

DOES SPIRITUALITY OR RELIGIOSITY IMPACT MARKETING STUDENT PERFORMANCE?

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the authors found that demographic characteristics of a person do indeed have an impact on his/her spirituality and religiosity. However, surprisingly and contrary to expectations, a person's spirituality and religiosity do not have an impact on that person's attitude toward business ethics. As expected men are more religious than are women. The reason for this finding in college-aged males may be that men see going to church as a social activity and possibly a chance to develop a perception of being religious for others to see. However, against predictions and against findings in previous literature, men are also more spiritual than are women. Therefore, perhaps the social aspect of attending church and demonstrating a perception for others holds less credence in the face of this finding. Perhaps college-aged men truly are more spiritual and their manifestation of this spirituality at this age is to be active in an organized religion, thus accounting for the religiosity aspect.

The findings showed that Caucasians are more spiritual than are Hispanics and that there is no differences between the two on religiosity. Also, majors appear to attract different types of people, or the majors themselves may contribute to a person's spirituality and religiosity. It appears that the least spiritual students are management majors because both marketing and accounting students are significantly more spiritual than are management majors. Further, it appears that accounting students are less religious than are any of the other majors assessed in this study in that marketing majors are significantly more religious than are non-business majors and accounting students are less spiritual than are non-business majors.

An individual's politics do not influence his/her spirituality; however, politics do appear to influence a person's religiosity. Republicans and Independents were both found to be more religious than were Democrats. Because of the conservative reputation of the members of the Republican Party, strong members are most likely to wish to continue to enhance that representation by belonging to and being active in organized religions. Further, neither age nor income influenced a person's spirituality or religiosity. Caution should be used when

generalizing these findings from our student sample to the overall U.S. population because of the concentration of ages and incomes amongst college students. Though ages of our respondents was between 20 and 40 years old, 108 out of 116 (93.1%) were between the ages of 20 and 25. Thus, the low variation in ages perhaps made this finding questionable. Also, though some students reported higher incomes, up to \$150,000, the higher income students may have been reporting the income of their parents and thus the amounts may not accurately represent their own personal income.

Another significant finding of this study is that it demonstrates that spirituality and religiosity are distinctly different constructs and should be considered as such. As dependent variables, each was impacted separately and differently by the various demographic independent variables. However, this difference does not show up with these two variables as independent variables. Surprisingly, neither spirituality nor religiosity has any influence on a person's attitude toward business ethics.

Finally, since spirituality and religiosity had no direct impact on the outcome of this study – attitude toward business ethics – an indirect impact of the seven demographic variables on that outcome failed to be confirmed. However, logic suggested that some of the demographic variables still may have an impact, and if not indirectly through spirituality and/or religiosity, then a direct impact. For example, in post hoc statistics analyses, it was found that both academic major and political party affiliation directly influence a person's attitude toward business ethics. Marketing majors have a less positive attitude toward business ethics than do either management majors or non-business majors. However, marketing majors and general business have a more positive attitude toward business ethics than do accounting majors.