

The Influence of Indoctrination of Religious Belief on Indecisiveness and Self-regulation among Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between the indoctrination of religious belief and the psychological constructs of indecisiveness and self-regulation among young adults in India. Since religious teachings often shape core values and guide personal development, the study examines how deeply held beliefs impact decision-making abilities and self-regulatory behaviors. A sample of 200 young adults (100 male and 100 female) participated, responding to surveys measuring religious fundamentalism, indecisiveness, and self-regulation. Statistical analysis revealed that while indoctrination of religious belief was positively associated with self-regulation, it had minimal influence on indecisiveness. Additionally, gender differences were found, with female participants exhibiting higher levels of both indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation compared to males. These findings suggest that religious beliefs may play a selective role in young adults' psychological adaptation, fostering self-regulatory skills while not necessarily affecting decisional conflicts. This research offers valuable insights for practitioners in youth development, emphasizing the potential of belief systems in promoting goal-directed behavior.

Keywords: *Indoctrination Of Religious Belief, Indecisiveness, Self-Regulation, Young Adults, Gender Differences*

Religious beliefs shape values, attitudes, and decision-making, particularly in culturally diverse societies like India. While they provide moral guidance and social cohesion, rigid religious teachings can impact personal autonomy and psychological development. Indoctrination, which involves unquestioning adherence to religious beliefs, may influence decision-making and self-regulation, affecting young adults as they navigate autonomy and societal expectations.

Indoctrination of religious belief can foster social stability but may also suppress critical thinking, leading to cognitive rigidity and difficulties in independent decision-making. In India, where religious traditions are deeply ingrained, individuals raised in strict religious environments may experience challenges in adapting to diverse perspectives. However, in some cases, religious teachings can serve as a framework for self-regulation, providing structured moral guidelines that promote discipline and goal-directed behavior.

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Indecisiveness, characterized by hesitation and difficulty in making choices, is linked to cognitive styles, uncertainty avoidance, and perfectionism. When individuals rely heavily on external religious authorities for moral direction, decision-making may become challenging due to a lack of personal agency. However, religious belief systems may also offer clarity in uncertain situations, reducing decisional conflict in some cases.

Self-regulation, the ability to control emotions, thoughts, and behaviors, is essential for personal and professional success. Religious teachings often emphasize discipline, accountability, and adherence to moral standards, which can enhance self-regulation. However, excessive reliance on external rules may hinder the development of intrinsic self-control. This study explores how the indoctrination of religious belief influences indecisiveness and self-regulation, shedding light on its role in shaping young adults' psychological adaptation.

Statement of the problem

The influence of religious beliefs acquired during childhood on the development of indecisiveness and self-regulation in young adults is not well understood. While these psychological traits are crucial for navigating adulthood, it remains unclear whether the indoctrination of religious belief aids or hinders their development. This study seeks to explore how early religious teachings influence indecisiveness and self-regulation, offering valuable insights into the broader consequences of religious upbringing on young adults.

Aim of the study

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the impact of the indoctrination of religious beliefs on indecisiveness and self-regulation among young adults.

Objective of the study

- To investigate the relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and indecisiveness among young adults
- To investigate the relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation among young adults.
- To examine the influence of indoctrination of religious belief on self-regulation among young adults.
- To examine the influence of indoctrination of religious belief on indecisiveness among young adults.
- To examine the significant difference in the level of indoctrination of religious belief between male and female participants
- To examine the significant difference in the level of indecisiveness between male and female participants
- To examine the significant difference in the level of self-regulation between male and female participants

Hypothesis

- **Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and indecisiveness among young adults
- **Ho2:** There is no significant relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation among young adults.
- **Ho3:** There is no significant influence of indoctrination of religious belief on indecisiveness among young adults

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- **Ho4:** There is no significant influence of indoctrination of religious belief on self-regulation among young adults.
- **Ho5:** There is no significant difference in the level of indoctrination of religious belief between male and female participants
- **Ho6:** There is no significant difference in the level of indecisiveness between male and female participants
- **Ho7:** There is no significant difference in the level of self-regulation between male and female participants

1.9 Significance of the study

This study explores how the indoctrination of religious belief influences indecisiveness and self-regulation among young adults in India, where religious beliefs play a central role in shaping cultural norms and personal identity. Given that religious teachings can provide moral guidance yet potentially limit autonomous decision-making, it is essential to understand their psychological impact. By examining whether indoctrination fosters self-regulation or contributes to indecisiveness, this research offers insights into its effects on emotional control, critical thinking, and mental well-being. In a society balancing tradition and modernity, these findings can help young adults navigate personal growth while maintaining individuality and resilience.

Operational definitions

- **Indoctrination of Religious Belief:** Indoctrination of religious belief is defined as the process by which individuals are exposed to and adopt a deeply held set of convictions about existence, the divine, and moral order, without rational justification or criticism.
- **Indecisiveness:** Indecisiveness is characterized as the difficulty in making quick or effective decisions.
- **Self-regulation:** Self-regulation is defined as the ability to comprehend, manage, and react to one's thoughts and emotions in reaction to events and feelings.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter provides a brief overview of studies related to the influence of indoctrination of religious belief on indecisiveness and self-regulation among young adults.

Research on the indoctrination of religious belief suggests that it can shape decision-making and self-regulation, often reinforcing rigid belief systems that may impact cognitive flexibility. Studies by Altemeyer and Hunsberger (1992) and Hood et al. (2009) highlight that religious fundamentalism is linked to decreased adaptability, potentially contributing to indecisiveness. Similarly, Ferrari and Dovidio (2000) found that individuals raised in highly religious environments struggled with decision-making due to internal conflicts between personal desires and religious teachings.

Indecisiveness has been linked to religious rigidity, with research showing that young adults who internalize religious beliefs without questioning them may experience difficulties in asserting autonomy (Sica et al., 2010; Ryan et al., 1993). However, other studies indicate that religious belief systems can provide structure and clarity, reducing decision-related anxiety (Beck & McDonald, 2004).

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Self-regulation, often enhanced by structured belief systems, has been associated with religious practices that promote discipline and emotional control (Koole et al., 2010; McCullough & Willoughby, 2009). While some findings suggest that religious teachings support self-regulation by fostering resilience and goal-oriented behavior (Pargament, 1997; Hardy et al., 2015), others argue that over-reliance on religious doctrine can suppress independent self-control, particularly when beliefs discourage personal agency.

Research Gap

Despite extensive research, gaps remain regarding how different types of indoctrination of religious belief affect psychological outcomes. Most studies have focused on Western contexts, leaving a lack of empirical research on South Asian populations. Additionally, while religious belief has been linked to both indecisiveness and self-regulation, few studies have examined moderating factors like personality traits or family dynamics. Addressing these gaps can provide a more nuanced understanding of how religious upbringing influences young adults' decision-making and emotional regulation.

METHOD

This segment provides an in-depth look at the procedural framework that is employed for this research. This includes the research design, selection of participants, sampling techniques, and the overall sampling process.

Research design: The Present study adopted a quantitative correlational research design to investigate the influence of indoctrination of religious beliefs on indecisiveness and self-regulation among young adults.

Participants

The present study consists of a sample of 200 young adults (100 male and 100 female). The variables of this study are indoctrination of religious belief, indecisiveness and self-regulation, gender, and young adults.

Demographic variables: Age and sex were taken as demographic details via self-report to arrange and analyze the data.

Universe of the study: All young adults aged 18-25 who have been exposed to religious teachings and beliefs, whether through family, educational institutions, or religious organizations, were considered as the universe of the research study.

Sample

The data collection employed a convenient sampling technique

Inclusion criteria

- The study included young adults aged between 18 and 25 years.
- The respondent should have exposure to religious teachings or practices
- The respondent should be a resident of any Indian State
- The respondent must be able to comprehend the English language

Exclusion criteria

- Not being able to comprehend the English language.
- Diagnosed with mental illness that could interfere with their ability to participate in the study.

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Measures

The data collection for the research study was done using the self-report questionnaire and tools described below.

- 1. Religious Fundamentalism Scale (RFS):** It is a revised 12-item self-report scale in an 8-point Likert format (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004). Assessments of construct validity have been demonstrated through correlations made to hostility toward homosexuals for Hindus, Jews, Muslims, and Christians with r values ranging from .42 to .82 (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004). Interitem reliability for the present study was $\alpha = .94$.
- 2. Indecisiveness Scale (IS) - Randy O Frost & Deanna L. Shows:** The Indecisiveness Scale developed by Randy O. Frost and Deanna L. Shows is a 15-item well-regarded instrument for measuring indecisiveness. The scale typically exhibits high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values around 0.80 or higher, which indicates that the items consistently measure the same construct and the scale has demonstrated good construct validity and correlates well with other measures of indecisiveness. It also shows predictive validity in terms of decision-making behavior.
- 3. Short Form Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SSRQ) - Neal & Carey, 2005:** The SSRQ is a self-report instrument that assesses self-regulation, which is the ability to manage one's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors to achieve personal goals and adapt to environmental demands. Cronbach's alpha coefficients typically range from 0.70 to 0.80. This indicates that the items on the scale reliably measure the construct of self-regulation. The SSRQ demonstrates satisfactory test-retest reliability, suggesting that it provides stable measurements of self-regulation over time.

Procedure

Participants completed online surveys via Google Forms. Informed consent was obtained, and responses were anonymized. Statistical analyses were performed using JAMovi.

Data Analysis

Inferential Statistics:

- Correlation: To examine relationships between variables.
- Regression: To assess the influence of indoctrination of religious belief on indecisiveness and self-regulation.
- T-test: to identify the gender difference

Research Ethics

This study will obtain informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation and the right to withdraw anytime. Participants' doubts will be addressed, and confidentiality will be maintained through anonymized data storage. The research will uphold transparency, honesty, and integrity in reporting findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section offers an extensive examination of the dataset, encompassing a concise overview of sample attributes, a comprehensive presentation of the study's findings, and their corresponding interpretation. The hypothesis is evaluated through relevant statistical methodologies, including measures such as mean, standard deviation, correlation, and regression analysis.

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Results

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the impact of the indoctrination of religious beliefs on indecisiveness and self-regulation among young adults aged between 18 and 25. A total sample of 227 participants was initially collected, and after screening, 200 responses were included in the analysis.

Table 1 presents Pearson's correlation coefficient, significance values, and sample size for the relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and indecisiveness.

Variables	N	1	2	3
Indoctrination of religious belief	200			
Indecisiveness	200	0.032	-	-

Dependent variable: Indecisiveness

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and indecisiveness among young adults

Table 1 presents Pearson correlation results for indoctrination of religious belief and indecisiveness among the sample of 200 participants. Pearson's correlation coefficient was found to be .032, which indicates a very weak, positive association between indoctrination of religious belief and indecisiveness. However, this relationship was not statistically significant ($p = .651$).

Table 2 presents Pearson's correlation coefficient, significance values, and sample size for the relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation.

Variables	N	1	2	3
Indoctrination of religious belief	200			
Self-regulation	200	0.281**	-	-

Dependent variable: Self-regulation

HO2: There is no significant relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation among young adults.

Table 2 presents the correlation analysis results for the relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation among a sample of 200 participants. Both are Pearson's correlation coefficient. The Pearson correlation coefficient was found to be .281, indicating a moderate positive relationship between RFS and SSRQ. This result was statistically significant, with a p-value of .000, suggesting a reliable association between these variables. In other words, as the indoctrination of religious belief increases, there is a moderate increase in self-regulation among participants, as measured by Pearson's correlation.

Table 3

Table 3.1 presents the mean, standard deviation, and sample size for the influence of indoctrination of religious belief on indecisiveness.

Variable	Mean	SD	N
RFS	3.45	15.55	200
IS	43.07	7.02	200

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Table 3.2 presents the model summary for the regression analysis examining the relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and indecisiveness.

R	R square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin Watson
0.32	0.001	-.004	7.04	1.75

Ho3: There is no significant influence of indoctrination of religious belief on indecisiveness among young adults

Table 3 presents regression model results for indoctrination of religious belief and indecisiveness among the sample of 200 participants. The descriptive statistics reveal that the mean score for indecisiveness (IS) is 43.07, with a standard deviation of 7.02, indicating a moderate level of indecisiveness within the sample. In contrast, the mean score for religious faith strength (RFS) is 3.45, with a much larger standard deviation of 15.55, suggesting considerable variability in the levels of religious faith strength among participants. The model summary provides further insights into the relationship between the two variables. The correlation coefficient (R) is .032, indicating a very weak positive relationship between IS and RFS. The R square value is .001, meaning that only 0.1% of the variance in indecisiveness can be explained by religious faith strength. This negligible explanatory power, along with the adjusted R square of -.004, indicates that the model does not account for any meaningful variation in indecisiveness. The results from this analysis suggest that there is no significant influence of indoctrination of religious belief on indecisiveness. Consequently, any variations in RFS do not correspond to consistent changes in IS, leading to the conclusion that the null hypothesis is retained. This indicates that the level of indoctrination of religious belief among the participants does not appear to influence their indecisiveness.

Table 4

Table 4.1 presents the mean, standard deviation, and sample size for the influence of indoctrination of religious belief on self-regulation.

Variable	Mean	SD	N
RFS	3.4500	15.54787	200
SSRQ	102.7800	12.48282	200

Table 4.2 presents the model summary for the regression analysis examining the relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation.

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin Watson
0.281	0,079	0.075	12.00836	1.762

Table 4 presents regression model results for indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation among the sample of 200 participants. Table 4.1 provides descriptive statistics indicating that the mean score for RFS is 3.4500, with a standard deviation of 15.54787, highlighting substantial variability in religious belief among the sample of 200 participants. In contrast, the mean score for SSRQ is 102.7800, with a standard deviation of 12.48282, suggesting a moderate level of self-regulation skills within this population. Table 4.2 presents the model summary from the regression analysis investigating the relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation. The correlation coefficient (R)

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is 0.281, indicating a moderate positive relationship between RFS and SSRQ. The R square value of 0.079 suggests that 7.9% of the variance in self-regulation can be explained by religious faith strength, indicating a meaningful, though limited, influence. The adjusted R square value of 0.075 further corroborates this finding, demonstrating that the model explains approximately 7.5% of the variance in self-regulation while accounting for the number of predictors in the model. The standard error of the estimate (12.00836) indicates the average distance between the observed self-regulation scores and the predicted scores from the regression model. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.762 falls within the acceptable range, suggesting that there is no significant autocorrelation in the residuals. The results indicate that the indoctrination of religious belief has a moderate positive influence on self-regulation among participants.

Table 5 presents an independent t-test of indoctrination of religious belief among young adults based on gender.

	N	F	Sig	t	df	Mean	SD
RFS							
Male	90	3.705	0.056	-3.351	198	-7.22	2.15
Female	110			-3.235	153.3	-7.22	2.23

Ho5: There is no significant difference in the level of indoctrination of religious belief between male and female participants.

Table 5 presents the results of an independent samples t-test comparing the levels of indoctrination of religious belief between two groups. The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances shows an F value of 3.705 with a significance level of .056. Since this p-value exceeds the alpha level of 0.05, we conclude that the assumption of equal variances is valid for our analysis. The t-test results indicate a t-value of -3.351 with 198 degrees of freedom and a two-tailed significance level of .001. This finding is statistically significant, suggesting that there is a notable difference between the two groups. The mean difference of -7.22 indicates that one group has a lower average level of indoctrination in religious belief compared to the other. The standard error of the difference is 2.15, reflecting the variability of this mean difference estimate. The 95% Confidence Interval for the mean difference ranges from -11.47 to -2.972. Since this interval does not include zero, it reinforces the conclusion that there is a statistically significant difference in levels of indoctrination of religious belief between the groups. The results reveal a significant difference in the indoctrination of religious belief between the two groups, with one group exhibiting lower levels of indoctrination (male) and the other higher (female).

Table 6 presents an independent t-test of indecisiveness among young adults based on gender.

	N	F	Sig	t	df	Mean	SD
IS							
Male	90	6.038	0.015	1.620	198	1.610	0.994
Female	110			1.642	197.2	1.610	0.980

Ho6: There is no significant difference in the level of indecisiveness between male and female participants

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Table 6 displays the results of an independent samples t-test evaluating differences in indecisiveness scores between two groups. The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances yields an F value of 6.038 with a significance level of .015. Because this p-value is less than 0.05, we conclude that the assumption of equal variances is violated. Therefore, the results for the row "Equal variances not assumed" will guide our interpretation. The t-test results for "Equal variances not assumed" show a t-value of 1.642 with 197.2 degrees of freedom and a p-value of .102. Since this p-value is above the alpha level of 0.05, we do not have sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a statistically significant difference in IS scores between the two groups. The mean difference in IS between the groups is 1.61, indicating that one group has a slightly higher average score in indecisiveness than the other. However, this difference is not statistically significant. The 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference ranges from -0.32 to 3.54355, which includes zero, further suggesting that the difference in means could be due to random variation. The results indicate no significant difference in indecisiveness between the two groups (male and female). While one group shows a marginally higher mean score for indecisiveness, this difference is not statistically meaningful, implying that group differences in IS scores may occur by chance.

Table 7 presents an independent t-test of self-regulation among young adults based on gender.

	N	F	Sig	t	df	Mean	SD
SSRQ							
Male	90	4.087	0.45	-3.929	198	-6.73	1.713
Female	110			-4.020	197.8	-6.73	1.674

Ho7: There is no significant difference in the level of self-regulation between male and female participants.

Table 7 provides the results of an independent samples t-test comparing self-regulation scores between two groups (male and female). The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances yields an F value of 4.087 with a significance level of .045. Since this p-value is below the threshold of 0.05, we reject the assumption of equal variances. Consequently, we interpret the results under "Equal variances not assumed." For the "Equal variances not assumed" row, the t-test produces a t-value of -4.020 with 197.818 degrees of freedom and a p-value of .000. This significance level indicates a statistically significant difference in self-regulation (SSRQ) between the groups, as it is well below the 0.05 threshold. The mean difference of -6.73131 shows that one group has a significantly lower average SSRQ score compared to the other. The standard error of this difference is 1.67432, indicating the variability around the mean difference estimate. The 95% Confidence Interval for the mean difference ranges from -10.03312 to -3.42950, excluding zero. This interval reinforces the finding that the difference between the groups is statistically significant and unlikely to be due to random chance. The results indicate a significant difference in self-regulation between the groups, with one group exhibiting lower self-regulation scores (male) than the other group (Female).

Discussion

This study set out to examine the influence of the indoctrination of religious belief on indecisiveness and self-regulation among young adults, guided by theories of self-determination and cognitive consistency. The results reveal a nuanced picture: while the indoctrination of religious belief has a clear positive effect on self-regulation, its impact on

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indecisiveness is minimal, suggesting that religious beliefs play a selective role in influencing these psychological traits.

Ho1 posited no significant relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and indecisiveness. The findings supported this, as both Pearson's correlation ($r = 0.032$, $p = 0.651$) and Spearman's rho (-0.001 , $p = 0.987$) showed a very weak, statistically insignificant relationship, as presented in Table 1. This result aligns with Ho1, supporting the null hypothesis that indoctrination of religious belief does not meaningfully influence indecisiveness among young adults. These findings challenge theoretical perspectives suggesting that rigid belief systems can elevate indecisiveness due to heightened cognitive dissonance or moral conflict (McCaffree, 2019). Specifically, young adults in this cohort may approach religious doctrines with greater flexibility, which allows them to engage in decision-making without feeling constrained by rigid beliefs. Flexible self-regulation theory may help interpret this finding by highlighting that, in contexts where individuals perceive their beliefs as adaptable or contextually appropriate, decisional conflict is minimized (Bonanno, 2004). Moreover, theories like Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957) and Moral Foundations Theory (Haidt & Graham, 2007) suggest that individuals often experience internal conflict when their actions or beliefs are at odds with ingrained moral structures. However, the weak association found here implies that indoctrination of religious belief alone may not create significant dissonance in decision-making for young adults, possibly because they view their religious beliefs as compatible with modern values or personal growth objectives.

Ho2 posited that the indoctrination of religious belief would not significantly impact self-regulation. Contrary to this hypothesis, however, the results showed a moderate, statistically significant positive correlation between indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation (Pearson's $r = 0.281$, $p < 0.001$; Spearman's rho = 0.331 , $p < 0.001$). Thus, Ho2 was rejected, indicating that indoctrination of religious belief is associated with improved self-regulation in young adults, as presented in Table 2. This positive relationship resonates with Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which suggests that beliefs internalized through autonomous motivation (i.e., personally endorsed beliefs) enhance self-regulation by aligning actions with deeply held values (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Further supporting this, Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) emphasizes that when individuals possess belief structures that offer clear behavioral standards and encourage accountability, these beliefs can significantly enhance self-regulatory behaviors. Bandura's concept of self-efficacy also aligns with these findings, suggesting that religious beliefs might foster confidence in one's ability to adhere to personal goals and behavioral standards, ultimately reinforcing self-regulation. Research by Baumeister and Exline (1999) showed similar correlations, where religious doctrines often provided frameworks that individuals could use to control impulses and adhere to personal or moral standards. The effect size found here, while moderate, also suggests that self-regulation is likely multifactorial, with social influences and intrinsic motivations supplementing the structure provided by religious beliefs.

This study's hypotheses, Ho5, Ho6, and Ho7, addressed potential gender differences in the indoctrination of religious belief, indecisiveness, and self-regulation, respectively. Ho5 posited that there would be no significant difference in the indoctrination of religious belief levels between genders. Contrary to this, female participants reported higher levels of indoctrination than males ($t = -3.351$, $p = 0.001$), as detailed in Table 5. This finding aligns with Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987), which suggests that societal expectations and

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cultural norms can lead to gendered differences in behavior and belief systems. It also echoes the Gender Schema Theory (Bem, 1981), suggesting that women may internalize beliefs more deeply due to gender-based socialization, which traditionally emphasizes religiosity and community-oriented values more strongly for females (Francis, 1997). Ho6 posited no gender differences in indecisiveness, which was supported as no significant differences were found (Table 6). This result may indicate that indecisiveness is more closely related to individual cognitive traits like anxiety or perfectionism than to gender or religious influences. Trait Theory (Costa & McCrae, 1992) might explain this lack of gender effect, suggesting that indecisiveness is linked to personality traits such as neuroticism, which operates independently of gender but could influence decisiveness in various contexts (Frost & Shows, 1993). Ho7 suggested no gender differences in self-regulation, which was contradicted by findings showing that females scored significantly higher in self-regulation than males ($t = -4.020$, $p = 0.000$), as illustrated in Table 7. This supports prior research suggesting that women often display higher self-regulatory behaviors, potentially due to social norms that encourage emotional and behavioral control in women (Francis, 1997). Gender Role Theory (Bem, 1981) further postulates that such socialization can cultivate higher self-regulation in females, aligning with Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by implying that women may internalize these behavioral expectations as part of social values. The findings of Ho3, which posited that indoctrination of religious belief would not influence indecisiveness, further underscore the role of cognitive factors over belief systems in decisional behavior. With an R-squared of 0.001 (Table 3.2), only 0.1% of indecisiveness variance was explained by indoctrination of religious belief, leading to retention of the null hypothesis. Cognitive theories like the Decision Field Theory (Busemeyer & Townsend, 1993) support these findings by highlighting that decision-making and indecisiveness often arise from cognitive processes that are separate from moral or ideological belief structures. This aligns with the view that while religious beliefs provide structured values, they do not necessarily generate indecisiveness among young adults who may instead rely on personal decision-making preferences, stress levels, or personality traits (Diab et al., 2011).

Ho4 explored whether the indoctrination of religious beliefs significantly influences self-regulation. Regression results (R-squared = 0.079) indicated that indoctrination of religious belief explained 7.9% of the variance in self-regulation (Table 4.2), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Self-regulation in this context can be understood through the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which proposes that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control collectively shape behavioral intentions and, ultimately, self-regulation. In cases where religious beliefs serve as strong normative guides, individuals may experience enhanced self-regulation as they feel more accountable to these internalized standards. Prior research supports this; for instance, Baumeister and Exline (1999) found that religious beliefs can serve as intrinsic motivators for self-regulatory behaviors, particularly in goal-oriented or values-aligned activities.

This study provides insights into the role of religious beliefs in self-regulation, suggesting that the indoctrination of religious belief supports self-regulation while having to affect decisiveness. For practitioners in youth development and counseling, these findings highlight the potential of structured belief systems in promoting goal-directed behaviors in young adults. By recognizing gender differences in the indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation, counselors can employ gender-sensitive approaches to support and develop self-regulatory skills in young adults. Future research should delve into specific elements of indoctrination of religious belief, such as whether intrinsic or extrinsic motivations most

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significantly enhance self-regulation. Additionally, examining these relationships longitudinally could reveal how self-regulatory capacities evolve as young adults navigate increasingly diverse belief systems.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

This study investigated the relationship between indoctrination of religious belief and two psychological outcomes—indecisiveness and self-regulation—in young adults aged 18-25, with an emphasis on gender differences. Using a quantitative correlational research design grounded in Self-Determination Theory, the study explored whether internalized religious beliefs might impact decision-making behaviors and self-regulatory abilities. A balanced sample of 200 young adults (100 male, 100 female) participated, responding to self-report surveys that measured religious fundamentalism, indecisiveness, and self-regulation. Statistical analyses, including correlation, regression, and t-tests, were conducted to examine these relationships. The results revealed that the indoctrination of religious belief did not have a significant influence on indecisiveness but demonstrated a positive correlation with self-regulation. Additionally, gender differences were observed, with females reporting higher levels of both indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation.

Conclusion

The study found that while the indoctrination of religious belief supports self-regulation in young adults, it does not significantly affect indecisiveness. This suggests that religious beliefs provide structure and behavioral guidance without necessarily increasing decision-making conflicts. Aligned with Self-Determination Theory, the results indicate that internalized beliefs enhance self-regulation by reinforcing consistency with personal values. Gender differences, with females exhibiting higher levels of indoctrination of religious belief and self-regulation, highlight the role of cultural and societal influences. The findings also suggest that indecisiveness is more influenced by individual cognitive traits rather than religious belief systems.

Implications

This study highlights the relevance of the indoctrination of religious belief in fostering self-regulation among young adults, offering insights for counseling, education, and youth development. Structured belief systems may help individuals develop self-discipline and goal-setting skills. Practitioners can integrate value-based approaches to enhance self-regulation while also considering gender differences in religious engagement. Given that females show higher levels of self-regulation, gender-sensitive strategies in counseling and support services can ensure tailored guidance that aligns with individual needs.

Limitations

- **Sampling Method:** A convenience sampling approach was used, which may limit the generalizability of the findings beyond this specific sample. The voluntary nature of participation might have introduced selection bias.
- **Self-Report Instruments:** Data were collected using self-reported questionnaires, introducing potential biases, such as social desirability, where participants may have presented themselves in a more favorable light.
- **Cross-Sectional Design:** The cross-sectional approach captured data at a single point in time, which restricts the ability to observe changes or causal relationships over time.

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- **Cultural Scope:** The focus on young adults from India may limit the applicability of findings to other cultural contexts, as the influence of indoctrination of religious belief could vary across different societies.

Acknowledging these limitations is essential for situating the findings within the broader research landscape and guiding future investigations.

Recommendations for Future Research

Building on the insights and limitations of this study, several recommendations for future research are suggested:

1. **Longitudinal Design:** Future research could adopt a longitudinal approach to examine how the indoctrination of religious belief impacts self-regulation and indecisiveness over time. This would provide insights into how these relationships evolve as young adults mature and navigate new challenges.
2. **Cross-Cultural Expansion:** Expanding the study to include young adults from diverse cultural backgrounds would offer cross-cultural comparisons, allowing for a broader understanding of how the indoctrination of religious belief influences young adults in various settings. Such comparisons could highlight cultural factors that modify the effects of indoctrination.
3. **Examining Additional Mediators:** Future studies could investigate additional mediating variables, such as motivation types (intrinsic vs. extrinsic) or cognitive styles, to explore how specific aspects of indoctrination of religious belief influence self-regulation. This could deepen the understanding of how different belief structures impact psychological outcomes.
4. **Qualitative Insights:** Incorporating qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, could add context to the quantitative findings. Gathering personal narratives around religious beliefs and their impact on decision-making or self-regulation would provide richer insights into how young adults experience and interpret the indoctrination of religious belief in their daily lives.

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Conflict of Interest

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