



The Impact of Spiritual and Religious Activities on the Well-being and Academic Achievement of the College students at San Sebastian College Recoletos de Cavite

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ABSTRACT

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This study investigates the influence of spiritual and religious activities on the well-being and academic success of college students at San Sebastian College Recoletos de Cavite, aiming to address existing gaps in understanding within diverse cultural and religious contexts like the Philippines. Utilizing a quantitative approach, data from 350 randomly selected students were analyzed, revealing a minimal positive linear correlation between engagement in religious activities and overall well-being, alongside a negligible linear relationship with academic performance. ANOVA findings underscored significant variations in impact across different academic disciplines, emphasizing the need for tailored interventions to support students' holistic development. The results suggest a limited association



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between engagement in religious activities and student outcomes, prompting further research to explore the roles of spirituality and religious engagement in enhancing student well-being and academic success.

INTRODUCTION

The study begins by examining the relationship between religion and the well-being of people, focusing on how religiosity and engagement in religious activities affect mental health (Bowman & Small, 2012). Several studies have found a link between religion and mental health, suggesting that religion provides meaning, purpose in life, and a sense of well-being (Taheri-Kharamkeh, 2016). Moreover, religious experiences have often been associated with positive mental health (Papaleontiou-Louca, 2021). The connection between religion and quality of life indicates that religiosity, particularly religious activities like church attendance, has a modest positive effect on subjective well-being (Michalos, 1993). Religiosity is beneficial to people, including older adults (Lawler-Row & Elliott, 2009). This is especially true for students studying in Catholic institutions, where their spiritual well-being is nurtured through religious activities. In these settings, religious views are seen as potential causes and outcomes of happiness, love, harmony, and dedication (Pong, 2018). Likewise, there is a positive correlation between students' participation in moral and religious activities and academic achievement (Kitjaroonchai & Hungyo, 2017).

Some might ask, how can religiosity influence one's academic success? Is studying diligently enough to get a high score in an exam, or do we need to ask for a miracle from God? Can a bright student fail to get good grades if he does not pray at all? Can anyone be so sure to pass an exam by entrusting everything to God without studying the lessons? Is it reasonable to rely on God, abiding by the notion that 'nothing is impossible with God'? Does kneeling and praying guarantee us success in our academic endeavors? Nonetheless, these queries are the enigmas of the relationship between religious practices and the academic achievement of students. Studies show that despite the ambiguity, there is a genuine relationship between religiosity and the academic success of students.

The study examined how students' participation in Islamic religious activities affected their academic performance, finding that these activities positively influenced above-average grades (Karani & Taufik, 2020). By encouraging moral standards, self-discipline, family stability, and the provision of strong role models, especially for underprivileged youth, religious practice dramatically increases scholastic performance, particularly for those with low incomes. Religious participation is an important component of public welfare and societal value since

it helps deter criminal behavior and is particularly advantageous for those who participate voluntarily (Fagan, 2010). Similarly, teenagers' academic performance is positively impacted by their involvement in religion. This is partially due to the fact that religious participation promotes engagement in extracurricular activities and fosters the development of supportive social interactions, both among peers and between generations, which in turn improve academic performance and school engagement (Glanville et al., 2008).

However, there are studies that highlight the varying impact of religious involvement on academic performance across different racial and ethnic groups. Owens (2013) examines the role of campus religious group participation in mediating the positive relationship between high school religious service attendance and college grades. The findings indicate that for Hispanic and some black students, campus religious group involvement mediates this positive relationship, while for Asian and white students, high school service attendance is positively associated with grades regardless of campus religious group participation. Another study explores how spirituality, religion, and the African American church influence educational outcomes for Black students. Key findings indicate that Black students with higher religious activity and stronger religious convictions reported higher grades, better self-concept, positive feelings about school, more parental involvement, and fewer disciplinary issues (Toldson & Anderson, 2010).

Recognizing the fundamental link between spiritual development and key outcomes like well-being and academic success, this research seeks to investigate the impact of religious and spiritual activities on college students. The connection between spiritual engagement and academic achievement among college students has garnered increasing attention in academic circles. This study endeavors to address three primary inquiries: firstly, the extent to which students' involvement in spiritual and religious activities influences their well-being; secondly, the significant relationship between such engagement and academic performance; and finally, any noticeable differences in these impacts among students.

Existing research indicates a positive correlation between participation in spiritual and religious activities and various aspects of well-being, including mental health, life satisfaction, and academic outcomes such as GPA (Kitjaroonchai & Hungyo, 2017). However, further exploration within diverse cultural and religious contexts, particularly in the Philippines, is warranted. To bridge this gap, the present study employs a quantitative approach to examine the relationship between students' engagement in spiritual and religious activities and their overall well-being and academic achievement. By collecting data from San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite through self-administered surveys

and conducting statistical analyses, the findings of this research aim to inform interventions and policies that foster holistic student development within the college environment, thus contributing to the broader discourse on spirituality, well-being, and academic achievement among college students at San Sebastian.

FRAMEWORK

The framework for this study on the impact of spiritual and religious activities on the well-being and academic achievement of college students integrates theories from psychology, education, and spirituality. The research framework illustrates the relationships between the variables: (1) **Independent Variables:** Participation in spiritual and religious activities (e.g., frequency of prayer, attending religious services, meditation, and participation in faith-based community service). (2) **Dependent Variables:** Well-being: Measured through emotional, psychological, and social well-being using validated scales. (3) **Academic Achievement:** Measured through self-reported GPA, academic motivation, and engagement. (4) **Moderating Variables:** Demographic factors such as gender, age, religious affiliation, and socioeconomic status may influence the strength of the relationships between spiritual/religious activities, well-being, and academic achievement.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to (1) examine the relationship between participation in spiritual and religious activities and the well-being of college students, (2) analyze the and religious activities on academic achievement, (3) identify the specific spiritual and religious practices that have the most significant influence on well-being and academic success, (4) explore the role of demographic factors in the relationship between spiritual and religious activities and students' well-being and academic achievement, (5) explore how college students perceive the role of spiritual and religious activities in coping with academic stress, and (6) provide recommendations for universities to support spiritual well-being as a means to enhance student well-being and academic performance.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research implements a quantitative approach to explore the influence of spiritual and religious engagements on the well-being and academic performance of college students at San Sebastian College Recoletos de Cavite. From the total student population, 350 participants were randomly selected based on calculations using G-Power. The study employed a self-administered Likert questionnaire to gather data and the data gathered is limited to the different courses offered to the students. Cultural aspect, upbringing, and coping mechanism of the students are not particularly emphasized in the survey questionnaire.

Participants

The survey instrument evaluates the frequency of students' involvement in spiritual and religious activities, as well as their levels of well-being and academic success. The collected data will undergo analysis using various methods: Regression analysis will address the impact of participation in spiritual and religious activities on student well-being; Correlation analysis will examine the relationship between participation in religious activities and academic achievement; and Analysis of variance will identify significant differences in the effects of religious and spiritual activities on student well-being and academic performance. Since, this concern is not very common to many college institution, there are limited sources related to the study.

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the study, including obtaining approval from the institutional review board and ensuring participant confidentiality and voluntary participation.

Instrumentation

To assess the impact of spiritual and religious activities on the well-being and academic achievement of college students, a quantitative surveys interviews. The survey will collect demographic information, including age, gender, year level, and academic program. Academic achievement will be measured through self-reported Grade Point Average (GPA) or latest grades, alongside an evaluation of study habits, academic motivation, and engagement in learning activities. These methods will provide a comprehensive understanding of how spiritual and religious practices relate to the overall well-being and academic success of college students.

Data Gathering Procedure

Participant Selection involved employing a stratified sampling method to ensure diversity across various year levels, academic programs, and religious affiliations. To foster inclusivity, voluntary participation was encouraged, and informed consent was obtained from all participants.

For Survey Administration, the survey was distributed either physically on campus or through an online platform, ensuring that participants' anonymity and confidentiality in their responses were maintained.

Research Ethics Protocol

Informed Consent: Ensure that participants are fully informed about the nature of the research, its purpose, and their role in the study. They should know that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

Confidentiality and Anonymity: All personal data will be kept confidential, and survey responses will be anonymized to protect the identity of participants. Interview data will also be anonymized in any reports or publications.

Sensitivity to Beliefs: Respect the religious and spiritual beliefs of all participants. Ensure that no questions or procedures are intrusive or disrespectful.

Mental Health Support: If any participant experiences distress related to the topics of spirituality, well-being, or academics during the study, researchers should provide information about campus mental health resources or offer referrals to counselors.

Data Security: All data, whether digital or physical, will be stored securely and accessible only to authorized personnel. Digital data will be password-protected, and physical data (e.g., signed consent forms) will be stored in a locked cabinet.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

By exploring how spiritual and religious activities intersect with the well-being and academic achievement of college students, the study explores an essential and diverse aspect of student life utilizing these tools namely; Regression, Correlation, and Analysis of Variance in analyzing the gathered data.

Table 1
Regression Analysis Result

Multiple R	0.019799299
R Square	0.000392012
Adjusted R Square	-0.002204372
Standard Error	0.095549003
Observations	387

Table 1 displays the outcomes of a regression analysis examining the impact of engagement in spiritual and religious activities on the overall well-being of college students. The Multiple R coefficient stands at around 0.0198, indicating an exceedingly weak positive linear correlation between participation in religious activities and well-being. The R Square value, approximately 0.000392, suggests that merely 0.04% of the variability in well-being can be clarified by religious activity. Consequently, it implies that religious activity alone possesses minimal explanatory capacity for fluctuations in well-being. This finding correlates with Garssen et al. (2020), who found that involvement in public religious activities and the significance of religion exhibit a slight positive impact on mental health of the students. Similarly, a study involving 989 Australian adults found a positive association between three measures of Christian faith (belief in God, personal prayer, and church attendance) and psychological well-being (Francis & Kaldor, 2002).

Furthermore, in the article of Lucchetti et al. (2021), there is significant evidence for the positive impact of spirituality/religiousness (S/R) on various mental health disorders, such as depression, suicidality, and substance use, and emphasizes the need for further study on the mechanisms and interventions related to S/R. Though the article also recommends that mental health providers consider patients’ S/R to provide holistic and patient-centered care.

Table 2
Correlation Result

	Academic Achievement	Activity
Academic Achievement	1	0.008273501
Activity	0.008273501	1

Table 2 presents the correlation coefficient between academic achievement and engagement in religious activities, yielding a value of $r=0.008273501$, which is very close to zero. This suggests an almost negligible linear relationship between

participation in religious activities and academic performance. In Napone and Lagura’s (2023) study, it was found that students generally reported high levels of spirituality, with an average score of 4.23, alongside predominantly strong academic performance. However, the correlation between spirituality and academic performance was observed to be positive yet weak, and it did not reach statistical significance (Pearson’s R Correlation coefficient: 0.049; p-value: 0.347), possibly due to consistently high levels of spirituality among students.

The correlation result, though not negative, gears to another aspect of the influence of religious activity to the academic endeavor of students. It means to say that the effects are not always positive. A study conducted that; ineffective teaching strategies are the main cause of the widespread failure of Christian Religious Studies (CRS) students. The study draws attention to problems like inadequate pedagogical knowledge, moral decay, a lack of enthusiasm among educators, inadequate communication strategies, and the abstract nature of the subject. It also highlights the necessity of solutions that meet the demands of educational stakeholders (Kesmen & Mellemut, 2022). Similar to this, a study examines the impact of religious affiliation and religiosity on student performance in marketing classes at a U.S. university. It finds positive effects for Christianity, no effects for Judaism, Buddhism, and Hinduism, and negative effects for Islam, leading to policy recommendations for campus life improvements (Li & Murphy, 2018).

Table 3
ANOVA summary of the impact of spiritual and religious activities on well-being and academic achievement of student in SSCRdC when group according to courses

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	1.038831695	9	0.115425744	42.94173809	2.50915E-06	3.178893104
Columns	0.078588188	1	0.078588188	29.23709435	0.000428987	5.117355029
Error	0.024191655	9	0.002687962			
Total	1.141611537	19				

The variances in the impact of spiritual and religious activities on both well-being and academic achievement across different courses are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that the influence of participation in these activities varies notably among different academic disciplines. Moreover, the disparities in how spiritual and religious activities affect well-being as opposed

to academic achievement are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This implies that the impact of engaging in such activities differs significantly between students' overall well-being and their academic performance.

The ANOVA findings further highlight the significance of both the distinctions among courses and the disparities between well-being and academic achievement ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that the effects of spiritual and religious activities on students' well-being and academic performance not only vary across different courses but also differ distinctly between well-being and academic achievement. In David et al. (2022) study, positive and noteworthy correlations were uncovered between forgiveness, gratitude, happiness, and academic performance. Specifically, spirituality was identified as a moderator in the relationship between self-forgiveness and student happiness. Moreover, personal prayer plays a dominant role in mediating the relationship between religious orientation and psychological well-being. The findings suggest that personal prayer is an important factor in the theory of religious coping, influencing psychological well-being more significantly than other measures of religiosity (Maltby et al., 2010).

Additionally, spirituality and happiness played moderating roles in the association between gratitude and academic performance. This study, rooted in positive psychology, introduces an innovative analytical framework supported by theoretical foundations, emphasizing the predictive significance of moderated-mediation in students' academic achievements and well-being (David et al. 2022). The study of Berhanu and Shiferaw (2023) found a positive correlation between religious practice and healthy lifestyle behavior, with religious practice significantly predicting healthy lifestyle behavior. However, the study did not find any relationship between students' academic achievement and their religious practice or healthy lifestyle behavior.

Such findings might suggest that the spiritual dimension of students has nothing to do with their academic success, as it is described as the need for meaning, purpose, and fulfillment in life; hope/will to live; belief, and faith (Ross, 1995). These are different aspects and are dealt with differently, which is reasonable for those who abide by reason. Nonetheless, spirituality encourages resilience and achievement motivation, which favorably impact academic involvement. As a result, students who are deeply spiritual are more likely to be resilient and driven to succeed, both of which enhance their academic engagement (Imron et al., 2023). As stated in the letter of James 2:17, 'faith without works is dead' (NABRE). There will be no merit if we just pray and sit down. Our participation

is needed to succeed in all our endeavors, including academics.

CONCLUSION

The study explored the relationship between students' engagement in spiritual and religious activities, overall well-being, and academic performance at San Sebastian College-Recoletos de Cavite. The findings revealed a minor positive linear correlation between participation in religious activities and overall well-being, indicating that while religious engagement contributes to student mental health, its impact is modest. Similarly, the analysis showed a negligible link between religious activities and academic performance, suggesting that participation in such activities alone does not significantly enhance academic outcomes.

Moreover, the results underscored the importance of academic discipline, with significant variations in how spiritual and religious activities affected well-being and academic achievement across different fields of study. This highlights the necessity for tailored interventions that consider the unique dynamics of each discipline to foster holistic student development effectively.

Despite these findings, the research points to a broader need for continuous exploration into the influences of spirituality and religious engagement on student success. Future studies should address existing gaps, such as the roles of demographic factors, cultural influences, and the psychological mechanisms linking spiritual engagement to well-being and academic performance. By doing so, educators and policymakers can better understand how to encourage positive outcomes among students, promoting a balanced approach to academic and personal development.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

It is recommended to embark on a longitudinal study that employs a mixed-methods approach to dig into the enduring impacts of spiritual and religious activities on students' well-being and academic performance over time. This study should incorporate qualitative interviews to capture nuanced experiences and perceptions, alongside objective measures of academic success such as GPA and completion rates. By integrating these diverse methodologies, researchers can gain a comprehensive understanding of how engagement in spiritual and religious activities shapes students' lives and achievements in the long term.

Another recommendation is to undertake a cross-cultural comparative study to investigate the influence of cultural differences on the relationship between

spirituality, well-being, and academic achievement among college students across varied cultural contexts. This study would involve employing advanced statistical analyses and drawing upon frameworks from cultural psychology to explore the complex interplay between culture and these key variables. By examining how cultural factors shape individuals' experiences and outcomes, researchers can gain valuable insights into the universality or context-dependence of the relationships under study.

Additionally, it is suggested to explore the potential moderating effects of personality traits, coping strategies, and social support on the connection between engagement in spiritual and religious activities, well-being, and academic performance. Employing structural equation modeling and mediation analyses can help uncover the complicated interactions and pathways through which these variables influence each other. By understanding how individual differences and coping mechanisms impact the relationship between spirituality, well-being, and academic performance, educators and practitioners can develop tailored interventions to support students' holistic development and academic success.

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