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Christian Affiliation and Academic Success in College

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Introduction

- Actions and motivations of people are significantly influenced by intrinsic beliefs
- Religious schools
- What impact does Christian affiliation have on academic success at a **secular** university?

Outline

- Introduction
- Background
- Methods
 - Participants
 - Procedure
 - Measures
- Results
- Discussion
- References
- Questions

Background

- Prior research
 - Limited
 - Minority secular achievement
 - Positive correlation
 - Mixed results
- Christian affiliation vs. secular university

Method: participants

- 171 participants
 - 140 female
 - 26 male
 - 3 other/no response
- Between 18-24 years old
- Full-time students at the University of Minnesota, Morris

Method: procedure

- Self-report online survey
- Taken anonymously
- Consent was obtained before survey was accessed

Method: measures

- The survey consisted of:
 - **Demographics:** age, year in school, gender, race/ethnicity, religion
 - **Academic success:** GPA and participation in the University of Minnesota, Morris honors program
 - **Christian affiliation:** strength of affiliation with Christian beliefs and practices
 - **Positivity:** strength of positive outlook on life

Method: measures

□ Hope

- **Trait hope attached mastery:** hope based in interpersonal attachments
- **Trait hope personalized mastery:** hope based in personal future positivity, goal-setting, personal meaningful success
- **State hope mastery:** hope based in a sense of accomplishing life dreams, outside support, feeling inspired by others

Method: data analysis

- Data were analyzed using Excel and R statistical software
- Multiple linear regression (MLR) was done to determine the relationships between the measured variables

Results

**“There’s something different
about those Christians.”**

- Jon Anderson, statistics professor
at the University of Minnesota, Morris

Results

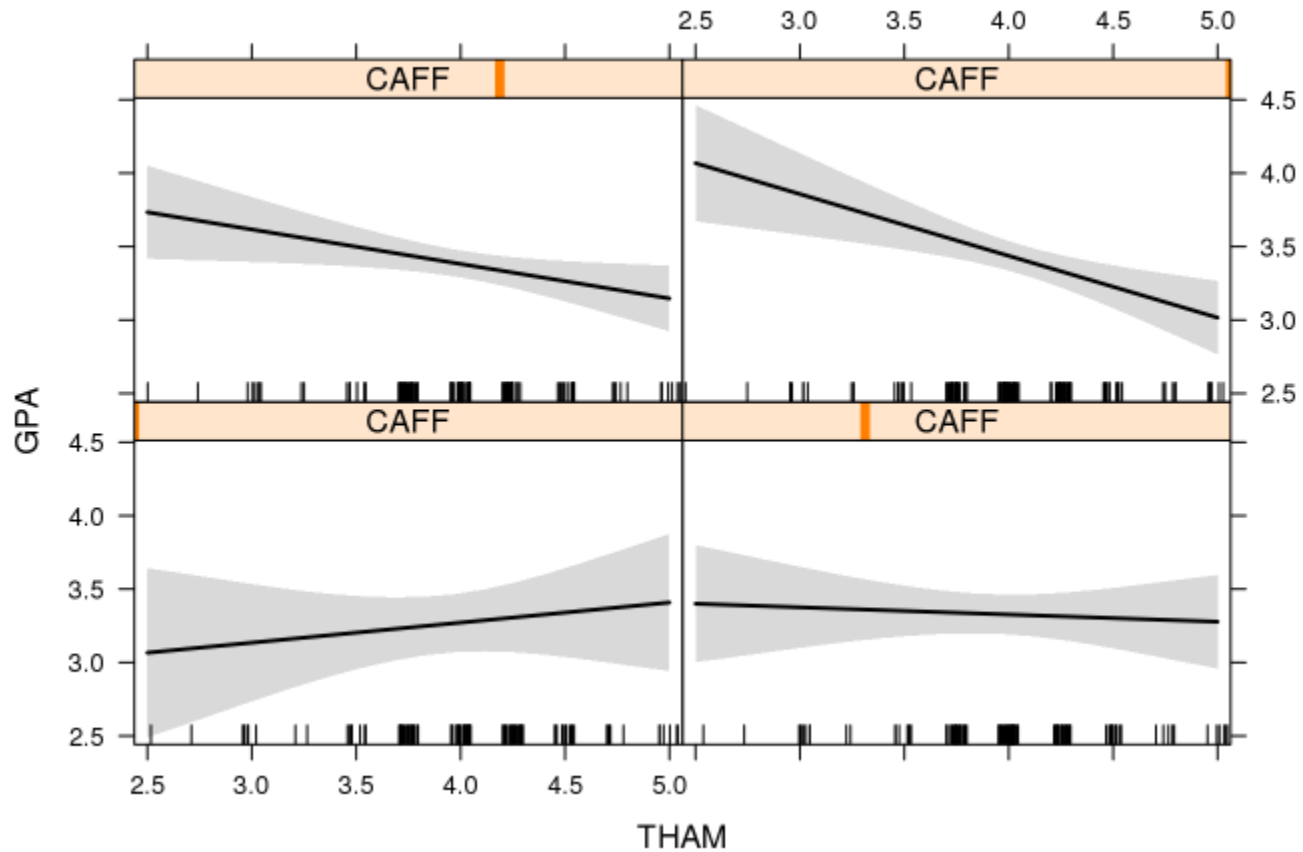
- There was a noticeable positive relationship between Christian affiliation and GPA, although it failed to reach statistical significance

Results

- **Trait hope attached mastery:** hope based in interpersonal attachments
- We found an interaction between Christian affiliation and trait hope attached mastery

Results

CAFF*THAM effect plot



Results: what does this look like?

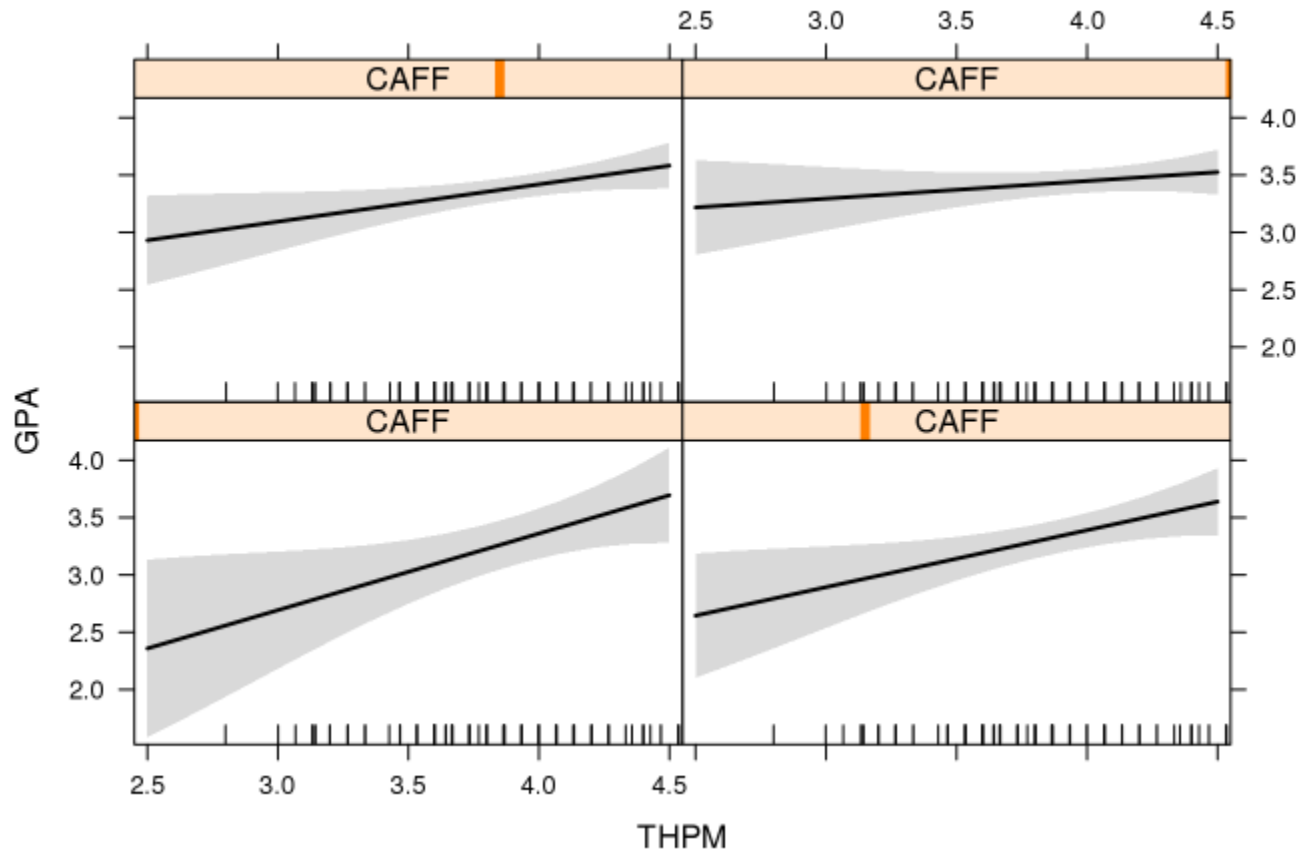
- Christians who base less of their hope in interpersonal attachments are more successful academically (close to a 4.0 GPA)
- Christians who base more of their hope in interpersonal attachments are less successful academically (close to 3.0 GPA)
- Are low-attached mastery Christians more ambitious?
- Are high-attached mastery Christians more well-adjusted?

Results

- **Trait hope personalized mastery:** hope based in personal future positivity, goal-setting, personal meaningful success
- We found an interaction between Christian affiliation and trait hope personalized mastery

Results

CAFF*THPM effect plot



Results: what does this look like?

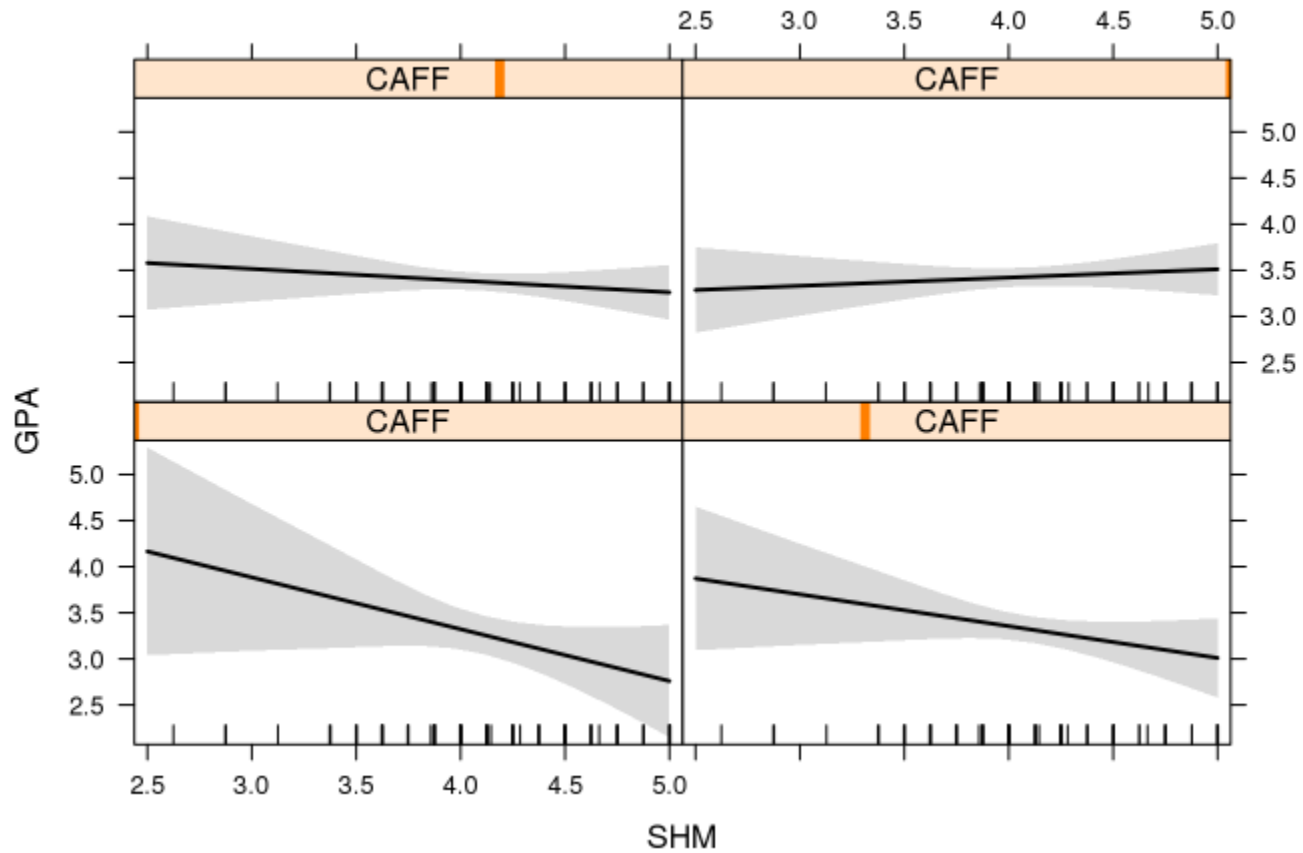
- Non-Christians who base more of their hope in personal goals, visions for the future, and meaningful success are more successful (close to 4.0 GPA)
- Non-Christians who base less of their hope in personal goals, visions for the future, and meaningful success are less successful (close to 2.5 GPA)
- Are Christians motivated by something beyond personalized mastery?
- Is a personalized sense of hope more meaningful to non-Christians?

Results

- **State hope mastery:** hope based in a sense of accomplishing life dreams, outside support, feeling inspired by others
- We found an interaction between Christian affiliation and state hope mastery

Results

CAFF*SHM effect plot



Results: what does this look like?

- Non-Christians who base more of their hope in a sense of situational mastery are less successful (close to 3.0 GPA)
- Non-Christians who base less of their hope in a sense of situational mastery are more successful (close to 4.0 GPA)
- There is no effect of this kind of hope for Christians
- Are Christians less situationally-based than non-Christians?
- Do non-Christians put more hope in current circumstances than Christians?

Discussion

- Christians and non-Christians are both academically successful, but this success appears to be motivated by different factors
- “There’s something different about those Christians”
- What motivates success differently in Christians than non-Christians?

Discussion

- Future research should explore the interaction effects between Christian affiliation and hope in more depth
- Future studies in this area should also look at this effect in other populations and other religions
 - Our sample was all college students, primarily white females
 - Do these effects hold true in other populations and religions?

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Thank you for coming!

Questions?