

# Religious involvement and adult mortality in the united states literature review

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## Purpose

The report seeks to analyze empirical data on the linkage between religion and adult mortality in the United States. The main objective is to examine how religion influences mortality outcomes.

## Summary

Much of empirical data from medical, public health and social sciences literature suggest that religious involvement leads to lower mortality rates compared to little or no involvement. Research on religion and mortality outcomes show that different religious denominations have different mortality levels. Active members of religious groups with distinctive lifestyles such as Mormons and Seventh Day Adventists tend to have lower cancer and suicide rates as compared to non-religious persons and therefore experience lower mortality levels.

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Research on religion and mortality outcomes has also shown that public religious attendance frequency has an effect on adult mortality. A number of researches conducted by different scholars show that more frequent religious attendance reduces adult mortality.

More specific research indicates that religious attendance has different weight in effect on various subgroups. Middle-aged grownups that have frequent religious attendance show higher reductions in mortality rates as compared to older adults. Though with little empirical data to support, some researchers have put across that women have lower mortality levels compared to men since they are most religious compared to men.

With little research done on the linkage between private religious activity and mortality rates, available empirical data suggests that people who practice private religious activity have lower mortality compared to the non-religious lot. The many different types of private religion make it complicated to research on that field and hence the lack of availability in empirical data.

Research has shown that there are possible mechanisms contributing to religion reducing mortality rate. These possible mechanisms include: social integration and social regulation. Social integration comes through social ties among religious members that help generate collective responsibility and relationships which contribute to low mortality levels. Social regulation exhibited by religious members also helps keep them out of vice and conflicts and thus reducing mortality among this group.

Despite the growth in content on the relation between religion and mortality, research has been constrained within certain limits. These include public attendance as a measure of public involvement, poor quality of empiric work

in this area, lack of multiple comparison researches and inconsistent findings.

## **Conclusion:**

This report has substantially satisfied the main objective of examining how religion has influenced adult mortality in the United States. The rich compilation of empirical work by different scholars gives the report a lot of content and weight. The report also shows consistency as much of the empirical data provided enforces the major finding that religious involvement reduces adult mortality. The report also gives adequate literature support on the possible mechanisms in religion that have contributed to reduced mortality rates.

In conclusion, the report has not failed in giving the weaknesses on the empirical data available. It has clearly outlined that there is insufficient data on the area and that some conclusions made might have insufficient proof. This admission in the report indicates the lack of biases and show extensive level of research. The report further provides a window for continued research in this topic but using specific variables from the general topic. This will allow researchers to carry out more research providing more valuable data and identifying flaws into what this report could have missed.