The Association Between Religion and Self-Rated Health: A Case of Taiwan

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Background

- Compare to the rest of the world, Taiwan has the second highest score on the Religious Diversity Index.
- 80% of Taiwanese consider themselves as religious.
- The aims of this study are to explore the correlation between religious belief, religious behavior and self-rated health in Taiwan.

Methods

Data sources and participants

- The data for this study came from the 2012 World Values Survey Taiwan .
- After eliminating cases with missing values, the final sample consisted of 1235 individuals from Taiwan (mean age =45.45, SD = 17.279; 50.3% women).

Variables

- Dependent variable: Self-rated health (health/poor)
- Independent variables: 1. Religious belief (high/low)
  2. Religious behavior (high/middle/low)
- Control variables: Gender, age, education, area of residence, marital status and perceived socioeconomic status.

Statistical analysis

- Pearson's chi-square test was used to examine the relationship among religious belief, religious behavior and self-rated health .
- Binary logistic regression was used to explore the correlation between religion and health by controlling for individual variables such as gender, age, education, residence, marital status and perceived socio-economic status.

Results

Self-rate health / Religious belief / Religious behavior

The percentage of self-rate health
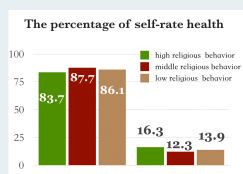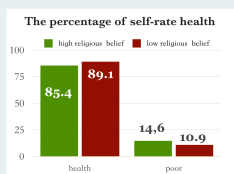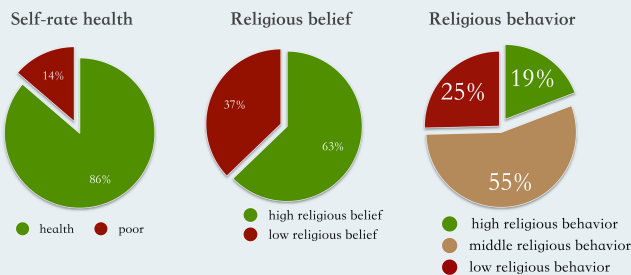
- The relationship between religious belief and self-rated health was near the significant level (p=0.068).
- There was no significant difference between religious behavior and self-rated health (p=0.231).

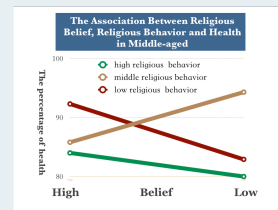The Association Between Religious Belief, Religious Behavior and Health
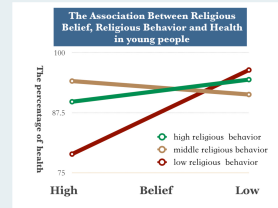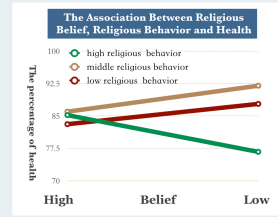
- There was an interaction effect between religious belief and religious behavior on health for different age groups .

The Association Between Religious Belief, Religious Behavior and Health in young people

The Association Between Religious Belief, Religious Behavior and Health in young people				
	Self-rated health			
	β	SE	OR	P-value
N=492				
Religious belief				
High	-0.6601	0.4753	0.517	0.1649
Low	-	-	-	-
Religious behavior				
High	-0.5999	1.0800	0.549	0.5786
Middle	-	-	-	-
Low	-0.9373	0.6687	0.392	0.1610
Religious belief*Religious behavior				
Low*Middle	2.255	0.8804	9.535	0.0104
High*Middle	0.5221	1.2921	1.686	0.6861

Note: Control variables included gender, age, education, residence, marital status and perceived socio-economic status.

- The findings suggest that young people (18-40 years) who ranked themselves as low for religious belief and middle for religious behavior rate their own health as worse than those who ranked themselves low on religious belief and religious behavior.
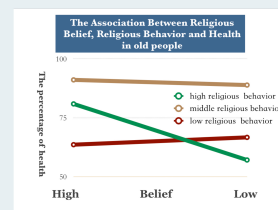

The Association Between Religious Belief, Religious Behavior and Health in Middle-aged

The Association Between Religious Belief, Religious Behavior and Health in middle-aged				
	Self-rated health			
	β	SE	OR	P-value
N=447				
Religious belief				
High	1.1921	0.5764	3.294	0.0386
Low	-	-	-	-
Religious behavior				
High	1.1791	1.2178	3.251	0.3329
Middle	-	-	-	-
Low	1.6219	0.7018	5.063	0.0208
Religious belief*Religious behavior				
Low*Middle	-2.1788	0.9676	0.113	0.0243
High*Middle	-0.9465	1.2716	0.388	0.4567

Note: Control variables included gender, age, education, residence, marital status and perceived socio-economic status.

- The findings suggest that middle-aged individuals (40-60 years) who ranked themselves higher on religious beliefs rate their own health as worse compared to those who ranked themselves low on religious belief.
- The findings suggest that middle-aged individuals (40-60 years) who ranked themselves low on religious behavior rate their own health as worse compared to those who ranked their religious behavior as middle.
- The findings suggest that middle-aged individuals (40-60 years) who ranked themselves low on religious belief and middle on religious behavior rate their own health as worse compared to those who ranked themselves low on religious belief and religious behavior.

The Association Between Religious Belief, Religious Behavior and Health in old people

The Association Between Religious Belief, Religious Behavior and Health in old people				
	Self-rated health			
	β	SE	OR	P-value
N=226				
Religious belief				
High	12.0297	202.1	167661	0.9525
Low	-	-	-	-
Religious behavior				
High	11.6614	202.1	116006	0.9540
Middle	-	-	-	-
Low	12.2166	202.1	202116	0.9518
Religious belief*Religious behavior				
Low*Middle	-12.1609	202.1	0.0000052	0.9520
High*Middle	-12.1437	202.1	0.0000053	0.9521

Note: Control variables included gender, age, education, residence, marital status and perceived socio-economic status.

- The findings suggest that for individuals aged 60-85 there was no correlation between religious belief, religious behavior, and self-rated health.

Conclusion

- The findings show an association between religion and health; but the strength and direction of the association are difference for different age groups.