

Running Head: RELIGIOSITY

The Effects of Perceived Religiosity
on Approval of Hooking Up and Premarital Sex

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“The Effects of Perceived Religiosity on Approval of Hooking Up and Premarital Sex”

In the last decade “hooking up” has become substantially more popular in research and everyday language. While the meaning of the term “hooking up” can be ambiguous, in some areas dating has been replaced by “hooking up” (Burdette, Ellison, Hill, and Glenn 535-551). Some people think “hooking up” has become a beneficial way for young adults to experiment before marriage; others recognize that it may be very harmful (Burdette, Ellison, Hill, and Glenn 535-551). Many students, especially females, have reported having hooked up with the hopes of starting a relationship (England, Shafer, and Fogarty 531-547). Many other women feel pressured to have sex and often end up the objects of sexual abuse and mistreatment (Burdette, Ellison, Hill, and Glenn 535-551).

All the major religions place some restrictions to emphasize “sexual purity” (Burdette, Ellison, Hill, and Glenn 535-551). It has been found that religious involvement reduces the odds of “hooking up” at college, and this pattern is directly affected by religious service attendance (Burdette, Ellison, Hill, and Glenn 535-551). Studies show that continued religious service attendance is one of the greatest predictors of religious commitment.

Religious denomination can also play a key role in the likelihood of hooking up. Women who attend colleges and universities with a Catholic affiliation are more likely to have hooked up at school than women who attend academic institutions with no religious affiliation (Burdette, Ellison, Hill, and Glenn 535-551). Furthermore, Catholic college women are more likely to have “hooked up” while at school than those of no religious affiliation or those who are Conservative Protestants (Burdette, Ellison, Hill, and Glenn 535-551). Lastly, Conservative Protestant women are less likely to have “hooked up” while at school than college women with no religious affiliation (Burdette, Ellison, Hill, and Glenn 535-551).

The hypothesis is that there will be a correlation between how religious people perceive themselves to be and whether or not they approve of premarital sexuality and hooking up. Specifically, it is expected that there will be a lower rate of approval from those that consider themselves “very religious” in comparison to those that consider themselves “not religious.” Based on past research it is also expected that those students who attend church frequently, at least once a month, will also report having less hook ups than those who don’t attend.

Method

Participants

The participants were three hundred and ten students at Concord University. Participants were allowed to skip questions they didn’t want to answer or didn’t feel comfortable answering so the total number of participants may vary for different questions. The surveys were distributed during class time to several different divisions. Only students present in the class at the time of distribution were able to participate. If students had multiple classes where the surveys were being distributed they were asked to not take the survey more than once. The survey was also approved by the Human Subjects Review Board at Concord University prior to administering surveys.

Procedure

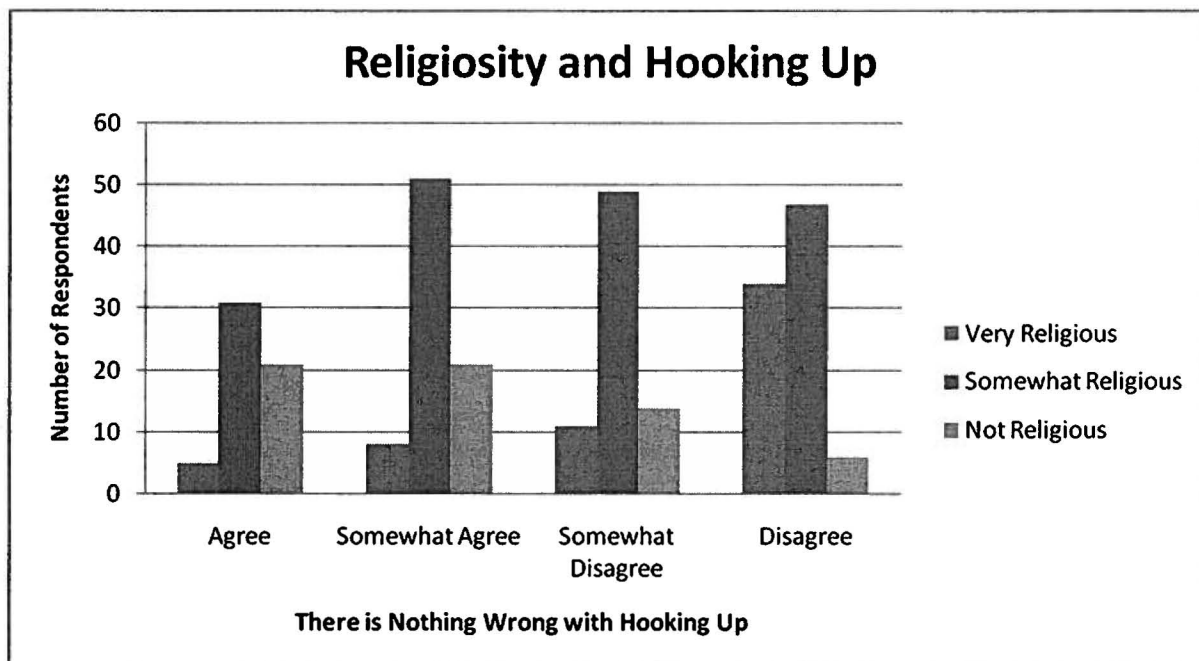
The students were asked to fill out a 6 page survey but were informed that participation was voluntary. Each student was handed a disclaimer prior to the survey which explained that participation was voluntary and that all information recorded would be confidential. After the students had signed and returned the disclaimer they were handed a survey. After completing the survey students were asked to return it to a table or desk sitting at the front of the room.

The survey was titled “Survey on College Social Life: Hooking up, Hanging Out and

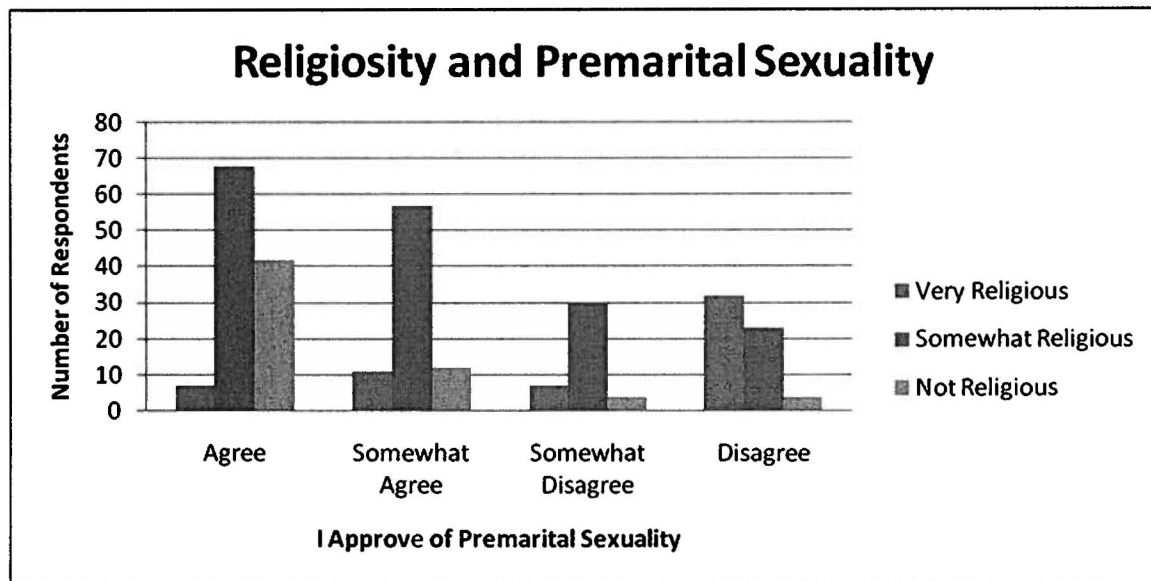
Relationships” and all questions pertained to those issues. Demographic information such as race, gender, age, economic class, and religious information were collected. Almost all questions were close ended and most involved rating scales. Those questions with scales were rated on scales of never, rarely, sometimes, often, all the time or agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or disagree.

Results

In regard to the question there is nothing wrong with hooking up in relation to perceived religion the hypothesis was supported. A χ^2 test revealed that the results were significant, $\chi^2 (6)$, $p < .001$.



For the question of I approve of premarital sexuality from a perceived religious perspective the hypothesis was proven. A χ^2 test revealed that the results were significant, $\chi^2 (6)$, $p < .001$.



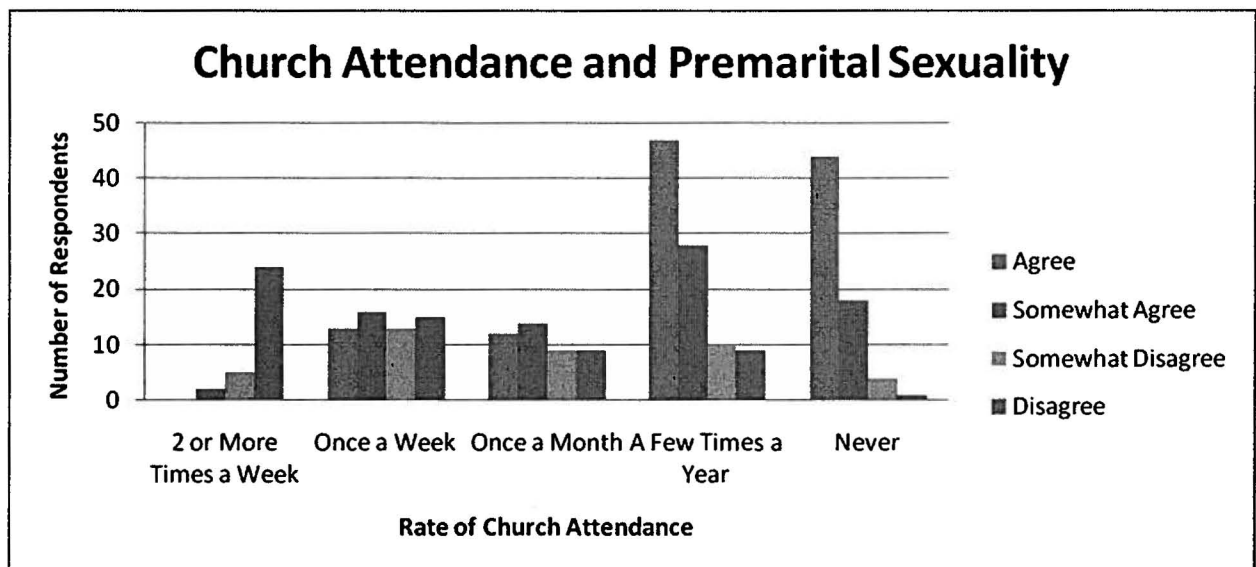
The hypothesis is that there will be a correlation between how religious people perceive themselves to be and whether or not they approve of premarital sexuality and hooking up is fully supported. The charts show what was expected, for the question there is nothing wrong with hooking up only 5 “very religious” people agreed and 34 disagreed. For those that were not religious, 21 agreed and 6 disagree.

For the question on premarital sexuality, of those that identify themselves as “very religious” only 7 people approved of premarital sex while 32 disagreed. Furthermore, those that identified as not religious were much more likely to approve with 42 responses and only 4 disagreed. There is an unexpected pattern of responding from those individuals that identify themselves as “somewhat religious.” Those individuals often responded at a higher rate than those that are nonreligious.

From past research, it is expected that a person’s rate of church attendance will have a direct influence on their views of premarital sexuality and hooking up. More specifically, it is expected that those individuals who go to church are more likely to disapprove of premarital sex

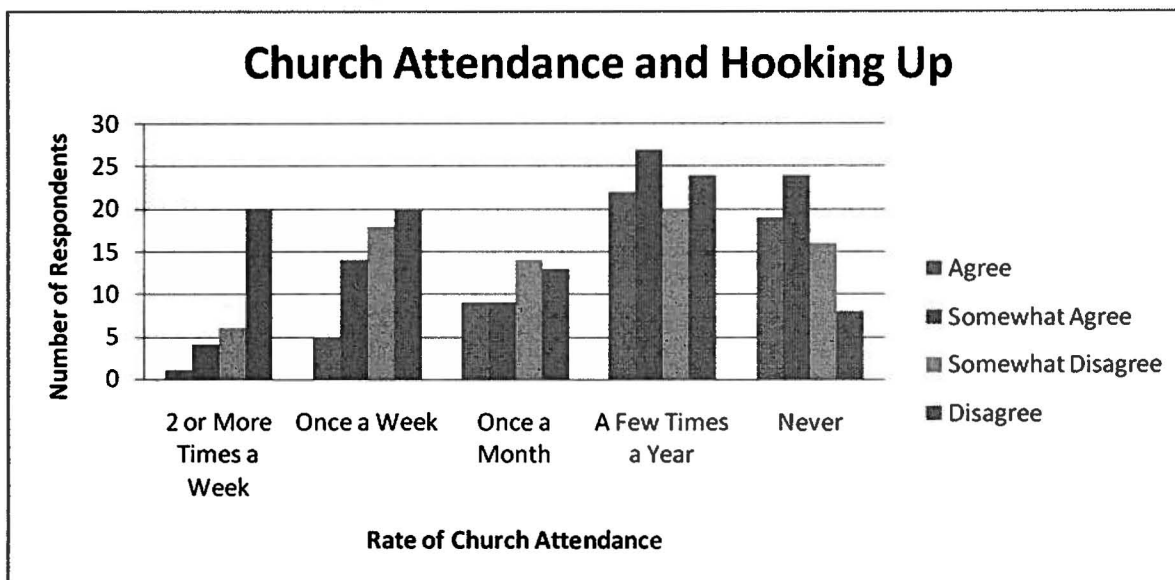
and hooking up. The findings for the rate of church attendance on approval premarital sexuality are exactly as expected as well.

A χ^2 test revealed a significant effect, $\chi^2(6)$, $p < .001$. No respondents who go to church 2 or more times a week reported approval of premarital sexuality and of those who attend church only a few times a year or never had a high rate of agreement, 47 and 44 individuals respectively. The most disagreement with the statement I approve of premarital sexuality comes from those who go to church 2 or more times a week as well. Twenty-four respondents who go to church two or more times a week said they disagreed while only one person who never goes to church said that premarital sexuality was wrong.



Lastly is the question there is nothing wrong with hooking up in comparison with the rate of church attendance. A χ^2 test revealed a significant result, $\chi^2(6)$, $p < .001$. The overall results are the same as in church attendance and premarital sexuality. Once again, it shows that those people who attend church more frequently disagree with hooking up, and those that never attend

church or go only a few times a year are more accepting of hooking up.



Discussion

The hypothesis was successfully supported and it does appear that there is a relationship between perceived religiosity and approval of hooking up and premarital sex. On the topic of religiosity, I was surprised to find that those respondents who identified as “somewhat religious” in most cases had a higher rate of approval than those who are “not religious.” Some proposed explanations of this problem are: Some of the people who responded may not be religious but marked somewhat religious because Concord University is in an area where religion plays a key role or some of the people responding may identify with a religion that does not place restrictions on premarital sex.

Also another unusual pattern was that overall 163 respondents disagreed or somewhat disagreed that there is nothing wrong with hooking up, making it a total of 52.6%. There were only 102 people that disagreed with premarital sexuality, or only 32.9%. I propose this could be caused by the ambiguous definitions of the two words, or that “hooking up” seems to be associated with negative things more often than premarital sexuality.

In the future, I would like to be able to see more research on the topic of religion and sexuality as it's a growing concern for religious peers. I would also be interested to see more research about males and religion and not just on females. Since religion and premarital sexuality research is very limited, at this time, new research could open a world of information currently left undiscovered.

References

England, Paula, Emily F. Shafer, and Alison C.K. Fogarty. "Hooking Up and Forming Romantic Relationships on Today's College Campuses." (2007): 531-547.

Burdette, Amy, Christopher Ellison, Terrence Hill, and Norval Glenn. "'Hooking Up' at College: Does Religion Make a Difference?." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. 48.3 (2009): 535-551.