

Adolescent Identity Style: An Antecedent to Adolescents' Ability to Articulate Religious Beliefs

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ABSTRACT. Adolescents often struggle with articulating their religious beliefs. This study proposes that identity style may explain why some adolescents have difficulty articulating their religious beliefs. A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to predict adolescents' ability to articulate their religious beliefs. It was found that an information-oriented identity style, commitment to an identity style, and religiosity were positively related to adolescents' ability to articulate their religious beliefs. Diffuse- and normative-oriented identity styles were not related to adolescents' ability to articulate their religious beliefs.

Keywords: adolescent identity, articulation of religiosity

Over the last four decades, scholars have examined the effects of religiosity on adolescent behavior (Amoateng & Bahr, 1986; Benda & Corwyn, 1997; Hirschi & Stark, 1969; Regnerus, 2003b; Smith & Denton, 2005). Adolescent religiosity enables adolescents to avoid risk behaviors, such as substance abuse (Bahr, Maughan, Marcos, & Li, 1998; Corwyn & Benda, 2000; Wills, Yaeger, & Sandy, 2003), alcohol use (Dunn, 2005; Thomsen & Rekve, 2003), use of tobacco (Soweid, Khawaja, & Salem, 2004; Weaver, Flannelly, & Strock, 2005), risky sexual behavior (Fehring, Cheever, German, & Philpot, 1998; Jeynes, 2003; Rostosky, Wilcox, Wright, & Randall, 2004), and delinquency (Chadwick & Top, 1993; Top, Chadwick, & Garrett, 1999). Adolescent religiosity has also been associated with positive consequences, such as good physical and emotional health, quality education, volunteering and political involvement, and family well-being (Regnerus, 2003b; Smith, Denton, Faris, & Regnerus, 2002; Smith, Faris, Denton, & Regnerus, 2003). Adolescent religiosity appears to help adolescents avoid adverse consequences, while enhancing positive consequences in their lives.

While religiosity is associated with many positive outcomes, Smith and Denton (2005) concluded that adolescents "have a difficult to impossible time explaining what they believe, what it means, and what the implications of their beliefs are for their lives" (p. 262). This disconnect between benefiting from religious involvement, yet being unable to explain their beliefs or see the religious implications in their daily lives, presents an intriguing research opportunity. One possible explanation for the inability of adolescents to articulate their religious beliefs is their identity status.

Many scholars have recognized the pivotal maturation period of adolescence in identity development (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Archer & Waterman, 1983; Berger, 2001; Berzonsky, 1992; Erikson, 1959; Kroger, 2000; Marcia, 1966; Marcia, 2002b). During identity development,

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adolescents engage in the process of answering the question, “Who am I?” This includes exploring and clarifying their beliefs, morals, and personal stance on the role religion will play in their lives (Duriez & Soenens, 2006). Researchers have reported that some adolescents grow up in an environment where their beliefs and morals are never explored (Berzonsky, 1992; Marcia, 1966). These adolescents rarely become committed to an identity, and only seem to achieve a low level of identity status (Marcia, 1966; Marcia, 1980; Marcia, 2002a). These adolescents fail to answer the questions, “Who am I?” and/or, “What do I believe?” and they struggle to explain their personal beliefs because they have not actively engaged in the process of discovering what their beliefs are.

The research examining the interaction of adolescent identity development and religion seems promising (Hunsberger, Pratt, & Pancer, 2001). Scholars have recognized the need for more empirical research in this area, as well as the potential valuable contribution of further research (Fulton, 1997; King, 2003; Markstrom-Adams, Hofstra, & Dougher, 1994; Youniss, McLellin, & Yates, 1999). This study expanded upon research on religion and identity status by focusing on the following research question: Is it possible that identity style may help explain why adolescents have difficulty articulating their religious beliefs?

Identity Development in Adolescence

Many scholars have addressed the issue of identity development. William James (1985), Charles Cooley (1922), George Mead (1922), James Marcia (1966), and Michael Berzonsky (2004) all emphasized the importance of identity development within individuals. Identity is a definition of self in terms of roles, attitudes, beliefs, and aspirations. Identity development begins in childhood, and continues into adolescence and well into adulthood (Erikson, 1959). However, adolescence is the primary period when individuals struggle to find their identity (Duriez & Soenens, 2006; Nightingale & Wolverson, 1993). During the identity development process, adolescents strive to understand who they are, what values they should live by, what they believe, and what they desire to do and become (Erikson, 1959; Myers, 1999; Koteskey, Walker, & Johnson, 1990). Engaging in identity development is mental, physical, and emotional work, as adolescents struggle to align their emotions, thinking, and behavior to be consistent across relationships and contexts (Berger, 2001). During this period, there is hope that adolescents can come to a point where they establish their own identities. This occurs as they examine their own goals, as well as analyze their goals in comparison with significant individuals, groups, and even society (Enright, Ganiere, Buss, Lapsley, & Olson, 1983). Meyers (1999) stated that

to refine their sense of identity, adolescents in Western cultures usually try out different “selves” in different situations—perhaps acting out one self at home, another with friends, and still another at school and work. If two of these situations overlap—as when a teenager brings home friends with whom he is Joe Cool—the discomfort can be

considerable. The teen asks, “Which self should I be? Which is the real me?” Often, this role confusion is resolved by the gradual reshaping of a self-definition that unifies the various selves into a consistent and comfortable sense of who one is—an identity. (p. 104).

As adolescents are developing their identity, they establish personal stances on the role religion will play in their lives. They begin the process of examining their religious beliefs, how they fit into their lives, and their personal stance(s) on religious issues (Duriez & Soenens, 2006). Scholars have emphasized that although early historical work mentioned the importance of religion to identity formation, there is very little published empirical literature on how religious beliefs correlate with an identity status (Fulton, 1997; Hunsberger et al., 2001; Markstrom-Adams et al., 1994). One scholar has noted that “few social scientists have explored the domains of religion and spirituality as a resource for identity development” (King, 2003, p. 197). This dearth of research has continued since 2003.

Although research on identity and religion is sparse, current research indicates that adolescents with a more secure identity tend to engage in religious faith and practices. Scholars have reported that adolescents who have gone through identity exploration were secure in their beliefs, had fewer doubts, were more committed, and attended church more regularly than adolescents with less developed identities (Hunsberger et al., 2001; Markstrom-Adams et al., 1994). In contrast, adolescents who had a less developed identity were more likely to have doubts, lack of religious commitment, and lower religiosity (Donelson, 1999).

Types of Identity Formation

The identity development of adolescents can be separated into three different types of identity formation orientations: information, normative, and diffuse (Berzonsky, 1999; 2004; Berzonsky & Adams, 1999). Adolescents who use an information-oriented processing style are active agents who seek information, actively process the information, and evaluate the information when considering their identity decisions (Nurmi, Berzonsky, Tammi, & Kinney, 1997). They are self-reflective, conscientious, open to new experiences, problem focused, and astute decision makers (Berzonsky, 2004). Information-oriented adolescents have explored and personally chosen their values, beliefs, goals, standards, and ideals (Berzonsky, 2003; Berzonsky, Nurmi, Kinney, & Tammi, 1999). These individuals engage in strategic planning and decision making (Berzonsky, 1992), self-regulate their behavior (Soenens, Berzonsky, Vansteenkiste, Beyers, & Goossens, 2005), and maintain their beliefs across varying contexts and interpersonal relationships. In summary, adolescents who have an information-oriented identity style will understand their religious beliefs, be able to articulate their religious beliefs, and understand how their beliefs impact their lives. This occurs because they have gone through the identity development process of exploring what they believe and why.

Adolescents with a normative-oriented identity style were found to have the most stable self-conceptions (Nurmi et al., 1997). However, normative-oriented individuals tend to define themselves by the norms of significant individuals and groups in their lives (Soenens et al., 2005). Adolescents who have a normative-oriented identity style look to the expectations and prescriptions of significant others, and internalize the standards, goals, and beliefs of significant

others (Berzonsky, 2003). These adolescents are conscientious, purposeful, structured, and closed to any information that may challenge their beliefs, which have been obtained from significant others (Berzonsky, 2004). Adolescents with a normative-oriented identity style, who have adopted their beliefs from their parents or guardian, may have less knowledge and confidence in their religious beliefs. These adolescents will struggle in articulating their religious beliefs because they have only passively adopted the beliefs of significant others.

Adolescents with a diffuse-oriented identity style procrastinate and delay facing identity issues and conflicts (Berzonsky, 2004). They allow context and immediate interpersonal relationships to determine their actions. These individuals tend to comply in the short-term, but lasting change fails to occur (Nurmi et al., 1997). Scholars have shown that diffuse-oriented adolescents suffer from a variety of problems, such as depression, eating disorders, alcohol abuse, work-related problems, academic difficulties, and drugs, and are more likely to show higher levels of neuroticism (Berzonsky, 2003). These adolescents are likely to avoid dealing with identity-related issues, which leaves them confused and uncertain about themselves (Soenens et al., 2005). Diffuse-oriented adolescents have not yet entered into the exploration phase or are not yet committed to their religious beliefs. They will struggle with explaining their beliefs because they lack the motivation, prerequisite knowledge, and understanding to do so. These individuals only choose to follow religious beliefs when the action brings short-term reward, giving no thought of the action's implications.

Each of these identity styles is associated with differences in identity commitment (Berzonsky, 2004). Identity commitment is the strength or clarity of an individual's identity style. A strong commitment to an identity style prevents an individual from changing his behavior under certain circumstances where he otherwise would have (Berzonsky, 2003). Scholars have generally found that identity commitment is positively associated with identity processing styles. For example, individuals who have an informational- or normative-oriented identity style have stronger identity commitment than individuals who have a diffuse-oriented identity style (Berzonsky, 2003). Therefore, identity commitment is positively related to adolescents' ability to articulate their religious beliefs.

Finally, adolescents with greater levels of religiosity will be able to better articulate their religious beliefs (Regnerus, 2003a; Smith, 2003). Increased religiosity means adolescents are more inclined to engage in personal, family, and public religious activities. Adolescents with higher levels of religiosity normally engage in practices of individual prayer and scripture study. In addition, they often participate in family religious discussion, weekly youth activities, and public church services. This increased exposure has allowed them to acquire both a broad and in-depth understanding of their religion, which leads to an increased capacity to articulate their religious beliefs (Smith & Denton, 2005). In addition, these activities give them a variety of contexts to practice hearing and explaining their religious beliefs, and provide a sense of greater familiarity with those beliefs. It is anticipated that an increased religiosity will result in an adolescent's ability to articulate her religious beliefs. Five research hypotheses were tested in regard to adolescent identity and religiosity, and adolescents' ability to articulate religious beliefs:

Hypothesis 1: Adolescent information-oriented identity style is positively related to the ability to articulate religious beliefs.

Hypothesis 2: Adolescent normative-oriented identity style is negatively related to the ability to articulate religious beliefs.

Hypothesis 3: Adolescent diffuse-oriented identity style is negatively related to the ability to articulate religious beliefs.

Hypothesis 4: An adolescent's religiosity will be positively related to his ability to articulate his religious beliefs.

Hypothesis 5: An adolescent's commitment to an identity style will be positively related to her ability to explain her religious beliefs.

Methodology

Participants

The participants were 145 adolescents from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) and two participants who did not recognize themselves as such. Smith and Denton (2005) found that LDS adolescents, as a whole, were more competent at articulating their religious beliefs than the general population. In fact, Smith and Denton found that many adolescents reported a very limited ability to articulate their religious beliefs at all. Thus, to test the current research questions, it was necessary to study a group of adolescents who had some proficiency at articulating their religious beliefs. Subsequently, this research project used a purposive sampling method in studying LDS adolescents. Obviously, future studies need to explore more religiously diverse samples.

The ages of participants ranged from 14 to 18 years ($M = 16.5$; $SD = 1.02$) and consisted of 2 fourteen-year-olds (1.4%), 25 fifteen-year-olds (17.2%), 40 sixteen-year-olds (27.6%), 51 seventeen-year-olds (35.2%), and 27 eighteen-year-olds (18.6%). This sample consisted of 77 females (53.1%) and 68 males (46.9%). Students also identified themselves by ethnicity with 131 Caucasian students and 2 students each identified as Hispanic or Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, and American Indian. Six students did not answer the question about ethnicity.

Procedure

Permission was granted to distribute a questionnaire in six weekday release-time classrooms. With parental permission, students were released from their public school during the school day to attend a religious education program of their choice off school premises. Typically, students would leave for one school period and then return to their public school. These classes all came from the same weekday release-time program, which is located in a large western metropolitan city. Parental permission slips were distributed, and the survey was distributed during the next class period. Fifteen minutes of class time were set aside for the adolescents to fill out the questionnaire. A trained researcher proctored the questionnaire and monitored students as they independently responded to the questions. This sample was a convenience sample, and it may not represent LDS adolescents as a whole.

Measures

The research instrument had three primary sections. The first section consisted of demographic items (i.e., ethnicity, gender, age, and church affiliation). In the second section, identity style was measured using the Identity Style Inventory (Berzonsky, 1992), which consisted of 40 items reflecting various identity styles. Responses were reported on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all like me*) to 5 (*very much like me*). The information-oriented identity style scale consisted of 11 items (e.g., *I've spent a great deal of time thinking seriously about what I should do with my life*). In the present study the Cronbach coefficient alpha was .77. The normative-oriented identity style scale consisted of 9 items (e.g., *I've more or less always operated according to the values with which I was brought up*). In the present study the Cronbach coefficient alpha was .60. The diffuse-oriented identity style scale consisted of 10 items (e.g., *It doesn't pay to worry about values in advance; I decide things as they happen*). In the present study the Cronbach coefficient alpha was .70. The commitment to an identity scale consisted of 10 items (e.g., *I have a definite set of values that I use in order to make personal decisions*). In the present study the Cronbach coefficient alpha was .76. A composite variable for each identity level was calculated, which enabled the participants to be classified as having information-, normative-, or diffuse-oriented identity styles.

The third section of the questionnaire examined the adolescents' ability to articulate their religious beliefs and religiosity. Items were used with permission from Smith and Denton (2005) who authored National Study of Youth and Religion. Adolescent religiosity was measured using 16 items (e.g., *How often, if ever, do you pray by yourself, alone?*). In the present study the coefficient alpha was .87. Adolescents' ability to articulate their religious beliefs was measured using 7 items (e.g., *How comfortable are you with explaining your religious beliefs to others?*). In the present study the coefficient alpha was .85. Additionally, the items reflecting religiosity and articulation of religious beliefs were combined to create composite variables.

Analyses

Descriptive statistics for the composite variables were calculated. In addition, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were estimated to examine the relationships between participants' identity styles and the ability to articulate religious beliefs. Finally, to examine the antecedents of adolescents' ability to articulate their religious beliefs, a hierarchical regression analysis was completed.

Results

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the relationships between participants' identity styles and ability to articulate religious beliefs. As anticipated, significant positive correlations were found between adolescents' ability to articulate religious beliefs and (a) an information-oriented identity ($r = .65, p < .01$), (b) a normative-oriented identity ($r = .46, p < .01$), and (c) commitment to an identity style ($r = .63, p < .01$); while correlations were found between adolescents' inability to articulate religious beliefs and a diffuse-oriented style ($r = -.34, p < .01$). Ability to articulate religious beliefs had the highest

correlation with adolescents' religiosity ($r = .69, p < .01$). These results showed preliminary evidence for each of the proposed hypotheses.

Ethnicity, gender, and age were not correlated with an adolescent's ability to articulate religious beliefs. An adolescent's religiosity positively correlated with (a) normative-oriented style ($r = .57, p < .01$), (b) information-oriented style ($r = .53, p < .01$), and/or (c) commitment to an identity style ($r = .60, p < .01$), and negatively related to diffuse-oriented style ($r = -.32, p < .01$). Ethnicity, gender, and age were not correlated with adolescents' religiosity.

Finally, a series of exploratory correlations that found adolescents' ability to articulate religious beliefs positively correlated with religious practices were examined. Adolescents' articulation of religious beliefs significantly correlated with their involvement in their respective weekly youth groups ($r = .34, p < .01$), how often they attended church ($r = .35, p < .01$), similarity to the beliefs of their parents ($r = .46, p < .01$), family prayer ($r = .40, p < .01$), and proximity to and participation in family discussions on religion ($r = .50, p < .01$). Private religious practices, such as importance of religious practice ($r = .60, p < .01$), individual prayer ($r = .60, p < .01$), and individual scripture reading ($r = .60, p < .01$), all positively correlated with adolescents' ability to articulate religious beliefs (see Table 4).

Finally, to examine the antecedents of adolescents' ability to articulate their religious beliefs, a hierarchical regression analysis was completed. A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted with demographic variables in the first block followed by identity style and religiosity (see Table 5). This analysis allowed for the prediction of ability to articulate religious beliefs from several other variables such as identity styles, gender, age, ethnicity, and religiosity.

The standardized regression coefficients indicated that an information-oriented identity style significantly predicted articulation of religious beliefs ($\beta = .314; p < .000$), indicating that adolescents with an information-oriented identity style were able to better articulate their religious beliefs. Hypothesis 1 was supported. Standardized regression coefficients indicated that normative- and diffuse-oriented identity styles failed to attain statistical significance (see Table 5). Hypothesis 2 and 3 were not supported. Age, gender, and ethnicity failed to attain statistical significance. In addition, religiosity was the strongest predictor of ability to articulate religious beliefs ($\beta = .402; p < .000$), meaning that the higher the level of religiosity, the better the adolescents were at articulating religious beliefs. Hypothesis 4 was supported. The standardized regression coefficients indicated that a higher level of commitment to an identity style significantly predicted articulation of religious beliefs ($\beta = .210; p < .01$). The more committed they were to an identity style, the more capable they were at articulating their religious beliefs. Hypothesis 5 was supported.

Discussion

Results showed that information-oriented identity style and commitment to an identity style positively related to adolescents' ability to articulate religious beliefs. Adolescents with an information-oriented identity style were best able to articulate their religious beliefs. These adolescents are committed to their values, goals, and standards because they have evaluated them and have made them part of their sense of self. Thus, it is not difficult for them to articulate

beliefs they have already purposely evaluated and chosen. In addition, adolescents with a commitment to an identity style are better able to explain their religious beliefs. Diffuse- and normative-oriented identity styles were found to be nonsignificantly related to adolescents' ability to articulate religious beliefs.

Religiosity was the best predictor of the ability to articulate religious beliefs. The more religiosity adolescents reported, the better able they were at articulating their religious beliefs. As an adolescent becomes more involved in his religion, it is easier for him to articulate his religious beliefs. Correlations between articulation of religious beliefs and religiosity items suggest that as adolescents become more engaged in weekly youth activities, church attendance, personal prayer, personal scripture reading, family prayer, and family religious discussion, they will be more skilled at articulating their religious beliefs. These activities contribute to their knowledge of their religion, which leads to a better understanding of what they do and do not believe. This exposure to religion also provides different settings to practice understanding and explaining what they do and do not believe.

Also, there was no significant relationship found between age and ability to articulate religious beliefs. This is different from Smith and Denton's (2005) proposal, which suggested that older adolescents are more capable of articulating their religious beliefs. In this study, the mean age was 16.5 with only 2 fourteen-year-olds and 27 eighteen-year-olds. This small number of younger and older adolescents could be one reason why there was no difference in ability to articulate religious beliefs by age.

Recommendations

The empirical evidence in this study provides a base for two recommendations for school educators. First, it is recommended that educators assist adolescents as they move through the process of identity development. This is accomplished by helping adolescents ask and explore such questions as, "Who am I?" and, "What do I believe?" Scholars recommend the use of organized cognitive strategies to help form adolescents identity (Enright et al., 1983). Organized cognitive strategies entail helping an adolescent see one other viewpoint besides the self. Educators should be prepared to facilitate adolescents' ability to see the reciprocal perspective, or to reflect upon the self from the other's viewpoint, and also to help adolescents reflect on the self compared to the group, seeing both the similarities and differences between the group and self. This step entails providing an atmosphere where adolescents can examine themselves in comparison with society so they can see both similarities and differences. This process can aid the exploration that is needed to achieve an information-oriented identity style (Enright et al., 1983). As adolescents acquire an information-oriented style of identity, their ability to articulate their religious beliefs will increase because they have examined and explored their beliefs, values, and morals.

The second recommendation is for school educators to encourage, motivate, and guide adolescents to engage in activities that create a larger knowledge base of a certain subject, such as religion. Private practices, such as individual study, can help give adolescents the necessary foundational knowledge needed to coherently articulate their beliefs. Public practices, such as involvement in classes and other learning activities, give adolescents opportunities to consider

their individual viewpoints in contrast with their friends, peers, family, neighbors, and other contacts. These interactions help adolescents try out their emerging beliefs in a variety of contexts. Ultimately, these activities will help them to clarify their own beliefs and values, and will improve their ability to articulate their beliefs.

Further Research

The research on adolescents' inability to articulate their religious and other beliefs is an area that has received minimal scholarly activity. Therefore, there are multiple avenues for future research. First, this study examined adolescents from one religious denomination, in a weekday release-time setting, and had limited diversity in ethnicity and age. Future research needs to examine multiple religious denominations to see if similar results would be found when adolescents defined themselves as Catholics, Protestants, Buddhists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims, and Evangelicals. Future studies need to examine samples with a variety of ethnicities and adolescents of varying ages to see the impact ethnicity and age may have on adolescents' ability to articulate their religious beliefs. It may be that adolescents' ethnicity, or their age, plays a role in their ability to articulate their religious beliefs.

Second, researchers could examine adolescents who attend a weekday release-time program in comparison to adolescents who do not attend a formal release-time setting. For example, is there a significant difference between adolescents who attend release time and those who do not, regarding their ability to articulate their beliefs? Third, researchers need to examine other antecedents that may help explain adolescents' ability to articulate their religious beliefs. Should educators do activities that expose adolescents to a wider breadth of beliefs? Should educators allow more time to practice articulating their beliefs, and accompany this practice with developmental feedback? Should educators help facilitate a deeper understanding of adolescents' beliefs, which will ultimately lead to an increased ability to articulate beliefs? Is the purposeful development of adolescents' religiosity the best approach to strengthening adolescents' ability to articulate their beliefs?

Finally, scholars should focus on examining adolescents' ability to articulate their beliefs through multilevel modeling. This will allow researchers to examine whether contextual or individual differences are more strongly related to adolescents' ability to articulate their beliefs. It may be that a personality trait or disposition plays a role in an adolescent's ability to articulate her belief. In addition, it may be that context—such as the school an adolescent attends, his neighborhood, family, or friends—plays a significant role in an adolescent's ability to articulate his beliefs. Future research is required to examine these possibilities.

Limitations

This study had several limitations. First was the use of a purposive convenience sample, which is not a representation of all LDS adolescents because it was small and not random. The second limitation was the lack of diversity in the sample. This study only examined LDS adolescents, and in doing so it lacked the diversity that would be present if a researcher examined adolescents from different populations. In addition, it also lacked diversity in terms of ethnicity and age. Samples with greater ethnicity and samples containing a wider range of ages

are needed. Third, this sample consisted of adolescents who were sampled in a weekday release-time program. Future research should look at adolescents who do not attend a weekday release-time program. Finally, as with any correlation study, it may be possible that identity style is a consequence, rather than an antecedent, of religiosity, as suggested in this study.

Conclusion

This study examined the phenomenon of adolescents struggling with their ability to articulate their religious beliefs (Smith & Denton, 2005). An adolescent's identity style was postulated as a possible explanation for this deficiency. It was found that informational identity style, commitment to an identity, and religiosity significantly predicted articulation of religious beliefs. It seems that adolescents who participate in religious activities and those who have higher levels of identity development are more capable of articulating their religious beliefs.

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Table 1

Summary of the Questions Used to Form Composite Variables

Articulation: (7 items) $\alpha = .85$
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you feel confident in explaining your religious beliefs to others? 2. How often do you practice explaining part of what you believe to someone else? 3. How much, if at all, do you openly express your religious beliefs at school? 4. How comfortable are you with explaining your religious beliefs to others? 5. Do other students at your school generally look down on teens who are openly religious? 6. How often do you explain your religious beliefs to others? 7. How good are you at explaining your religious beliefs?
Religiosity: (16 items) $\alpha = .87$
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How often, if ever, do you pray by yourself, alone? 2. How involved or active would you say you are in Young Womens or Young Mens? 3. How often, if ever, do you read from the scriptures by yourself? 4. How important are your religious practices to you? 5. How often does your family regularly pray together? 6. About how often do you usually attend church? 7. How often, if ever, does your family discuss God, scriptures, prayer, etc.? 8. How much are you pressured or made fun of because of your religious beliefs and practices? 9. How interested, or not, are you in learning more about your religion? 10. If it was totally up to you, how often would you attend religious services? 11. How well does your church help you to learn what you want to know? 12. If you were unsure of what was right or wrong, how would you decide what to do? 13. Does your church make you think about important things? 14. Do you believe in God? 15. Is your church boring to you? 16. How similar would you say that your own religious beliefs are to your parents' beliefs?
Demographics: (4 items)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are you male or female? 2. What ethnicity do you consider yourself? 3. What age are you? 4. Are you a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?
Informational: (11 items) $\alpha = .77$
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I've spent a great deal of time thinking seriously about what I should do with my life. 2. I find it's best to seek out advice from professionals when I have problems. 3. I've spent a good deal of time reading and talking to others about religious ideas. 4. I find that personal problems often turn out to be interesting challenges. 5. When I discuss an issue with someone, I look at others' point of view. 6. When I have to make a decision, I like to spend a lot of time thinking about my options. 7. I've spent a lot of time reading and trying to make some sense out of political issues. 8. I like to have responsibility for problems in my life that require me to think on my own. 9. I've spent time and talked to people trying to develop a sense of values that make sense. 10. When making important decisions, I like to have as much information as possible. 11. When I have a personal problem, I try to analyze the situation in order to understand it.

Normative: (9 items) $\alpha = .60$

1. I've more or less always operated according to the values with which I was brought up.
2. I think it's better to have fixed values, than to consider alternative value systems.
3. I've always had purpose in my life; I was brought up to know what to strive for.
4. Once I know the correct way to handle the problem, I prefer to stick with it.
5. Regarding religion, I've always known what I believe and don't believe.
6. I prefer to deal with situations where I can rely on social norms and standards.
7. I've known since junior high that I was going to college and what I was going to major in.
8. I find it's best to trust the advice of close friends or relatives when I have a problem.
9. I think it's better to have a firm set of beliefs than to be open-minded.

Diffused: (10 items) $\alpha = .70$

1. I'm not really sure what I'm doing in school; I guess things will work themselves out.
2. It's best for me not to take life too seriously; I just try to enjoy it.
3. It doesn't pay to worry about values in advance; I decide things as they happen.
4. I try not to think about or deal with problems as long as I can.
5. Many times by not concerning myself with personal problems, they work themselves out.
6. I avoid personal situations that require me to think a lot and deal with them on my own.
7. I'm not really thinking about my future now; it's still a long way off.
8. Sometimes when I refuse to believe a problem will happen, things seem to work themselves out.
9. When I have to make a decision, I wait as long as possible in order to see what will happen.
10. When I know a situation is going to cause me stress, I try to avoid it.

Commitment: (10 items) $\alpha = .76$

1. Regarding religious beliefs, I know basically what I believe and don't believe.
 2. I'm not sure what I want to do in the future.
 3. I know what I want to do with my future.
 4. I'm really into school.
 5. I'm not really sure what I believe about religion.
 6. I'm not sure what I should major in when I get to college.
 7. I'm not sure which values I really hold.
 8. I have a definite set of values that I use in order to make personal decisions.
 9. I have a definite stand on where the government and country should be headed.
 10. I think people need to get emotionally involved and commit to specific values and details.
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Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Identity, Religiosity, and Articulation of Beliefs

	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Identity style orientation				
Information	20.00	51.00	36.60	6.16
Normative	19.00	62.00	32.54	5.71
Diffuse	11.00	49.00	25.25	5.77
Commitment	19.00	49.00	37.93	6.10
Articulating beliefs	10.00	36.00	22.80	5.48
Religiosity	24.00	73.00	58.16	11.40

Table 3

Summary of Correlation Statistics Between Articulation of Religious Beliefs and Identity and Demographic Variables (n = 145)

Variable	Articulate beliefs	Religiosity	Norm. oriented	Diffuse oriented	Inform oriented	Commitment oriented	Ethnicity	Gender	Age
Articulate beliefs	—	.691*	.458*	-.339*	.649*	.634*	-.052	-.073	.056
Religiosity		—	.565*	-.324*	.526*	.591*	-.002	.090	-.012
Normative oriented			—	-.236*	.360*	.592*	-.003	.109	-.040
Diffuse oriented				—	-.268*	-.444*	.066	-.124	-.026
Inform oriented					—	.604*	-.094	.252*	.012
Commitment oriented						—	.071	.225*	-.016
Ethnicity							—	-.113	-.030
Gender								—	-.099
Age									—

* $p < .01$.

Table 4

Summary of Correlation Statistics Between Articulation of Religious Beliefs and Religiosity

Items (n = 145)

Variable	Weekly youth activity	Importance of religious practices	Church attendance	Similar beliefs to parents	Prayer alone	Scripture reading alone	Family prayer	Family discuss religion
Articulating beliefs	.336*	.594*	.351*	.456*	.591*	.591*	.398*	.505*

* $p < .01$.

Table 5

Hierarchical Regression Analyses for Variables Predicting Articulation of Religious Beliefs

Variable	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i> β	β
Step 1			
Ethnicity	-.079	.347	-.012
Gender	-.895	.619	-.082
Age	.287	.290	.054
Step 2			
Information oriented	.277	.063	.314*
Normative oriented	.005	.068	.005
Diffuse oriented	.025	.057	-.026
Commitment oriented	.188	.075	.210*
Religiosity	.191	.035	.402*

Note. Multiple correlation $R = .789$; R^2 square = 0.623; $F = 26.800$; Significance $F = .000$; b = unstandardized betas; β = standard error of standardized betas; SE β = standardized betas.

* $p < .01$.