THE IMPACT OF SHORT-TERM MISSION TRIPS ON RELIGIOSITY AND
MOTIVATIONS FOR HELPING IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

By
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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education
School of Behavioral Sciences
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ABSTRACT

There is an abundant amount of research on the negative aspects of short-term mission trips; however, there is a lack of literature that reflects the religiosity of college students and studies using religious assessments for the specific age range of 18-25. The current research intends to answer the following three questions: Does going on short-term mission trips make a difference in religiosity in the lives of college students who participate? What is the mean difference in religiosity practices between college students that participated in short-term mission trips compared to those that did not? What are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer? This research uses questions from the Belief Into Action (BIAC) Scale, and The Attitudes Towards Helping Others (AHO) scale. College students from a multi-site, religious congregation of approximately 25,000 members, that meets in 14 campuses in South Florida, who went on mission trips and college students that did not participate in mission trips were assessed through an online survey via surveymonkey.com. On average, those with mission experience have a higher score than those that did not on the BIAC, but it is not statistically significant. The mean difference was slightly in favor of those college students that did participate in at least one short-term mission trip. The motivating factors were inconclusive, but the AHO items were combined to create a social factor revealing college students attending a Christian college showed statistically higher pro-social values such as benevolence and universalism than secular college students. This study is imperative due to the gap in the literature on this subject and because the results of this study could have an impact on church programming, college recruiting, volunteer retention, and growth in non-profit involvement.

Keywords: short-term mission trips, religiosity, college students, motivating factors.
Dedication

This study is dedicated to my parents, Fernando and Minerva Cepeda, immigrants from Mexico, who instilled in me the values of hard work, perseverance, and service to others.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank God for calling this study out in me. I would like to thank my husband Sean and my son Andy for their support throughout this arduous journey. I would like to thank Dr. Tina Dochniak for first inspiring me to further my education and to Dr. Shelby Mosos, who helped me along the way. I would like to thank my chair, Dr. Stacey Lilley and my reader, Dr. Kristy Ford for guiding me through the dissertation process. I would also like to thank Dr. Bill Gallo at Vital Statistics for his assistance and my editors Dr. William Gribbin and Carolyn Master. Finally, to Christ Fellowship Missions and Children’s Impact Network for putting me out in the missionary field in the first place.
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List of Abbreviations

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)

Attitude Towards Helping Others (AHO)

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Belief into Action Scale (BIAC)

Digital Object Identifier (Doi)

Edition (ed.)

Educator (Ed.)

Experiential Learning Theory (ELT)

Etcetera (Etc.)

Gregory School of Pharmacology (GSOP)

Hypothesis (H)

Hours (hrs.)

Maximum (max)

Minimum (min)

Number (n)

Non-Government Organization (NGO)

New International Version (NIV)

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Probability Value (p-value)

Question (Q)

Research Question (RQ)

Reference Error; deleted cell (ref)
Standard Deviation (SD)
Standard Error (SE)
Short-Term Mission (STM)
Short-Term Mission Trip (STMT)
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The researcher has many years of experience in participating in short-term mission trips with various churches and religious organizations. While teaching as an Adjunct Professor at both a Christian college and a secular state college, the researcher found that there was a big difference in religiosity practices between these students. She noticed that the students at the Christian college made time for volunteering each month. They also practiced prayer and tithing more than the students at the secular college. Another factor observed was the increased fervor of the Christian group’s attitude towards service. They were excited about it and it was part of their normal activities. Why did this group have such a different view of religiosity than that of the other students? The researcher theorized that the disparity between the two groups was due to the participation or lack thereof in short-term mission trips. Therefore, the research question was posed: Does participating in short-term mission trips account for the difference in the religiosity between these students? Equally as intriguing, she wondered why do college students volunteer in general? So, it was out of observation and shear curiosity that this study was birthed.

Background

A short-term mission trip can have a wide variety of definitions, from medical trips to educational trips. For the purpose of this study, a short-term mission trip can be defined as a church sponsored, religious event, with the focus being on service to community and sharing and teaching people the tenets of Christianity. Priest, Dischinger, Rasmussen and Brown (2006) described short-term mission trips as “explicitly intended to serve and help others in distant places” (p.434). Hopkins, Olson, Baillie Smith, and Laurie (2015) posited that mission trips can be defined as having a religious focus matched with global travel and evangelism. Typically,
short-term mission trips are coordinated by religious institutions and planned throughout the year around local school schedules to better assist church members in planning their holidays (Priest et al., 2006). Large churches have mission departments that are exclusively dedicated to planning and executing short-term mission trips. These departments are responsible for connecting with organizations, locally and abroad, and to partner with them to fill the greatest need. There is usually an allotment of funding for trips throughout the year. Furthermore, churches encourage pastors of student ministries to take groups on short-term mission trips during spring break and summer break as confirmed by Priest et al. (2006). These trips have become the normal practice for churches and students throughout the year. Thanks to the ongoing participation in short-term mission trips, participants are assisting in the continuation of the evolution of Christianity world-wide (Offutt, 2011).

Mission trips have long been associated with expanding the modern church since the 19th and 20th centuries (Koll, 2010). Although historically mission trips have been known to be a long-term commitment, even lifelong, modern mission trips have evolved to include short-term trips as well (Roldan, 2018). The U.S. sends the most people on short-term mission trips (Caldron, Impens, Pavlova, and Groot, 2016). Priest et al. (2006) posited that 1.5 million Christians in the U.S. participate in international short-term missions each year. Several different denominations have led the way such as Protestants, Evangelicals and Catholics; however, the Protestants are predicted to show higher numbers (Adler & Ruiz, 2018). It is one way for the church to be able to experience first-hand where their financial contribution is going. Financial support also allows parishioners to feel like they are a part of broadening the church’s reach around the world. Some churches fund missionaries yearlong and allow the short-term mission teams to assist and support these missionaries.
Young adults, ages 18-25, are more likely than adults to participate in short-term mission trips (Adler & Ruiz, 2018), yet youth groups primarily are known for their mission focus with an average of 1,600,000 participants each year (Howell, 2009). “In 2002, 29% of teenagers in the U.S. have gone on a mission trip” (Adler & Ruiz, 2018, p. 325). A review of the literature suggests that short-term mission trips have grown exponentially in the last five decades, particularly with teenagers, now ranging in the 2000 average participant range (Howell, 2012; Wuthnow, 2009). Youth aside, it takes a particular type of person to leave home and spend a week with strangers in a different country. Also, this age group is more adaptable than adults in regards to where to sleep, what to eat and conditions for travel. Caldron et al. (2016) suggested those with a unique mindset of “humility, compassion, patience and flexibility” (p.82) are the most likely to make the most significant difference. These virtues can be learned and practiced on a short-term mission trip.

Due to its unique attributes of experiencing new cultures and acquiring new skills, this study is grounded in the Experiential Learning Theory proposed by David Kolb, based on the work of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin and Jean Piaget (Kolb, 1984). ELT is a process in which learning occurs in a four-stage cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). At its core, ELT is the process of learning as described by Hedin (2010). As Cherry (2018) stated, ELT “takes a more natural approach emphasizing how experiences, including cognition, environmental factors, and emotions, influence the learning process” (n.d.). ELT is most fitting since short-term mission trips are all about the experience and transforming through those experiences. Experiential Learning is an effective teaching method that allows students to reflect on the experience and incorporate it into their lives.
**Problem Statement**

The current research questions are (1) Does going on short-term mission trips make a difference in religiosity in the lives of college students who participate? (2) What is the mean difference in religiosity practices between college students that participated in short-term mission trips and those that did not? And (3) what are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer? A review of the literature has provided a broad scope of the current research on these factors. The problem is that there is not enough research addressing the religiosity of college students between the ages of 18 to 25. There is also a shortage of research on whether short-term mission trip participation increases religiosity.

Trinitapoli and Vaisey (2009) concurred that short-term mission trips enhanced religious activity in adolescents and act as a transcendent moment. This time of their lives marks the “peak” of religious instability (Trinitapoli and Vaisey, 2009). Furthermore, a study conducted by Hopkins et al. (2015) explored this similar focus and added the positive transition to adulthood in addition to religious resilience and self-confidence as a priority for their study. According to McNamara Barry, Nelson, Davarya, and Urry (2010) religious development consists of “daily prayer, meaning-making and religious commitment” (p.389). Pearce, Hayward, and Pearlman (2017) suggested that most studies of religiosity include “measures of religious affiliation, frequency of religious service, attendance, frequency of prayer, importance of religiosity and belief in God” (p.368). Koenig, Wang, Al Zaben, and Adi (2015) added that religious commitment can be described as “what individuals spend their time, talents and financial resources on” (p.1007).

The secondary goal for this research is to ascertain what exactly motivates young people to volunteer. Shye (2010) posited that two equal factors motivate young people to volunteer,
altruism, and egoism. This is based off the hypothesis of Horton-Smith (1981). Hustinx, Handy, Cnaan, Brudney, Pessi, and Yamauchi (2010) concurred and add that while altruism and self-interest may be the main motivating factor in young people, the level of fervor depends on age and nationality. Gillespie and King (1985) suggested that in Canada, younger volunteers are more concerned about learning new skills while Hall et al. (2006) stated that older Canadian volunteers are more interested in the possibility of bettering their job prospects. In contrast, Winniford et al. (1995) suggested that American students volunteer for gratification, personal growth, and altruism.

**Purpose Statement**

The focus of this research is to understand the impact that short-term mission trip participation has on religiosity of college students ages 18-25 years. The secondary outcome goal is to ascertain the motivations of college students who volunteer to go on short-term mission trips. College students who participated in at least one short-term mission trip, as well as college students that were non-participants of short-term mission trips were assessed through an online survey. These students were selected from a multi-site, religious congregation of approximately 25,000 members, that meets at 14 different sites simultaneously in South Florida. This survey was given through surveymonkey.com and made available through social media such as Instagram. Univariate statistics were used to describe the sample (mean with SD or number and %). A comparison was made between the two groups of samples (those that have gone on a short-term mission trip to those that have not) using bivariate methods such as t-tests for continuous variables, chi-square tests for categorical. Bivariate testing (t-tests) was utilized to compare the means of the instrument/scales. Regression models were used to adjust demographic variables, such as with mission status, age, sex, year in college and type of college.
Significance of the Study

This study is significant because a review of the literature suggests that short-term mission trips have grown exponentially in the last five decades, particularly with teenagers (Howell, 2012; Wuthnow, 2009). Peterson, Aeschliman, and Sneed (2003) predicted that participation in short-term mission trips would grow to one million. During the age range of young adults 18-25, a profound change in self-identity takes place with young adults exploring their religious beliefs due to the changes in the areas of biological, cognitive, and psychosocial development (McNamara Barry et al., 2010). It stands to reason that this phenomenon will continue to grow and as such, it merits further research to quantify the religious outcomes. Also, there is not enough research on the actual effects that short-term mission trips have on college student’s religiosity specifically for the ages of 18-25. Finally, religious organizations, mission trip organizations and non-government organizations can use this study as a recruiting and retention tool to prove that by going on a short-term mission trip, one’s religiosity can be affected positively.

Research Question

RQ 1: Does going on short-term mission trips make a difference in religiosity in the lives of college students who participate?

RQ 2: What is the difference in religiosity practices between college students that participated in short-term mission trips and those that did not?

RQ 3: What are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer?
Definitions

1. *Short-term mission trip* - global travel with a religious focus and evangelism (Hopkins, Olson, Baillie Smith, and Laurie, 2015).


3. *Ethnocentrism* - a belief that one’s personal culture is superior to another culture (Priest, 2006).

4. *Voluntourism* - A vacation with a purpose to relax from ordinary life while doing good in the world (Kahn, 2014).

5. *International service-learning* - type of learning that includes service-learning and cultural-learning (Rauschert and Byram, 2018).
Summary

The researcher has many years of experience in participating in short-term mission trips with various churches and religious organizations. While teaching as an Adjunct Professor at both a Christian college and a secular state college, the researcher found that there was a big difference in religiosity practices between these students. She noticed that the students at the Christian college made time for volunteering each month. They also practiced prayer and tithing more than the students at the secular college. Another factor observed was the increased fervor of the Christian group’s attitude towards service. They were excited about it and it was part of their normal activities. Why did this group have such a different view of religiosity than that of the other students? The researcher theorized that since these students participated in short-term mission trips then this may be a reason why there was a disparity in the religiosity of the two groups. Therefore, the research question was posed: does participating in short-term mission trips account for the difference in the religiosity between these students? Equally as intriguing, she wondered why do college students volunteer in general? So, it was out of observation and shear curiosity that this study was birthed.

The current research questions are (1) Does going on short-term mission trips make a difference in religiosity in the lives of college students who participate? (2) What is the mean difference in religiosity practices between college students that participated in short-term mission trips and those that did not? And (3) what are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer? A review of the literature has provided a broad scope of the current research on these factors. The problem is that there is not enough research addressing the religiosity of college students between the ages of 18 to 25, and if short-term mission trip participation enhances that.
The focus of this research is to understand the impact that short-term mission trip participation has on religiosity of college students ages 18-25 years. The secondary outcome goal is to ascertain the motivations of college students who volunteer to go on short-term mission trips. College students who participated in at least one short-term mission trip, as well as college students that were non-participants of short-term mission trips will be assessed through an online survey. These students will be selected from a multi-site, religious congregation of approximately 25,000 members, that meets at 14 different sites simultaneously in South Florida.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This paper seeks to contribute to the existing available literature on the impact that short-term mission trip participation has on religiosity of college students ages 18-25 years. The secondary outcome goal is to ascertain the motivations of college students who volunteer to go on short-term mission trips.

A review of the literature reveals that during the age range of young adults 18-25, a profound change in self-identity takes place with young adults. Due to the changes in the areas of biological, cognitive, and psychosocial development, young adults begin to explore their religious beliefs (McNamara Barry et al., 2010). This search for self and confirmation of religious beliefs often leads this age range to volunteer and commit to service to community more than other age ranges (Hopkins et al., 2015). For that reason, this research will concentrate on the data collected from students in this age range. Another reason that this age range is intriguing is because literature indicates that there is a disconnect between religiosity and spirituality among young adults (McNamara et al., 2010). Braskamp (2008) hypothesized that the disconnect is due to the developing brain in young adults and their newfound ability to question their spirituality and what they believe in.

A review of the literature on the motivation of young adults’ highlights that that two equal factors motivate young people to volunteer, altruism, and egoism, based off the hypothesis of Horton-Smith (1981). Hustinx et al. (2010) concurred and add that while altruism and self-interest may be the main motivating factor in young people, the level of fervor depends on the age and nationality. Gillespie and King (1985) suggested that in Canada, younger volunteers are more concerned about learning new skills while Hall et al. (2006) stated that older Canadian
volunteers are more interested in the possibility of bettering their job prospects. In contrast, Winniford et al. (1995) suggested that American students volunteer for gratification, personal growth, and altruism.

All these variables challenge the social norms and can enhance the growth of the participants’ global perspective (Walling, Erikson, Meese, Ciovica and Gorton, 2006). One area of short-term mission trips that often gets overlooked is the reentry stage when the traveler returns home and attempts to assimilate back into their cultural norm. The readjustment process can be a very trying time for a missionary, even more so than when a missionary first arrives in a new country Walling et al. (2006) confirmed this and posits that travelers often have a hard time adjusting to home life after a short-term mission trip. Still, the reward outweighs the difficulty as short-term mission trips are known to have astounding impact on young people (Walling et al., 2006).

Finally, there are many instruments that gauge religiosity and motivation in college students. Initially this researcher was going to use the popular Duke University Religion Index (DUREL) which is a five-item measurement tool of religious involvement. The DUREL seemed to be a good fit originally due to its three dimensions of measurement that assesses such as religious activity, non-organizational religious activity, and intrinsic religiosity (Koenig & Bussing, 2010). Despite the initial zeal for this instrument, when this researcher contacted the author Dr. Harold Koenig for permission to use the DUREL, he suggested that the Belief Into Action Scale (BIAC) would be more appropriate for the type of study that this researcher was attempting (a means comparison of college students, ages 18 to 25). Additionally, had this study not been interrupted due to the travel restrictions because of the COVID-19 pandemic, a pre-mission trip survey and post-mission trip survey would have been employed where the DUREL
would have been more appropriate. An example of this type of mission trip survey was successful in a study by Meidl et al. (2017) that assessed the efficacy of short-term medical mission trips to Chiapas, Mexico using the DUREL. Other instruments that gauge motivations to volunteer were considered as well. One in particular was the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) which is a 30-item tool that measures the motivations in volunteers (Clary et al, 1998). Unfortunately, this researcher was unable to ascertain permission to use this scale, as such the VFI was no longer considered.

For this study, this researcher chose to highlight questions from the Belief Into Action (BIAC) Scale, and The Attitudes Towards Helping Others (AHO) scale. The Belief Into Action (BIAC) Scale was chosen because of its unique ability to quantify belief as action, which Koenig et al. (2015) stated as being the most important aspect of religiosity. The Attitudes Towards Helping Others (AHO) Scale has been used in the past to measure the degree of helping attitudes (Chen, Chen, Zhang, Xing, Guan, Cheng, and Li, 2020).

**Conceptual Framework**

This study views short-term mission trips through the lens of the Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) proposed by David Kolb, based on the work of John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget (Kolb, 1984). Experiential Learning Theory is a process in which learning occurs in a four-stage cycle. These four stages are concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). At its core, ELT is the process of learning as described by Hedin (2010) and as Cherry (2018) stated “takes a more natural approach emphasizing how experiences, including cognition, environmental factors, and emotions, influence the learning process” (para.4). ELT is most fitting since short-term mission trips are all about the experience and the transformation that occurs through those experiences.
This process best explains what these college students are going through at this stage. They are trying to figure out “life” and where they can make a difference. Linhart (2005) explained that the pedagogy of short-term mission trips includes learning through experience, assigning responsibility and interacting with the experiences. Some of the experiential components include cross-cultural adaptation, problem solving and exposure to poverty.

Yount (2001) posited that experiential learning is the “active participation of learners which leads to the accumulation of knowledge or skill” (p.276). Understanding this framework is paramount when discussing how participants of short-term mission trips are affected by their experiences. Based on the Experiential Learning Theory, every participant of a short-term mission trip learns in two main ways. The first way is by grasping knowledge through experiences and secondly by transforming those experiences into new working knowledge (Kolb, 2015). This is done in four modes of learning: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (illustrated in figure 1). In this study, concrete experience is the actual short-term mission trip, where the participants are doing the various activities. These activities can include performing in sidewalk Sunday skits, teaching English, running sports camps, planning, and implementing food distribution, and working on various construction projects. Reflective observation takes place daily as the participants reflect and review the day’s events by journaling and meditating on what they experienced. This reflective process assists students in turning the experiences of the day into learning (Knowles et al., 2014). In an experiential learning study conducted by Sato & Laughlin (2018), students in a 15-week psychology course implemented reflective practices after various golf putting tournaments. The goal was to see if reflecting on the day’s performance enhanced the next day's performance and the participants’ overall learning effectiveness in the course. This study found
that this reflection and review of previous performance did enhance the next day’s performance.

Abstract conceptualization occurs when the participants assimilate what they have gleaned and draw conclusions about what they have learned. On a mission trip, a college student may use several different methods to teach the gospel but may only feel comfortable doing so in one specific way. One participant may feel more comfortable speaking about Jesus while performing in a skit while another participant may feel more comfortable in a one-on-one setting. It is in this assimilation process that the mission trip participant will decide if what they learned is worth remembering in the future.

Finally, active experimentation transpires when the participants test out the new ideas that they have learned on their trip. For the sake of this study, the new ideas would be the implementation of new habits of religiosity following their experience abroad. These new habits could include personal prayer time and worship, tithing, attending religious services and volunteering at church. Trinitapoli and Vaisey (2009) concurred that short-term mission trips enhanced religious activity in adolescents and act as a transcendent moment. Priest et al. (2006) concurred with this theory and adds that personal transformation occurs. Towns (2001) suggested ELT is a dynamic process sustained through experience, thus constantly being updated as new elements of experimentation are carried out. There are several different approaches to experiential learning such as service learning, Joplin’s Model, alternative break programs, field trips, and short-term study abroad programs. The definition of service learning according to the National and Community Service Act of 1990 is “a coordinated learning experience between educational institutes and community partners where students learn and develop through active participation in service experiences to meet the needs of the community” (n.d.). Service-learning blends academic instruction and community-based service (Bikos et al., 2015) and could provide
meaningful research opportunities for undergraduates (Henderson, 2018). This can also be used in an international context as in short-term mission trips abroad. One study conducted by Zwerg-Villegas and Hiller (2020) utilized experiential learning while teaching international business in a partnership with Latin American Universities. Service learning can also be used in a faith-based environment where the reason for participation is more of a religious calling instead of just volunteering. This adds another dimension to the short-term mission trip study where students are more motivated by their belief in a certain religion.

Laura Joplin’s (1981) model of experiential learning has been used in many studies regarding short-term mission trip research. She proposed a five-phase process of focus, action, support, feedback, and de-brief (Linhart, 2005). Initially, the emphasis was placed on the focus of the participant and the impending task. Secondly, the action stage encompassed the activity where the participant is forced to act and accommodate new knowledge. The support phase and feedback phase were similar as both are happening throughout the study and can be based on what is happening at that given time. Finally, the de-brief period was a time to review and organize the learning through discussion or journaling.

Short-term immersion programs are similar to service-learning programs and mission trips in that they are short in duration have an experiential learning component. They are also known as alternative break programs where students will take a break from traditional university courses and immerse themselves into another culture for a short period of time. Like the participation in a short-term mission trip, the goal of immersion programs is to encourage students to enhance their worldview, dispel stereotypes and reflect on their privilege (Jones et al., 2012). These short-term trips have the potential to ignite a passion in college students who might commit themselves to a longer term of community service (Bowen, 2011).
Field trips are most people’s first experience with experiential learning outside of the classroom. Elementary school field trips are activities that most people look upon with fondness in their childhood and because of this, major corporations are also utilizing field trips as an effective way to implement experiential learning. Rone (2008) stated that other examples of experiential learning similar to the field trip include service learning, cultural journalism projects, exchange programs, cooperative education, social science laboratory courses and adventure education.

Finally, short-term study abroad programs are excellent examples of ways that undergraduate and graduate students can employ experiential learning techniques in order to broaden their cultural competency and academic discipline (Witkowsky & Mendez, 2018). Akin to short-term mission trips, study abroad programs are excellent ways for students to incorporate their chosen path, international travel, cultural, social, and political views (Franklin, 2010).

In summary, this researcher concludes that the experiential learning theory by Kolb (1984) is best suited as the conceptual framework for this study. The four stages of this theory give a broader perspective to the pedagogy of short-term mission trips and allowed this researcher to peer through a wider lens of information. The four stages are concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). Service learning, Joplin’s model, short-term immersion programs, alternative break programs, field trips, and short-term study abroad programs were also found to help with broadening the scope of information into the study.
Figure 1

Kolb’s 1984 Experiential Learning Theory as it relates to STMT (Kolb, 2015).

Concrete Experience=
Going on a STMT

Active Experimentation=
Trying out new info

Transformative Experience

Reflective Observation=
Reflecting on experiences

Abstract Conceptualization=
Assimilating the info

Learning Experience
Related Literature

History of Short-Term Mission Trips

Short-term mission trips have long been associated with expanding the modern church since the 19th and 20th centuries (Koll, 2010). In 2006, it was estimated that more than one million people went on short-term mission trips (Priest, Dischinger, Rasmussen and Brown, 2006). The U.S. sends the most people on short-term mission trips (Caldron, Impens, Pavlova, and Groot, 2016). These trips have grown in part due to the advances in air travel and technology, making it much easier to get to remote places (Walling et al. 2006). Several different denominations have led the way with mission trips such as Protestants, Evangelicals, and Catholics; however, the Protestants are predicted to show higher numbers according to Adler & Ruiz (2018). Short-term missions are one way for the Christian Church to be able to experience first-hand where their financial contribution is going. In Christianity, tithing is giving 10% of ones’ income to the church. Historically, the tithe is used to enable the church to help the community and beyond. Mission-focused churches are the financial support for missionaries around the globe (Howell, 2012). Young adults, ages 18-25, are more likely than adults to participate in short-term mission trips (Adler & Ruiz, 2018), yet youth groups primarily are known for their mission focus, with an average of 1,600,000 participants each year (Howell, 2009). “In 2002, 29% of teenagers in the U.S. have gone on a short-term mission trip” (Adler & Ruiz, 2018, p. 325). Short-term mission trips have become an integral part of the post-secondary Christian education (Walling et al. 2006). The youth minister is the primary person to facilitate a short-term mission trip (Wuthnow, 2009). A review of the literature suggests that short-term mission trips have grown exponentially in the last five decades, particularly with teenagers, now ranging in the 2000 average participant range (Howell, 2012; Wuthnow, 2009).
Teenagers have a more biographical availability for short-term missions which may explain why they are the highest number involved. They are twice as likely as a middle-aged person to participate (Wuthnow, 2009). Youth aside, it takes a particular type of person to leave home and spend a week with strangers in a different country. Caldon et al. (2016) suggested those with a unique mindset of “humility, compassion, patience and flexibility” (p.82) are the most likely to make the most significant difference yet Wuthnow (2009) stated that the educational level influences mission trip participation as college students are twice as likely to participate.

**What are short-term mission trips?**

For this study, a short-term mission trip will be defined as a church sponsored, religious event, lasting 1-2 weeks, with the focus being on service to a community including sharing and teaching people the tenets of Christianity. While typical short-term mission trips can be local or international, this study will only focus on international trips. Mission trips have four main objectives. These objectives are to evangelize in the community, host Bible studies (sidewalk Sunday school), social work (food distribution, construction) and self-meditation (reflection). Priest et al. (2006) describe short-term mission trips as “explicitly intended to serve and help others in distant places” (p.434). Priest et al. (2006) also proposed that short-term mission experience can enhance the interest in missions as a career. Hopkins et al. (2015) posited that mission trips can be defined as trips that have a religious focus that is matched with global travel and evangelism. These trips are coordinated by religious institutions (churches, schools, mission organizations) and are planned throughout the year. Some are specifically planned around local school schedules to better assist church members in planning their holidays (Priest et al., 2006). Other trips can be longer over the summer or even over spring break. Most churches have a
mission department that is exclusively dedicated to planning and executing short-term mission trips. Short-term mission trips propagate the gospel throughout areas of the world that would otherwise have no contact or experience with Christianity (Offutt, 2011).

**Short-term mission trips and the effects on religiosity**

The focus of this research is to understand the impact that short-term mission trip participation has on the religiosity of college students ages 18-25. Religiosity is defined as the conceptualization of spiritual beliefs, with tenets for behavior that are followed by others in the same organization (Good and Willoughby, 2006). It is a shared set of beliefs and practices that are upheld within a community of believers (Stuckey, 2001). Religiosity can also be associated with positive outcomes and be a source of hope and well-being (Wnuk and Marcinkowski, 2014). It can also be associated with an increase in volunteerism (Moore, Warta and Erichsen, 2014).

Trinitapoli and Vaisey (2009) concurred that short-term mission trips enhanced religious activity in adolescents and act as a transcendent moment. Behavior such as reliance on God, going on a pilgrimage and prayer can enhance one’s sense of peace (Nadi and Ghahremani, 2014) Furthermore, a study conducted by Hopkins et al. (2015) explored this similar focus and added the positive transition to adulthood in addition to religious resilience and self-confidence as a priority for their study.

Pearce, Hayward, and Pearlman (2017) theorized that religiosity has five dimensions. The dimensions are religious beliefs, religious exclusivity, external practice, private practice, and religious salience. Religious development remains the focal point of this paper which seeks to understand how participation in short-term mission trips enhances religious development.
McNamara Barry et al. (2010) suggested that “daily prayer, meaning-making and religious commitment” continue to this enhancement (p.389).

Koenig, Wang, Al Zaben, and Adi (2015) added that religious commitment can be described as “what individuals spend their time, talents and financial resources on” (p.1007). Caldron et al. (2016) suggested those with a unique mindset of “humility, compassion, patience and flexibility” (p.82) are the most likely to make the most significant difference.

The enhancement of civic engagement and pro-social behavior is a by-product of short-term mission trips. In an attempt to expose their children to diverse cultures, parents are sending their youth on mission trips with the hopes of instilling a greater sense of global community and cultivation of a spirit of altruism. Spiritual rejuvenation in the church is another by-product of a short-term mission trip, as participants return with a newfound commitment to sacred goals and personal transformation (Priest et al. 2006). Webb et al (2000) described pro-social values as a combination of six social factors with benevolence and universalism as most common in motivation for charitable behavior. Benevolence focuses on who people care about most. Universalism concentrates on “a concern for welfare of all people in all settings” (p.305). These two tenets make mission trips an ideal proving ground for experience and transformation.

Probasco (2013) mentioned that while short-term mission trips may be for a short amount of time, their impact can be felt in future volunteer work. In addition, it has positive effects on a student’s self-esteem, sense of identity and intercultural competence (Rowan-Kenyon and Niehaus, 2011). Those involved in this study were found to be more empathetic to other cultures, making them more adaptable and tolerant. Furthermore, when a young person creates a habit of serving others in their youth, this habit continues to grow in their adult life, thus creating more active adults (Frisco, 2004). This was confirmed by Whitner (2006) that stated, “Christian baby
boomers who had participated in the short-term mission trips are much more likely than Christians who have not been on short-term mission trips to become donors, volunteers, and full-time missionaries” (p.56). Priest et al. (2006) found that students that participated in a mission trip to Mexico showed lower levels of ethnocentrism that those who did not attend the trip. Ethnocentrism is defined as a belief that ones’ personal culture is superior to another culture.

**Mission Trip Trends.**

There are many different types of short-term mission trips, each having a different focus. Traditionally, short-term mission trips entail leaving the comfort of one’s community for at least a week (Probasco, 2013). The assumption is that only religious organizations facilitate short-term mission trips. However, the growing trend also includes medical trips, educational trips, and trips that focus on humanitarian issues such as orphan relief and human trafficking. Now, more than ever, tourism groups are organizing to include a volunteer aspect where the participants can make a difference while traveling abroad. This has come to be known as voluntourism (McGhee, 2014). Voluntourism is a new form of short-term missions which incorporates volunteering with tourism. Some forms of voluntourism include community assistance, conservation as well as humanitarian projects (McGhee, 2014). In Africa, South Africa has been a leader in the proponents of voluntourism with Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda following close behind (Rogerson and Slater, 2014). Four areas of voluntourism are the most popular in Africa: Wildlife conservation, eco-projects, English education, and social/community work (Rogerson and Slater, 2014).

Still, church led, religious, short-term mission trips lead the way in the demand of incorporating medical mission trips as the most sought-after trip. Shah et al. (2019) confirmed the need for an increase in medical missions by non-religious organizations. There is a high
demand for medical mission’s trips among students of medicine. This can help them learn about service and research (Shah et al. 2019). Per Shah et al. (2019), medical student participation rates increased from 6% in 1978 to 32% in 2008. Meidl et al. (2017) reported that participation with medical missions was associated with significant increase in intrinsic religiosity. A qualitative study conducted by Bartelme (2015) confirmed this and adds that since the start of affordable airfare, medical professionals have joined church missionaries to provide medical care around the world. Bartelme (2015) went on to say that millions of dollars are now spent on international medical missions.

In Thailand, working with orphans is a growing focus of mission activity (Rogerson and Slater, 2014). The benefits of this type of trip are the positive role models of the volunteers and the financial impact of the American dollar in Thailand. In a study conducted in Mexico, Tomazos and Bulter (2009), highlighted that while volunteers were appreciated, the effects of having people “come and go” into the lives of these orphans can sometimes do more harm than good. This was confirmed by Richter and Norman (2010). Their study in Africa, showed that the short amount of time that the orphans had with the volunteers was enough to forge attachments. While these attachments are well-meaning, they are more traumatic when the volunteers leave the children.

One of the newer areas of short-term missions is in business education. The term for this type of mission is “international service-learning”. This type of learning includes service-learning and cultural-learning (Rauschert and Byram, 2018). Business schools send students all over the world in the hope to increase an expanded world view, increase ethics, social responsibility, and community (AACB, 2018). Typical courses include marketing, international trade, and political economy (Blevins, Ramirez and Wight, 2020). Host families play a role in
the education of these students as they provide examples of indigenous lifestyles and the preconceptions that Westerners’ have. Within this educational example, there is a service-learning component that requires students to donate their time in the form of community engagement (Blevins et al. 2020). Another benefit of these trips is enhanced intercultural competencies. Students learn respect, empathy and relationship building (Deardorff, 2020). Intercultural service-learning also involves active learning over passive learning. These students get an upfront, interactive view of international business practices in real time. More advantages to international trips include cross-cultural immersion, exposure to foreign culture and a great appreciation for home culture (Walling, et al. 2006).

**Reasons People Go on Mission Trips.**

There are many reasons why people go on short-term mission trips. Some go to enhance their education, others to travel with an altruistic reason. Some go due to peer pressure from church or school friends, while some go just to experience something new. Religious congregations promote short-term missions to transform members attitudes about economic, political, and social issues (Beyerlein et al. 2011, p. 781). Some of these trips include support of long-term missionaries, worshipping with the local community and learning a new language. This can be done by immersion into the culture by painting homes, delivering medical supplies, and teaching English (Beyerlein et al. 2011). There are some factors that can influence why a person volunteers such as age, race, sex, and personality traits (Moore et al. 2014, p.247). One of the most popular reasons is based on the theological thought of “answering the call” (Howell, 2009, p.206). This call is a religious term, based on an intense feeling to serve. People feel that God is “calling” them out for something greater. For many churches, it is one way that they feel they are answering the great commandment as noted in Mathew 22:37-39 (New International
Version, 2011), which states, “Love the Lord with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it, Love your neighbor as yourself”. And the Great Commission in Mathew 28:19-20 (New International Version, 2011), that says “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age”. In that tradition, Christian Churches are creating opportunities for church members to serve neighboring countries and share tenets of Christianity. Probasco (2013) confirmed this and posits that evangelism and service projects are some of the goals for short-term mission trips. This affirms Beyerlein and Chaves (2003) hypothesis that participating in short-term mission trips boosts religiosity in young people.

A review of the literature reveals another, more recent reason to participate in short-term mission trips. Tourism with an altruistic purpose is on the rise (Mittleberg & Palgi, 2011). People are seeing the benefits of taking a vacation with a purpose. They view their vacation to relax from ordinary life while doing good in the world. This trend has earned the term “voluntourism” as it is growing fast and producing about $2 billion dollars per year (Kahn, 2014). Another popular name for this type of short-term mission trip is “volunteer vacation” (McMillion et al., 2006). One characteristic that defines voluntourism is the chance to sightsee during the trip (Chen & Chen, 2011). Rogerson and Slater (2014) added that South Africa is a popular destination for voluntourism opportunities. Tomazos and Butler (2009) stated that South Africa ranks in the top ten of voluntourism locations. Eco conservation and wildlife conservation are growing trends within the voluntourism field (Rogerson & Slater, 2014). Additional research is needed on this topic as this trend is new, and the amount of literature is limited. One thing must
be made clear there are a growing number of missionaries that are adamant about being distinct from voluntourism. While it is a known fact that missionaries also benefit from traveling abroad in the form of adventure, having new experiences, and gleaning a better understanding of other cultures (Occhipinti, 2016), they feel a “special religious calling”. Literature reveals though that traveling as a part of short-term mission trips has become so popular that it can be considered a form of voluntourism (Mostafanezhad, 2013). What makes the difference between voluntourism and traditional short-term mission trips are the motivation and the faith-based dimension that acts as a foundation, hypothesized Occhipinti (2013).

The enhancement of civic engagement is also a reason for the growing rates of participation in short-term mission trips. To expose their children to diverse cultures, parents are sending their youth on mission trips with the hopes of instilling a greater sense of global community and cultivation of a spirit of altruism. Probasco (2013) mentioned that while short-term mission trips may be short, their impact can be felt in future volunteer work. Furthermore, when a young person creates a habit of serving others in their youth, this habit continues to grow in their adult life, thus creating more active adults (Frisco, 2004).

Cultural humility is another excellent reason for people to go on short-term mission trips. Cunningham and Sessay (2017) explained cultural humility as something that must be learned through personal experience. Short-term mission trips are a stellar way for people to learn about different cultures while serving a more significant cause than themselves. Short-term mission trips also afford people opportunities to immerse themselves in culture and language in a safe and temporary arena.

Medical mission trips are a growing trend under the umbrella of humanitarian operations. Physicians are taking breaks from their regular duties and participating in humanitarian efforts
with surgeons being the most likely to participate (Caldron et al., 2016). One such mission was planned by Mulvaney and McBeth (2009) who were military officers at the time and had the luxury of the armed forces logistics to aid them. Students of pharmacology, specifically at the Gregory School of Pharmacology (GSOP) were participating in medical mission trips as part of their extra-curricular activities. A study conducted by Brown et al. (2012) revealed that students from GSOP that participated in a medical mission trip felt better prepared to meet patient needs upon return (p. 1252). Another form of medical mission trip includes small scale research on medical missions. Rovers et al. (2014) conducted a study to show that small teams of medical volunteers could manage research in the field. This makes sense as it cuts down the time between collecting and analyzing data when the actual research is attended to in the field. Further research revealed that medical teams are also mobilizing to provide specific ambulatory care in rural areas. One such study by Niska and Sloand (2010) concentrated their efforts on combating intestinal parasites in rural Haiti. Another study concentrated their efforts on Ebola in West Africa (Bartelme, 2015). Both studies utilized onsite testing that provided results in real time which strengthened the mission and made the overall effort more sustainable.

**Negative aspects of mission trips.**

To give the research of short-term mission trips a fair look, one must also include the negative aspects. There is substantial research on the adverse facets of short-term mission trips. Shah et al. (2019) found that some of the problems with medical missions included the inability to sustain outcomes, lack of sensitivity to local culture and practicing beyond one’s scope of practice. The problem becomes how to maintain medical services once a trip is over. Bartelme (2015) experienced this need and documented that he now has shifted his focus onto enhancing sustainability. He teaches and prepares local doctors in the area in which he serves to combat the
dependency on foreign care. Educating volunteers, encouraging self-assessments, and joining established programs are other ways to promote sustainability (Shah et al. 2019). Another problem of short-term medical missions is that the team may be bombarded with patients and the need is often too high. There is only so much a team can do in a short amount of time. As a result, locals wait in long lines to be treated. They will also postpone medical care until the mission teams return, often causing more harm. The harsh reality is that there comes a time when the mission ends, and patients are still left in need. Lack of sensitivity to the local culture can cause a lack of trust in the medical providers. This will result in alienation of patients, avoidance of treatment and decrease the medical team’s efficacy. There is a push to have a specific certification for those that will provide medical services internationally to help keep the focus within their personal scope of practice. This will protect those in other countries that come under the care of providers that are licensed elsewhere.

Guttentag (2009) discussed volunteer tourism and all the bad things that take away from the right intentions. These bad things include “neglect of locals desires, hindering of work progress, unsatisfactory and incomplete work, disruption of local economies, reinforcement of conceptualizations of the ‘other’, rationalizations of poverty and an instigation of cultural change” (p.537) to name a few. It will always be impossible to please everyone involved. Short-term mission trip coordinators do their best to work with local churches and non-government organizations to ascertain the needs of the community being visited. Perhaps due to language barriers or differences in culture, the expectation is not being communicated and the volunteers fall short. The truth is that participants are human and make mistakes even when they have the best of intentions.
The assumed misappropriation of American dollars is another negative side to short-term mission trips. It takes money to send teams on short-term mission trips. That is a fact and some research, (Biddle, 2014) posited that travel companies eat up most of the money raised instead of giving it to charity. This is an area that can be studied in the future. It is imperative to know how much of every dollar is received by the organization because of fiscal responsibility.

Inauthentic mission motives can be another reason for concern. Gharib (2017) also discussed the possibility of missionary’s motives being self-serving rather than altruistic based on unethical social media posts. Zakaria (2014) added that missionary’s needs come before the needs of the community that they are serving such as comfort in lodging, time for sightseeing, time for shopping and added rest time.

What about short-term mission trips that stay in their communities? Are these considered mission “trips”? Stanley (2017) coined the terms “the going principle vs. the staying principle” (p. 10) in his study that sought to argue that although some missionaries stay home, they are still acting in the spirit of the Christendom context of making disciples where they are. As such, they are considered short-term mission trips.

Summary

The current research questions ask if going on short-term mission trips makes a difference in religiosity in the lives of college students who participate. What is the mean difference in religiosity practices between college students that participated in short-term mission trips and those that did not? And what are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer?

The analysis of the study was viewed though the conceptual framework of Experiential Learning Theory proposed by David Kolb (1984). The four stages of this theory give a broader
perspective to the pedagogy of short-term mission trips and allowed this researcher to peer through a wider lens of information. The four stages are concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984).

A review of the literature has provided a broad scope of the current research starting with the history of short-term missions, the definition, the effects on religiosity, current trends, reasons why people participate and negative aspects. The history of missions’ dates to the 19th century when the modern church was expanding (Koll, 2010). Protestants are amount the highest participants in global missions (Adler and Ruiz, 2018). Many other denominations also use short-term missions.

There are many definitions of a short-term mission trip but for the purpose of this study, a short-term mission trip is defined as a church sponsored trip, lasting one to two weeks with the aim of sharing the tenets of Christianity. A typical mission trip concentrates on evangelizing in the community, social work, and self-reflection. Mission trips are most often planned throughout the year, by religious institutions such as churches, schools, and mission organizations.

The focus of this research was to understand the impact that short-term mission trips had on the religiosity of college students ages 18-25. Religiosity can be defined as the conceptualization of spiritual beliefs, with tenets of behavior that are followed by others in the same organization (Good and Willoughby, 2006). Trinitapoli and Vaisey (2009) posited that mission trips enhance religiosity in adolescents. College students are twice as likely to participate in a short-term mission trip when compared with the general population (Wuthnow, 2009).

There is a substantial amount of research on the new trends of medical missions and voluntourism. However, there is much to be learned about college students and how
participating in a short-term mission trip affects their religiosity and motivations to volunteer. There is an assumption that only religious organizations facilitate short-term mission trips. The growing trend includes medical, educational, humanitarian and voluntourism trips. Medical mission trips concentrate on bringing care, supplies and medical education to underserved populations. Educational trips include learning about business, cross-cultural economics, international service learning and cultural learning (Rauschert and Byram, 2018). Humanitarian trips can include helping to care for orphans or helping those that are caught in human trafficking. Voluntourism is the new form of short-term missions that incorporates volunteering with tourism. A growing trend can be seen in Africa, working on conservation and humanitarian projected (McGehee, 2014). South Africa is the most popular destination with Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda being the most sought-after destinations (Rogerson and Slater, 2014).

There are many reasons that people choose short-term missions. They include enhancing education, altruism, peer pressure and seeking adventure. The most important reason for missions is to “answer the call” to service (Howell, 2009, p. 206). Barelme (2015) suggested that since the start of affordable airfare, more medical professionals are joining church mission groups to provide medical care around the world.

In contrast, there are many negative aspects that can be detrimental to short-term missions. A few would include an inability to sustain outcomes, lack of sensitivity to local culture and practicing beyond one’s scope of practice which may result in harm. There is only so much a medical team can do within the allotted time. Many times, they are leaving the needs of the locals unfulfilled. This can lead to bad outcomes, delay of care and harm for the individual. Lack sensitivity to local customs can lead to a lack of trust resulting in the alienation of patients.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

College students who participated in at least one short-term mission trip, as well as college students that were non-participants of short-term mission trips were assessed through an online survey. These students were selected from a multi-site, religious congregation of approximately 25,000 members, that meets at 14 different sites simultaneously in South Florida. This survey was given through surveymonkey.com and made available through social media. The focus of this research is to understand the impact that short-term mission trip participation has on religiosity of college students ages 18-25 years. The secondary outcome goal is to ascertain the motivations as to why college students volunteer to go on short-term mission trips.

This study is imperative as it addresses the gap in the literature on this subject and because the results of this study could have an impact on church programming, college recruiting, volunteer retention and growth in non-profit involvement.

Design

This study is a quantitative design utilizing descriptive data from a 10-minute survey comprised of questions from the Belief Into Action (BIAC) Scale, and The Attitudes Towards Helping Others (AHO) scale.

The survey was made available via social media to all college students at a multi-site, religious congregation in south Florida, who were between the ages of 18-25, that participated in a short-term mission trip while enrolled in college and to those who have not participated in mission trips, but that were willing to participate in the study.
Research Questions

RQ 1: Does going on short-term mission trips make a difference in religiosity in the lives of college students who participate?

RQ 2: What is the mean difference in religiosity practices between college students that participated in short-term mission trips and those that did not?

RQ 3: What are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer?

Hypothesis

H1: There will be a statistically significant difference in the religiosity scores in college students that have gone on short-term mission trips compared to those that have not.

H2: There will be a statistically significant difference in religiosity practices in college students that have gone on short-term mission trips compared to those that have not.

H3: There will be distinct motivating factors that lead college students to volunteer.

Ha1: There will not be a statistically significant difference in the religiosity scores in college students that have gone on short-term mission trips compared to those that have not.

Ha2: There will not be a statistically significant difference in religiosity practices in college students that have gone on short-term mission trips compared to those that have not.

Ha3: There will not be distinct motivating factors that lead college students to volunteer.

Participants and Setting

The sample seeks to ascertain data from college students, ages 18-25, attending a multi-site, religious congregation in south Florida that participated in short-term mission trips while they were enrolled in college. The study also includes students who did not participate in short-
term mission trips. The sample seeks to ascertain data regarding their level of religiosity, and their motivation to serve as well as if participating in short-term mission trips altered that data. In order to make the study more robust, surveys from college students from a multi-site, religious congregation that have not gone on mission trips were added and the mean difference of scores were compared. Participants included male and female students over the age of 18 but not older than 25, that attend the same multi-site, religious congregation in south Florida.

**Instrumentation**

This study utilizes a quantitative design utilizing descriptive data from a 10-minute survey comprised of questions from the Belief Into Action (BIAC) Scale, and The Attitudes Towards Helping Others (AHO) scale.

The BIAC is available on the internet, free of charge; however, this researcher was granted access via personal communication by the author, Dr. Harold Koenig. The BIAC is comprised of ten questions with classification ratings from 1 to 10 with 1 being the lowest and 10 being highest. The total score is from 10-100. The BIAC was chosen by this researcher because of how it assesses action of religious practices. It is probable to assess religious practices based on belief but more effective to assess how this belief is put into daily practice. In a recent study Koenig et al. (2015) were able to measure religious action among female caregivers in the U.S. as well as university students in China. This study allowed the appraisal of diverse populations with different religious traditions. Additionally, the BIAC was used in a study in the Middle East because it was shown to be sensitive and comprehensive enough to be effective in highly religious populations (Hafizi et al., 2016). This researcher will be ascertaining data from
college students representing diverse backgrounds at a megachurch. This scale was chosen for its ability to be diverse and used with highly religious populations.

Webb et al. (2000) developed The Attitudes Toward Helping Others Scale (AHO) to measure donations of non-profit organizations. The Attitudes Toward Helping Others Scale (AHO) is a four-scale tool that measures the helping attitudes, and in this case of college students. The scale utilizes a 5-point Likert scale that scores responses from strongly agree to strongly disagree. In addition, the authors added in different scoring combinations that could specifically be used to identify six additional factors such as protective factors, values factors, career factors, social factors, understanding factors, and enhancement factors. This can be accomplished by combining the scores of the different questions as noted at the bottom of the instrument. Nickell (1998) used this same scale to measure helping attitudes in the late 1990’s. Bekkers (2007) modified the AHO scale and added a game called the all-or-nothing dictator which resulted in extrapolating interesting measures on giving and generosity in the Netherlands. Finally, Krueger et al. (2001) employed this scale to explore the correlation between personality and altruism. In this study, the additional scoring combinations to specifically identify pro-social factors will be employed. Webb et al. (2000) described pro-social values as combination of six social factors with benevolence and universalism as most common in motivation for charitable behavior. Benevolence concentrates more on people one cares about and universalism as “a concern for welfare of all people in all settings” (p.305).

The survey was made available to all college students from a multi-site, religious congregation who have attended a short-term mission trip as well as to college students that have not attended a short-term mission trip. This data provides a more robust study as the mean difference is exposed. A survey was provided via social media by this researcher. A post with the
survey was made on one platform of social media, Instagram. Various departments at a multi-site, religious congregation were tagged on their social media platforms as well as direct messaged to share the survey with college students. College students that were eligible to participate in this study were any students over the age of 18 that have been on at least one short-term mission trip while enrolled in college as well as college students, age 18-25 that have not gone on a short-term mission trip. Additional questions were ascertained to better understand the demographics of the students participating in the study. Questions included, age, sex, year in college, and type of college.

**Procedures**

A 10-minute, online survey through surveymonkey.com was created with questions used from the Belief into Action (BIAC) Scale, and The Attitudes Towards Helping Others (AHO) scale, as well as demographic questions. Participants identified were asked to participate via social media. A post with the survey was made on Instagram. A multi-site, religious congregation was tagged on its social media platforms as well as direct messaged to share the survey with college students ages 18-25. Posts were made daily in the month of November 2020; the first post was on November 1, 2020. The posts included a link to a survey on the Survey Monkey platform. Data was collected daily until November 30, 2020. To add to the study, the same survey was given to college students that did not go on a short-term mission trip and the mean difference was compared.
Data Analysis

Univariate statistics were used to describe the sample (mean with SD or number and %). A comparison was made between the two groups of samples (those that have gone on a short-term mission trip to those that have not) using bivariate methods such as t-tests for continuous variables, chi-square tests for categorical and because they were statistically different, adjustments were made to the comparison of means. Bivariate testing (t-tests) was utilized to compare the means of the instrument/scales. Differences were found in demographic variables, such as with mission status, as such, an adjustment was made (multivariable analysis) to the tests of mean differences by controlling for the effect of those variables. Regression models were used to adjust for other variables.

Summary

This study utilized an online survey to assess college students who participated in at least one short-term mission trip, as well as college students that were non-participants of short-term mission trips. This survey was given through surveymonkey.com and made available through social media. The focus of this research is to understand the impact that short-term mission trip participation has on religiosity of college students ages 18-25 years. The secondary outcome goal is to ascertain the motivations as to why college students volunteer to go on short-term mission trips.

The current research questions are (1) Does going on short-term mission trips make a difference in religiosity in the lives of college students who participate? (2) What is the mean difference in religiosity practices between college students that participated in short-term mission trips and those that did not? And (3) what are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer? A review of the literature has provided a broad scope of the current research on these
factors. The problem is that there is not enough research addressing the religiosity of college students between the ages of 18 to 25, and if short-term mission trip participation enhances that data.

Pearce et al. (2017) suggested that most studies of religiosity include “measures of religious affiliation, frequency of religious service, attendance, frequency of prayer, importance of religiosity and belief in God” (p.368). Koenig et al. (2015) added that religious commitment can be described as “what individuals spend their time, talents and financial resources on” (p.1007).

The secondary goal for this research is to ascertain what exactly motivates young people to volunteer. Shye (2010) posited that two equal factors motivate young people to volunteer, altruism, and egoism, based off the hypothesis of Horton-Smith (1981). Hustinx et al. (2010) concurred and add that while altruism and self-interest may be the main motivating factor in young people, the level of fervor depends on age and nationality.

Univariate statistics were used to describe the sample (mean with SD or number and %). A comparison was made between the two groups of samples (those that have gone on a short-term mission trip to those that have not) using bivariate methods such as t-tests for continuous variables, chi-square tests for categorical. Bivariate testing (t-tests) was utilized to compare the means of the instrument/scales. Regression models were used to adjust demographic variables, such as with mission status, age, sex, year in college and type of college.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The researcher has many years of experience in the field participating in short-term mission trips with various churches and religious organizations. While teaching as an Adjunct Professor at both a Christian college and a secular state college, the researcher was curious about why there was such a difference in religiosity between these students. These differences led to two questions: (1) Does participation in short-term mission trips explain the perceived differences in religiosity between students at a Christian college and those at a secular state college? (2) Why do college students volunteer to serve on short-term mission trips?

Data collected from 112 college students who answered questions from the Belief Into Action Scale (BIAC), The Attitudes Towards Helping Others (AHO) scale, as well as demographic questions (age, sex, year in college, and type of college) were analyzed. These scales were chosen because of their unique ability to quantify belief as action, which Koenig et al. (2015) stated as being the most important aspect of religiosity. The Attitudes Towards Helping Others (AHO) Scale has been used in the past to measure the degree of helping attitudes (Chen et al., 2020). To detect a difference in short-term mission scores (Mission) and non-participation in short-term mission scores (No Mission), a Pearson’s chi-squared test with Yates continuity correction was applied to the data with an error margin of 5% (alpha=0.05) to test for any statistically significant result.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to obtain absolute and relative frequencies for each demographic variable for those students that reported having participated in a short-term mission trip (Mission, n=89) and those that had not participated in a short-term mission trip (No Mission,
n=23). To examine between-group differences for Mission vs. No Mission, a Pearson’s chi-squared test with Yates continuity correction was applied to the data with an error margin of 5% (alpha=0.05) to test for any statistically significant result. Chi-squared test results could not be reported for those aged 18 or older as compared to those under the age of 18 as there were no participants under the age of 18 (<18).

**Results**

Table 1 describes between-group differences for Mission vs. No Mission, specifically in demographic variables such as sex, age, year in college and type of college. Of the 112 students that completed the survey, 23 had no short-term mission experience while 89 had gone on at least one short-term mission trip.

**Table 1.**

Descriptive analysis of the total sample, and by those who had participated in a short-term mission trip as compared to those that had not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total (n=112)</th>
<th>No Mission, n=23 (%)*</th>
<th>Mission, n=89 (%)*</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age &lt; 18</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18+</td>
<td>112 (100)</td>
<td>23 (100)</td>
<td>89 (100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>College student</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>96 (86)</td>
<td>21 (91)</td>
<td>75 (84)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16 (14)</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td>14 (16)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>86 (77)</td>
<td>17 (74)</td>
<td>69 (78)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26 (23)</td>
<td>6 (26)</td>
<td>20 (22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age group:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>44 (39)</td>
<td>7 (30)</td>
<td>37 (42)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-23</td>
<td>45 (40)</td>
<td>11 (48)</td>
<td>34 (38)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-25</td>
<td>23 (21)</td>
<td>5 (22)</td>
<td>18 (20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year in college</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15 (13)</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>14 (16)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20 (18)</td>
<td>3 (13)</td>
<td>17 (19)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>29 (26)</td>
<td>11 (48)</td>
<td>18 (20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>25 (22)</td>
<td>5 (22)</td>
<td>20 (22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+</td>
<td>23 (21)</td>
<td>3 (13)</td>
<td>20 (22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of college</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>69 (62)</td>
<td>12 (52)</td>
<td>57 (64)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secular</td>
<td>43 (38)</td>
<td>11 (48)</td>
<td>32 (36)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*relative frequencies may not add up to 100 due to rounding

**Notes:** question “What year of college are you in?” was originally coded as 1, 2, 3, 4 and 4+, however, in the analysis, 4+ was converted to 5+ to avoid double counting participants that are in year 4.

Females outnumbered males in total responses, 77% to 23%. This was also true in mission experience. Data analysis shows 69 females had mission experience while only 20 males
went on at least one short-term mission trip. The study revealed that 17 of the females had no experience and 6 of the males had no experience.

A review of the literature informs that young adults, ages 18-25, are more likely than adults to participate in short-term mission trips (Adler & Ruiz, 2018), yet youth groups primarily are known for their mission focus with an average of 1,600,000 participants each year (Howell, 2009). “In 2002, 29% of teenagers in the U.S. have gone on a mission trip” (Adler & Ruiz, 2018, p. 325). This study confirms the literature as the sample population shows 42% of college students ages 18-20 had mission experience while 30% of students had no mission experience. These findings also validate the study conducted by Howell (2009) and Wuthnow (2009) that reported short-term mission trips have grown exponentially in the last five decades, particularly with teenagers, now ranging in the 2000 average participant range. Data from this study showed that 38% of students ages 21-23 had mission experience and 48% of students had no experience. Further examination affirmed that 20% of students ages 24-25 had mission experience and 22% did not.

An additional review of the literature reveals that during the age range of young adults 18-25, a profound change in self-identity takes place with young adults exploring their religious beliefs due to the changes in the areas of biological, cognitive, and psychosocial development (McNamara Barry et al., 2010). This search for self and confirmation of religious beliefs often leads this age range to volunteer and commit to service to community more than other age ranges (Hopkins et al., 2015). This is confirmed in the data that highlights “the year of college student” displaying interesting details as 3rd year college students were the least experienced in missions, 48% and 4th and 5th year students were the most experienced (22% respectively). Of the 15 first year students, 16% had mission experience and only 4% did not.
Finally, those students that attended a Christian college had a higher rate of non-mission trip experience, 52% as compared to secular college students, 48%; however, Christian college students did have a higher participation rate, (64%) than their peers that attended a secular college with 36%. It is noteworthy to point out that 16 participants of the study were not college students but that were in the age range of 18 to 25. It is unclear how this select group of participants was added to the statistics as it clearly skews the analysis. This will be added to the limitations as human error.

Next, to answer research question one, “does going on short-term mission trips make a difference in religiosity in the lives of college students who participate?” univariate, bivariate and multivariable analyses were utilized. First, a Belief Into Action Scale (BIAC) score was calculated. The BIAC instrument was comprised of 1 categorical item and 9 Likert-scaled items in which 1 indicated the lowest degree and 10 the highest degree of response. As per scoring instructions, question 1 was recoded to assign score 10 to “relationships with God” response and score 1 to all other responses. The total BIAC score was calculated as the sum of Q1 through Q10 and could range from 10 to 100. Table 2 summarizes absolute and relative frequencies for each BIAC item by Mission vs. No Mission with relation to the total sample and estimates between-group differences at alpha=0.05 level using Pearson’s Chi-squared test with Yate’s continuity correction.

McNamara Barry et al. (2010) suggested that “daily prayer, meaning-making and religious commitment” (p.389) are the key components of religious development. Koenig, Wang, Al Zaben, and Adi (2015) added that religious commitment can be described as “what individuals spend their time, talents and financial resources on” (p.1007). Based on the Experiential Learning Theory, every participant of a short-term mission trip learns in two main
ways. The first way is by grasping knowledge through experiences and secondly by transforming those experiences into new working knowledge (Kolb, 2015).

Table 2.
Between-group differences for each individual BIAC instrument question about religious practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>No Mission* (%)</th>
<th>Mission* (%)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1 - Rate the highest priority in your life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.5533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships with God</td>
<td>15 (65)</td>
<td>66 (74)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8 (35)</td>
<td>23 (26)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 - How often do you attend religious services?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A couple of times per year</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every few months</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>4 (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once per month</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times per month</td>
<td>4 (17)</td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About every week</td>
<td>4 (17)</td>
<td>12 (14)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every week</td>
<td>10 (44)</td>
<td>25 (28)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once per week</td>
<td>4 (17)</td>
<td>37 (42)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3 - Other than religious services, how often do you get together with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others for religious reasons (prayer, religious discussions, volunteer</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work, etc.)</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>5 (6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A couple of times per year</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td>4 (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every few months</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>7 (8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once per month</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td>6 (7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several times per month</td>
<td>4 (17)</td>
<td>9 (10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About every week</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>16 (18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every week</td>
<td>8 (35)</td>
<td>9 (10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than once per week</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td>26 (29)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>4 (5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4 - To what extent have you decided to place your life under God’s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.4157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direction?</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>2 (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>6 (26)</td>
<td>14 (16)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completely</td>
<td>16 (70)</td>
<td>73 (82)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 - What percentage of your gross annual income do you give to your</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.5738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religious institution or to other religious causes each year</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3 (13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-2%</td>
<td>3 (13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-4%</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-6%</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7-8%</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9-10%</td>
<td>10 (44)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-12%</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13-14%</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15% or more</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 - On average, how much time each day (in 24 hrs.) do you spend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.4331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listening to religious music or radio, or watching religious TV?</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3 (13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-5 minutes</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-10 minutes</td>
<td>5 (22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-20 minutes</td>
<td>5 (22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21-30 minutes</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-60 minutes</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 1 hour</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 2 hours</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-4 hours</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 or more hours</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7 - On average, how much time each day (in 24 hrs.) do you spend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.9988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading religious scriptures, books, or other religious literature?</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3 (13)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 (13)</td>
<td>10 (11)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 revealed that students with no mission experience attended religious services more consistently than those that had mission experience, 44% to 28%, but not as frequently as the mission group. The mission group attended services more than once a week at a rate of 42% to 17% of the non-mission groups who only attended once a week. This corroborates Beyerlein and Chaves’ (2003) hypothesis that participating in short-term mission trips boosts religiosity in young people. The data also reported that students in the no mission category attended some sort of religious gathering other than a religious service such as a prayer group, discussion group, volunteer group every week at a higher rate than the mission positive group at 35% to 10%. So, while the table answers H2: There will not be a statistically significant difference in religiosity practices in college students that have gone on short-term mission trips compared to those that
have not, there is slightly more religious devotion in the mission group as they considered their relationship with God to be of higher importance than those that had no mission experience, 74% to 65%. This could be attributed to the assimilation process, which occurs in experiential learning, the conceptual framework of this study. Yount (2001) posited that experiential learning is the “active participation of learners which leads to the accumulation of knowledge or skill” (p.276). Understanding this framework is paramount when discussing how participants of short-term mission trips are affected by their experiences.

Table 2 also explained that when asked “what percentage of your gross annual income do you give to your religious institution or to other religious causes each year?” 44% of the no mission group answered 9 to 10% while 35% of the mission group answered 9 to 10%. Furthermore, 7% of the mission group donated 15% or more of their income than the no mission group who donated 0% in this category.

Finally, a review of the literature on the motivation of young adults highlights that two equal factors motivate young people to volunteer, altruism, and egoism. This is based off the hypothesis of Horton-Smith (1981). Hustinx et al. (2010) concurred and add that while altruism and self-interest may be the main motivating factor in young people, the level of fervor depends on the age and nationality. In contrast, in this study, when asked “on average how much time each day do you spend as a volunteer in your religious community or to help others for religious reasons?” 17% of the non-mission group said 21-30 minutes and 6% of the mission group said 21-30 minutes. This revelation confirms the research of Hustinx et al. (2010) that the level of fervor of young adults’ motivation to volunteer depends on the age and nationality, not so much if the student has participated in a short-term mission trip or not.
Next, to answer the second research question “what is the mean difference in religiosity practices between college students that participated in short-term mission trips and those that did not?”; descriptive analysis with measures of central tendency, spread and distribution (mean, median, standard deviation, minimum and maximum) was conducted for the total BIAC score and compared between Mission and No Mission as well as other demographic variables such as sex, age, college type and year in college which is summed up in Table 3.

Table 3.
BIAC score summary for the total sample, by mission and other demographic variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total (n=112)</td>
<td>63.00</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>0.1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission (n=89)</td>
<td>64.56</td>
<td>16.37</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Mission (n=23)</td>
<td>59.04</td>
<td>18.32</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (n=96)</td>
<td>61.66</td>
<td>17.02</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (n=16)</td>
<td>74.06</td>
<td>11.25</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (n=86)</td>
<td>63.98</td>
<td>16.33</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0.5652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (n=26)</td>
<td>61.62</td>
<td>18.71</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age group:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20 (n=44)</td>
<td>59.82</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>0.0573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-23 (n=45)</td>
<td>64.84</td>
<td>17.43</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-25 (n=23)</td>
<td>67.57</td>
<td>18.35</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year in college</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (n=15)</td>
<td>66.67</td>
<td>14.47</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (n=20)</td>
<td>57.40</td>
<td>19.03</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (n=29)</td>
<td>62.76</td>
<td>12.99</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>0.3860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (n=25)</td>
<td>63.52</td>
<td>19.65</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ (n=23)</td>
<td>67.30</td>
<td>17.14</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of college</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian (n=69)</td>
<td>67.04</td>
<td>13.64</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>0.0079*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secular (n=43)</td>
<td>57.63</td>
<td>19.84</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = p<0.05, indicates statistically significant result at alpha = 0.05
Two-sample t-test with Bonferroni adjustment used for binary independent variables
ANOVA with Bonferroni post-hoc test used for categorical independent variables with 3+ categories

Between-group statistical significance and inferences about mean differences was determined using two-sample t-test with Bonferroni adjustment for binary independent variables (Mission, College student, Sex, Type of college), and ANOVA with Bonferroni post-hoc test for independent variables with three or more categories (Age group, Year in college). On average, those with mission experience have a higher score than those that did not, but it is not statistically significant (0.1978*) and answers H1: There will not be a significant difference
between scores on the Belief Into Action Scale (BIAC) of college students who have participated in a short-term mission trip than in the experimental group.

Next, a multiple linear regression model was created using BIAC score as the dependent outcome variable and demographic independent variables as exposures. The goal of this analysis was to observe covariates that might have statistically significant contribution to the BIAC total score. For this model, variable recording individuals that are over and under age 18 was excluded due to the zero observations in <18 group recapped in Table 4. Results indicated that on average, there was a statistical difference in type of college (Christian, 0.0179*).

Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>64.22</td>
<td>7.413</td>
<td>8.662</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a college student</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College student</td>
<td>-9.847</td>
<td>5.252</td>
<td>-1.875</td>
<td>0.0637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Mission</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>5.375</td>
<td>3.953</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>0.1769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18-20</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 21-23</td>
<td>5.501</td>
<td>4.385</td>
<td>1.254</td>
<td>0.2126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 24-25</td>
<td>6.923</td>
<td>5.300</td>
<td>1.306</td>
<td>0.1944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-3.673</td>
<td>3.820</td>
<td>-0.962</td>
<td>0.3386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College year 1</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College year 2</td>
<td>-8.106</td>
<td>5.638</td>
<td>-1.438</td>
<td>0.1536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College year 3</td>
<td>-0.305</td>
<td>5.539</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
<td>0.8847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College year 4</td>
<td>-4.743</td>
<td>6.191</td>
<td>-0.766</td>
<td>0.4454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College year 5+</td>
<td>-7.004</td>
<td>6.432</td>
<td>-1.089</td>
<td>0.2787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secular College</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian College</td>
<td>7.718</td>
<td>3.208</td>
<td>2.406</td>
<td>0.0179*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*= statistically significant at alpha=0.05 level
Multiple R-squared: 0.1803
Adjusted R-squared: 0.09014

For the third research question “what are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer?”, a modified version of Attitudes Toward Helping Others (AHO) scale was applied. The instrument consisted of six 5-point Likert-scale items ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) pertaining to volunteering motivators. Univariate, bivariate, and multivariable analyses were utilized. Table 5 summarizes the absolute and relative frequencies for each AHO
item by Mission vs. No Mission with relation to the total sample and estimates between-group
differences at a significance threshold of alpha=0.05 using Pearson’s Chi-squared test with
Yate’s continuity correction.

Table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>No Mission* (%)</th>
<th>Mission* (%)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1 – Volunteering can help me get my foot in the door at a place that I would like to work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>8 (40)</td>
<td>23 (32)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>5 (25)</td>
<td>29 (40)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>6 (30)</td>
<td>9 (12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>7 (10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1 (5)</td>
<td>5 (7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 – My friends volunteer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.7410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>5 (25)</td>
<td>17 (23)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>11 (55)</td>
<td>40 (55)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3 (15)</td>
<td>6 (8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>1 (5)</td>
<td>7 (10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>3 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3 – I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0042*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>12 (60)</td>
<td>39 (53)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4 (20)</td>
<td>31 (43)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3 (15)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1 (5)</td>
<td>3 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4 – People I’m close to want me to volunteer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.7110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>4 (20)</td>
<td>12 (16)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>8 (40)</td>
<td>36 (49)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>8 (40)</td>
<td>21 (29)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>3 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 – Volunteering makes me feel important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.5717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>4 (20)</td>
<td>16 (22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>5 (25)</td>
<td>29 (40)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>8 (40)</td>
<td>22 (30)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>3 (15)</td>
<td>5 (7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 – People I know share an interest in community service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.4773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>5 (25)</td>
<td>24 (33)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>12 (60)</td>
<td>34 (47)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>3 (15)</td>
<td>7 (10)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>5 (7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>3 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = p<0.05, indicates statistically significant result at alpha = 0.05

The table answers H3: Distinct motivating factors that lead college students to volunteer will not
be revealed, however there was a statistical significance in concern for others less fortunate
(0.0042*). It is interesting to note that those with no mission experience answered that they
“strongly agree that they are concerned about those less fortunate than myself” 60% more than
those with mission experience (53%); but this same group scored lower (20%) than those that

went on a mission trip (43%) in the “agree that they are concerned about those less fortunate than myself” question. Which correlates with a study done by Howell (2009) that found that one of the most popular reasons to participate in short-term mission trip is based on the theological thought of “answering the call”. In this qualitative study, Howell (2009) found that both call and sacrifice remain key motivations for short term missions.

Next, a total AHO score was calculated as a sum of the Likert items. The possible AHO score ranged between 6 to 30. Between-group statistical significance and inferences about mean differences in AHO scores was determined using two-sample t-test with Bonferroni adjustment for binary independent variables (mission status, college student, sex, type of college), and ANOVA with Bonferroni post-hoc test for independent variables with three or more categories (age group, year in college). The scores were almost identical, thus showing high non-statistical significance; the results are compiled in Table 6.

### Table 6.

AHO total score summary for the total sample, by mission and other demographic variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total (n=93)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission (n=20)</td>
<td>23.48</td>
<td>3.571</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.8536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Mission (n=73)</td>
<td>23.65</td>
<td>3.646</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (n=93)</td>
<td>23.52</td>
<td>3.568</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (n=0)</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (n=74)</td>
<td>23.66</td>
<td>3.717</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.3777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (n=19)</td>
<td>22.95</td>
<td>2.934</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age group:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20 (n=41)</td>
<td>23.71</td>
<td>4.244</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-23 (n=37)</td>
<td>23.54</td>
<td>3.097</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.5100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-25 (n=15)</td>
<td>22.93</td>
<td>2.658</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year in college</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (n=10)</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>2.633</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (n=19)</td>
<td>20.95</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (n=29)</td>
<td>24.28</td>
<td>2.914</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.8700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (n=23)</td>
<td>24.04</td>
<td>3.254</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ (n=12)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.558</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of college</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian (n=54)</td>
<td>23.93</td>
<td>3.791</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.1821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secular (n=39)</td>
<td>22.95</td>
<td>3.195</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = p<0.05, indicates statistically significant result at alpha = 0.05
Two-sample t-test with Bonferroni adjustment used for binary independent variables
ANOVA with Bonferroni post-hoc test used for categorical independent variables with 3+ categories
For exploratory analysis, a multiple linear regression model was created using AHO total score as the dependent outcome variable and demographic independent variables as exposures. The goal of this analysis was to observe covariates that might have statistically significant contribution to the AHO total score. For this model, variables recording individuals that are over and under age 18 as well as variable pertaining to student status were excluded due to the zero observations in <18 and non-college student groups. Students with mission experience had slightly lower scores, but not significant and 2nd year college students had a higher correlation (0.0008*** with AHO total score as revealed in Table 7.

![Table 7. Multivariable Linear Regression results: Correlation between AHO total score and 6 factors](image)

To further explore the third research question, “what are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer?” three of the AHO items were combined to create a social factor as per AHO scoring instructions. These questions were “my friends volunteer”, “people I’m close to want me to volunteer”, and “people I know share an interest in community service”. The possible score for this factor ranged from 3 to 15. Between-group statistical significance and inferences about mean differences in AHO Social factor scores was determined using two-sample t-test with Bonferroni adjustment for binary independent variables (Mission, College
student, Sex, Type of college), and ANOVA with Bonferroni post-hoc test for independent variables with three or more categories (Age group, Year in college).

Identified in Table 8, the social factor score revealed a statistically significant difference of 0.0374*, indicating college students attending a Christian college had a higher social factor than secular college students. Webb, Green, and Brashear (2000) described pro-social values as a combination of six social factors with benevolence and universalism as most common in motivation for charitable behavior. Benevolence concentrates more on people one cares about and universalism as “a concern for welfare of all people in all settings” (p.305).

Finally, a multiple linear regression model was created using AHO Social Factor score as the dependent outcome variable and demographic independent variables as exposures. The goal of this analysis was to observe covariates that might have statistically significant contribution to

Table 8.
AHO social factor score summary for the total sample, by mission and other demographic variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total (n=93)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission (n=73)</td>
<td>11.53</td>
<td>2.456</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.4784</td>
</tr>
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<td>No Mission (n=20)</td>
<td>11.90</td>
<td>1.889</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>College student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (n=93)</td>
<td>11.61</td>
<td>2.341</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (n=74)</td>
<td>11.66</td>
<td>2.301</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.7104</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male (n=19)</td>
<td>11.42</td>
<td>2.545</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Age group:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20 (n=31)</td>
<td>11.49</td>
<td>2.712</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-23 (n=37)</td>
<td>11.78</td>
<td>2.110</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.8100</td>
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<tr>
<td>24-25 (n=15)</td>
<td>11.53</td>
<td>1.846</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year in college</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (n=10)</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>1.912</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 (n=19)</td>
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<td>3.000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (n=29)</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>1.496</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>4 (n=23)</td>
<td>12.17</td>
<td>2.406</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+ (n=5)</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>2.195</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of college</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian (n=54)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.0374*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secular (n=39)</td>
<td>11.03</td>
<td>2.218</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = p<0.05, indicates statistically significant result at alpha = 0.05

Two-sample t-test with Bonferroni adjustment used for binary independent variables
ANOVA with Bonferroni post-hoc test used for categorical independent variables with 3+ categories
the AHO total score which did show a statistically significant difference in 2nd year students (0.01467*) and Christian college students (0.01858*).

Table 9.
Multivariable Linear Regression results: Correlation between AHO social factor score and 6 factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>11.86</td>
<td>0.9014</td>
<td>13.16</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Mission</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>-0.3147</td>
<td>0.5954</td>
<td>-0.5286</td>
<td>0.5985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 18-20</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 21-23</td>
<td>-0.3109</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td>-0.4754</td>
<td>0.6358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 24-25</td>
<td>-0.5101</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>-0.622</td>
<td>0.5356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-0.0599</td>
<td>0.6092</td>
<td>-0.0983</td>
<td>0.9219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College year 1</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
<td>(ref)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College year 2</td>
<td>-2.198</td>
<td>0.8819</td>
<td>-2.493</td>
<td>0.01467*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College year 3</td>
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<td>0.9833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College year 4</td>
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<td>0.9818</td>
<td>0.2045</td>
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<td>College year 5+</td>
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<td>-0.3025</td>
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<td>Christian College</td>
<td>1.114</td>
<td>0.4764</td>
<td>2.401</td>
<td>0.01858*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*= statistically significant at alpha=0.05 level
Multiple R-squared: 0.1925
Adjusted R-squared: 0.1049

For this model, variables recording individuals that are over and under age 18 as well as variable pertaining to student status were excluded due to the zero observations in <18 and non-college student groups as seen in Table 9.

Summary

Table 1 describes between-group differences for Mission vs. No Mission, specifically in demographic variables such as sex, age, year in college and type of college. Of the 112 students that completed the survey, 23 had no short-term mission experience while 89 had gone on at least one short-term mission trip; 96 were college students and 16 were not.

Table 2 highlights between-group differences for each individual BIAC instrument question about religious practices and revealed that students with no mission experience attended religious services more consistently than those that had mission experience, 44% to 28%, but not as frequently as the mission group.
Next, to answer the second research question “what is the mean difference in religiosity practices between college students that participated in short-term mission trips and those that did not?”; descriptive analysis with measures of central tendency, spread and distribution (mean, median, standard deviation, minimum and maximum) was conducted for the total BIAC score and compared between Mission and No Mission as well as other demographic variables such as sex, age, college type and year in college which is summed up in Table 3.

The goal of this analysis was to observe covariates that might have statistically significant contribution to the BIAC total score. For this model, variable recording individuals that are over and under age 18 was excluded due to the zero observations in <18 group recapped in Table 4. Results indicated that on average, there was a statistical difference (0.0179* Christian college).

Table 5 shows between-group differences for each individual AHO item about helping attitudes and answers H3: Distinct motivating factors that lead college students to volunteer will not be revealed. However, there was a statistically significant difference in concern for the less fortunate in the no mission group (0.0042*).

Next, Table 6 revealed a total AHO score was calculated as a sum of the Likert items. The scores were almost identical, thus showing high non-statistical significance.

Table 7 shows the results of the analysis to observe covariates that might have statistically significant contribution to the AHO total score. Students with mission experience had slightly lower scores, but not significant and 2nd year college students had a higher correlation (*0.0008) with AHO total score.
Identified in Table 8, the social factor score revealed a statistically significant difference of *0.0374, indicating college students attending a Christian college had a higher social factor than secular college students.

In Table 9, a multiple linear regression model was created using AHO Social Factor score as the dependent outcome variable and demographic independent variables as exposures. The goal of this analysis was to observe covariates that might have statistically significant contribution to the AHO total score which did show a statistically significant difference in college year (2\textsuperscript{nd} year students, 0.01467*) and type of college (Christian college, 0.01858*).
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

College students who participated in at least one short-term mission trip, as well as college students that were non-participants of short-term mission trips. were assessed through an online survey. These students were selected from a multi-site, religious congregation of approximately 25,000 members, that meets at 14 different sites simultaneously in South Florida. This survey was given through surveymonkey.com and made available through social media. The focus of this research is to understand the impact that short-term mission trip participation has on religiosity of college students ages 18-25 years. The secondary outcome goal is to ascertain the motivations as to why college students volunteer to go on short-term mission trips.

Discussion

This exploration has set out to understand the following research questions: RQ 1: Does going on short-term mission trips make a difference in religiosity in the lives of college students who participate? RQ 2: What is the mean difference in religiosity practices between college students that participated in short-term mission trips and those that did not? RQ 3: What are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer? The hypothesis was that there will be a statistically significant difference in the religiosity scores in college students that have gone on short-term mission trips compared to those that have not. There will be a statistically significant difference in religiosity practices in college students that have gone on short-term mission trips compared to those that have not. There will be distinct motivating factors that lead college students to volunteer for short term missions.
Research Question 1

Univariate, bivariate, and multivariable analyses were utilized to answer research question 1. First, a Belief Into Action Scale (BIAC) score was calculated. The BIAC instrument was comprised of 1 categorical item and 9 Likert-scaled items in which 1 indicated the lowest degree and 10 the highest degree of response. As per scoring instructions, question 1 was recoded to assign score 10 to “relationships with God” response and score 1 to all other responses. The total BIAC score was calculated as the sum of Q1 through Q10 and could range from 10 to 100. Table 2 summarizes absolute and relative frequencies for each BIAC item by Mission vs. No Mission with relation to the total sample and estimates between-group differences at alpha=0.05 level using Pearson’s Chi-squared test with Yate’s continuity correction. Interestingly, this revealed that students with no mission experience attended religious services more consistently than those that had mission experience, 44% to 28%, but not as frequently as the mission group. The mission group attended services more than once a week at a rate of 42% to 17% of the non-mission groups who only attended once a week.

Table 2 also answers H2: There will not be a statistically significant difference in religiosity practices in college students that have gone on short-term mission trips compared to those that have not. This finding was unexpected given the amount of mission trips participation discovered in the review of literature where it was reported that “in 2002, 29% of teenagers in the U.S. have gone on a mission trip” (Adler & Ruiz, 2018, p. 325). A review of the literature also suggests that short-term mission trips have grown exponentially in the last five decades, particularly with teenagers, now ranging in the 2000 average participant range (Howell, 2012; Wuthnow, 2009). Furthermore, during the age range of young adults 18-25, a profound change in self-identity takes place with young adults exploring their religious beliefs due to the changes in
the areas of biological, cognitive, and psychosocial development (McNamara Barry et al., 2010). While this study did observe that 18–20-year old’s had gone on short-term mission trips, 42% more than the other age ranges. The results of this study did reveal that there was not a statistically significant difference in the religiosity practices of college students that have gone on short-term mission trips than in those who have not gone on short-term mission trips. This finding was astonishing. At the very least, this researcher speculated that the reflective observation, the second step in the ELT model would enhance the religiosity practices in STMT participants due to its meditative and reflective nature.

**Research Question 2**

To answer research question 2, descriptive analysis with measures of central tendency, spread and distribution (mean, median, standard deviation, minimum and maximum) was conducted for the total BIAC score and compared between Mission and No Mission as well as other demographic variables summed up in Table 3. Between-group statistical significance and inferences about mean differences was determined using two-sample t-test with Bonferroni adjustment for binary independent variables (Mission, College student, Sex, Type of college), and ANOVA with Bonferroni post-hoc test for independent variables with three or more categories (Age group, Year in college). On average, those with mission experience have a higher score than those that did not but it is not statistically significant (0.1978*). The table answers H1: There will not be a significant difference between scores on the Belief Into Action Scale (BIAC) of college students who have participated in a short-term mission trip than in the experimental group.
Research Question 3

For the third research question “what are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer?”, a modified version of Attitudes Toward Helping Others (AHO) scale was applied. The instrument consisted of six 5-point Likert-scale items ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) pertaining to volunteering motivators. Univariate, bivariate, and multivariable analyses were utilized. Table 5 summarizes the absolute and relative frequencies for each AHO item by Mission vs. No Mission with relation to the total sample and estimates between-group differences at a significance threshold of alpha=0.05 using Pearson’s Chi-squared test with Yate’s continuity correction. The table answers H3: Distinct motivating factors that lead college students to volunteer will not be revealed. It is interesting to note that those with no mission experience answered that they “strongly agree that they are concerned about those less fortunate than myself” more (60%) than those with mission experience (53%); but this same group scored lower (20%) than those that went on a mission trip (43%) in the “agree that they are concerned about those less fortunate than myself” question. To further explore the third research question, “what are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer?” three of the AHO items were combined to create a social factor as per AHO scoring instructions. These questions were “my friends volunteer”, “people I’m close to want me to volunteer”, and “people I know share an interest in community service”. The possible score for this factor ranged from 3 to 15. Between-group statistical significance and inferences about mean differences in AHO Social factor scores was determined using two-sample t-test with Bonferroni adjustment for binary independent variables (Mission, College student, Sex, Type of college), and ANOVA with Bonferroni post-hoc test for independent variables with three or more categories (Age group, Year in college). Identified in Table 8, the social factor score revealed a statistically significant difference of
*0.0374, indicating college students attending a Christian college had a higher social factor than secular college students. Webb, Green, and Brashear (2000) described pro-social values as combination of six social factors with benevolence and universalism as most common in motivation for charitable behavior. Benevolence concentrates more on people one cares about and universalism as “a concern for welfare of all people in all settings” (p.305).

**Implications**

The implications for this study are rooted in the words of Jesus Christ as told in the book of Mathew 22:36-40 (New International Version, 2011) which states “Jesus replied, love the Lord God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment and the second is like it: love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and prophets hang on these two commandments”. The initial idea for this study was birthed out of this researcher’s experience with Christian college students and secular college students. This researcher noticed a difference in religiosity between these two groups and was curious as to why college students from a Christian college who had participated in short term mission trips had more experience in religious practices. This researcher also noticed that college students from a Christian college who had participated in at least one short term mission trip, volunteered more often in the community especially at the church where this study was conducted. This church set aside every Saturday for serving their community. The highest turn out for volunteers were from the college age group. As it relates to community care and counseling, while there was not a statistical significance in the difference in the two mission status groups, there was a slight difference in the group of college students that participated in short term mission trips. This is to say that they volunteered more, cared more about their community, and participated in religious practices more often than the other college students that had not gone on a short-term
mission trip. Furthermore, the social factor score revealed college students attending a Christian college had a higher social factor than secular college students. Other implications are that college students that participated in at least one short term mission trip engaged in experiential learning where they served their community and as a result reflected on their experience causing them to actively experiment with their newfound sense of service. In addition, these college students have a greater awareness of the world around them based on their cultural experience with a diverse population other than their own. This group also develops close peer attachments and a sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves.

A review of the literature revealed that during the age range of young adults 18 to 25, a profound change in self-identity takes place with young adults exploring their religious beliefs due to the changes in the areas of biological, cognitive, and psychosocial development (McNamara Barry et al., 2010). This search for self and confirmation of religious beliefs often leads this age range to volunteer and commit to service to community more than other age ranges (Hopkins et al., 2015). Webb, Green, and Brashear (2000) described pro-social values as a combination of six social factors with benevolence and universalism as most common in motivation for charitable behavior. Finally, this study can assist religious organizations, mission trip organizations and non-governmental organizations to recruit and retain participants in the future, thus offering the community a way to train up the youth of their population.

**Limitations**

There were several limitations in this study, some that were foreseen and some that were truly unexpected. Initially, this study would have had a much higher sample size due to the church where it was conducted. This church provides at least 10-15 opportunities for short term missions throughout the year. Unfortunately, starting in March of 2020, all mission trips were
cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. So, even though the study was conducted at a large, religious, multi-site congregation of approximately 25,000 members, there was no opportunity for short-term missions due to travel restrictions. The marketing of this study was another limitation in that it attracted a disproportionate number of students with mission experience and not enough of non-mission participants. This caused the ratio to be skewed at a rate of 1:3. This can also be attributed to a recruiting error on this researcher’s part. Another limitation of the study was the inclusion of 16 participants who had not attended college or who were not college students at the time of their mission experience. This was a limitation due to human error. A disqualification code was not written into the survey when the participants were asked if they were college students. Had this been done, the 16 participants that were not college students would have been disqualified. There was found to be a lack of instrumentation available for this age range of 18 to 25 years old. There were instruments for teenagers and instruments for adults, but this researcher only found one instrument for the specific age range of 18 to 25. Finally, there was ambiguity surrounding the definition of a short-term mission trip as different studies prior to this one has defined it as one week or less than a month long.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

One area that merits future research is the types of short-term mission trips. This researcher recommends including service learning, humanitarian, cultural trips in addition to religious focused trips. The inclusion of local missions would also increase the sample size as well. Considering the length of a mission trip and defining how many weeks it entails would alleviate the ambiguity of what a short-term mission trip is. Broadening the area of concentration of a trip may have a different effect on its participants. Opening the population to include all youth eligible to participate would increase the number of instruments that would be compatible
to the study. Also, conducting the study over a longer period after the travel restrictions have eased may increase participation. In addition, including more than one church could offer a more diverse population and alleviate the burden of having too many samples in one variable such as in mission experience. Other constructs and theoretical frameworks could be considered that included cultural diversity and cognitive behavioral therapy could possibly be another avenue of study to increase the knowledge in this field of study and make it more relatable to community care and counseling. Additionally, conducting a mixed methods study to include participant interviews to go along with the assessments could shed more light on the topic.

**Summary**

College students who participated in at least one short-term mission trip, as well as college students that were non-participants of short-term mission trips were assessed through an online survey through surveymonkey.com and made available through social media. These students were selected from a religious congregation of approximately 25,000 members in South Florida. The focus of this research is to understand the impact that short-term mission trip participation has on religiosity of college students ages 18-25 years. The secondary outcome goal is to ascertain the motivations as to why college students volunteer to go on short-term mission trips.

This study has set out to understand the following research questions: **RQ 1:** Does going on short-term mission trips make a difference in religiosity in the lives of college students who participate? Table 3 answers this question as it reveals that there was not a statistically significant difference of 0.1978* but was in favor of Christian college students’ BIAC scores. **RQ 2:** What is the mean difference in religiosity practices between college students that participated in short-term mission trips and those that did not? Table 2 also answers H2: There
will not be a statistically significant difference in religiosity practices in college students that have gone on short-term mission trips compared to those that have not. This finding was unexpected given the amount of mission trips participation discovered in the review of literature where it was reported that “in 2002, 29% of teenagers in the U.S. have gone on a mission trip” (Adler & Ruiz, 2018, p. 325). **RQ 3:** What are the motivating factors that lead young people to volunteer? Distinct motivating factors that lead college students to volunteer were not be revealed. Identified in Table 8, the social factor score revealed a statistically significant difference of *0.0374, indicating college students attending a Christian college had a higher social factor than secular college students. Webb, Green, and Brashear (2000) described prosocial values as combination of six social factors with benevolence and universalism as most common in motivation for charitable behavior.

As it relates to community care and counseling, while there was not a statistical significance in the difference in the two mission status groups’ religious practices, there was a slight difference in the group of college students that participated in short term mission trips. This is to say that they volunteered more, cared more about their community, and participated in religious practices more often than the other college students that had not gone on a short-term mission trip. Furthermore, the social factor score revealed college students attending a Christian college had a higher social factor than secular college students. Other implications are that college students that participated in at least one short term mission trip engaged in experiential learning where they served their community and as a result reflected on their experience causing them to actively experiment with their newfound sense of service.

There were several limitations in this study, some that were foreseen and some that were truly unexpected. All mission trips were cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic causing the
sample to be smaller than expected, the marketing of this study was another limitation in that it attracted a disproportionate number of students with mission experience and not enough of non-mission participants, the inclusion of 16 participants who had not attended college or who were not college students at the time of their mission experience, a lack of instrumentation available for this age range of 18 to 25 years old, finally, there was ambiguity surrounding the definition of a short-term mission trip as different studies prior to this one has defined it as one week or less than a month long.

One area that merits future research is the types of short-term mission trips. Perchance by including local missions there would be an increase in participation. Also, considering the length of a mission trip and area of concentration of a trip may have a different effect on its participants. Opening the population to include all youth eligible to participate would broaden the number of instruments that would be compatible to the study. Also, conducting the study over a longer period after the travel restrictions have eased may increase participation.
References


*Missiology, 41*(2), 202-224.


APPENDICES

Appendix A: IRB Approval letter

November 19, 2020

Patricia Cepeda-Russell
Stacey Lilley

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY20-21-257 The Impact of Short-Term Mission Trips on Religiosity and Motivations for Helping in College Students.

Dear Patricia Cepeda-Russell, Stacey Lilley:

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:

101(b):

Category 2.(i). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording).

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

Your stamped consent form can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. This form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office
APPENDIX B: Informed Consent Form

Consent

Title of the Project: THE IMPACT OF SHORT-TERM MISSION TRIPS ON RELIGIOSITY AND MOTIVATIONS FOR HELPING IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Principal Investigator: Patricia M. Cepeda-Russell, Liberty University, School of Behavioral Sciences

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be 18-25 years old, a college student, and someone who either has or has not gone on at least one short-term mission trip. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of this study is to ascertain if going on a short-term mission trip makes a difference in religiosity in the lives of college students who participate. As well as understanding the mean difference in religiosity practices and motivations for helping between college students that participated in short-term mission trips and those that did not.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Complete the survey. It will take approximately 5 to 10 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include quantifying the religious outcomes of attending short-term mission trips to improve participation and recruitment.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

• Participant responses will be anonymous.
• Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
How will you be compensated for being part of the study?
Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or Christ Fellowship Church. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?
If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?
The researcher conducting this study is Patricia M. Cepeda-Russell. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact her at pmcepedarussell@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty sponsor, Stacey C. Lilley, Ph.D., LPC-S, Assistant Professor, Program Director, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Department of Counselor Education & Family Studies at (434) 582-3317.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu

Your Consent
Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher/study team using the information provided above.

By proceeding to the study, you agree that you have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions, if desired, and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.
APPENDIX C: Survey Questions with Permission Correspondence

Harold Koenig, M.D. <harold.koenig@duke.edu>
Fri 1/10/2020 1:52 PM
To: Cepeda-Russell, Patricia Minerva

0-DUREL English version.doc
26 KB

BIAC Scale.doc
69 KB

[ EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open attachments unless you know the sender and trust the content. ]

Patricia – thanks for your interest! I’m attaching the DUREL and an even better measure of religiosity, the BIAC. You have permission to use either one. Say hello to your professors at Liberty from me. I think I’m scheduled to speak for some event up there on evening of March 24th. HK

Harold G. Koenig, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences
Associate Professor of Medicine
Director, Center for Spirituality, Theology and Health
Duke University Medical Center, Durham, North Carolina
Belief into Action Scale (also available in Chinese, Spanish, and a Muslim version in Arabic and Farsi).

Circle a number that indicates your level of agreement.

1. Please circle a number that indicates your level of agreement.

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THIS BOX IS HERE TO PROTECT THE CONTENT OF THIS INVENTORY.
THIS BOX IS HERE TO PROTECT THE CONTENT OF THIS INVENTORY
Hello Patricia,

Thank you for your email and interest in our work.

You can freely use that scale given that it is published. On behalf of my co-authors we are pleased it is being used.

Good luck with your PhD research and I look forward to seeing your successfully publications in the future.

Best,
Tom Brashear
ATTITUDES TOWARD HELPING OTHERS SCALE (AHO)

Reference:


Description of Measure:

A 4-item measure of helping attitudes. The authors define AHO as "global and relatively enduring evaluations with regard to helping or assisting other people (pp. 303)." Respondents answer each item using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Note: this scale was published along side the Attitudes toward Charitable Organizations scale (see the ACO page on this website for a description).

Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:


The purpose of this research was to develop a multidimensional attitude scale which measures beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to helping. Four-hundred and eight undergraduate students took part in one of four studies used to evaluate the psychometric properties of the Helping Attitude Scale (HAS). These preliminary studies suggest that the HAS is a reliable and valid measure of helping attitudes. The results also indicated that women had a more positive attitude toward helping.


A field study of altruistic behaviour is presented using a modification of the dictator game in a large random sample survey in the Netherlands (n=1,964). In line with laboratory experiments, only 5.7% donated money. In line with other survey research on giving, generosity increased with age, education, income, trust, and prosocial value orientation.

THIS BOX IS HERE TO PROTECT THE CONTENT OF THIS INVENTORY