount of trust one places in another individual. Table 3 presents the unstandardized regression coefficients (B), the standard error (SE), the standardized regression coefficients (β), t-values, and p-values for all predictor variables.

Correlations of the variables, shown in Table 4, indicate a moderate association between the scores on the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and the Centrality of Religion Scale (Huber & Huber, 2012) ($r = .37, p < .01$). The religiousness of the target also correlated positively with the amount of trust placed in the target, showing a small effect ($r = .29, p < .05$). A correlation did not exist between participant religiousness and target's religiousness ($r = .14, p > .05$). Additionally, a moderate positive correlation exists between scores on the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SEC) (Everett, 2013) and scores on the Centrality of Religion Scale ($r = .43, p < .01$). Scores on the Social Distance Scale correlated with the amount of trust placed in the target ($r = .28, p < .05$) and also with the interaction of the scores from the Centrality of Religion Scale and the target's religiousness ($r = -.24, p < .05$) showing small effects. A strong positive correlation can also be seen between participants scores on the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory and the amount of trust placed in the stranger ($r = .54, p < .01$). Contrary to predictions, scores on the Centrality of Religion Scale did not correlate with the amount of trust placed in the stranger ($r = .22, p > .05$).

A 2 (Target's Religiousness) x 3 (Vignette: Neighbor, Doctor, Future Spouse) mixed ANOVA, with the vignette serving as a repeated-measures factor, was used to further examine the mean differences of the vignettes presented in the Situational Trust Survey. Thirty-three participants responded to vignettes involving religious individuals and 38 participants responded to vignettes about nonreligious individuals. Cell means and variability are reported in Table 5. The results of the ANOVA are shown in Table 6. There was an overall significant difference in the vignettes, $F(2, 138) = 22.81, p < .05$, indicating that if the religiousness of the targets was ignored, the targets were still rated significantly differently. Results of a Fisher's Least

Significant Difference test was used to further analyze mean differences and indicated that the doctor ($M = 5.00$, $SEM = .08$) was rated higher than the future spouse of a family member ($M = 4.73$, $SEM = .09$), who was rated higher than the neighbor ($M = 4.48$, $SEM = .09$). A significant main effect did not exist for target's religiousness, $F(1,69) = 3.39$, $p > .05$, indicating that participants were not more likely to trust based on the target's religiousness. There was not a significant interaction between the type of individual in the vignette (neighbor, doctor, family member's future spouse) and the religiousness of the target $F(2, 138) = .48$, $p > .05$.

A repeated measures ANOVA and a chi-square analysis were used to further analyze the two rating items. The religiousness of the individual did have an effect $F(2, 124) = 41.814$, $p < .05$. Results of a Fisher's Least Significant Difference test, which was used to further analyze mean differences, indicate that all three types of individuals were rated significantly different from one another. When asked to rate each individual on a scale from one to ten, the atheist ($M = 4.49$, $SEM = .40$) was rated lower than the nonreligious individual ($M = 6.67$, $SEM = .30$), who was rated lower than the religious individual ($M = 7.84$, $SEM = .26$). The results of this analysis are shown in Table 7. Additionally, when asked to rank order their preference of individuals, 51 people (70.8%) indicated that they preferred religious individuals, 19 people (26.4%) indicated that they preferred nonreligious individuals, and 1 person (1.4%) indicated a preference for atheists, confirming that people in the study report a preference for religious individuals, $\chi^2 (N=71) = 54.197$, $p < .001$.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to predict whether an individual's religiousness would impact the amount of trust given to another. Specifically, this study tested two hypotheses: (1) individuals who identify themselves as being religious will trust strangers more easily than those who do not identify with a religion; and (2) that individuals will more easily trust strangers if the strangers are presented as being religious. The findings from the regression analysis indicate that the first hypothesis was not supported. Individuals who identified themselves as being relatively more religious did not report being able to trust others more easily than those who were relatively less religious. However, in support of the second hypothesis, individuals reported trusting the targets more if the other individual(s) are presented as being religious versus nonreligious.

Descriptive statistics, a multiple regression analysis, correlations, within-subjects ANOVAs, and a chi square analysis were conducted to examine the main hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 was not supported as found by the regression analysis because participant religiousness, as reported using the Centrality of Religion Scale, was not indicated as a predictor. Participant religiousness did not significantly predict the degree of trust the participant placed in the target and there was no correlation between the two variables. This finding was contrary to previous research that stated that those high in religiosity show more trust of others in general (Tan & Vogel, 2008).

Results of the regression analysis also suggest that the target's religiousness (religious versus nonreligious), taken from the vignettes used in the Situational Trust Survey, significantly predicted the level of trust a participant places on another individual, also measured using

participant responses to the Situational Trust Survey. Hypothesis 2 was supported as found by the regression analysis because the target's religiousness was found to be a significant predictor of the degree of trust placed in another and a positive correlation was found between the two variables. This confirms results from previous research indicating that people generally trust religious individuals over those who are not religious (Tan & Vogel, 2008).

Hypothesis 2 was also supported by the results of a repeated measures ANOVA and the chi-square analysis. In congruence with previous research, participants in this study rated religious individuals higher than the atheist and nonreligious individuals in general likability. According to Edgell, Gerteis, and Hartmann (2006), Americans specifically tend to exclude atheists from both their public and private lives as atheists are believed to be problematic and threatening to society. In the present study, when asked to rate a religious individual, a nonreligious individual, and an atheist on a scale from 1 to 10, the majority of participants gave the religious individual a higher rating than both the atheist and nonreligious individuals. The religiousness of the individual did have an effect on how the individuals were rated. Results of a Fisher's Least Significant Difference post-hoc test further indicated that all three types of individuals (atheist, nonreligious, and religious individuals) were rated significantly different from one another.

The chi-square analysis examined the item in which participants were asked to rank an atheist, nonreligious individual, and a religious individual from one to three in terms of preference. Results of this analysis showed that when asked to rank order their preference of individuals, the majority indicated they would prefer a religious individual. As previously discussed by Edgell, Gerteis, and Hartmann (2006), these findings could be due to lack of exposure to differences in specific religious teachings and/or preconceived notions.

Additionally, participant scores on the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory were statistically significant within the regression analysis. Also, the interaction between participant religiousness, as taken from the Centrality of Religiosity Scale and target's religiousness, as taken from the Situational Trust Survey, was not statistically significant. This indicates that a nonlinear relationship exists between the two variables. Other variables including age, gender, and scores on the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SEC) and the modified Social Distance Scale (SDS), were not shown to be significant predictors of the amount of trust placed in a stranger.

A series of correlational analyses were conducted as part of the regression analysis in order to further examine the data. A strong, positive correlation was found between participants' scores on the Centrality of Religion Scale (CRS) and their scores on the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory, indicating that as an individual's religiousness increases, the amount of trust placed in others also increases. However, participant scores on the Centrality of Religion Scale did not correlate with the participant scores on the Situational Trust Survey, suggesting that while religiousness may predict how much an individual may trust others in general, it may not necessarily indicate the amount of trust placed in strangers, specifically. It is possible, as previous findings have suggested, that if more information is known about the individual, the participants may have been more likely to see the individuals in the vignettes as trustworthy (Dunning, Anderson, Schlösser, Ehlebracht, & Fetchenhauer, 2014).

Additionally, a 2 (Target's Religiousness) x 3 (Vignette: Neighbor, Doctor, Future Spouse) mixed ANOVA was used to further examine the mean differences of the vignettes presented in the Situational Trust Survey. Thirty-three participants responded to vignettes involving religious individuals and 38 participants responded to vignettes about nonreligious

individuals. Results of this analysis indicated that the individuals inferred about within the vignettes of the Situational Trust Survey were rated differently by the participants regardless of the target's religiousness, with people rating the doctor as being more trustworthy than the family member's future spouse, who was rated as more trustworthy than the neighbor. However, results also indicated that participants were not more likely to trust the individuals based on the target's religiousness. Participants did not base their decisions on whether or not the individuals in the vignettes were trustworthy on the individual's religiousness.

Limitations

Although using this method was not expensive and relatively simple to run, and the order of the surveys was randomized to reduce any possible order effects, there were of course some limitations to this study. However, limitations and weaknesses still existed in this study. The limitations to using this design include the utilization of self-report measures and the sample size. Self-report measures conducted via computer allow the participant to respond in such a way that could make them look good, with lying and stretching reality as strong possibilities. Additionally, the risk of participants simply replying to the questionnaires in the study without reading or fully comprehending the items exists as well, even with the presence of several reverse-worded items.

Because the researcher was present when a portion of the data was collected, the risk of experimenter biases and demand characteristics may also be present with this study, even with little interaction between researcher and participants. Another limitation is the sample size as well as the nature of the sample. The number of participants was lower than expected or desired for this study. A power analysis was used prior to data collection with the desired number of participants equaling 97 in order to have ideal power (Cohen, 2003). This study was able to

include only 72 participants. A larger sample size would offer greater statistical power, which may have yielded more statistically significant results. Another limitation of the study is that it includes solely undergraduate students at a rural, Southern university, limiting the generalizability of the results.

Additionally, if the individuals who participated in this study had a previous experience with a person similar to those being described in the vignettes, this may have altered the way the questions were interpreted and ultimately answered by the participant, thereby affecting the outcome. As research has shown, if individuals have had an encounter in the past in which their trust was shaken or shattered, they may feel that every situation and relationship will have the same issues and that ultimately no one can be trusted. Individuals rely on past experiences when making decisions about how to feel or react to new situations (Glanville & Paxton, 2007). Therefore, any prior experiences with someone similar to those being inferred about in the study may have had an impact on how the individuals were viewed by the participants.

Future Directions

Future research should examine a more diverse sample that more accurately reflects the population and should also examine religion and trust within different societies and countries because cultures differ in many areas, including how religion is interpreted and how trustworthiness is determined. For example, researchers should recruit from a larger, more diverse subject pool outside of the university setting to attempt to both enlarge the sample size and increase the generalizability of the results. It may also be worth researching the differences in religiosity and trust among different age groups, examining such ideas as if children and older adults differ in the amount of trust they place in others to see if any differences exist or if it may be possible that our opinions change as we age due to experiences, education, and cognitive

development, as research has shown that older individuals tend to be more trusting (Welch, Sikkink, & Loveland, 2007). Additional research could also explore the hypotheses utilizing methods that are more in depth than those used in the current research, such as a laboratory method. For instance, collecting data in a laboratory setting possibly utilizing a confederate instead of strictly questionnaires may yield intriguing results and possible improvements in the study.

Based on the finding that the Centrality of Religion Scale is not a predictor of the amount of trust placed in an individual and that no correlation exists between scores on the scale and responses to that Situational Trust Survey, future research could also further investigate the level of relationship necessary for a person to readily trust another individual. According to the contact hypothesis, as originally stated by Allport (1954, as cited in Hughes, Campbell, & Jenkins, 2011), in order for an individual to place more trust in another, the other individual must be of equal status, share common goals with the other, be cooperative, and include institutional support. Further research has indicated that a reduction in one's anxiety levels occurs when positive contact happens between individuals of separate social groups, improving relations between individuals (Hughes, Campbell, & Jenkins, 2011). Because relations between individuals can be improved, the contact hypothesis could be used in future research as a basis to further explore religion and trust. These changes may enhance the current findings by providing additional resources and ways of collecting data, thereby solidifying and validating any effects.

Trust may be difficult to establish, especially with someone you may not know very well, or have just met. Today, over two-thirds of people in the United States believe in a personal God, creating quite a large in-group (Cragun, Kosmin, Keysar, Hammer, & Nielsen, 2012). Together, the tests of these hypotheses have aided in informing us of the role that religion plays

in trusting in other people. The current research shows that religiosity is associated with greater levels of trust placed on others, with religious individuals being considered more trustworthy than nonreligious or atheist individuals. The degree to which this might be due to in-group favoritism or other factors remains unclear, and these questions would benefit from further study.

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Table 1

Frequency Distribution and Sample Percentages of Participant Demographics.

Variable (<i>N</i> = 72)	<i>n</i>	Percentage of Sample
Ethnicity		
White	49	68.1%
Black or African American	18	18%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	1.4%
Multi-Racial	2	2.8%
Other	1	1.4%
Prefer Not to Answer	1	1.4%
Gender		
Male	29	40.3%
Female	43	59.7%
Religious Affiliation		
Agnostic	3	4.2%
Atheist	1	1.4%
Christian	56	77.8%
No Affiliation	10	13.9%
Missing/Prefer Not to Answer	1	2.8%

Note: There were additional possible options for demographic variables which yielded zero responses. Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino, Native American or American Indian. Gender: Transgender, Prefer Not to Answer. Religious Affiliation: Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Other.

Table 2

Summary of Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges of Predictor Variables

Variable ($N = 72$)	M (SD)	Range
SECTotal	69.9 (24.67)	0, 100
SDSTotal	4.50 (1.18)	1, 6
NEOTrustTotal	3.28 (.90)	1, 5
Age	19.49 (2.33)	18, 32
Gender		1, 2
CRSTotal	3.59 (1.25)	1, 5
Target Religiousness		1, 2

Note: SECTotal represents participant scores on the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale; SDSTotal represents participant scores on the modified Social Distance Scale; NEOTrustTotal represents participant scores on the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory; CRSTotal represents participant scores on the Centrality of Religion Scale; Target Religiousness represents the religiousness of the targets, averaged across the three vignettes (Religious or Nonreligious).

Table 3

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Amount of Trust Placed in Others

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			t	p
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β		
NEOTrustTotal	.39	.13	.44	.30	.12	.34*	2.47	.02
SECTotal	-.01	.00	-.15	-.00	.00	-.14	-.97	.34
SDSTotal	.07	.08	.12	.09	.08	.01	.10	.92
Age	-.16	.23	-.10	-.21	.21	-.13	-.97	.34
Gender	.94	1.26	.10	1.09	1.16	.12	.93	.36
CRSTotal				.08	.07	.19	1.27	.21
Target's Religiousness				10.53	4.07	1.15*	2.59	.01
Interaction (-1,1 coding)				.12	.06	.89	2.00	.05
R ²	.28			.45				
ΔR^2	.19			.33				

Note: NEOTrustTotal represents participant scores on the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory; SECTotal represents participant scores on the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale; SDSTotal represents participant scores on the modified Social Distance Scale; CRSTotal represents participant scores on the Centrality of Religion Scale; Target Religiousness represents the religiousness of the target in the vignettes (Religious or Nonreligious); Interaction represents the interaction between participant scores on the Centrality of Religion Scale and the target's religiousness.

*. Significance at $p < .05$.

Table 4

Summary of Intercorrelations

Variable (<i>N</i> = 72)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. CRSTotal	1	-.05	.43**	.37**	.14	-.10	.22	-.06	-.11
2. SDSTotal		1	-.08	.19	.22	-.24*	.28*	.09	.11
3. SECTotal			1	.10	-.16	.12	-.13	-.16	-.09
4. NEOTrustTotal				1	.15	-.10	.54**	.06	.09
5. Target Religiousness					1	-.96**	.29*	.12	-.00
6. Interaction (-1, 1 coding)						1	-.21	-.13	.05
7. TrustDV							1	.06	.02
8. Gender								1	-.04
9. Age									1

Note: CRSTotal represents participant scores on the Centrality of Religion Scale; SDSTotal represents participant scores on the modified Social Distance Scale; SECTotal represents participant scores on the Social and Economic Conservatism Scale; NEOTrustTotal represents participant scores on the Trust Subscale of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory; Target Religiousness represents the religiousness of the target in the vignettes (Religious or Nonreligious); Interaction represents the interaction between participant scores on the Centrality of Religion Scale and the target's religiousness; TrustDV represents participant scores on the Situational Trust Survey.

** . Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5

Variable Descriptives for Mixed Analysis of Variance of Target Religiousness and the Vignettes (Neighbor, Doctor, Family Member Future Spouse).

Variable	M	SEM	95%CI
Target Religiousness			
Religious	4.60	.11	[4.39, 4.81]
Nonreligious	4.87	.10	[4.67, 5.01]
Vignette*			
Neighbor	4.48	.09	[4.30, 4.65]
Doctor	5.00	.08	[4.83, 5.16]
Family Member's Future Spouse	4.73	.09	[4.55, 4.90]

Note: All participants answered the same items for all three vignettes. Participants were randomly assigned as to the religiousness of the individual in the vignette.

*. Significant at the .05 level. Fisher's post-hoc comparisons showed each of the three conditions to differ significantly from one another.

Table 6

Summary of Mixed Analysis of Variance of Target Religiousness and the Vignettes (Neighbor, Doctor, Family Member's Future Spouse).

Variable	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	p-value
Vignette	9.43	4.72	22.81*	.00
Target Religiousness	3.90	3.90	3.39	.07
Vignette x Target Religiousness	.20	.10	.48	.62

Note: All participants answered the same items for all three vignettes. Participants were randomly assigned as to the religiousness of the individual in the vignette (Religious or Nonreligious).

*. Significant at the .05 level.

Table 7

Summary of Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance of Ratings of Atheist, Nonreligious, and Religious Individuals.

Variable		Mean Difference	Std. Error	p-value	95%CI
Atheist	Nonreligious	-2.175*	.299	.000	[-2.77,-1.58]
	Religious	-3.349*	.453	.000	[-4.26,-2.44]
Nonreligious	Religious	-1.175*	.346	.001	[-1.87,-.48]

Note: Atheist, nonreligious, and religious individuals were rated on a scale from 1 – 10 with 10 being most liked.

*. Significance at the .05 level.

APPENDIX A

Situational Trust Survey

Neighbor:

One day while doing housework, you glance out your kitchen window and see a moving truck with a new person appearing to move into the apartment next door that has been vacant for some time. You go over to introduce yourself and welcome the new person to the neighborhood and a conversation starts with your new neighbor. You find out that this person is (religious/nonreligious).

For each item below, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

I feel that I could trust this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would be friendly to this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would be wary of this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would continue contact with this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would consider this person to be trustworthy.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I feel that I could count on this person for help.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

This person is reliable.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

Doctor:

You have come down with an ache in your stomach and your regular doctor has recently moved out of the area. You decide to make an appointment with a doctor that is new to town and that you have never met. While in the exam room, the doctor, in an effort to get to know you a bit better, starts a conversation about your life and habits. During this brief conversation, you find out that this doctor is (religious/nonreligious).

For each item below, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

I feel that I could trust this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would be friendly to this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would be wary of this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would continue contact with this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would consider this person to be trustworthy.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I feel that I could count on this person for help.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

This person is reliable.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

Family Member Marriage:

You go home for the weekend to celebrate a family member's birthday. You are also excited to meet this family member's future spouse. At dinner, you begin talking to this new prospective family member in an attempt to get to know them better and you find out that he or she is (religious/nonreligious).

For each item below, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

I feel that I could trust this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would be friendly to this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would be wary of this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would continue contact with this person.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I would consider this person to be trustworthy.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

I feel that I could count on this person for help.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

This person is reliable.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

APPENDIX B

**Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS)
Huber and Huber (2012)**

Please read the following questions and respond to the option that best matches your opinion.

How often do you think about religious issues?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very Often

To what extent do you believe that God or something divine exists?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at All	Not Very Much	Moderately	Quite a Bit	Very Much So

How often do you take part in religious services?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very Often

How often do you pray?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very Often

How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine intervenes in your life?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very Often

How interested are you in learning more about religious topics?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at All	Not Very Much	Moderately	Quite a Bit	Very Much So

To what extent do you believe in an afterlife? (e.g. immortality of the soul, resurrection of the dead or reincarnation?)

1	2	3	4	5
Not at All	Not Very Much	Moderately	Quite a Bit	Very Much So

How important is it to take part in religious services?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at All	Not Very Much	Moderately	Quite a Bit	Very Much So

How important is personal prayer to you?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at All	Not Very Much	Moderately	Quite a Bit	Very Much So

How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine wants to communicate or to reveal something to you?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very Often

APPENDIX C

Trust Subscale
From the Revised NEO Personality Inventory
Costa and McCrae (1992)

For each item below, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

I trust others.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I believe that others have good intentions.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I suspect hidden motives in others.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I find it easy to trust someone again after trust has been broken.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I trust what people say.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I distrust people.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I believe that people are basically moral.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I believe in human goodness.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I think that all will be well.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I am wary of others.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I believe that people are essentially evil.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

I find it difficult to trust someone again after trust has been broken.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

APPENDIX D

**Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SECS) (Slider)
Everett, 2013**

**How positive or negative do you feel about each issue?
Please rate each item on a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 represents Very Negative and 100
represents Very Positive.**

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Abortion. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |
| 2. Welfare benefits. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |
| 3. Limited government. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |
| 4. Military and national security. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |
| 5. Religion. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |
| 6. Gun ownership. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |
| 7. Traditional marriage. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |
| 8. Traditional values. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |
| 9. Fiscal responsibility. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |
| 10. Business. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |
| 11. The family unit. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |
| 12. Patriotism. | ----- ----- ----- -----
0 25 50 75 100 |

APPENDIX E

**Modified Social Distance Scale
(Bogardus, 1933)**

Please read the following questions and respond to the option that best matches your opinion.

How willing are you to have a religious person as your spouse?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to have a nonreligious person as your next door neighbor?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to have a religious person as your close friend?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to have a nonreligious person as your spouse?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to want a religious person only as a visitor to the nation?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to work in the same office as a nonreligious person?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to have a religious person as your next door neighbor?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to have a nonreligious person as a speaking acquaintance?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to work in the same office as a religious person?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to want a nonreligious person debarred from the nation?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to have a religious person as a speaking acquaintance?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to have a nonreligious person as your close friend?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to want a religious person debarred from the nation?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

How willing are you to want a nonreligious person only as a visitor to the nation?

-3	-2	-1	1	2	3
Definitely Unwilling	Very Much Unwilling	Mildly Unwilling	Mildly Willing	Very Much Willing	Definitely Willing

APPENDIX F

Rating Item 1 (Slider)

**How would you rate the following, on a scale of 1 to 10,
with 1 being Not at All Liked and 10 being Highly Liked.**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

An Atheist **X**_____

A Nonreligious Person **X**_____

A Religious Person **X**_____

Rating Item 2

**Rank the following in order of preference,
with 1 being Most Preferred and 3 being Least Preferred.**

___ Atheist

___ Nonreligious

___ Religious

APPENDIX G

Demographics

Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Prefer not to answer

Ethnicity origin (or Race): Please specify your ethnicity.

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Native American or American Indian
- Asian / Pacific Islander
- Multi-racial
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

Age: What is your age? ____

Class Standing:

- First Year
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate

Religious Affiliation: To which religious group do you most affiliate with?

- Agnostic
- Atheist
- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Other
- I do not affiliate with any religious group
- Prefer not to answer

Worship Attendance: How often do you attend a worship service?

- Never
- Few times a year
- Once every other month
- Once a month
- More than once a month
- Once a week
- Prefer not to answer

APPENDIX H



COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

INFORMED CONSENT

My name is Kaitlyn Sawyer and I am a student at Georgia Southern University working towards receiving my Master's degree in Experimental Psychology. This research will aid in the completion of my graduation requirements. The purpose of this research is to examine several factors that may or may not influence the amount of trust one places in strangers and will take approximately half an hour to complete.

Participation in this research will include completion of a series of questionnaires assessing demographics and other personal characteristics and opinions.

In this research, you will **not** be asked to contribute any personal information and your responses will be kept strictly confidential. The tasks involved in the research (reading, answering questions, and making judgments about people or situations) carry no foreseeable physical, psychological, social, or legal risks beyond those experienced in daily life. If you wish to seek assistance following participation in this study, you may contact the Georgia Southern University Counseling Center at (912) 478-5541.

Benefits:

- a. The benefits to participants include an increased level of self-discovery, and an opportunity to learn about social science research.
- b. The benefits to society include an improved understanding of the factors that affect perceived trustworthiness of strangers.

For this study, only the primary researcher and faculty advisor will have access to participant information. This data will be collected electronically and will be stored in a file on a computer within the lab and will be disposed of after three years has passed following completion of the research. Deidentified or coded data from this study may be placed in a publicly available repository for study validation and further research. You will not be identified by name in the data set or any reports using information obtained from this study, and your confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

Participants have the right to ask questions and have those questions answered. If you have questions about this study, please contact the researcher named above or the researcher's faculty advisor, whose contact information is located at the end of the informed consent. For questions concerning your rights as a research participant, contact Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at (912) 478-0843.

Your participation in this study will fulfill 0.5 credit units of your “experiment participation” assignment in Introduction to Psychology (please see the handout provided in your class for details regarding your assignment). If you have met the criteria for that assignment, your participation in this study will provide you with 0.5 units of extra credit toward your grade if allowed by your instructor. Students enrolled in courses other than Introduction to Psychology who wish to participate will receive credit that will be decided by your course instructor. You will have other opportunities to fulfill this course requirement if you choose not to participate in this study by participating in another study or completing an alternative assignment.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may end your participation at any time by exiting the survey. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. There is no penalty for deciding not to participate in the study. If you feel uncomfortable at any time during the study, you can withdraw from the study without penalty. Your responses will be kept completely confidential, and will not be linked with your name in any way. You will still receive credit if you decide to withdraw from the study.

You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to participate in this research study. If you consent to participate in this research study and to the terms above, please click the “I agree” button below. This project has been reviewed and approved by the GSU Institutional Review Board under tracking number H_15190_.

[I AGREE]

Title of Project: Religion and Interpersonal Trust: An Individual Differences Analysis

Principal Investigator: Kaitlyn Sawyer, ks07225@georgiasouthern.edu

Faculty Advisor: Michael Nielsen, PhD., (912) 478-5122, mnelsen@georgiasouthern.edu