Who am I God?: An Examination of the Role of Belief in God in the Identity Development of Young Adults

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WHO AM I GOD?: AN EXAMINATION OF THE ROLE OF BELIEF IN GOD IN THE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG ADULTS

Dissertation
by
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submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Who am I God?: An Examination of the Role of Belief in God in the Identity Development of Young Adults

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Recently theory has proposed that Belief in God plays a significant role in Identity development by facilitating identity exploration and the resolution of identity crises (King, 2003). The intersections of Identity development and Belief in God are particularly important to understand in young adults because (1) this is the developmental period when Identity development begins and (2) Belief in God is prevalent among college students. However, researchers have not empirically examined the theorized relationship between Belief in God and Identity. Therefore, this study sought to begin to understand and explain (through empirical research) the relationship between Belief in God and Identity development in young adults.

A sample of 306 young adults enrolled in private, four-year post-secondary education institutions in New England completed questionnaires measuring their reasons for Belief in God and their current Identity Status. Findings from the study indicate that: (1) these young adults have average levels of Belief in God across each of the six reasons for Belief in God measured in this study, regardless of age or gender; (2) these young adults tend to function from a transition Diffuse-Foreclosure Identity status; (3) Belief in God has an impact on the Identity of these young adults; (4) Age and gender do not appear to impact the relationship between Belief in God and Identity; and (5) Comprehensive models explaining the relationships between Belief in God and each of
the Identity statuses measured in this study, indicated that Belief in God is a significant predictor of both the Moratorium and Achieved Identity statuses. Overall, results from the study provide empirical support for the theoretical link between Belief in God and Identity development, and further suggest that Belief in God impacts Identity Development more by aiding in the resolution of Identity crises than by facilitating the exploration process.
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Chapter 1 (Introduction)

Theoretical Models of Identity Development

Over the years the field of developmental psychology has produced some of the most widely used models in understanding the identity development of adolescents and young adults. This chapter provides an introduction to the theories and research currently guiding the field of identity development. Importantly, it also brings in relevant theories and research that allow for an examination of identity development within the context of religion and spirituality, a relatively new area of research within the developmental literature.

Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development

Erik Erikson (1950, 1968) proposed a model for the psychosocial development of children and adolescents, focusing on how they socialize and how that socialization affects their sense of self. Erikson maintains that social development occurs in a predetermined order of eight distinct stages. According to the theory, successful completion of each stage results in a healthy personality and successful interactions with others. Failure to successfully complete a stage can result in a reduced ability to complete further stages, and therefore a more unhealthy personality and sense of self. Of particular importance for this study is Erikson’s Identity vs. Role Confusion stage, the stage which corresponds to the adolescent and young adulthood periods of development. Erikson believes that during this time adolescents and young adults are becoming more independent and are beginning to look at the future in terms of career, relationships, families, housing, etc. Adolescents explore possibilities and begin to form their own
identity based upon the outcome of their explorations. This sense of who they are can be disturbed, which results in a sense of confusion ("I don’t know what I want to be when I grow up") about their identity and their role in the world. Erikson argued that the key to resolving the crisis of identity versus role confusion is based on the adolescent’s interactions with others, so that the social context in which adolescents attempt to establish their sense of identity has a significant impact on the identity formation process.

According to Erikson, the complications inherent in identity development in modern society (e.g., more career options) have created the need for a psychosocial moratorium, or a “time out” during adolescence from responsibilities and obligations that might restrict the adolescent’s self-exploration. During this psychosocial moratorium, the adolescent can experiment with different roles and identities in a context that permits and encourages this sort of exploration. Without a chance to explore, experiment, and choose among options for the future, Erikson believes that adolescents may not come to realize their full potential. Erikson saw the university setting as an ideal place for adolescents to explore potential identity options.

Although Erikson’s model of psychosocial development is the driving model in the field of development, it has been critiqued on certain levels. First, it has been criticized for being too conceptual (e.g., Meeus, 1996), where scholars believe it is difficult to conduct empirical research to test the validity of the theory (e.g., is the successful completion of an earlier developmental phase a prerequisite for positive development in a later phase?). Erikson’s model has also been critiqued for its lack of generalizability across gender (Franz & White, 1985; Gilligan, 1982; Lytle, Bakken, &
Romig, 1997). That is, it tends to be more reflective of male development than female development. Some research suggests the need for a two-path model of development to more accurately reflect the development of both males and females (e.g., Franz & White, 1985). Despite some criticisms, Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development continues to be one of the guiding theories in the field.

Marcia’s Ego Identity Status Approach

Marcia (1966) improved upon Erikson’s theory of identity development by being the first theorist to derive an empirically measurable construct, “identity status,” from his conceptual framework. Marcia posited that the adolescent stage consists neither of identity resolution nor role confusion, but rather the degree to which one has explored and committed to an identity in a variety of life domains such as vocation, religion, relational choices, gender roles, etc. Marcia’s theory argues that two distinct aspects of identity status form an adolescent’s identity (orthogonal dimensions): exploration and commitment. He defined exploration as the process of sorting through potential life choices, whereas commitment represents the selecting of choices to which one plans to adhere. Marcia mapped levels of the two dimensions, exploration and commitment, to create a 2 X 2 matrix where each quadrant within the matrix corresponds to an identity status. Each identity status represents a specific combination of a high or low level of exploration with a high or low level of commitment. Marcia proposed four identity statuses of psychological identity development: Diffusion (the absence of systematic identity exploration and a virtual lack of commitment), Foreclosure (commitments enacted without much prior exploration), Moratorium (a period of active exploration in
the relative absence of current commitments), and *Achievement* (a commitment enacted following a period of exploration), corresponding to the four matrix quadrants.

Although widely used in identity research (e.g., as of 2006, Marcia’s paradigm had been used in more than 500 published studies; Schwartz, Adamson, Ferrer-Wreder, Dillion, & Berman, 2006), Marcia’s (1966) framework has been challenged by theorists. First, the framework has been critiqued because some believe that it does not conceptualize the *process* of identity development (Berzonsky & Adams, 1999; Cote & Levine, 1988; Goosens, 1995; Van Hoof, 1999; Waterman, 1982, 1993, 1999), but rather provides a typology of outcomes of the identity crisis theorized by Erikson (1950, 1968). In response, new models which begin to capture the process of identity development have been proposed (e.g., Grotevant, 1987; Stephen, Fraser, & Marcia, 1992; Lucyx, Schwartz, Berzonsky, Soenens, Vansteenkiste, Smits, & Goosens, 2008). For example, Lucyx and colleagues (2008) developed a model that accounts for the multidimensional nature of exploration and commitment. They proposed a five-dimensional identity status model (Exploration in Depth, Exploration in Breadth, Ruminative Exploration, Commitment Making, and Identification with Commitment) that they believed would help to adequately distinguish between the different types of exploration and commitment that individuals go through during the identity formation process. Within this model, there are six identity statuses (in comparison to Marcia’s four statuses): achievement, foreclosure, ruminative moratorium, carefree diffusion, diffused diffusion, and undifferentiated. This model is believed to allow for the investigation of identity formation at both the process and the status, or categorical, level.
Marcia’s identity status framework has also been critiqued for assuming that individuals develop their identity in a singular and definable context, not accounting for external socio-cultural influences (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001; Cote & Levine, 1987, 1988a; Yoder, 2000). Yoder (2000) believes that Marcia’s identity status paradigm “must reflect the existence of and describe identity formation processes common to all adolescents while identifying possible influences that cause variations from [normal] progression through the transition from childhood to adulthood” (p. 95). Therefore, she suggests adding an additional component to Marcia’s model which accounts for potential “barriers” to exploration and commitment, where barriers refer to “conditions [in the socio-cultural environment] over which an individual has little or no control, but which affect, often profoundly, his or her developmental options” (Yoder, 2000; p. 98).

According to Yoder (2000), “barriers” include, but are not limited to, the following factors: (1) geographic isolation; (2) childhood socioeconomic status; (3) parenting style; (4) educational opportunities; (5) physical handicaps; (6) politics; (7) ethnicity; (8) gender; (9) age; and (10) religion. Overall, Yoder’s expansion on Marcia’s model is designed to provide a “means by which to further identify and understand important contextual variables which greatly affect the overall identity formation process” (p. 103).

Individual and Contextual Factors Related to Identity Development

Although Yoder (2000) was among the first to offer a contextually-based alternative to Marcia’s theory of identity development, some other researchers have also recognized the important role that various individual and contextual factors (e.g., gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, type of school attending, immigration process) play in
the process of identity development (e.g., Adams & Marshall, 1996; Baumeister & Muraven, 1996; Bilsker, Schiedel, & Marcia, 1988; Bosma & Kunnen, 2001; Cote, 1996; Cote & Levine, 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c; Grotevant, 1987; Kroger, 1993; Phinney & Goossens, 1996; Schachter, 2005). In general, research has found that age (Lewis, 2003), gender (Bilsker, Schiedel, & Marcia, 1988; Lewis, 2003; Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002), ethnicity (Branch, Tayal, & Triplett, 2000; Lewis, 2003), level of acculturation (Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002), type of school (Solomontos-Kountouri & Hurry, 2008), and socioeconomic status (Solomontos-Kountouri & Hurry, 2008) are all significantly related to identity statuses in adolescence and young adulthood. Despite these significant and important findings, there continues to be a lack of empirical research investigating the role of individual and contextual factors in the process of identity development and researchers continue to call for more contextually-based identity research (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001; Solomontos-Kountouri & Hurry, 2008).

Identity Statuses in College Students

The University (as Erikson referred to it, or “college” setting as is more common today) setting has been conceptualized as an ideal setting for identity exploration and formation (Arnett, 2000; Erikson, 1968). Empirical research has confirmed this idea indicating that the University setting can provide a climate conducive to the exploration of one’s identity and beliefs (Barry & Nelson, 2005; Montgomery & Cote, 2003). As a result, research examining identity formation is commonly conducted on college samples in University settings. In general, this research has revealed clear evidence of psychosocial growth in college, where there tends to be strong positive developmental
shifts in identity from the end of freshman year (first year) to senior year (last year) in college (Kroger, 1988; Lewis, 2003; Meilman, 1979; Waterman, Geary, & Waterman, 1974; Whitbourne & VanManen, 1996). In addition to explicitly examining identity statuses among college students, research has been conducted on identity statuses in reference to a variety of topics ranging from identity processing style (e.g., Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000), transitioning into university (e.g., Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000), alcohol consumption (e.g., Bishop, Macy-Lewis, Schnekloth, Puswella, & Struessel, 1997), conformity pressure (e.g., Toder & Marcia, 1973), gender (e.g., Lewis, 2003), ethnic identity (e.g., Branch, Tayal, & Triplett, 2000), age (e.g., Lewis, 2003), and religiosity (e.g., Markstrom-Adams & Smith, 1996). Research in these areas has found significant and important connections between identity and these topics of adolescents’ and young adults’ lives. As relevant to the current study, the following section will elaborate on the connections between identity and religion/spirituality.

Identity Development and Religion/Spirituality

*Religion on University Campuses*

In general, research has revealed that both the practice and the study of religion are vital aspects of higher education in America (Cherry, Deberg, & Porterfield, 2001). However, research suggests that college students tend to become less active religiously and more committed to integrating spirituality into their lives during their college experience (Astin, 1993; Cherry et al., 2001; Knox, Langlehough, Walters, & Rowley, 1998; Bryant, Choi, & Yasuno, 2003). Given the presence of both religion and
spirituality on college campuses, it is important to understand the role that they may play in the identity of emerging adults.

*Theoretical Basis for Connecting Identity Development and Religion/Spirituality*

Erikson believed that religion had a high potential to significantly influence the identity process by fostering the development of fidelity (i.e., the capacity to sustain commitments and loyalties to an ideology), and strengthening the ego that emerges upon the successful resolution of the identity crisis. He also believed that religion could facilitate identity formation by providing answers for the more complex issue of existence. Building off of these ideas, King (2003) recently presented a three-dimensional framework for conceptualizing how religion provides a context for adolescent identity development. The model suggests that identity development emerges out of the ideological, social, and spiritual contexts of religion. King (2003) suggests that “young people who are active in religious communities have access to a coherent worldview providing meaning and perspective that can serve to trigger considerations of identity issues and to suggest resolutions for identity concerns” (p. 199). Religion provides opportunities for adolescents to interact with peers and build intergenerational relationships while also developing experientially-based knowledge. She contends that such experiences provide adolescents and young adults with a supportive context in which they are able to experiment with self-conceptions and activate various aspects of their identity. Specifically, within the spiritual context, King highlighted the importance of engaging in spiritual practices. She argues that they provide adolescents and young adults with the opportunity to embark on the search for meaning and belonging that is
central to identity exploration. King also believes the relationship to God that individuals experience can facilitate identity exploration and ultimately the resolution of the identity crisis. Although there is some research to support King’s model, it tends to focus primarily on the link between religion and identity, rarely specifically examining spirituality in the context of identity (e.g., Markstrom-Adams, 1999; Markstrom-Adams, Hofstra, & Dougher, 1994)—an important area of focus given the presence of spirituality among college students (e.g., Cherry et al., 2001).

Rationale and Aims of Study

Identity development is the central task of adolescence and young adulthood. Research suggests that religion provides an important context through which young adults are able to develop their identity (King, 2003; Markstrom-Adams, 1999; Markstrom-Adams, Hofstra, & Dougher, 1994). Unfortunately, empirical research connecting religion and identity development is limited and rarely examines the spiritual aspect of religiosity despite research indicating that young adults tend to become less religiously active and more committed to integrating issues of spirituality into their lives as they progress through college. Drawing from Yoder’s (2000) model of identity development which accounts for socio-cultural factors in identity formation and King’s (2003) framework for conceptualizing spirituality as an avenue for identity development, the current study examined the relationship between Belief in God (an aspect of spirituality as outlined by King [2003]) and Identity Statuses among college students. In particular, this study aimed to: (1) Describe the reasons for belief in God (or a higher power) among young adults; (2) Describe the ego identity statuses of young adults; (3)
Evaluate the relationship between belief in God and identity statuses for young adults; (4) Evaluate the contributing factors that impact the relationship between belief in God and identity statuses for young adults; and (5) Develop a comprehensive model to explain the relationship between belief in God and identity statuses, while taking into account any contributing individual and contextual factors, for young adults.
Chapter 2 (Review of the Literature)

Theoretical Models of Identity Development

Over the years the field of developmental psychology has produced some of the most widely used models in understanding the identity development of adolescents and young adults. This chapter provides a description of the theories and research currently guiding the field of identity development. Importantly, it also brings in relevant theory and research that allow for an examination of identity development within the context of religion and spirituality, a relatively new area of research within the developmental literature.

*Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development*

Erik Erikson (1950, 1968) developed one of the most widely accepted models of the psychosocial development of children and adolescents. He believed that the interaction of biological, psychological, and sociocultural forces heavily influences the course of personality development for children and adolescents. He postulated predictable changes in personality development over the lifespan based on a set of eight psychosocial crisis stages. According to Erikson, each stage is critical for the development of a certain dimension of personality. The first stage is critical for the development of *trust versus mistrust* (which occurs during infancy and the first year), and the second stage, which occurs in the second year, for *autonomy versus shame and doubt*. Between the ages of about 3 to 5 years is a critical period for the development of *initiative versus guilt*, and from 6 to 11 for the development of *industry versus inferiority*. The crucial stage for *identity versus role confusion* occurs in adolescence, and for
intimacy versus isolation in early adulthood. The years from ages 25 to 60 represent the critical period for the development of generativity versus stagnation, and the final stage of integrity versus despair is experienced in old age (i.e., age 60 to death).

Although Erikson originally conceptualized identity versus role confusion to occur exclusively in adolescence, more recent research in this area has found that the process of identity development actually continues into young adulthood. For example, Arnett (2000) introduced the concept of “emerging adulthood,” which refers to a distinct stage of life when young people (18-25 years) have left the dependency of childhood and adolescence but have not yet entered the enduring responsibilities of adulthood. During this time, individuals experience relative independence from social roles and normative expectations which allows for active engagement in the explorations central to identity formation. According to this approach, the process of identity exploration (as described by Erikson [1968] and Marcia [1966]) begins in adolescence but now extends well into the 20s for most people in industrialized societies. Therefore, although Erikson believed that identity development occurred in adolescence, more recent research has found that it can extend into young adulthood. As a result, research in this area tends to focus on adolescents and young adults.

In each of Erikson’s stages, conflict arises between newly emerging individual, personal needs and social demands. This conflict culminates in a state of “crisis,” or a normal event for the individual that represents a turning point in development. Successful resolution of each crisis is associated with the development of an individual’s basic ego strengths (hope emerges from trust, will from autonomy, purpose from initiative,
competence from industry, fidelity from identity, love from intimacy, care from
genativity, and wisdom from integrity). As successive crises are resolved, ego strengths
accumulate and are integrated into the individual’s personality, providing an internal
foundation for well-being. According to Erikson, successful resolution of developmental
crises provides the foundation for successful resolution of later crises, a process he
referred to as the epigenetic unfolding of personality. Importantly, however, the qualities
developed in each stage are not always permanent (Erikson, 1950). Therefore, it is
possible to successfully resolve earlier stages that had not previously been favorably
resolved.

The identity crisis that adolescents and young (or “emerging”) adults experience
is a temporary period of distress as they experiment with alternatives before settling on
values and goals. According to Erikson, they go through a process of inner soul-
searching, sifting through characteristics that defined the self in childhood and combining
them with emerging traits and capacities (to Erikson this is the process of exploration).
Then they mold these into a solid inner core that provides a mature identity, or a sense of
self-continuity, as they move through various roles in daily life (to Erikson this is the
process of commitment). Erikson argues that the occurrence of this crisis is precipitated
by both individual readiness and societal pressure. Thus, the age at which the identity
crisis occurs can vary according to factors such as social class, subculture, ethnic
background, and gender. Psychological (e.g., neuroticism) and socialization (e.g.,
childrearing practices) factors can also affect the timing of the identity crisis. It is
important to recognize that although this crisis is most salient during adolescence and
young adulthood, Erikson believes that identity formation is an ongoing task that is subject to challenges and fluctuations which continues to be refined in adulthood as people reevaluate earlier commitments and choices.

Erikson postulates that the identity crisis is adequately resolved when adolescents and young adults have developed a clear sense of themselves, their personal beliefs and values, and their place in their community (i.e., Identity). However, this sense of who they are can be disrupted resulting in unsuccessful resolution. Unsuccessful resolution, according to Erikson, leaves adolescents and young adults with a diffuse sense of identity, confusion about social roles, difficulty selecting clear occupational goals, and uncertainty about internal subjective states and feelings (i.e., Role Confusion). Erikson argued that the key to resolving the crisis of identity versus role-confusion is dependent on the quality of recognition and support the adolescent receives from the social environment. A supportive environment is one that functions to successfully engage and validate the identity of the individual. Interactions with significant others and social institutions are the main source of strength for the developing individual (and his/her ego).

According to Erikson, the complications inherent in identity development in modern society (e.g., more career options) have created the need for a psychosocial moratorium, where society allows adolescents and young adults to resolve the identity crisis. The psychosocial moratorium is the time period during which adolescents and young adults are generally free to experiment with various roles without being expected to accept or to carry any permanent responsibilities or commitments. Without a chance to
explore, experiment, and choose among options for the future, Erikson believes that adolescents may not realize their full capacity. Therefore, this moratorium is central to the successful resolution of the identity crisis. Erikson explicitly identified the University setting as an ideal moratorium setting in American culture, where most individuals attending a University have not yet fully established their adult identity but are provided the opportunity to do so.

_Critiques of Erikson’s psychosocial theory of development._ Although Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development is one of the leading theories in the field of developmental psychology and has been a guiding force in understanding development across the lifespan, it has been critiqued by scholars in the field. First, empirical research validating Erikson’s theory is quite limited. Scholars believe that this is largely due to the fact that the research would have to follow an individual from their birth through death in order to determine, as Erikson theorized, whether prior development influences later phases (Meeus, 1996). A major premise of Erikson’s theory is that every phase has to be resolved successfully before moving on to the next phase of development. Therefore, in order to validate one of the core dimensions of Erikson’s theory, research would have to be conducted across the lifespan of individuals to track their “crises” and “resolutions” of developmental stages. Consequently, it has proven impossible to demonstrate that the completion of an earlier developmental phase is a prerequisite for positive development in a later phase (Meeus, 1996).

Erikson’s theory has also been widely critiqued for claiming to be universal while in actuality being based on male development (Franz & White, 1985; Gilligan, 1982;
Lytle, Bakken, & Romig, 1997). In particular, scholars have criticized Erikson for both neglecting and misportraying female experiences in the developmental process. Much of the early research on Erikson’s model focused on male development with the patterns of male development becoming synonymous with normal human development (Archer, 1992). Since 1980, identity research has increasingly focused on female identity, resulting in an emerging female pattern which may not follow Erikson's eight-stage model (Matteson, 1993). Unfortunately, this unexpected pattern of development carries the stigma of abnormal by some researchers as they struggle to fit women into Erikson's model (Archer, 1992); but as Unger (1988) states, "one cannot simply 'add women and stir'" (p. 29).

Douvan and Adelson (1966) were among the first to provide biographical portrayals of females and to take exception with Erikson (1968), suggesting that females place more emphasis on interpersonal (or sense of self as connected to others) identity issues whereas males emphasize intrapersonal (or sense of self as separate and unique) identity. Somewhat more recently, a body of research emerged (Archer, 1985; Hopkins, 1980; Streitmatter, 1988) positing that females attempt to resolve both interpersonal and intrapersonal issues whereas males negotiate intrapersonal issues only. Grotevant and his colleagues (1982) and Thorbecke and Grotevant (1982) found that, although both genders invested in interpersonal issues, boys used their affiliations to enhance individual success whereas girls focused on affiliations with the hope of enhancing success for all.

Consistent with previous research, Lytle and colleagues (1997) found that males and females require a different theory of identity development in which females necessitate a
broader theory that encompasses dimensions of both separation and connectedness while males require a theory that focuses predominantly on separation. Overall, research tends to refute Erikson’s *universal* theory of development, suggesting the potential need for a two-path model of development that more comprehensively and accurately addresses the role of interpersonal attachment in the psychosocial development of males and females (Franz & White, 1985).

Despite the aforementioned critiques, Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development continues to be one of the most widely accepted and used theoretical frameworks for conducting developmental research.

*Marcia’s Ego Identity Status Approach*

Erikson was the first developmental theorist to introduce identity development as the primary psychosocial task of adolescence. However, as alluded to, his model was purely conceptual. Marcia (1966) was the first theorist to derive an empirically measurable construct from Erikson’s conceptual framework of identity development. He based his model on a series of interviews conducted with White male college students. This identity status paradigm has been the driving framework in identity research for over 35 years (Berzonsky & Adams, 1999).

To Erikson, identity was something an individual possessed to a greater or lesser degree; it could be assessed as lying on a continuum somewhere between positive and negative poles. Marcia’s approach, however, suggested the possibility that adolescents and young adults engage in the identity formation process in qualitatively different styles. He posited that the identity crisis stage of development consists of the degree to which
one explores and/or commits to an identity in a variety of life domains including vocation, religion, politics, relational choices, gender roles, etc. Therefore, using Erikson’s concepts of exploration and commitment, Marcia developed four identity statuses that represent a specific combination of a high or low level of exploration with a high or low level of commitment. Individuals are assigned to an identity status based on the extent to which they have been through an exploration period and whether they have made commitments to pursue a particular occupation and adhere to a certain ideology (i.e., religious and political convictions).

Marcia defined exploration as the process of sorting through potential life choices and he defined commitment as the selection of choices (e.g., goals, values, and beliefs) to which one plans to adhere. As suggested above, Marcia crossed the two orthogonal dimensions (exploration and commitment) to create a 2 X 2 matrix where each quadrant within the matrix corresponds to an identity status. The statuses are Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achievement and are conceived as “individual styles of coping with the psychosocial task of forming an ego identity” (Marcia, 1966; p.558).

According to Marcia (1966), Diffusion represents the absence of systematic identity exploration and a virtual lack of commitment. Individuals in the Diffused status have engaged in a limited amount of exploration and similarly have made very few commitments. An individual in this stage may be viewed as “just going through the motions,” without any real direction, meaning, or passion behind the decisions that they make or the things that they do. For example, a student in Diffusion may be enrolled in courses because they are believed to be easy or they are required, but the student
generally would not have strong feelings about their course selection. This same person may also socialize with people out of convenience (e.g., in class together or roommates), but probably will not make an effort to go out and meet a variety of different people.

Marcia (1966) posited that *Foreclosure* represents commitments enacted without much prior exploration, so there tends to be low levels of exploration and high levels of commitment. A person functioning from a Foreclosed identity status often has made commitments about their future roles, values, and goals based on what they have observed from significant others (e.g., family and friends) in their lives without challenging them or exploring other possibilities. For example a student in Foreclosure may enter college already planning to pursue a career as a lawyer, without having taken any related courses or internships yet, because both parents are successful lawyers. Therefore, he/she would probably pursue a major in history or political science without first enrolling in courses from alternative disciplines. This same person may also only befriend peers at school who are driven by success and money because those are the types of people his/her parents have chosen to be friends with. He/she probably will not try to establish meaningful relationships with people who do not fit this prototype, and in fact may avoid relationships with people who do not value success and money (as they may challenge his/her beliefs and approach to life).

*Moratorium* represents a period of active exploration in the relative absence of current commitments. Individuals in this status are high on exploration and low on commitment. An individual functioning predominantly from Moratorium tends to have a great deal of diversity in different aspects of his/her life such as with activities and
relationships. They also tend to enjoy trying new things and meeting new people. For example, a student in Moratorium has probably not yet selected a college major, but has taken courses from a variety of disciplines in an effort to select the most fulfilling area of study. In addition, this student may also be involved in a variety of different extracurricular activities—he/she may be a bartender on the weekend, baby-sit during weekday afternoons, and be a member of the diversity club on campus. There may be a struggle at times to remain committed to his/her responsibilities—he/she may have some course incompletes or may not hold jobs for extended periods of time.

Finally, Achievement according to Marcia (1966) represents a commitment enacted following a period of exploration. Individuals in the Achieved status have displayed both high levels of exploration and commitment. An individual in this status has tried a variety of options/identities and eventually selected the one that best fits him/her. Therefore, they tend to be committed to, invested in, comfortable with, and generally passionate about their roles, values, and goals.

An assumption fundamental to Marcia’s paradigm is that the differing degrees of ego identity of each of the statuses represent a level of “developmental maturity” (Marcia, 1976; p. 28). Marcia specified an ordering for the identity statuses along the continuum of identity formation, with the “lower” statuses reflecting a weak ego identity and the “higher” ones reflecting a strong ego identity. The ordering Marcia postulated is as follows (moving from the “lower” to the “higher” statuses): Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achievement. Identity Diffusion and Achievement were viewed by Marcia as “polar outcomes,” whereas identity Foreclosure and Moratorium were said to
be “roughly intermediate” in the order (Marcia, 1966; p. 551-552). Therefore, while each identity status is viewed as constituting a “mode of resolution” of the identity crisis, Diffusion, Foreclosure, and Moratorium are also viewed as steps in a potential developmental sequence toward an Achieved identity (Marcia, 1976; p. 145).

Empirical research on Marcia’s identity status paradigm. Marcia’s identity status paradigm is widely accepted and used in identity research (e.g., as of 2006, Marcia’s paradigm had been used in more than 500 published studies (e.g., Schwartz, Adamson, Ferrer-Wreder, Dillion, & Berman, 2006). In fact, it has been instrumental in a number of ways (1) in launching a research tradition based in Erikson’s theory of identity formation (Schwartz, 2001); (2) in providing the basis for generating operational definitions of the construct of identity; and (3) in identifying a number of potential outcomes to the identity development process (Berzonsky & Adams, 1999). Each identity status, for example, has been empirically associated with certain personality characteristics (Berzonsky & Adams, 1999; Bourne, 1978; Kroger, 1993; Marcia, 1993; Waterman, 1999). Specifically, Diffusion has been linked with apathy and disinterest as Diffused individuals tend to demonstrate low levels of agency (Schwartz, Cote, and Arnett, 2005) and a general lack of concern about identity issues (Berzonsky, 1989). Foreclosure has been associated with rigidity and authoritarianism and Moratorium with critical thinking and anxiety. Finally, individuals with an Achieved identity status generally score higher than the other three statuses on a number of qualities such as psychological well-being, cognitive complexity, academic motivation, and deep interpersonal relationships (Boys & Chandler, 1992). Empirical research using Marcia’s status paradigm has also found that individual
personality variables (e.g., openness to experience, ego resilience, self-esteem, and cognitive complexity) play a key role in predicting the course of identity development for young adults (e.g., Kroger & Green, 1996). Moreover, there is a strong body of research that attests to the convergent and discriminant validity of identity status measures (see Berzonsky & Adams, 1999 for a complete review of this research). Data also indicates that status measures based on Marcia’s paradigm do capture at least some of the components of the identity construct put forth by Erikson.

**Critiques of Marcia’s identity status paradigm.** Although widely accepted in identity research, Marcia’s (1966) identity status framework has been challenged by theorists. First, the framework has been critiqued because some believe that it does not adequately conceptualize the process of identity development (Berzonsky & Adams, 1999; Cote & Levine, 1988; Goosens, 1995; Meeus, Iedema, Helsen, & Vollebergh, 1999; Van Hoof, 1999; Waterman, 1982, 1993, 1999), but rather provides a typology of outcomes of the identity crisis described by Erikson (1950). Specifically, the framework has been criticized for inconsistent findings in whether there is a continuum underlying the statuses and whether the statuses are categories of behavior or phases/stages of development. In general, the identity status field is characterized by contradictory findings concerning the developmental sequence that underlies the statuses despite Marcia’s claim that there is a clear and predictable order to his statuses (Kroger, 1996; Van Hoof, 1999; Waterman, 1982, 1993). The fact that research has not yielded consistent patterns of identity formation or identity status change has lead theorists to question the developmental nature of the model. Indeed, Marcia (1976) concedes that
“the problem with the statuses is that they have a static quality and identity is never static…it may be productive to begin thinking of identity in terms of ongoing processes or dimensions….instead of the identity status categories…” (p. 153-154). When identity status interviews are utilized in research, the status of the individuals at the time of the interview is often interpreted as their resolution of the identity crisis when in fact their status may change. Therefore, theorists believe that relying on identity statuses has diverted attention away from the fact that the statuses are probably assessing certain processes taking place during identity formation and not actual identity resolutions (Cote & Levine, 1988).

Marcia’s identity status paradigm has also been criticized for taking a decidedly individualistic perspective (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001; Cote & Levine, 1987, 1988; Yoder, 2000). In doing so, researchers contend that Marcia has ignored Erikson’s attention to the various contexts (e.g., sociological and historical) of development and instead focused too heavily on identity statuses as an intrapersonal attribute, whose development is predominantly (if not solely) affected by individual factors. Theorists have argued that historical and social contexts determine the adaptive quality of different statuses and that the development of identity is strongly affected by those factors (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). Moreover, Yoder (2000) believes that in order to be relevant and useful in contemporary social and psychological theory, Marcia’s ego identity status paradigm must “…identify possible influences that cause variations from (normal) progression through the transition from childhood to adulthood” (p. 95). To address some of the
critiques of Marcia’s model, scholars have developed alternative models of identity formation.

Alternative Models of Identity Development

In an attempt to better address the process-oriented nature of identity development, Grotevant (1987) offered a process model of identity formation that comprises four main components: (1) individual characteristics brought to bear on the identity process; (2) contexts of development; (3) the identity process in specific domains (e.g., occupation, ideology); and (4) interdependencies among the different identity domains. The model is described as developmental, contextual, and life span in scope. The identity process, according to Grotevant (1987), begins with an orientation to engage in identity exploration. The adolescent’s exploration in turn yields both affective and cognitive outcomes, which become integrated into a newly consolidated sense of identity. This consolidation of the new sense of identity is followed by evaluation of the identity (the purpose of this evaluation being the determination of goodness of fit between the identity and the environment in which the adolescent resides). The results of identity evaluation influence whether and how the adolescent engages in further identity work. A noteworthy aspect of Grotevant’s process model is its claim that individual (e.g., personality and cognitive ability) and contextual (e.g., culture, society, family, peers, school, work) factors interact to influence the identity process.

With a similar goal (e.g., to address the process-oriented nature of identity development) as Grotevant (1987), Stephen, Fraser, and Marcia (1992) proposed an identity evaluation model in which an individual who had previously reached identity...
Achievement begins to reconsider the alternatives selected and may re-enter a period of exploration (or the Moratorium status) if these alternatives are no longer deemed suitable. Therefore, Stephen and colleagues (1992) suggested that the identity process may be better described as spiral as opposed to linear, where individuals will cycle between identity Moratorium and identity Achievement (i.e., Mama cycles) as their established identity becomes disequilibrated (i.e., once meaningful commitments become unsatisfactory, one’s self image and definition no longer fit with newly emerging thoughts, feelings, and values, and/or external life events propel a challenging of old ways).

Lucyx, Schwartz, Berzonsky, Soenens, Vansteenkiste, Smits, and Goossens (2008) also developed a model to address the process concerns of Marcia’s (1966) initial identity status paradigm. Their model accounts for the multidimensional nature of exploration and commitment. They proposed a five-dimensional identity status model (Exploration in Depth, Exploration in Breadth, Ruminative Exploration, Commitment Making, and Identification with Commitment) that they believed would aid in adequately distinguishing between the different types of exploration and commitment individuals experience during the identity formation process. Within this model, there are six identity statuses (in comparison to Marcia’s four statuses): Achievement, Foreclosure, Ruminative Moratorium, Carefree Diffusion, Diffused Diffusion, and Undifferentiated. Lucyx and colleagues (2008) believe that this model will help researchers to re-define some of the core dimensions of identity for adolescents and young adults. Moreover, the model is purported to allow for the investigation of identity formation at both the process
and the status (or categorical) level. Importantly, however, this model does not address contextual processes involved in the identity formation process.

Closely connected to Marcia’s concept of the development of different identity statuses (based on varying levels of exploration and commitment), Berzonsky (1997) proposed a model of identity styles. According to Berzonsky, individuals differ in the way they go about monitoring, utilizing, testing, and revising their identities. He proposed three different styles of developing one’s sense of self (i.e., identity). The informational style is associated with a stronger orientation to explore and involves actively seeking out, processing, and evaluating self-relevant information. The normative style is characterized by a concern with the standards and expectations of significant others (e.g., parents) and entails resisting change and defending against information that challenge currently held beliefs and values. Finally, the Diffuse-avoidant style is characterized by procrastination and the avoidance of dealing with personally relevant issues. Where a Diffuse-avoidant style is utilized, delay in dealing with personally relevant issues results in a tendency for situational demands and consequences to determine a course of action. Overall, Berzonsky’s model is conceptually similar to Marcia’s but offers slightly different ways of understanding how adolescents and young adults attempt to resolve the identity crisis.

Finally, in order to address concerns around the intrapersonal focus of Marcia’s model, Yoder (2000) expanded Marcia’s model to more accurately reflect socio-cultural variables, which may have an impact on individual internal psychological functioning. She did so by adding an additional component to Marcia’s model which accounts for
potential “barriers” to exploration and commitment (the factors which determine the status in which an individual resides), where barriers refer to “conditions [in the socio-cultural environment] over which an individual has little or no control, but which affect, often profoundly, his or her developmental options” (Yoder, 2000; p. 98). According to Yoder (2000), “barriers’ include, but are not limited to, the following factors: (1) geographic isolation; (2) childhood socioeconomic status; (3) parenting style; (4) educational opportunities; (5) physical handicaps; (6) politics; (7) ethnicity; (8) gender; (9) age; and (10) religion. Overall, Yoder’s expansion on Marcia’s model provides a “means by which to further identify and understand important contextual variables which greatly affect the overall identity formation process” (p. 103). Although to date researchers have not used Yoder’s model as a theoretical foundation for their research, they continue to cite her work when highlighting the need to address the role of contextual factors in the process of identity development.

Individual and Contextual Factors Related to Identity Development

Although Yoder (2000) was among the first to offer a contextually-based alternative to Marcia’s theory of identity development, some scholars have recognized the important role that various individual and contextual factors (e.g., gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, type of school attending, immigration process) play in the process of identity development for adolescents and young adults (e.g., Adams & Marshall, 1996; Baumeister & Muraven, 1996; Bilsker, Schiedel, & Marcia, 1988; Bosma & Kunnen, 2001; Cote, 1996; Cote & Levine, 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c; Grotevant, 1987; Kroger, 1993; Phinney & Goossens, 1996; Schachter, 2005). As a result, identity formation is
more consistently conceptualized as a process of person-context interactions, where the context continually influences and is continually influenced by the developing person. Despite such a heavy conceptual shift in the field of identity development, there continues to be a lack of empirical research investigating the role of contextual factors in the process of identity development (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001; Solomontos-Kountouri & Hurry, 2008). The following is a review of the limited empirical research available in this area, the majority supporting the theoretical literature, which advocates for a contextual approach to the study of identity development.

In one of the earliest investigations of individual and contextual factors and identity development, Bilsker and colleagues (1988) examined sex differences in identity status among college students (ethnic background of participants was not noted). Although significant differences between male and female participants were not detected in their overall identity status (e.g., an about equal number of males and females were present in each of the identity statuses [Achievement, Moratorium, Foreclosure, and Diffusion]), results did indicate that the female students’ identity statuses were determined more by interpersonal issues than for their male counterparts. These findings, according to Bilsker and colleagues (1988), highlight the importance of relationships to the identity formation of women. It is important to recognize that interpersonal relationships also emerged as an area important for self-definition in male participants, but to a lesser degree than for female participants.

The issue of ethnic differences in the patterns of ego identity has appeared in the literature, often noting that individuals who come from a background that is different
from the dominant cultural group must find a way to integrate the values and norms of their ethnic culture in addition to those of the dominant cultural group into their identity (e.g., Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990), while also overcoming certain “barriers” (Yoder, 2000). As a result, it is argued that the identity process may require more time for ethnic minorities than it does for Anglo-Americans living in the United States. In an attempt to further explore this area of research, Branch, Tayal, & Triplett (2000) examined the effects of age and ethnic group membership on ego identity statuses in a multi-ethnic sample of adolescents and young adults. Contrary to previous research, no significant differences were found in ego identity statuses when ethnic groups were compared. When examining the relationship between ethnic identity and ego identity status, the Diffused identity status was negatively correlated with ethnic identity but the other statuses were not. On the other hand, however, findings from the study did indicate significant age effects on the identity status of participants, where the youngest participants (13-19 years old) scored significantly higher than the oldest participants (24-26 years old) in both the Foreclosure and Moratorium statuses. No significant differences were found in the Diffusion and Achievement statuses for any of the age groups. Overall, Branch and colleagues (2000) found significant age, but not ethnic group, effects in the ego identity development of a sample of adolescents and young adults. In other words, significant differences were found in identity statuses for participants from different age groups, but significant differences were not found for participants from different ethnic groups.
Schwartz and Montgomery (2002) examined the effects of acculturation and
gender on identity processes and outcomes for a sample of students at a culturally diverse
University. Results from their study suggested a complex pattern of relationships between
identity development and contexts of development. In particular, Schwartz and
Montgomery found significant effects of both immigrant generation and gender on
identity processes and outcomes, where gender tended to have a relatively greater impact
than did immigrant generation. From their findings Schwartz and Montgomery (2002)
concluded that the processes and outcomes of identity “may be more-or-less culture-
specific” (p. 369). Overall, results from the study revealed important and significant
relationships between identity development and both gender and immigrant generation.

Lewis (2003) provided one of the first studies to examine differences in ego
identity statuses among college students across age, ethnicity, and gender. She
administered the Revised Version of the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity
Status to a diverse (with respect to age and ethnicity) sample of 434 college students.
Overall, results from the study found important and significant differences in identity
status associated with age, ethnicity, and gender. With respect to age, results from her
study indicated that participants who were younger than 27 years tended to have higher
levels of identity Diffusion, Foreclosure, and Moratorium and lower levels of
Achievement. Lewis explained these findings were in line with Arnett’s (2000) theory of
emerging adulthood, where adolescents and young adults are taking more time searching
for identity options and delaying forming identity commitments. When examining
ethnicity, contrary to Schwartz and Montgomery (2002), Lewis found differences in
identity statuses among college students from Asian, Hispanic, African-American, and Anglo-American backgrounds. Most notable was the significant differences among Asian participants as compared to at least one other group in each of the identity statuses (e.g., they had higher levels of Foreclosure and Moratorium than any of the other groups). Differences also emerged between the Hispanic and Anglo-American participants, where Hispanic participants scored significantly higher on Diffusion and lower on Achievement than Anglo-American participants. Contrary to their hypothesis, no differences emerged between African-American and Anglo-American participants. Importantly, Lewis noted that when thinking about ethnic group differences it is also necessary to attend to such factors as socioeconomic status, color, stereotypes, level of acculturation, prejudice, language, and worldview. In terms of gender, the study revealed significant differences between men and women, where men scored significantly higher than women on identity Diffusion and Foreclosure in interpersonal identity. Gender differences did not emerge in the ideological domain of identity status.

In a synthesis of previous theoretical work and a case study, Schachter (2005) examined the implications of integrating context into identity theory. Schachter conducted a number of interviews on Jewish Modern Orthodox young adults, where he asked them to tell their life stories in chronological order, in vivid extensive detail—focusing on events that were particularly meaningful to them and integrating any story related to either their religious or sexual development. For the purposes of this examination, Schachter used interview material from Gil, a 24 year old Jewish Modern Orthodox male. From his interview with Gil, Schachter found that identity is co-
constructed by the individual and his/her context and that conceptualizing identity as attributed solely to the individual is highly problematic. From this, he concluded that identity researchers need to focus not only on the individual, but also on those “elements and agents” that comprise his or her context (p. 390).

Most recently, Solomontos-Kountouri and Hurry (2008) examined political, religious, and occupational identities in context. Building from that, they found important differences in domain-specific identities for participants from different cultural groups (Greek Cypriot and North American adolescents), types of schools (state, state technical, and private), socioeconomic statuses, and genders. Specifically, significant differences were found when comparing the political and religious identity statuses of Greek Cypriot and North American adolescents: (a) In political identity, Greek adolescents were significantly more likely to belong to Achievement, Moratorium, and Foreclosure statuses, while North American adolescents were significantly more likely to be in Diffusion status; (b) In religious identity, Greeks were more likely to belong to Achievement and Moratorium, while their American counterparts were more likely to belong to Foreclosure and Diffusion. Significant differences were also found when comparing adolescents based on their different types of schools: (a) Adolescents from state technical schools were more likely (than students from state and private schools) to belong to Diffusion status in religious and occupational identity; (b) Adolescents at state schools were significantly more likely to be Achieved in their religious identity; and (c) Adolescents from private schools were more likely to be in Moratorium status for occupational identity. When examining the associations between identity status and
socioeconomic status the following significant differences were detected: (a) In religious identity, adolescents from upper socioeconomic statuses were more likely to be Diffused in their religious identity; (b) In occupational identity, working class adolescents were more likely to be Diffused, while upper class adolescents were more likely to be in Moratorium. Finally, significant differences were also found when examining the intersections of identity and gender: (a) Male adolescents were more likely to be Foreclosed in their political identity, whereas females were more likely to be Diffused; (b) Male adolescents were more likely to belong to Diffusion, while females to Moratorium for religious identity; and (c) In occupational identity, male adolescents were more likely to be belong to Diffusion status and females to Moratorium. Based on all of their findings, Solomontos-Kountouri and Hurry (2008) concluded that micro (e.g., gender), meso (e.g., academic context), and macro (e.g., politics and religion) contexts are all important in shaping adolescents’ identities.

Overall, the research examining the role of individual and contextual factors in identity development supports Yoder’s (2000) contention that such factors need to be accounted for when trying to understand identity development in adolescents and young adults.

Identity Statuses in College Students

The University setting has been conceptualized as an ideal setting for identity exploration and formation (Arnett, 2000; Erikson, 1968) and empirical research has confirmed this idea indicating that the University setting can provide a climate conducive to the exploration of one’s identity and beliefs (Barry & Nelson, 2005; Montgomery &
Cote, 2003). Moreover, in their review of relevant literature, Meeus, Iedema, Helsen, and Vollebergh (1999) concluded that although important identity development processes take place for adolescents in high school, the development of identity is stronger and shows a different pattern in college/university samples. In particular, during the high school period, the progressive development of identity takes place more by moving out of Diffusion (and into Foreclosure) and, in the period of college/university, by moving out of Foreclosure (and into Achievement). Given the strong connections between identity formation and the college/university setting, research examining identity formation is commonly conducted on college samples. This research has revealed clear evidence of psychosocial growth from freshmen year to senior year in college, where there tends to be strong positive developmental shifts in identity from the end of freshman year to the senior year at college (Kroger, 1988; Lewis, 2003; Meilman, 1979; Waterman, Geary, & Waterman, 1974; Whitbourne & VanManen, 1996). Specifically, general trends demonstrate significant decreases in the frequency of college students in Diffuse statuses and corresponding increases in identity Achievement over the course of the college experience.

Research on identity development, and particularly identity statuses, in college students has been conducted on a variety of topics ranging from identity processing style (e.g., Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000), transitioning to university (e.g., Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000), alcohol consumption (e.g., Bishop, Macy-Lewis, Schnekloth, Puswella, & Struessel, 1997), conformity pressure (e.g., Toder & Marcia, 1973), gender (e.g., Lewis, 2003), ethnic identity (e.g., Branch, Tayal, & Triplett, 2000), age (e.g., Lewis, 2003), and
religiosity (e.g., Markstrom-Adams & Smith, 1996). Given the focus of the current study, the following section provides a thorough theoretical and empirical review of connections between identity development and religiosity.

Identity Development and Religion/Spirituality

Religion on University Campuses

Although somewhat limited, research has examined trends in religiosity and spirituality on university campuses. In general, research has found that both the practice and the study of religion are vital aspects of higher education in America (Cherry, Deberg, & Porterfield, 2001). The rates at which they are practiced and studied are higher at religiously affiliated universities, but present at unaffiliated institutions as well. In their qualitative study of religion on college campuses, Cherry and colleagues (2001) found this to be true of universities representing each of the different regions (e.g., north, south, east, and west) in the United States. Therefore, they concluded that religion is available and accessible to college students at universities across the country.

In addition to examining the extent to which religion is present on college campuses, researchers have also investigated whether and how students are religiously engaged. Trends in the research indicate that although college students tend to become less religiously active (e.g., attending religious services, praying/meditating, and discussing religion) throughout their college experience, they become more committed to integrating spirituality into their lives (Astin, 1993; Cherry et al., 2001; Knox, Langehough, Walters, & Rowley, 1998; Bryant, Choi, & Yasuno, 2003). In their research on religiousness in college students, Knox and colleagues (1998) found that younger
students had higher scores for religiousness than did older students. Consistent with these findings, Bryant and colleagues (2003) found that first-year college students were less likely to engage in religious practices compared to their levels of participation in high school. Additionally, in their qualitative study, Cherry and colleagues (2001) found that both students and faculty prefer to use the terms “spiritual” and “spirituality,” as opposed to “religious” and “religion,” to describe their experiences. One individual, when asked whether students on his campus were very religious answered “No, but most of them are very spiritual” (Cherry et al., 2001, p. 275).

Research in this area has suggested that changes in religion and spirituality in college students may be due to certain experiences at college, such as distance from family members, certain institutional environments, interactions with nonreligious peers and faculty, participation in community service and service learning opportunities, and participation in diversity-related activities (e.g., Astin, 1993; Bischetti, 2000; Bryant et al., 2003; Rhoads, 1997; Serow & Dreyden, 1990). Researchers have also speculated that declines in religious activity may be attributed to either (a) the busy schedules that college students often have (which makes it difficult for them to engage in religious activities), (b) religious questioning and doubt from exposure to different views and denominations, or (c) the combination of busy schedules and religious questioning and doubt (Cherry et al., 2001; Goldscheider & Goldscheider, 1999; Hoge, Dinges, Johnson, & Gonzalez, 1998a, 1998b; Lee, 2002). Despite some notable shifts, religion continues to hold a presence on university campuses and students do work to integrate spirituality into their lives. Therefore, both religion and spirituality are important aspects of the college
experience that warrant examination in the process of identity formation for college students (as will be articulated in the following section).

Theoretical Basis for Connecting Identity Development and Religion/Spirituality

Erikson’s psychosocial theory of development (1950, 1968) offers an explanation for linking religion and identity formation. In particular, he recognized religion’s potential impact in the identity development process. He argued that religion is the oldest and most enduring institution that facilitates the emergence of fidelity (i.e., the capacity to sustain commitments and loyalties to an ideology), the ego strength that emerges upon the successful resolution of the identity crisis. According to Erikson (1950, 1968), fidelity serves the following important functions: (a) provides a socially acceptable channel for adolescent passions that derive from enhanced drive capacity; (b) promotes feelings of belongingness; (c) facilitates the emergence of ethical strength; (d) enhances the social order by allowing youths to correct or destroy aging ideologies; and (e) provides a sense of purpose in life. Therefore, he contended that an adolescent or young adult characterized by fidelity is able to make commitments to ideological institutions such as religious groups.

Erikson (1964, 1965) also believed that religion facilitates identity formation by providing answers for the more complex issues of existence. He suggested that adolescents and young adults are attracted to religious ideologies because the beliefs, values, and morals they offer allow them to make sense of and understand their place in the world. Erikson even argued that without the guidance of religion (i.e., it provides a worldview that gives meaning and guides behavior), the choices and options before
adolescents may lead to confusion and despair. Moreover, Erikson believed that as social groups, religions serve as buffers against alienation by promoting belongingness through the use of rites and rituals, faith, and affirmative dogma.

Building off of Erikson’s work, King (2003) developed a three-dimensional conceptual framework, suggesting that religion provides a distinct setting for identity exploration and commitment by offering ideological, social, and spiritual contexts. Based in part on the work of Erikson (1968) and Marcia (1966), King argues that religious institutions play a valuable role in identity development by providing adolescents and young adults with an environment of intergenerational support that can foster values, meaning, identity, a sense of belonging, and connectedness beyond themselves. Moreover, King believes that religion can provide a coherent worldview which offers pro-social values and behavioral norms that are grounded in an ideology and that can help facilitate identity exploration and commitment. Overall, King (2003) contends that “although other institutions and activities offer a wide range of opportunities for youth to explore identity, they rarely offer the breadth and depth of developmental resources that foster identity as congregations do at their best” (p. 201).

As indicated above, King believes that religion provides unique contexts in which adolescents and young adults are able to form their identities. First, she believes that through their values, beliefs, worldviews, and traditions, religions are able to provide an ideological context in which an adolescent can generate a sense of meaning, order, and place in the world. She believed that religion provides adolescents with access to a coherent worldview (i.e., beliefs, values, and morals) that offers meaning and
perspective, which can trigger considerations of identity issues and also suggest resolutions for the identity crisis.

King also believes that religion offers a social context helpful for identity development, where religions provide opportunities for adolescents and young adults to interact with peers and build intergenerational relationships. Through these relationships, young people are able to observe and imitate people from their faith in order to grow (i.e., spiritual modeling). In addition to relationships, the social experiences and support within the religious social context allows adolescents and young adults to experiment with their conceptions of themselves and also activate various aspects of their identity (e.g., leader, believer, or helper).

Finally, King asserted that religion offers a spiritual context in which adolescents and young adults can explore issues related to identity development. Engaging in spiritual practices provides an important level of connectedness that can give adolescents the chance to experience themselves in relationship to God, a community of believers, or nature and also to engage in the search for meaning and belonging that is central to identity exploration. King believes that the awareness that stems from this search provides the ultimate answers and also perspective on the larger issues of life that are crucial to the resolution of the identity crisis. This is the aspect of religiosity that will be focused on in the current study.

Empirical Research Connecting Identity Development and Religion/Spirituality

Although researchers have identified a clear theoretical link between religion and identity development, empirical research in this area is sparse (Markstrom-Adams, 1999;
Markstrom-Adams, Hofstra, & Dougher, 1994). Furthermore, the little empirical research that does exist tends to focus primarily on the link between religion and identity development, rarely specifically examining spirituality. As outlined in King’s (2003) model, religion and spirituality provide unique and valuable avenues through which adolescents and young adults are able to shape their identity. Therefore, although identity formation has not been examined in the context of spirituality, it is an important area that should be empirically examined. The following section provides a review of current research findings in the field of identity development and religiosity.

Religious orientation. An area that has been somewhat highly researched is the connection between Marcia’s (1966) identity statuses and Allport and Ross’ (1967) religious orientations. According to Allport and Ross, religious orientation is centered on people’s motivations toward religion as opposed to their degree of religiosity. In their research, Markstrom-Adams and Smith (1996) conceptually linked identity statuses and religious orientations, arguing that the internalized search necessary for optimal identity formation appears strikingly similar to an internally-oriented religious motivation. They specifically proposed that overlapping internal processes operate in the development of the intrinsic religious orientation and in advanced identity formation. Results from their two research studies revealed clear links between certain identity statuses and religious orientations. For example, people with extrinsic religious orientations (i.e., external motivation for being religious [e.g., meeting people, community conformity, family pressure]) scored higher than those with intrinsic orientations (i.e., internal motivation for being religious [belief in God, inner peace and happiness, connection with the divine]) on
both Diffusion and Moratorium statuses. People with intrinsic orientations tended to score the highest in Achievement and the lowest in Moratorium and Diffusion. They also scored lower than extrinsics in Foreclosure. Overall, Markstrom-Adams and Smith (1996) concluded that there is evidence to suggest important connections between identity and religious orientation.

Fulton (1997) also examined the association between religious orientation and identity status. He found that Achievement was associated with people who scored high on the intrinsic orientation and low on the extrinsic. On the other hand, his results revealed that Foreclosure was associated with people who scored high on the extrinsic orientation and low on the intrinsic. Fulton argues that these findings are conceptually consistent with the identity statuses where Achieved individuals are believed to have internalized their commitments and Foreclosed individuals have “inherited” theirs.

Religious involvement. In addition to religious orientations, research has also examined the connection between religious involvement and psychosocial development. For example, Markstrom-Adams and colleagues (1994) examined religious attendance and identity formation, reporting that more frequent church attendance was associated with the commitment statuses of identity (i.e., Foreclosure and Achievement) and lower scores on the non-commitment statuses of Diffusion and Moratorium. In a more recent study, Markstrom-Adams (1999) examined whether psychosocial maturity was associated with frequency of attendance at religious services, participation in a Bible study group, and involvement in a youth group. She found that the ego-strength fidelity (the ego-strength associated with the identity crisis in adolescence) was most strongly
associated with religious attendance and Bible study participation for European-American participants. These same findings were not found among African-American participants.

Religious beliefs. Hunsberger, Pratt, and Pancer (2001) investigated links between adolescents’ attempts to deal with religious issues, particularly religious doubt, and their identity development. Results from their research revealed that Achievement scores were only weakly associated with religious commitment. There were strong connections, however, among Achieved people seeking out both belief-confirming consultation and belief-threatening consultation for religious doubts. Moratorium was related to lack of religious commitment, religious doubting, and also avoidance of belief-confirming consultation for religious doubt. On the other hand, identity Foreclosed people tended to be more religiously committed and less doubtful of religious teachings. Consultation around religious doubt for these individuals tended to involve belief-confirming sources and avoidance of belief-threatening resources. Finally, Diffused individuals tended to experience more religious doubts, be religiously uncommitted, disagree with religious teachings, and avoid any consultation in the face of religious doubt.

Finally, Fisherman (2004) examined the relationship among religious beliefs (i.e., belief in the existence of the Creator, belief in reward and punishment in the context of religion, and belief in the power of prayer) and ego identity in adolescents. Results from the study revealed a positive and significant relationship between religious belief and ego-identity. Based on her findings, Fisherman concluded that religious beliefs appeared to be an important component in the ego identity of religious adolescents. She also
concluded that, although there are several variables related to the ego identity of religious adolescents, religious beliefs are a vital component of their identity.

In summation, empirical research has examined identity in the context of a variety of religious variables, but as indicated, has failed to examine the relationship between identity and spirituality—a relationship that has theoretical justification (King, 2003).

Rationale, Aims, and Hypotheses for Current Study

Developmental research has labeled identity formation as the primary task of young adulthood (e.g., Erikson, 1968; Arnett, 2000). Within this research, the University setting as has been identified as ideal for the exploration of various aspects of one’s developing identity (e.g., Barry & Nelson, 2005; Montgomery & Cote, 2003). Additionally, this research has documented clear connections between identity formation and a variety of individual and contextual factors, such as age, ethnicity, gender, type of school, etc. Within the past two decades, scholars have provided both theoretical and empirical justifications for more clearly delineating the relationship between religion and identity formation. However, empirical research in this area is sparse and the little research that does exist focuses explicitly on religion and identity—overlooking the potential relationship between spirituality and identity (as outlined in King’s [2003] model).

The relationship between spirituality and identity is important to understand as separate from the relationship between religion and identity for two very specific reasons: (1) King (2003) provided a comprehensive model which conceptualizes the ways in which spirituality (as a specific aspect of religiosity) can foster the process of identity
development; and (2) research indicates that college students identify as “spiritual” (as opposed to religious) and actually report a decline in their participation in religious activities upon entering the university setting (e.g., Astin, 1993; Cherry et al., 2001; Knox, Langehough, Walters, & Rowley, 1998; Bryant et al., 2003). Therefore, the current study attempted to address gaps in the literature by examining the relationship between spirituality (as defined by Belief in God) and Identity for a group of young adults. The following were the specific aims and hypotheses of this study:

**Aim 1:** The first aim of this study was to describe the reasons for Belief in God (or a higher power) among young adults. The reasons why young adults Believe in God have never been empirically described. Therefore, documenting the specific reasons why young adults believe in God provided unique information about this population’s spirituality and allowed for an in-depth analysis of how one specific dimension of spirituality (i.e., Belief in God) is related to identity status.

**Research Question 1:** What are the reasons why young adults believe in God?

**Hypothesis 1:** The measure (Functions for Belief in God Inventory [further described in chapter 3]) selected to evaluate the reasons for Belief in God among young adults assessed for six different reasons: (1) Family Tradition; (2) Social Connection; (3) Personal Comfort; (4) Fear of Death; (5) Personal Experience; and (6) Provides Knowledge. To date, previous literature has not measured the reasons why individuals believe in God, but instead has tended to focus on whether people believe (e.g., Bishop, 1999; Morin, 2000). Therefore, this portion
of the study was largely exploratory and specific hypotheses regarding the reasons for Belief in God of young adults could not be made. However, general hypotheses were made based on previous literature looking more generally at spirituality and religiosity. For example, ethnic group differences were expected to emerge, where ethnic minority and White participants would vary in their reasons for Belief in God. Research has shown that religion and spirituality function largely as a social support for ethnic minorities, where their beliefs stem from family tradition and also a desire to be connected with others who share their same faith (e.g., Ferraro & Koch, 1994). Therefore, ethnic minority participants were expected to score higher on the Family Tradition and Social Connection reasons than White participants. Age was also expected to be significantly correlated with some of the different reasons for belief in God. Research on religion and spirituality in college students has documented clear changes in their religious/spiritual practice and beliefs due to certain experiences at college, such as distance from family members, certain institutional environments, interactions with nonreligious peers and faculty, participation in community service and service learning opportunities, and participation in diversity-related activities (e.g., Astin, 1993; Bischetti, 2000; Bryant et al., 2003; Rhoads, 1997; Serow & Dreyden, 1990). Therefore it was expected, for example, that age would be negatively correlated with the Family Tradition and Social Connection reasons for belief in God.
Aim 2: The second aim of this study was to describe the Identity Statuses of young adults. There is convincing evidence in the literature demonstrating that identity development is an important component of adolescence and young adulthood (Arnett, 2000; Erikson, 1968). Therefore, documenting the Identity Statuses of this population provided valuable information in understanding the identity formation of young adults as well as the relationship between Belief in God and Identity for young adults.

Research Question 2: What are the Identity Statuses of young adults?

Hypothesis 2: The measure selected (Extended Objective Measure-Ego Identity Status-II [further described in chapter 3]) to evaluate the Identity Statuses of young adults provided information regarding the extent to which participants were using Marcia’s ego identity statuses to negotiate their current identity: (1) Diffusion; (2) Foreclosure; (3) Moratorium; and (4) Achievement. Based on the current literature, significant age, gender, ethnic group, and religious background differences were expected to emerge in the Identity Statuses of the participants (e.g., Branch et al., 2000; Lewis, 2003; Schachter, 2005; Schwartz & Montgomery, 2000; Solomontos-Kountouri & Hurry, 2008). Although results from studies examining age differences in Identity Statuses have been somewhat inconsistent, two meta-analyses of studies examining age and Identity Statuses in college students reported overall developmental trends in Identity Statuses, such that as age increased, there was a decrease in the number of individuals in the Diffusion status and an increase in the number in the Achievement status (Meeus, Iedema, Helsen & Vollebergh, 1999; Waterman, 1985). Therefore, a negative
relationship between age and Identity Status scores for the Diffusion and Foreclosure statuses were hypothesized, such that as age increased, the levels of these two statuses were expected to decrease. Conversely, a positive relationship was expected between the Moratorium and Achievement statuses and age, such that as age increased, the scores for these statuses were also expected to increase.

Results from recent studies examining the role of gender in Identity Statuses have tended to yield inconsistent findings and those significant findings that do emerge tend to do so when the domain-specific identity statuses are examined. Therefore, significant gender differences were expected to emerge if domain-specific statuses had been examined, where males were expected to score higher than females on the Diffusion and Foreclosure statuses in the interpersonal domain of Identity, while females were expected to score higher on the Identity Achievement status. However, since the Global Identity Statuses were used in the current study (as discussed in Chapter 3), specific hypotheses about the relationship between gender and Identity could not be made.

Research on ethnicity and identity has found that individuals who come from a background that is different from the dominant cultural group must find a way to integrate the values and norms of their ethnic culture and those of the dominant cultural group (e.g., Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990), while also overcoming certain “barriers” (Yoder, 2000). As a result, it is argued that the identity process may require more time for ethnic minorities than it does for Anglo-Americans living in the United Statues (Lewis, 2003). Given this research,
it was expected that ethnic minority participants would exhibit higher scores for the Diffusion, Foreclosure, and Moratorium statuses and lower scores for the Achievement status as compared to their Anglo-American peers.

Finally, although religious background (e.g., Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, etc.) has been identified as a potential important factor in identity formation (e.g., Yoder, 2000), empirical research has not examined this specific aspect of religion. Therefore, specific hypotheses were not made. However, based on Yoder’s model, it was expected that differences in Identity Status would be detected across religious backgrounds.

**Aim 3: The third aim of this study was to evaluate the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses for young adults.** Although research has theoretically linked spirituality, and specifically Belief in God, to identity development (King, 2003), empirical research documenting the relationship is lacking. Therefore, providing an empirical description of the relationship between these variables was an important step in understanding the role of Belief in God in the Identity Statuses of young adults.

**Research Question 3: What is the relationship between Belief in God and each of the four Identity Statuses: Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achievement?**

**Hypothesis 3:** Given the theoretical link between spirituality and the process of identity development put forth by King (2003), as well as the strong empirical connections between various aspects of religiosity and identity statuses (Markstrom-Adams, 1999; Markstrom-Adams, Hofstra, & Dougher, 1994),
significant relationships were expected to emerge between the Identity Statuses and reasons Belief in God. However, given the lack of empirical research examining the role of Belief in God in Identity (e.g., Markstrom-Adams, 1999), the extent to which specific hypotheses could be made was limited (e.g., not all of the reasons for Belief in God can be connected to the Identity Statuses) and those hypotheses that could be made were based on theoretical links between the constructs (i.e., the definitions of the different statuses and reasons for belief). This portion of the study was largely exploratory. For example, negative relationships were expected to emerge between each of the reasons for Belief in God and the Diffusion and Moratorium Identity Statuses. Additionally, positive relationships were hypothesized between the Family Tradition and Social Connection motivations for Belief in God and the Foreclosure identity status. Finally, a positive relationship was expected to emerge between the Provides Knowledge reasons for Belief in God and the Achieved identity status.

**Aim 4:** The fourth aim of this study was to evaluate the contributing factors that impact the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses for young adults. Given Yoder’s (2000) model emphasizing the potential impact individual and contextual factors (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, type of school, educational opportunities, socioeconomic status) can have on identity development, it was important to understand which factors impact the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses for young adults.
Research Question 4: What factors will impact the relationship between Belief in God and the Identity Statuses (as identified in research question 3)?

Hypothesis 4: Given what is known from previous theories and empirical research (e.g., Lewis, 2003; Yoder, 2000), it was expected that age, gender, ethnicity, and religious affiliation would be some of the factors impacting the relationships between Belief in God and the Identity Statuses. In particular, they were expected to operate as moderator variables where they were hypothesized to affect the relationship between the reasons for Belief in God and the Identity Statuses. Because empirical research examining the relationship between Identity and religiosity/spirituality has failed to account for the impact of individual and contextual factors, specific hypotheses regarding the impact of the predicted moderating variables were not able to be made.

Aim 5: The fifth and final aim of this study was to develop a model to explain the relationship between Belief in God and Identity, while taking into account any contributing individual and contextual factors (as identified in Aim 4). Although previous literature has started to draw connections between spirituality/Belief in God and Identity processes, it has not necessarily done so in a comprehensive or explanatory manner (King, 2003; Markstrom-Adams, 1999). Additionally, previous literature has failed to factor contributing individual and contextual factors into research (Yoder, 2000). This study addressed whether and how these factors influence the relationship between Belief in God and Identity for young adults.
Research Question 5: Based on the results obtained in research questions 3 and 4, is there a comprehensive statistical model that can be used to explain the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Status?

Hypothesis 5: Although empirical research examining the connection between Belief in God and Identity is limited, King (2003) developed a theoretical model outlining the ways religion and spirituality can serve as an avenue for identity development. Within this model, she specifically outlined Belief in God as a powerful force in shaping Identity. Therefore, based on this theoretical model, it was expected that the overall Belief in God of participants (i.e., the combination of all of their reasons for believing) would significantly predict their current Identity, even when contributing individual and contextual factors are included in the model.
Chapter 3 (Methods)

This chapter describes the research participants (including sample size, recruitment strategies, and incentives), research measures, procedures, and the research design and analytic strategy of the present study.

Participants

A total of 309 participants were recruited from four private four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England (Boston College, Stonehill University, Suffolk University, and Quinnipiac University). However, due to missing data, this study is based on 306 of the original 309 participants (see section on Missing Data for a description of the procedure used to address missing data). Within the four different colleges (see Table 1 for the number of students recruited from each college) participants were recruited from academic classes (history, human development, psychology, sociology) as well as student clubs and organizations (debate club, fraternity, student athlete resource center, student government). The vast majority of the sample ranged in age from 19 – 21 years (this age span represents 81% [n = 247] of the sample), although there was a small number of participants who were younger (n = 34; 11%) and older than this group (n = 25; 8%). Consistent with the age range, the majority of participants reported being in their first, second, or third year in college (n = 257; 84%). A fairly equal number of males (n = 122; 40%) and females (n = 184; 60%) participated in the study.
The ethnic breakdown of the sample for the current study is fairly representative of private four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England (see Appendix A for an explanation of how the sample colleges are representative of liberal arts colleges in New England), where the large majority identified their ethnicity as White, not Hispanic (n = 255; 83%). The majority of participants identified their religion as Catholic (n=199; 65%) and almost 80% (n=239) of the participants reported attending religious services at least occasionally. In addition, 93% (n = 281) of the sample reported believing in God. Similar trends were found among participants’ parents with respect to their religious background, service attendance, and belief in God. Table 1 provides a detailed overview of the demographic characteristics of the sample.

Insert Table 1 about here

The current study collected data from approximately 300 participants based on recommendations for sample sizes when utilizing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). In the literature, sample sizes commonly run between 200 and 400 for models with 10 to 15 indicators (e.g., Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). In particular, Schumacker and Lomax (2004) surveyed the literature and found sample sizes of 250 to 500 to be used in many research studies with 10 to 15 indicators. As will be described below (in the section on Research Design and Analytic Strategy), the current study utilized 8 indicators (i.e., each of the 6 reasons for belief in God as well as age and gender). Since 8 indicators is just
below the range of indicators examined, this study surveyed just over 300 participants in order to safely ensure that the sample size was large enough to create a stable SEM.

The following were the only criteria necessary for participation in the study: (1) fluent in English; (2) attending a private four-year postsecondary education institution in New England; and (3) at least 18 years of age. They did not need to believe in God as the analyses in this study were designed to include people who do not believe.

Measures

Participants received a series of three self-administered questionnaires written in English, which measured potential contributing factors, Identity Statuses, and reasons for Belief in God. The specific measures are described below.

Demographic information. A demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B) was created specifically for this study in order to collect descriptive information about the sample as well as to allow for the evaluation of factors that may impact the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Status among young adults. The questionnaire is self-administered, multiple-choice, and contains 32 items targeting the following areas: (1) age; (2) gender; (3) race/ethnicity; (4) immigrant status; (5) language; (6) religiosity/spirituality (religious background, attendance at religious services, and belief in God); and (7) academic information (e.g., school attending, year in school, major selected, and residency on campus). The areas of immigrant status, language, and religiosity/spirituality were assessed for participants as well as their parents and grandparents.
For subsequent analyses, age was coded as a continuous variable and gender was dummy coded (male = 0 and female = 1). The remaining variables were not entered into the analyses (please see rationale in Results section), but were used to describe the sample. As a result, they did not need to be effect coded.

Identity status. The Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status II (EOM-EIS-II) was used to measure participant identity statuses in the current study (Bennion & Adams, 1986; see Appendix C). The EOM-EIS-II is based on Marcia’s (1966) identity status paradigm and is designed to measure the identity statuses, as outlined by Marcia (i.e., Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achieved), of adolescents and young adults in four ideological areas (politics, religion, occupation, and philosophical lifestyle) and four interpersonal content areas (friendships, dating, gender roles, and recreation/leisure). The ideal range of use is for respondents between 13 and 30 years of age, and it was developed with a normative population focus so that conclusions drawn from the use and classification strategies are based on normal groups (e.g., not delinquents, runaways, or adolescent psychopathological groups).

The EOM-EIS-II is self-administered and contains 64 items, 16 measuring each of the 4 identity statuses. Of the 16 items targeting each identity status, 2 assess each content area (i.e., politics, religion, occupation, philosophical lifestyle, politics, religion, occupation, and philosophical lifestyle). Sample items for the scale include “When it comes to religion I just haven’t found anything that appeals and I don’t really feel the need to look” (Religion/Diffusion), “I might have thought about a lot of different jobs, but there’s never really been any question since my parents said what they wanted”
(Occupation/Foreclosure), “There’s so many ways to divide responsibilities in marriage. I’m trying to decide what will work for me” (Gender Roles/Moratorium), and “There are many reasons for friendship, but I choose my close friends on the basis of certain values and similarities that I’ve personally decided on” (Friendship/Achieved).

The EOM-EIS-II generates continuous scores for each status, both in overall terms (i.e.,

Global Identity Status) and

within the Ideological and Interpersonal content-area clusters (i.e., Domain Identity Statuses). For example, respondents can receive either an overall Diffusion status score (which is generated from summing all of the 16 Diffusion status items) or an Ideological Diffusion status score (which is generated from summing the 8 Diffusion status items assessing Ideological content areas) and an Interpersonal Diffusion status score (which is generated from summing the 8 Diffusion status items assessing Interpersonal content areas). The current diagram is an example of the structure of the EOM-EIS-II using the Diffused identity status; this same structure holds true for each of the remaining identity statuses (Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achieved).

The measure uses a 6-point Likert-type response scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 6 (strongly disagree). Responses are reversed for scoring (e.g., a response of 6 is scored as 1). Higher scores in a given status are representative of respondents being more prominently located in that Identity Status (i.e., that is the status they tend to function
Scores are summed across either the 16 items of each status scale (to generate Global Identity Status scores; scores can range from 16-96 for each identity status scale) or the 8 items in the Ideological and Interpersonal content-areas of each status scale (to generate Domain Identity Status scores; scores can range from 8-48 for each content-area identity status scale). They can be used in two different ways: (1) each respondent receives a score for each Status and those scores are correlated with other variables; or (2) respondents are classified into a particular Identity Status based on their scores on each of the status scales. For the purposes of this study, participants’ Identity Status scores were summed and the value was used in correlational analyses. Individual participants were not assigned to Identity Statuses, but the sample as a group was in order to provide meaning to their mean scores on the Identity Statuses.

The following is a brief review of the process used to classify the sample. In general, cut-off scores have been established (by adding the mean and standard deviation for each subscale [which were determined from a sample of 2000 adolescent and young adults from high schools and colleges across the country]) to determine classification in a given status (Adams, 1998). Scores at or above the cut-off levels, indicate classification within that status. The cut-off scores for college students are as follows: Diffusion, 53; Foreclosure, 53; Moratorium, 63; and Achievement, 73. Scores above the cut-off point in two adjacent Identity Statuses, is indicative of a transition Status, where they are potentially demonstrating a combination of characteristics from each of the Statuses (Adams, 1998).
As suggested previously, the EOM-EIS-II can generate either Global or Domain Identity Status Scores. The decision regarding which approach to use should be based on the following: (1) the nature of the research hypotheses; (2) the type of construct that will be related to Identity; and (3) statistical evidence (Goosens, 2001; Waterman, 1985, 1993). Global Identity Statuses are reported to be the preferred procedure when studying the correlates of identity statues, whereas Domain-Specific Identity Statuses are preferred when testing hypotheses about differences between two or more existing populations in the frequency of Identity Statuses. Additionally, Global Statuses are preferred when investigating relations with other Global constructs and Domain-specific Statuses are favored when the other variables are more specific (e.g., occupational satisfaction or religious orientation). Finally, Global Statuses can be used when there is a high degree of convergence between the Global and Domain-Specific Statuses. On the other hand, Domain-Specific Statuses should be used if there is a low level of convergence between the Global and Domain Statuses. Given the nature of the research hypotheses for the current study (e.g., correlational), the type of construct being related to identity (i.e., spirituality, which is reported to have both interpersonal and ideological aspects to it [e.g., King, 2003]), and the statistical evidence yielded, it was determined that Global Identity Status scores should be used (see the Research Design and Analytic Strategy section of this chapter for a description of the analyses that were run and the results that were used in determining the use of the Global Identity Status scores).

In past research, internal consistency reliability estimates for scores on the EOM-EIS-II scales have ranged from .60 to .80 for White American samples (Bennion &
Adams, 1986) and from .49 to .74 for ethnic minority American samples (e.g., African American, Asian, and Hispanic; Schwartz, 2001). Most recently, in a study examining the internal consistency of the EOM-EIS-II among a White American sample and a Hispanic American sample, the following alpha values were reported: Diffusion, .72 and .65; Foreclosure, .86 and .84; Moratorium, .76 and .77; Achieved, .79 and .75 (Schwartz, Adamson, Ferrer-Wreder, Dillon, & Berman, 2006). Cronbach alpha values for the Identity Statuses for the current sample are: Diffused, .70; Foreclosed, .87; Moratorium, .75; and Achieved, .71.

Construct, concurrent, and predictive validity analyses have been conducted and demonstrate that both the Interpersonal and the Ideological items can adequately measure Identity Status during late adolescence (Archer & Waterman, 1988; Bennion & Adams, 1986; Carlson, 1986). For example, in terms of construct validity, convergent correlations between the corresponding Ideological and Interpersonal subscales ranged from .51 to .79 with a mean of .63. Divergent correlations of the Ideological subscales ranged from -.20 to .65 with a mean of .19, and for the Interpersonal subscales, -.15 to .55 with a mean of .23. Additionally, with respect to concurrent validity, comparisons of EOM-EIS-II status categorizations with Marcia interview status classifications showed 70% to 100% agreement over the status categories and overall status-to-status agreement was 84% (Carlson, 1986). Finally, in terms of predictive validity, comparison of romantic relationship styles and identity statuses revealed that Achievement-status individuals tended to approach romantic relationships in a more deliberate fashion and were more willing to share personal information with their partner, while Diffusion-status subjects
showed the opposite pattern (Archer & Waterman, 1988). In this same study, the Moratorium status was associated with poor quality relationships. Therefore, research has revealed adequate levels of construct, concurrent, and predictive validity for the EOM-EIS-II.

Belief in God. The Functions for Belief in God inventory (FBIG) was used to measure reasons for Belief in God (or a higher power) among the participants (see Appendix D for a copy of the scale and Appendix E for a complete description of the creation of the scale). The FBIG is a 35-item, self-report scale designed to assess college students’ reasons for Belief in God or a higher power (DeBono & DeSilva, unpublished). The inventory is made up of six subscales or reasons for Belief: Family Tradition, Social Connection, Provides Comfort, Fear of Death, Personal Experience, and Provides Knowledge. Of the 35 items, 6 assess for Family Tradition, 6 for Social Connection, 6 for Provides Comfort, 5 for Fear of Death, 6 for Personal Experience, and 6 for Provides Knowledge. Sample items for the scale include “I believe in the existence of God because it is tradition within my family to believe in God” (Family Tradition), “I believe in the existence of God because it is the socially appropriate thing to do” (Social Connection), “I believe in the existence of God because it provides me with a sense of comfort” (Provides Comfort), “I believe in the existence of God because believing brings with it the promise of an afterlife” (Fear of Death), “I believe in the existence of God because I have seen God intervene in the lives of others” (Personal Experience), and “I believe in the existence of God because God is the best explanation for the origins of the universe” (Provides Knowledge).
The FBIG generates continuous scores for each motivation. Respondents should receive six different scores (one for each of the reasons), a total score on the scale does not provide meaningful data. The measure uses a 9-point Likert-type response scale ranging from 1 (not at all true of me) to 9 (very true of me), where higher scores in a given question are indicative of respondents believing more strongly for that reason for Belief in God. As suggested, scores are summed across the items for each reason, so that scores range from 6-54 for each of the motivations except Fear of Death, which ranges from 5-45. Similar to the EOM-EIS-II, they can be used in two different ways: (1) each respondent receives a score for each reason and those scores are correlated with other variables; or (2) respondents are classified into a particular reason for Belief in God based on their scores on each of the scales. For the purposes of this study, participants’ scores for each motivation for belief in God were summed and that value was used in correlational analyses. Participants were not assigned to specific reasons for Belief; therefore the process by which respondents are assigned to motivations is not reviewed here.

Although this scale has not yet been published, internal reliability estimates for scores on the FBIG have been calculated for 3 different samples of college students. These are the samples that have been used in the development of this measure. Among these samples, Cronbach alpha values have ranged from 0.86 to 0.90 for the subscales. The following Cronbach alpha values have been obtained for the different reasons for Belief in God (ranges are listed when relevant—some motivations do not have ranges because when rounded to the nearest hundredth, the alpha was the same across datasets):

Who am I God?  61
Family Tradition, .96; Social Connection, .83 - .87; Provides Comfort, .93; Fear of Death, .89 - .90; Personal Experience, .93; and Provides Knowledge, .92 - .93. The samples used in these studies were not diverse with respect to ethnic background. As a result, internal reliability consistency estimates are not available for ethnic minority college students. Cronbach Alpha values for the subscales of the FBIG for this sample are: Family Tradition, .97; Social Connection, .90; Provides Comfort, .94; Fear of Death, .93; Personal Experience, .94; and Provides Knowledge, .93.

Evidence of construct validity for the scale was also obtained through a pilot study conducted by this researcher prior to utilizing the measure in the current study (see Appendix F for a comprehensive description of the pilot study that examined the construct validity of the FBIG). Construct validity was assessed by examining the FBIG in the context of the Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments developed by Piedmont (2004) to measure religious sentiments and spiritual transcendence. Overall, the results from this pilot study provide sufficient evidence of construct validity (both convergent and divergent) for the scale. With respect to convergent validity, the 6 different subscales of the FBIG were each related to well-known and well-measured constructs of religiosity and spirituality. They correlated with the ASPIRES scales of religiosity, connectedness, and spiritual transcendence. Each of these constructs address experiences of connection, belongingness, and the search for meaning and direction in life, which are the aspects of spirituality that the FBIG are intended to measure. Additionally, the study found evidence of divergent validity where the FBIG failed to be significantly related to scales on the ASPIRES that tapped into aspects of religiosity and
spirituality that are separate from Beliefs in God and connectedness (Spiritual Transcendence, Prayer Fulfillment, and Universality). These findings provide evidence for the fact that the FBIG is measuring certain aspects of spirituality, but not the broad construct of spirituality. Given the evidence of both convergence and divergence between the FBIG and the ASPIRES (on a sample of college students), the results from this pilot study provided evidence of construct validity for the FBIG.

Procedure

The study was conducted in English in a group format. It was introduced to potential participants in a group setting (either their class or club) in English. The study was introduced as an examination of spirituality and Identity in college students. The introduction included a brief explanation of the importance of examining these constructs in college students as well as a brief description of the administration process (see Appendix G for the script that was read to potential participants). At this time, potential participants were clearly informed that their participation in the study was completely voluntary and that their grade in their class and/or membership in their club would not be affected by their participation in the study. Students were given the opportunity to ask questions so they could make informed decisions about their participation in the study.

Following the introduction of the project, interested students were able to sign up for times to participate in the study (see Appendix H for a copy of the form that was used for participant sign up), and, in some cases, the study was administered at the end of class time. Time slots immediately before and after their classes/club meetings were offered in order to increase participation rates. The form requested that potential participants
include their email address when signing up so that reminder emails could be sent one day prior to their scheduled time in order to increase participation rates as well. This form was destroyed (via an office shredder) immediately following the scheduled time for the study. For example, the sign up form for administration of the study on Monday at 9am was destroyed on that Monday when participants completed the study. The names on the form were not paired with the research packets.

When those students who volunteered to participate in the study arrived on their scheduled day/time, they were handed a consent form (which was written in English) and the group was briefed both verbally (in English) and in written form about the purpose of the study, the possible risks and benefits, and the procedure (see Appendix I for a copy of the consent form that was handed to and read to participants prior to participating in the study). At this time, participants were informed that they could skip any items that they did not feel comfortable answering and that they could terminate participation in the study at any point (without their grade/membership being affected and without sacrificing the $5.00 Dunkin’ Donuts gift card that was offered to participants for their participation in the study). Students returned the signed consent form, which was kept separate from their packet of measures in order to ensure anonymity.

After consent forms were returned to the researcher, students were handed a packet of the self-report measures (demographic questionnaire, EOM-EIS-II, and FBIG), a scantron sheet where they would record their responses, and a number 2 pencil to use to fill out the scantron sheet. As indicated previously, each of the measures were administered in English. The packet that participants received had an ID number on the
front in order to track their responses during the data analysis process. The ID number was not able to be paired with the consent form (which contained the participant’s name). Participants independently completed the three self-report measures. This process took approximately 30-45 minutes and participants returned the packet of measures to the researcher when they were finished.

When packets were returned to the researcher, participants received the Dunkin’ Donut’s gift card and a debriefing form (see Appendix J for a copy of the debriefing form). At this time, participants were able to sign up to receive the results of the study when it is completed. The highest ethical standards (APA Ethics Code, 2002) were adhered to in protecting participants’ confidentiality through the data collection and analyses (e.g., ensuring that consent forms were kept separate from measure packets).

Research Design and Preliminary Analyses

The present study used a passive quantitative correlational research design, which aimed to assess how Belief in God relates to the Identity Statuses of young adults. More specifically, using SEM, the ultimate goal of the study was to develop a statistical model to explain the relationship between Belief in God and Identity, while taking into account contributing individual and contextual factors (i.e., age and gender), for young adults. The following is a description of the various analytic procedures that were used in this study.

Missing data. Of the 309 participants who participated in the current study, 29 of the cases had missing data. Twenty-two of these cases had only one missing response (i.e., one of the items on the EOM-EIS-II or the FBIG was not completed), four of the
cases had two missing responses, one case had 10 missing responses, one case had 34 missing responses, and one case had 60 missing responses.

The raw data for cases with fewer than two pieces of missing data were examined and it was determined that the majority of the missing data were missing at random (i.e., no patterns were detected in the missing data cases). Since unconditional mean imputation is well suited (in comparison to conditional mean imputation) for use with data when patterns (e.g., by age or gender) are not detected in participant responses, it was used to replace the missing data for these cases (Carter, 2006; Musil, Warner, Yobas, & Jones, 2002; Roth, 1994). With this approach, the mean for the entire sample (for the particular variable with missing responses) was used to replace missing values. This helped to preserve the sample size, which was necessary given the statistical procedures used in the current study (SEM; Roth, 1994).

List-wise deletion (i.e., the entire case was deleted; Roth 1994) was used to exclude the remaining three cases (which had 10 or more pieces of missing data). It was not employed to address all of the missing data because such a large number of cases had missing data (e.g., more than 10 cases; Carter, 2006; Musil, Warner, Yobas, & Jones, 2002; Roth, 1994). List-wise deletion is a method used to exclude any cases with missing values from statistical analysis (i.e., an entire case will be deleted if there are any missing values). Because list-wise deletion excludes data with any missing values, it reduces the sample which is being statistically analyzed and consequently can jeopardize the statistical power of the tests conducted. Given the importance of maintaining a large sample size to ensure the stability of the SEM (which will be described below), this
approach was only employed on cases that had 10 or more missing responses (Carter, 2006; Musil, Warner, Yobas, & Jones, 2002; Roth, 1994). Once the missing data were addressed, 306 participants comprised the sample of the current study.

Outliers. Outliers are data points that are numerically distant from the rest of the data (Stevens, 2002). They can have many deleterious effects on statistical analyses: (1) they generally serve to increase error variance and reduce the power of statistical tests; (2) if non-randomly distributed they can decrease normality, altering the odds of making both Type I and Type II errors; and (3) they can seriously bias or influence estimates that may be of substantive interest. Therefore, it was important to assess for the presence of outliers in the current data. Scatterplots and histograms allowed for the observation of any notable outliers in the data. These did not reveal any notable outliers. Additionally, since the data are normally distributed (see section entitled Preliminary analyses for assessment of normality), z scores were also examined to determine whether there were any potential outliers (Stevens, 2002). None of the z scores were above 3 in absolute value (an absolute value of 3 was used as the standard since in a normal distribution approximately 99% of the scores should fall within 3 standard deviations of the mean; Stevens, 2002), thereby providing additional evidence that there were no outliers in the data. Therefore, analyses were run with all of the remaining cases (after cases were removed for missing data).

Statistical evidence. As discussed previously (in the Measures section), prior to computing any statistics for this study, analyses were run to determine whether Global or Domain-specific (Ideological and Interpersonal) Identity Status scores for the EOM-EIS-
II should have been used with the current sample. In order to obtain statistical evidence indicating the appropriateness of using a Global scoring procedure, the following analyses were completed: (1) factor analysis; (2) reliability analysis; and (3) scale correlations. First, a principal axis factor analysis with an oblique rotation (direct oblimin) was run on the 16 items from each of the Identity Statuses (for a total of four factor analyses). An oblique rotation was selected because this approach derives factor loadings based on the assumption that the factors are correlated (Gorsuch, 1983). Within oblique solutions, direct oblimin is the standard rotation method (Gorsuch, 1983). A two-factor solution was requested corresponding to the number of domains (Ideological and Interpersonal) reportedly comprising each Identity Status (see Tables 2-5 for the factor loadings from the structure matrix for each status). When the four factor analyses were run, the items that should have loaded together (to create the domains) did not, suggesting the presence of just one factor for each status and providing evidence to support the hypothesis that the Global Identity Statuses should be used for the current study. Additionally, the factor correlation matrix for each of the factor analyses was examined. Factor correlations provide information regarding the extent to which the factors that are extracted in a factor analysis are correlated. When these factors are correlated, there is evidence to suggest that there is only one factor operating (as opposed to two or more). The factor correlation matrix (which reports the correlation value between the extracted values) for the factors that were extracted for each Identity Status indicated that the factors are correlated: For the Diffusion status the factor correlation is 0.27; for the Foreclosure status it is 0.54; for the Moratorium status the factor correlation is 0.37; and
for the Achievement status it is 0.34. This provides further evidence for the presence of just one factor, as opposed to two, for the four Identity Statuses.

In addition to the factor analyses, reliability analyses (i.e., internal consistency estimates) were run on the Global Identity Statuses to determine whether each status yielded a high enough reliability to support its use as a subscale. A Cronbach alpha level above .70 was considered support for the use of Global Identity Statuses (Schwartz, Adamson, Ferrer-Wreder, Dillon, & Berman, 2006). On the other hand, alpha levels below .70, would have suggested the potential appropriateness of Domain-Specific Statuses (refer to Tables 6-10 for the Cronbach alpha values and the item-total correlations from the analyses). The Cronbach alpha values for each of the Global Identity Statuses are above .70, which is an adequate level of internal consistency (and is comparable to values reported in previous studies utilizing this measure of identity development; Schwartz, Adamson, Ferrer-Wreder, Dillon, & Berman, 2006). Further, the vast majority of the item-total correlations are above 0.20, which suggests that the items are correlating well with their respective scales. For the items that have low correlations with their respective Global Identity-Status scales, correlation values are similarly low when the item is examined in the context of the Domain-Specific Status. For example, the item-total correlation for item 1 on the EOM-EIS, when examined in the context of the Global Diffusion status, is 0.16. When item 1 is examined in the context of the
Ideological Diffusion status (the domain to which this item belongs), its correlation is 0.12. These alpha values and item-total correlations provide evidence of internal consistency for the Global Identity Statuses and additional support for their use in the analyses (as opposed to the domain-specific statuses).

Finally, Pearson-product moment correlations were run on the statuses from the separate domains (e.g., correlations were run between Ideological Diffusion and Interpersonal Diffusion) to determine whether they (the domains) are highly correlated (see Table 11 for the correlation coefficients for the relationship between the domain statuses). Results from the table reveal that the statuses from the Ideological and Interpersonal domains were significantly correlated at the 0.001 level for each of the Identity Statuses. This provides evidence that the domains are not distinct content areas, and further confirmation that the Domain-Specific Statuses do not need to be examined separately. However, if non-significant correlations had emerged, this would have indicated that they are distinct content-areas that would have needed to be examined separately.

Overall, the results from each of the above analyses provide statistical evidence to
confirm the appropriateness of using Global Identity Status scores. These findings are consistent with literature (Goosens, 2001; Waterman, 1985, 1993) indicating that Global Identity Statuses should be used when conducting correlational research. Therefore, Global Identity scores were used for the study and subsequent analyses were run with 4 independent/criterion variables (i.e., Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achieved).

Preliminary analyses. Prior to running a hierarchical regression (this statistical procedure, in the context of the present study, will be described below) it was necessary to ensure that the assumptions of linearity, normality, reliability of measurement, and homoscedasticity were met for the current data. First, multiple regressions can only accurately estimate the relationship between criterion and predictor variables if the relationships are linear in nature. If the relationship between the criterion and predictor variables is not linear, the results of the regression analysis will under-estimate the true relationship. Additionally, multiple regressions assume that variables have normal distributions. Non-normally distributed variables (highly skewed or kurtotic variables, or variables with substantial outliers) can distort relationships and significance tests. Histograms were run for the Identity Status and Belief in God variables in order to examine whether the data is normally distributed. Results from the histograms indicated that all of the variables, except the subscale measuring the Social motivation for Belief in God, adequately approximate the normal distribution. The Social motivation was extremely skewed to the right. In order to adjust the skewness, a power transformation was conducted (Mosteller & Tukey, 1977). Because of the direction of the skewness, a square root transformation was applied and then a cube root transformation. Root
transformations are used to “pull in” outliers and normalize the right skew (Fox, 1997). The cube-root transformation provided a better fit (when trying to fit the data to the normal curve) in comparison to the square root transformation, and was subsequently employed. Therefore, in order to meet the assumption of normality, all subsequent statistical analyses have been computed utilizing the cube root of the Social variable.

Scatterplots were used to examine the linearity and homoscedasticity of the data. To examine the linearity, scatterplots of the raw data plotting the outcome variables against the predictor variables were used. Results from the scatterplots indicated that there is a weak linear relationship between each of the dependent and independent variables. Although weak relationships are not ideal, it is important to recognize that the data are in fact linear, which is an assumption of the subsequent statistical analyses. Additionally, the strength of the relationships is not uncommon in social science research where the variables being measured can be somewhat subjective and challenging to define/measure (Wampold & Freund, 1987). To assess for homoscedasticity within the data, scatterplots of the standardized dependent variables against the standardized residuals were used (Fox, 1997). Results from these standardized scatterplots showed random, uniform patterns across the data. This suggests that the variances of the outcome variables are reasonably similar across the ranges of the predictor variables. Therefore, the scatterplots confirmed that the assumptions of both linearity and homoscedasticity are met for the current data.

When measures of variables have low levels of reliability, the statistical validity of a study can be jeopardized. Therefore, it was important to calculate the reliability of
both the EOM-EIS-II and the FBIG. Reliability analyses were conducted to examine the internal consistency of each of the scales being used in the current study. Specifically, Cronbach alphas were calculated for the four Identity Statuses measured in the EOM-EIS-II (Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achievement) and the six reasons for Belief in God measured in the FBIG (Family Tradition, Social Connection, Provides Comfort, Fear of Death, Personal Experience, and Provides Knowledge). Cronbach alpha was selected for the reliability analysis because this is the measure of internal consistency appropriate for interval or ratio data (Miller, 1995). In addition, the item-total correlations were examined for each of the subscales. These correlations provided information regarding the extent to which each item in a scale is correlated with the scale (Miller, 1995). Results from these analyses for the four Identity Statuses from the EOM-EIS-II are reported in the section entitled Statistical Evidence (and can be found in Tables 6-10). For the Cronbach alpha values and item-total correlations for each of the six subscales that comprise the Functions for Belief in God Inventory refer to Tables 12-13. Cronbach alpha values for each of these scales were above .90. Further, all of the item-total correlations were well above 0.40, which indicates that the items are adequately correlating with their respective scales (Miller, 1995). The reliability data calculated for each of the scales being used in the current study indicate that the assumption of reliability of measurement is met for the current data.
Finally, in order to successfully and appropriately run a multiple regression, the variance of errors needs to be the same across all levels of the predictor variables (i.e., homoscedasticity). Homoscedasticity was checked for by examining a plot of the predicted values against the studentized residuals (with the predicted values along the X axis and the studentized residuals along the Y axis) for random uniform patterns across the data (Fox, 1997). Studentized residuals were used because they are more sensitive to an unusual observation (i.e., a potential outlier) in the data than standardized residuals (Mosteller & Tukey, 1977). Data points falling outside of +2 or -2 were considered potential outliers. In order to further assess their impact on the regression models, the analyses were run with each of the cases removed. The regression solutions did not significantly change when the cases were removed. Therefore, all of the cases were included in the regression analyses.

As indicated, these analyses needed to be run to ensure that the assumptions of linearity, normality, reliability of measurement, and homoscedasticity were met for the current data in order to be able to run the planned hierarchical regressions with confidence (that Type I and II errors can be avoided). Results from the analyses suggest that each of the assumptions have been met for the current study.

In addition to ensuring that the above assumptions were met, it was important to check for multicollinearity. Multicollinearity refers to the degree to which the predictor variables are correlated and it can jeopardize the statistical validity of a regression model (Swerdick & Cohen, 1998; Wampold & Freund, 1987). Two general problems can arise if the predictor variables are highly correlated: (1) none of predictor variables will
demonstrate a substantial unique contribution to the prediction of the criterion variables and (2) the estimates of population partial regression coefficients will be highly unstable (resulting in decreased probabilities of obtaining statistically significant findings). In a regression, it is ideal if the predictor variables are significantly correlated with the criterion variable, but not each other. Therefore, it was important to run Pearson-correlation analyses (i.e., a Pearson-product moment correlation matrix) prior to the hierarchical regressions to reveal: (1) which of the predictor variables were highly correlated and (2) if multicollinearity was going to be an issue among the variables. Pearson-product moment correlations were used because the variables for correlation are both interval variables and are approximated well by the normal distribution (Fox, 1997). Table 14 contains the specific correlation values for each of the relationships examined. Results from the correlation matrix indicate that each of the predictor variables is correlated with one another, revealing a high level of multicollinearity among the data. Although multicollinearity is problematic when running regression analyses, the SEM being run in the current study will address this issue by measuring the latent construct of Belief in God. Therefore, although multicollinearity within data can decrease the probability of obtaining statistically significant findings or of parceling out the unique contribution of each predictor variable, the SEM will help ameliorate these problems.

Insert Table 14 about here
**Analytic Strategies**

**Aims 1 and 2: To describe the reasons for Belief in God and the Identity Statuses of young adults.** Means and standard deviations were calculated for each of the reasons for Belief in God (Family Tradition, Social Connection, Provides Comfort, Fear of Death, Personal Experience, and Provides Knowledge) and the Identity Statuses (Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achievement). In order to provide meaning to the means and standard deviations of the reasons for Belief in God, the raw scores were converted to standardized scores (i.e., t-scores). Because each of the Identity Statuses operates on the same scale, raw scores were an appropriate measure to use for interpreting the scale (Adams, 1998). Overall, the means and standard deviations provided important descriptive information about the sample’s Belief in God and Identity Statuses.

After basic descriptive information was calculated, they were examined in the context of gender and age. As recommended in previous research, differences in Belief in God and Identity Status were examined by gender (e.g., Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002). Between-group t-tests were run to determine if there were significant gender differences in participants’ scores on each of the reasons for Belief in God and Identity Statuses. In addition and consistent with previous research, Belief in God and Identity were considered in the context of age (e.g., Lewis, 2003). Pearson-product moment correlations were run on the Identity Statuses and age as well as on the reasons for Belief in God and age. Differences were also originally supposed to be examined by race and religious affiliation, but due to a lack of diversity in these areas among the participants, group comparisons had to be limited to gender (see Participants section for a
comprehensive description of the sample). Results from these analyses provided descriptive information about the reasons for Belief in God and Identity Statuses about young adults as well as information to help in the determination of whether gender and age should have been considered potential moderating variables (i.e., entered into the hierarchical regressions).

Aim 3: To evaluate the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses for young adults. In order to understand the relationship between Belief in God and identity, a variety of statistical analyses were run. First, Pearson-product moment correlations were run on the Identity Statuses and reasons for Belief in God. These analyses provided initial statistical information regarding the relationships between the reasons for Belief in God and Identity Statuses.

Hierarchical regression analyses were also run to examine how reasons for Belief in God relate to Identity Statuses. When running hierarchical regressions, the researcher decides not only how many predictors to enter but also the order in which they are entered (Wampold & Freund, 1987). The order of entry is typically based on theoretical considerations and/or previous research. It can also be determined by the research relevance of the variables. In hierarchical regression analyses, predictor variables are entered into the equation one at a time/one group at a time to determine how each individual variable or group of variables contributes to explaining the variance in the criterion variable.

Hierarchical regressions are the most preferred statistical method for examining moderator effects (Frazier, Tix, & Barron, 2004). A moderator is a variable that alters the
direction or strength of the relation between a predictor and an outcome variable (Frazier et al., 2004). Thus, a moderator effect is an interaction whereby the effect of one variable depends on the level of another. Therefore, hierarchical regressions were well suited for the current study given previous theory (Yoder, 2000) and research (e.g., Lewis, 2003) that suggest certain individual and contextual factors play an important and significant role in the Identity of young adults. Using hierarchical regression analyses allowed for an examination of the extent to which individual and contextual factors such as gender and age influence the relationships between the different reasons for Belief in God and Identity Statuses. The impact of race and religious background on the relationships between the reasons for Belief and God and Identity Statuses were also originally supposed to be examined, but (as indicated previously) due to a lack of diversity in these areas among the participants, the examination of potential moderating variables had to be limited to gender and age (see Participants section for a comprehensive description of the sample).

Separate hierarchical regression models were run for each of the Identity Statuses (Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achievement). In the models, the Identity Status was the outcome variable, the demographic variables (age and gender) were the covariates, and the reasons for Belief in God were the predictor variables. Gender and age were entered into the first step of the hierarchical regression (together) and then the reasons for Belief in God were entered into the second step (together). By entering the demographic variables in the first step, it was possible to examine the relationship between the reasons for Belief in God and Identity after having accounted for the effects
of age and gender. The demographic variables and the reasons for Belief in God were entered into their respective steps of the regression model together because there is no theory or research to suggest that they (each of the demographic variables and each of the reasons for Belief in God) be entered at different steps.

Because the focus of this study was to empirically examine the theoretical relationship between Belief in God and Identity (and not to try to understand all of the variables that best predict Identity Statuses), the statistics of primary interest in the regression models were the beta ($\beta$) coefficients for the predictor variables (Wampold & Freund, 1987). When there are two or more predictor variables in a regression model, as in a hierarchical regression, the values of the different predictor variables usually do not correspond with one another. Therefore, comparisons cannot be made across the predictor variables. Standardizing the regression coefficient adjusts all of the values of the predictor variables so that they are on the same scale. Thus, the individual effects that each predictor variable has on the outcome variable can be compared and interpreted. The standardized regression coefficients are the $\beta$ weights assigned to each predictor variable and are considered units of standard deviation change. These regression coefficients were used in the current study to allow for comparisons (to determine which reasons for Belief in God have the largest impact on the slope of the regression line) across the different reasons for Belief in God. This was necessary because the Fear reason for Belief in God is measured on a slightly different scale than the other reasons (it has only 5 items, as opposed to 6).
Finally, although the $\Delta R^2$ statistic was not a primary focus for the purpose of this study, it was important to consider given the multicollinearity among the predictor variables. As indicated previously, multicollinearity can limit the extent to which the effects of individual variables are detectable. Therefore, the $\Delta R^2$ provided important information regarding the combined effect of all of the reasons for Belief in God. Ultimately, both the $\beta$ coefficients and the $\Delta R^2$ were examined and reported—with the $\beta$ functioning as the primary analysis and the $\Delta R^2$ as a secondary analysis. Results from these tests helped to describe the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses and also to determine which individual and contextual variables were included in the SEM (described in following section).

**Aim 4: To evaluate the contributing factors that impact the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses for young adults.** Moderated multiple regressions (MMR) were run to examine the moderating effects of age and gender on the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses. A MMR is simply a multiple regression that contains interaction terms (predictor variable * potential moderator variable) as well as main effects (predictor variables independently and potential moderator variables independently). In order to run the MMR, the main effects (Belief in God variables and demographic variables) were entered into the first two steps of the regression model. Specifically, the demographic variables (i.e., the potential moderating variables) were entered into the first step of the model and all of the reasons for Belief in God were entered into the second step. The third step of the regression contained all of the multiplicative terms reflecting the interactions between each of the predictor variables.
(reasons for Belief in God) and the moderating variables (age and gender). As with the
previous regression models, the reasons for Belief in God and demographic variables
were entered into their respective steps of the regression model together because there is
no theory or research to suggest that they (each of the demographic variables and each of
the reasons for Belief in God) be entered at different steps. As with the hierarchical
regressions, the statistics of primary interest in the regression models were the beta
coefficients for the multiplicative terms, as these provided information regarding whether
gender and age were functioning as moderator variables.

Aim 5: To develop a model to explain the relationship between Belief in God and
Identity, while taking into account any contributing individual and contextual factors.
Structural equation modeling (SEM; multivariate analysis with latent variables) is a
statistical methodology that provides researchers with a comprehensive means for
assessing and modifying theoretical models (Byrne, 2006; Fassinger, 1987; Hox &
Bechger, 1998; MacCallum & Austin, 2000). In particular, it allows for the analysis of
causal patterns among unobserved variables represented by multiple measures. Variables
in an SEM may include both observed/measured variables and latent variables. Latent
variables are hypothetical constructs that cannot be directly measured. In SEM each
latent variable is typically represented by multiple observed/measured variables that serve
as indicators of the construct. Therefore, an SEM is a hypothesized pattern of linear
relationships among a set of observed/measured variables and latent variables.

SEM was a necessary statistical procedure for the current study because it allowed
for the examination of both observed/measured and latent variables. If the study had only
utilized hierarchical regression analyses, the extent to which the relationship between Belief in God and Identity could have been delineated, but it would have been quite limited. In particular, when running the regression analyses, it would have only been possible to examine the relationship between the separate motivations for Belief in God and one of the Identity Statuses. In reality, however, Belief in God is actually composed of all of the various reasons why people Believe (as opposed to one isolated reason) and Identity is not necessarily easily or clearly categorized into one status. Current research indicates that people often fall into multiple Identity Statuses at any given time (Goosens, 2001; Jones, Akers, & White, 1994). Moreover, relevant theoretical literature (King, 2003) has described spirituality and specifically Belief in God as one important tool that adolescents and young adults use when forming their Identity (the theory is clearly directional suggesting that Belief in God shapes Identity). Therefore, while running basic hierarchical regressions illuminated the relationship between the individual reasons for Belief in God and the separate Identity Statuses, it did not provide a comprehensive understanding of the role that Belief in God plays in the Identity of college students. Additionally, because of multicollinearity among the motivations for Belief in God, some of the individual relationships between various motivations and the identity statuses were not evident in the regressions (i.e., some motivations did emerge as significant when entered in the hierarchical regression with the group of all of the motivations for belief; but when entered individually they were significant predictors). Although two SEMs were originally supposed to be run (with and without accounting for the role of contextual factors in the relationship), results from the MMR indicated that it was
unnecessary to develop the second SEM (accounting for the impact of contextual factors). Therefore, only one SEM, examining the relationship between Belief in God and Identity without incorporation of the individual and contextual factors, was originally developed.

For the purposes of this study, the observed/measured variables were each of the questionnaire items that make up the subscales on the FBIG and the EOM-EIS-II. The latent variables were the subscales of each, as well as the broad construct the scale addresses (Belief in God and Identity). In particular, for the FBIG there were 7 latent variables: (1) Belief in God (which is representative of the totality of all of the reasons someone believes in God); (2) Family Tradition; (3) Social Connection; (4) Provides Comfort; (5) Fear of Death; (6) Personal Experience; and (7) Provides Knowledge. For the EOM-EIS-II there were 5 latent variables: (1) Identity (which is representative of the combination of all of the Identity Statuses for someone); (2) Diffused; (3) Foreclosed; (4) Moratorium; and (5) Achieved. The diagram in Appendix K depicts each of the observed/measured variables as well as the latent variables that were examined in the current study, where squares represent observed/measured variables and circles represent latent variables.

In a full SEM model, the researcher can hypothesize the impact of one latent variable on another in the modeling of causal direction (Byrne, 2006; Fassinger, 1987; Hox & Bechger, 1998; MacCallum & Austin, 2000). This model is termed full because it comprises both a measurement model (which depicts the links between the latent variables and their observed/measured variables [e.g., a confirmatory factor analysis])
and a structural model (which depicts the links among the latent variables). The current study utilized a full SEM model in order to delineate the relationship between Belief in God and Identity. Specifically, there were two measurement models which examined/explained how the observed/measured variables related to the latent variables. In other words, factor analyses were run to confirm that the measured/observed variables actually measured the latent variable(s) they were expected to measure. Higher-order (or second-order) analyses in SEM refer to analyses that involve the use of latent variables that are created from other latent variables (as opposed to observed variables). For example, with the FBIG, the “Belief in God” variable is considered a higher-order latent variable, while the individual reasons for Belief in God are the latent variables that comprise the higher-order Belief in God. Therefore, the confirmatory factor analyses run for the FBIG and EOM-EIS are considered higher-order.

A higher-order confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was run on the 35 items of the FBIG to determine the extent to which they generate the 6 motivation subscales (which are latent variables in the model) and ultimately the Belief in God variable. Another higher-order CFA was run on the 64 items of the EOM-EIS-II to determine the extent to which they generate the 4 status subscales (which are latent variables in the model) and ultimately the Identity variable. The results of this CFA did not indicate a good fit. In response, the fit of the individual statuses was examined via separate CFAs and they were a better fit with the data then the originally hypothesized Identity higher-order latent variable.
After running the measurement models, the structural models needed to be run. Initially, (as indicated early in this section) one structural model was intended—examining the relationship between Belief in God and Identity. However, due to the results from the EOM-EIS measurement model, four separate structural models were run in order to estimate the relationship between the latent variables of interest (Belief in God and Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achievement). The structural models specifically consisted of running separate regressions on Belief in God and each Identity Status (Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achievement), where Belief in God was the predictor variable and the Identity Statuses the criterion variable.

When utilizing SEM to estimate relationships between variables, it is first important to specify the model (Byrne, 2006; Fassinger, 1987; Hox & Bechger, 1998; MacCallum & Austin, 2000). Specification entails using all available relevant theory, research, and information to construct the theoretical model. In SEM this results in specifying the relationships between the relevant variables. As indicated in the Aims and Hypothesis section of Chapter 2, the model used in the current study was based on relevant theory articulating a relationship between Belief in God and Identity, where Belief is believed to facilitate the Identity development process (King, 2003). Therefore, the models tested in the current study examined the extent to which Belief in God impacts Identity development in young adults. Although, current research and theory also highlight the need to account for individual and contextual factors when understanding Identity in college students (e.g., Yoder, 2000), the originally proposed second SEM (which would have examined the extent to which Belief in God impacts Identity, while
allowing for the impact of certain individual and contextual factors) was not run due to a lack of significant findings in the MMRs. The specified models can be seen in Appendices M, O, Q, and S.

After the model was specified, the parameters (or relations among variables) of the model were identified and estimated (Byrne, 2006; Fassinger, 1987; Hox & Bechger, 1998; MacCallum & Austin, 2000). The parameters in a full SEM are represented as a series of regression equations (for both the measurement and the structural). The measurement equations for each indicator contain the hypothesized latent variable and corresponding factor loading as well as an error term. The structural equation contains the weight associated with the relationship between the latent variables of interest and the error term. In the current study, parameters were estimated for the following: (1) the relationship between each of the observed/measured variables and their respective latent variables; (2) the relationship between each of the latent Belief in God variables and their Belief in God higher-order latent variable (e.g., the relationship between the Family Tradition motivation and Belief in God); and (3) the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses. As indicated, the specified models can be seen in Appendices M, O, Q, S (assume that with each arrow that is depicted, a parameter was estimated). The parameter estimates for the relationships between each of the latent Belief in God variables and their Belief in God higher-order latent variable as well as the relationships between Belief in God and each Identity Status are reported in Tables 26.

Once the model was specified and the parameters estimated, the structure of the hypothesized model was tested using the robust method of estimation (Byrne, 2006;
This method is appropriate for use with samples that are not normally distributed. Therefore, it was selected after a review of the kurtosis statistics (i.e., Mardia’s Normalized Estimate) provided evidence that the data were not normally distributed. The overall fit of the hypothesized model to the data was assessed through fit statistics. Several different fit indices exist and it is recommended that a variety be considered because they reflect different aspects of model fit (Crowley & Fan 1997). The Chi-Square value is the traditional measure for evaluating overall model fit and “assesses the magnitude of discrepancy between the sample and fitted covariances matrices” (Hu & Bentler, 1999; p. 2). A good model fit provides an insignificant result at a 0.05 threshold (Barrett, 2007). A major limitation of the Chi-Square statistic, is that this test assumes multivariate normality, and severe deviations from normality may result in model rejections even when the model is properly specified (McIntosh, 2006). Satorra and Bentler (1994) developed a statistic that incorporates a scaling correction for the Chi-Square statistic when distributional assumptions are violated; its computation takes into account the model, the estimation method, and the sample kurtosis values. Therefore, the Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square was the specific Chi-Square value examined in this study. In general, the Chi-Square model is commonly reported in conjunction with other fit indices because findings of well fitting hypothesized models have proven to be unrealistic in most SEM empirical research (Byrne, 2006; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) are two of the most commonly used fit statistics (in conjunction with the Chi-
Square). The CFI (Bentler, 1990) assumes that all latent variables are uncorrelated (null/independence model) and compares the sample covariance matrix with this null model. This statistic is highly valued because it takes into account sample size (Byrne, 1998). Values for this statistic range between 0.0 and 1.0, with values closer to 1.0 indicating good fit. A cut-off criterion of $\text{CFI} \geq 0.90$ was initially used, however, recent studies have shown that a value greater than 0.90 is needed in order to ensure that mis-specified models are not accepted (Hu & Bentler, 1999). From this, a value of $\text{CFI} \geq 0.95$ is presently recognized as indicative of good fit.

Finally, the RMSEA indicates how well the model, with unknown but optimally chosen parameter estimates, would fit the population’s covariance matrix (Byrne, 1998). This statistic is valuable because of its sensitivity to the number of estimated parameters in the model (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000). In other words, the RMSEA favors parsimony in that it will choose the model with the lesser number of parameters. Recommendations for RMSEA cut-off points indicate that values between 0.08 and 0.10 provide a mediocre fit and below 0.08 provide a good fit (MacCallum, Browne, & Sugawara, 1996). When the robust method of estimation is selected in SEM, robust versions of the CFI and RMSEA are also computed. Each of these fit indices was considered when running the SEM analyses. Therefore, when examining the fit of the hypothesized SEMs, the Chi-Square, CFI, and RMSEA were examined together to provide the most comprehensive (and realistic) assessment of the goodness of fit of the hypothesized models.
Since the initial fit of the models was not adequate (according to the Chi-Square statistic, CFI, and RMSEA), the model was modified by deleting parameters that were not significant and adding parameters that improved the fit (Byrne, 2006; Fassinger, 1987; Hox & Bechger, 1998; MacCallum & Austin, 2000). For example, it was necessary to allow for the estimation of parameters between some of the observed variables which make up the first-order latent variables (e.g., questions 1 and 3 on the FBIG may be highly correlated). In order to determine how to modify the model, the modification indexes were examined. Modification indexes were computed for each fixed parameter in the model (i.e., those parameters set at zero, implying the absence of that relationship/parameter in the model) and they indicated the minimum improvement that could be obtained in the Chi-Square value if that parameter were freed for estimation. This process is the equivalent of adding paths/relationships to the model. It was conducted in a sequence of modeling modifications where at each step a parameter was freed that produced the largest improvement in fit. This process continued until an adequate fit (or the optimal fit for this data) was reached (as determined by the previously described fit indices).

Finally, after examining the fit-statistics, the structural path estimates were examined in each of the hypothesized models. Of specific focus, were the estimates for the structural paths between the Belief in God higher-order latent variable and each of the Identity Statuses (Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achievement).
Chapter 4 (Results)

This chapter describes the results of the statistical analyses (as described in Chapter 3) of the present study. As noted in the Participant section of Chapter 3, due to limited ethnic and religious diversity among the participants, these variables were not included in the statistical analyses. However, gender and age were included in all analyses in an effort to determine if they should be included in the final SEM.

*Aims 1: To describe the reasons for Belief in God of young adults*

Means and standard deviations were calculated for each of the reasons for Belief in God (Family Tradition, Social Connection, Provides Comfort, Fear of Death, Personal Experience, and Provides Knowledge). In order to provide meaning to the means and standard deviations of the reasons for Belief in God, the raw scores were converted to standardized scores (i.e., t-scores). Table 15 contains these values and Figure 1 contains a graph of the scores. As indicated in the Measures section, higher scores in a given reason for Belief in God are indicative of respondents believing more strongly for that reason for believing in God. In general, standardized scores for each of the reasons for Belief in God were fairly close to 50 (ranging from 48.25 to 50.98). These scores indicate that participants tend to hold moderate Beliefs in God for each of the six reasons. There is not one reason for Belief in God that tends to dominate the sample.

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In order to examine potential statistically significant gender differences in
participants’ scores on each of the reasons for Belief in God, between-group t-tests were run. Specific hypotheses were not made regarding the role of gender in the different reasons for Belief in God, but gender was expected to emerge as a moderating variable in this study and was therefore examined in the reasons for Belief in God. Results from these t-tests revealed that male and female participants differ significantly on the Provides Comfort motivation for Belief in God ($t(304) = -2.94, p < .05$). This means that female participants scored significantly higher on the Provides Comfort reason than their male peers. Practically this implies that female participants have a stronger Belief in God (than their male peers) because that belief gives their life a sense of direction/meaning, influences them to contribute to the world in a positive way, and provides them with a sense of “personal comfort” at troublesome times. Significant gender differences did not emerge among any of the other reasons for Belief in God. This indicates that males and females have about equal Belief in God for the Family Tradition ($t(304) = -1.63, p = .10$), Social Connection ($t(304) = 1.32, p = .19$), Fear of Death ($t(304) = -1.38, p = .17$), Personal Experience ($t(304) = -0.76, p = .45$), and Provides Knowledge ($t(304) = .23, p = .98$) reasons.

Finally, Pearson-product moment correlations were run to help further describe the reasons for Belief in God of young adults. Contrary to the hypotheses, none of the reasons for Belief in God were significantly related to age: Family Tradition, $r = .00$; Social Connection, $r = .45$; Fear of Death, $r = .11$; Personal Experience, $r = .05$; and Provides Knowledge, $r = .54$.

*Aim 2: To describe the Identity Statuses of young adults*
Means and standard deviations were also calculated for each of the Identity Statuses (Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achievement). Because each of the Statuses operates on the same scale, raw scores are an appropriate measure to use for interpreting the scale (Adams, 1998). Table 16 displays these values and Figure 2 contains a graph of the scores. The possible range of scores for each of the Identity Statuses is 16-96. Higher scores in an Identity Status are representative of respondents being more prominently located in that Identity Status (i.e., that is the status they tend to function from on a daily basis) and particular cut-off scores have been established for classification in a particular Identity Status (values are presented in Chapter 3 in the Measures section). Overall, scores indicate that the current sample has mean scores in the Diffusion and Foreclosure identity statuses that are above their respective cut-off points. This suggests that as a group, this sample can be classified with a transition status where they are classified as Diffusion-Foreclosure (Adams, 1998). The translation of this status indicates that, in general/on average, the participants in this study have not yet engaged in an active process of exploration and are either not ready to make any commitments to values, roles, and goals for their future or have conformed to the expectations or experiences of others regarding these issues.

In order to examine potential statistically significant gender differences in participants’ scores on each of the Identity Statuses between-group t-tests were run. As
indicated, specific hypotheses were not made because previous research found significant
gender differences in Identity Statuses when domain specific, and not global statuses, are
used. Therefore, these tests were exploratory and it was unclear whether any significant
relationships would emerge. Findings from the t-tests indicated significant differences in
scores on the Diffusion Identity Status ($t (304) = -3.58, p < .05$) and Foreclosure Identity
Status ($t (304) = -2.56, p < .05$) for male and female participants. These findings mean
that female participants scored higher on these Identity Statuses than male participants,
suggesting that they are more likely than males to either avoid exploring and committing
in areas such as their roles, values, or goals for the future or to conform to the
expectations or experiences of others regarding their future without engaging in a process
of exploration. Significant differences did not emerge for the Moratorium ($t (304) = -.71,
p = .48$) and Achieved Identity Statuses ($t (304) = -.81, p = .42$). This indicates that males
and females are operating from these Statuses about equally. These findings are not
consistent with previous research which has failed to find significant gender differences
in the global Identity Statuses.

Pearson-product moment correlations were also run on the Identity Statuses and
age to further describe the Identity of young adults. Overall, findings are not consistent
with the research hypotheses made at the beginning of this study. Age is significantly
positively correlated with the Foreclosure ($r = .11$) identity status. This suggests that as
the age of participants increases, so does their tendency to function from the Foreclosure
identity status. On a more practical level, these findings indicate that as participants’ ages
increase, so does their tendency to conform to the expectations or experiences of others
regarding their future without engaging in a process of exploration. Significant relationships did not emerge with the other statuses: Diffusion; \( r = .07 \); Moratorium; \( r = .11 \); and Achievement; \( r = -.05 \).

Overall, results from the gender and age analyses in conjunction with previous theory and research (Bilsker, Schiedel, & Marcia, 1988; Lewis, 2003; Schwartz & Montgomery, 2002; Yoder, 2000), suggest that the variables should be entered into the hierarchical regression analyses.

**Aim 3: To evaluate the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses for young adults**

Pearson-product moment correlations were run on the Identity Statuses and reasons for Belief in God to provide initial statistical information regarding the relationships between these constructs. Results from these correlations are presented in Table 17. The Diffusion identity status is significantly positively correlated with Family Tradition \( (r = .23) \), Provides Comfort \( (r = .36) \), Fear of Death \( (r = .17) \), Personal Experience \( (r = .34) \), and Provides Knowledge \( (r = .24) \) suggesting that participants who believe in God more strongly for these reasons also have a tendency to avoid exploring and committing to things such as their roles, values, or goals for the future. These findings are inconsistent with the expected research hypothesis. The assumption was that people scoring high in the Diffused Identity Status would not have committed to any of the reasons for Belief in God.

The Foreclosure identity status is significantly negatively correlated with all of the reasons for Belief in God: Family Tradition \( (r = -.32) \), Social Connection \( (r = -.26) \),
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Provides Comfort \( (r = -.22) \), Fear of Death \( (r = -.28) \), Personal Experience \( (r = -.20) \), and Provides Knowledge \( (r = -.26) \). This implies that with stronger Belief in God for these reasons comes a reduced tendency to conform to the expectations or experiences of others without engaging in a process of exploration, regarding their future roles, values, or goals. The direction of the relationships between the Family Tradition and Social Connection reasons for Belief in God and the Foreclosure identity status are not consistent with the expected research hypothesis.

With respect to the Moratorium identity status, there is only a significant negative correlation with Social Connection \( (r = -.12) \). This means that participants who believe in God more strongly for Social reasons are less likely to be engaged in a process of active exploration and ready to make commitments regarding their future roles, values, and goals. The direction of this relationship was consistent with the research hypotheses. However, negative relationships were also expected to emerge between the remainder of the reasons for Belief in God and the Moratorium identity status.

Finally, the Achievement identity status is significantly negatively correlated with Provides Comfort \( (r = -.15) \), Personal Experience \( (r = -.16) \), and Provides Knowledge \( (r = -.12) \). These findings suggest that participants who believe more strongly in God for Comfort, Experience, and Knowledge reasons are less likely to have actively explored and subsequently committed to a particular identity (i.e., various roles, values, and goals). The direction between the Provides Knowledge reason for Belief in God and the Achieved identity status is not consistent with the research hypothesis where a positive relationship was expected to emerge.
Hierarchical regression analyses were also run to further examine how reasons for Belief in God relate to Identity Statuses. Hierarchical regressions were selected for the current study for two important reasons. First, there is previous theory and research indicating which predictor variables should be included in the regression model (e.g., King, 2003; Lewis, 2003; Yoder, 2000). In addition, hierarchical regressions are the most preferred statistical method for examining moderator effects (Frazier, Tix, & Barron, 2004). Therefore, hierarchical regressions were well suited for the current study because they allowed for an examination of the extent to which individual and contextual factors moderated the relationship between the different reasons for Belief in God and Identity Statuses (Aim 4: To evaluate the contributing factors that impact the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses for young adults).

As described in the Preliminary Analysis section, prior to running the hierarchical regressions, the data were examined for potential outliers within the regressions. Specifically, the predicted values were plotted against the studentized residuals (with the predicted values along the X axis and the studentized residuals along the Y axis). Studentized residuals were used because they are more sensitive to an unusual observation (i.e., a potential outlier) in the data than standardized residuals (Mosteller & Tukey, 1977). Data points falling outside of +2 or -2 were considered potential outliers. In order to further assess their impact on the regression models, the analyses were run
with each of the cases removed. The regression solutions did not significantly change when the cases were removed. Therefore, all of the cases were included in the regression analyses.

Regression models were run which examined how reasons for Belief in God related to Identity Statuses after first partialing out the effects of gender (dummy coded) and age (continuous variable). Separate models were run for each of the Identity Statuses (Diffusion, Foreclosure, Moratorium, and Achievement). In the models, the Identity Status was the outcome variable, the demographic variables (age and gender) were the covariates, and the reasons for Belief in God were the predictor variables. Gender and age were entered into the first step of the hierarchical regressions (together) and then the reasons for Belief in God were entered into the second step (together). By entering the demographic variables in the first step, it was possible to examine the relationship between the reasons for Belief in God and Identity after having accounted for the effects of age and gender. The demographic variables and the reasons for Belief in God were entered into their respective steps of the regression model together because there is no theory or research to suggest that they (each of the demographic variables and each of the reasons for Belief in God) be entered at different steps.

Because the focus of this study was to empirically examine the theoretical relationship between Belief in God and Identity (and not to try to understand all of the variables that best predict Identity Statuses), the statistics of primary interest in the regression models were the beta ($\beta$) coefficients for the predictor variables (Wampold & Freund, 1987). When there are two or more predictor variables in a regression model, as
in a hierarchical regression, the metrics of the different predictor variables usually do not correspond with one another. Therefore, comparisons of effects cannot be easily made across the predictor variables. Standardizing the regression coefficient adjusts all of the values of the predictor variables so that they are on the same scale. Thus, the individual effects that each predictor variable has on the outcome variable can be compared and interpreted. The standardized regression coefficients are the $\beta$ weights assigned to each predictor variable and are considered units of standard deviation change. These regression coefficients were used in the current study to allow for comparisons (to determine which reasons for Belief in God have the largest impact on the slope of the regression line) across the different reasons for Belief in God. This was necessary because the Fear reason for Belief in God is measured on a slightly different scale than the other reasons (it has only 5 items, as opposed to 6). Finally, although the $\Delta R^2$ statistic was not of primary focus for the purpose of this study, it was important to consider given the multicollinearity among the predictor variables. As indicated previously, multicollinearity can limit the extent to which the effects of individual variables are detectable. Examining the $\Delta R^2$ provided important information regarding the combined effect of all of the reasons for Belief in God. Therefore, both the $\beta$ and the $\Delta R^2$ are reported—with the $\beta$ functioning as the primary analysis and the $\Delta R^2$ as the secondary.

Results from each of the four regression models examining the role that Belief in God plays in the Identity Status of young adults are discussed below. The results from the models can also be found in Tables 18-21. When looking at the standardized beta coefficients for the model predicting the Diffused identity status, gender ($\beta = -.14$) was
the only covariate that emerged as significant and the Comfort ($\beta = .33$) and Experience ($\beta = .22$) reasons for Belief in God were the only reasons that emerged as significant predictors. The directions of these relationships are inconsistent with what was expected. Overall, these findings indicate that out of the six different reasons for Belief in God, the Comfort reason for Belief in God has the greatest effect on the variance in Diffusion identity status scores and the Experience reason has the second greatest effect. More specifically these findings indicate that, after accounting for the effects of gender and age, for a 1 standard deviation change in the endorsement of items assessing for the Comfort reason for Belief in God there is a statistically significant standard deviation change of 0.36 in the endorsement of items assessing for the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors consistent with the Diffusion identity status. They also mean that for a 1 standard deviation change in the endorsement of items assessing for the Experience reason for Belief in God, there is a statistically significant standard deviation change of 0.23 in the endorsement of items assessing for the Diffusion identity status, after accounting for the effects of gender and age. In more practical terms, these regression models suggest that stronger Belief in God for the Comfort and Experience reasons are predictive of more prominent functioning from the Diffusion identity status, where individuals have a tendency to avoid exploring and committing to things such as their roles, values, or goals for the future. As indicated above, the $\Delta R^2$ for the model was also considered as a secondary analysis. For this model, the $\Delta R^2$ is 0.14. This indicates that after accounting for the effects of age and gender, the reasons for Belief in God account
for 14% of the variability in the Diffusion identity status, which is statistically significant, $F(8, 293) = 8.04, p < 0.001$. Results from this regression model can be found in Table 18.

In the regression model predicting the Foreclosed identity status, the standardized beta coefficients for gender ($\beta = 0.14$) emerged as significant as well as for the Family ($\beta = -0.26$) and Social ($\beta = -0.16$) reasons for Belief in God. Age and the remaining reasons for Belief in God did not emerge as significant predictors. Consistent with findings from the basic correlations, the direction of the relationships between the Family Tradition and Social Connection reasons for Belief in God were inconsistent was what was expected. Overall, these findings indicate that out of the six different reasons for Belief in God, the Family reason has the greatest effect on the variance in Foreclosed identity status scores and the Social reason has the second greatest effect. More specifically these findings indicate that, after accounting for the effects of gender and age, for a 1 standard deviation change in the endorsement of items assessing for the Family reason for Belief in God, there is a statistically significant standard deviation change of -0.26 in the endorsement of items assessing for the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors consistent with the Foreclosed status. Similarly, for a 1 standard deviation change in the endorsement of items assessing for the Social reason for Belief in God, there is a statistically significant standard deviation of -0.16 in the endorsement of items assessing for the Foreclosed identity status, after accounting for the effects of gender and age. The negative direction of the beta coefficients indicate that higher Family and Social reasons for Belief in God are predictive of lower scores on the Foreclosed identity status. Therefore, these results can be interpreted to mean that, stronger Belief in God for Family and Social reasons is
predictive of a reduced tendency to conform to the expectations or experiences of others regarding future goals, values, and roles without first engaging in a process of exploration. Again, these findings are not consistent with the research hypotheses. The $\Delta R^2$ was also considered for the secondary analysis and is 0.15. Similar to the previous model, this indicates that after accounting for the effects of age and gender, the reasons for Belief in God account for 15% of the variability in the Foreclosed identity status, which is statistically significant, $F(8, 293) = 7.97, p < 0.001$. Results from this regression model can be found in Table 19.

The standardized beta coefficients and the $\Delta R^2$ are reported below for the Moratorium identity status regression model. In terms of the beta coefficients, neither gender nor age emerged as significant covariates. However, the Family ($\beta = 0.22$), Social ($\beta = -0.14$), Experience ($\beta = 0.19$), and Fear ($\beta = -0.20$) reasons for Belief in God all emerged as significant predictors. The remaining two reasons for Belief in God did not emerge as significant predictors. These findings were inconsistent with the research hypotheses, which had predicted negative relationships between all of the reasons for Belief in God and the Moratorium identity status. Overall, these results indicate that out of the six different reasons for Belief in God, the Family reason has the greatest effect on the variance in Moratorium identity status scores. Following the effect of the Family reason are the Fear, Experience, and Social reasons respectively. More specifically these results indicate that, after accounting for the effects of gender and age, for a 1 standard deviation change in the endorsement of items assessing for the Family reason for Belief in God, there is a significant standard deviation change of 0.22 in the endorsement of
items assessing for the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors consistent with the Moratorium status. Also, for a 1 standard deviation change in the endorsement of items assessing for the Social reason for Belief in God, there is a significant standard deviation change of -0.14 in the endorsement of items assessing for the Moratorium identity status. Additionally, for a 1 standard deviation change in the endorsement of items assessing for the Experience and Fear reasons for Belief in God, there are statistically significant standard deviation changes of 0.19 and -0.20 respectively in the endorsement of items assessing for the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors consistent with the Moratorium status, after accounting for the effects of age and gender. As with the previous model, the negative direction of the beta coefficients indicate that higher Social and Fear reasons for Belief in God are predictive of lower scores on the Moratorium identity status. These findings can be interpreted to indicate that stronger Belief in God for Family and Experience reasons is predictive of more prominent functioning in the Moratorium identity status, where individuals are engaged in a process of active exploration of goals, values, and roles but have not yet made any commitments. On the other hand, stronger Belief in God for the Social and Fear reasons is predictive of a reduced tendency to be actively engaged in exploration and uncommitted to an identity. The secondary analysis examining the $\Delta R^2$ revealed that, after accounting for the effects of age and gender, the reasons for Belief in God account for 7% ($\Delta R^2 = 0.07$) of the variability in the Moratorium identity status, which is statistically significant, $F(8, 293) = 3.32, p < 0.01$. Results from this regression model can be found in Table 20.
Finally, in the regression model predicting the Achieved identity status, none of the standardized beta coefficients for the covariates or predictor variables (i.e., the reasons for Belief in God) emerged as significant. This is inconsistent with the research hypotheses that predicted a positive relationship to emerge between the Provides Knowledge reason for Belief in God and the Achieved identity status. Additionally, the secondary analysis of the $\Delta R^2$ (which is 0.04) indicated that after accounting for the effects of age and gender, the reasons for Belief in God account for 4% of the variability in the Achievement identity status, which is not statistically significant, $F(8, 293) = 1.59$, $p = 0.13$. This suggests that none of the reasons for Belief in God are significant predictors of the Achieved identity status. These results can be found in Table 21.

Aim 4: To evaluate the contributing factors that impact the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses for young adults

Moderated multiple regressions (MMR) were also run to examine the moderating effects of age and gender. A MMR is simply a multiple regression that contains interaction terms (predictor variable * potential moderator variable) as well as main effects (predictor variables independently and potential moderator variables independently). In order to run the MMR, the main effects (Belief in God variables and demographic variables) were entered into the first two steps of the regression model. Specifically, the demographic variables (i.e., the potential moderating variables) were
entered into the first step of the model, and all of the reasons for Belief in God were entered into the second step. The third step of the regression contained all of the multiplicative terms reflecting the interactions between each of the predictor variables (reasons for Belief in God) and the moderating variables (age and gender). As with the previous regression models, the reasons for Belief in God and demographic variables were entered into their respective steps of the regression model together because there is no theory or research to suggest that they (each of the demographic variables and each of the reasons for Belief in God) be entered at different steps.

As with the hierarchical regression models discussed previously, the statistics of primary interest in the MMRs are the beta coefficients of the multiplicative terms (Bedeian & Mossholder, 1994). These were the focus of the analysis because an important aim of the study was to determine whether age and gender were significant moderating variables in the relationship between reasons for Belief in God and Identity Status (and not necessarily predicting Identity Statuses among emerging adults). Although the standardized beta coefficients were reported and interpreted in the previous regression models, the unstandardized coefficients will be reported and interpreted in the MMRs, because in equations that include interaction terms, the beta coefficients for the interaction terms are not properly standardized and thus are not interpretable (Aiken & West, 1991; Frazier et al., 2004).

Results from the four MMRs can be found in Tables 22-25 (as explained, the multiplicative terms can be found in the third step of the regression models). None of the unstandardized regression coefficients for the multiplicative terms emerged as
statistically significant. This is true for each of the four MMRs. These results indicate that neither age nor gender serve as a moderator variable in the relationship between any of the six reasons for Belief in God and the four Identity Statuses. These findings are not consistent with the research hypotheses which predicted that gender and age would emerge as significant moderating variables in the relationship between reasons for Belief in God and Identity.

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Insert Table 18-21 about here
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Aim 5: To develop a model to explain the relationship between Belief in God and Identity, while taking into account any contributing individual and contextual factors.

Structural equation modeling was utilized in the current study because it allowed for the examination of both observed/measured and latent variables. It allowed for the statistical analyses to go one step beyond the previously described hierarchical regressions to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role that Belief in God (as opposed to individual reasons for Belief in God) plays in the Identity of college students.

For the purposes of this research project, the observed/measured variables were each of the questionnaire items that make up the subscales on the FBIG and the EOM-EIS-II. The latent variables were the subscales of each, as well as, the broad construct the scale addresses (Belief in God and Identity). In particular, for the FBIG there were 7 latent variables: (1) Belief in God (which is representative of the totality of all of the reasons someone believes in God); (2) Family Tradition; (3) Social Connection; (4)
Provides Comfort; (5) Fear of Death; (6) Personal Experience; and (7) Provides Knowledge. For the EOM-EIS-II there were 5 latent variables: (1) Identity (which is representative of the combination of all of the Identity Statuses for an individual); (2) Diffused; (3) Foreclosed; (4) Moratorium; and (5) Achieved. The included diagram in Appendix K depicts each of the observed/measured variables as well as the latent variables that were examined in the current study, where squares represent observed/measured variables and circles represent latent variables.

The current study utilized a full SEM model (comprises both a measurement model and a structural model) in order to delineate the relationship between Belief in God and Identity. Specifically, factor analyses were first run to confirm that the measured/observed variables actually measured the latent variable(s) they were expected to measure (two measurement models on the FBIG and the EOM-EIS-II) and then the structural model was run in order to estimate the relationship between Belief in God and Identity (the latent variables of interest). Appendix K contains a diagram of the originally hypothesized model.

Prior to estimating the parameters for the full model, the measurement models were run individually to determine whether the hypothesized Belief in God and Identity variables were strong enough latent variables to use in the model. When the Belief in God measurement model was run using the robust method of estimation, the Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square value was 1317.34 ($p = 0.00$), the CFI was 0.93, and the RMSEA was 0.07. Although the Chi-Square value was significant, suggesting the model is not a good
fit, the CFI and RMSEA suggest that the model is a moderate to good fit. Therefore, this higher-order latent variable (Belief in God) was able to be used in the structural model.

When the Identity measurement model was run using the robust method of estimation, the Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square value was 4745.82 \( (p = 0.00) \), the CFI was 0.44, and the RMSEA was 0.07. Taken together, these fit indices suggest that the model is not a good fit for the data. Therefore, the factorial structures for each of the individual Identity Statuses were examined to determine if they were a better fit with the data and more appropriate to use in the structural model being estimated. Overall, the models testing the factorial structure for each individual status yielded positive results, where the data fit the hypothesized model well. For the Diffusion status, the Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square value was 87.46 \( (p = 0.02) \), the CFI was 0.97, and the RMSEA was 0.04. For the Foreclosed status, the Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square value was 73.69 \( (p = 0.00) \), the CFI was 0.98, and the RMSEA was 0.05. For the Moratorium status, the Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square value was 92.10 \( (p = 0.00) \), the CFI was 0.95, and the RMSEA was 0.05. Finally, for the Achieved status, the Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square value was 71.05 \( (p = 0.25) \), the CFI was 0.99, and the RMSEA was 0.02. Given the strong fit for each of the individual statuses, and the poor fit for the higher-order factorial structure (creating the Identity variable), the decision was made to run separate structural models where Belief in God predicted each individual Identity Status.

Although the originally hypothesized comprehensive model of Belief in God and Identity was not run due to poor fitting data with the hypothesized higher-order latent
variable Identity, the command file that would have been used can be found in Appendix L. Following the determination that four separate models would be run, parameters were estimated for the following: (1) the relationship between each of the observed/measured variables and their respective latent variables; (2) the relationship between each of the latent Belief in God variables and their Belief in God higher-order latent variable (e.g., the relationship between the Family Tradition motivation and Belief in God); and (3) the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses. Once the models were specified and the parameters estimated, the structure of the hypothesized models were tested using the robust method of estimation (Byrne, 2006; Fassinger, 1987; Hox & Bechger, 1998; MacCallum & Austin, 2000) and the overall fit of the models were assessed through fit statistics, including the Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). As indicated in Chapter 3, the robust method of estimation was selected for the current analyses because it is appropriate for data that violate the assumption of normality, and an examination of the kurtosis statistics for this sample provided evidence that the data were not normally distributed. Modification indexes were examined and the model was altered accordingly. The diagrams of the models displayed in Appendices M, O, Q, and S do not contain all of the parameters that were freed for estimation because the diagram became too complicated and unclear. However, an examination of the command files for each model (found in Appendices N, P, R, and T) indicate which parameters were freed for estimation to modify to models.
The first structural model that was run, with the robust method of estimation, examined the relationship between Belief in God and the Diffusion status. The fit statistics for this hypothesized model indicated that it was a fairly good fit with the data. The Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square value was 1857.28 ($p = 0.00$), the CFI was 0.94, and the RMSEA was 0.05. Additionally, when focusing on the relationship between Belief in God and Diffusion, the structural estimate for this parameter emerged as nonsignificant (-0.55, $p > 0.05$), suggesting that Belief in God is not a significant predictor of the Diffused identity status. Table 26 contains the parameter estimates for this model. Appendix M contains the diagram of the model and Appendix N contains the command file for this model.

The second structural model that was run, with the robust method of estimation, examined the relationship between Belief in God and the Foreclosed status. The fit-statistics for this hypothesized model indicated that it was a fairly good fit with the data. The Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square value was 2104.16 ($p = 0.00$), the CFI was 0.93, and the RMSEA was 0.05. Additionally, when focusing on the relationship between Belief in God and Foreclosure, the structural estimate for this parameter emerged as nonsignificant (-0.14, $p > 0.05$), suggesting that Belief in God is not a significant predictor of the Foreclosed identity status. Table 26 contains the parameter estimates for this model. Appendix O contains the diagram of the model and Appendix P contains the command file for this model.

The third structural model that was run, with the robust method of estimation, examined the relationship between Belief in God and the Moratorium status. The fit
statistics for this hypothesized model indicated that it was a moderate fit with the data. The Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square value was 2236.25 ($p = 0.00$), the CFI was 0.91, and the RMSEA was 0.06. Additionally, when focusing on the relationship between Belief in God and the Moratorium status, the structural estimate for this parameter emerged as significant (-2.39, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that Belief in God is a significant predictor of the Moratorium identity status, where stronger rates of Belief in God appear to lead to a reduced chance of being engaged in a process of active exploration of goals, values, and roles without having made any commitments yet. Table 26 contains the parameter estimates for this model. Appendix Q contains the diagram of the model and Appendix R contains the command file for this model.

The final structural model that was run, with the robust method of estimation, examined the relationship between Belief in God and the Achieved status. The fit statistics for this hypothesized model indicated that it was a moderate fit with the data. The Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Square value was 2156.46 ($p = 0.00$), the CFI was 0.91, and the RMSEA was 0.05. Additionally, when focusing on the relationship between Belief in God and the Achieved status, the structural estimate for this parameter emerged as significant (1.03, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that Belief in God is a significant predictor of the Achieved identity status, where higher rates of Belief in God seem to lead to an increased likelihood of having actively explored and subsequently made commitments with respect to future goals, values, and roles. Table 26 contains the parameter estimates for this model. Appendix S contains the diagram of the model and Appendix T contains the command file for this model.
Chapter 5 (Discussion)

Research suggests that religion provides an important context through which young adults are able to develop their identity (King, 2003; Markstrom-Adams, 1999; Markstrom-Adams, Hofstra, & Dougher, 1994). Recently, theory has proposed that Belief in God is a specific aspect of religion that may play a significant role in the identity development process (King, 2003). The intersections of identity development and belief in God are particularly important to understand in young adults because (1) this is the time period when identity development is believed to begin (Arnett, 2000; Erikson, 1968) and (2) spirituality and belief in God are extremely prevalent among college students (Cherry et al., 2001; Values Survey Databank, 2006). However, researchers have not yet empirically examined the theorized relationship between Belief in God and Identity. Therefore, this study sought to begin to understand and explain (through empirical research) the relationship between Belief in God and Identity development in young adults.

Overall, findings from the current research study indicate that: (1) young adults enrolled in private, four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England have average levels of Belief in God across each of the six reasons for Belief in God, regardless of age or gender; (2) young adults enrolled in private, four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England tend to function from a transition Diffuse-Foreclosure Identity status; (3) Belief in God has an impact on the Identity of young adults enrolled in private four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England; (4) Age and gender do not appear to impact the relationship between Belief in God and
Identity; and (5) Comprehensive models explaining the relationships between Belief in God and each of the Identity statuses indicated that Belief in God is a significant predictor of both the Moratorium and Achieved Identity statuses. The following section will position these findings within the context of existing literature on the intersections of religion/spirituality and Identity development. The implications for research and practice will also be discussed.

**Research Aims and Hypotheses**

*Aim 1: To Describe the Reasons for Belief in God of Young Adults*

Although previous research has not specifically examined the reasons why college students believe in God, it has found that religion, spirituality, and specifically belief in God are present among this population (Astin, 1993; Cherry et al., 2001; Knox et al., 1998; Bryant et al., 2003; Values Survey Databank, 2006). Therefore, the first aim of the current study was to describe the reasons for Belief in God of young adults enrolled in private four-year, postsecondary education institutions in New England. In general, this sample of young adults has fairly average levels of Belief in God across each of the reasons, regardless of age or gender. The only exception occurred in the Provides Comfort reason for Belief in God, where females tended to exhibit significantly stronger Beliefs for the Comfort reason than their male peers. This finding may best be explained through gender differences in help-seeking behavior, where help-seeking by males is consistently lower than for females, especially in the case of emotional problems (e.g., Moller-Leimkuhler, 2000). The Provides Comfort reason for Belief in God is the reason that is most comparable to seeking emotional support. This is an area that needs further
investigation in order to fully understand the factors that influence such gender
differences among this reason for Belief in God, but not others.

**Aim 2: To Describe the Identity Statuses of Young Adults.**

Previous research has found that adolescents and young adults tend to have higher
levels of Diffusion, Foreclosure, and Moratorium and lower levels of Achievement
(Lewis, 2003). Therefore, the second aim of this study was to describe the Identity
Statuses of young adults enrolled in private, four-year postsecondary education
institutions in New England. Consistent with previous research, results from this study
found that the young adults in this sample can be classified into the transition Diffusion-
Foreclosure status (Adams, 1998). This indicates that, in general, the participants in this
study have not yet engaged in an active process of exploration of their Identity and are
either not ready to make any commitments to values, roles, and goals for their future or
have conformed to the expectations or experiences of others regarding these issues
without first engaging in a process of exploration.

Contrary to previous research, which has failed to find significant gender
differences among the Global Identity Statuses (e.g., Bilsker et al., 1988; Lewis, 2003), in
this study the female participants tended to score significantly higher than their male
peers on the Diffusion and Foreclosure statuses. These findings suggest that females are
more likely than males to either (1) avoid exploring and committing to roles, values, and
goals for the future or (2) conform to the expectations or experiences of others regarding
their future without engaging in a process of exploration.

Although inconsistent with initial research reporting a developmental progression
from Diffusion to Achievement during college (Kroger, 1988; Meilman, 1979; Whitbourne & VanManen, 1996), findings from this study are consistent with Arnett’s (2000) theory of Emerging Adulthood which extends the process of Identity development beyond the college-years and well into one’s late 20’s. Results from this study found that age was positively related to the Foreclosure status—suggesting that as age increases for the sample, so does their tendency to adopt others’ experiences with roles, values, and goals without first exploring potential options. According to Arnett (2000), progression through the Identity statuses is slower than was previously described in research (e.g., Kroger, 1988; Meilman, 1979; Whitbourne & VanManen, 1996). Therefore, movement into the Foreclosed status during college would be considered an appropriate progression in the context of Arnett’s (2000) theory of Emerging Adulthood.

**Aim 3: To Evaluate the Relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses for young adults**

King’s (2003) theoretical model describes belief in God as a facilitating factor in the process of identity development. Therefore, the third aim of this study was to examine the relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses for young adults. However, given a lack of empirical research in this area, the analyses were largely exploratory since it was unclear exactly how the reasons for Belief in God would relate to Identity. Results from the primary analyses in the regressions, examining the beta coefficients of the reasons for Belief in God when predicting the Identity Statuses, were somewhat unexpected and inconsistent with the research hypotheses (which were based on theoretical links between the Belief in God and Identity variables due to a lack of
empirical research in this area). For example, negative relationships were expected to emerge between the six reasons for Belief in God and the Diffusion and Moratorium statuses. These Identity Statuses are low commitment statuses, and low levels of Belief in God across the different reasons may suggest a weak commitment to Belief in God. In the analyses, however, the majority of Belief reasons that emerged as significant predictors of these statuses were positively related. Additionally, positive relationships were expected between the Family Tradition and Social Connection reasons for Belief in God and the Foreclosed status. The Foreclosed identity status is characterized by a lack of exploration and commitments based on others’ experiences. Similarly, the Family Tradition and Social Connection reasons for Belief in God suggest that the Belief exists because of others and may not have a lot of personal meaning. However, the relationship between these variables was negative. Finally, individuals scoring high on the Provides Knowledge reason for Belief in God were also expected to score high on the Achieved status. Both of these constructs represent a process of personally experiencing or exploring and then making a commitment. A significant relationship did not emerge between these variables though.

The unexpected findings between the reasons for Belief in God and the Identity Statuses in these regression models may be a function of the FBIG. This scale is newly developed and has not been extensively used in research. As indicated, the hypothesized relationships between these variables were based on theoretical conceptualizations of the constructs as opposed to previously conducted empirical research. Therefore, it is possible that the reasons for Belief in God may be functioning differently than expected.
For example, as will be discussed in the results of Aim 5, the individual reasons for Belief in God create a strong higher-order latent variable of Belief in God. It may be that the utility of the scale is best optimized when used in this manner as opposed to with the individual reasons functioning independently, especially when all of the reasons for Belief are included in statistical models together as they were in this study. A specific example of how this approach (all of the reasons included in the statistical models together) may have impacted the findings is the multicollinearity that was evident among the reasons for Belief in God. This may have influenced the relationships between the reasons for Belief in God and the Identity Statuses in the regressions (Swerdick & Cohen, 1998; Wampold & Freund, 1987). For example, the Provides Knowledge reason for Belief in God did not emerge as a significant predictor of the Achieved identity status as was expected. However, there was a significant relationship between these variables in the correlation analyses. Additionally, when running the regression analysis with just the Provides Knowledge reason for Belief in God entered as a predictor, it emerged as a positive, significant predictor. This suggests that because all of the reasons for Belief in God are so highly correlated, the unique variance accounted for by the Provides Knowledge reason was not evident in the regression analysis when all of the reasons were entered simultaneously.

In addition to multicollinearity, the unexpected findings may be a function of the reasons for Belief in God operating differently than was expected based on theoretical interpretations of the variables. For example, negative relationships were expected to emerge between the Diffused and Moratorium identity statuses and each of the reasons
for Belief in God. This relationship was hypothesized based on the assumption that low levels of Belief in God across all of the reasons would be indicative of a weak commitment to Belief in God. However, it could be that high levels of belief across various reasons is more indicative of a lack of commitment, where people have not yet, or still are in the process of, critically examining their belief in God and therefore believe for many different reasons.

Another example of the belief in God variables operating differently than was expected is between the Foreclosed identity status and the Family Tradition and Social Connection reasons for belief in God. Negative relationships emerged between these reasons for belief in God and the Foreclosed identity status when positive relationships were predicted. These relationships were expected based on the assumption that people who believe in God for the Family Tradition and Social Connection reasons have not engaged in a process of active exploration. Rather, they have developed their belief based exclusively on the influence of their friends and family and therefore are likely to function in a similar manner in the development of their own identity. Perhaps, however, people who believe in God for the Family and Social reasons have explored their belief with their family and friends and have not adopted their belief in God simply because the important people in their lives also believe. If this is the case, a negative relationship between the variables is logical.

Although results from the primary regression analyses were inconsistent with research hypotheses, findings from the secondary analyses (examining the Δ $R^2$ for the Belief in God regression steps) provide support for King’s (2003) model of belief in God
and identity development. In particular, when examining the $\Delta R^2$ associated with the blocks of Belief in God variables entered into the hierarchical regressions, it was apparent that these blocks accounted for a significant amount of variance in the Diffused (14%), Foreclosed (15%), and Moratorium (7%) statuses. This indicates that Belief in God is clearly an important factor in the Identity of the young adults in this sample. These findings also provide additional support for the use of the FBIG as a higher-order latent variable that examines “Belief in God” as opposed to the separate reasons for Belief in God, where the “whole” of Belief in God is somehow greater than the “sum” if its parts (the individual reasons for Belief in God). Therefore, while it is clear that Belief in God is involved in the Identity development of young adults, the ways in which it is functioning is less clear based on these regression analyses.

_Aim 4: To Evaluate the Contributing Factors that Impact the Relationship between Belief in God and Identity Statuses for young adults_

Previous theory and research has highlighted the important role that certain individual and contextual factors (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, and religious affiliation) can play in the Identity development of young adults (e.g., Lewis, 2003; Yoder, 2000). Therefore, the fourth aim of the study was to determine whether any individual or contextual factors impacted the relationship between Belief in God and Identity for young adults. Initially age, gender, ethnicity, and religious affiliation were expected to function as moderating variables. These variables were hypothesized to moderate the relationship between Belief in God and Identity due to the fact that previous research has found these variables to be salient in Identity development (see Chapter 2 for a complete review of
this research [e.g., e.g., Lewis, 2003; Yoder, 2000]). However, given the composition of the sample (see Appendix A and Table 1), only the moderating effects of age and gender were able to be examined. Contrary to previous theory and research (and hypotheses for this study), neither age nor gender had a significant impact on the relationship between Belief in God and Identity for young adults, regardless of the specific Identity Status.

Gender may not have emerged as a significant moderating variable because the Global Identity Statuses were used in these analyses and past research has found significant gender differences in the Domain-Specific statuses (Bilsker et al., 1988; Lewis, 2003). Moreover, it is possible that age did not emerge as a significant moderating variable because there was not enough variability in the age range of the participants (predominantly 19-21 years). As indicated, it is now believed that identity formation takes place from adolescence through the late 20’s (Arnett, 2000). Therefore, the age range of participants may have been too limited (in comparison to the larger period when identity development is believed to occur) to detect the effects of age on the relationship between Belief in God and Identity.

**Aim 5: To Develop a Model to Explain the Relationship between Belief in God and Identity, while taking into Account any Contributing Individual and Contextual Factors**

The fifth and final aim of the study was to develop a comprehensive model to explain the relationship between Belief in God and Identity for young adults. It is important to recognize that this aim was not able to be explored as originally intended. First, the model was not able to take contributing individual and contextual factors into account because (1) the sample was not diverse enough with respect to ethnicity and
religious affiliation and (2) gender and age did not emerge as significant moderating variables in the MMRs that were run (Aim 4). Second, while the model was able to use the intended higher-order latent variable “Belief in God” (which took into account all of the reasons for Belief in God), “Identity” (which would have taken into account all of Identity Statuses) was not able to be included in the model. The measurement model in the SEM for the Belief in God variable emerged as a strong fit with the data, suggesting that it was appropriate to use this measure of “Belief in God” as opposed to the individual reasons for Belief. However, the measurement model for the Identity variable did not emerge as a strong fit with the data, but separate models creating the individual Identity Statuses did. As a result, four separate models were developed explaining the relationship between Belief in God and each of the Identity Statuses (see Appendices M-T). As will be discussed in the Limitations section of this chapter, a different measure of Identity may have allowed for a more comprehensive model to explain the relationship between Belief in God and Identity (e.g., one model, instead of four separate models examining each individual Identity status). However, it is important to recognize that running the four separate models, did allow for certain interpretations (described below) that may not have been possible with the originally proposed higher-order latent variable “Identity.”

In the four structural models that were run, Belief in God did not emerge as a significant predictor of the Diffused and Foreclosed statuses. It was, however, a significant predictor of the Moratorium and Achieved statuses. The relationship with the Moratorium status was negative, where lower levels of Belief in God predicted a more
active process of exploration without having made any commitments about one’s future roles, values, and goals yet. On the other hand, the relationship with the Achieved status was positive, where higher levels of Belief in God led to commitments in roles, values, and goals subsequent to an active process of exploration.

Findings from these SEMs suggest that Belief in God may be functioning to help individuals select or commit to certain choices with respect to their life roles, values and goals after they have engaged in a process of exploration. Marcia (1966) conceptualized Identity development to consist of a process of exploration (the process of sorting through potential life choices) and commitment (the selecting of choices to which one plans to adhere). He described these to be two distinct aspects of identity. According to King (2003), Belief in God facilitates both of these aspects. Given that Belief in God is a positive significant predictor of the Achieved status (and a negative significant predictor of the Moratorium status), it may be that Belief facilitates making commitments (after having explored options) more than exploring possible life choices.

This explanation is further supported by insignificant connections between Belief in God and the Diffused and Foreclosed statuses. Functioning from either of these statuses implies that individuals have not made commitments to certain life roles, values, and goals after first actively exploring potential options. Instead, they have either not made any commitments or made commitments based on the expectations or experiences of others. As a result, Belief in God is likely not an important factor for them with respect to their Identity. Therefore, results from these models suggest that Belief in God impacts Identity Development more by aiding in the process of selecting (or committing to) life
roles, values and goals after potential options have been explored, than by facilitating the actual exploration process.

Limitations of Research

Although there are many strengths of the study, in interpreting the findings, methodological limitations need to be considered. These limitations pertain to the sample and instrumentation and may impact the external and internal validity of the study. Recommendations around how to address these limitations can be found in the following section on Implications for Research.

Sample

As indicated, there are certain limitations of the current research study concerning the sample. Most clearly is that the research findings are primarily generalizable to students enrolled in private, four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England. Participants were only recruited from such institutions and the demographic composition of the sample is representative of students enrolled in these institutions. Therefore, caution should be taken if trying to generalize these findings to young adults outside of private, four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England.

In addition to that apparent limitation, there are two other more subtle limitations with respect to the sample. First, the demographic composition of the sample should be considered. Although the sample is essentially representative of college students enrolled in private, four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England with respect to ethnic background, gender, and age (see Appendix A), the sample was not diverse enough in certain areas to conduct all of the originally planned analyses. As mentioned
previously, the sample was not ethnically or religiously diverse enough to examine the impact that such individual factors could have on the relationship between Belief in God and Identity in young adults (Yoder, 2003). In a similar vein, although not within the intended scope of this study, the age range of participants was quite limited in the context of Emerging Adulthood, where Identity Development is believed to continue well into the late 20’s (Arnett, 2000). Therefore, as with ethnicity and religion, the study was limited in examining the role that age may play in the relationship between Belief in God and Identity.

Second, the selection of participants should be considered a potential limitation. Although participants were recruited from four different private, four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England, almost one half were recruited from Boston College and over two-thirds were recruited from institutions with a Catholic affiliation. Previous research has shown that rates of religious and spiritual engagement are higher at religiously affiliated institutions than those that are unaffiliated (though it is still present at unaffiliated institutions; Cherry et al., 2001). Therefore, this sample may be more religiously active than is true for the “average” student enrolled in college in New England. The vast majority of participants also came from psychology or sociology-related courses, and they were recruited in a group format. As a result, their participation in the study may have been a function of their enrollment/participation in a certain course/club (even though participation was voluntary), as opposed to random recruitment/participation. Overall, the selection and recruitment of participants may have elicited participation from a certain “type” of student (beyond their basic demographic
characteristics) that may not be completely representative of students enrolled in private four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England.

**Instrumentation**

Limitations of the study should also be considered with respect to the instrumentation. First, the measure used to assess the Identity of the young adults had some important limitations, especially in the context of the current study. Primarily, the theoretical model underlying the EOM-EIS-II does not account for the process of Identity Development. As a result, the scale provides a typology of outcomes of the Identity crisis, but does not capture the process (as described by Erikson; Berzonsky & Adams, 1999; Cote & Levine, 1988; Goosens, 1995; Meeus et al., 1999; Van Hoof, 1999; Waterman, 1999). This limitation is particularly salient in the context of the current study because it aimed to understand the extent to which Belief in God functions as a vehicle through which young adults develop their Identity. Therefore, having a measure of the Identity Development process, may have helped to better illuminate the ways Belief in God may facilitate (or hinder) identity formation.

A similar critique can be made of the instrumentation used to measure the Belief in God of participants. The findings from this study provide a basic understanding of the relationship between Belief in God and Identity, but it remains somewhat unclear how Belief in God is functioning. For example, many of the findings regarding the relationship between Belief in God and Identity were either inconsistent with previous research or did not support the research hypotheses. Importantly, this measure of Belief in God provides valuable information that previous measures (which simply included
whether someone believed) failed to address. Independently, however, it is still somewhat limited and may be better served if used in conjunction with measures that address other aspects of religion and spirituality. Additionally, the multicollinearity detected among each of the reasons for Belief in God may have limited the extent to which they were able to emerge as significant predictors of the Identity Statuses in the hierarchical regressions. Therefore, caution should be taken when using this measure in analyses that do not allow for the creation of the higher-order latent variable Belief in God.

Implications of Research Findings

Implications for Research

Overall, findings from this study provide empirical support for King’s (2003) theory, suggesting that Belief in God can facilitate Identity Development. Although it is somewhat unclear exactly how Belief in God is functioning in the process of Identity formation, results from the study suggest that it is involved in the process and may be most instrumental in helping in selecting (or committing to) life choices after exploring potential options. In addition to providing initial empirical support for the relationship between Belief in God and Identity, the current study has highlighted areas for future research.

First, there are certain limitations of the current sample which should be addressed or accounted for in future research. As indicated, this study focused specifically on young adults enrolled in private four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England. Furthermore, the majority of participants came from Catholic affiliated institutions and/or psychology or sociology-related classes. Therefore,
future research should (1) expand to include college students enrolled in institutions from other parts of the country and (2) recruit students from other areas of the colleges (e.g., different types of classes or a larger assortment of clubs and organizations). This will help to either expand the generalizability of the findings or highlight differences in the role that Belief in God plays in Identity for young adults according to geographic location and college involvement. In a similar vein, future research should strive to include a more demographically diverse sample to allow for the examination of additional moderating variables. For example, Yoder (2000) discussed the important role that socioeconomic status, education, politics, ethnicity, gender, age, and religion (among others) may play in the Identity formation process. Therefore, future research should ensure that samples are diverse enough (with respect to certain individual and contextual factors) to allow for such consideration.

Second, as briefly mentioned, the findings from this study highlight the importance of more specifically focusing on the process of Identity Development, as opposed to examining Identity Statuses. This is important given the theoretical foundation of the study which suggests that Belief in God can facilitate the process of Identity exploration and commitment. Unfortunately, this task may be difficult as Marcia’s model of Identity continues to remain most prominent in the field, with other models lacking sufficient research to support their use (Schwartz et al., 2006). Future research may benefit from utilizing a combination of different Identity measures to best capture the Identity experience of young adults. For example, the EOM-EIS-II may be used in conjunction with Lucyx and colleagues’ (2008) recently developed model that
examines Identity formation at both the process and status level. Using these instruments in conjunction with one another may allow for a more comprehensive measure of the Identity Development of young adults. Moreover, a different measure of Identity may facilitate the development of a more comprehensive model to explain the relationship between Belief in God and Identity (as opposed to the four separate models that had to be used in the current study). As indicated in Chapter 4, Appendix L contains the command file for the originally hypothesized SEM explaining the relationship between Belief in God and Identity, which could be used as a model for similar future research.

Similarly, the inclusion of additional measures of religion and spirituality may help further explain how Belief in God is functioning in the context of Identity Development. Although research examining the relationship between Belief in God and Identity is limited, there is a somewhat long history (beginning with Erikson) of considering religion as an important agent in Identity formation (see Chapter 2). For example, studies conducted by Markstrom-Adams and Smith (1996) and Fulton (1997) both found strong links between Identity and religious orientation (people’s motivation [intrinsic versus extrinsic] toward religion as opposed to their degree of religiosity). Given that certain reasons for Belief in God seem more intrinsic (e.g., Personal Comfort) and others more extrinsic (e.g., Social Connection), it may be useful to include a measure of religious orientation in future research to further understand how Belief in God is involved in Identity Development. Additionally, multicollinearity among the six reasons for Belief and findings from the measurement model of the FBIG, support the use of the higher-order latent variable “Belief in God” as opposed to utilizing the individual reasons
in future research with this measure. Finally, given the unexpected relationships that emerged between some of the reasons for belief in God and different Identity Statuses, it will be important to continue to conduct research that helps illuminate the ways in which the individual reasons for belief in God operate for individuals, especially in the context of other variables (e.g., Identity Development).

Implications for Practice

Findings from the current study can also be used to help guide therapeutic work with young adults. First, this study confirmed and further described the Belief in God of young adults. Research consistently reports high rates of Belief in God among college students and young adults (Cherry et al., 2001; Knox et al., 1998; Bryant et al., 2003; Values Survey Databank, 2006). However, information about why they believe is not available, despite strong research highlighting the importance of understanding why people hold certain beliefs (e.g., Maio & Olsen 2000). Results from this study indicate that young adults (at least within this sample) believe in God for a variety of reasons, without one dominant reason. Therefore, this suggests the importance of first asking whether young adults believe in God and then following up with questions regarding why they believe. This is especially important because different reasons for Belief in God will likely impact the way that Belief is used on a daily basis for them (Maio & Olsen 2000).

Findings from the current study are also important in that they provide information about the Identity Statuses of young adults enrolled in private, four-year postsecondary education institutions in New England. Results from this study suggest that in general, college students in New England can be classified in a transition
Diffusion-Foreclosure status of Identity Development. The first major implication of this finding is that it indicates that young adults in New England have not yet engaged in an active process of Identity exploration and for those individuals who have committed to certain Identities they did so by conforming to the expectations of those around them.

The second closely related clinical implication of this finding is that it provides additional empirical support for Arnett’s (2000) theory of Emerging Adulthood. Since the individuals sampled in the current study are primarily situated in a transition status of Diffusion-Foreclosure, this would also suggest that they are in the beginning of their Identity formation process. Therefore, therapeutic work with young adults, especially those currently enrolled in college, should acknowledge that they probably have not explored future goals, values, and roles for themselves yet. Interventions may help to prepare them to begin the process of Identity exploration.

Finally, results from the study indicate that Belief in God is certainly involved in the Identity Development of young adults. Although it is not completely clear how Belief in God is functioning, it seems to be involved in the process of resolving Identity crises/making commitments after exploring potential options (as opposed to the actual exploration process). As a result, it seems to facilitate advanced levels of Identity Development (marked by a period of active exploration and subsequent commitment). Therefore, findings from this study in conjunction with previous theory and research (e.g., King, 2003; Markstrom-Adams, 1999; Markstrom-Adams, Hofstra, & Dougher, 1994) support the integration of belief in God into work with young adults around their identity development. Given that research shows decreased participation in religious
activities/communities for college students (e.g., Cherry et al., 2001), incorporation of belief in God into programs that are separate from religious communities and aimed at helping develop a sense of identity may be most beneficial.

Summary and Conclusions

The current study is one of the first to try to empirically explain the relationship between Belief in God and Identity among young adults in college. King’s (2003) three-dimensional framework for conceptualizing how religion provides a context for adolescent Identity Development, suggests that Identity Development emerges out of the ideological, social, and spiritual contexts of religion. Specifically, within the spiritual context, King explained that the relationship that individuals experience to God can facilitate Identity exploration and ultimately the resolution of the identity crisis. Through hierarchical regression analyses and SEMs, this study has provided empirical support for this dimension of King’s model. Specifically, the regression analyses provided initial support for the contention that Belief in God is an important factor in Identity Development for young adults. The SEMs helped to further understand this relationship. In particular, they suggested that Belief in God may function more prominently at the identity commitment level than at the exploration level. Although there are still many unanswered questions about how Belief in God promotes Identity exploration and commitment, this study provided an important foundation in understanding this relationship. It has not only clarified the relationship between Belief in God and Identity, but it has also helped to highlight areas for future research that can help further delineate this connection.
References


### Table 1

Participant Characteristics as a Frequency and a Percentage of the Sample

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Factor Loadings from the Structure Matrix of the Factor Analysis with Oblique Rotation for the Foreclosure Identity Status

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Factor Loadings from the Structure Matrix of the Factor Analysis with Oblique Rotation for the Achieved Identity Status

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Table 6

Cronbach Alpha Values for the Global and Domain-Specific Scales for each Identity Status

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<th>Identity Status</th>
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### Table 7

Item-Total Correlation Values for the Global and Domain-Specific Scales for the Diffused Identity Status

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Item-Total Correlation Values for the Global and Domain-Specific Scales for the Foreclosed Identity Status

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Table 9

Item-Total Correlation Values for the Global and Domain-Specific Scales for the Moratorium Identity Status

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Table 10

Item-Total Correlation Values for the Global and Domain-Specific Scales for the Achieved Identity Status

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Table 11

Correlation Coefficients for the Relationship between the Ideological and Interpersonal Scales for each Identity Status

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*Note: **$p<.01$ (2-tailed)*
Table 12

Cronbach Alpha Values for each Reason for Belief in God Measured in the Functions for Belief in God Inventory (FBIG)

<table>
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<th>Reason for Belief in God</th>
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<td>Fear of Death</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides Knowledge</td>
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Table 13

Item-Total Correlation Values for each Scale of the Functions for Belief in God Inventory

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Table 14

Correlation Coefficients for the Relationship among the Six Reasons for Belief in God (the predictor variables)

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<td>.63**</td>
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<td>.34**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
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<td>3. Comfort</td>
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<td>.65**</td>
<td>.75**</td>
<td>.73**</td>
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<td>.60**</td>
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<td>5. Experience</td>
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<td>.73**</td>
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*Note.* *p* < .05, **p** < .01 (2-tailed)
Table 15

Means and Standard Deviations for the Reasons for Belief in God

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<th>Reason for Belief</th>
<th>Standardized Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<td>Social Connection</td>
<td>50.98</td>
<td>10.46</td>
</tr>
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<td>10.01</td>
</tr>
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<td>Fear of Death</td>
<td>50.30</td>
<td>10.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Experience</td>
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<td>9.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides Knowledge</td>
<td>48.93</td>
<td>9.88</td>
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Table 16

Means and Standard Deviations for the Identity Statuses

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<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<td>70.77</td>
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<td>Moratorium</td>
<td>59.69</td>
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<td>Achievement</td>
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<td>8.16</td>
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Table 17

Summary of Intercorrelations for Scores on the Identity Statuses with Reasons for Belief in God

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<th>Foreclosure</th>
<th>Moratorium</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
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<td>-0.07</td>
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<td>-0.12**</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-0.22**</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.15**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-0.28**</td>
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<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.16**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
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<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.12**</td>
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*Note. *p*.05, **p*.01 (2-tailed)*
Table 18

Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting the Diffused Identity Status

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<th>SE B</th>
<th>β</th>
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*Note.* $R^2 = .04$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .14$ for Step 2.

**p<.01, *p<.05
Table 19

Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting the Foreclosed Identity Status

<table>
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<td>-0.26**</td>
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*Note.  $R^2 = .03$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .15$ for Step 2.*

**p<.01, *p<.05
Table 20

Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting the Moratorium Identity Status

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*Note. $R^2 = .01$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .07$ for Step 2.

**p<.01, *p<.05
Table 21

Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting the Achieved Identity Status

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Note. $R^2 = .01$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .04$ for Step 2.

**$p<.01$, *$p<.05$
Table 22

Summary of Moderated Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting the Diffused Identity Status

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<td>-0.14**</td>
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<td>Personal Experience</td>
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<td>0.22</td>
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Note. $R^2 = .04$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .14$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .05$ for Step 3.

**$p<.01$, *$p<.05$**
Table 23

Summary of Moderated Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting the Foreclosed Identity Status

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<td>0.62</td>
<td>-0.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.10</td>
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<td>-0.26**</td>
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<td>1.39</td>
<td>-0.16**</td>
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<td>0.09</td>
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<td>-0.11</td>
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*Note. $R^2 = .03$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .15$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .03$ for Step 3. 
**$p<.01$, *$p<.05$
Table 24

Summary of Moderated Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting the Moratorium Identity Status

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<th>$SE\ B$</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
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<td>-0.02</td>
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*Note. $R^2 = .01$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .07$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .04$ for Step 3.

**$p<.01$, *$p<.05$**
Table 25

Summary of Moderated Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting the Achieved Identity Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>β</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides Comfort</td>
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<td>-0.09</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.01</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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</table>

*Note. $R^2 = .01$ for Step 1; $\Delta R^2 = .04$ for Step 2; $\Delta R^2 = .03$ for Step 3.

**p<.01, *p<.05**
### Table 26

Parameter Estimates for Structural Equation Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BIG Predicting Diffusion</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F to BIG</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>S to BIG</td>
<td>3.36*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C to BIG</td>
<td>16.30*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FD to BIG</td>
<td>9.48*</td>
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<tr>
<td>E to BIG</td>
<td>9.37*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K to BIG</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIG to D</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BIG Predicting Foreclosure</strong></td>
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<td>C to BIG</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>FD to BIG</td>
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<tr>
<td>E to BIG</td>
<td>15.59*</td>
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<td>K to BIG</td>
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<td>BIG to M</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BIG Predicting Achievement</strong></td>
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<td>S to BIG</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIG to A</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note*.

F = Family, S = Social, C = Comfort, FD = Fear of Death, E = Experience, K = Knowledge, BIG = Belief in God, D = Diffusion, F = Foreclosure, M = Moratorium, A = Achievement.

*p < .05.*
Figure 1. Graph of Mean Standard Scores for Reasons for Belief in God
Figure 2. Graph of Mean Scores for Identity Statuses
Appendix A

Students in Postsecondary Education in New England

Postsecondary education in New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont) is quite different from the rest of the United States (Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2006). First, more than one half (54%) of colleges and universities in New England are private four-year institutions (compared to 41% nationwide) and 38% of students are enrolled in these institutions (compared to 18% nationwide). New England colleges also have a demographic profile that differs from most other regions in the United States, especially with respect to the racial and ethnic backgrounds of students. In New England, a lower proportion of students are students of Color. For example, in 2002, approximately 13% of students were Black, Hispanic, Asian, or Native American, compared to 29% across the country (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004). A more recent sampling (Fall 2007) of private four-year colleges in New England (n=28) from the National Center for Education Statistics, revealed that the average enrollment rate for students of Color was 19% (compared to the nationwide average of approximately 30% in 2006 and 2008; NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, 2009; National Center for Education Statistics, 2006; U.S. Census Bureau, unpublished data).

Such differences in student demographics and postsecondary education between New England and other regions of the United States, highlight the importance of studying college students in New England separate from college students in other areas of the country. The sample of participants obtained for the current study consists of students enrolled in private four-year colleges in New England. The demographic makeup of this sample is consistent with what is reported for private four-year institutions in New England. For example, in terms of the ethnic background of the current sample, 17% were students of Color. This percentage is consistent with the average percentage of ethnic minority students enrolled in private four-year institutions in New England (13% in 2002 and 19% in 2007). Moreover, the age and gender composition of the sample is essentially consistent with what can be seen among students at four-year institutions across the country (despite racial and ethnic group differences, reports indicate that the gender and age composition of students is not significantly impacted by the geographic location of institutions; Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2006; NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, 2009; National Center for Education Statistics, 2006; U.S. Census Bureau, unpublished data). The current sample is approximately 40% male and 60% female (compared to the national average of 37% male and 63% female in 2008 at predominantly four-year institutions; NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, 2009; National Center for Education Statistics, 2006;) and the majority of students (87%) range in age from 19-22 years (compared to the national average of 70% of students ranging in age from 19-22 years; NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, 2009).

Therefore, although the current sample is not as ethnically diverse as originally intended, the demographic composition of the sample is representative of the students enrolled in private four-year institutions in New England. As a result, the findings of this research project will be able to be generalized to such student populations.
Appendix B
Demographic Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions about yourself and your family. Please remember to record your responses on the scantron sheet.

1. What is your age?
   a. 18 years
   b. 19 years
   c. 20 years
   d. 21 years
   e. 22 years
   f. 23 years
   g. other __________ years

2. What is your sex?
   a. Male
   b. Female

3. What is your race/ethnicity?
   a. White, Not Hispanic
   b. Black, Not Hispanic
   c. Hispanic
   d. Asian
   e. Native American
   f. Biracial, (please specify): ________________________________
   g. Other, (please specify): ________________________________

4. Were you born in this country?
   a. Yes
   b. No

5. Was your mother born in this country?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. don’t know

6. Was your father born in this country?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. don’t know

7. Were your mother’s parents born in this country?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. don’t know

8. Were your father’s parents born in this country?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. don’t know
9. Is English your first language?
   a. Yes
   b. No
10. Is English your mother’s first language?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. don’t know
11. Is English your father’s first language?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. don’t know
12. Is English your mother’s parents’ first language?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. don’t know
13. Is English your father’s parents’ first language?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. don’t know
14. What is your religion?
    a. Catholic
    b. Protestant
    c. Jewish
    d. Muslim
    e. Hindu
    f. Buddhist
    g. atheist
    h. Other, (please specify): ________________________________
15. What is your mother’s religion?
    a. Catholic
    b. Protestant
    c. Jewish
    d. Muslim
    e. Hindu
    f. Buddhist
    g. atheist
    h. Other, (please specify): ________________________________
    i. don’t know
16. What is your father’s religion?
    a. Catholic
    b. Protestant
    c. Jewish
    d. Muslim
    e. Hindu
Who am I God?

f. Buddhist
g. atheist
h. Other, (please specify): ___________________________________________
i. don’t know

17. What is your mother’s parents’ religion?
a. Catholic
b. Protestant
c. Jewish
d. Muslim
e. Hindu
f. Buddhist
g. atheist
h. Other, (please specify): ___________________________________________
i. don’t know

18. What is your father’s parents’ religion?
a. Catholic
b. Protestant
c. Jewish
d. Muslim
e. Hindu
f. Buddhist
g. atheist
h. Other, (please specify): ___________________________________________
i. don’t know

19. How often do you attend religious services?
a. never
b. occasionally (mostly for major holidays)
c. frequently
d. weekly (for the most part)

20. How often does your mother attend religious services?
a. never
b. occasionally (mostly for major holidays)
c. frequently
d. weekly (for the most part)
e. don’t know

21. How often does your father attend religious services?
a. never
b. occasionally (mostly for major holidays)
c. frequently
d. weekly (for the most part)
e. don’t know
22. How often do/did your mother’s parents attend religious services?
   a. never
   b. occasionally (mostly for major holidays)
   c. frequently
   d. weekly (for the most part)
   e. don’t know

23. How often do/did your father’s parents attend religious services?
   a. never
   b. occasionally (mostly for major holidays)
   c. frequently
   d. weekly (for the most part)
   e. don’t know

24. Do you believe in God or a higher power?
   a. Yes
   b. No

25. Does your mother believe in God or a higher power?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. don’t know

26. Does your father believe in God or a higher power?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. don’t know

27. Do/did your mother’s parents believe in God or a higher power?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. don’t know

28. Do/did your father’s parents believe in God or a higher power?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. don’t know

29. What school do you currently attend?
   a. Boston College
   b. Fordham University
   c. Suffolk University

30. What year are you currently in at college?
   a. first year (e.g., freshman)
   b. second year (e.g., sophomore)
   c. third year (e.g., junior)
   d. fourth year (e.g., senior)
   e. fifth year
   f. other (please specify): ____________________________
31. Have you selected an undergraduate major area of study yet?
   a. Yes
   b. No

32. Do you currently live on your college’s campus?
   a. Yes
   b. No
Appendix C
EOM-EIS-II

Read each item carefully. Be sure to respond to the total item and not just a certain part of it. Using the range of responses (provided below) from strongly agree to strongly disagree, indicate to what degree it fits your own impressions about yourself. You may begin by thinking about whether you agree or disagree. Then you can decide how strongly you feel about it. Remember, I am interested in how these items either reflect or don’t reflect how you perceive your own situations. Please remember to record your responses on the scantron sheet.

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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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</table>

1. I haven’t chosen the occupation I really want to get into, and I’m just working at what is available until something better comes along.

2. When it comes to religion I just haven’t found anything that appeals and I don’t really feel the need to look.

3. My ideas about men’s and women’s roles are identical to my parents’. What has worked for them will obviously work for me.

4. There’s no single “life style” which appeals to me more than another.

5. There are a lot of different kinds of people. I’m still exploring the many possibilities to find the right kind of friends for me.

6. I sometimes join in recreational activities when asked, but I rarely try anything on my own.

7. I haven’t really thought about a “dating style.” I’m not too concerned whether I date or not.

8. Politics is something that I can never be too sure about because things change so fast. But I do think it’s important to know what I can politically stand for and believe in.

9. I’m still trying to decide how capable I am as a person and what work will be right for me.

10. I don’t give religion much thought and it doesn’t bother me one way or the other.
11. There’s so many ways to divide responsibilities in marriage, I’m trying to decide what will work for me.

12. I’m looking for an acceptable perspective for my own “life style”, but haven’t really found it yet.

13. There are many reasons for friendship, but I choose my close friends on the basis of certain values and similarities that I’ve personally decided on.

14. While I don’t have one recreational activity I’m really committed to, I’m experiencing numerous leisure outlets to identify one I can truly enjoy.

15. Based on past experiences, I’ve chosen the type of dating relationship I want now.

16. I haven’t really considered politics. It just doesn’t excite me much.

17. I might have thought about a lot of different jobs, but there’s never really been any question since my parents said what they wanted.

18. A person’s faith is unique to each individual. I’ve considered and reconsidered it myself and know what I can believe.

19. I’ve never really seriously considered men’s and women’s roles in marriage. It just doesn’t seem to concern me.

20. After considerable thought I’ve developed my own individual viewpoint of what is for me an ideal “life style” and don’t believe anyone will be likely to change my perspective.

21. My parents know what’s best for me in terms of how to choose my friends.

22. I’ve chosen one or more recreational activities to engage in regularly from lots of things and I’m satisfied with those choices.

23. I don’t think about dating much. I just kind of take it as it comes.

24. I guess I’m pretty much like my folks when it comes to politics. I follow what they do in terms of voting and such.

25. I’m not really interested in finding the right job, any job will do. I just seem to flow with what is available.

26. I’m not sure what religion means to me. I’d like to make up my mind but I’m not done looking yet.
27. My ideas about men’s and women’s roles have come right for my parents and family. I haven’t seen any need to look further.

28. My own views on a desirable life style were taught to me by my parents and I don’t see any need to question what they taught me.

29. I don’t have any real close friends, and I don’t think I’m looking for one right now.

30. Sometimes I join in leisure activities, but I really don’t see a need to look for a particular activity to do regularly.

31. I’m trying out different types of dating relationships. I just haven’t decided what is best for me.

32. There are so many different political parties and ideals. I can’t decide which to follow until I figure it all out.

33. It took me a while to figure it out, but now I really know what I want for a career.

34. Religion is confusing to me right now. I keep changing my views on what is right and wrong for me.

35. I’ve spent some time thinking about men’s and women’s roles in marriage and I’ve decided what will work best for me.

36. In finding an acceptable viewpoint to life itself, I find myself engaging in a lot of discussions with others and some self exploration.

37. I only pick friends my parent would approve of.

38. I’ve always liked doing the same recreational activities my parents do and haven’t ever seriously considered anything else.

39. I only go out with the type of people my parents expect me to date.

40. I’ve thought my political beliefs through and realize I can agree with some and not other aspects of what my parents believe.

41. My parents decided a long time ago what I should go into for employment and I’m following through their plans.

42. I’ve gone through a period of serious questions about faith and can now say I understand what I believe in as an individual.
43. I’ve been thinking about the roles that husbands and wives play a lot these days, and I’m trying to make a final decision.

44. My parents’ views on life are good enough for me, I don’t need anything else.

45. I’ve had many different friendships and now I have a clear idea of what I look for in a friend.

46. After trying a lot of different recreational activities I’ve found one or more I really enjoy doing by myself or with friends.

47. My preferences about dating are still in the process of developing. I haven’t fully decided yet.

48. I’m not sure about my political beliefs, but I’m trying to figure out what I can truly believe in.

49. It took me a long time to decide but now I know for sure what direction to move in for a career.

50. I attend the same church as my family has always attended. I’ve never really questioned why.

51. There are many ways that married couples can divide up family responsibilities. I’ve thought about lots of ways, and now I know exactly how I want it to happen for me.

52. I guess I just kind of enjoy life in general, and I don’t see myself living by any particular viewpoint to life.

53. I don’t have any close friends. I just like to hang around with the crowd.

54. I’ve been experiencing a variety of recreational activities in hope of finding one or more I can really enjoy for some time to come.

55. I’ve dated different types of people and know exactly what my own “unwritten rules” for dating are and who I will date.

56. I really have never been involved in politics enough to have made a firm stand one way or the other.

57. I just can’t decide what to do for an occupation. There are so many possibilities.
58. I’ve never really questioned my religion. If it’s right for my parents it must be right for me.

59. Opinions on men’s and women’s roles seem so varied that I don’t think much about it.

60. After a lot of self-examination I have established a very definite view on what my own life style will be.

61. I really don’t know what kind of friend is best for me. I’m trying to figure out exactly what friendship means to me.

62. All of my recreational preferences I got from my parents and I haven’t really tried anything else.

63. I date only people my parents would approve of.

64. My folks have always had their own political and moral beliefs about issues like abortion and mercy killing and I’ve always gone along accepting what they have.
Appendix D

FBIG

For each statement, use the following scale to indicate how true each statement is for you. Please try to complete all of the items on this questionnaire and please make every effort to be as honest as you can. The term “God” is used in reference to any God(s) or higher power(s) in which you may believe. If you do not believe in the existence of any God, please respond to each question with the number 1, which signifies that the statement is “not at all true of you.” Please remember to record your responses on the scantron sheet.

1          2          3          4          5          6          7          8          9
not at all true of me                   very true of me

1. I believe in the existence of God because it is tradition within my family to believe in God.
2. I believe in the existence of God because believing in God is a source of personal comfort.
3. I believe in the existence of God because my parents instilled this belief in me.
4. I believe in the existence of God because there are too many phenomena that science cannot explain.
5. I believe in the existence of God because my parents believe(d) in God.
6. I believe in the existence of God because believing in God provides me with a sense of comfort.
7. I believe in the existence of God because I have seen God answer the prayers of others.
8. I believe in the existence of God because I am fearful of what will happen when I die.
9. I believe in the existence of God because I feel better about myself by believing.
10. I believe in the existence of God because death frightens me.
11. I believe in the existence of God because members of my family have always believed in God.
12. I believe in the existence of God because believing makes me less anxious about the prospect of dying.
13. I believe in the existence of God because I was raised to believe in God.
14. I believe in the existence of God because I have personally experienced a miracle.
15. I believe in the existence of God because believing in God brings with it the promise of an afterlife.

16. I believe in the existence of God because a belief in God has always been a central belief in my family.

17. I believe in the existence of God because God provides a better understanding of life’s origins than any other explanation.

18. I believe in the existence of God because it is the socially appropriate thing to do.

19. I believe in the existence of God because I have seen God intervene in the lives of others.

20. I believe in the existence of God because God is the best explanation for the origins of the universe.

21. I believe in the existence of God because the promise of something more after death makes me content.

22. I believe in the existence of God because believing in God gives my life a sense of direction.

23. I believe in the existence of God because I want to be accepted by society.

24. I believe in the existence of God because I am afraid of being shunned by family and peers for not believing.

25. I believe in the existence of God because believing in God influences me to do good in the world.

26. I believe in the existence of God because I don’t believe we could exist without some creator.

27. I believe in the existence of God because it is a good way to make friends and meet new people.

28. I believe in the existence of God because most people, in general, believe in God.

29. I believe in the existence of God because I want to be accepted by my peers.

30. I believe in the existence of God because I have personally experienced God.

31. I believe in the existence of God because believing gives my life a sense of meaning.

32. I believe in the existence of God because God has intervened in my life.

33. I believe in the existence of God because only God can explain the mysteries of the world.
34. I believe in the existence of God because someone must be responsible for the creation of the world.

35. I believe in the existence of God because I have prayed and God has answered my prayers.
Appendix E  
Timeline Summary of the Creation of the FBIG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Fall 2001-Winter 2002 | Qualitative Data Collection  | 100 (double check this number) undergraduate students from a college near Albany NY wrote short essays in response to the following statement: “I believe in God because.” Responses were read and coded by 4 researchers and the most common responses were utilized as a basis for creating the subscales and likert-type questions. Themes emerged in the following areas:  
   1. Family Tradition  
   2. Social Connection  
   3. Provides Comfort  
   4. Fear of Death  
   5. Personal Experience  
   6. Provides Knowledge |
<p>| Winter-Spring 2002  | Scale construction           | 100 likert-type questions were created by a team of researchers based on the themes of responses to the open-ended question.                                                                                  |
| Summer 2002        | Quantitative Data Collection | The 100-item questionnaire was administered to a convenient sample of 500 late adolescents and young adults.                                                                                               |
| Fall 2002          | Data Analysis                 | Factor analyses with Varimax and Equamax rotations were run on the data. Based on qualitative data, 6 and 7 factors were forced in the analyses. Factors were considered to be loading high enough on a factor if they loaded above 0.4. Therefore, items loading at or above 0.4 maintained their status in the scale. |
| Fall 2002          | Data Collection and Data Entry| The 48-item questionnaire was administered to a convenient sample of approximately 300 people. Participants came primarily from a private liberal arts undergraduate college and a local community college. All participants were enrolled in “undergraduate courses.” |
| Summer 2003        | Data Collection and Data Entry| The 48-item questionnaire was administered to a convenient sample of approximately 250 young adults in the Capital region in NY.                                                                           |
| Fall 2003          | Scale Reduction               | Factor analyses with Varimax and Equamax rotations were run on the datasets from Fall 2002 and Summer 2003. Results from the FA indicated that items loaded with their appropriate/intended subscale. Based on the factor loadings, the scale was reduced |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2004</td>
<td>Scale Revision</td>
<td>The scale was reduced by one additional item (leaving a total of 35 items) because an error was made in the Fall 2003 reduction. The “Fear of Death” scale had 5 items, the “Family Tradition” scale had 7 items, and the remaining scales had 6 items. The “Family Tradition” scale item with the lowest loading was deleted from the scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2004</td>
<td>Data Collection and Data Entry</td>
<td>The 35-item questionnaire was administered to a convenient sample of 250 undergraduate students at Boston College. All students were taking classes in the Lynch School of Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer-Fall 2006</td>
<td>Initial attempt at CFA</td>
<td>A CFA Model was created based on the items that emerged as factors in the initial FA (Fall 2002). The model was designed such that each item was expected to load exclusively with the factor with which it was intended to belong. The datasets from Fall 2002, Summer 2003, and Fall 2004 were combined and used in the CFA. The model did not emerge as a good fit. The speculated cause of the misfit is that the items did not load exclusively with their respective factors in the initial FA. The model needs to account for cross-loadings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2006 – Winter 2007</td>
<td>Factor Analyses calculated</td>
<td>Factor Analyses (Principle Component with Varimax and Principle Component with Equamax) were calculated for the datasets from Fall 2002, Summer 2003, and Fall 2004. 6 factors were forced in the analyses. Similarities between item loadings were examined between the datasets. The items intended for each of the subscales loaded together and in a similar manner across the three datasets (consistent with initial loadings in data from Fall 2002).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter-Spring 2007</td>
<td>Congruence Coefficients calculated</td>
<td>Congruence coefficients were calculated for the scale between the datasets from Fall 2002, Summer 2003, and Fall 2004. The congruence coefficient calculations were based on the Principle Component with Varimax factor analyses. The congruence coefficients produced initial statistical evidence for the structure of scale across datasets.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F

Examining the Construct Validity of the FBIG Inventory: A Pilot Study

The purpose of this pilot study was to examine the construct validity of the Functions for Belief in God Inventory. Previous research has revealed adequate alpha levels for this scale, but the construct validity has not yet been explored. The constructs measured by the Functions for Belief in God inventory were compared to the constructs assessed by Piedmont’s (2004) Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments scale. The following section provides a detailed description of each of these scales as well as the constructs being measured by each.

Measures

Functions for Belief in God Inventory

The Functions for Belief in God inventory (FBIG) was used to measure reasons for belief in God (or a higher power) among the participants. The FBIG is a 35-item, self-report scale designed to assess college students’ motivations for (i.e., reasons why) belief in God or a higher power (DeBono & DeSilva, unpublished). The inventory is made up of six subscales or motivations: Family Tradition (people believe because it is they were raised to believe in God by their parents and other family members), Social Connection (people believe because other people in their life do and it is a good way to get to know others), Provides Comfort (people believe because it provides a sense of comfort and meaning in their life), Provides Knowledge (people believe because it is the best explanation for the origins of the earth), Personal Experience (people believe because they have witnessed something that they can only attribute to the work of God), and Promise of Life after Death (people because it provides the promise of life after death and helps to alleviate anxiety around the prospect of dying). Of the 35 items, 6 assess for Family Tradition, 6 for Social Connection, 6 for Provides Comfort, 5 for Fear of Death, 6 for Personal Experience, and 6 for Provides Knowledge. Sample items for the scale include “I believe in the existence of God because it is tradition within my family to believe in God” (Family Tradition), “I believe in the existence of God because it is the socially appropriate thing to do” (Social Connection), “I believe in the existence of God because it provides me with a sense of comfort” (Provides Comfort), “I believe in the existence of God because God is the best explanation for the origins of the universe” (Provides Knowledge), “I believe in the existence of God because I have seen God intervene in the lives of others” (Personal Experience), and “I believe in the existence of God because believing brings with it the promise of an afterlife” (Promise of Life After Death).

Although this scale has not yet been published, internal reliability consistency estimates for scores on the FBIG have been calculated for 3 different samples of college students. These are the samples that have been used in the development of this measure. Among these samples, Cronbach’s alpha values have ranged from 0.86 to 0.90 for the subscales. The following Cronbach’s alpha values have been obtained for the different motivations for belief in God: Family Tradition, .96; Social Connection, .85; Provides...
Comfort, .93; Fear of Death, .90; Personal Experience, .93; and Provides Knowledge, .93. Cronbach’s alpha values for the current sample were: Family Tradition, .97; Social Connection, .86; Provides Comfort, .91; Provides Knowledge, .85; Personal Experience, .94; and Fear of Death, .90. The samples used in these studies (including the current study) were not diverse with respect to ethnic background. As a result, internal reliability consistency estimates are not available for ethnic minority college students.

Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments

The Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments (ASPIRES) was developed by Piedmont (2004) to measure religious sentiments and spiritual transcendence. The religious sentiments component is composed of two domains and 12 questions. Eight questions assess for religiosity and 4 measure religious crisis. Religiosity includes involvement in religious behaviors and the level of importance these activities represent to the person. This domain also includes experiences of connection to a higher being and the quality of relationship one has to that higher being. Sample items for the religiosity domain include “How important to you are your religious beliefs?” and “To what extent do you have a personal, unique, close relationship with God?” The religious crisis domain examines whether a person may be experiencing problems, difficulties, or conflicts with the God of their understanding and/or their faith community. Sample items for this domain include “I feel that God is punishing me” and “I find myself unable, or unwilling, to involve God in the decisions I make about my life.”

The spiritual transcendence component represents a motivational construct that reflects one’s efforts to create a broad sense of personal meaning in life. Those high on transcendence are able to find a larger sense of meaning and purpose that goes beyond their immediate sense of time and place. This section of the ASPIRES is made up of 23 questions and there are three scales that comprise it—prayer fulfillment (10 questions), universality (7 questions), and connectedness (6 questions). Items in each domain are rated from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). Prayer fulfillment refers to the ability to create personal space that enables one to feel a positive connection to some larger reality. A sample item from the prayer fulfillment domain is “I meditate and/or pray so that I can reach a higher spiritual level.” Universality examines the extent to which one possesses belief in a larger meaning and purpose to life and a sample item includes “I believe that on some level my life is intimately tied to all of humankind.” Lastly, connectedness refers to feelings of belonging and responsibility to a larger human reality that cuts across generations and groups. A sample item from this domain is “Although dead, memories and thoughts of some of my relatives continue to influence my current life.”

Alpha reliability coefficients have been calculated for scores obtained on each of the religious sentiments and spiritual transcendence scales. Piedmont (2004) reported the following Cronbach alpha values: Religiosity, .89; Religious Crisis, .75; Prayer Fulfillment, .94; Universality, .78; Connectedness, .49; and Total Spiritual Transcendence, .89. Piedmont reported adequate levels of convergent validity where each scale of the ASPIRES correlated significantly across self-report and observer forms. Additionally, Piedmont (2004) found high positive correlations between religiosity and spiritual transcendence and negative correlations between religious crisis and spiritual
transcendence. The APSIRES scales have also been found to correlate with other psychosocial criteria, such as feelings of life satisfaction and well-being, psychological maturity, interpersonal style, and attitudes towards sexuality Piedmont 2004). Evidence of divergent validity was found when Piedmont (1999) examined the spiritual transcendence scales in the context of the Five-Factor Model of Personality (an empirically derived, comprehensive taxonomy of traditionally defined personality constructs) and found a relatively small overlap between spiritual transcendence and each of the five-factors of personality.

**Rationale for Selecting the ASPIRES**

The ASPIRES was selected as a measure to examine the construct validity of the FBIG for two primary reasons. First, both the FBIG and the ASPIRES were developed on a sample of college students. Second, the ASPIRES measures some constructs that are similar to those measured by the FBIG and some that are not. Therefore, using this scale allows for an assessment of both convergent and divergent construct validity. Below is a table illustrating the expected convergences and divergences between the FBIG and ASPIRES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASPIRES Scales</th>
<th>FBIG Scales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>R eligiosity</strong></td>
<td>Family Tradition, Social Connectedness, Personal Comfort, Experience, Knowledge, Promise of Life after Death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Religiosity scale from the Aspires was expected to relate to each of the FBIG scales because it measures religious beliefs as well as experiences of connection to a higher being and the quality of relationship one has to that higher being. Both of these scales address belief in God, but from slightly different angles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious Crisis</strong></td>
<td>Family Tradition, Social Connectedness, Personal Comfort, Experience, Knowledge, Promise of Life after Death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Religious Crisis scale from the ASPIRES was expected to correlate negatively with each of the FBIG scales because it measures the extent to which people are experiencing conflict with their God. Both of these scales address belief in God, but from slightly different angles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual Transcendence</strong></td>
<td>Personal Comfort, Social Connectedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Total Spiritual Transcendence Scale was expected to relate to the Personal Comfort scale on the FBIG because each of these scales address finding personal meaning and direction in life. The Spiritual Transcendence Scale was also expected to relate to the Social Connectedness scale on the FBIG because each scale addresses seeking a sense of connection with others (with spirituality as the catalyst for this connection).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prayer Fulfillment</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Prayer Fulfillment scale from the ASPIRES was not expected to relate to any of the FBIG scales because this scale measures the extent to which people benefit from prayer, which is different from belief in God. Although some people may choose to pray to a God, they are not necessarily related.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Universality</strong></td>
<td>Personal Comfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Universality scale from the ASPIRES was expected to relate to the Personal Comfort Scale on the FBIG because each addresses finding meaning in life.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connectedness</strong></td>
<td>Family Tradition, Social Connectedness, Personal Comfort, Experience, Knowledge, Promise of Life after Death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Connectedness scale from the Aspires was expected to relate to each of the FBIG scales because it measures the extent to which people feel a sense of connection and belongingness. In her research, King (2003) identified belief in God as an important source of connection, especially for young adults.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participants**

Participants for the study were recruited from undergraduate classes. This sample was selected because both the ASPIRES and the FBIG were created and normed on samples of college students. Additionally, this is the sample that the scale will be used on in the larger dissertation study.
Sixty undergraduate students enrolled in human development classes (2 different classes) participated in this pilot study. However, data from only 46 of the participants could be used due to inaccurate responses on the scantron sheet from the remaining 14. Specifically, 14 of the participants had either 120 or 122 responses, when completed surveys should have had 121 responses. This suggests that the participants mis-marked the scantron sheet (perhaps inadvertently skipping a question or responding to the same question twice)—making it unclear how they would have responded to the questions. Therefore, the following description (as well as the reported results) is based on the sample of 46 participants who correctly marked their responses on the scantron sheet.

Of the 46 participants who had usable data, 85% (n=39) were female and 15% (n=7) were male. The large majority of participants reported being 19 (37%; n=17), 20 (24%; n=11), or 21 (20%; n=9) years old. Nine percent (n=4) of participants reported being 18 years old and another 9% reported being 22 years old. Only one participant reported being 23 years old. The participants were fairly equally dispersed in their years in college, with 22% (n=10) being first year students, 34% (n=16) second year students, 22% (n=10) third year students, and 20% (n=9) fourth year students. There was just one participant (2%) in his/her fifth year of college. Most of the participants identified as White, not Hispanic (72%; n=33) and reported being born in the United States (89%; n=41). The remaining participants identified as Black, not Hispanic (9%; n=4), Hispanic (9%; n=4), Asian (4%; n=2), Biracial (2%; n=1), and other (4%; n=2).

Participants also provided basic information regarding their religion and spirituality. With respect to religious background, 58% (n=26) of participants identified as Catholic, 9% (n=4) as Protestant, 2% (n=1) as Jewish, 4% (n=2) as Atheist, and 27% (n=12) as other. Twenty-two percent (n=10) of the participants reported attending religious services “weekly (for the most part),” 17% (n=8) reported attending “frequently,” 46% (n=21) reported that they attend religious services “occasionally (mostly for major holidays),” and 15% (n=7) of participants reported never attending religious services. When asked about their belief in God, the vast majority of participants reported that they do believe in God (96%; n=43), while only 2 participants (4%) reported that they do not believe. One participant did not respond to this question.

Results

In order to examine the construct validity of the FBIG, Pearson-product-moment correlations were run among each of the FBIG subscales (Family Tradition, Social Connectedness, Personal Comfort, Knowledge, and Promise of Life after Death) and each of the ASPIRES subscales (Religiosity, Religious Crisis, Spiritual Transcendence, Universality, Connectedness, and Prayer Fulfillment). The following is the correlation matrix of these subscales. The bold boxes indicate where relationships (either positive or negative) were expected to emerge between the different subscales (as described in the previously presented table outlining the rationale for selecting the ASPIRES as a comparison measure). Please note that the bold boxes do not indicate which relationships were significant—just those that were expected to be significant.
Summary of Results

Overall, results from this pilot study provide evidence of construct validity (both convergent and divergent) for the Functions for Belief in God inventory. With respect to convergent validity, Piedmont’s (2004) domains of Religiosity and Connectedness appear to be consistent with the theoretical constructs measured by the FBIG. The Religiosity and FBIG subscales each capture the belief in God aspect of spirituality. In a similar vein, the Connectedness and FBIG subscales each address experiences of connection and belongingness. The theoretical constructs of Personal Comfort and Social Connection also converged with Piedmont’s construct of Spiritual Transcendence, where both of these scales addresses an important component of Piedmont’s construct of Spiritual Transcendence. Specifically, Personal Comfort taps into the search for meaning and direction captured in Spiritual Transcendence and Social Connection maps onto the desire to be connected to other people and things through spiritual means that is an important aspect of Spiritual Transcendence. Although the correlations between the FBIG subscales and Piedmont’s Religious Crisis were not statistically significant, it is important to note that the relationship between the variables was in the expected direction. The scales were negatively correlated, where higher scores on the FBIG scales (indicative of stronger beliefs in God) were expected to be related to lower scores on the religious crisis scale (which addresses feelings of conflict with God).

It is also important to note the correlations that were not significant, which provide evidence of divergent validity. The subscales from the FBIG (with the exception of Personal Comfort) were not related to Spiritual Transcendence, Prayer Fulfillment, and Universality. Relationships were not expected between these scales due to differences in the constructs being measured by each. Although they may all fall within the broad realm of spirituality, the constructs measured by the Spiritual Transcendence, Prayer Fulfillment, Universality, and FBIG examine different aspects within spirituality. Therefore, while they may be related for some people, they are not necessarily related. This explains why significant relationships did not emerge between these scales.

Conclusions

Overall, the results from this preliminary study provide sufficient evidence for utilizing the FBIG in research on college students. The six different subscales of the FBIG were each related to well-known and well-measured constructs of religiosity and spirituality. In particular, as expected, they correlated with the ASPIRES scales of religiosity, connectedness, and spiritual transcendence. Each of these constructs address experiences of connection, belongingness, and the search for meaning and direction in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Tradition</th>
<th>Religiosity</th>
<th>Religious Crisis</th>
<th>Spiritual Transcendence</th>
<th>Universality</th>
<th>Connectedness</th>
<th>Prayer Fulfillment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Connection</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-0.038</td>
<td>0.260*</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>0.344**</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides Comfort</td>
<td>0.673**</td>
<td>-0.124</td>
<td>0.341*</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.393**</td>
<td>0.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides Knowledge</td>
<td>0.680**</td>
<td>-0.078</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
<td>0.254*</td>
<td>0.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of Death</td>
<td>0.474**</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>0.363**</td>
<td>-0.056</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=46
* p < .05 level (1-tailed)
** p < .01 level (1-tailed)
life, which are the aspects of spirituality that the FBIG are intended to measure. As outlined in previous literature (much of which the development of the FBIG is based on), belief in God provides individuals with a sense of connection and also an avenue through which they are able to find a sense of meaning in the world (e.g., King, 2003; Paloutzian 1996). Therefore, by measuring the different reasons why people believe in God, the FBIG measures the specific ways in which people are able to experience the sense of connection and search for meaning that are inherent in belief in God.

Additionally, when considering the utility of the FBIG, it is also important to recognize that its scales were not related to scales on the ASPIRES that tapped into aspects of religiosity and spirituality that are separate from beliefs in God and connectedness. This provides evidence for the fact that the FBIG is measuring certain aspects of spirituality (aspects that King [2003] outlined as facilitators of identity development), but not the broad construct of spirituality. Given the evidence of both convergence and divergence between the FBIG and the ASPIRES (on a sample of college students), the results from this preliminary study provide enough verification for utilizing the FBIG in research on college students.
Hello my name is Angela DeSilva and I want to tell you about a study that I am conducting in order to complete my doctoral degree in Counseling Psychology at Boston College. For my dissertation, I have decided to explore the relationship between belief in God and identity among college students. I selected this topic for two reasons. First it is personally very interesting to me and second previous research has theorized that spirituality can be an important avenue through which college students develop their identity or sense of self. Currently, however, research has not explicitly examined the role that belief in God can play in the identity development of college students. Therefore, this study will investigate a new area of identity development.

I want to invite each of you to participate in my study. Participation in the study will only entail 15-30 minutes where you will independently complete three questionnaires. All of the questions are multiple choice and your responses will be recorded on a scantron sheet. You can skip any questions that you are not comfortable answering and you can stop participating at any time if you want to or need to. The only requirements for participation in the study are that you attend a four-year residential college, that you are able to fluently speak English, and that you are 18 years of age. You do not have to believe in God to participate. The study will include examinations of identity for college students who do not believe in God. All of your responses will be kept confidential and your name will not be able to be paired with your responses. Additionally, results will only be reported in group format. Your participation is completely voluntary and your grade in this class/membership in this club will in no way be impacted by your participation in this study. If you do choose to participate in this study, you will receive a $5.00 gift card to Dukin’ Donuts for your time and effort. Finally, if you choose to participate in the study, you can sign up to have the results of the study sent to you upon completion of the study.

I have brought a sign-up form for those of you who are interested in volunteering to participate in the study. The form asks for you to print your name and email address in the space below the time that you are available to attend. I am asking for your email address so that I can send an email to you one day prior to your scheduled time to remind you about your participation in the study. If you are not available during any of the listed days and times, please record your name, email address, and available times and I will contact you via email to schedule an alternative time. I will destroy the sign up form after we have met for the study and your email address will never be paired with your responses to the questionnaires or used for any purpose other than to remind you about the your scheduled time for participation in the study.

Are there any questions about the study? Questions can be about the purpose of the study or the role you will play in participating in the study. If you do not have questions now, you can always contact me later at angelamdesilva@gmail.com with any questions that may come up for you.
### Appendix H
Sample Sign-Up Form for Participation in Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date and Time</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday April 20, 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday April 20, 2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are not available during any of those days/times, please record your name, email address, and available times below and I will contact you via email to schedule a time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Available Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I
Informed Consent Form

Participant Consent to Participate in a Research Study

I am inviting you to participate in a research study that I (Angela DeSilva, a doctoral candidate in Counseling Psychology at Boston College) am conducting. The purpose of this study is to expand current knowledge about the sense of identity of college students, and particularly to understand how belief in God (or a higher power) may contribute to their identity formation process. I am asking you to take part in the study because you are attending college at a four-year residential university. You do not have to believe in God (or a higher power) to participate in this study. I want to include college students from a variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds and I expect about 350-400 college students to take part in the study.

This survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Participation in the study is completely voluntary, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty, and you may skip any questions that you are not comfortable answering. Your grade in your class/membership in your club will in no way be impacted by your decision about whether to participate in this study, by the responses that you provide, or if you choose to skip any questions. Only the researcher will have access to survey materials and your name will not be able to be paired with your responses to the questions. As a participant in this study, you will receive a $5.00 Dunkin’ Donuts gift card as a token of my appreciation for your time and effort.

You are eligible to participate in this study if you are:
* Currently enrolled as a student at a four-year residential college
* 18 years or older
* Able to read and speak English

Procedure:
You will sit in a room with other college students and I will ask you to independently read and respond to a series of multiple-choice questions on three different questionnaires. You do not have to write to participate in this study. You will only have to record your responses on the scantron sheet that you will find at the front of the packet of questionnaires. These questionnaires have been used with other college students and include questions about yourself, your belief in God (or a higher power), and the ways you think about things such as relationships, politics, and religion. The whole process should take approximately 30 minutes and this will be your only contribution to my study.

Benefits and Risks of Participation:
This study is not designed for your direct benefit. However, I hope that the results of this study will help researchers, counselors, educators, religious organizations, and families understand the important role of spirituality in the identity development process of college students.

The questionnaires used in this study have been used with other college students. They do not pose any known risks to you. If you have difficulty with or feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions you can refuse to answer and skip the question.
Withdrawal from the study:
At any point in the study, you may choose to stop participating in the research project. This decision will have no effect on your grade in your class/membership in your club. You will still receive the $5.00 Dunkin’ Donuts gift card even if you are not able to complete the study.

Costs:
There will be no direct cost other than your time.

Compensation:
As a thank you, we will be giving you a $5 Dunkin’ Donuts gift card for participating in the study. You will receive this gift card whether or not you complete the study.

Confidentiality:
The surveys will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. You will not put your name on the scantron answer sheets. Numbers will be assigned to the questionnaires and demographic information collected to help me organize the data. All information obtained from this study will be kept in locked files. No one else will see this consent form but me. This consent form will be collected and kept separate from all other study information. I will destroy all the consent forms by shredding them five years after the results are published. The anonymous surveys will be kept for use in future research.

I will enter the information you give me into an electronic database and analyze it. I will combine your information with information from other college students taking part in the study. I will write up the study as my part of doctoral program requirements and also to share it with other researchers at meetings or in journals. However, I will only write about the combined group information.

Questions:
If you have any questions or concerns about the survey or your participation, please feel free to contact me (the primary researcher) or my research advisor:

Angela M. DeSilva, MA
Doctoral Candidate
Boston College
203-676-3917
desilvan@bc.edu

Guerda Nicolas, Ph.D.
Professor, Counseling Psychology
University of Miami
305-284-9124
nguerda@miami.edu

This study has been approved by my University's Institutional Review Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the Office for Protection of Human Subjects, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467 (617-552-4778). This Office oversees the review of the research to protect your rights and is not involved with this study.

Certification:
I have read and I understand this Informed Consent document. I understand the purpose of the research project. I understand what I will be asked to do. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I have been answered satisfactorily.

I understand that I may stop participating in this research study at anytime. I know that I can refuse to answer any questions. I also understand that my name will not appear on any of the
surveys. I understand that my information will be kept private and that I will not be identified in reports on this research.

I hereby give my informed and free consent to be a participant in this study.

Date

Consent Signature of Participant

Printed Name of Participant
Appendix J
Participant Debriefing Form

Who am I God?
An Examination of the Role of Belief in God in the Identity Development of Young Adults

Thank you very much for participating in my research project today!

Your time and effort are very much appreciated. I hope you enjoy the $5.00 Dunkin’ Donuts gift card! I will use the information you shared today to learn more about how college students use their belief in God to help them develop their sense of self. Your responses, whether you believe in God or not, have been very valuable to me.

Your responses will be read only by me. Your name will not be on any of these materials. No individuals will be identified by name in my reports.

If you are interested in the results of this study when it is completed, please let me know before leaving today, or feel free to contact me in the future. If you have any other questions, you can call or e-mail me (Angela DeSilva) at (203) 676-3917, desilvan@bc.edu.
Appendix K
Initial Hypothesized Structural Equation Model
Appendix L
Command File for Belief in God Predicting Identity

/TITLE
Belief in God Predicting Identity
/SPECIFICATIONS
VARIABLES = 99; CASES = 306;
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MATRIX = RAW;
METHOD = ML, Robust;
ANALYSIS = COVARIANCE;
/LABELS
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V8 = EOM8; V9 = EOM9; V10 = EOM10; V11 = EOM11; V12 = EOM12; V13 = EOM13;
V14 = EOM14; V15 = EOM15; V16 = EOM16; V17 = EOM17; V18 = EOM18; V19 = EOM19;
V20 = EOM20; V21 = EOM21; V22 = EOM22; V23 = EOM23; V24 = EOM24; V25 = EOM25;
V26 = EOM26; V27 = EOM27; V28 = EOM28; V29 = EOM29; V30 = EOM30; V31 = EOM31;
V32 = EOM32; V33 = EOM33; V34 = EOM34; V35 = EOM35; V36 = EOM36; V37 = EOM37;
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V50 = EOM50; V51 = EOM51; V52 = EOM52; V53 = EOM53; V54 = EOM54; V55 = EOM55;
V56 = EOM56; V57 = EOM57; V58 = EOM58; V59 = EOM59; V60 = EOM60; V61 = EOM61;
V62 = EOM62; V63 = EOM63; V64 = EOM64; V65 = GOD1; V66 = GOD2; V67 = GOD3;
V68 = GOD4; V69 = GOD5; V70 = GOD6; V71 = GOD7; V72 = GOD8; V73 = GOD9;
V74 = GOD10; V75 = GOD11; V76 = GOD12; V77 = GOD13; V78 = GOD14; V79 = GOD15;
V80 = GOD16; V81 = GOD17; V82 = GOD18; V83 = GOD19; V84 = GOD20; V85 = GOD21;
V86 = GOD22; V87 = GOD23; V88 = GOD24; V89 = GOD25; V90 = GOD26; V91 = GOD27;
V92 = GOD28; V93 = GOD29; V94 = GOD30; V95 = GOD31; V96 = GOD32; V97 = GOD33;
V98 = GOD34; V99 = GOD35;
F1 = Diffusion; F2 = Foreclosure; F3 = Moratorium; F4 = Achievement; F5 = Identity
F11 = Family; F12 = Social; F13 = Comfort; F14 = Knowledge; F15 = Experience; F16 = Fear;
F17 = Belief_In_God;
/EQUATIONS
V1 = *F1 + E1;
V2 = *F1 + E2;
V4 = *F1 + E4;
V10 = *F1 + E10;
V16 = *F1 + E16;
V25 = *F1 + E25;
V52 = *F1 + E52;
V56 = *F1 + E56;
V6 = *F1 + E6;
V7 = *F1 + E7;
V19 = *F1 + E19;
V23 = *F1 + E23;
V29 = *F1 + E29;
V30 = *F1 + E30;
V53 = *F1 + E53;
V59 = *F1 + E59;
  V17 = *F2 + E17;
  V24 = *F2 + E24;
  V28 = *F2 + E28;
  V41 = *F2 + E41;
  V44 = *F2 + E44;
  V50 = *F2 + E50;
  V58 = *F2 + E58;
  V64 = *F2 + E64;
  V3 = *F2 + E3;
  V21 = *F2 + E21;
  V27 = *F2 + E27;
  V37 = *F2 + E37;
  V38 = *F2 + E38;
  V39 = *F2 + E39;
  V62 = *F2 + E62;
  V63 = *F2 + E63;
    V9 = *F3 + E9;
    V12 = *F3 + E12;
    V26 = *F3 + E26;
    V32 = *F3 + E32;
    V34 = *F3 + E34;
    V36 = *F3 + E36;
    V48 = *F3 + E48;
    V57 = *F3 + E57;
    V5 = *F3 + E5;
    V11 = *F3 + E11;
    V14 = *F3 + E14;
    V31 = *F3 + E31;
    V43 = *F3 + E43;
    V47 = *F3 + E47;
    V54 = *F3 + E54;
  V61 = *F3 + E61;
    V8 = *F4 + E8;
    V18 = *F4 + E18;
    V20 = *F4 + E20;
    V33 = *F4 + E33;
    V40 = *F4 + E40;
    V42 = *F4 + E42;
    V49 = *F4 + E49;
V60 = *F4 + E60;
V13 = *F4 + E13;
V15 = *F4 + E15;
V22 = *F4 + E22;
V35 = *F4 + E35;
V45 = *F4 + E45;
V46 = *F4 + E46;
V51 = *F4 + E51;
V55 = *F4 + E55;
V65 = *F11 + E65;
V67 = *F11 + E67;
V69 = *F11 + E69;
V75 = *F11 + E75;
V77 = *F11 + E77;
V80 = *F11 + E80;
V82 = *F12 + E82;
V87 = *F12 + E87;
V88 = *F12 + E88;
V91 = *F12 + E91;
V92 = *F12 + E92;
V93 = *F12 + E93;
V66 = *F13 + E66;
V70 = *F13 + E70;
V73 = *F13 + E73;
V86 = *F13 + E86;
V89 = *F13 + E89;
V95 = *F13 + E95;
V68 = *F14 + E68;
V81 = *F14 + E81;
V84 = *F14 + E84;
V90 = *F14 + E90;
V97 = *F14 + E97;
V98 = *F14 + E98;
V71 = *F15 + E71;
V78 = *F15 + E78;
V83 = *F15 + E83;
V94 = *F15 + E94;
V96 = *F15 + E96;
V99 = *F15 + E99;
V72 = *F16 + E72;
V74 = *F16 + E74;
V76 = *F16 + E76;
V79 = *F16 + E79;
V85 = *F16 + E85;
F17 = *F11 + *F12 + *F13 + *F14 + *F15 + *F16 + D17;
F5 = *F1 + *F2 + *F3 + *F4 + D5;
F5 = *F17 + D5;
/VARIANCES
F11 TO F16 = *;
E1 TO E99 = *;
/COVARIANCES
E2, E10 = *; E16, E56 = *; E25, E1 = *; E4, E52 = *; E6, E30 = *; E7, E23 = *;
E29, E53 = *; E59, E19 = *; E59, E7 = *; E19, E7 = *; E59, E23 = *; E19, E23 = *;
E2, E16 = *; E2, E56 = *; E10, E16 = *; E10, E56 = *; E6, E29 = *; E6, E53 = *;
E30, E29 = *; E30, E53 = *; E2, E7 = *; E2, E23 = *; E10, E7 = *; E10, E23 = *;
E25, E4 = *; E25, E52 = *; E1, E4 = *; E1, E52 = *; E7, E29 = *; E7, E53 = *;
E23, E29 = *; E23, E53 = *; E59, E16 = *; E59, E56 = *; E19, E16 = *;
E19, E56 = *; E4, E7 = *; E4, E23 = *; E52, E7 = *; E52, E23 = *; E17, E41 = *;
E24, E64 = *; E28, E44 = *; E50, E58 = *; E3, E27 = *; E21, E37 = *; E38, E62 = *;
E39, E63 = *; E39, E3 = *; E39, E27 = *; E63, E3 = *; E63, E27 = *; E50, E24 = *;
E50, E64 = *; E58, E24 = *; E58, E64 = *; E50, E39 = *; E50, E63 = *; E58, E39 = *;
E58, E63 = *; E17, E28 = *; E17, E44 = *; E41, E28 = *; E41, E44 = *; E21, E39 = *;
E21, E63 = *; E37, E39 = *; E37, E63 = *; E24, E3 = *; E24, E27 = *; E64, E3 = *;
E64, E27 = *; E28, E39 = *; E28, E63 = *; E44, E39 = *; E44, E63 = *; E50, E21 = *;
E50, E37 = *; E58, E21 = *; E58, E37 = *; E24, E21 = *; E24, E37 = *; E64, E21 = *;
E64, E37 = *; E28, E21 = *; E28, E37 = *; E44, E21 = *; E44, E37 = *; E38, E39 = *;
E38, E63 = *; E62, E39 = *; E62, E63 = *; E17, E3 = *; E17, E27 = *; E41, E3 = *;
E41, E27 = *; E17, E38 = *; E17, E62 = *; E41, E38 = *; E41, E62 = *; E24, E38 = *;
E24, E62 = *; E64, E38 = *; E64, E62 = *; E32, E48 = *; E26, E34 = *; E9, E57 = *;
E12, E36 = *; E31, E47 = *; E5, E61 = *; E14, E54 = *; E11, E43 = *; E31, E11 = *;
E31, E43 = *; E47, E11 = *; E47, E43 = *; E26, E32 = *; E26, E48 = *; E34, E32 = *;
E34, E48 = *; E26, E31 = *; E26, E47 = *; E34, E31 = *; E34, E47 = *; E9, E12 = *;
E9, E36 = *; E57, E12 = *; E57, E36 = *; E31, E5 = *; E31, E61 = *; E47, E5 = *;
E47, E61 = *; E12, E31 = *; E12, E47 = *; E36, E31 = *; E36, E47 = *; E5, E14 = *;
E5, E54 = *; E61, E14 = *; E61, E54 = *; E26, E5 = *; E26, E61 = *; E34, E5 = *;
E34, E61 = *; E12, E5 = *; E12, E61 = *; E36, E5 = *; E36, E61 = *; E14, E31 = *;
E14, E47 = *; E54, E31 = *; E54, E47 = *; E8, E40 = *; E18, E42 = *; E33, E49 = *;
E20, E60 = *; E15, E55 = *; E13, E45 = *; E22, E46 = *; E35, E51 = *; E15, E35 = *;
E15, E51 = *; E55, E35 = *; E55, E51 = *; E18, E8 = *; E18, E40 = *; E42, E8 = *;
E42, E40 = *; E18, E15 = *; E18, E55 = *; E42, E15 = *; E42, E55 = *; E33, E20 = *;
E33, E60 = *; E49, E20 = *; E49, E60 = *; E13, E15 = *; E13, E55 = *; E45, E15 = *;
E45, E55 = *; E35, E8 = *; E35, E40 = *; E51, E8 = *; E51, E40 = *; E20, E15 = *;
E20, E55 = *; E60, E15 = *; E60, E55 = *; E13, E22 = *; E13, E46 = *; E45, E22 = *;
E45, E46 = *; F11 TO F16 = *;
/PRINT
EIS;
FIT = ALL;
TABLE = EQUATION;
/END
Appendix M

Structural Equation Model of Belief in God Predicting the Diffused Identity Status
Appendix N
Command File for Belief in God Predicting Diffusion Identity Status

/TITLE
Belief in God Predicting Diffusion

/SPECIFICATIONS
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ANALYSIS=COVARIANCE
METHOD=ML, Robust;

/LABELS
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V8=EOM8; V9=EOM9; V10=EOM10; V11=EOM11; V12=EOM12; V13=EOM13;
V14=EOM14; V15=EOM15; V16=EOM16; V17=EOM17; V18=EOM18; V19=EOM19;
V20=EOM20; V21=EOM21; V22=EOM22; V23=EOM23; V24=EOM24; V25=EOM25;
V26=EOM26; V27=EOM27; V28=EOM28; V29=EOM29; V30=EOM30; V31=EOM31;
V32=EOM32; V33=EOM33; V34=EOM34; V35=EOM35; V36=EOM36; V37=EOM37;
V38=EOM38; V39=EOM39; V40=EOM40; V41=EOM41; V42=EOM42; V43=EOM43;
V44=EOM44; V45=EOM45; V46=EOM46; V47=EOM47; V48=EOM48; V49=EOM49;
V50=EOM50; V51=EOM51; V52=EOM52; V53=EOM53; V54=EOM54; V55=EOM55;
V56=EOM56; V57=EOM57; V58=EOM58; V59=EOM59; V60=EOM60; V61=EOM61;
V62=EOM62; V63=EOM63; V64=EOM64; V65=GOD1; V66=GOD2; V67=GOD3;
V68=GOD4; V69=GOD5; V70=GOD6; V71=GOD7; V72=GOD8; V73=GOD9;
V74=GOD10; V75=GOD11; V76=GOD12; V77=GOD13; V78=GOD14; V79=GOD15;
V80=GOD16; V81=GOD17; V82=GOD18; V83=GOD19; V84=GOD20; V85=GOD21;
V86=GOD22; V87=GOD23; V88=GOD24; V89=GOD25; V90=GOD26; V91=GOD27;
V92=GOD28; V93=GOD29; V94=GOD30; V95=GOD31; V96=GOD32; V97=GOD33;
V98=GOD34; V99=GOD35; F1=Diffusion; F11=Family; F12=Social; F13=Comfort;
F14=Knowledge; F15=Experience; F16=Fear; F17=Belief_In_God;

/EQUATIONS
V1 = *F1 + E1;
V2 = *F1 + E2;
V4 = *F1 + E4;
V10 = *F1 + E10;
V16 = *F1 + E16;
V25 = *F1 + E25;
V52 = *F1 + E52;
V56 = *F1 + E56;
V6 = *F1 + E6;
V7 = *F1 + E7;
V19 = *F1 + E19;
V23 = *F1 + E23;
V29 = *F1 + E29;
V30 = *F1 + E30;
V53 = *F1 + E53;
V59 = *F1 + E59;
V65 = *F11 + E65;
V67 = *F11 + E67;
V69 = *F11 + E69;
V75 = *F11 + E75;
V77 = *F11 + E77;
V80 = *F11 + E80;
  V82 = *F12 + E82;
  V87 = *F12 + E87;
  V88 = *F12 + E88;
  V91 = *F12 + E91;
  V92 = *F12 + E92;
  V93 = *F12 + E93;
    V66 = *F13 + E66;
    V70 = *F13 + E70;
    V73 = *F13 + E73;
    V86 = *F13 + E86;
    V89 = *F13 + E89;
    V95 = *F13 + E95;
      V68 = *F14 + E68;
      V81 = *F14 + E81;
      V84 = *F14 + E84;
      V90 = *F14 + E90;
      V97 = *F14 + E97;
      V98 = *F14 + E98;
        V71 = *F15 + E71;
        V78 = *F15 + E78;
        V83 = *F15 + E83;
        V94 = *F15 + E94;
        V96 = *F15 + E96;
        V99 = *F15 + E99;
          V72 = *F16 + E72;
          V74 = *F16 + E74;
          V76 = *F16 + E76;
          V79 = *F16 + E79;
          V85 = *F16 + E85;
F17= *F11 + *F12 + *F13 + *F14 + *F15 + *F16 + D17;
F1=*F17 + D1;
/VARIANCES
F11 TO F16=*;
E65 TO E99=*;
E1 = *;
E2 = *;
E4 = *;
E6 = *;
E7 = *;
E10 = *;
E16 = *;
E19 = *;
E23 = *;
E25 = *;
E29 = *;
E30 = *;
E52 = *;
E53 = *;
E56 = *;
E59 = *;
D17=*;

/COVARIANCES
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E29,E53 = *; E59,E19 = *; E59,E7 = *; E19,E7 = *; E59,E23 = *; E19,E23 = *;
E2,E16 = *; E2,E56 = *; E10,E16 = *; E10,E56 = *; E6,E29 = *; E6,E53 = *;
E30,E29 = *; E30,E53 = *; E2,E7 = *; E2,E23 = *; E10,E7 = *; E10,E23 = *;
E25,E4 = *; E25,E52 = *; E1,E4 = *; E1,E52 = *; E7,E29 = *; E7,E53 = *;
E23,E29 = *; E23,E53 = *; E59,E16 = *; E59,E56 = *; E19,E16 = *; E19,E56 = *;
E4,E7 = *; E4,E23 = *; E52,E7 = *; E52,E23 = *; F11 TO F16 = *

/PRINT
EIS;
FIT=ALL;
TABLE=EQUATION;
/END
Appendix O
Structural Equation Model of Belief in God Predicting Foreclosed Identity Status
Appendix P
Command File for Belief in God Predicting Foreclosed Identity Status

/TITLE
Belief in God Predicting Foreclosure
/SPECIFICATIONS
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METHOD=ML, Robust;
/LABELS
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V8=EOM8; V9=EOM9; V10=EOM10; V11=EOM11; V12=EOM12; V13=EOM13;
V14=EOM14; V15=EOM15; V16=EOM16; V17=EOM17; V18=EOM18; V19=EOM19;
V20=EOM20; V21=EOM21; V22=EOM22; V23=EOM23; V24=EOM24; V25=EOM25;
V26=EOM26; V27=EOM27; V28=EOM28; V29=EOM29; V30=EOM30; V31=EOM31;
V32=EOM32; V33=EOM33; V34=EOM34; V35=EOM35; V36=EOM36; V37=EOM37;
V38=EOM38; V39=EOM39; V40=EOM40; V41=EOM41; V42=EOM42; V43=EOM43;
V44=EOM44; V45=EOM45; V46=EOM46; V47=EOM47; V48=EOM48; V49=EOM49;
V50=EOM50; V51=EOM51; V52=EOM52; V53=EOM53; V54=EOM54; V55=EOM55;
V56=EOM56; V57=EOM57; V58=EOM58; V59=EOM59; V60=EOM60; V61=EOM61;
V62=EOM62; V63=EOM63; V64=EOM64; V65=GOD1; V66=GOD2; V67=GOD3;
V68=GOD4; V69=GOD5; V70=GOD6; V71=GOD7; V72=GOD8; V73=GOD9;
V74=GOD10; V75=GOD11; V76=GOD12; V77=GOD13; V78=GOD14; V79=GOD15;
V80=GOD16; V81=GOD17; V82=GOD18; V83=GOD19; V84=GOD20; V85=GOD21;
V86=GOD22; V87=GOD23; V88=GOD24; V89=GOD25; V90=GOD26; V91=GOD27;
V92=GOD28; V93=GOD29; V94=GOD30; V95=GOD31; V96=GOD32; V97=GOD33;
V98=GOD34; V99=GOD35; F2=Foreclosure; F11=Family; F12=Social; F13=Comfort;
F14=Knowledge; F15=Experience; F16=Fear; F17=Belief_In_God;
/EQUATIONS
V17 = *F2 + E17;
V24 = *F2 + E24;
V28 = *F2 + E28;
V41 = *F2 + E41;
V44 = *F2 + E44;
V50 = *F2 + E50;
V58 = *F2 + E58;
V64 = *F2 + E64;
V3 = *F2 + E3;
V21 = *F2 + E21;
V27 = *F2 + E27;
V37 = *F2 + E37;
V38 = *F2 + E38;
V39 = *F2 + E39;
V62 = *F2 + E62;
V63 = *F2 + E63;
V65 = *F11 + E65;
V67 = *F11 + E67;
V69 = *F11 + E69;
V75 = *F11 + E75;
V77 = *F11 + E77;
V80 = *F11 + E80;
V82 = *F12 + E82;
V87 = *F12 + E87;
V88 = *F12 + E88;
V91 = *F12 + E91;
V92 = *F12 + E92;
V93 = *F12 + E93;
V66 = *F13 + E66;
V70 = *F13 + E70;
V73 = *F13 + E73;
V86 = *F13 + E86;
V89 = *F13 + E89;
V95 = *F13 + E95;
V68 = *F14 + E68;
V81 = *F14 + E81;
V84 = *F14 + E84;
V90 = *F14 + E90;
V97 = *F14 + E97;
V98 = *F14 + E98;
V71 = *F15 + E71;
V78 = *F15 + E78;
V83 = *F15 + E83;
V94 = *F15 + E94;
V96 = *F15 + E96;
V99 = *F15 + E99;
V72 = *F16 + E72;
V74 = *F16 + E74;
V76 = *F16 + E76;
V79 = *F16 + E79;
V85 = *F16 + E85;
F17 = *F11 + *F12 + *F13 + *F14 + *F15 + *F16 + D17;
F2 = *F17 + D2;
/VARIANCES
F11 TO F16 = *;
E65 TO E99 = *;
E17 = *;
Who am I God?  

E24 = *;  
E28 = *;  
E41 = *;  
E44 = *;  
E50 = *;  
E58 = *;  
E64 = *;  
E3 = *;  
E21 = *;  
E27 = *;  
E37 = *;  
E38 = *;  
E39 = *;  
E62 = *;  
E63 = *;  
D17=*;

/COVARIANCES
E17,E41 = *; E24,E64 = *; E28,E44 = *; E50,E58 = *; E3,E27 = *; E21,E37 = *;
E38,E62 = *; E39,E63 = *; E39,E3 = *; E39,E27 = *; E63,E3 = *; E63,E27 = *;
E50,E24 = *; E50,E64 = *; E58,E24 = *; E58,E64 = *; E50,E39 = *; E50,E63 = *;
E58,E39 = *; E58,E63 = *; E17,E28 = *; E17,E44 = *; E41,E28 = *; E41,E44 = *;
E21,E39 = *; E21,E63 = *; E37,E39 = *; E37,E63 = *; E24,E3 = *; E24,E27 = *;
E64,E3 = *; E64,E27 = *; E28,E39 = *; E28,E63 = *; E44,E39 = *; E44,E63 = *;
E50,E21 = *; E50,E37 = *; E58,E21 = *; E58,E37 = *; E24,E21 = *; E24,E37 = *;
E64,E21 = *; E64,E37 = *; E28,E21 = *; E28,E37 = *; E44,E21 = *; E44,E37 = *;
E38,E39 = *; E38,E63 = *; E62,E39 = *; E62,E63 = *; E17,E3 = *; E17,E27 = *;
E41,E3 = *; E41,E27 = *; E17,E38 = *; E17,E62 = *; E41,E38 = *; E41,E62 = *;
E24,E38 = *; E24,E62 = *; E64,E38 = *; E64,E62 = *; F11 TO F16 = *;

/PRINT
EIS;
FIT=ALL;
TABLE=EQUATION;
/END
Appendix Q
Structural Equation Model of Belief in God Predicting Moratorium Identity Status
Appendix R
Command File for Belief in God Predicting Foreclosed Identity Status

/TITLE
   Belief in God Predicting Moratorium
/SPECIFICATIONS
VARIABLES= 51; CASES= 306;
DATAFILE='E:\CFA.ess';
MATRIX=RAW;
ANALYSIS=COVARIANCE
METHOD=ML, Robust;
V1=EOM1; V2=EOM2; V3=EOM3; V4=EOM4; V5=EOM5; V6=EOM6; V7=EOM7; V8=EOM8; V9=EOM9; V10=EOM10; V11=EOM11; V12=EOM12; V13=EOM13; V14=EOM14; V15=EOM15; V16=EOM16; V17=EOM17; V18=EOM18; V19=EOM19; V20=EOM20; V21=EOM21; V22=EOM22; V23=EOM23; V24=EOM24; V25=EOM25; V26=EOM26; V27=EOM27; V28=EOM28; V29=EOM29; V30=EOM30; V31=EOM31; V32=EOM32; V33=EOM33; V34=EOM34; V35=EOM35; V36=EOM36; V37=EOM37; V38=EOM38; V39=EOM39; V40=EOM40; V41=EOM41; V42=EOM42; V43=EOM43; V44=EOM44; V45=EOM45; V46=EOM46; V47=EOM47; V48=EOM48; V49=EOM49; V50=EOM50; V51=EOM51; V52=EOM52; V53=EOM53; V54=EOM54; V55=EOM55; V56=EOM56; V57=EOM57; V58=EOM58; V59=EOM59; V60=EOM60; V61=EOM61; V62=EOM62; V63=EOM63; V64=EOM64; V65=GOD1; V66=GOD2; V67=GOD3; V68=GOD4; V69=GOD5; V70=GOD6; V71=GOD7; V72=GOD8; V73=GOD9; V74=GOD10; V75=GOD11; V76=GOD12; V77=GOD13; V78=GOD14; V79=GOD15; V80=GOD16; V81=GOD17; V82=GOD18; V83=GOD19; V84=GOD20; V85=GOD21; V86=GOD22; V87=GOD23; V88=GOD24; V89=GOD25; V90=GOD26; V91=GOD27; V92=GOD28; V93=GOD29; V94=GOD30; V95=GOD31; V96=GOD32; V97=GOD33; V98=GOD34; V99=GOD35; F3=Moratorium; F11=Family; F12=Social; F13=Comfort; F14=Knowledge; F15=Experience; F16=Fear; F17=Belief_In_God;
/EQUATIONS
   V9 = *F3 + E9;
   V12 = *F3 + E12;
   V26 = *F3 + E26;
   V32 = *F3 + E32;
   V34 = *F3 + E34;
   V36 = *F3 + E36;
   V48 = *F3 + E48;
   V57 = *F3 + E57;
   V5 = *F3 + E5;
   V11 = *F3 + E11;
   V14 = *F3 + E14;
   V31 = *F3 + E31;
   V43 = *F3 + E43;
   V47 = *F3 + E47;
V54 = *F3 + E54;
V61 = *F3 + E61;
V65 = *F11 + E65;
V67 = *F11 + E67;
V69 = *F11 + E69;
V75 = *F11 + E75;
V77 = *F11 + E77;
V80 = *F11 + E80;
V82 = *F12 + E82;
V87 = *F12 + E87;
V88 = *F12 + E88;
V91 = *F12 + E91;
V92 = *F12 + E92;
V93 = *F12 + E93;
V66 = *F13 + E66;
V70 = *F13 + E70;
V73 = *F13 + E73;
V86 = *F13 + E86;
V89 = *F13 + E89;
V95 = *F13 + E95;
V68 = *F14 + E68;
V81 = *F14 + E81;
V84 = *F14 + E84;
V90 = *F14 + E90;
V97 = *F14 + E97;
V98 = *F14 + E98;
V71 = *F15 + E71;
V78 = *F15 + E78;
V83 = *F15 + E83;
V94 = *F15 + E94;
V96 = *F15 + E96;
V99 = *F15 + E99;
V72 = *F16 + E72;
V74 = *F16 + E74;
V76 = *F16 + E76;
V79 = *F16 + E79;
V85 = *F16 + E85;
F17 = *F11 + *F12 + *F13 + *F14 + *F15 + *F16 + D17;
F3 = *F17 + D3;
/VARIANCES
F11 TO F16 = *;
E65 TO E99 = *;
E9 = *;
E12 = *;
Appendix S
Structural Equation Model of Belief in God Predicting Achieved Identity Status
Appendix T
Command File for Belief in God Predicting Foreclosed Identity Status

/TITLE
   Belief in God Predicting Achievement
/SPECIFICATIONS
VARIABLES= 51; CASES= 306;
DATAFILE='E:\CFA.ess';
MATRIX=RAW;
ANALYSIS-COVARIANCE
METHOD=ML, Robust;
/LABELS
V1=EOM1; V2=EOM2; V3=EOM3; V4=EOM4; V5=EOM5; V6=EOM6; V7=EOM7;
V8=EOM8; V9=EOM9; V10=EOM10; V11=EOM11; V12=EOM12; V13=EOM13;
V14=EOM14; V15=EOM15; V16=EOM16; V17=EOM17; V18=EOM18; V19=EOM19;
V20=EOM20; V21=EOM21; V22=EOM22; V23=EOM23; V24=EOM24; V25=EOM25;
V26=EOM26; V27=EOM27; V28=EOM28; V29=EOM29; V30=EOM30; V31=EOM31;
V32=EOM32; V33=EOM33; V34=EOM34; V35=EOM35; V36=EOM36; V37=EOM37;
V38=EOM38; V39=EOM39; V40=EOM40; V41=EOM41; V42=EOM42; V43=EOM43;
V44=EOM44; V45=EOM45; V46=EOM46; V47=EOM47; V48=EOM48; V49=EOM49;
V50=EOM50; V51=EOM51; V52=EOM52; V53=EOM53; V54=EOM54; V55=EOM55;
V56=EOM56; V57=EOM57; V58=EOM58; V59=EOM59; V60=EOM60; V61=EOM61;
V62=EOM62; V63=EOM63; V64=EOM64; V65=GOD1; V66=GOD2; V67=GOD3;
V68=GOD4; V69=GOD5; V70=GOD6; V71=GOD7; V72=GOD8; V73=GOD9;
V74=GOD10; V75=GOD11; V76=GOD12; V77=GOD13; V78=GOD14; V79=GOD15;
V80=GOD16; V81=GOD17; V82=GOD18; V83=GOD19; V84=GOD20; V85=GOD21;
V86=GOD22; V87=GOD23; V88=GOD24; V89=GOD25; V90=GOD26; V91=GOD27;
V92=GOD28; V93=GOD29; V94=GOD30; V95=GOD31; V96=GOD32; V97=GOD33;
V98=GOD34; V99=GOD35; F4=Achievement; F11=Family; F12=Social; F13=Comfort;
F14=Knowledge; F15=Experience; F16=Fear; F17=Belief_In_God;
/EQUATIONS
V8 = *F4 + E8;
V18 = *F4 + E18;
V20 = *F4 + E20;
V33 = *F4 + E33;
V40 = *F4 + E40;
V42 = *F4 + E42;
V49 = *F4 + E49;
V60 = *F4 + E60;
V13 = *F4 + E13;
V15 = *F4 + E15;
V22 = *F4 + E22;
V35 = *F4 + E35;
V45 = *F4 + E45;
V46 = *F4 + E46;
V51 = *F4 + E51;
V55 = *F4 + E55;
V65 = *F11 + E65;
V67 = *F11 + E67;
V69 = *F11 + E69;
V75 = *F11 + E75;
V77 = *F11 + E77;
V80 = *F11 + E80;
V82 = *F12 + E82;
V87 = *F12 + E87;
V88 = *F12 + E88;
V91 = *F12 + E91;
V92 = *F12 + E92;
V93 = *F12 + E93;
V66 = *F13 + E66;
V70 = *F13 + E70;
V73 = *F13 + E73;
V86 = *F13 + E86;
V89 = *F13 + E89;
V95 = *F13 + E95;
V68 = *F14 + E68;
V81 = *F14 + E81;
V84 = *F14 + E84;
V90 = *F14 + E90;
V97 = *F14 + E97;
V98 = *F14 + E98;
V71 = *F15 + E71;
V78 = *F15 + E78;
V83 = *F15 + E83;
V94 = *F15 + E94;
V96 = *F15 + E96;
V99 = *F15 + E99;
V72 = *F16 + E72;
V74 = *F16 + E74;
V76 = *F16 + E76;
V79 = *F16 + E79;
V85 = *F16 + E85;
F17 = *F11 + *F12 + *F13 + *F14 + *F15 + *F16 + D17;
F4 = *F17 + D4;
/VARIANCES
F11 TO F16 = *;
E65 TO E99 = *;
E8 = *;
E18 = *;
E20 = *;
E33 = *;
E40 = *;
E42 = *;
E49 = *;
E60 = *;
E13 = *;
E15 = *;
E22 = *;
E35 = *;
E45 = *;
E46 = *;
E51 = *;
E55 = *;
D17 = *;
/COVARIANCES
E8,E40 = *; E18,E42 = *; E33,E49 = *; E20,E60 = *; E15,E55 = *; E13,E45 = *;
E22,E46 = *; E35,E51 = *; E15,E35 = *; E15,E51 = *; E55,E35 = *; E55,E51 = *;
E18,E8 = *; E18,E40 = *; E42,E8 = *; E42,E40 = *; E18,E15 = *; E18,E55 = *;
E42,E15 = *; E42,E55 = *; E33,E20 = *; E33,E60 = *; E49,E20 = *; E49,E60 = *;
E13,E15 = *; E13,E55 = *; E45,E15 = *; E45,E55 = *; E35,E8 = *; E35,E40 = *;
E51,E8 = *; E51,E40 = *; E20,E15 = *; E20,E55 = *; E60,E15 = *; E60,E55 = *;
E13,E22 = *; E13,E46 = *; E45,E22 = *; E45,E46 = *; F11 TO F16 = *;
/PRINT
EIS;
FIT=ALL;
TABLE=EQUATION;
/END