

## The Relationship Among Religiosity, Paranormal Beliefs, and Superstition in Young Adults of Indian Urban Areas

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### ABSTRACT

This research explores the relationship between religiosity, paranormal beliefs, and superstition among young adults in urban areas. The study sample consists of 178 urban young adults aged 18 to 30. Participants were from different states in India, representing diverse regional backgrounds. The research employed a cross-sectional design. Three scales were utilized to measure the levels of religiosity, superstition, and paranormal beliefs. The findings suggest that among urban young adults, religiosity and superstition levels are moderate, while paranormal belief levels are high. The study shows significant relationship between the variables. These results contribute to a better understanding of the complex interplay between religiosity, paranormal beliefs, and superstition among young adults in urban settings.

**Keywords:** *Religiosity, Paranormal Beliefs, Superstition, Urban Young Adults, India, Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS), A Scale to Measure Superstition (ASMS), Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (RPBS), correlation, cross-sectional research*

### Religiosity

According to Anita Ravi (2020), the concept of gods protecting people and their crops and cities dates back to early writing in the Mesopotamian city of Sumer, around 1200 BCE. The emergence of shared beliefs and values helped establish social cohesion and identity, eventually leading to the development of religious systems that shaped the culture and society of these civilizations she also says that almost, all religions offer the assurance of eternal salvation in some form. For example, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam share a belief in one omnipotent and wise deity. In contrast, Hinduism permits the adoration of several influential gods and goddesses, whereas Buddhism and Daoism recognize the existence of many divine beings in various shapes and incarnations. Additionally, all these religions promote the regulation of human relationships through kindness, selflessness, and ethical integrity. While some classify Confucianism as an ethical system rather than a religion, it emphasizes ethical behavior in public, good governance, and social responsibility. Emile Durkheim defined religion as "A unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say things set apart and forbidden - beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them".

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The prevalence of religion during the 1200 BCE period can be attributed to several factors, as explained by the McNeills in *The Human Web: A Bird's-Eye View of World History*: "urban dwellers, and particularly poor, marginal persons, found that authoritative religious guidance, shared faith, and mutual support among congregations of believers could substitute for the tight-knit custom of village existence (within which the rural majority continued to live) and give meaning and value to ordinary lives, despite daily contact with uncaring strangers" (McNeills, 2003, p. 61). Such religious congregations helped to stabilize urban society by making its inherent inequality and insecurity more tolerable.

It is fascinating to observe how religion has evolved over time, from the early beliefs in multiple gods to the more modern monotheistic faiths. Despite the differences between the various religions, they all share a belief in moral principles and human values. Religion, in this sense, can be seen as a way for people to connect with something larger than themselves and to seek guidance for living a good life. It is an essential aspect of human society that continues to shape the beliefs and values of individuals and communities around the world.

### **Superstition**

When ever black cat crosses the road, sinister thoughts start occupying our Brain, this is nothing but superstition. Researcher (Stephen Mays,2017) have mentioned 13 superstition forms around the world which include knocking on wood for good luck, the use of the "nazar boncuğu" amulet to ward off the evil eye, black cats, crows, and magpies as harbingers of bad luck, trimming nails at night as a potential cause of premature death, fear of Tuesday the 13th, whistling indoors and at the sun, sitting at the corner of a table as a sign of bad luck, placing a purse or wallet on the ground as bad financial luck, toasting with water as a way of wishing death upon someone, the Hagia Sophia's thumb turning, breaking mirrors leading to seven years of bad luck, and bird flying into homes as a bad omen .

The term "superstition" has a long and evolving history. It was first used in ancient Greece in the 4th century BCE to describe practices such as magic, prophecy, and divination. Over time, the meaning of superstition changed and was often used in contrast to the religious practices preferred by the elites. Superstition has always been a transactional concept, lacking a fixed meaning of its own and serving to differentiate itself from other worldviews that were more widely accepted during a particular era.

(Stuart Vyse, 2020). These beliefs often involve the idea that certain actions or events can bring either good or bad luck. Despite advancements in science and technology, many people still hold onto these superstitious beliefs in various forms, such as carrying a lucky charm or avoiding certain activities on certain days. While these beliefs may not have any scientific basis, they continue to play a significant role in many people's lives, providing comfort, meaning, and a sense of control over the unpredictable forces of the world.

### **Paranormal Belief**

Paranormal beliefs refer to ideas or experiences that are outside the scope of what is considered scientifically explainable or rational, and that involve supposed supernatural or unexplained phenomena. The origins of paranormal beliefs can be traced back to ancient cultures, where beliefs in ghosts, spirits, and other supernatural forces were commonly held. Today, paranormal beliefs continue to be held by many people, although they are often viewed with skepticism by the scientific community (Irwin Et al, 2007)

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*There are many types of paranormal beliefs (Shermer, 2011), including:*

- Ghosts and Hauntings - Belief in the existence of the spirits of dead people who can haunt places or people.
- Psychic Abilities - Belief in the ability of certain individuals to perceive information through means other than the five senses, such as telepathy, clairvoyance, or precognition.
- UFOs and Extraterrestrial Life - Belief in the existence of unidentified flying objects (UFOs) and the possibility of extraterrestrial life.
- Cryptozoology - Belief in the existence of unknown or undiscovered animals, such as Bigfoot or the Loch Ness Monster.
- Spiritualism - Belief in the ability of mediums to communicate with the spirits of the dead.

There are many factors that contribute to the development and maintenance of paranormal beliefs, including cultural and social influences, personal experiences, and cognitive biases. While some people may find comfort or meaning in paranormal beliefs, others may experience negative consequences such as anxiety, paranoia, or even delusional thinking (Peltzer, K., & Hlongwana, 2020).

### **THEORIES**

#### ***Religiosity Functionalism***

Emile Durkheim, a prominent sociologist, focused on studying religion in small societies. He believed that religion influenced people's thoughts and behavior within a societal context. Durkheim observed that sacred religious symbols and rituals were separated from everyday profane objects. While advanced cultures may not believe in the divine power of sacred objects, they still treat them with respect. Durkheim emphasized that religion is not just about belief but also about regular rituals that bring people together and offer an escape from mundane life. He predicted that as society modernizes, traditional religion would be replaced by civic religion, incorporating civic celebrations (Durkheim, 1912).

#### **Weber's Theory of Religion**

Durkheim's theory of religion was based on limited examples, while Weber studied various religions worldwide. Weber focused on millions of believers in Christianity, Taoism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. He aimed to understand religion's impact on social change and observed that Protestantism influenced Western culture and the rise of capitalism. In contrast, Eastern religions like Hinduism emphasized spiritual attainment and escaping worldly matters. Weber saw Christianity as an active religion that sought to save people through specific beliefs and moral codes, while Eastern religions took a more passive approach. He believed salvation religions had a more proactive role in shaping society.

#### **Marx's Theory of Religion**

Karl Marx, although not religious himself, drew upon ideas from thinkers like Ludwig Feuerbach to develop his views on religion. According to Feuerbach, people project their cultural values onto gods and spirits. Marx called religion the 'opium of the people,' suggesting it acts as a distraction from societal injustices and discourages social change. It teaches acceptance of one's current situation and postpones happiness to the afterlife. Marx recognized that religion provides solace from daily

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hardships but believed it would eventually fade away. He argued that religion justifies inequality and diverts attention from addressing societal problems.

### ***Superstition***

#### **Reinforcement and Operant Conditioning Theory**

In 1948, psychologist B.F. Skinner noticed pigeons displaying strange behaviors in hopes of getting food. Even though the food was already scheduled to be given at regular intervals, the pigeons believed their actions influenced the feeding. Some psychologists disagreed with Skinner's explanation, suggesting a different reason for the pigeons' behavior. However, Skinner's idea of reinforcement schedules has been used to explain superstitious behavior in humans. When people perform an action expecting a reward and don't get it, they may keep trying because sometimes rewards come unexpectedly. This is called the partial reinforcement effect and can make people persist in their actions.

#### **Evolutionary Theory**

Nature favors the development of quick and simple ways of thinking that often lead to mistaken connections or beliefs. Even though these beliefs may be incorrect, they can sometimes offer survival benefits that outweigh the drawbacks. There's a link suggested between obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and superstition, indicating a possible connection. According to a recent theory by Jane Risen, superstitions are intuitive judgments that people know are incorrect but still go along with, rather than correcting, because they emerge from our automatic thinking process and are not corrected by our more deliberate thinking process. (Barrett, 2000).

### ***Paranormal belief***

#### **The Cognitive Theory of Paranormal Belief**

The cognitive theory posits that paranormal beliefs stem from the way our minds process information and interpret experiences. According to this theory, individuals who are prone to paranormal beliefs have a tendency to find patterns and connections in random events, leading them to attribute supernatural causes. This cognitive bias is known as patternicity. Additionally, individuals may rely on heuristics, mental shortcuts that help them make quick judgments, to explain and understand the unexplainable. These cognitive processes contribute to the development and maintenance of paranormal beliefs (Shermer, 2011).

#### **The Socio-Cultural Theory of Paranormal Belief**

The socio-cultural theory suggests that paranormal beliefs are influenced by social and cultural factors. People are social beings, and their beliefs are shaped by the society they live in. In some cultures, supernatural phenomena are deeply ingrained and accepted as part of everyday life. Additionally, the media plays a significant role in promoting and disseminating paranormal beliefs. Movies, television shows, and books often portray paranormal events and phenomena, which can influence individuals' perceptions and reinforce their beliefs in the supernatural (Houran & Lange, 2001).

#### **The Psychological Theory of Paranormal Belief**

The psychological theory proposes that paranormal beliefs fulfill various psychological needs. For example, individuals may find comfort and a sense of control in believing in supernatural powers or an afterlife. Paranormal beliefs can also serve as a coping mechanism, helping individuals make sense of traumatic experiences or providing hope in challenging times. Furthermore, these beliefs can enhance individuals' sense of uniqueness

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or provide them with a sense of belonging to a specific group that shares similar beliefs. Thus, psychological factors contribute to the formation and maintenance of paranormal beliefs (Goulding, 2004).

### *Statement of the problem*

The relationship between religiosity, paranormal beliefs, and superstitions among young adults in urban areas remains largely unexplored. As urbanization continues to shape societies, traditional religious practices and beliefs are often challenged by modern lifestyles and a growing interest in paranormal phenomena. Consequently, there is a need to understand how young adults in urban areas navigate their religiosity, paranormal beliefs, and superstitions, and how these factors interact and influence their worldview and decision-making processes.

### *Purpose of the study*

The purpose of this exploratory study is to examine the relationship between religiosity, paranormal beliefs, and superstitions among young adults residing in urban areas. The study aims to investigate the prevalence of religiosity, explore the extent of paranormal beliefs, and assess the presence of superstitious behaviors among this demographic. By shedding light on these aspects, the study aims to contribute to a broader understanding of the complex dynamics between religiosity, paranormal beliefs, and superstitions among young adults in urban areas and provide insights into the potential impact on their lives and decision-making processes.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Residents of rural areas tend to be more religious and paranormal believer because in majority, locus of control is influenced by external factors (Dr. Adnan Adil Et al. 2019). In comparison to rural male, rural female showed low level of superstitious belief, similar conclusion found in urban context, however, (Subhankar Samanta 2021) found no significant difference between urban population and rural population in terms of superstitious belief.

We all live in a male dominated society. (Dr. Pragati Chaturvedi and Roopali Shreevastava 2020) found that, In India, women are more superstitious than men, underlying reason could be lack of education because women are less educated than men in India, even, Latvian women showed higher level of paranormal belief than men (J. J. TOBACYK Et al 2015), however, (Aisha Maqsood Et al. 2018) stated that, women are more superstitious than men not because they are less educated, they tend to be involved more in experiential thinking. It is found that high level of experiential thinking predicted high superstitious beliefs and high level of rational thinking predicted low superstitious belief.

Humans who lack confidence and don't believe in their handwork, they indulge in superstitious activity to get their work done in order to avoid harm, injury and adversity. It is mostly common in uneducated and ignorant individuals (Bodising Narah and Ranjit Taku 2020). Intelligent and reflective thinkers scored low in paranormal belief in comparison to non reflective thinkers (Onurcan Yilmaz 2020). Reflective thinkers can easily nullify their uncanny experience in comparison to non reflective thinker (Romain Bouvet, Jean-François Bonnefon 2015). Researchers like (Torgler and Benno, 2003) concluded that, higher education is inversely proportional to superstitious belief, but in contrast to this (Hazim Hakkush Al-Dilaimya and Marwah Firas Abdullah Al-Raweb 2020) postulated that Educated, smart individuals can also be superstitious at different level. Smart, emotionally

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stable and educated individuals know the difference between what is rational and what is irrational but still they believe in superstition (Jane L. Risen 2016), Education itself cannot eradicate people's belief in superstition or other powerful intuition (Jane L. Risen 2016), it should be combined with rational thinking because those who indulge in intuitive-experiential thinking they easily fall prey to powerful intuition and other superstitious belief (Paul Rogers Et al 2018).

According to (Yung-Jong Shiah Et al 2010) Christian and atheists scored lower on paranormal belief compared to traditional Chinese religious believer. Among believers, nominal believers and nonbelievers. Nominal believers and nonbelievers share similar belief and they show higher level of paranormal belief as compared to believer (Elizabeth L. Hillstrom and Melissa Strachan 2000). Another report stated that non religious individuals show high level of belief in both superstition and paranormal phenomena were as religious individuals show high level of belief in paranormal phenomena only (Richard Beck a & Jonathan P. Miller b 2010). In contrast to this (Jeffrey Rudski 2003)'s reports says that even believers are superstitious and believe in paranormal phenomena. Culture has more influence on superstitious belief of an area in comparison to religion. For instance, Northern Italy is more secular in comparison to southern Italy but the natives of both the areas avoid Tuesday and 17th of every month for marriage, they consider it as an unlucky day because it's a part of their culture (Marco Et al 2016). A research was conducted Among Buddhist, Christian, Taoists and atheist. Buddhists and Taoists showed more Subjective Well Being (SWB) in comparison to christian and atheist. Underlying reason could be culture. Buddhism and Taoism were developed in China and they believe in collectivism (Yung-Jong Shiah Et al 2015). Two individuals who share same political ideology, age, sexuality, education, religious engagement can acquire poles apart set of belief about the world if their analytical thinking differ from each other (Gordon Pennycook Et al 2012). An experiment was conducted to understand why people don't want to pet black cats. Researchers found no evidence of religiosity or racial prejudice behind this deed, underlying reason was participants could not understand black cats emotion and facial expression which make them unworthy to pet (Haylie D. Jones and Christian L. Hart 2019)

In Kyoto university hospital, Japan, patients extend their stay in hospital beyond doctors suggestion in order to be released from hospital on a lucky day. Research also shows that in the name of superstition patients consult traditional healer and these traditional practitioners use insanitary instrument which can be hazardous for health (Donat Uwayezu Et al 2022). In Taiwan, the seventh lunar month is considered as ghost month. It is believed that during this month, gates of the afterlife are opened and ghosts freely roam in the living world. Presence of these otherworldly beings impact life of earthlings. Believers avoid number of activities such as swimming, driving, traveling, avoid outing after sunset, shopping, social events, surgeries, going to clinic etc. An individual who believes in these myth wont be consulting medical practitioner when he or she will be under critical situation. This can be hazardous for him or her (Martin Halla Chia-Lun Liu Jin-Tan Liu 2019).

Superstition can also have positive outcome. Yield of positive outcome could be result of placebo effect. (Sieun An Et al 2020) experimented and found that under the placebo condition, more superstitious individual could memorize more words in comparison to less superstitious individuals, however, in the control condition less superstitious individual could memorize more words. Placebo effect also influence athlete's performance this is the reason why elite athletes are more believer in superstition than non-athletes (Zsuzsanna

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Dömötör Et al 2016). Superstitious thought or behavior improves superstition believer's performance. In this experiment ball was considered as a lucky charm, narrative was established that in past who ever had this ball they got success. Result shows that superstitious individual showed better performance in the presence of lucky charm (Lysann Damisch Et al 2010). A study suggests that some people who experienced physical abuse during childhood may find solace in paranormal beliefs, as these beliefs may offer a sense of control and emotional resilience. (Stefanie L. Perkins and Rhiannon Allen 2006).

### ***Research Questions***

What is the relationship between religiosity, paranormal beliefs, and Superstition among young adults in urban areas?

### ***Research Gap***

While there has been some research on the relationship between religiosity and paranormal beliefs, as well as between religiosity and superstitions, there is a lack of research that examines all three factors together among young adults in urban areas.

Additionally, previous studies have mostly focused on the general population, rather than specifically on young adults living in urban areas, who may have different experiences and beliefs due to their unique social and cultural context. Therefore, there is a need for an exploratory study that investigates the interplay between religiosity, paranormal beliefs, and superstitions among this demographic group in urban areas.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Aim:***

The aim of this exploratory study is to investigate the relationship between religion, paranormal beliefs, and superstitions among young adults in urban areas.

### ***Objective:***

- To examine the level of religiosity among the young adults living in urban area.
- To examine the level of superstition among the young adults living in urban area.
- To examine the level of paranormal belief among the young adults living in urban area.
- To explore the relationship between religiosity, paranormal beliefs and superstition among young adults living in urban areas.

### ***Hypothesis***

- H0: There is no significant relationship between religiosity and superstition among urban young adults.
- H1: There is a significant relationship between religiosity and paranormal belief among urban young adults.

### ***Operational Definition***

- Religiosity can be defined as the degree to which an individual or a community adheres to and practices the beliefs, rituals, and values associated with a particular religion or religious system. It reflects the level of religious commitment and involvement in religious activities. Religiosity encompasses various aspects, including religious beliefs, participation in religious ceremonies, engagement in

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religious practices such as prayer and worship, and adherence to religious moral codes. It is a measure of one's religious devotion and the extent to which religion influences their thoughts, behaviors, and overall worldview (Pargament, 1999).

- Superstition refers to the belief in supernatural causality, where certain actions or objects are believed to have an influence on future events or outcomes, despite a lack of rational or scientific evidence. Superstitions often involve notions of luck, omens, charms, and rituals that are thought to bring about either good or bad fortune. People may engage in superstitious behaviors to seek protection, control uncertainty, or attempt to influence the outcomes of events in their favor. While superstitions can vary across cultures and individuals, they typically involve irrational beliefs and actions that are not based on empirical evidence (Vyse, 1997).
- Paranormal beliefs refer to the acceptance or endorsement of concepts and phenomena that are beyond the scope of scientific understanding and explanation. These beliefs encompass a wide range of phenomena such as ghosts, psychic abilities, astrology, and extraterrestrial life. Paranormal beliefs often arise from experiences, cultural influences, and personal interpretations of unexplained events. People with paranormal beliefs may attribute events or experiences to supernatural forces or phenomena that cannot be easily explained or verified by scientific methods. However, paranormal beliefs lack empirical evidence and are often considered pseudoscientific or outside the realm of scientific inquiry (Irwin, 2009).

### *Sample Distribution and technique*

The sample consist of 178 urban young adults between the age of 18 to 30, selected using stratified random sampling technique. The participants were from different states (Andhra Pradesh -5.6%, Assam - 2.8%, Bihar - 1.1%, Chhattisgarh - 3.9%, Goa - 1.7%, Gujarat - 0.6%, Haryana - 1.1%, Himachal Pradesh - 0.6%, Jharkhand - 2.8%, Karnataka - 15.6%, Kerala - 8.9%, Madhya Pradesh - 2.2%, Maharashtra - 5.6%, Manipur - 8.3%, Mizoram - 0.6%, Odisha - 1.7%, Punjab - 3.3%, Rajasthan - 1.7%, Sikkim - 0.6%, Tamil Nadu - 5%, Telangana - 6.1%, Tripura - 3.3%, Uttar Pradesh - 3.3%, Uttarakhand - 1.1%, West Bengal - 6.1%, Andaman and Nicobar Islands - 2.2%, Delhi - 1.1%, Jammu and Kashmir - 2.8%, Ladakh - 0.6%) of India. This study utilized a cross-sectional research design to collect data at a single point in time. Questionnaires were distributed to the participants through Google forms. The sample comprises, 66.1% Hindus, 7.2% Christians, 8.3% Muslims, 4.4% Sikhs, 1.7% Buddhists, 2.8% Jains, 1.1% Agnostic, 3.3% Atheist, 5% Sanamahism (folk religion)

### **Inclusion Criteria:**

- Age between 18 and 30 years
- Urban residents
- Willingness to participate in the study

### **Exclusion Criteria:**

- Age below 18 or above 30 years
- Non-urban residents
- Unwillingness to participate in the study



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### *Description of tools*

Three scales were used in this research: The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS), A Scale to Measure Superstition (ASMS), and A Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (RPBS).

- **A Scale to Measure Superstition (ASMS)**

Md. Mahfuzul Huque and Ataharul Huq Chowdhury developed a scale to measure levels of superstition. The scale consists of 20 items and uses a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from "High" to "Not at all". The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for 'A Scale to Measure Superstition' is 0.97

- **The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS)**

The Centrality of Religiosity Scale, created by Stefan Huber and Odilo W. Huber, is a reliable and valid 15-item scale that measures religiosity. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for 'The Centrality of Religiosity Scale' ranges between 0.92 to 0.96. The scale uses a 5-point Likert scale to assess the frequency and importance of personal constructs related to religiosity, including the presence of hermeneutics (personal interpretation of religious texts) in personality. The answer options range from "never" to "very often" and are divided into five categories based on the level of presence or absence of these constructs.

In addition to the self-reported measures of religiosity, the scale also includes objective measures of prayer, meditation, and participation in religious services. The objective frequencies of these activities are recoded into five levels, ranging from "several times a day" to "never" for prayer and meditation, and from "more than once a week" to "never" for participation in religious services.

Overall, the Centrality of Religiosity Scale provides a comprehensive assessment of religiosity that takes into account both self-reported and objective measures

- **A Revised Paranormal Belief Scale (RPBS).**

Jerome J. Tobacyk developed a 26-item scale, known as the Revised Paranormal Belief Scale, which is used to assess individuals' beliefs in paranormal phenomena. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for 'A Revised Paranormal Belief Scale' is 0.96. Participants rate each item on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree."

### *Procedure for Data Collection*

For the research study, a Google form was used to collect data from 178 young adults residing in urban areas. The participants were asked to fill out three different scales, including A Scale to Measure Superstition, The Centrality of Religiosity Scale, and A Revised Paranormal Belief Scale. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided their consent to participate. The Google form was made available online, and the participants were given a specified time to fill out the form. The data collection process was conducted within a specific timeframe to ensure that the responses were received on time.

### *Procedure for Data Analysis*

For the data analysis, SPSS software was used. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the participants. The Normality test was performed to determine the normal distribution of the data. Data was not normally distributed. The Spearman's rho correlation test was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationships among the variables under investigation. The results of the data analysis were

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used to draw conclusions and make inferences about the relationships between religion, paranormal beliefs, and superstitions among young adults in urban areas.

### *Ethical Considerations*

The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of research involving human subjects. The participants were informed of the purpose and nature of the study, and their informed consent was obtained before the survey was administered. The participants' personal information was kept confidential, and the data was used for research purposes only. The study did not involve any risks or harm to the participants.

## RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

*Table 1. Descriptive statistics and normality test for the variables*

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup> (P value)	Shapiro-Wilk (P value)
Religiosity level	53.53	14.216	178	.000	.000
Superstition level	36.39	14.372	178	.000	.000
Paranormal	102.78	28.574	178	.012	.053

*Note.* If the p-value is less than the chosen significance level (0.01), we can conclude that the data is not normally distributed.

**Table 1**, shows mean, standard deviation, Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test and Shapiro-Wilk normality test of Religiosity level, Superstition level and Paranormal belief level. The mean religiosity level among the young adults in urban areas was 53.53 (SD = 14.216), indicating a moderate level of religiosity. The mean superstition level was 36.39 (SD = 14.372), suggesting a relatively moderate level of superstition. The mean paranormal belief level was 102.78 (SD = 28.574), indicating a relatively high level of paranormal beliefs among the participants.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were used to assess the normality of the data. This research study involved the participation of 178 individuals, which is a smaller sample size compared to the commonly used benchmark of 2000 participants. Due to the smaller sample size, the Shapiro-Wilk test is chosen instead of Kolmogorov-Smirnov for assessing the normality of the data distribution. The Shapiro-Wilk test is a statistical test specifically designed for small sample sizes and is appropriate for determining whether the data follows a normal distribution.

The results indicate that the Religiosity level (.000) and the Superstition level (.000) variables deviated significantly from a normal distribution ( $p < 0.01$ ) whereas the Paranormal belief level (.053) is normally distributed ( $p > 0.01$ ), thus non parametric test is opted because non-parametric tests require fewer assumptions about the underlying distribution and are resilient to deviations from normality.

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**Table 2. Spearman's rho correlation between variables**

		Religiosity level	Superstitious belief level	Paranormal belief level
Religiosity level	r	1.000	.342**	.241**
	p	.	.000	.001
Superstition level	r	.342**	1.000	.441**
	p	.000	.	.000
Paranormal belief level	r	.241**	.441**	1.000
	p	.001	.000	.

*Note.* \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

**Table 2,** shows the Spearman's rho correlation coefficients among three variables: Religiosity level, Superstition level, and Paranormal belief level. The religiosity level, superstition level, and paranormal belief level were measured in a sample of 178 individuals. The correlations between these variables were found to be significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed). The findings indicate that there is a positive relationship between religiosity level and superstition level ( $r = .342, p < .01$ ), as well as between religiosity level and paranormal belief level ( $r = .241, p < .01$ ). Similarly, a positive correlation was observed between superstition level and religiosity level ( $r = .342, p < .01$ ), and between superstition level and paranormal belief level ( $r = .441, p < .01$ ). Additionally, there is a positive correlation between paranormal belief level and religiosity level ( $r = .241, p < .01$ ), as well as between paranormal belief level and superstition level ( $r = .441, p < .01$ ).

The strength of the correlations suggests that there is a moderate positive relationship between these variables. Therefore, individuals who report high levels of religiosity tend to have higher levels of superstition and paranormal beliefs. Similarly, individuals who report high levels of superstition tend to have higher levels of paranormal beliefs.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### *Discussion*

The findings from this research indicate that level of religiosity and level of superstition is 'moderate' whereas level of paranormal belief is 'high' among urban young adults.

The study also provide evidence to reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) that there is no significant relationship between religiosity, superstition and paranormal belief among urban young adults. The positive correlations between religiosity level and superstition level, as well as between superstition level and paranormal belief level, suggest that there is indeed a significant relationship between these variables. Therefore,  $H_1$ , which proposes a significant relationship between religiosity, superstition and paranormal belief among urban young adults, is supported by the data, thus  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted.

The results indicate that individuals who report higher levels of religiosity are more likely to hold superstition and paranormal beliefs. This finding aligns with previous research that has suggested a connection between religiosity and supernatural beliefs. It is possible that individuals with a strong religious orientation may be more open to the idea of supernatural forces and events, leading to an increased likelihood of endorsing superstitious and paranormal beliefs.

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### *Major finding*

The study found a significant positive correlation between religiosity level, superstition level, and paranormal belief level among young adults in urban areas. The strength of the correlations indicates that individuals with high levels of religiosity tend to have higher levels of superstition and paranormal beliefs, and those with high levels of superstition tend to have higher levels of paranormal beliefs.

Research also indicate that level of religiosity and level of superstition is moderate whereas level of paranormal belief is high among urban young adults.

### *Limitations of the study*

The study has a few limitations that need to be considered while interpreting the results. Firstly, the study was conducted on a relatively small sample size of 178 young adults from urban areas, which may not be representative of the entire population. Secondly, the study used self-reported measures, which are subject to social desirability bias and may not accurately reflect the true beliefs and attitudes of the participants. Thirdly, the study did not examine the possible causal relationship between religiosity, superstition, and paranormal beliefs. Fourth, the tools used in this research were lengthy, many participants didn't complete the form because it was time consuming.

### *Scope for further research*

Future studies could use a larger and more diverse sample size to examine the relationship between religiosity, superstition, and paranormal beliefs. Additionally, future research could use mixed research methodology to investigate the causal relationship between these variables. Longitudinal studies could also examine how these beliefs change over time and the factors that contribute to their change.

### *Implications of the study*

The study has important implications for understanding the relationship between religiosity, superstition, and paranormal beliefs among young adults in urban areas. The findings suggest that individuals with high levels of religiosity may also hold superstition and paranormal beliefs. This has implications for mental health practitioners who may encounter clients with these beliefs and need to be sensitive to their cultural and religious beliefs.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the study found a significant positive correlation between religiosity, superstition, and paranormal beliefs among young adults in urban areas. The findings also indicate that level of religiosity and level of superstition is 'moderate' whereas level of paranormal belief is 'high' among urban young adults. The study highlights the need for further research to understand the causal relationship between these variables and their implications for mental health practitioners.

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