

Four

EDUCATION

Since the earliest days of the Restoration, Church leaders and members alike have placed a high premium on learning—secular as well as spiritual. The revelations of the Lord make it clear that education is necessary both on earth and in eternity. Education is seen as a spiritual pursuit as much as a practical necessity for earthly life.

Education, according to LDS teachings, is not antagonistic to spirituality but is a unique and important aspect of both the doctrinal teachings and the religious life of Latter-day Saints. “The glory of God is intelligence,” the Lord declared to the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1833 (Doctrine and Covenants 93:36). Earlier, the Prophet had been directed to establish schools for the education of both children (see Doctrine and Covenants 55:4) and adults (see Doctrine and Covenants 88:127–41). Such schools, whether they were for children or adults, were a unique blend of the secular and the spiritual. The Lord said, “And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best

books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (Doctrine and Covenants 88:118).

For members of the Church, gaining intelligence through study and faith is a religious pursuit, not just an intellectual exercise. Latter-day Saint theology teaches that education affects not just the mind in mortality, but also the spirit and the destiny of the soul beyond this life. “Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection. And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come” (Doctrine and Covenants 130:18–19).

Latter-day prophets and apostles continue to counsel members of the Church, young and old, to get as much formal education as they can and to make learning a lifetime pursuit. “We have in the Church a strong tradition regarding quality education,” President Gordon B. Hinckley observed (1997). He then further admonished Latter-day Saints: “Get all the education you can. . . . Education is the key to opportunity. The Lord has placed upon you, as members of this Church, the obligation to study and to learn of things spiritual, yes, but of things temporal also. Acquire all the education that you can, even if it means great sacrifice while you are young. You will bless the lives of your children. You will bless the Church because you will reflect honor to this work” (pp. 169, 172).

This chapter explores the influence that religion has on educational attainment and whether LDS teens and young adults with higher religiosity do better in school and further their education more than less-religious members do. In addition, we will ascertain whether higher education challenges faith and results in members drifting into inactivity. In other words, do those members of the Church who have graduated from college, especially those who have completed graduate school or earned professional degrees, have a lower rate of Church activity than do less-educated members?

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AND EDUCATION

Early research linking religion and education compared members of different denominations and found that those belonging to fundamentalist denominations such as Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses have less education than members of mainline and liberal denominations. For example, Rhodes and Nam (1970) examined census data for the United States collected in 1965 and found that children with a Jewish mother were the most likely to attend college, followed by children with a mainstream Protestant mother, while children with mothers belonging to fundamentalist denominations were the least likely to attend college.

The most plausible explanation for the more limited education of members in fundamentalist churches is that their doctrine discourages it. Leaders and members alike are convinced that education challenges religious faith, which leads to members reducing the number of years they attend college and perhaps even dropping out. It is assumed that the religious values and doctrine taught by the more fundamentalist denominations are critical of higher education and that fewer of their members continue beyond high school.

Darnell and Sherkat (1997) examined the writings of popular conservative Protestant authors to ascertain if they actually do preach against higher education. They found that conservative ministers do, in fact, oppose "secular" education because it threatens religious beliefs, such as the belief that the Bible is inerrant. Fundamentalists point to the shift from teaching about the creation of the earth under God's hand to teaching evolution devoid of God in public schools as an example of religious beliefs being replaced with secular ones.

The fundamentalist writers, according to Darnell and Sherkat, perceive secular humanist values taught in the public schools as a serious threat to religious beliefs. They found that fundamentalists are especially fearful of higher education

because colleges, with their secular humanist orientation, tend to be anti-God and to promote moral relativism.

Darnell and Sherkat (1997) also analyzed data collected from a large national sample of youth to test the relationship between fundamentalist affiliation and educational achievement. Information was obtained from nearly 1,800 high school seniors in 1965 and 1973, and then again in 1982, when they were adults approaching their mid-30s. The researchers discovered that conservative Protestant affiliation and fundamentalist beliefs both had a significant and substantial negative influence on educational attainment.

Sacerdote and Glaeser (2001) analyzed data from the General Social Survey (GSS) from 1972 through 1998. The GSS surveys a random sample of approximately 1,500 adults across the United States every two years. By combining the data from the surveys conducted during this 26-year period, they obtained a large sample of men and women belonging to a wide variety of religious denominations. Unfortunately, they placed the LDS Church with fundamentalist Protestant denominations such as Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses in an "other Protestant" category. The data reveal that members of these "other Protestant" denominations have less education than members of a mainline Protestant church such as the Methodist Church or a liberal Protestant denomination such as the Episcopal Church.

Lehrer (1999) tested a multivariate model predicting educational attainment using data from the large National Survey of Families and Households conducted in 1987–88. She included several factors along with religious denomination in her model to predict educational attainment. She discovered that Jews had the highest education, followed by Catholics and mainline Protestants, while fundamentalist Protestants had the least. Interestingly, Lehrer called for additional study of the "other religious populations," including the LDS Church.

One study looked specifically at the relationship between religion and postsecondary education for men and women. The authors felt the relationship may be different because of traditional sex roles (Keysar & Kosmin, 1995). They hypothesized that religion, due to its influence on the choice between marriage and participation in the labor force, has an indirect effect on women's educational attainment.

According to the researchers, women who belong to conservative religious groups such as Baptist, Evangelical, and Pentecostal churches tend to marry younger and are less likely to work outside the home. Both of these trends reduce higher education. Information was obtained via a telephone survey in 1990 from 19,274 women. The researchers compared the percentage of women from different religious groups who had obtained higher education. They were surprised to learn that as many women belonging to conservative groups had post-high school training—including business school, vocational school, junior college, or college—as women from the liberal denominations. Sixty-one percent of the LDS women had obtained some post-high school education, as compared to 84% of Jewish women, 77% of liberal religions, 77% of Eastern religions, 69% of Episcopalian women, and 67% of Presbyterian women. The women belonging to more conservative religions had married younger and had remained in the home more often.

LDS women had a higher educational level than did conservative Protestants, Pentecostals, Baptists, Lutherans, Catholics, Methodists, and women with no religion. Researchers discovered that religious identification had significant direct and indirect relationships to higher education.

Finally, a more recent study of nearly 3,000 adults in the United States also confirmed that religious affiliation has an effect on educational attainment (Beyerlein, 2004). He found that members of mainline and Evangelical Protestant denominations were 2.5 times more likely to have graduated from college than fundamentalist Protestants and 5 times

more likely than Pentecostal Protestants (both very conservative denominations).

In previous studies, the relationship between religion and education in conservative denominations was often assumed to apply to members of the LDS Church, since the studies usually grouped the Church with the conservative denominations. However, revelations revealed in the Doctrine and Covenants, as well as the statements made by prophets discussed earlier in this chapter, make it clear that there is no antieducational bias taught within the LDS Church. Rather, the Church endorses education and encourages its members to pursue as much of it as possible.

LDS EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Although many non-LDS observers anticipate that members of the LDS Church have less education than members of other churches, such is not the case. Actually, Latter-day Saints have significantly more education than the general public.

Albrecht and Heaton (1984) compared the educational achievement of a large national sample of LDS to that of the general population. They found that 54% of the LDS men had some post-high school education, as compared to 37% for the general population. LDS women's post-high school educational attainment significantly exceeded the national average, at 44% compared to 28% (Albrecht & Heaton, 1984).

More recently, McClendon and Chadwick (2004) compared the educational attainment of men and women who have served missions to that of men and women in U.S. society of the same age. They examined the education of missionaries who had been home from the mission field for 17 years because almost all of this 35- to 44-year-old age-group had completed their formal education. Since returned missionaries are very strong members of this conservative Church, most social scientists would predict they would have significantly less education than the national group of the same age.

Table 1. Educational Attainment of LDS Returned Missionaries Compared with National Rates in 1998, by Percentage

Education Level 1999	Returned Missionaries Ages 35–44			United States Ages 35–44
	Men (<i>n</i> = 453)	Women (<i>n</i> = 308)	Combined (<i>n</i> = 761)	Combined (<i>n</i> = 44,462)
Did not finish high school	0	0	0	15
High school	4	3	4	41
Some college/skill training	26	38	31	18
College	37	45	40	18
Graduate/Professional school	33	14	25	8

Question: "Please circle the highest grade in year of school that you have completed."

Possible answers: "none," "elementary school," "high school," "some college or skill training," "college," "graduate/professional school"

The study soundly rejects this hypothesis. The educational advantage of the returned missionaries is evident in Table 1. Over 40% of these LDS men and women graduated from college, compared to only 18% of the general population at the same age. An additional 25% of the LDS young adults completed professional school or graduate school, while the national average of such attainment for this age-group is only 8%. These are not trivial differences, and they clearly document that many active members of the LDS Church are highly educated.

Additional evidence of higher LDS educational attainment was obtained by comparing the level of education of fathers and mothers of high school seniors. The Monitoring the Future project collects data from a very large national sample of high school seniors each year. We compared the results from the seniors in this study to the senior students in our samples. The results for fathers' and mothers' education are presented in Tables 2 and 3. The differences are substantial. For example, nearly 30% of the fathers of the LDS young men have a graduate degree, which is more than double the 13.8% for non-LDS fathers of young men.

Interestingly, significantly fewer young women, both LDS and non-LDS, report that their fathers have completed such

Table 2. Educational Level of Fathers of LDS Youth and National Sample of Seniors, by Percentage

Education Level 1999	Young Men		Young Women	
	LDS	National Sample ¹	LDS	National Sample
	(<i>n</i> = 326)	(<i>n</i> = 7,125)	(<i>n</i> = 419)	(<i>n</i> = 7,650)
Grade school or less	3.8	3.9	3.1	5.9
Some high school	7.4	11.1	10.7	11.4
High school graduate	8.5	28.8	11.2	30.6
Some college	24.6	18.9	37.2	18.0
College graduate	25.8	23.5	31.6	20.1
Graduate degree	29.9	13.8	6.6	13.9

1. National sample from Johnston, Bockman, & O'Malley (1995), p. 17.

Question for national sample: "What is the highest level of schooling your father completed?"

Question for LDS sample: "How much education did your father complete?"

Table 3. Educational Level of Mothers of LDS Youth and National Sample of Seniors, by Percentage

Education Level 1999	Young Men		Young Women	
	LDS	National Sample ¹	LDS	National Sample
	(<i>n</i> = 260)	(<i>n</i> = 7,459)	(<i>n</i> = 356)	(<i>n</i> = 8,061)
Grade school or less	0.4	3.4	0.3	4.4
Some high school	1.9	9.4	1.4	11.9
High school graduate	10.9	34.8	13.3	34.5
Some college	38.1	21.8	43.3	20.7
College graduate	39.7	21.7	34.8	19.6
Graduate degree	8.9	9.3	6.8	8.9

1. National sample from Johnston, Bockman, & O'Malley (1995), p. 17.

Question for national sample: "What is the highest level of schooling your mother completed?"

Question for LDS sample: "How much education did your mother complete?"

degrees. We don't know the reason why sons have different perceptions of their fathers' education than daughters have. In spite of such gender differences, the trend is the same: LDS

Table 4. Grades Received in High School by LDS Youth and National Sample of Seniors, by Percentage

Grades	Young Men		Young Women	
	LDS	National Sample ¹	LDS	National Sample
	(n = 260)	(n = 7,398)	(n = 356)	(n = 8,101)
A	24.6	9.1	33.1	14.3
A-	15.9	10.6	18.1	14.7
B+	15.7	15.8	18.1	19.3
B	16.0	19.3	15.5	20.2
B-	9.1	15.4	5.7	12.7
C+	8.9	14.4	5.6	10.2
C	3.5	9.8	2.8	5.6
C-	3.9	4.0	0.8	2.3
D or below	2.2	1.6	0.3	0.8

1. National sample from Johnston, Bachman, & O'Malley (1995), p. 20.

Question for national sample: "Which of the following best describes your average grade in high school?"

Possible answers: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D or below

Question for the LDS sample: "What grades do you receive in high school?"

Possible answers: "Mostly A's," "A's and B's," "Mostly B's," "B's and C's," "Mostly C's," "C's and D's," "Mostly D's," "D's and F's"

fathers have significantly more education than do the fathers of non-LDS high school seniors in this national sample.

The educational differences are not as large for mothers of the high school seniors. Nevertheless, significantly more LDS mothers had some college or had graduated from college than the other mothers. But the percentages who had completed graduate or professional degrees actually favor the national sample a little. Perhaps, as Keysar and Kosmin (1995) suggested, the LDS emphasis on women's roles of wife and mother reduced the number of LDS women who pursued graduate degrees.

Comparing the grades earned by LDS high school seniors to those of non-LDS high school seniors provides insight into the relationship between religious affiliation and educational performance of students. Both the LDS young men and young

Table 5. Hours of Homework Each Week for LDS Youth and National Sample of Seniors, by Percentage

Hours per Week	Young Men		Young Women	
	LDS	National Sample ¹	LDS	National Sample
	(<i>n</i> = 260)	(<i>n</i> = 804)	(<i>n</i> = 356)	(<i>n</i> = 931)
0	9.8	15.5	4.1	5.6
1–4	0.0	47.8	0.0	45.1
5–9	49.6	20.3	36.8	24.2
10–14	22.6	6.1	33.6	12.7
15–19	10.2	4.5	15.7	5.7
20–24	3.8	3.2	3.1	3.4
25 or more	4.0	2.6	6.7	3.4

1. National sample from Johnston, Bachman, & O'Malley (1995), p.126.

Question for national sample: "About how many hours do you spend on the average week on all of your homework, including both in school and out of school?"

Question for LDS sample: "About how many hours do you spend on school work outside of class each day?"

women who were seniors in high school reported significantly higher grades than did non-LDS seniors. Twice as many LDS young men as non-LDS students claimed they earned As as did non-LDS students, and the difference was almost as large for the young women. An examination of the table reveals that LDS students are more clustered at the higher end of the GPA scale than students in the national sample.

Students in the national sample were asked how many hours of homework they do each week. We asked in our study how many hours they do each day. To make the data comparable, we multiplied the replies of the LDS students by 5. We used 5 days rather than 7 to calculate a conservative estimate of hours of homework completed each week. Because of this multiplication, the 1–4 hours category for the LDS students is blank. Nevertheless, the overall trend is that LDS seniors spend more time doing homework than do their national peers. The difference appears among both the young men and the young women.

Table 6. Feelings about School as reported by LDS Youth and National Sample of Seniors, by Percentage

Feeling about School	Young Men		Young Women	
	LDS	National Sample ¹	LDS	National Sample
	(n = 360)	(n = 1,267)	(n = 356)	(n = 1,340)
I like it very much	28.1	12.5	32.0	10.3
I like it some	41.1	27.7	38.8	28.6
Mixed feelings	23.5	42.7	23.6	45.7
I dislike it	5.0	10.6	4.8	11.4
I dislike it very much	2.3	6.5	0.8	4.0

1. National sample from Johnston, Bachman, & O'Malley (1995), p. 96.

Question for national sample: "Some people like school very much, others don't. How do you feel about going to school?"

Possible answers: "like very much," "like quite a lot," "like some," "don't like very much," "don't like school at all"

Question for LDS sample: "Some people like going to school very much while others don't. How do you feel about going to school?"

Possible answers: "like very much," "like some," "mixed feelings," "dislike very much"

Table 7. Post-High School Educational Expectations of LDS Youth and National Sample of Seniors, by Percentage *

Educational Level	Young Men		Young Women	
	LDS	National Sample ¹	LDS	National Sample
	(n = 260)	(n = 7,708)	(n = 356)	(n = 8,310)
Technical/Vocational school	3.5	8.7	2.0	7.5
Two-year college	7.7	14.2	7.0	18.4
Four-year college	27.7	47.8	60.4	36.7
Graduate/Professional school	57.7	15.7	28.9	21.9

* Total percentages do not add up to 100 because some planned on military service and entering the work force.

1. National sample from Johnston, Bachman, & O'Malley (1995), p. 96.

Question for national sample: "How likely is it that you will do each of the following after high school?"

Possible answers: "attend a technical or vocational school," "graduate from a two-year college," "graduate from college," "attend graduate or professional school after college"

Question for LDS sample: "What are your educational expectations?"

Possible answers: "not finish high school," "only finish high school," "trade or vocational school," "some college," "graduate from college," "advanced degree after college"

One of the major reasons students drop out of high school or limit their education is because they have developed a dislike for school and academics. The feelings about school reported by students in the two samples are presented in Table 6.

The middle of the five response categories used in the two studies was a little different in the two samples. We used “mixed feelings,” while the national sample had “I like school some.” The other categories were the same, or very similar, and reveal that significantly more LDS seniors, both young men and young women, like school “very much.” Over 28% of the LDS boys like school “very much,” as compared to only 13% of the national sample of boys. The percentage for young women is 32% for LDS and only 10% for the national sample.

The reverse pattern appears for the other extreme category of “disliking school very much.” In other words, more non-LDS students were turned off by school. Even though the data are not exactly parallel, the trend of LDS students liking school is readily apparent. Such feelings probably motivate more LDS youth to complete high school and to seek post-high school training.

The influence of LDS teachings about and support for education is evident in the educational expectations of the youth. It is amazing that over half of the LDS young men who are seniors in high school expect to obtain a graduate or professional degree (see Table 7). These young men expect to complete a master’s degree or PhD or to attend professional school and become a doctor, dentist, accountant, business manager, or lawyer. This compares to only 15% of the national sample. This is a dramatic difference!

Interestingly, the differences are not nearly as large for the young women. LDS young women in the last year of high school do expect to obtain a little more education than their national peers, but the gap is not nearly as large as it is for the young men. Significantly more LDS young women than non-LDS young women plan on a college degree, but the difference is smaller for young women than for young men. This may be

due in part to the Church's emphasis on men being the primary provider for the family.

It is clear that LDS doctrine strongly encourages the pursuit of knowledge, both secular and sacred. Church leaders encourage young people to stay in school and to seek higher education. In addition, leaders invite members to make learning a lifelong adventure. The data demonstrates that members of the LDS Church are educated beyond their national peers. The higher education of LDS people is obtained in spite of the supposedly conservative nature of their doctrine.

INDIVIDUAL RELIGIOSITY AND EDUCATION

Although the educational differences between members of various denominations are substantial, they may be the consequence of factors other than religious beliefs and values. Some researchers have pointed out that social class and minority culture greatly impact educational attainment. They go on to suggest that members of fundamentalist churches tend to be from the lower classes and from minority populations. Thus, social class and race rather than religious affiliation may account for their lower educational attainment. One strategy to eliminate these class and ethnic factors as explanations of educational attainment is to focus on the relationship between individual religiosity and educational attainment within a single denomination.

A number of studies examine the association between personal religiosity and educational aspirations and attainment. Dai (1996) examined data collected in 1989 from the Monitoring the Future study. The major focus of the analysis was on the links between race, political orientation, and educational plans after high school. He found that religious involvement was also related to strong aspirations for higher education among members of different races and among those with divergent political orientations.

Trusty and Watts (1999) studied 13,000 high school seniors who had been surveyed in 1988 and then again in 1992. They found seniors who reported that religion was important in their lives had a more positive attitude toward school, fewer attendance problems, spent more time on homework, and received better grades than did seniors for whom religion was not important.

Jeynes (1999) analyzed data from the same large sample of students and identified a religious work ethic among religious black and Hispanic students, which fostered higher academic achievement. He also noted that religious youth engaged significantly less in risky behavior that endangers academic performance. These effects were observed even after he controlled for the influence of social class, sex, and whether the students attended a private or public school.

Regnerus and Elder (2001) suggest an alternative explanation of the religiosity-education link. They hypothesize that social capital provided by membership and activity in a church leads to stronger academic achievement. They argue that activity in a church provides a youth with positive role models who help with homework, provide encouragement, and give guidance on how to deal with teachers. All of these are considered “social capital” by the researchers. They found among a national sample of 13,500 high school students that the church functions as a stable community for youth living in an “otherwise disorganized world.” Activity in a church provided social and emotional support, which in turn kept youth from engaging in risky behavior. In their view, it is the social capital component of religious activity, rather than the spiritual component, that fosters education.

Muller and Ellison (2001) used the same study as Jaynes (1999) and Trusty and Watts (1999) to test this social capital model and found that activity in a church was related to higher academic performance. Importantly, they also found that even after the effects of social capital have been removed, personal religious involvement remained modestly linked with desired

school behaviors. They attribute this residual impact to spiritual or psychological benefits derived from religious activity. Thus, in their study, both the social and spiritual components of church membership were found to be related to academic achievement.

Finally, Loury (2004) examined data collected from a sample of youth in 1979 and then fourteen years later in 1993. She found a relationship between church activity as a teenager and educational attainment in later life. Those individuals who were active in their church when they were teenagers had obtained more education than had those who were less active. However, she attributes most of the difference in education to parents rather than to church activity. She argues that parents of religious youth are different from other parents in that they more vigorously encourage their children to do well in school. After analysis of the data, she concludes that religious activity includes both family and religious influences, and both contribute to performance in school.

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT OF LDS YOUTH

In light of all this research, the important question is if active LDS students do better in school than less-active members and if active LDS adults have more education than less-active peers in the Church. Albrecht and Heaton (1984) provided an initial answer to this question. They collected data from 3,500 LDS adults living in the United States and found a positive link between religious activity and education. They rejected the social capital model for their sample of adults, as religion had a stronger relationship with education than it did with income or occupational success.

The same data suggested that the Church's policy of a lay ministry contributes to the link between religiosity and education. It may be that educated members are more likely to be called to leadership positions in the Church and that leaders have spiritual experiences that maintain, or most likely strengthen, their religiosity. Whatever the reasons, they found

that active LDS people had higher educational attainment than did those who were less active in the Church.

We have collected information from LDS teens and young adults of different ages, which allows us to follow the relationship between religiosity and education.

RELIGIOSITY AND ACADEMIC ASPIRATIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

To test the religion-education link, we analyzed data from LDS high school students to ascertain the relationship between religiosity and educational performance and aspirations. In Appendix A, we describe the large sample of LDS high school students selected from four different regions in the United States and from Great Britain and Mexico.

We first computed bivariate correlations between the various dimensions of religiosity and educational aspirations. *Educational aspirations* combined the responses to three questions. The first question was “Some people like school very much, while others don’t. How do you feel about going to school?” The five responses ranged from “I like school very much” to “I dislike school very much.”

The second question was “How important is it to you to get good grades in school?” The five response categories varied from “Extremely important” to “Not important.”

The third question was “What are your educational expectations?” The six response categories ranged from “I don’t expect to finish high school” to “I expect to get an advanced degree after graduation from college.”¹

The questions used to create the six *dimensions of religiosity* are described in detail in Appendix B. Bivariate correlations shown in Tables 8 and 9 demonstrate the relationship between religiosity and educational plans when all other factors are ignored. Obviously other factors such as peer pressure and the father’s education are important, but it is informative to determine the relationship between religiosity and educational

Table 8. Bivariate Correlations between Seven Dimensions of Religiosity and Educational Aspiration for Male LDS High School Students, by Region

	Utah County (<i>n</i> = 417)	Castle Dale, UT (<i>n</i> = 152)	East Coast (<i>n</i> = 576)	Pacific Northwest (<i>n</i> = 225)	Great Britain (<i>n</i> = 128)	Mexico (<i>n</i> = 587)
Belief	.280	.309	.258	.164	.182	.206
Public	.293	.416	.253	.116	.201	.261
Private	.491	.368	.275	.205	.266	.276
Spiritual experience	.507	.344	.393	.322	.276	.313
Acceptance in church	.269	.373	.278	.254	.272	.230
Family religious behavior	.127	.276	.120	NS	.256	.176

Table 9. Bivariate Correlations between Seven Dimensions of Religiosity and Educational Aspiration for Female LDS High School Students, by Region

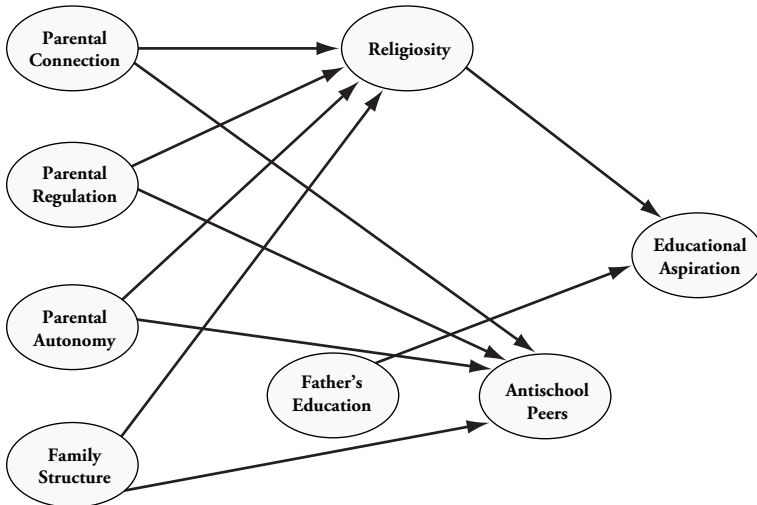
	Utah County (<i>n</i> = 555)	Castle Dale, UT (<i>n</i> = 192)	East Coast (<i>n</i> = 700)	Pacific Northwest (<i>n</i> = 328)	Great Britain (<i>n</i> = 167)	Mexico (<i>n</i> = 628)
Belief	.295	.262	.272	.180	.339	.089
Public	.367	.197	.256	.147	.275	.149
Private	.359	.220	.332	.288	.354	.269
Spiritual experience	.415	.255	.362	.288	.384	.215
Acceptance in church	.269	.195	.256	.256	.334	.191
Family religious behavior	.141	.164	.117	NS	.244	.127

aspirations, with all other things held constant. Frankly, we were surprised at the magnitude of the correlations for both young men and young women. Thirty-six correlations are reported in each table, and all but one for men and one for women were statistically significant.

For some reason, family religiosity was not related to education among either the boys or the girls living in the Pacific Northwest. Family religiosity had the weakest relationship to education, perhaps because it is not a direct measure of the students' personal religious beliefs and behaviors.

Spiritual experiences and private religiosity produced higher correlations with education than did the other dimensions. The correlation between spiritual experiences and educational aspirations produced by the young men in Utah County is remarkable. The strength of spiritual experiences and private religious behaviors to predict education is similar to the superior ability to predict delinquency by the lack of religiosity, as was discussed in Chapter 3. Personal religious commitment, as evidenced by private religious behavior and by spiritual

Figure 1. Model of Significant Estimates of Educational Aspirations



experiences, has a greater impact in the youth's daily life than more public religious activities.

These rather sizable correlations reveal that the six dimensions of religiosity are strongly related to the educational performance and plans of LDS teenagers. Religious parents, a religious work ethic, the Church's doctrine concerning education, and social capital provided by Church participation all combine to significantly enhance the education of LDS high school students.²

Sociology has produced several rather sophisticated models of how young people gain entrance into class structure. Interestingly, religion is rarely included in these models, and when it is, it usually identifies only the young adult's religious denomination.

Figure 1 identifies the seven factors included in our model to explain educational aspirations. *Antischool peers* combined the responses to four questions about how friends engaged in disruptive and disrespectful behavior at school. The behaviors included "Purposely damaged or destroyed things at school," "Openly defied a teacher or official at school," "Skipped school without a legitimate excuse," and "Been suspended or expelled from school."³ It was anticipated that antischool friends would place powerful peer pressure on the LDS teens to engage in similar behavior, which would most likely interfere with school performance.

Religiosity combined the students' responses to the six dimensions of beliefs, public and private behaviors, spiritual experiences, acceptance in Church, and family religious practices. We expected religiosity to predict educational aspirations.

Parental connection, parental regulation, and parents granting psychological autonomy were also included in the model. The items used to create these scales are reported in Appendix B. Such parental behaviors were expected to contribute to educational performance.

Family structure determined if the teens lived in a home with two parents or only one. The question we asked was:

“Who do you live with?” The responses included “Mother and father,” “Mother and stepfather,” “Father and stepmother,” “Mother alone,” “Father alone,” and “Other.” Two-parent homes included stepfathers and stepmothers. Single-parent families in this study had been created mostly by divorce, but a few were the result of the death of a mother or father. We anticipated that high school students living with two parents would do better in high school and would desire more higher education than those raised by a single parent.

Research on status attainment in American society has identified the fathers’ education as a powerful factor in the educational and occupational accomplishments of their children. We asked the students: “How much education did your father (mother) complete?” See Tables 2 and 3 for the distribution of responses from men and women to this question. The responses ranged from “Grade school (grades 1–6)” to “Advanced degree (master’s, PhD, or doctor).” We anticipated that fathers’ and

Figure 2. Model of Significant Estimates for Educational Aspirations (Utah County Boys)

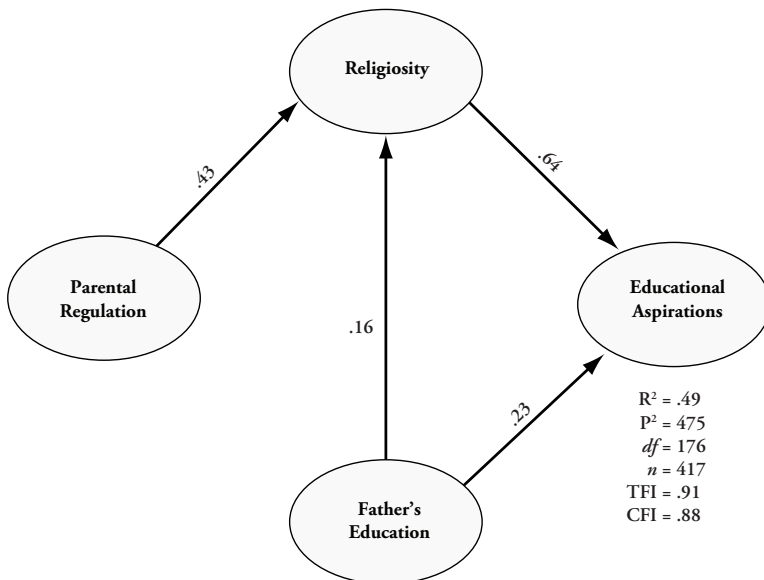
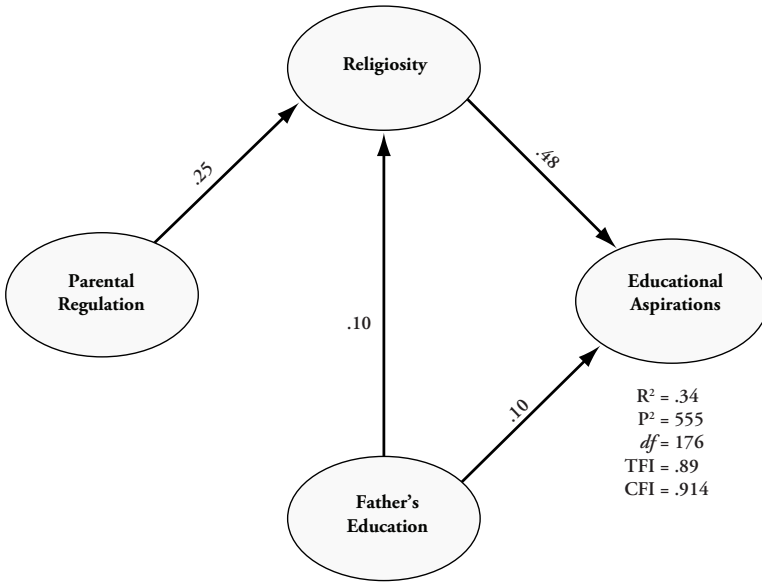


Figure 3. Model of Significant Estimates for Educational Aspirations (Utah County Girls)



mothers' education would make a positive contribution to educational desires among LDS high school students.

The initial model included the mothers' education and maternal employment, but the bivariate analysis and the initial modeling made it clear that these two variables were not significant, and they were deleted.

The model for the young men living in Utah County reasonably fit the data (see Figure 2). The range and meaning of these indicators are discussed in the previous chapter. The findings surprised us. First, only two factors emerged from the competition to explain educational aspirations. The strength of the relationship between religiosity and education is truly amazing. The only other factor to contribute was the fathers' education. These two factors combined to explain nearly half of the variation in educational aspirations among these young men. It should be noted that parental regulation and the fathers' education both made a significant indirect contribution to

Table 10. Summary of Structural Equation Modeling Linking Religiosity to Educational Aspirations among Male LDS High School Students

Dimensions of Religiosity	Utah County (<i>n</i> = 417)	Castle Dale, UT (<i>n</i> = 152)	East Coast (<i>n</i> = 576)	Pacific Northwest (<i>n</i> = 225)	Great Britain (<i>n</i> = 128)	Mexico (<i>n</i> = 587)
Religiosity	.635	.268	.435	.277	*	.437
Antischool peers	*	*	-.221	*	-.363	*
Family connection	*	.523	**	.278	*	*
Family regulation	*	*	**	*	*	*
Family autonomy	*	*	**	*	*	*
Father's education	.226	.179	.303	.188	.217	*
Two-parent family	*	*	*	*	*	*
R ²	.494	.634	.390	.285	.314	.379
χ ²	475	279	288	230	239	299
<i>df</i>	178	176	90	176	145	162
TLK	.878	.890	.899	.953	.903	.943
CFI	.906	.916	.924	.964	.926	.956

* Not significant.

** No data.

understanding education through religiosity. We were very surprised to see that peer pressure to misbehave in school was not significant.

Figure 3 demonstrates that the same factors that influenced the boys emerged as significant predictors for the young women in Utah County. Religiosity was the strongest factor, which combined with the fathers' education to account for a strong contribution to the girls' educational aspirations.

Table 10 presents summary data for the models, predicting educational aspirations among young men in all six geographical regions. The young men living in Great Britain were the only group among which religiosity did not emerge as a significant predictor. We don't have any explanation for this finding other than the fact that British society is very secular, and religion has a tough time having much influence. Also, the British educational system is more structured than it is in the United States, and religion may be limited in the influence it exerts.

Among the other five samples, religiosity made a very strong contribution. Overall, the results support the hypothesis that individual religiosity is a powerful predictor of educational achievement among LDS male high school students.

The fathers' education proved an influential factor in all of the models except for the boys living in Mexico. The British young men fit the more traditional model of adolescent behavior, in which peer pressures dominate. Peers were important to the boys living along the East Coast, but their influence was not nearly as strong as that of religiosity.

Another surprise finding was the association of family connection with educational aspirations among young men living in rural Castle Dale, Utah. Those boys who felt close to their parents had much stronger desires for education than those boys who felt their parents were less interested in them. While these unique findings are interesting, they do not detract from the importance of the influence of religiosity on educational aspirations among LDS high school students.

Table 11. Summary of Structural Equation Modeling Linking Religiosity to Educational Aspirations among Female LDS High School Students

Dimensions of Religiosity	Utah County (n = 555)	Castle Dale, UT (n = 192)	East Coast (n = 700)	Pacific Northwest (n = 328)	Great Britain (n = 167)	Mexico (n = 628)
Religiosity	.479	.293	.436	.292	.425	.435
Antischool peers	*	*	-.173	*	*	*
Family connection	*	*	**	.294	.337	**
Family regulation	*	*	**	*	*	.254
Family autonomy	*	*	**	*	*	*
Father's education	.099	.146	.144	.146	*	*
Two-parent family	*	*	*	*	*	*
R ²	.349	.189	.304	.294	.406	.269
χ^2	555	310	233	371	307	352
df	178	176	90	176	176	162
TLK	.889	.889	.941	.891	.889	.927
CFI	.914	.915	.956	.917	.911	.944

* Not significant.

** No data.

The results for the young women living in the different regions are presented in Table 11. The model fit the data nicely for all six samples. Among the young women, religiosity was the strongest factor predicting educational aspirations for all six samples. Interestingly, the fathers' education emerged as a significant factor among the four samples in the United States, but not in the British or Mexican samples. Perhaps the importance of the fathers' education for daughters is culturally determined and is more important in the United States.

Family connection had a strong direct effect among the girls in the Pacific Northwest and Great Britain. Teens with involved parents desired more education than those teens with more distant parents.

An important finding is that in none of the samples of either men or women did family structure make a contribution. These results indicate that single parents are able to foster educational desires in their children as strong as those found in teens living with two parents.

In summary, the strength of individual religiosity in comparison to family and peer influences in predicting educational aspirations is remarkable. In all six regions, among both men and women, religiosity was associated with doing better in school and desiring a higher education. It seems that religious values that encourage education are one reason for this strong association. Other reasons are a religious work ethic, social capital obtained by church activity, and religious students' tendency to engage in less risky behavior.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF LDS COLLEGE STUDENTS

College is a time when young adults, away from the steady influence of their parents and other significant adults, struggle with their religious beliefs. They must decide if they still believe in God and whether or not they will attend religious services, pray, and read their scriptures.

In addition, liberal and secular ideas in the classroom challenge the students' religious beliefs. Media attention to the recreational activities of some college students, such as hanging out and hooking up (casual sex), keg parties, and recreational drug use add to the belief that college students are fairly nonreligious.

Astin and Astin (2004) are coprincipal investigators of a national study of the Spiritual Development of American College Students. The study is being conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles, and funded by the Templeton Foundation. The initial survey, interviewing 3,680 freshmen attending 46 colleges and universities across the country, was conducted in the fall of 2000, and a follow-up survey was obtained in the spring of 2003. The final follow-up took place in the fall of 2004. Several reports from this study have been posted on the project's Web site, www.spirituality.ucla.edu. Analysis has not been completed, but tentative findings have been reported for the 2000 to 2003 period, in which the students were followed from their freshman through their junior years.

We compared the information about the religiosity of this sample of college students across the country to data we collected from BYU students at both the Provo and Idaho campuses. We conducted a study of dating and courtship among BYU students attending both of these campuses. The details are presented in Appendix A. We included in the mail survey several questions about educational goals and aspirations, peer and family pressures to do well in college, and religious beliefs and activities. Thus, we are able to test a model in which religiosity competes with family characteristics, peer pressures, and family pressures to explain educational performance and aspirations.

The major limitation with this analysis is that all of the BYU students have rather high religiosity. A lack of variation in religiosity limits its ability to predict education. In order to

provide insights about the religiosity of BYU students, their religious beliefs and activities were compared to the findings from the national study.

The strong religious behavior found among non-LDS students in the national study surprised the researchers. Seventy percent of the students in the national study had attended church services the previous year, and 52% had attended regularly. The authors of the national study indicated that the level of religiosity was higher at Evangelical colleges affiliated with Baptist and Church of Christ denominations. They did not report the beliefs and activity of students attending Evangelical colleges, but we are very confident that the church attendance of the BYU students is significantly higher than even this group of students. Our data showed that 95% of the BYU students attended sacrament meeting every week, and another 4% attended three or four times a month.

Over three-fourths (77%) of the students in the national study reported that they pray. The researchers did not ask how often the students prayed but just if they did so. Over 99% of the BYU students said they prayed. A large majority (78%) of the BYU students said they pray every day, and another 16% pray several times a week.

Table 12. Bivariate Correlations between Five Dimensions of Religiosity and Three Academic Factors or Attitudes among Students Attending BYU and BYU-Idaho

College experience	Religious beliefs (<i>n</i> = 2,372)	Public behavior (<i>n</i> = 2,374)	Private behavior (<i>n</i> = 2,371)	Spiritual experience (<i>n</i> = 2,356)	Acceptance in congregation (<i>n</i> = 2,370)	Total religiosity
Satisfaction with college	.076	.165	.237	.192	.242	.108
Cumulative GPA	.145	.126	.192	.111	.086	.131
Educational expectations	*	*	.054	*	*	*

*Not significant.

Finally, 74% of the students in the national study reported that their religious or spiritual beliefs had provided them with strength, support, and guidance. It is encouraging that over three-fourths of the college students across this country derive strength and comfort from the Spirit. In comparison, all of the BYU students “strongly agreed” that they have felt the Spirit guide or comfort them. As stated, those conducting the national study were impressed with the level of religiosity of college students, especially those attending Evangelical colleges.

It is also important to ascertain the relationship between the religiosity of college students and their academic performance. In a limited study of 251 students, Zern (1989) found that belief in God, self-perception of righteousness, and “ritual” observances such as baptisms and religious holidays were not related to grade point average. However, when he controlled for the students’ religiousness during their youth, he found that those who had become more religious had significantly higher GPAs than did the rest of the sample.

Astin and Astin (2004) found that high school grades were the strongest predictor of a student’s college grade point average. In addition, students who worked or who partied a lot in high school had lower-than-average grades. Nevertheless, spiritual/religious factors affect academic performance in college (Astin & Astin, 2004). Students who read sacred texts and other religious materials, who went to church, and who engaged in religious singing had higher-than-expected grades. In addition, religious students were more satisfied with their college experience, had stronger self-esteem, lower psychological distress, and higher self-rated physical health.

The bivariate correlations between the five dimensions of religiosity and three measures of school performance among BYU students are presented in Table 12. Family religiosity was deleted from the questionnaire because most BYU students live away from home. The correlations in the table are fairly modest, probably because there is so little variation in religiosity among

BYU students. Even so, private religious behavior (personal prayer, scripture reading, and fasting) is significantly related to positive feelings about college, a high cumulative GPA, and ambitious educational aspirations. The other four dimensions of religiosity produced significant correlations with both satisfaction and GPA. For some reason, educational expectations are more independent of religiosity.

EDUCATION AND ENDURING RELIGIOSITY

As discussed at length above, research has demonstrated the positive impact of religion on educational attainment. However, a reverse relationship—that education erodes religious beliefs and practices—is also plausible.

Secularization, or the increase of worldliness, is used by members of conservative denominations to justify fear of advanced secular education. The significant question is whether or not advanced education influences members of the LDS Church to replace their religious beliefs with scientific beliefs and, in turn, to decrease their religious involvement. Do reason and rationality replace faith and activity among educated members of the Church? The logic is so pervasive that a “secularization hypothesis” has been widely accepted by both social scientists and the general public. A recent article complained that social scientists “have long ceased troubling themselves with exclusive investigations of the relationship between formal education and religious belief. . . . They could simply assume as a matter of course that formal education induces a weakening of faith” (Johnson, 1997, p. 231).

COLLEGE STUDENTS

Many observers, religious leaders, and members of the general public assume that the college experience leads to secularization. College allows freedom from family, so that teens who went to church to please Mom and Dad can now stay away. In

addition, students are exposed to secular ideas in many of the classes they attend.

An early study tracked college students from 1948 to 1974 and concluded that college attendance was associated with a shift from orthodox religious beliefs to more liberal and humanistic viewpoints and was also associated with a decline in church attendance up to 1967 (Hastings & Hoge, 1976). The authors caution that the decline in religiosity they observed may be the consequence of the political and social alienation that occurred in the 1960s, rather than the college experience alone. Additional analysis convinced them that the age when religious views are formed had shifted down from college to the high school, and that after the mid-1960s college students' religiosity remained fairly constant. According to them, any shifts in belief and activity had already taken place in high school.

On the other hand, Johnson (1997) examined the national General Social Survey (GSS) study for the years 1988 through 1993. He found that each year of schooling beyond high school decreased belief in God among the young people in the study.

The national study of college students (Astin & Astin, 2004) found that 52% of the freshmen regularly attended religious services prior to attending college, and that the percentage had declined to 29% by their junior year. It is unfortunate that the study does not have information about the frequency of attendance during the students' freshman year. It may be that most of this decline in attendance occurred when the students left home and entered college.

We do not have data from BYU students, but we did compare the attendance and personal prayer of freshman students to that of juniors. Ninety-four percent of both freshman and juniors reported weekly attendance at Church. A few more juniors than freshmen revealed they prayed daily, at 78% versus 74%. Obviously, exposure to BYU had not decreased religious activity. One probable reason there was no decrease in religiosity

ity between freshmen and juniors at BYU is that many of the latter, especially the young men, are returned missionaries.

Self-reported spirituality also declined among the students in the national sample during their first three years of college. Twenty percent of the students claimed to be more spiritual in 2003 as compared to 2000, while 36% acknowledged their spirituality was lower (Astin and Astin, 2004). There was a loss in the spirituality of this sample of college students during the three-year period.

We did not ask the same question, but instead used responses to the question: "I have a strong testimony of the gospel," to represent spirituality. Just over 80% of the freshmen at BYU "strongly agreed" with this statement, as compared to 86% of the juniors. Again, the juniors' religiosity is actually stronger than that of freshman. Attendance at BYU certainly was not associated with a decline in religiosity.

Interestingly, 39% of the students in the national sample reported that their religious or spiritual beliefs were strengthened by "new ideas encountered in class" (Bonderud and Fleischer, 2003). Over half, at 53%, felt their classroom experience had no impact on their religiosity, and only 8% reported that exposure to secular ideas and theories in the classroom reduced their religiosity. This should calm some of the fear among conservative denominations about the consequences of secular education. We did not ask any questions about the impact of classroom material, but given that religiosity did not decline between freshmen and juniors, it seems that what is taught in the BYU classrooms did not threaten religiosity.

We tested the relationship between education and religion by computing the bivariate correlations between three measures of educational attitudes and five dimensions of religiosity. The relationships between satisfaction with college, cumulative grade point average, educational expectations, and the measures of religiosity are presented in Table 12.

If college education secularizes students, then the correlations between college experience and religion should be negative which means that as education increased, religiosity declined. However, the opposite is the case. All of the significant correlations are positive, which argues that for BYU students, success in college and desire for more education are associated with stronger religiosity. Only private religious behavior has a positive relationship to educational expectations. But importantly, none of the correlations support the notion of college reducing religiosity.

As stated earlier, it is difficult to rigorously test the secularization hypothesis among BYU students because all of the students have such strong beliefs and high level of Church activity. The comparison of religious attitudes and behavior between the students in the national sample and BYU students also reveal the extremely high religiosity of BYU students. But all the analysis we were able to conduct not only refuted the secularization hypothesis but also indicated that attendance at BYU strengthened religiosity.

YOUNG ADULTS

The analysis of the educational achievement of young adults provides potential evidence about the secularizing effect of a college education. Men and women in their middle and late thirties have finished their education, and it has had time to work its effect on their religiosity. We have two different groups of LDS young adults whose educational attainment can be studied. We collected data in 1994 from a sample of 6,000 men who had served missions for the Church. One-fourth of the subjects (1,500) had been home from their missions one year, one-fourth had been home 5 years, one-fourth had been home 10 years, and the final one-fourth had been home for 17 years. We also surveyed a sample of 4,000 young women who had been home the same number of years.

Two years later we conducted a companion study of LDS young men and women who had not served a mission. They

Table 13. Bivariate Correlation between Family, Friends, and Religiosity and Educational Attainment for Adult LDS Men and Women

Family/Religiosity/Peers	Men		Women	
	Returned Missionaries	Non-Missionaries	Returned Missionaries	Non-Missionaries
	(<i>n</i> = 1,874)	(<i>n</i> = 336)	(<i>n</i> = 1,341)	(<i>n</i> = 540)
High school years				
High school grades	.301	.364	.333	.383
Father's education	.130	.292	.215	.275
Family connection	*	*	*	.108
Family regulation	.053	.194	.121	.175
Family autonomy	.079	*	.097	.150
Religiosity	.092	*	.112	.249
Post-mission/college				
Friends attending college	.219	**	.244	**
Religiosity	.119	.185	*	.177
Current				
Marital status (single)	*	*	*	.109
Religiosity	.080	.113	*	.141
Public	.075	*	*	.124
Private	.051	.133	*	.101

* Not significant.

** No data.

were in the same four age categories as the missionaries. A high proportion of the men in the study refused to participate, as they argued they were no longer affiliated with the Church. Not serving a mission was part of their separation from the Church, which in many cases had started when they were much younger. Young women have no obligation to serve a mission, and those who do not serve are treated much differently than are young men who do not go on missions. This difference was evident in that we obtained a much higher response from

women than from men. Details of the data collection for both studies are presented in Appendix A.

The educational attainment of the returned missionaries is compared to a national sample in Table 1. The educational accomplishment of the members of the Church is remarkable. The bivariate correlations between educational achievement, family, peer, and religious factors are presented in Table 13. Some family, peer, and religious factors are from when the young adults were in high school. Others are from the first couple of years after the missionaries returned from their missions. For the non-missionaries, the factors refer to when they were finishing college. Some are current characteristics.

The most important correlations are those between educational attainment and current religiosity. If education reduces religiosity, then the correlations should be negative. The opposite is the case. Three of the four correlations are positive, which means that the higher the education, the stronger the person's religiosity.

The correlation between education and current religiosity for young women who served a mission is not significant, but is not a negative correlation. These results are very strong evidence that for both LDS men and women, higher education does not reduce religious beliefs and activities. This is true even among those who did not serve missions and have fairly low levels of religiosity.

Sacerdote and Glaeser (2002) found interesting mixed results concerning education's impact on religiosity among adults. They discovered that education is positively related to church attendance, but is negatively related to religious beliefs. Thus, the more education a person attains, the higher will be their attendance at church, but the weaker will be their religious beliefs and values. They explain this inconsistency by observing that church attendance is a social activity and that education tends to enhance social participation.

On the other hand, their study found that education may erode fundamental religious beliefs, which are replaced by

Table 14. Bivariate Correlation between Background, Peer Pressure, Religiosity, and Educational Attainment among LDS Returned Missionaries Ages 35–50

Characteristics	Men (n = 1,442)	Women (n = 1,548)
High school grades	.397	.333
Friends seeking higher education	.268	.244
Father's education	.212	.215
Youth religiosity	.148	.112
Religiosity prior to mission	.133	.072
Religiosity following mission	.160	*
Current religiosity	.138	*

* Not significant.

Figure 4. Model of Significant Estimates for Educational Attainment for Male Returned Missionaries over Age 32

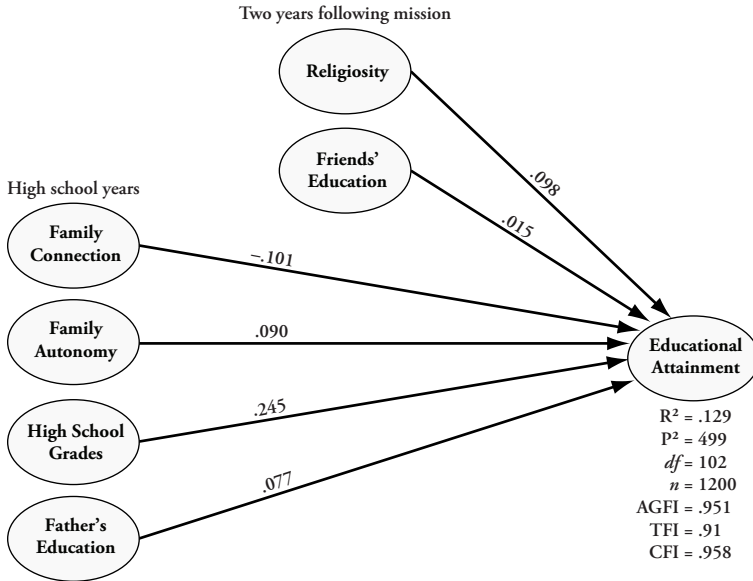


Figure 5. Model of Significant Estimates for Educational Attainment for Female Returned Missionaries over Age 32

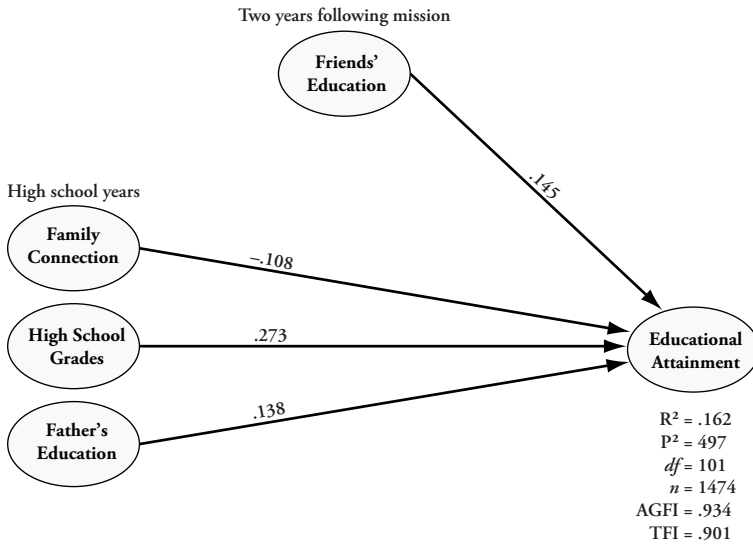


Figure 6. Model of Significant Estimates for Educational Attainment for Young Women over Age 32 Who Did Not Serve a Mission

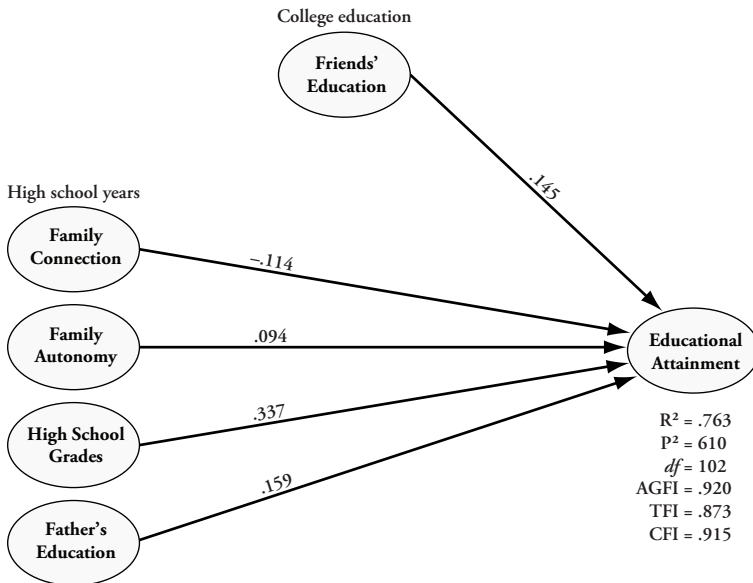
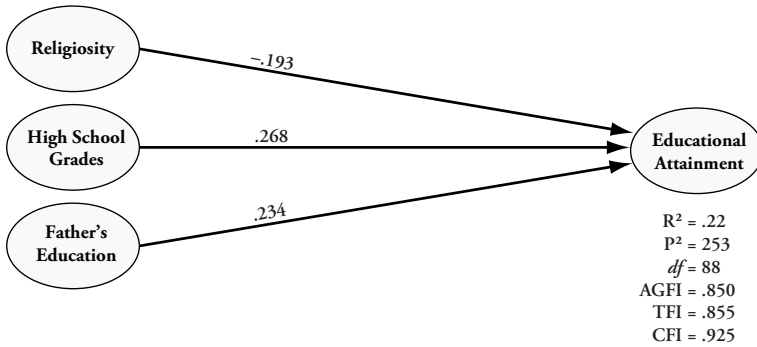


Figure 7. Model of Significant Estimates for Educational Attainment for Young Men over Age 32 Who Did Not Serve a Mission



science and secular beliefs. They suggest that educated men and women resolve this inconsistency by gravitating to less “fer-vent” religions, where they can be involved socially while still holding to their weak religious beliefs.

Our study also calculated the association between educational attainment and current public and private religious behavior. We wanted to test Sacerdote and Glaeser’s idea that education increases church attendance (public behavior) and reduces religious beliefs and private behavior.

This differential effect did not appear among the four samples of LDS men and women. Education was not negatively related to private religious behavior, which included personal prayer, personal scripture reading, and thinking about religion. Actually, three of the four correlations were positive, and the fourth was not significant.

It is interesting that high school religiosity and religiosity following a mission were significantly associated with eventual educational achievement. The higher the religiosity among teens and returned missionaries, the more education they obtained.

High school grades reflect intellectual ability and a commitment to education, and it is not surprising that grades were the strongest predictor of eventual educational achievement.

Consistent with the other studies, the father's education had a strong relationship to educational attainment.

The structural equation models predicting educational achievement for each of the four samples are presented in Figures 4 through 7. We actually should have run the models with current religiosity as the dependent variable to show any secularizing effect of education. Given the time frame of the other variables in the model, this was not reasonable. The models in these four figures confirm the findings of the bivariate correlations that educational attainment did not reduce the religiosity of LDS men and women. Current religiosity did not emerge as a negative correlate of education in any of the four models.

The negative score between high school religiosity and educational attainment among young men who did not serve a mission may at first glance raise some interesting conjectures. But the correlation between high school religiosity and educational attainment for these men is not significant. In other words, high school religiosity is so strongly related to high school grades and the father's education that in the model it appears to have a negative influence. However, it does not.

CONCLUSION

This chapter is long and complex, as is nature of the relationship between religion and education. We have compared LDS teens and young adults to non-LDS students of the same ages. All these analyses make it absolutely clear that members of the LDS Church have significantly more education than the general public. Among LDS youth, individual religiosity is associated with academic success and aspirations. Finally, the structural equation modeling demonstrates that advanced education does not lead to a decrease in religiosity among LDS adults. Education does not replace religious beliefs or erode religious activities and practices.

NOTES

1. These three questions produced a fairly strong scale as factor analysis produced an Eigenvalue of 1.60 and the factor weights for the three items were .70 and higher. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .55, which is a little low. The limited number of only three items likely reduced the alpha.
2. We discussed in Chapter 3 the information provided by structural equation modeling. This statistical procedure allows all the various family, peer, and religious factors to compete to provide an explanation of educational aspirations. The R^2 reveals the percent of the variation in educational desires predicted by the combination of factors in the model. The level of individual contribution made by each factor is revealed in its beta coefficient. Structural equation modeling also calculates the indirect effects of family factors on education through peers and religious factors. This interaction between the various influences approximates real life much more closely than bivariate correlations. In our study of the relationship between religion and education, we are not interested in developing a comprehensive model of status attainment. Rather, we have included the major factors from the status attainment models with religiosity to determine whether religion makes an independent contribution while competing with these other variables.
3. The items produce a strong scale with an Eigenvalue of 2.27 and factor weights greater than .74. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was .74.

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