

W10

1. What is your project about?

Religiousness among elite athletes

2. What is the data you plan to use?

[Religiousness and Perceived God Perfectionism Among Elite Athletes](#)

The study by Houlberg, Wang, and Schnitker (2017) examines how religious beliefs and practices affect athletes' coping with the pressures related to elite competition. Self-worth and perfectionistic concerns were found to be important in understanding the link between religious variables and outcomes.

Athlete religiousness was related to high levels of self-worth, which was related to low levels of shame when recalling a disappointing performance. Perceived God perfectionism discrepancy was related to shame via a positive relation to perfectionistic concern. Religiousness was linked to high levels of challenge appraisals and low levels of stress and threat appraisals of competition through high levels of global self-worth.

Overall, findings suggest that religiousness can serve as an important resource for athletes or contribute to psychological difficulties.

3. What is the question you plan to answer?

"How does religion affect sporting psychology?"

4. Why is this an important question?

As an athlete, I have personally experienced the stress and anxiety that comes with the pressure of upcoming competitions and past failures. While well-researched conventional methods like Gould's 4 domains of coping mechanisms (thought control, task focus, emotional control, and behavioural strategies) can help, there is a novel approach that has yet to be fully explored in sports psychology - the integration of spirituality and religion. This unique perspective offers a fresh outlook and could potentially provide additional benefits to athletes' emotional well-being and performance. As such, I believe it would be interesting to showcase this topic through a data story on a website.

Scholars from various fields have analysed and synthesised the integration of religion and sports historically and presently. However, research on the impact of religious practices and experiences on athletes' emotional health and performance in sports is limited. The little research that exists has yielded mixed results, thus further portrayals of investigation is necessary due to the established link between religiousness and psychological well-being in other fields of psychology.

5. Which rows and columns of the dataset do you plan to use, to answer this question?

Methodology: Demographics of survey participants

Participant Characteristics

Participants ($N = 99$) were recruited from various athletic affiliations and collegiate sports teams across the United States (44.5% university athletes; 55.6% non-university athletes). Our sample was predominately Caucasian, young adult athletes (73% Caucasian; Median age = 22; 48% female with 37% reported being in the beginning or middle of their career. The majority (89%) of participants believed in God, with 62% identifying as Protestant, 17% did not belong to a particular religion, 13% were Catholic and 8% other. Further, roughly half of the athletes competed in “mostly” or “completely” individual sport (53%; e.g. Track & Field, Swimming, Cycling, Speed Skating) whereas the remainder competed in “mostly” or “completely” team sports (e.g. baseball, rugby, soccer). Among the athletes in our sample, 74% reporting being a National Collegiate Athletic Association Division 1 (NCAA D1) athlete at some point with 45% of the athletes reported being in the NCAA championships of their respective sport. Further, athletes reported competing internationally (38%) including in the World Championships (22%). There were 16 athletes that competed in the Olympic Trials with seven athletes making the Olympic Team and five athletes had won Olympic or World Championship medals. Finally, 18% of our sample reported being a professional athlete.

Findings/Results: Correlations between study variables

Table 1

Intercorrelations Between Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. NORA													
2. ORA	.58***												
3. IR	.70***	.61***											
4. GPS	.36**	.33**	.49***										
5. GPD	-.16	-.19	-.09	.24*									
6. RSES	.26*	.34**	.31**	.17	-.27**								
7. PERF	-.07	-.05	-.16	.04	.25*	-.59***							
8. COM	.43***	.36**	.61***	.46***	-.09	.28**	-.23*						
9. Shame	.00	.04	-.03	-.04	.01	-.50***	.59***	-.24*					
10. Anger	.10	.15	.01	.27**	.30**	-.07	.29**	-.11	.23*				
11. CA	-.02	.12	.07	.04	-.11	.27**	-.20*	.07	-.08	.01			
12. SA	-.11	-.03	-.08	-.10	.14	-.44***	.43***	-.24*	.49***	.12	.01		
13. TA	-.31	-.16	-.34**	-.14	.11	-.47***	.49***	-.25*	.48***	.08	-.14	.74***	
Mean	3.89	3.71	4.95	25.16	13.39	31.01	24.10	35.86	13.30	9.13	14.89	10.30	8.22
SD	1.50	1.73	1.10	6.61	5.85	4.99	6.19	15.53	5.71	7.05	3.44	3.54	2.87

Note. $N = 99$. NORA = Non-organizational religious activity; ORA = Organizational religious activity; IR = Intrinsic Religiousness; GPS = God perfectionism standards; GPD = God perfectionism discrepancy; RSES = Global self-worth; PERF = Perfectionism Concern; COM = Feelings of comfort from God; Shame = Post performance shame; Anger = Feelings of Anger towards God; CA = Challenge appraisal of upcoming competition; SA = Stress appraisal of upcoming competition; TA = Threat appraisal of upcoming competition.

$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, two-tailed.

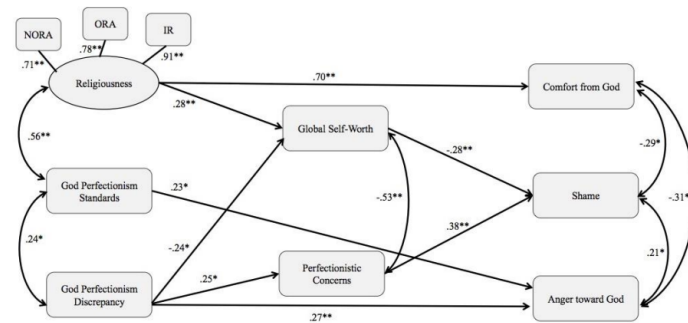


Figure 1. The effects of religiousness and perceived God perfectionism on athlete attitudes toward God and shame post-disappointing performance. Note: ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

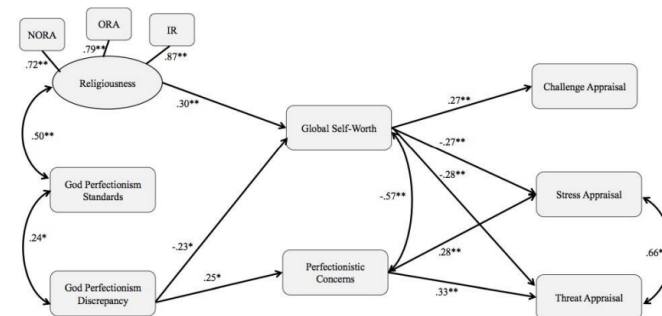


Figure 2. The effects of religiousness and perceived God perfectionism on athlete cognitive appraisals of upcoming competition. Note: ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.