An Exploratory Model of Christian Privilege:
The Development of a Scale to Measure the Attitudinal Constituents of Christian Privilege

Brier Gallihugh, B.A
Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI

Introduction

- Much research centered on privilege has dealt with White privilege (Neville, et al., 2000; Pinterits et al., 2009).

- Few (i.e., Privilege and Oppression Inventory 8-item Christian privilege subscale; Hays, et al., 2007) have bothered to look at Christian privilege

- This study sought to expand on the work of Hays et al (2007) to more fully capture the construct of Christian privilege.

Background

- Israel (2012) defines privilege as "unearned advantages that are conferred to individuals based on membership or assumed membership in a dominant group" (p. 158)

- Privilege is conferred to various social groups through legislative and societal means

- Privilege has been postulated to be conferred in the United States to the following groups (although this should not be considered an exhaustive list): White people (Pinterits, et al., 2009), men (McIntosh, 2008), the middle class (Liu, et al. 2007), and Christians (Schlosser; 2003).

Methods

Participants

- Participants consisted of 398 self identified Christians recruited from Reddit (n = 319), Facebook (n = 59), Twitter (n = 1) and SONA (n = 10)

- Participants were all from the United States and ranged in age from 18 to 77 (M = 26.16, SD = 8.6)

- Participant religious affiliation consisted of Evangelical Christians (n = 71), Protestant Christians (n = 166), Catholics (n = 62), and "Other" Christians (n = 90) .

Procedure

- Participants were recruited from various social media platforms

- Upon signing up to complete in the study (in which 4 participants at random would be gifted a $25 Amazon gift card for completion), participants were directed to the primary study materials

- Participants were asked to answer the proposed Christian privilege scale items as well as the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (Neville et al, 2000), Social Dominance Orientation (Pratto et al., 1994), Religious Fundamentalism Scale (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 1992), Global Just World Beliefs Scale (Lipkus, 1991), Santification of Social Justice Scale (Todd et al., 2015), and Privilege and Oppression Inventory (Hayes et al., 2007).

- An exploratory factor analysis was run. After a process of factor analyses and item retention and deletion criteria were analyzed, a 21-item 2 factor solution was chosen as best solution.

Results

Factor One (Christian Exceptionalism; 16 Items)

The first factor shows an internal reliability of α = .92 [CI: .90-.93] and contains items such as:

- "If someone's Christian values dictate that they not hire a gay/lesbian person for a job, then that choice should be respected by the rest of society."

- "Religious minorities do not have the same benefits as Christians."

Factor Two (Freedom from Discrimination; 5 Items)

The second factor shows an internal reliability of α = .74 [CI: .69-.78] and contains items such as:

- "I do not have to worry about losing my job because of my Christian faith".

- "It is easy to find places of worship to practice my Christian faith."

Table 1. Convergent Validity
Means, standard deviations, and correlations with confidence intervals

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Christian Privilege Awareness Scale (CPAS)	7.58	1.73				
2. CPAS: Christian Exceptionalism	7.29	1.99	.97**			
3. CPAS: Freedom From Discrimination	8.52	1.80	.60**	.40**		
4. POI: Christian	4.18	1.09	.84**	.81**	.52**	
5. Sanctification of Social Justice Scale (SSJS)	5.05	1.62	.59**	.61**	.26**	.57**

*Note. M and SD are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Values in square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each correlation. The confidence interval is a plausible range of population correlations that could have caused the sample correlation (Cumming, 2014). *p < .05. **p < .01.*

Table 2. Concurrent Validity
Means, standard deviations, and correlations between key variables.

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Christian Privilege Awareness Scale	7.58	1.73							
2. CPAS: Christian Exceptionalism	7.29	1.99	.97**						
3. CPAS: Freedom From Discrimination	8.52	1.80	.60**	.40**					
4. POI: White	4.01	1.39	.78**	.79**	.35**				
5. COBRAS	4.20	1.17	.81**	.83**	.35**	.91**			
6. SDO	2.34	1.11	-.70**	-.71**	-.30**	-.69**	-.77**		
7. RF	5.51	1.99	-.62**	-.65**	-.23**	-.44**	-.44**	.30**	
8. GJWB	2.82	0.94	-.43**	-.48**	-.06	-.44**	-.53**	.51**	.23**

Note. M and SD are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Insert abbreviations here. Values in square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each correlation.

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

Discussion

- Simply understanding one instance of privilege (i.e., White) is not sufficient to understand privilege. One must take an intersectional approach

- Intersectionality is the idea that the interaction between various social identities leads to differential outcomes (Chan et al., 2018)

- Taken together, this study provides an initial promising step toward the creation of a more thorough conceptualization of Christian privilege while adding one more tool toward understanding one more full intersectionality as it pertains to a Christian religious conviction.

Limitations and Future Directions

Limitations

- Sample consists only of Christians. Factor structure may not apply equally to all Christian denominations.

- Sample is largely a convenience sample

Future Directions

- A confirmatory factor analysis is needed to "confirm" the proposed factor structure

- Further, future research may wish to investigate how individuals high or low in QUEST orientation (as well as high or low on intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity) score on this proposed Christian privilege scale

Acknowledgements

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