

Individuals in Religious Social Environments Research Essay

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Assignment #4: Essay

1. Write a summary for each of your resources. Use a Level 1 heading at the beginning of each summary. Level 2 and Level 3 headings are optional.

a. Include the following for each book from Assignment #2 (A minimum of two books (minimum of one published in the last five years) relevant to your chosen topic.)

- a short biography of the author and his or her credentials, and
- your assessment of each book's (a) readability, (b) presentation of the subject, and (c) relevance to your chosen topic.

b. Include the following for each journal article from Assignment #2 (A minimum of five primary research journal articles relevant to your chosen topic; four articles must be less than five years old.)

- the title, year, and author(s) of the research;
- the basic categories in the literature review section;
- a brief description of the research type and methods;
- a brief description of the population being studied and how the participants were selected for the research; and
- a brief description of the findings and conclusions.

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Book: *Music: Its Theologies and Spiritualities*

In *Music: Its Theologies and Spiritualities*, author Edward Foley provides a comprehensive analysis of the theology of music across various religious traditions. Foley is a Professor Emeritus of Liturgy and Music at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago and has authored and contributed to countless books and articles on the theology of worship in the church. He holds multiple graduate degrees and is a well-respected voice in the realm of worship and theology.

With Foley's work in both academic and pastoral settings, the book is written in a professional yet accessible style. With this being said, some theological concepts presented in the book require the reader to have some familiarity with the Christian faith. Foley presents on the theologies and spiritualities of music by integrating historical analysis with modern day case studies, offering various perspectives on how different religious traditions use music as an expression of their faith.

While *Music: Its Theologies and Spiritualities* does present considerations for the intersection of religious experiences and personal faith, its primary purpose is to offer multiple perspectives on the theology of worship. Although aspects of Foley's work help build a framework for individuals in religious social environments, upon review, the book would not serve as a strong primary source for my research.

Book: *Thoughts on the Value of Feelings in Religion*

In the seminal work *Thoughts on the Value of Feelings in Religion*, 19-century theologian John Spadling presents an argument for the balanced integration of emotions and intellect in religious life. Spadling served as a Catholic author and bishop during his career, as

well as the co-founder of the Catholic University of America. Due to its age, *Thoughts on the Value of Feelings in Religion* is a more challenging read for the modern researcher in light of its formal and antiquated writing style.

Spadling's nuanced argument for the balance of intellect and feeling within religious experiences critiques an overly rationalistic interpretation of faith while emphasizing the necessity of genuine emotional engagement within religious experiences. Spadling's work is immensely relevant to my research interest in individuals in religious social environments, providing valuable context for modern debates on the balance between reason and emotion in faith. While often older in age and contextualized to a different era, seminal works provide foundational knowledge for modern social research.

Article: "Music, Emotion, and Relationship in Christian Worship"

Publication Details

"Music, Emotion, and Relationship in Christian Worship" was published in 2021 by Nathan Myrick.

Categories in Literature Review

Categories in the literature review include the emotional impact of music in worship, the role of music in fostering communal relationships, theological perspectives on worship music, and the psychological function of music in religious experience.

Research Type and Methods

This mixed-methods study combined ethnographic observations of worship services with structured interviews of worship leaders and congregants. The researcher conducted fieldwork in multiple church settings, recording musical styles, lyrical themes, and congregational

engagement. Interviews explored participants' emotional responses to worship music and its influence on their spiritual life.

Population and Selection

The study focused on Christian congregations using both traditional hymns and contemporary worship music. Participants included clergy, worship leaders, and congregants from diverse denominational backgrounds.

Findings and Conclusions

The study found that music serves as a key facilitator of emotional and spiritual engagement in worship. It strengthens communal bonds, enhances personal faith experiences, and provides an avenue for emotional expression in religious settings.

Article: “The Embodiment of Worship: Relations Among Postural, Psychological, and Physiological Aspects of Religious Practice”

Publication Details

“The Embodiment of Worship: Relations Among Postural, Psychological, and Physiological Aspects of Religious Practice” was published in 2021 by Patty Van Cappellen and Meghan Edwards.

Categories in Literature Review

Categories in the literature review include the role of bodily posture in religious experiences, psychological effects of embodied religious practices, physiological responses to worship behaviors, and cross-cultural perspectives on religious embodiment.

Research Type and Methods

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining experimental research and physiological measurement. Participants engaged in various worship postures (kneeling,

standing, arms raised), and their psychological responses were measured through self-reported emotions and religious feelings. Physiological responses, including heart rate variability and galvanic skin response, were also recorded.

Population and Selection

The study recruited participants from Christian and multi-faith backgrounds to examine the universality of embodied religious experiences. Participants were selected through religious organizations and university subject pools to ensure diversity in religious affiliation and worship experience.

Findings and Conclusions

The study found that worship postures significantly influenced emotional and physiological responses. Certain postures, such as kneeling, were associated with heightened humility and reverence, while more expansive postures correlated with increased feelings of joy and empowerment. These findings support the idea that religious experiences are deeply embodied, with posture playing a key role in shaping spiritual and emotional states.

Article: “Upward Spirals of Positive Emotions and Religious Behaviors”

Publication Details

“Upward Spirals of Positive Emotions and Religious Behaviors” was published in 2021 by Patty Van Cappellen, Meghan Edwards, and Barbara Fredrickson.

Categories in Literature Review

Categories in the literature review include positive emotions and religious engagement, the broaden-and-build theory applied to religion, the role of gratitude, awe, and joy in religious experiences, and the long-term psychological benefits of religious emotions.

Research Type & Methods

This theoretical overview synthesized findings from multiple empirical studies on the intersection of positive emotions and religious behaviors. The researchers used the broaden-and-build framework to explain how positive emotions encourage deeper religious engagement, leading to a reinforcing cycle of faith and emotional well-being.

Population and Selection

The review included studies across various religious traditions and cultural contexts, drawing from both experimental and observational research. No new participants were directly recruited for this study.

Findings and Conclusions

The study concludes that positive emotions contribute to religious commitment by fostering an “upward spiral,” where engaging in religious practices enhances emotional well-being, leading to continued religious involvement and stronger social ties within faith communities.

Article: “Variation and Consistency in the Links Between Religion and Emotion Regulation”

Publication Details

“Variation and Consistency in the Links Between Religion and Emotion Regulation” was published in 2021 by Aviad Vishkin.

Categories in Literature Review

Categories in the literature review include religious coping mechanisms, emotion regulation strategies in different religious traditions, the role of cultural variation in religious emotional responses, and the psychological benefits and limitations of religious emotion regulation.

Research Type and Methods

This article systematically reviewed existing research on religious emotion regulation, synthesizing data from multiple empirical studies. The researcher examines findings from psychological and sociological studies to evaluate how different religious traditions approach emotional control and expression.

Population and Selection

The review includes data from a broad range of cultural and religious backgrounds, comparing emotion regulation strategies in Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and other traditions. No new participants were directly recruited.

Findings and Conclusions

The study found that religion generally enhances emotional well-being, but different faith traditions promote varying emotion regulation strategies. Some emphasize suppression of negative emotions, while others encourage expressive coping mechanisms, highlighting the complexity of religion's role in emotional regulation.

Article: "Religiosity and Desired Emotions: Belief Maintenance or Prosocial Facilitation?"

Publication Details

"Religiosity and Desired Emotions: Belief Maintenance or Prosocial Facilitation?" was published in 2020 by Aviad Vishkin, Shalom Schwartz, Pazit Ben-Nun Bloom, Nuri Solak, and Maya Tamir.

Categories in Literature Review

Categories in the literature review include the relationship between religiosity and emotional goals, emotional experiences that reinforce religious beliefs, emotions that facilitate

social cohesion within religious communities, and cross-cultural differences in religious emotional preferences.

Research Type and Methods

This study used a combination of experimental and survey-based methodologies. Participants completed surveys assessing their religious beliefs and emotional goals, followed by controlled experiments measuring their emotional responses to religious and secular stimuli.

Population and Selection

The study included participants from diverse religious and non-religious backgrounds, recruited through academic research panels. Researchers ensured a balanced representation of different faith traditions to analyze variations in religious emotional goals.

Findings and Conclusions

This article concludes that religious individuals prioritize emotions that strengthen their faith (such as awe and gratitude) while also valuing emotions that promote social harmony (such as compassion and humility). The findings suggest that religious emotional goals serve both personal and interpersonal functions, influencing belief maintenance and prosocial behavior.

Works Cited

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