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PRAYING, PLAYING AND HAPPY FAMILIES: AN EXAMINATION  
OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY RELIGIOSITY,  
FAMILY RECREATION, AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING

by

Sarah Taylor

A thesis submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

Department of Recreation Management and Youth Leadership

Brigham Young University

August 2005

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Sarah Taylor

This thesis has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the thesis of Sarah Taylor in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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## ABSTRACT

### PRAYING, PLAYING AND HAPPY FAMILIES: AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY RELIGIOSITY, FAMILY RECREATION, AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING

Sarah Taylor

Department of Recreation Management and Youth Leadership

Master of Science

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between family religiosity, family recreation, and family functioning. Mahoney's Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire was used to measure family religiosity, while Zabriskie's Family Leisure Activity Profile (FLAP) was used to measure family leisure involvement. Olson's Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales (FACES II) was used to measure family functioning. The sample consisted of 121 parents and 99 youth from various faith groups and were selected using a convenience and snowball sample. Results indicated that there was a relationship between family religiosity and family recreation, and that both family religiosity and family recreation had a significant influence on family functioning for this sample. Data collected from both parents and youth in families provided interesting insights into the nature of the impact of family religiosity and family recreation on family

functioning. Family religiosity was the most significant predictor of family functioning for parents, whereas for youth, both family recreation and family religiosity were the significant predictors of family functioning. These findings provide specific implications for parents and professionals who work with families.

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Praying, Playing and Happy Families: An Examination of the Relationship  
Between Family Religiosity, Family Recreation, and Family Functioning

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## 2 Religiosity and Recreation

### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between family religiosity, family recreation, and family functioning. Mahoney's Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire was used to measure family religiosity, while Zabriskie's Family Leisure Activity Profile (FLAP) was used to measure family leisure involvement. Olson's Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales (FACES II) was used to measure family functioning. The sample consisted of 121 parents and 99 youth from various faith groups and were selected using a convenience and snowball sample. Results indicated that there was a relationship between family religiosity and family recreation, and that both family religiosity and family recreation had a significant influence on family functioning for this sample. Data collected from both parents and youth in families provided interesting insights into the nature of the impact of family religiosity and family recreation on family functioning. Family religiosity was the most significant predictor of family functioning for parents, whereas for youth, both family recreation and family religiosity were the significant predictors of family functioning. These findings provide specific implications for parents and professionals who work with families.

Key words: religion, recreation, leisure, family interaction

## Introduction

The family is the fundamental unit of society, and is the building block of social structures and organizations in every culture. Throughout time, societies have been based upon the family, and great civilizations have seen their demise upon the disintegration of the family structure within their culture. Today, as in many other times throughout the history of the world, the structure of the family seems to be under attack from many sides. Ours is a day described by “high divorce rates and the alleged collapse of traditional marriage [and family life]” (VanDenBerghe, 2000, pp. 16-17). There is a widespread belief that American marriages and families are weak and troubled (Nock, 1998). With this apparent weakening of the family, many people are calling for society to take steps to help protect and strengthen the family unit.

Ninety-five percent of all married couples and parents in America report a religious affiliation (Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, & Swank, 2001), and several studies have indicated correlations between religiosity and various beneficial family outcomes such as increased marital happiness (Booth, Johnson, Branaman, & Sica, 1995) and greater warmth in family relationships (Mahoney et al., 2001).

Research has also shown that recreation has beneficial outcomes in families, such as increased family satisfaction, family stability, and family strength (Hawks, 1991; Holman & Epperson, 1989; Orthner & Mancini, 1991). The relationship between religiosity and recreation has been addressed by a limited number of researchers, but none of these studies have examined both religiosity and recreation in relation to family functioning. Therefore, the first problem of this study was to investigate if there is a

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relationship between a family's perception of their religiosity and their family leisure involvement. The second problem of this study was to determine the relationship between religiosity, leisure involvement and family functioning.

##### Review of Literature

###### *Family Functioning*

Throughout time, families have been and are the fundamental unit of society. Carlson, Deppe, and MacLean (1972) stated that,

The family was the basic unit of even ancient primitive cultures. It was the organization for procreation and education of children, bound together through social and economic necessities. In the last two hundred years, nearly every new force in our civilization has been instrumental in weakening those original ties (p. 206).

Families today are facing a decline. This is evident in the increasing number of marriages ending in divorce. For example, in 1900 there was approximately one divorce for every 12 marriages in a given year; in 1984 there was nearly one divorce occurring for every 2 marriages in a given year (Cox, 2002). Since families play a vital role in the preservation and progression of the human race, understanding how families interact and what can be done to strengthen them is of utmost importance.

*Family Systems Theory.* Systems theory has been used by theorists to describe the family and give a framework for understanding how families function and interact (Steinglass, 1987; Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993). The main premise of Family Systems Theory is that the family is a complex system composed of individuals

interacting with one another. It is not merely a collection of separate individuals whose lives and actions have no effect on each other, but rather a dynamic organism made up of different members that influence and are influenced by the other members and the environment in which they are embedded.

Considering the family as a complex system, one can envision the family functioning as a dynamic organism, with the individual parts working in relation to each other to form a larger whole. Referring to Klein and White's (1996) work, Zabriskie and McCormick (2001) summed up that family systems theory "holds that families are goal directed, self-correcting, dynamic, interconnected systems that both affect and are affected by their environment and by qualities within the family itself" (p. 281). A graphic representation of these dynamic relationships within families was developed by Olson and DeFrain (2000), and is called the Circumplex Model.

*Circumplex Model.* The Circumplex Model is built on the principles of systems theory. The model addresses cohesion, adaptability, and communication within the family (Olson & DeFrain, 2000). The Circumplex Model emphasizes how family members and their behaviors are interconnected (see Figure 1). The three dimensions addressed by the model are cohesion (defined as togetherness), adaptability (defined as the ability to cope with change), and communication. Although communication is not pictured graphically in the model, it is a facilitating dimension and helps the families move between the extremes of the other two dimensions. According to Olson and DeFrain (2000), "if a couple or family has good communication skills, they are more



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likely to be close (cohesion dimension) and be able to work out problems (adaptability dimension) when they arise” (p. 66).

Both cohesion and adaptability contribute to a family’s overall functioning, and they are the two primary qualities of high functioning families listed by Olson and DeFrain (2000). Many other factors may also influence this family functioning, and the levels of cohesion and adaptability experienced within the family system. Two dimensions of family life that have been found to influence family functioning are family religiosity and family recreation.

### *Family Religiosity*

Religious beliefs and activities are an important part of American family life. Ninety-five percent of all married couples and parents in America report a religious affiliation (Mahoney et al., 2001). About 90 percent desire religious training for their children (Gallup & Castelli, 1989), over half say that they attend religious services at least monthly (Heaton & Pratt, 1990), and 60 percent say religion is “important” or “very important” to them (McCullough, Hoyt, Larson, Koenig, & Thoresen, 2000). Only two percent of American parents say they do not believe in God (Sherkat & Ellison, 1999). Even when considering the tendency of U.S. survey respondents to exaggerate their religious participation, it is apparent that religious activity is an important part of life for many people (Christiano, 2000).

As Pankhurst and Houseknecht stated, “[R]eligion and family may be primordial institutions, but they are also dynamic and ‘modern’ institutions” (2000, p. 28). Dollahite, Marks, and Goodman (2004) discuss the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as being a time of

remarkable growth in both religious and family diversity. They attribute this to changes in religious expression, increasing numbers of immigrants with non-Jewish and non-Christian religious affiliations, and changes in family structure. They claim that increased family diversity is probably associated with increased religious diversity, using the example that parental divorce is positively associated with increased likelihood that children will change their religious identity through either apostasy or conversion (Lawton & Bures, 2001). Dollahite et al. also claim that growing diversity in families complicates analyses of the connections between religiosity and family life.

The religiosity-family linkage has received a relatively small amount of attention from social scientists when compared to other aspects of social and personal life (Pankhurst & Houseknecht, 2000). According to Sherkat and Ellison (1999), many social scientists have been skeptical of the viability and even the benefit of research regarding religiosity, and have treated personal and familial religious practices and beliefs as nonissues. Nevertheless, in recent years, there has been an increase in empirical research linking religiosity and families. Pankhurst and Houseknecht (2000) believe this is due in part to a growing acknowledgement that “even from an atheistic or agnostic position, it is important to understand what motivates and energizes a large portion of the world’s population” (p. 9).

Religiosity is multi-faceted and complex and has been described and measured in several ways. Marks and Dollahite (2001) conceptualized religiosity as a three-dimensional construct composed of religious beliefs, religious practices, and religious communities. Religious beliefs include personal, internal beliefs, framings, meanings,

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and perspectives. Religious practices are outward, observable expressions of faith such as scripture study, prayer, traditions, rituals, or less overtly sacred practices or abstinence that is religiously based. Religious communities consist of support, relationships, and involvement based in a congregation or less formal religious group. Dollahite et al. (2004) claim that past research has often examined only one of these dimensions at a time, consequently failing to capture the complex interaction of religious beliefs, practices, and communities that occur in family life. While religiosity may influence different families in different ways, studies that have examined personal, marital, and familial life have consistently reported positive correlations between religiosity and various beneficial outcomes, such as improved marriage relationships and parent-child interactions.

Several studies have reported religious involvement to be associated with marital happiness, adjustment, commitment and lower risk of conflict (Bahr & Chadwick, 1985; Mahoney, Pargament, Jewell, Swank, Scott, Emery, et al., 1999; Sherkat & Ellison, 1999). Religiosity has also been found to have a significant influence on marital stability and commitment to marriage (Mahoney et al., 2001; Robinson, 1994; Wilson & Musick, 1996). In addition to the positive effects that religiosity has been found to have on the marital relationship, it has also been found to influence parent-child relationships.

Recent studies have connected religiosity to improved parent functioning (Brody, Stoneman, & Flor, 1996; Brody, Stoneman, Flor, & McCrary, 1994; Chadwick & Top, 1993; Gunnoe, Hetherington, & Reiss, 1999). Religiosity has also been correlated with higher levels of parental warmth (Bartkowskie & Wilcox, 2000; Wilcox, 1998), and

increased family-centeredness (Christiano, 2000). Mahoney et al. (2001) found parental religiosity to be associated with various desirable child outcomes, such as fewer behavior problems, less antisocial behavior, less depression, and less alcohol and drug use.

*Religiosity and family functioning.* In addition to impacting the marital dyad and parent-child relationships, religiosity has been found to influence the family as a whole. Erich and Leung (1998) explored factors contributing to family functioning in families with adoptive children that have special needs. They found that adoptive families with more children and fathers with less education, who did not receive family therapy, and who participated in religious activities were more likely to have higher family functioning scores. They reported that the mother's monthly participation in religious activities tended to positively correlate with family functioning scores. Erich and Leung (1998) hypothesized that religiosity in these families might be a means of providing spiritual support and a social support network for the parents. The researchers pointed out that religiosity may also be an indicator of family cohesiveness, given that the spouses and adopted children often attended these religious activities as well.

Raider (1992) undertook a two-year research project to describe the relationship between religious commitment and family style. He found that religion influences almost every aspect of family life and interaction. One area he discussed as being influenced by religiosity was "positive emotional bonding," which he defined as loving and caring and providing a sense of connectedness that brings families together (which echoes Olson and DeFrain's (2000) definition of cohesion). Raider pointed out that different religions (or even levels of commitment or orthodoxy to a religion) may place different emphasis on

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emotional closeness, nurturance, and intimacy among family members. Raider, in referencing Perlman (1979), made an insightful connection between this emotional bonding, or cohesion, to a family's ability to adapt to change (echoing Olson and DeFrain's (2000) adaptability): "The relationship allows family 'to feel secure and thus to go forward to risk new learning and new experiences'" (1992, p. 174).

Past studies have indicated that family religiosity can have an influence on several facets of family life, including cohesion, adaptability, and family functioning. Religion is apparently a part of the lives of many families throughout the world, and as such plays a significant role in how families function and the interactions between their members. For most religions, family relationships and spending time with family members is critical to living one's faith. Since all major world religions place such great emphasis on the family (Madsen, Lawrence, & Christiansen, 2000), it seems that if a family is religious (as many parents report), then spending time with family and participating in activities together would be important. Many families participate in recreational activities not only to spend time together and have fun, but also to strengthen family relationships. It is logical, therefore, that a religious family would participate in recreational activities together.

### *Family Recreation*

Recreation has been defined as voluntary participation in leisure activities that are enjoyable and meaningful to the person involved (Cordes & Ibrahim, 1999). In this sense, recreation is considered one aspect of the broader concept of leisure. Leisure has three specific elements, according to Cordes and Ibrahim (1999): there is perceived freedom (one does it on his own will), it is an autotelic activity (the activity is engaged in for its

own sake), and there is a beneficial outcome. Aristotle suggested that leisure could be categorized into three overlapping categories: contemplation, amusement, and recreation (Cordes & Ibrahim, 1999). Recreation is the participatory and active component of leisure, and can be participated in either individually or as a group. One of these groups in which recreation can occur is the family.

Family recreation plays an important role in the lives of many families. Shaw and Dawson (2001) have stated that family leisure is purposive in nature, and that parents “consciously and deliberately” plan and facilitate family leisure activities to improve family relationships. They emphasized the importance many parents place on family recreation by stating that it is often with a “sense of urgency” that parents try to spend time together with children participating in family activities (Shaw & Dawson, 2001). Over the last 70 years, researchers have consistently reported positive relationships between family recreation and positive family outcomes when examining recreation and leisure patterns in families (Hawks, 1991; Holman & Epperson, 1984; Orthner & Mancini, 1991).

As in the realm of family religiosity, a good deal of research done in the area of family leisure has focused on couples. Hawks (1991) suggested that husbands and wives who share leisure time together in joint activities tend to be much more satisfied with their marriages than those who do not. Both Orthner (1975) and Smith, Snyder, and Morisma (1988) claimed that shared leisure activities have been found to be particularly important to wives’ satisfaction, especially early in marriage. Orthner (1976) found a strong relationship between participation of husbands and wives in joint leisure and the

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level of their communication. Family recreation has also been found to influence many aspects of parent-child relationships, as well as the family as a whole.

Recent research has demonstrated that family recreation and leisure are associated with several positive outcomes in family interaction, satisfaction, and stability (Driver, Brown, & Peterson, 1991), such as increased satisfaction with family life (Zabriskie & McCormick 2003), increased collective efficacy (Wells, Widmer, & McCoy, 2004), and improved communication (Huff, Widmer, McCoy, & Hill, 2003). Not only was recreation found to influence family members' satisfaction with family life, but it also influenced how family members interacted with one another.

Some of these studies (Huff et al., 2003; Wells et al., 2004; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2003) examined the influence of recreation on the family from both the parent and youth perspectives. By including the perspectives and experiences of a variety of family members, a much fuller picture of the family dynamics occurring within the system can be obtained. This richer perspective is important when considering how family recreation influences family functioning, particularly when using a family systems framework to understand family functioning.

*Recreation and family functioning.* Hawks stated that 60 years of family leisure research has found that “family strength or cohesiveness is related to the family’s use of leisure time” (1991, p. 424), and Orthner and Mancini (1991) claimed that “leisure experiences foster system adaptation to new inputs” (p. 297). Referring again to the Circumplex Model, cohesion and adaptability are the two primary components of family functioning. Recent studies have focused on the effects of leisure on family functioning

(Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003; Hill, Freeman, & Huff, 2001; Smith, Taylor, Hill, & Zabriskie, 2004; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001), and have indicated that family leisure is clearly related to family functioning, and thus stronger families. Although the positive relationship between family leisure and aspects of family functioning is fairly well established, Freeman and Zabriskie (2003) claim that the nature of the relationship is still poorly understood. The Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning has been developed in an effort to clarify this relationship (Zabriskie 2000, 2001; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001).

*Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning.* The Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning elucidates the relationship between family leisure and family functioning. It clarifies how family leisure impacts the different areas of family functioning. According to Iso-Ahola (1984), humans need both stability and change. As described by Kelly (1996, 1999), there are two patterns of leisure that individuals engage in. These two patterns address both the need for constancy and novelty. The Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning combines the two patterns of leisure and their influence on family functioning in the framework of family leisure (see Figure 2).

The model indicates that there are two types of family leisure patterns, core and balance, which families utilize to meet their needs for both stability and change (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). Core leisure patterns are “depicted by activities that are common, everyday, low-cost, relatively accessible, often home-based, and are participated in frequently” (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003, pp. 76-77). Core activities might



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include activities such as going on a walk together after dinner, playing a board game around the kitchen table, playing catch with a football in the yard, or watching a movie together. These activities usually require little planning or resources. Core activities provide a safe and comfortable environment in which family closeness can increase.

Balance leisure patterns are more novel experiences, and occur less frequently than core patterns (Zabriskie, 2001). They are usually not home-based, and often require a greater investment of time, effort, and resources. Balance activities might include family vacations, special events, and many outdoor recreation activities, such as boating or camping. Balance activities generally require more planning, and are consequently less spontaneous and more formalized than core activities. Since balance activities tend to be more novel and may include an element of unpredictability, family members are often required to be flexible and adapt to new experiences that do not occur in everyday life.

The Core and Balance Model suggests that the family's need for stability is addressed by core leisure patterns, which provide predictable family experiences that increase family closeness and cohesion. The family's need for change is met by balance leisure patterns, in which the family is challenged and able to adapt to new circumstances and novel experiences. The balance of cohesion and adaptability, according to Olson (1986), combine to facilitate family functioning. The Core and Balance Model also suggests that families that participate in both core and balance family leisure activities are likely to function better than families who participate in very high or very low amounts of either category (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003).

Studies that have examined this model have found both core and balance leisure patterns to be associated with cohesion (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001; Smith et al., 2004). Although both types of leisure patterns have a high association with cohesion, core activities are more strongly associated with family closeness than balance activities. Regular, structured and familiar family activities apparently aid families in feeling close and unified. Researchers have also found that both core and balance activities are associated with adaptability (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001; Smith et al., 2004). Participating in novel, spontaneous and unpredictable experiences seems to help families achieve flexibility and an openness to and ability to deal with change. The model suggests that as families have both core and balance activities, they will be more likely to experience a higher level of family functioning.

As demonstrated by past research, both family religiosity and family leisure have been found to influence family functioning. However, the influences these areas have had on the family seem to have been studied, for the most part, independently of each other. A few researchers have tied religion and recreation together, and their findings lead us to inquire further into the relationship between a family's religiosity and recreation, and the ensuing influence on the family system as a whole.

### *Recreation and Religiosity*

The connection between recreation and religiosity is one which has not been examined in much depth, but has been theorized about. Stone (1952) posed the question, What is the relation of recreation to religion? Both are concerned with things of the spirit. Both are concerned with the good life. Life is not good when social

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relations leave us unrefreshed. Life is not good when as we get closer together physically, we get farther apart spiritually. Leisure time provides the opportunity for refreshing social relations, and for community of interest, if we are smart enough to use it. There is a re-creational way of living at home, at church, at school, at work, in the community (p. 7).

The closeness of recreation and religion as primary human needs is discussed by Brightbill (1961):

The chain which links the healthful recreational life with the wholesome spiritual life is most evident in their mutual attributes: love and respect for humanity, justice and fair play, truth, faith, hope, and joy, and the fortitude to stand for what we believe to be right. Each of these is what gives buoyancy, purposefulness, zest, and worthwhileness to life. It is the compatibility of the religious and recreation life—this dual dedication to abundant, fruitful, and joyous living for all people—as well as the mutually broad dimensions of these fields, which bind them together so strongly (pp. 99-100).

Although the relationship between recreation and religion has been discussed, it has not been examined or empirically tested by many researchers.

Few researchers have performed studies which address both religiosity and recreation. One study, by Golding and Cornish (1987), compared a group of medical students and non-medical students, and found that the medical students had stronger religious beliefs and participated in more physical exercise. Golding and Cornish seemed to find both the religious and recreation components in their sample, but did not explore

the relationship between the two beyond the fact that both were present in this “healthy” lifestyle.

Russell (1987) also addressed religiosity and recreation. She compared the influence of several activities on life satisfaction, with two of the activities being religiosity and recreation. The results indicated that religiosity had a slightly stronger influence on life satisfaction than recreation participation. Satisfaction with recreation had a much greater influence than either religiosity or recreation participation. Since religiosity was perhaps measured more in terms of frequency (similar to the recreation participation variable) rather than in terms of satisfaction, the reader was left to question if religiosity may have had more of an influence on life satisfaction if it had been measured differently.

In a similar study, Russell (1990) examined the interrelationships among recreation and other life circumstance variables, two of which were religiosity and quality of life. The findings indicated that religiosity, sex, education, marital status, and age were significantly related to income, health, recreation activity participation, and recreation satisfaction. However, these variables were not found to influence quality of life directly. The only significant and direct predictor of quality of life was satisfaction with recreation. These results indicate that there is some type of relationship between religiosity and recreation participation and satisfaction, but that relationship remains unclear.

*Recreation, religiosity, and families.* A number of studies have examined families in relation to religiosity and recreation, but religiosity and recreation have merely been

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considered domains in which the family exists and participates. Ancona (1999) mentioned religion and recreation as being areas of life in which adolescents may struggle. Bagarozzi and Bagarozzi (1982) included religion and recreation in their list of areas in which families face developmental tasks. Knox and Knox (1974) discussed religion and recreation as being areas in which couples considering marriage should discuss their opinions. Landis (1947) talked about religion and recreation as being domains of life in which adjustments would be necessary after marriage. These researchers, and others who have done similar work, acknowledge that families are involved in religion and recreation, but fail to explore the effects that these two areas have on the family and its members.

Beyond exploring how religiosity and recreation influence the family as a whole, the question remains about a relationship between a family's religiosity, their recreation, and their family functioning. To date, no researchers have specifically examined family religiosity, family recreation, and family functioning together. Both family recreation and family religiosity have been found to influence family functioning separately, but the relationship between recreation and religiosity and the influence of the two together has not been examined. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between family recreation and family religiosity and their ensuing impact on family functioning. Based on this purpose, the following hypotheses were formed:

*Hypothesis 1.* There is a positive relationship between perceptions of family religiosity and level of family leisure involvement.

*Hypothesis 2.* There is a positive relationship between perceptions of family religiosity, family leisure involvement, and various demographic variables with perceptions of family functioning.

## Methods

### *Procedures*

Volunteers were recruited by the principle investigator and three colleagues, each being a member of one of the various faith groups included in the study. The principle investigator and colleagues recruited people from their various faith groups covering a wide range of activity and participation in their various faith communities, thus providing a broad range and level of religiosity in the sample. An email was sent to each volunteer with a short paragraph including instructions and a three-digit code. The email referred participants to an online questionnaire. The parent or youth who was recruited was asked to contact their youth or parent, respectively, and give them the URL address for the questionnaire and the three-digit code. Before taking the questionnaire, both the parent and the youth entered the three-digit code, thereby linking their two questionnaires. On the website, an introductory paragraph explained that participation was voluntary, that terminating participation at any time was allowed, and that completion of the questionnaire was considered to indicate consent to participation in the study. The introductory paragraph also informed the participant that information was completely confidential, since their names did not appear on the questionnaire. Completed questionnaires were automatically emailed to the principle investigator. The principle investigator sent a follow-up email to participants with a short reminder and the link to

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the survey. Some participants were also recruited by various recreation centers across the country. The recreation centers posted a flier about the study with the web address for the survey, and volunteers entered the last four digits of their phone number to link parent and youth surveys.

### *Instrumentation*

The research questionnaire included three instruments: (a) Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales (FACES II); (b) Family Leisure Activity Profile (FLAP); and (c) Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire. Relevant sociodemographic questions were also included on the parents' survey.

*Family functioning.* FACES II (Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, & Wilson, 1992) was used to measure family functioning. FACES II is an instrument based on the Family System Circumplex Model (Olson, 1986). It measures perceptions of family cohesion and adaptability and calculates an overall indicator of family functioning. It includes two scales, with 16 cohesion items and 14 adaptability items, for a total of 30 items. The instrument asks the respondent to indicate how frequently (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being almost never and 5 being always) the described behavior occurs in his or her family. For example, one item states, "Family members are supportive of each other during difficult times." The respondent would then indicate how often this occurs in his or her family.

Cohesion and adaptability scores were calculated by following a formula provided by Olson et al. (1992), which calculates scores based on their positive or negative reference. This calculation provides a total perceived family cohesion score and a total

perceived family adaptability score. Once cohesion and adaptability scores were obtained, a corresponding 1-8 value based on Olson et al.'s linear scoring interpretation scale was assigned for a total family functioning score. FACES II has demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties in terms of internal consistency, test-retest reliability, face validity, content validity, and concurrent validity. Olsen et al. has reported internal consistency for the instrument, showing Cronbach Alpha figures of .88 and .86 for cohesion, and .78 and .79 for adaptability.

*Family recreation.* The FLAP (Zabriskie, 2001) was used to measure family leisure involvement. It is based on the Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). It measures two types of family leisure patterns, core and balance. The FLAP includes 16 questions, 8 of which measure core family leisure patterns, and 8 which measure balance family leisure patterns. Each question asks if the respondent participates in the activity with his or her family. If the answer is yes, the respondent estimates how often that activity is participated in, the duration of participation in the activity, and how satisfied he or she is with that participation with family members. To calculate scores for the FLAP, the ordinal indicators of frequency and duration in each category were multiplied. The core categories were then summed to produce a core family leisure index, and the balance categories were summed to produce a balance family leisure index. Total family leisure involvement was calculated by summing the core and balance scores. The FLAP has demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties in terms of construct validity, content



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validity, inter-rater reliability, and test-retest reliability for core ( $r = .74$ ), balance ( $r = .78$ ), and total family leisure involvement ( $r = .78$ ) (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003).

*Family religiosity.* The Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire (Mahoney et al., 1999) was used to measure family religiosity. The 13-item questionnaire assesses how often people engage in religious or spiritual activities together. A 7-point scale is used, with 1 indicating never, 7 meaning very often, and the midpoint of 4 indicating sometimes. The 13 items cover informal activities, such as praying together and discussing spiritual issues, as well as more formal or traditional religious practices, such as attending church together or celebrating religious holidays together. The original instrument was formulated to assess religiosity in a married couple, so the researcher made some minor modifications in wording (with the author's permission) to adapt the questionnaire to be used to measure religiosity in a family. For example, the item that previously read, "My spouse and I pray together," was changed to, "My family and I pray together." The score for the Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire was calculated by summing the ratings for items to create a total score (Mahoney et al., 1999). Cronbach's Alpha for parent scores was calculated to be .96, and for youth scores was calculated to be .97.

A series of sociodemographic questions were included to identify underlying characteristics of the sample. Items included age, gender, and ethnicity of all family members, current marital status, history of divorce, family size, relationship of parents to all children (i.e., biological, step-parent, adoptive parent), annual family income, state of residence, population of place residing (urban or rural), religious affiliation, religious

affiliation of spouse, and religious affiliation(s) of children. Demographic variables were used as controlling factors, and continuous variables were included as covariates.

### *Analysis*

Data were analyzed using the statistical package SAS version 9.1. The researcher first reviewed the data collected for any missing responses or duplicate submissions by the same person. The next step was an examination of the data for any outliers. Descriptive statistics were generated to examine the underlying characteristics of the research variables. Pearson Product Moment zero-order correlations between the independent variables of family religiosity, balance family leisure involvement, core family leisure involvement, age, marital status, ethnicity, and gender were calculated and examined to check for multicollinearity. There was no multicollinearity, other than for core and balance, which sums to total family leisure, and cohesion and adaptability, which sums to total family functioning; therefore, they could not be used in the same multiple regression model.

Pearson correlations were calculated to examine the relationship between a family's level of leisure involvement and their perception of family religiosity. Correlations were analyzed separately for both parents and youth between religiosity and core family leisure involvement, balance family leisure involvement, and total family leisure involvement. Correlations were also analyzed individually for both parents and youth between total family functioning and core leisure involvement, balance leisure involvement, and total family leisure involvement. Because multiple tests were performed, the probability of calling something significant, when it truly is not, is

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inflated. To account for this, a Bonferroni adjustment was used for multiple tests. A family-wise .05 level of significance was used overall, thus with the Bonferroni adjustment individual tests were significant at .01 level or less.

Because of the significant correlations that were found (see Tables 1 and 2), a step-wise regression was calculated. The significant demographic and independent variables from the step-wise analysis were then used in multiple regression analyses on each dependent variable (family cohesion, family adaptability, and total family functioning). The regression models were analyzed to find which factors were significant in predicting the variables in each model. Analyses were performed separately for both parent and youth data. A Bonferroni adjustment was used for multiple tests. A family-wise .05 level of significance was used overall, thus with the Bonferroni adjustment individual tests were significant at .01 level or less.

### Results

The sample consisted of 121 parents and 99 youth. The lower number of youth responding was a factor of emailing either the parent or youth in a family, and relying on them to contact their youth or parent respectively. Subjects were selected using a convenience and snowball sample. The majority of the parents in the sample were female (72%) and white (97%). Eighty-six percent of the parents were married. The other 14% were single and never married (1%), divorced, widowed, or unmarried and living with a partner (11%), or did not indicate their marital status (2%). Parents ranged in age from 20 to 68 years of age (m: 43 years). The youth in the sample were slightly more female (56%) and ranged in age from 11 to 19 years of age (m: 14). It was intended to have

youth be within the ages of 11 to 15, but some youth older than that age group responded. Upon comparing the means of the older youth participants with the rest of the sample, there were no significant differences between the means; therefore, they were included in the sample.

Following recommendations by Dollahite et al. (2004), members of multiple faith groups were examined using the same questions and methods. The majority of the sample belonged to the Latter-day Saint (Mormon) church (69%). Other faith groups represented in the sample were Catholic (7%), Protestant (5%), Jewish (1%). Eighteen percent chose “other.” Respondents were from various regions of the country. The majority (71%) was from the west (Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming), but respondents from 25 states participated in the study.

This study included both parent and youth perspectives, as suggested by Zabriskie and McCormick (2003). This study utilized a family systems perspective by gathering data from both parents and youth. In gathering data from both parents and youth, it was hoped that a more complete picture of family life was obtained.

Parent scores on FACES II ranged from 33 to 67 for cohesion (m: 55.73, SD: 6.05), 25 to 68 for adaptability (m: 53.46, SD: 6.90), and 1.5 to 7 for total family functioning (m: 4.93, SD: 1.05). Youth scores on FACES II ranged from 31 to 65 for cohesion (m: 50.93, SD: 6.75), 22 to 69 for adaptability (m: 50.13, SD: 10.11), and 1.5 to 6.5 for total family functioning (m: 4.12, SD: 1.29). These scores are similar to the established norms for the instrument as reported by Olson et al. (1992).

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Parent scores on the FLAP ranged from 9 to 98 for core leisure involvement (m: 45.30, SD: 13.89), 0 to 148 for balance leisure involvement (m: 64.67, SD: 26.10), and 9 to 195 for total family leisure involvement (m: 109.97, SD: 34.13). Youth scores on the FLAP ranged from 4 to 133 for core leisure involvement (m: 44.47, SD: 23.95), 0 to 382 for balance leisure involvement (m: 71.72, SD: 52.76, and 4 to 408 for total family leisure involvement (m: 116.19, SD: 65.47).

Parent scores on the Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire ranged from 12 to 84 (m: 59.45, SD: 22.31), and youth scores also ranged from 12 to 84 (m: 50.98, SD: 25.54).

To address Hypothesis One, Pearson correlations were calculated to examine the relationship between family religiosity and family leisure involvement. Results for parents (see Table 3) indicated that family religiosity was positively correlated with core family leisure involvement ( $r = .2422, p = .0074$ ). Results for the youth (see Table 4) did not indicate a relationship between family religiosity and family leisure; however, total family functioning was positively correlated with core family leisure involvement ( $r = .4048, p < .0001$ ) and total family leisure involvement ( $r = .3243, p = .0011$ ).

To address Hypothesis Two, multiple regression analyses were calculated to examine the relationships between family religiosity, family leisure, and family functioning. Three regression models were computed for both parents and for youth data sets: one for total family functioning, one for family cohesion, and one for family adaptability. Variables that were used in the regression analyses were based on the step-wise regression. For the parents, the independent variables that were regressed on total family functioning were family religiosity, age, and marital status; the independent

variables that were regressed on cohesion were family religiosity, core leisure involvement, and age; and the independent variables that were regressed on adaptability were family religiosity and marital status. Results for parents (see Table 5) indicated that family religiosity was a significant positive predictor for overall family functioning ( $\beta = .2844, p = .0025$ ) and family cohesion ( $\beta = .2541, p = .0056$ ). Results also indicated that for the parents in the study (see Table 5), marital status had the strongest relationship with family adaptability ( $\beta = -.2565, p = .0076$ ). This showed that single parents in the study had a higher adaptability score than married parents.

For the youth, the independent variables that were regressed on total family functioning were family religiosity and core family leisure involvement; the independent variables that were regressed on cohesion were family religiosity, core family leisure involvement, and age; and the independent variables that were regressed on adaptability were family religiosity and core family leisure involvement. For the youth in the study (see Table 6), family religiosity and core family leisure involvement were significant positive predictors for overall family functioning ( $\beta = .3348, p = .0003$ ;  $\beta = .3269, p = .0004$  respectively), family cohesion ( $\beta = .4091, p < .0001$ ;  $\beta = .3000, p = .0007$  respectively), and family adaptability ( $\beta = .2637, p = .0057$ ;  $\beta = .3203, p = .0009$  respectively).

### Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between family recreation and family religiosity, and their ensuing impact on family functioning. Results indicated that there was, indeed, a relationship between family religiosity and family

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recreation, and that both family religiosity and family recreation had a significant influence on family functioning for this sample. Data collected from both parents and youth in families provided interesting insights into the nature of the impact of family religiosity and family recreation on family functioning. Family religiosity was the most significant predictor of family functioning for parents, whereas for youth, both family recreation and family religiosity were the significant predictors of family functioning. These findings provide specific implications for parents and professionals who work with families.

### *Relationship between Family Recreation and Family Religiosity*

Past researchers have theorized that there is a relationship between recreation and religiosity (Brightbill, 1961; Golding & Cornish, 1987), but none have examined it empirically. For those who have studied it, their findings have been inconclusive to the specific relationship that exists between the two, especially in relation to family life. Results from this study indicated that there is a relationship between family religiosity and family leisure. For parents in the study, family religiosity was significantly correlated with their core family leisure involvement. In other words, parents who saw their families as being more religious also tended to be involved in more common, everyday, low-cost, often home-based activities with family members. These findings make sense theoretically, particularly when considering that all major world religions place great emphasis on the family (Madsen et al. 2000). Religious beliefs tend to promote joint family activities such as eating dinner together, talking with each other, and going to religious services together. These findings clearly go beyond previous research by

indicating a clear empirical relationship between perceptions of family religiosity and core family leisure involvement.

For the youth in the sample, there was not a significant zero-order correlation between family religiosity and family recreation. Youth perceptions of both family recreation and family religiosity did, however, contribute to the explanation of family functioning, but there did not appear to be a direct relationship between family recreation and family religiosity for the youth in the sample.

#### *Influence of Family Religiosity on Family Functioning*

Family religiosity was found to be a significant predictor of family functioning among both parents and youth in this sample. This supports past research, which has shown family religiosity to influence the family as a whole (Erich & Leung, 1998; Raider, 1992). For parents, family religiosity was the only significant predictor for both family cohesion and total family functioning. Parents who viewed their family as being more religious also felt that their family was closer and there were better relationships among family members.

For youth, family religiosity was also a significant predictor of family functioning for all empirical measures of family functioning, including family cohesion, family adaptability, and total family functioning. Although previous research has addressed the role of religiosity in families, researchers have failed to examine family religiosity from the point of view of a youth. Research on family religiosity has focused on the marital relationship (Bahr & Chadwick, 1985; Sherkat & Ellison, 1999), parent functioning (Brody et al., 1996; Chadwick & Top, 1993), or the influence on the whole family from



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the parent's perspective (Christiano, 2000). Researchers who have examined youth in relation to family religiosity have mainly done so from a behavioral standpoint, by reporting less antisocial behavior, less depression, and less alcohol and drug use (Mahoney et al., 2001). No researchers have explored how family religiosity influences family functioning and interaction from a youth perspective. These are the first clear empirical findings that report a significant positive relationship between the level of family religious behavior and different aspects of family functioning from a youth's perspective.

#### *Influence of Family Recreation on Family Functioning*

For the parents in this sample, there was not a clear relationship between different kinds of family leisure involvement and family functioning. But for the youth, core family leisure involvement and total family leisure involvement were both significantly related to family functioning. Core family leisure involvement was also one of two significant predictors for all aspects of family functioning for the youth (family cohesion, family adaptability, and total family functioning). These findings support previous research which has indicated that family leisure, especially core family leisure involvement, is important for youth and their perceptions of family functioning (Hill et al., 2001; Smith et al., 2004; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001).

It was clear that for the youth in the sample, family leisure, particularly core family leisure involvement, played a valuable role in their evaluation of family functioning. It is doing the regular home-based, everyday activities with their family that helps youth feel close to other family members and improves family relationships. This is

perhaps contrary to what many parents believe. Many parents believe that it is the exciting vacations or novel experiences that will strengthen their families the most. But these findings indicate that for the youth, being involved in activities with each other everyday, such as shooting baskets, eating dinner together, or playing games at home, are what strengthen their relationships with other family members.

#### *Influence of Family Recreation and Family Religiosity on Family Functioning*

Perhaps one of the most important contributions of this study is the finding of the contributions of family religiosity and family recreation to family functioning at the same time. Until now, no one has examined the influence of family recreation and family religiosity on family functioning. Both family religiosity and family recreation have been found to influence family functioning in past research, but no studies have looked at the two together. Current findings indicated that family recreation and family religiosity were clearly related from the parent perspective, and both contributed to family functioning for both parents and youth in the sample. Recreation and religiosity are more than merely two realms of life in which families participate (Ancona, 1999; Bagarozzi & Bagarozzi, 1982) or types of activities that influence life satisfaction and quality of life (Russell, 1987, 1990), but two domains that have a relationship with each other, and an ensuing impact on family functioning.

#### *Practical Implications*

Findings from this study have valuable implications for both families and professionals who work with families. Based on current findings, it is clear that family recreation and family religiosity can have a positive influence on family functioning.

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Since there is a widespread belief today that American families are weak and troubled (Nock, 1998), many people are calling for society to take steps to strengthen the family unit. Current findings indicate that both family religiosity and family recreation may be such avenues to improve family functioning, and thereby strengthen families. Not only do current findings provide empirical evidence that family religiosity and family recreation influence family functioning, but they do so from both a parent and youth viewpoint. Practitioners and parents alike who are trying to strengthen families should consider having the family be involved in religious activities together, regardless of denomination, as well as family leisure activities (especially core activities).

Implications of this study may also be beneficial to families and practitioners by helping them understand how the influences that family religiosity and family recreation have on family functioning may be different for various members of the family. Using family systems theory (Steinglass, 1987; Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993), the family is a complex organism composed of different members that influence each other. If a person is attempting to help strengthen a family, it would be useful to address different needs of different members of the family. To improve total family functioning, this research would suggest emphasizing family religiosity to the parents and youth, as well as helping parents understand the importance for their youth of participating in core leisure patterns as a family. By participating in both religious activities and other core leisure patterns together, both parents and youth would benefit.

The contribution of core leisure patterns to the family functioning of the youth is an important implication for both parents and professionals working with families. Many

family intervention programs focus on balance type of activities, such as challenge course events or outdoor adventure activities. For these activities that are out of the ordinary, challenging, or include perceived risk, there appears to be an immediate impact.

Although such approaches may be beneficial to families in the short term, these activities may not have the lasting strengthening influence on the family. Current findings suggest that it is doing the relatively common, simple, everyday activities with family members that will ultimately improve and strengthen family relationships. Such activities seem to have more of an effect on family functioning and may make a more valuable contribution to family life. Parents may want to consider doing such activities consistently together, such as cooking together, planting flowers, reading together, going on walks together, and many other activities that can be done at home with little or no resources.

Professionals working with families may find it necessary to teach families skills to help them be able to do these types of activities together.

These findings may also be particularly useful for single-parent families. Past research has indicated that single-parent families are generally lower functioning than intact families (Smith, et al. 2004), but that family recreation can have a greater effect for single-parent families than it does for two-parent families (Smith et al.). For single-parent families and practitioners who are working with them, it may be helpful to address not only the avenue of family recreation as a way to strengthen the single-parent family, but to include the component of family religiosity as a means to strengthening the family and improving family functioning. Erich and Leung (1998) discussed the spiritual support and

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social support network for parents that family religiosity provides for parents. Such support may be even more important for single-parents than parents of intact families.

### *Recommendations for Future Research*

Future research is needed to explore the influence of family religiosity and family recreation on families and family functioning in more depth. More research is also needed to examine the relationship of family religiosity and family recreation among different religions, such as Judaism and faith traditions of an Eastern origin (i.e., Islam and Buddhism). It would also be interesting to look at parents and youth who see themselves as non-religious and examine their family recreation and family functioning. The participants in this study were predominantly white and belonged to Christian religions. Future research would benefit by examining a more diverse population of ethnic groups and religions. This research could benefit by using random sampling so that results could be generalized to more people. Also, more research is needed to examine religiosity of youth, and examining the demographic variables of that population. Such approaches may help clarify and deepen the understanding of how family religiosity and family recreation influences families, and help provide means of strengthening families everywhere.

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Table 1

*Pearson Correlations: Parent Data*

	Balance	Core	Age	M status	Ethnicity	Gender
Rel	$r = .0059$ $p = .9491$	$r = .2422$ $p = .0074^*$	$r = .1372$ $p = .1334$	$r = .2966$ $p = .0010^*$	$r = .0463$ $p = .6144$	$r = -.0255$ $p = .7812$
Balance		$r = .4009$ $p < .0001^*$	$r = .1151$ $p = .2087$	$r = .0787$ $p = .3889$	$r = .0389$ $p = .6717$	$r = -.0426$ $p = .6423$
Core			$r = -.1533$ $p = .0931$	$r = .0497$ $p = .5870$	$r = -.1644$ $p = .0716$	$r = -.0011$ $p = .9909$
Age				$r = .2941$ $p = .0011^*$	$r = .0052$ $p = .9552$	$r = -.1247$ $p = .1730$
M status					$r = .0947$ $p = .3017$	$r = -.0269$ $p = .7695$
Ethnicity						$r = .0186$ $p = .8398$

*Note.* Rel = religiosity; Balance = balance family leisure involvement; Core = core family leisure involvement; M status = marital status; N = 121; \* $p < 0.01$ . A Bonferroni adjustment was used for multiple tests. A family-wise .05 level of significance was used overall, thus with the Bonferroni adjustment individual tests were significant at .01 level or less.

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Table 2

*Pearson Correlations: Youth Data*

	Total f.l.i.	Core	Age	Gender
Rel	$r = .2433$ $p = .0152$	$r = .2335$ $p = .0200$	$r = .0270$ $p = .7908$	$r = .1332$ $p = .1886$
Total f.l.i.		$r = .6621$ $p < .0001^*$	$r = -.0611$ $p = .5477$	$r = -.0484$ $p = .6342$
Core			$r = .0239$ $p = .8144$	$r = .0534$ $p = .5998$
Age				$r = .1215$ $p = .2311$

*Note.* Rel = religiosity; Total f.l.i. = total family leisure involvement; Core = core family leisure involvement;  $N = 99$ ;  $*p < 0.01$ . A Bonferroni adjustment was used for multiple tests. A family-wise .05 level of significance was used overall, thus with the Bonferroni adjustment individual tests were significant at .01 level or less.

Table 3

*Pearson Correlation Coefficients: Parent Data*

	Total f.l.i.	Core	Balance
Family	$r = .0148$	$r = .2422^*$	$r = .0059$
religiosity	$p = .2525$	$p = .0074^*$	$p = .9491$
Family	$r = .1225$	$r = .1509$	$r = .0788$
functioning	$p = .1808$	$p = .0985$	$p = .3904$

*Note.* Total f.l.i. = total family leisure involvement; Core = core family leisure involvement, Balance = balance family leisure involvement; N = 121; \* $p < 0.01$ . A Bonferroni adjustment was used for multiple tests. A family-wise .05 level of significance was used overall, thus with the Bonferroni adjustment individual tests were significant at .01 level or less.



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Table 4

*Pearson Correlation Coefficients: Youth Data*

	Total f.l.i.	Core	Balance
Family	$r = .2433$	$r = .2335$	$r = .1959$
religiosity	$p = .0152$	$p = .0200$	$p = .0519$
Family	$r = .3243^*$	$r = .4048^*$	$r = .2187$
functioning	$p = .0011^*$	$p < .0001^*$	$p = .0296$

*Note.* Total f.l.i. = total family leisure involvement; Core = core family leisure involvement, Balance = balance family leisure involvement; N = 99; \* $p < 0.01$ . A Bonferroni adjustment was used for multiple tests. A family-wise .05 level of significance was used overall, thus with the Bonferroni adjustment individual tests were significant at .01 level or less.

Table 5

*Summary of Regression Analyses: Parent Data*

Predictor Variable	B	Standard Error	T	$\beta$	p
Total Family Functioning ( $R^2 = .1016, p = .0056, N = 121$ )					
Religiosity	.0134*	.0043*	3.09*	.2844	.0025*
Age	-.0207	.0127	-1.63	-.1497	.1053
Marital Status	-.4574	.2944	-1.55	-.1513	.1230
Family Cohesion ( $R^2 = .1384, p = .0006, N = 121$ )					
Religiosity	.0689*	.0244*	2.82*	.2541	.0056*
Core	.0706	.0392	1.80	.1621	.0744
Age	-.1402	.0703	-1.99	-.1762	.0485
Family Adaptability ( $R^2 = .0811, p = .0068, N = 121$ )					
Religiosity	.0706	.0286	2.47	.2283	.0149
Marital Status	-5.0905*	1.8745*	-2.72*	-.2565	.0076*

*Note.* Core = core family leisure involvement; \* $p < 0.01$ . A Bonferroni adjustment was used for multiple tests. A family-wise .05 level of significance was used overall, thus with the Bonferroni adjustment individual tests were significant at .01 level or less.

Table 6

*Summary of Regression Analyses: Youth Data*

Predictor Variable	B	Standard Error	T	$\beta$	p
Total Family Functioning ( $R^2 = .2695, p < .0001, N = 99$ )					
Religiosity	.0169*	.0045*	3.73*	.3348	.0003*
Core	.0176*	.0048*	3.64*	.3269	.0004*
Family Cohesion ( $R^2 = .3435, p < .0001, N = 99$ )					
Religiosity	.1082*	.0226*	4.78*	.4091	<.0001*
Core	.0846*	.0241*	3.51*	.3000	.0007*
Age	.6372	.3483	1.83	.1522	.0704
Family Adaptability ( $R^2 = .2116, p < .0001, N = 99$ )					
Religiosity	.1044*	.0369*	2.83*	.2637	.0057*
Core	.1352*	.0393*	3.44*	.3203	.0009*

*Note.* Core = core family leisure involvement; N = 99; \* $p < 0.01$ . A Bonferroni adjustment was used for multiple tests. A family-wise .05 level of significance was used overall, thus with the Bonferroni adjustment individual tests were significant at .01 level or less.

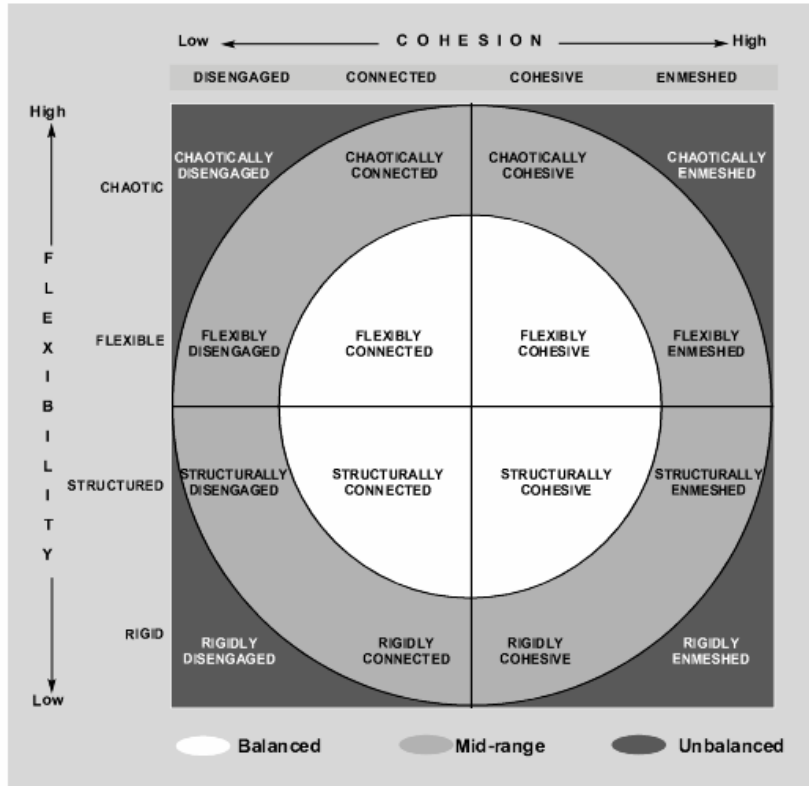


Figure 1.

*Family Circumplex Model (Olson, D. H. (2003). Personal communication. December 5, 2003)*

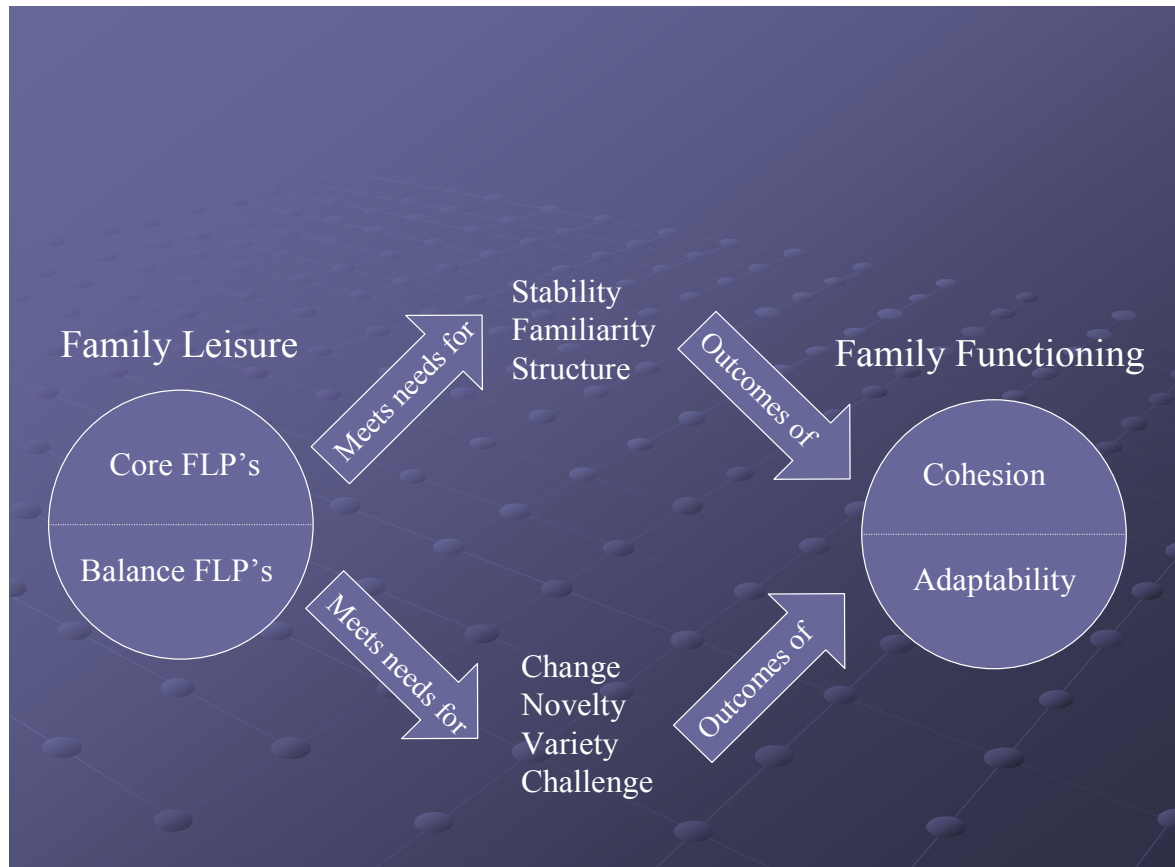


Figure 2.

*Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning (Zabriskie, 2001)*

Appendix A

Prospectus

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

The family is the fundamental unit of society, and is the entity into which all human beings enter as they begin their sojourn on earth. It is the building block of social structures and organizations in every culture. Every baby is born to a mother, and regardless of the connection with family members one may maintain throughout his or her life, humans are familial beings in their very nature. Throughout time, societies have been based upon the family, and great civilizations have seen their demise upon the disintegration of the family structure within their culture.

Families today are not very different than families in the past. Today, as in many other times throughout the history of the world, the structure of the family seems to be under attack from many sides. Ours is a day described by “high divorce rates and the alleged collapse of traditional marriage [and family life],” with marriages and families being seen as “demoralized” institutions (VanDenBerghe, 2000, p. 16-17). There is a widespread belief that American marriages and families are weak and troubled (Nock, 1998). With this apparent weakening of the family, many people are calling for society to take steps to help protect and strengthen the family unit.

The importance of the family is advocated not only by certain individuals throughout society, but also by the major religions of the world. Zimmerman (1974) suggests that all of the major world religions have very rigid and almost identical family systems in common. Raider (1992) states that these systems standardized the family unit (relations between husband and wife and relations between parents and children) and in

so doing “provided the main unit out of which societies could be built” (p. 171).

Zimmerman declared that ““the most sacred or divine aspect of society is considered to be the family system and being religious is tantamount to being a good husband, a good wife, or a good parent...’ Judaism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Islam all explicitly join family life and religion” (Raider, 1992, p. 171-172).

Ninety-five percent of all married couples and parents in America report a religious affiliation (Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, & Swank 2001), and sixty percent say that religion is “important” or “very important” to them (McCullough, Hoyt, Larson, Koenig, & Thoresen, 2000). Since the major religions in the world place such a profound emphasis on families, and since many people report that religion is an important part of their life, it is likely that these people then place a great importance on their family and attempting to strengthen it.

Many studies that have examined the linkages between personal, marital, and familial life indicate correlations between religiosity and various beneficial outcomes, such as increased marital happiness (Booth, Johnson, Branaman, & Sica, 1995), family unity (Dollahite & Marks, 2004), and greater warmth in family relationships (Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, & Swank, 2001). Another area that has been found to have beneficial outcomes in families is family recreation. Research examining the relationship between family interaction and recreation has consistently reported outcomes such as increased family satisfaction, family stability, and family strength (Hawkes, 1991; Holman & Epperson, 1989; Orthner & Mancini, 1991). Religion and recreation are two



realms of family life which often appear to be considered as avenues of strengthening families.

Religiosity and recreation have both been found to influence family functioning (Bernard-Fisher, 2001; Erich and Leung, 1998; Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001), but have never been studied together. The relationship between religiosity and recreation has been addressed by a limited number of researchers (Golding and Cornish, 1987; Russell, 1987, 1990), but none of these studies have examined both religiosity and recreation in relation to family functioning.

#### *Statement of Problem*

The first problem of this study is to investigate if there is a relationship between a family's perception of their religiosity and their family leisure involvement. The second problem of this study is to determine the relationship between religiosity, leisure involvement and family functioning.

#### *Purpose of Study*

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between family religiosity, family recreation, and family functioning. Information obtained through this study will contribute to the field of research used to strengthen families by providing further insight into areas that influence family interaction and strength. Family religiosity has been found to influence family functioning, increase family cohesion, and is correlated with healthy family relationships. Family recreation has also been found to have a positive impact on family functioning, family cohesion and adaptability, as well as satisfaction with family life. Given that religiosity and recreation have both been

correlated with family functioning separately, this study will examine the possible relationships between the two, and their subsequent contribution to the explanation of family functioning. The information gained may provide possible avenues to consider when attempting to strengthen families and improve family functioning.

### *Significance of the Study*

Religiosity and recreation have both been found to influence families and the processes that occur within them, but both sides claim that more work must be done to further understand what is taking place. Freeman and Zabriskie (2003) acknowledge that the positive relationship between family leisure and aspects of family functioning is “fairly well established, but the nature of the relationship is still poorly understood” (p. 75). They join with others in claiming that family leisure research has lacked an adequate theoretical framework, and that “theory has been undervalued and underused by researchers” (Holman & Epperson, 1991, p. 291) in the area of family leisure. In response to that lack of theory, the Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning was developed and tested (Zabriskie, 2000, 2001; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). This model, which is grounded in family systems theory, will be used as a guiding framework for this study in an effort to perform work that is theoretically based.

A similar criticism has been addressed by scholars examining family religiosity. Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, and Swank (2001) argued that a lack of conceptual clarity is a significant problem in the literature on religion and family life. Sullivan (2001) stated that many studies have been exploratory in nature or empirically-driven rather than theory driven. Dollahite, Marks, and Goodman (2004) agree that further

progress is “unlikely until there is more coherent conceptualization of religiosity within family contexts” (p. 421).

Many studies that have examined the influences of either religiosity or recreation on the family have done so from the perspective of only one member of the family (generally the parent). Zabriskie and McCormick (2003) emphasize the importance of collecting data from both a parent and a child from the same family. They point out that both parent and youth perspectives obtained [when studying family leisure] “remind us of the intricacies and interrelationships involved when examining family systems” (p. 181). Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, and Swank (2001) make a similar recommendation: “another advancement needed in the area [of family religiosity] is to obtain multiple family members’ reports” (p. 591). This study will involve perspectives from both parents and youth in an effort to gain a more complete view of what is happening in the family, and the different perceptions of various members in the family system.

Dollahite, Marks, and Goodman (2004) identify the future for work in this area and those connected to it: “Religion will remain a visible force in contemporary American family life, but because of growing complexity and diversity the religiosity-family connection will need to be more carefully examined to be understood. The linkage between religiosity and families will continue to be a compelling, valuable, and a relevant domain of social science scholarship and promises to become even more interesting in the future” (p. 426). The same is true for research involving family recreation. Since family religiosity, family recreation, and family functioning have never been studied together before, the ensuing information promises to be “compelling, valuable, and

relevant” to gaining a deeper understanding of families and activities through which they can be strengthened.

### *Delimitations*

The scope of the study will be delimited to the following:

1. This study will include 50 families from each of the following major faith groups: Judaism, Mormonism, Catholicism, and Protestantism, for a total of 200 families. Families whose faith traditions are more of an Eastern origin (i.e. Islam, Buddhism) are not represented in this sample.
2. Responses will be collected from parents for each sample family.
3. Responses will be collected from youth in the sample families who are between 12 and 15 years of age.
4. The data will be collected over a period of 6 weeks during December 2004 and January 2005.
5. Family functioning will be measured by the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales (FACES II) (Olson, Bell, & Portner, 1982), which measures family cohesion, adaptability, and overall family functioning.
6. Family leisure involvement will be measured by the Family Leisure Activity Profile (FLAP) (Zabriskie, 2000), which measures family involvement in different types of leisure activities.

7. Family religiosity will be measured by the Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire (Mahoney, 1999), which measures a family's perception of their religiosity.

#### *Limitations*

The study will be limited by the following factors:

1. Only four faith groups will be represented, which will limit the generalizability of the results. Families whose faith traditions are more of an Eastern origin (i.e. Islam, Buddhism) are not represented in this sample.
2. Each of the instruments is self-report, which could result in a social desirability effect.
3. The sample will be determined through a convenience and snowball process. This will reduce the representativeness of the sample.
4. Due to the fact that the methods of this study are correlational, causal relationships cannot be determined.

#### *Assumptions*

This study will be conducted based upon the following assumptions:

1. A person's family is an important part of their life, and their religion is fundamental in forming this belief.
2. The instruments being used in the study will provide valid and reliable measurements.
3. Participants will complete the questionnaires accurately and honestly.

### *Hypotheses*

The study will test the following null hypotheses:

1. There is no relationship between perceptions of family religiosity and level of family leisure involvement.
2. There is no relationship between perceptions of family religiosity, family leisure involvement, and various demographic variables with perceptions of family functioning.

### *Definition of Terms*

The following terms are defined to clarify their use in the study:

*Balance family leisure pattern.* Balance leisure patterns are “depicted through activities that are generally less common and less frequent than core activities and that therefore provide novel experiences” (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001, p. 283), and are generally not home-based. These might include activities such as vacations, camping trips, or sailing adventures.

*Core family leisure pattern.* Core leisure patterns are “depicted in the common, everyday, low-cost, relatively accessible, and often home-based activities that many families do frequently” (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001, p. 283). These might be activities such as family dinner, going on a walk as a family, or playing games together.

*Family adaptability.* Family adaptability is the “ability of a family system to change its power structure, role relationships, and relationship rules in response to situational and developmental stress” (Olsen, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, & Wilson, 1992, p. 1).

*Family cohesion.* Family cohesion is the emotional bonding that family members have for one another (Olson, 1993).

*Family functioning.* Family functioning is the relationships, processes, and interaction that occurs within a family. As described by family systems theory and the Circumplex model (Olson & DeFrain, 2000), the three dimensions related to family functioning are cohesion, flexibility (adaptability), and communication.

*Family leisure involvement.* Family leisure involvement is “all recreation and leisure activities family members participate in with other family members, including both core and balance leisure patterns” (Zabriskie, 2000, p. 7).

*Religiosity.* Religiosity is a three-dimensional construct composed of (a) religious beliefs (personal, internal beliefs, framings, meanings, perspectives), (b) religious practices (outward, observable expressions of faith such as prayer, scripture study, rituals or traditions), and (c) religious communities (support, involvement, and relationships grounded in a congregation or less formal religious group (Marks & Dollahite, 2001).

*Family religiosity.* Family religiosity is the amount of time a family spends involved in such religious activities together; this is their perception of their religious involvement and commitment as a whole group.

## Chapter 2

### Review of Literature

The literature related to the influence of religiosity and recreation on families is reported in this chapter. For organizational purposes, the literature is presented under the following topics: (a) Family Functioning, (b) Family Religiosity, (c) Family Recreation, and (d) Recreation and Religiosity.

#### *Family Functioning*

Throughout time, families have been and are the fundamental unit of society. Carlson, Deppe, and MacLean (1972) stated that, “The family was the basic unit of even ancient primitive cultures. It was the organization for procreation and education of children, bound together through social and economic necessities. In the last two hundred years, nearly every new force in our civilization has been instrumental in weakening those original ties”(p. 206). Families today are facing a decline. This is evident in the increasing numbers of marriages ending in divorce. For example, in 1900 there was approximately one divorce for every 12 marriages in a given year; in 1984 there was nearly one divorce occurring for every 2 marriages in a given year (Cox, 2002). Since families play a vital role in the preservation and progression of the human race, understanding how families interact and what can be done to strengthen them is of utmost importance.

*Family Systems Theory.* Systems theory has been used by theorists to describe the family and give a framework for understanding how families function and interact (Steinglass, 1987; Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993). The main premise of Family



Systems Theory is that the family is a complex system composed of individuals interacting with one another. It is not merely a collection of separate individuals whose lives and actions have no effect on each other, but rather a dynamic organism made up of different members that influence and are influenced by the other members and the environment in which they are embedded.

Whitchurch and Constantine (1993) postulated that when a family is described as a system, systems theories can be used to understand intrafamily processes—such as family functioning—through transactions among other family members. By examining what the family does as a unit, the processes that occur within the family can be better understood. Constantine (1986) pointed out that the explanation for the interaction occurring within a family cannot be found in the actions of the parts, but in the system as a whole.

Problems that were once addressed from the standpoint of the individual, such as alcoholism or eating disorders, are now being conceptualized as disorders involving the entire family system (Whitchurch & Constantine, 1993). Approaches to solving such problems are not being dealt with from the viewpoint of fixing the individual manifesting the symptoms, but by involving the entire family in improving family processes. Whitchurch and Constantine (1993) claim that “family processes can be understood as the product of the entire system,” and consequently the focus is shifted away from the individual member to relationships among members of the family system (p. 330).

Considering the family as a complex system, one can envision the family functioning as a dynamic organism, with the individual parts working in relation to each

other to form a larger whole. Referring to Klein and White's (1996) work, Zabriskie and McCormick (2001) summed up that family systems theory "holds that families are goal directed, self-correcting, dynamic, interconnected systems that both affect and are affected by their environment and by qualities within the family itself" (p. 281). A graphic representation of these dynamic relationships within families was developed by Olson and DeFrain (2000), and is called the Circumplex Model.

*Circumplex model.* The Circumplex Model is built on the principles of systems theory. The model addresses cohesion, adaptability, and communication within the family (Olson & DeFrain, 2000). The Circumplex Model emphasizes how family members and their behaviors are interconnected (see Figure 1). The three dimensions addressed by the model are cohesion (defined as togetherness), adaptability (defined as the ability to cope with change), and communication. Although communication is not pictured graphically in the model, it is a facilitating dimension and helps the families move between the extremes of the other two dimensions. According to Olson and DeFrain (2000), "if a couple or family has good communication skills, they are more likely to be close (cohesion dimension) and be able to work out problems (adaptability dimension) when they arise" (p. 66).

Both cohesion and adaptability contribute to a family's overall functioning, and they are the two primary qualities of high functioning families listed by Olson and DeFrain (2000). Many other factors may also influence this family functioning, and the levels of cohesion and adaptability experienced within the family system. Two

dimensions of family life that have been found to influence family functioning are family religiosity and family recreation.

### *Family Religiosity*

Religious beliefs and activities are an important part of American family life. Ninety-five percent of all married couples and parents in America report a religious affiliation (Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, & Swank, 2001). About ninety percent desire religious training for their children (Gallup & Castelli, 1989), over half say that they attend religious services at least monthly (Heaton & Pratt, 1990), and sixty percent say religion is “important” or “very important” to them (McCullough, Hoyt, Larson, Koenig, & Thoresen, 2000). Only two percent of American parents say they do not believe in God (Sherkat & Ellison, 1999). Even when considering the tendency of U.S. survey respondents to exaggerate their religious participation, it is apparent that religious activity is an important part of life for many people (Christiano, 2000).

As Pankhurst and Houseknecht stated, “[R]eligion and family may be primordial institutions, but they are also dynamic and ‘modern’ institutions” (2000, p. 28). Dollahite, Marks, and Goodman (2004) discuss the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as being a time of remarkable growth in both religious and family diversity. They attribute this to changes in religious expression, increasing numbers of immigrants with non-Jewish and non-Christian religious affiliations, and changes in family structure. They claim that increased family diversity is probably associated with increased religious diversity, using the example that parental divorce is positively associated with increased likelihood that children will change their religious identity through either apostasy or conversion

(Lawton & Bures, 2001). Dollahite, Marks, and Goodman also claim that growing diversity in families complicates analyses of the connections between religiosity and family life.

*Family religiosity research.* The religiosity-family linkage has received a relatively small amount of attention from social scientists when compared to other aspects of social and personal life (Pankhurst & Houseknecht, 2000). According to Sherkat and Ellison (1999), many social scientists have been skeptical of the viability and even the benefit of research regarding religiosity, and have treated personal and familial religious practices and beliefs as nonissues. Nevertheless, in recent years, there has been an increase in empirical research linking religiosity and families. Pankhurst and Houseknecht (2000) believe this is due in part to a growing acknowledgement that “even from an atheistic or agnostic position, it is important to understand what motivates and energizes a large portion of the world’s population” (p. 9).

Several family scholars wrote about religion in the 1980s (Bahr & Chadwick, 1985; D’Antonio & Aldous, 1983; Marciano, 1987; Thomas, 1988; Thomas & Cornwall, 1990; Thornton, 1985), and there were special issues on religion and family life that were published in a number of scholarly journals in the 1990s and 2000s: *Journal of Family Psychology* (Vol. 15, No. 4), *Journal of Family Psychotherapy* (Vol. 13, Nos. 3/4), *Journal of Men’s Studies* (Vol. 7, No. 1), and *Review of Religious Research* (Vol. 43, No. 3). Although recent years have seen an increase in the amount of research being done on families and religiosity, it remains an area of family life that perhaps does not receive the attention it deserves. Dollahite, Marks, and Goodman (2004) point out that in the 2000

decade review issue of the *Journal of Marriage and the Family* (Vol. 62., No. 4), “probably the most influential scholarly journal dealing with marriage and family issues (p. 413),” there was not one article on religion and family.

*Dimensions of religiosity.* Religiosity is multi-faceted and complex and has been described and measured in several ways. Marks and Dollahite (2001) conceptualized religiosity as a three-dimensional construct composed of religious beliefs, religious practices, and religious communities. Religious beliefs include personal, internal beliefs, framings, meanings, perspectives. Religious practices are outward, observable expressions of faith such as scripture study, prayer, traditions, rituals, or less overtly sacred practices or abstinence that is religiously based. Religious communities consist of support, relationships, and involvement based in a congregation or less formal religious group. Dollahite, Marks, and Goodman (2004) claim that past research has often examined only one of these dimensions at a time, consequently failing to capture the complex interaction of religious beliefs, practices, and communities that occur in family life.

Dollahite, Marks, and Goodman (2004) discuss different types of religiosity, claiming that differing levels of belief, commitment and behavior vary in their consequences for families. They explain that there are important differences between orthodox or traditional groups, and there more progressive or liberal counterparts. They also point out the importance of specifying the type of family that is being examined, stating that, “some types of families seem to draw more benefits from religious involvement than others” (p. 414). The example is given that on the basis of doctrine put

forth in certain religious texts (such as Jewish, Christian, and Muslim texts), gay and lesbian couples are not as likely to find congenial homes in many conservative faith communities than elsewhere (Gordis, 1991), although there have been shifts in recent history (Dollahite, Marks, & Goodman, 2004). While religiosity may influence different families in different ways, studies that have examined personal, marital, and familial life have consistently reported positive correlations between religiosity and various beneficial outcomes, such as improved marriage relationships and parent-child interactions.

*Religiosity and marriage.* Several studies have reported religious involvement being associated with marital happiness, adjustment, commitment and lower risk of conflict (Bahr & Chadwick, 1985; Mahoney, Pargament, Jewell, Swank, Scott, Emery, et al., 1999; Sherkat & Ellison, 1999). In a study of Seventh-Day Adventists, Dudley and Kosinski (1990) found that family worship was related to marital satisfaction. Additionally, in a longitudinal study with a national data set over twelve years, Booth, Johnson, Branaman, and Sica (1995) reported a positive association between marital satisfaction and religiosity, with increased religiosity being related to heightened satisfaction.

Religiosity has also been found to have a significant influence on marital stability and commitment to marriage (Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, & Swank, 2001; Robinson, 1994; Wilson & Musick, 1996). Call and Heaton (1997) reported that various facets of couple religiosity were related to marital stability, and that meeting attendance (together) was the best predictor of stability in the marriage relationship. Lehrer and Chiswick (1993), using a subset of the National Survey of Families and Households

(NSFH) data set, found that those who categorized themselves as not religious had the lowest marital stability and faced the highest likelihood of ending the marriage in divorce.

Studies have also been performed examining communication and conflict resolution through prayer and forgiveness in couples. Brody, Stoneman, Flor, and McCrary (1994) indicated that religiosity may be related to marital satisfaction and stability because religious couples may be more likely to use effective communication and conflict resolution skills, perhaps due to the emphasis on prayer and forgiveness in many religions. Butler, Gardner, and Bird (1998) have shown that prayer helps religious couples resolve conflicts in a variety of ways, and is used as a conflict resolution ritual (Butler, Stout, & Gardner, 2002). The influence of religious beliefs regarding sexuality has also been studied. Cochran and Beeghley (1991) examined the effect of religiosity on attitudes toward nonmarital sexuality across several religions in the U.S. (e.g., Jewish, Catholic, and Baptist), and found less tolerance of extramarital sexual relations and homosexuality in more proscriptive religions.

*Religiosity and parent-child relationships.* Recent studies have connected religiosity to improved parent functioning (Brody, Stoneman, Flor, & McCrary, 1994; Brody, Stoneman, & Flor, 1996; Chadwick & Top, 1993; Gunnoe, Hetherington, & Reiss, 1999). Religiosity has also been correlated with higher levels of parental warmth (Bartkowskie & Wilcox, 2000; Wilcox, 1998), and increased family-centeredness (Christiano, 2000). Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, and Swank (2001) found parental

religiosity to be associated with various desirable child outcomes, such as fewer behavior problems, less antisocial behavior, less depression, and less alcohol and drug use.

When examining fathers, Christiansen and Palkovitz (1998) reported that religious fathers scored higher than non-religious fathers on a measure of commitment toward their children and father involvement in the family. In a study done by Brody, Stoneman, and Flor (1996), father religiosity predicted marital and family cohesion and fewer child emotional and behavioral problems. Snarey (1993) asserted that father-child church attendance provided important “social-emotional child-rearing support” for fathers (p. 315). Although there is little research addressing mothering and religion, the religiosity-mothering connection is thought to be particularly important because, as reported by Strawbridge, Cohen, Shema, and Kaplan (1997), the influence of religiosity appears to be greater for mothers than fathers.

*Religiosity and family functioning.* In addition to impacting the marital dyad and parent-child relationships, religiosity has been found to influence the family as a whole. Erich and Leung (1998) explored factors contributing to family functioning in families with adoptive children that have special needs. They found that adoptive families with more children and fathers with less education, who did not receive family therapy, and who participated in religious activities were more likely to have higher family functioning scores. They reported that the mother’s monthly participation in religious activities tended to positively correlate with family functioning scores. Erich and Leung (1998) hypothesized that religiosity in these families might be a means of providing spiritual support and a social support network for the parents. The researchers pointed out



that religiosity may also be an indicator of family cohesiveness, given that the spouses and adopted children often attended these religious activities as well. In another study that examined religiosity in relation to family functioning, Bernard-Fisher (2001) analyzed different facets of religiosity as they related to African American families. The researcher found that family prayer and family feeling close to God achieved the most frequent significant correlations with healthy family relationships and system maintenance. Most African American families in the study reported their life satisfaction as being average to high, and the majority felt very close to God. The author formulated a list of characteristics of strong families, which included cohesion (a component of family functioning as described by Olson and DeFrain (2000)) and religious emphasis.

Raider (1992) undertook a two-year research project to describe the relationship between religious commitment and family style. He found that religion influences almost every aspect of family life and interaction. One area he discussed as being influenced by religiosity was “positive emotional bonding,” which he defined as loving and caring and providing a sense of connectedness that brings families together (which echoes Olson and DeFrain’s (2000) definition of cohesion). Raider pointed out that different religions [or even levels of commitment or orthodoxy to a religion] may place different emphasis on emotional closeness, nurturance, and intimacy among family members. Raider, in referencing Perlman (1979), made an insightful connection between this emotional bonding, or cohesion, to a family’s ability to adapt to change (echoing Olson and DeFrain’s (2000) adaptability): “The relationship allows family ‘to feel secure and thus to go forward to risk new learning and new experiences’” (1992, p. 174).

Past studies have indicated that family religiosity can have an influence on several facets of family life, including cohesion, adaptability, and family functioning. Religion is apparently a part of the lives of many families throughout the world, and as such plays a significant role in how families function and the interactions between their members. For most religions, family relationships and spending time with family members is critical to living one's faith. Since all of the major world religions place such great emphasis on the family (Madsen, Lawrence, & Christiansen, 2000), it seems that if a family is religious (as many parents report), then spending time with family and participating in activities together would be important. Many families participate in recreational activities not only to spend time together and have fun, but also to strengthen family relationships. It is logical, therefore, that a religious family would participate in recreational activities together as well.

#### *Family Recreation*

Throughout history, people have sought recreation and leisure. Recreation and engaging in enjoyable activities are an important, even necessary, part of many people's lives. Cervantes stated, "The bow cannot always stand bent, nor can human frailty subsist without some lawful recreation" (Carlson, Deppe, & MacLean, 1972, p. 3). Although our free time has generally been a matter of individual interest, Carlson, Deppe, and MacLean (1972) explained how what is done in that free time affects society: "Skills, interests, and attitudes developed through leisure are significant not only to the individual, but to the society whose quality of culture and citizenship he helps to develop. Society is, therefore, concerned with recreation, which occurs during leisure" (p. 4).

Recreation has been defined as voluntary participation in leisure activities that are enjoyable and meaningful to the person involved (Cordes & Ibrahim, 1999). In this sense, recreation is considered one aspect of the broader concept of leisure. Leisure has three specific elements, according to Cordes and Ibrahim (1999): there is perceived freedom (one does it on his own will), it is an autotelic activity (the activity is engaged in for its own sake), and there is a beneficial outcome. Aristotle suggested that leisure could be categorized into three overlapping categories: contemplation, amusement, and recreation (Cordes & Ibrahim, 1999). Recreation is the participatory and active component of leisure, and can be participated in either individually or as a group. One of these groups in which recreation can occur is the family.

*Family recreation research.* Family recreation plays an important role in the lives of many families. Shaw and Dawson (2001) have stated that family leisure is purposive in nature, and that parents “consciously and deliberately” plan and facilitate family leisure activities to improve family relationships. They emphasized the importance many parents place on family recreation by stating that it is often with a “sense of urgency” that parents try to spend time together with children participating in family activities (Shaw & Dawson, 2001). Over the last 70 years, researchers have consistently reported positive relationships between family recreation and positive family outcomes when examining recreation and leisure patterns in families (Hawkes, 1991; Holman & Epperson, 1984; Orthner & Mancini, 1991). Recent research has demonstrated that family recreation and leisure are associated with several positive outcomes in family interaction, satisfaction, and stability (Driver, Brown, & Peterson, 1991), such as increased satisfaction with

family life (Zabriskie & McCormick 2003), increased collective efficacy (Wells, Widmer, & McCoy, 2004), and improved communication (Huff, Widmer, McCoy, & Hill, 2003).

The first studies dealing with recreation in the family appeared in the 1930s, and provided an idea of how Americans spent their leisure time (Lundberg, Komarovsky, & McInerney, 1934). The ensuing decades covered a range of family recreation topics, including children's leisure activities and socioeconomic status (Cramer, 1950), employment status of mothers (Leevy, 1950), and common leisure interests of married couples (Benson, 1952). An important shift in the research occurred in the 1950s, when the focus of study shifted from the individual to the family as a unit (Wylie, 1953). Outdoor recreation began to be studied in the 1960s, and several studies indicated that camping had beneficial effects on family interaction (Burch, 1965; West & Merriam, 1970). The decades following were filled with studies examining the influence of recreation on the marital relationship, parent-child interaction, and the family system as a whole.

*Recreation and marriage.* As in the realm of family religiosity, a good deal of research done in the area of family leisure has focused on couples. Hawks (1991) reviewed multiple studies which suggested that husbands and wives who share leisure time together in joint activities tend to be much more satisfied with their marriages than those who do not. Both Orthner (1975) and Smith, Snyder, and Morisma (1988) claimed that shared leisure activities have been found to be particularly important to wives' satisfaction, especially early in marriage. Orthner (1976) found a strong relationship

between participation of husbands and wives in joint leisure and the level of their communication. Supporting this finding was a marital adjustment study (Presvelou, 1971), which indicated that the frequency of joint leisure activities was positively related to marital communication, especially nonverbal communication of caring.

*Recreation and parent-child relationships.* Family recreation has been found to influence many aspects of parent-child relationships. In a study done by Huff, Widmer, McCoy, and Hill (2003), the influence of challenging outdoor recreation on parent-adolescent communication was examined. The researchers found that the outdoor recreation experience led to increased interaction, improved communication, increased trust and support, and increased affection and kindness, among other things. As families engaged in the challenging activities, the established boundaries of the family system were temporarily changed. With these changes the family members “became more comfortable, thereby conveying support, affection, and kindness to one another” (p. 33). That adaptability, the researchers suggested, brought more willingness to work through problems and disagreements, thus reducing conflict.

Families’ collective efficacy and conflict resolution efficacy was found to increase after participating in a challenging outdoor recreation experience in a study performed by Wells, Widmer, and McCoy (2004). Although families participated in activities of differing levels of challenge, all families increased in their collective efficacy and confidence in ability to perform tasks as a group. They also increased in their confidence to resolve conflicts and solve problems. The researchers found that it was not the level of difficulty that was related to the gains in efficacy, but possibly the

participants' perceptions of challenge that caused the increase in the beliefs about their abilities.

Another study, done by Zabriskie and McCormick (2003), examined the relationship between family leisure involvement and satisfaction with family life. They found that family leisure involvement was the strongest predictor of family satisfaction from the parent perspective, but not from the child's perspective. Although regular family leisure involvement did have a positive correlation to the youth's perception of family satisfaction, other variables, including history of divorce and gender, had a greater relationship with overall family satisfaction than did family leisure involvement for early adolescent children. The researchers found the positive influence of family leisure on the parents' family satisfaction noteworthy, but also suggested that previous research which had examined only the leisure patterns of married couples and then generalized the findings to the family as a whole may be in error.

As pointed out by Zabriskie and McCormick (2003), interesting concepts can be learned about the influence of recreation through the study of couples, but researchers must be careful in generalizing such findings to the family as a whole. When examining the construct of family functioning, it is thus important to look at the family as an entire system, and not focus solely on the marital subsystem. By including the perspectives and experiences of a variety of family members, a much fuller picture of the family dynamics occurring within the system can be obtained. This richer perspective is important when considering how family recreation influences family functioning, particularly when using a Family Systems framework to understand family functioning.

*Recreation and family functioning.* Hawkes stated that sixty years of family leisure research has found that “family strength or cohesiveness is related to the family’s use of leisure time” (1991, p. 424), and Orthner and Mancini (1991) claimed that “leisure experiences foster system adaptation to new inputs” (p. 297). Referring again to the Circumplex Model, cohesion and adaptability are the two primary components of family functioning. Recent studies have focused on the effects of leisure on family functioning (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003; Hill, Freeman, & Huff, 2001; Smith, Taylor, Hill, & Zabriskie, 2004; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001), and have indicated that family leisure is clearly related to family functioning, and thus stronger families. Although the positive relationship between family leisure and aspects of family functioning is fairly well established, Freeman and Zabriskie (2003) claim that the nature of the relationship is still poorly understood. The Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning has been developed in an effort to clarify this relationship (Zabriskie 2000, 2001; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001).

*Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning.* The Core and Balance Model of Family Functioning elucidates the relationship between family leisure and family functioning. It clarifies how family leisure impacts the different areas of family functioning. According to Iso-Ahola (1984), humans need both stability and change. As described by Kelly (1996, 1999), there are two patterns of leisure that individuals engage in. These two patterns address both the need for constancy and novelty. The Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning combines the two patterns of leisure and their influence on family functioning in the framework of family leisure (see Figure 2).

The model indicates that there are two types of family leisure patterns, core and balance, which families utilize to meet their needs for both stability and change (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). Core leisure patterns are “depicted by activities that are common, everyday, low-cost, relatively accessible, often home-based, and are participated in frequently” (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003, pp. 76-77). Core activities might include activities such as going on a walk together after dinner, playing a board game around the kitchen table, playing catch with a football in the yard, or watching a movie together. These activities usually require little planning or resources. Core activities provide a safe and comfortable environment, in which family closeness can increase.

Balance leisure patterns are more novel experiences, and occur less frequently than core patterns (Zabriskie, 2001). They are usually not home-based, and often require a greater investment time, effort, and resources. Balance activities might include family vacations, special events, and many outdoor recreation activities, such as boating or camping. Balance activities generally require more planning, and are consequently less spontaneous and more formalized than core activities. Since balance activities tend to be more novel and may include an element of unpredictability, family members are often required to be flexible and adapt to new experiences that do not occur in everyday life.

The Core and Balance Model suggests that the family’s need for stability is addressed by core leisure patterns, which provide predictable family experiences that increase family closeness and cohesion. The family’s need for change is met by balance leisure patterns, in which the family is challenged and able to adapt to new circumstances novel experiences. The balance of cohesion and adaptability, according to Olson (1986),



combine to facilitate family functioning. The Core and Balance Model also suggests that families that participate in both core and balance family leisure activities are likely to function better than families who participate in very high or very low amounts of either category (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003).

Studies that have examined this model have found both core and balance leisure patterns to be associated with cohesion (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001; Smith, Taylor, Hill, & Zabriskie, 2004). Although both types of leisure patterns have a high association with cohesion, core activities are more strongly associated with family closeness than balance activities. Regular, structured and familiar family activities apparently aid families in feeling close and unified. Researchers have also found that both core and balance activities are associated with adaptability (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001; Smith, Taylor, Hill, & Zabriskie, 2004). Participating in novel, spontaneous and unpredictable experiences seems to help families achieve flexibility and an openness to and ability to deal with change. The model suggests that as families have both core and balance activities, they will be more likely to experience a higher level of family functioning.

As demonstrated by past research, both family religiosity and family leisure have been found to influence family functioning. However, the influences these areas have had on the family seem to have been studied, for the most part, independently of each other. A few researchers have tied religion and recreation together, and their findings lead us to inquire further into the relationship between a family's religiosity and recreation, and the ensuing influence on the family system as a whole.

#### *Recreation and Religiosity*

The connection between recreation and religiosity is one which has not been examined in much depth, but has been theorized about. Stone (1952) posed the question, “What is the relation of recreation to religion? Both are concerned with things of the spirit. Both are concerned with the good life. Life is not good when social relations leave us unrefreshed. Life is not good when as we get closer together physically, we get farther apart spiritually. Leisure time provides the opportunity for refreshing social relations, and for community of interest, if we are smart enough to use it. There is a re-creational way of living at home, at church, at school, at work, in the community” (p. 7). The closeness of recreation and religion as primary human needs is discussed by Brightbill (1961): “The chain which links the healthful recreational life with the wholesome spiritual life is most evident in their mutual attributes: love and respect for humanity, justice and fair play, truth, faith, hope, and joy, and the fortitude to stand for what we believe to be right. Each of these is what gives buoyancy, purposefulness, zest, and worthwhileness to life. It is the compatibility of the religious and recreation life—this dual dedication to abundant, fruitful, and joyous living for all people—as well as the mutually broad dimensions of these fields, which bind them together so strongly” (p. 99-100). Although the relationship between recreation and religion has been discussed, it has not been examined or empirically tested by many researchers.

Few researchers have performed studies which address both religiosity and recreation. One study, by Golding and Cornish (1987), compared a group of medical students and non-medical students, and found that the medical students had stronger religious beliefs and participated in more physical exercise. The individuals that

participated in more physical exercise also tended to abstain from behaviors such as smoking and drinking, which could have been due to either religious beliefs or the incompatibility of such behaviors with strenuous exercise. The researchers interpreted these findings to mean that the medical students pursued a more “healthy” lifestyle, with the exception that the medical students consumed a significantly greater amount of proprietary medicines. Golding and Cornish (1987) seemed to find both the religious and recreation components in their sample, but did not explore the relationship between the two beyond the fact that both were present in this “healthy” lifestyle.

Russell (1987) also addressed religiosity and recreation. She compared the influence of several activities on life satisfaction, with two of the activities being religiosity and recreation. Although she theorized that recreation participation and recreation satisfaction would be stronger predictors of life satisfaction than all of the other activities, the results indicated that religiosity had a slightly stronger influence on life satisfaction than recreation participation. Satisfaction with recreation had a much greater influence than either religiosity or recreation participation. Russell determined that it was the satisfaction with the recreation activity that impacted the life satisfaction rather than the frequency of involvement. Since religiosity was perhaps measured more in terms of frequency (similar to the recreation participation variable) rather than in terms of satisfaction, the reader was left to question if religiosity may have had more of an influence on life satisfaction if it had been measured differently.

In a similar study, Russell (1990) examined the interrelationships among recreation and other life circumstance variables, two of which were religiosity and quality

of life. The findings indicated that religiosity, sex, education, marital status, and age were significantly related to income, health, recreation activity participation, and recreation satisfaction. However, these variables were not found to influence quality of life directly. The only significant and direct predictor of quality of life was satisfaction with recreation. These results indicate that there is some type of relationship between religiosity and recreation participation and satisfaction, but that relationship remains unclear.

*Recreation, religiosity, and families.* A number of studies have examined families in relation to religiosity and recreation, but religiosity and recreation have merely been considered domains in which the family exists and participates. Ancona (1999) mentioned religion and recreation as being areas of life in which adolescents may struggle. Bagarozzi and Bagarozzi (1982) included religion and recreation in their list of areas in which families face developmental tasks. Knox and Knox (1974) discussed religion and recreation as being areas in which couples considering marriage should discuss their opinions. Landis (1947) talked about religion and recreation as being domains of life in which adjustments would be necessary after marriage. Frank (1953) put forth a list of five areas in life that promote healthy personalities, which included family living, recreation, and religion. These researchers, and others who have done similar work, acknowledge that families are involved in religion and recreation, but fail to explore the effects that these two areas have on the family and its members.

Beyond exploring how religiosity and recreation influence the family as a whole, the question remains about a relationship between a family's religiosity, their recreation,

and their family functioning. To date, no researchers have specifically examined family religiosity, family recreation, and family functioning together. Both family recreation and family religiosity have been found to influence family functioning separately, but the relationship between recreation and religiosity and the influence of the two together has not been examined. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between family recreation and family religiosity and their ensuing impact on family functioning.

## Chapter 3

### Methods

The first problem of this study is to investigate the relationship between a family's perception of their religiosity and their leisure involvement. The second problem of this study is to examine the relationship between religiosity, leisure involvement and family functioning. The conduct of this section will include the following organizational steps: (a) sample, (b) procedures for conducting the study, (c) selection of measurement tools, and (d) treatment of the data.

#### *Sample*

Subjects will be selected using a convenience and snowball sample. Following recommendations by Dollahite, Marks and Goodman (2004), members of multiple faith groups will be examined using the same questions and methods. Four religious faiths will be represented in the study: Judaism, Mormonism, Catholicism, and Protestantism. These four religious groups have been chosen because of the convenience of recruiting participants from these faiths. Although these four religions do not represent all of the major world religions, they are a cross-section of different religions found in the United States. Since the primary focus of this study is not to compare religions, this cross-sectional sample group should be appropriate to represent the religious population as a whole. Fifty families from each faith will be included in the study, totaling 200 families. Respondents will be from various regions of the country, with the majority living in the West and Midwest.

This study will include both parent and youth perspectives, as suggested by Zabriskie and McCormick (2003). One parent and one youth from 50 families (per faith group) will complete the questionnaire. Youth will be children living at home between 12 and 15 years of age. If there is not a child in the family who is in that age range, data will be collected from the parent only. The restricted age range for the youth will be used to enable comparison between these findings and previous samples (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003). It has also been suggested that this age range indicates that the youth have reached the level of cognitive development which includes the abstract thinking process necessary to complete the research instrument, allowing them to comprehend and make sense of the survey questions and how they relate to family life (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2003). Zabriskie and McCormick (2003) also note that children at this age are psychologically beginning to individuate from parents, yet still rely heavily on the secure base of parents and other family members. This study utilizes a family systems perspective by gathering data from both parents and youth. In gathering data from both parents and youth, it is hoped that a more complete picture of family life will be obtained.

### *Procedures*

Volunteers will be recruited by the principle investigator and three colleagues, each being a member of one of the various faith groups included in the study. The principle investigator and colleagues who will be contacting participants will recruit people from their various faith groups covering a wide range of activity and participation in their various faith communities, thus providing a broad range and level of religiosity in the sample. A card or email will be given to each volunteer with a short paragraph

including instructions and a three-digit code. The card/email will refer participants to an online questionnaire. The parent or youth who is recruited will be asked to contact their youth or parent, respectively, and give them the URL address for the questionnaire and the three-digit code. Before taking the questionnaire, both the parent and the youth will enter the three-digit code, thereby linking their two questionnaires. On the website, an introductory paragraph will explain that participation is voluntary, that terminating participation at any time is allowed, and that completion of the questionnaire is considered to indicate consent to participation in the study. The introductory paragraph will also inform the participant that information is completely confidential, since their names will not appear on the questionnaire. Completed questionnaires will automatically be emailed to the principle investigator. The principle investigator will follow-up with participants four times after the original email with the link to the survey: another email including the link to the survey, a short email reminder, a hand-written postcard with the survey's web address, a third email including the survey link, and one last email reminder.

#### *Instrumentation*

The research questionnaire will include three instruments: (a) Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales (FACES II); (b) Family Leisure Activity Profile (FLAP); and (c) Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire. Relevant sociodemographic questions will also be included on the parents' survey.

*Family functioning.* FACES II (Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, & Wilson, 1992) will be used to measure family functioning. FACES II is an instrument



based on the Family System Circumplex Model (Olson, 1986). It measures perceptions of family cohesion and adaptability and calculates an overall indicator of family functioning. It includes two scales, with 16 cohesion items and 14 adaptability items, for a total of 30 items. The instrument asks the respondent to indicate how frequently (on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being almost never and 5 being always) the described behavior occurs in his or her family. For example, one item states, "Family members are supportive of each other during difficult times." The respondent would then indicate how often this occurs in his or her family.

Cohesion and adaptability scores will be calculated by following a formula provided by Olson et al. (1992), which adds and subtracts item scores based on its positive or negative reference. This calculation provides a total perceived family cohesion score and a total perceived family adaptability score. Once cohesion and adaptability scores are obtained, a corresponding 1-8 value based on Olson et al.'s (1992) linear scoring interpretation scale will be assigned. These two scores will then be averaged to obtain the family type score, which will be used as an indicator of overall family functioning. To get a more complete picture of the family system, a family perspective score will be calculated by determining the mean of the parent and youth scores for cohesion, adaptability, and overall family functioning. FACES II has demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties in terms of internal consistency, test-retest reliability, face validity, content validity, and concurrent validity. Olsen et al. (1992) has reported internal consistency for the instrument, showing Cronbach Alpha figures of .88 and .86 for cohesion, and .78 and .79 for adaptability.

*Family recreation.* The FLAP (Zabriskie, 2001) will be used to measure family leisure involvement. It is based on the Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). It measures two types of family leisure patterns, core and balance. The FLAP includes 16 questions, 8 of which measure core family leisure patterns, and 8 which measure balance family leisure patterns. Each question asks if the respondent participates in the activity with his or her family. If the answer is yes, the respondent estimates how often that activity is participated in, the duration of participation in the activity, and how satisfied he or she is with that participation with family members.

To calculate scores for the FLAP, the ordinal indicators of frequency and duration in each category will be multiplied. The core categories will then be summed to produce a core family leisure index, and the balance categories will be summed to produce a balance family leisure index. Total family leisure involvement will be calculated by summing the core and balance scores. To get a more complete picture of the leisure a family is involved in, a family leisure score will be calculated by determining the mean of the parent and youth scores for core, balance, and total family leisure involvement (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003). The FLAP has demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties in terms of construct validity, content validity, inter-rater reliability, and test-retest reliability for core ( $r = .74$ ), balance ( $r = .78$ ), and total family leisure involvement ( $r = .78$ ) (Freeman & Zabriskie, 2003).

*Family religiosity.* The Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire (Mahoney, Pargament, Jewell, Swank, Scott, & Emery, 1999) will be used to measure family

religiosity. The 13-item questionnaire assesses how often people engage in religious or spiritual activities together. A 7-point scale is used, with 1 indicating never, 7 meaning very often, and the midpoint of 4 indicating sometimes. The 13 items cover informal activities, such as praying together and discussing spiritual issues, as well as more formal or traditional religious practices, such as attending church together or celebrating religious holidays together. The original instrument was formulated to assess religiosity in a married couple, so the researcher has made some minor modifications in wording (with the author's permission) to adapt the questionnaire to be used to measure religiosity in a family. For example, the item that previously read, "My spouse and I pray together," has been changed to, "My family and I pray together."

The score for the Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire is calculated by summing the ratings for items to create a total score (Mahoney et al., 1999). As will be done with the scores from FACES II and the FLAP, a mean will be calculated from the parent and youth scores to obtain a family perspective score of family religiosity. Since Cronbach Alpha figures have not been reported for this instrument, these will be calculated with data collected in this study.

A series of sociodemographic questions will be included to identify underlying characteristics of the sample. Items will include age, gender, and ethnicity of all family members, current marital status, history of divorce, family size, relationship of parents to all children (i.e. biological, step-parent, adoptive parent), annual family income, state of residence, population of place residing (urban or rural), religious affiliation, religious

affiliation of spouse, and religious affiliation(s) of children. Demographic variables will be used as controlling factors, and continuous variables will be included as covariates.

### *Analysis*

Data will be analyzed using the statistical package SAS. The researcher will first review the data collected for any missing responses. The next step will be an examination of the data for any outliers. Descriptive statistics will be generated to examine the underlying characteristics of the research variables. Pearson Product Moment zero-order correlations between the independent variables of religiosity, family leisure, and other demographic variables will then be calculated and examined to check for multicollinearity. Sociodemographic variables will be examined for correlations with the dependent variables to identify possible controlling factors that could be included in the analysis of covariance.

Analysis of covariance will be used to analyze this data. For hypothesis one, examining the relationship between family leisure and family religiosity, an analysis of covariance will be performed to see if the dependent variable of a family's level of leisure involvement has a relationship with the independent variable of their perception of family religiosity, after adjusting for demographic variables. The independent variables will be the religiosity score, as well as the demographic variables. The demographics will be categorized as continuous or categorical variables. Continuous variables will include age and income. Categorical variables will consist of gender, ethnicity, marital status, history of divorce, family size, relationship between parents and children, state of

residence, population of state of residence (rural or urban), and religious affiliation(s) of self and all family members.

Hypothesis two addresses the relationships between both religiosity and leisure with family functioning. Another analysis of covariance will be performed, with family functioning being the dependent variable. The independent variables will be the religiosity score, family leisure involvement, and the demographic variables.

The multiple correlation coefficients will be examined for each analyses and an alpha level of .05 will be utilized to determine significance. Additional examination of the standardized regression coefficients (Beta) will be used as necessary to examine the relative contribution of each variable.

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Figure 1

*Family Circumplex Model (Olson, 2003)*

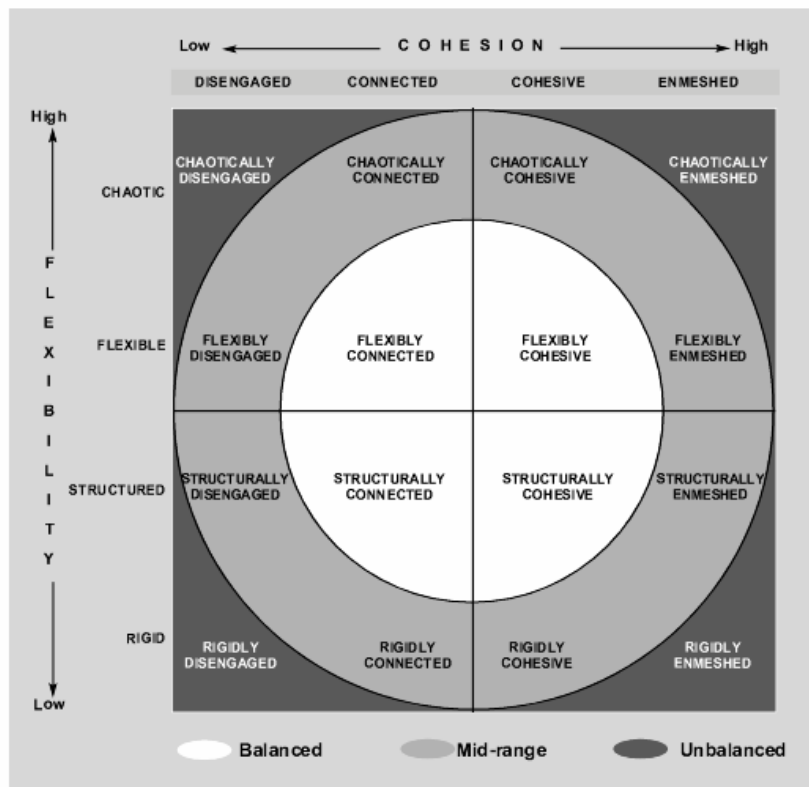
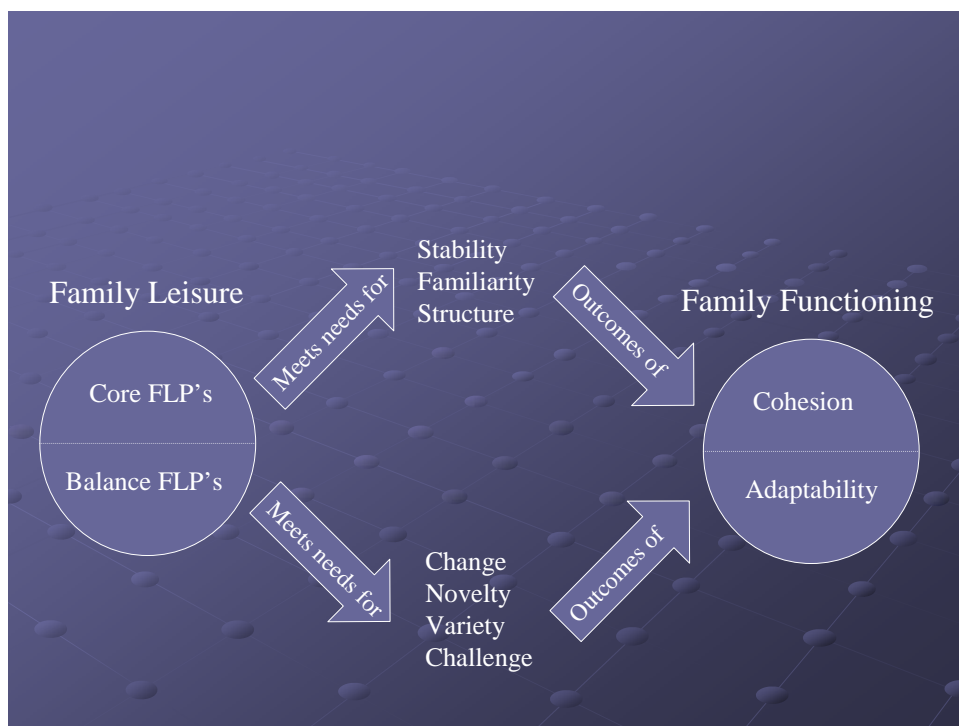


Figure 2

*Core and Balance Model of Family Leisure Functioning (Zabriskie, 2001)*



Appendix A-1  
Informed Consent

### Consent to be a Research Subject

Thank you for participating in our research! Your participation is greatly appreciated. Please complete the following questionnaire. This questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to answer. The intent of this study is to examine recreation involvement in families. Results may benefit families through a better understanding of the relationship between family recreation and strong families. There are no known risks for participation in this study. Participation is optional and completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty or you may choose to refuse to participate entirely. There will be no reference to your identification at any point in the research. If you have questions regarding this study please contact Dr. Ramon Zabriskie at (801)422-1667. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant please contact Dr. Renea Beckstrand, Chair of the Institutional Review Board of Human Subjects at Brigham Young University. (422 SWKT, BYU, Provo, UT 84602; phone (801)422-3873; email [renea\\_beckstrand@byu.edu](mailto:renea_beckstrand@byu.edu)) By completing this questionnaire your consent to participate is implied. Again, thank you for your help!

Appendix A-1b

Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales

(\*\*The youth questionnaire contained all of this except for the demographic section. They were only asked for their age and gender\*\*)

Please answer the following questions in reference to your family currently. Please be as open and honest as possible. All responses are strictly confidential.

Use the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Almost never	Once in awhile	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost always

### Describe your family:

- 1. Family members are supportive of each other during difficult times.
- 2. In our family, it is easy for everyone to express his/her opinion.
- 3. It is easier to discuss problems with people outside the family than with other family members.
- 4. Each family member has input regarding major family decisions.
- 5. Our family gathers together in the same room.
- 6. Children have a say in their discipline.
- 7. Our family does things together.
- 8. Family members discuss problems and feel good about the solutions.
- 9. In our family, everyone goes his/her own way.
- 10. We shift household responsibilities from person to person.
- 11. Family members know each other's close friends.
- 12. It is hard to know what the rules are in our family.
- 13. Family members consult other family members on personal decisions.
- 14. Family members say what they want.
- 15. We have difficulty thinking of things to do as a family.
- 16. In solving problems, the children's suggestions are followed.
- 17. Family members feel very close to each other.
- 18. Discipline is fair in our family.
- 19. Family members feel closer to people outside the family than to other family members.
- 20. Our family tries new ways of dealing with problems.
- 21. Family members go along with what the family decides to do.
- 22. In our family, everyone shares responsibilities.
- 23. Family members like to spend their free time with each other.
- 24. It is difficult to get a rule changed in our family.
- 25. Family members avoid each other at home.
- 26. When problems arise, we compromise.
- 27. We approve of each other's friends.
- 28. Family members are afraid to say what is on their minds.
- 29. Family members pair up rather than do things as a total family.
- 30. Family members share interests and hobbies with each other.



Appendix A-1c  
Family Leisure Activity Profile

### Family Leisure Activity Profile

The following questions ask about the activities you do with family members. Please refer to the last year or so. These questions ask about groups of activities, so try to answer in terms of the group as opposed to any one specific example. This may require you to “average” over a few different activities. Don’t worry about getting it exactly “right.” Just give your best estimate.

Take a moment to look at the example below. This will give you some instruction on how to fill in your answers.

QUESTION: Do you participate in home-based activities (for example watching TV/videos, listening to music, reading books, singing, etc.) with family members?

First do you do these activities? → YES X NO \_\_\_

If YES how often?	
At least daily	
At least weekly	x
At least monthly	
At least annually	

For about how long per time? (check only one)					
< 1 hour		1-2 hrs		2-3 hours	x
<u>3-4 hours</u>		4-5 hours		5-6 hours	
6-7 hours		7-8 hours		8-9 hours	
9-10 hours		>10 hours		> 1 day	

Next, how often do you usually do these activities?

Then, about how long, on average, do you typically do this type of activity each time you do it?

Last, how satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities? Please answer this question EVEN IF YOU DO NOT do these activities with your family.

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities? (please circle one)

Very Dissatisfied 1      2      3      4      5      Very Satisfied

## Symbol Key

&lt; = less than (e.g. &lt; 1 hour reads “less than one hour”)

&gt; = more than (e.g. &gt; 10 hours reads “ more than ten hours”)

1. Do you have meals, at home, with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

If YES how often?		For about how long per time? (check only one)					
At least daily	<input type="checkbox"/>	< 1 hour	<input type="checkbox"/>	1-2 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/>	2-3 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	3-4 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	4-5 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	5-6hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>						
At least annually	<input type="checkbox"/>						

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very Dissatisfied						Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5		

2. Do you participate in home-based activities (for example watching TV/videos, listening to music, reading books, singing, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

If YES how often?		For about how long per time? (check only one)					
At least daily	<input type="checkbox"/>	< 1 hour	<input type="checkbox"/>	1-2 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/>	2-3 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	3-4 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	4-5 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	5-6hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>	6-7 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	7-8 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	8-9 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least annually	<input type="checkbox"/>	9-10 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	>10 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	> 1 day	<input type="checkbox"/>

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very Dissatisfied						Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5		

3. Do you participate in games (for example playing cards, board games, video games, darts, billiards, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

If YES how often?	For about how long per time? (check only one)		
At least daily	< 1 hour	1-2 hrs	2-3 hours
At least weekly	3-4 hours	4-5 hours	5-6hours
At least monthly	6-7 hours	7-8 hours	8-9 hours
At least annually	9-10 hours	>10 hours	> 1 day

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very  
Dissatisfied

1

2

3

4

Very  
Satisfied

5

4. Do you participate in crafts, cooking, and/or hobbies (for example drawing, scrap books, baking cookies, sewing, painting, ceramics, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

If YES how often?	For about how long per time? (check only one)		
At least daily	< 1 hour	1-2 hrs	2-3 hours
At least weekly	3-4 hours	4-5 hours	5-6hours
At least monthly	6-7 hours	7-8 hours	8-9 hours
At least annually	9-10 hours	>10 hours	> 1 day

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very  
Dissatisfied

1

2

3

4

Very  
Satisfied

5

5. Do you participate in home-based outdoor activities (for example star gazing, gardening, yard work, playing with pets, walks, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

If YES how often?	
At least daily	
At least weekly	
At least monthly	
At least annually	

➔

For about how long per time? (check only one)			
< 1 hour	1-2 hrs	2-3 hours	
3-4 hours	4-5 hours	5-6hours	
6-7 hours	7-8 hours	8-9 hours	
9-10 hours	>10 hours	> 1 day	

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very  
Dissatisfied

1

2

3

4

Very  
Satisfied

5

---

6. Do you participate in home-based sport/games activities (for example playing catch, shooting baskets, frisbee, bike rides, fitness activities, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

If YES how often?	
At least daily	
At least weekly	
At least monthly	
At least annually	

➔

For about how long per time? (check only one)			
< 1 hour	1-2 hrs	2-3 hours	
3-4 hours	4-5 hours	5-6hours	
6-7 hours	7-8 hours	8-9 hours	
9-10 hours	>10 hours	> 1 day	

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very  
Dissatisfied

1

2

3

4

Very  
Satisfied

5

7. Do you attend other family members' activities (for example watching or leading their sporting events, musical performances, scouts, etc.)?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

If YES how often?	
At least daily	
At least weekly	
At least monthly	
At least annually	



For about how long per time? (check only one)					
< 1 hour		1-2 hrs		2-3 hours	
3-4 hours		4-5 hours		5-6hours	
6-7 hours		7-8 hours		8-9 hours	
9-10 hours		>10 hours		> 1 day	

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very  
Dissatisfied

1

2

3

4

Very  
Satisfied

5

8. Do you participate in religious/spiritual activities (for example going to church activities, worshipping, scripture reading, Sunday school, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_

If YES how often?		For about how long per time? (check only one)					
At least daily		< 1 hour		1-2 hrs		2-3 hours	
At least weekly		3-4 hours		4-5 hours		5-6hours	
At least monthly		6-7 hours		7-8 hours		8-9 hours	
At least annually		9-10 hours		>10 hours		> 1 day	

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very Dissatisfied
Very Satisfied

1
2
3
4
5

9. Do you participate in community-based social activities (for example going to restaurants, parties, shopping, visiting friends/ neighbors, picnics, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_

If YES how often?		For about how long per time? (check only one)					
At least daily		< 1 hour		1-2 hrs		2-3 hours	
At least weekly		3-4 hours		4-5 hours		5-6hours	
At least monthly		6-7 hours		7-8 hours		8-9 hours	
At least annually		9-10 hours		>10 hours		> 1 day	

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very Dissatisfied
Very Satisfied

1
2
3
4
5

10. Do you participate in spectator activities (for example going to movies, sporting events, concerts, plays or theatrical performances, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_

If YES how often?		For about how long per time? (check only one)					
At least daily		< 1 hour		1-2 hrs		2-3 hours	

At least weekly		3-4 hours		4-5 hours		5-6hours	
At least monthly		6-7 hours		7-8 hours		8-9 hours	
At least annually		9-10 hours		>10 hours		> 1 day	

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very Dissatisfied Very Satisfied  
 1 2 3 4 5

11. Do you participate in community-based sporting activities (for example bowling, golf, swimming, skating, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

If YES how often?		For about how long per time? (check only one)					
At least daily		< 1 hour		1-2 hrs		2-3 hours	
At least weekly		3-4 hours		4-5 hours		5-6hours	
At least monthly		6-7 hours		7-8 hours		8-9 hours	
At least annually		9-10 hours		>10 hours		> 1 day	

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very Dissatisfied Very Satisfied  
 1 2 3 4 5

12. Do you participate in community-based special events (for example visiting museums, zoos, theme parks, fairs, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

If YES how often?		For about how long per time? (check only one)					
At least daily		< 1 hour		1-2 hrs		2-3 hours	
At least weekly		3-4 hours		4-5 hours		5-6hours	
At least monthly		6-7 hours		7-8 hours		8-9 hours	
At least annually		9-10 hours		>10 hours			
		1 day		8 days		15 days	
		2 days		9 days		16 days	
		3 days		10 days		17 days	



4 days		11 days		18 days	
5 days		12 days		19 days	
6 days		13 days		20 days	
One week		Two weeks		3 or more weeks	

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very  
Dissatisfied

1

2

3

4

Very  
Satisfied

5

13. Do you participate in outdoor activities (for example camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

If YES how often?	
At least daily	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least annually	<input type="checkbox"/>



For about how long per time? (check only one)			
< 1 hour	<input type="checkbox"/>	1-2 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/>
2-3 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	4-5 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
3-4 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	5-6hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
6-7 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	7-8 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
8-9 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
9-10 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	>10 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 day	<input type="checkbox"/>	8 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	15 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	16 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	17 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	18 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	19 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
One week	<input type="checkbox"/>	20 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Two weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	3 or more weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very Dissatisfied					Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5	

---

14. Do you participate in water-based activities (for example water skiing, jet skiing, boating, sailing, canoeing, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

If YES how often?	
At least daily	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least monthly (during season)	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least annually	<input type="checkbox"/>



For about how long per time? (check only one)			
< 1 hour	<input type="checkbox"/>	1-2 hrs	<input type="checkbox"/>
2-3 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	4-5 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
3-4 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	5-6hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
6-7 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	7-8 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
8-9 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
9-10 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	>10 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 day	<input type="checkbox"/>	8 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	15 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	16 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	17 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	18 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 days	<input type="checkbox"/>	19 days	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	20 days	<input type="checkbox"/>

One week		Two weeks		3 or more weeks	
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How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very Dissatisfied  Very Satisfied  
 1  2  3  4  5

15. Do you participate in outdoor adventure activities (for example rock climbing, river rafting, off-road vehicles, scuba diving, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

If YES how often?	
At least daily	
At least weekly	
At least monthly	
At least annually	

For about how long per time? (check only one)					
< 1 hour		1-2 hrs		2-3 hours	
3-4 hours		4-5 hours		5-6hours	
6-7 hours		7-8 hours		8-9 hours	
9-10 hours		>10 hours			
1 day		8 days		15 days	
2 days		9 days		16 days	
3 days		10 days		17 days	
4 days		11 days		18 days	
5 days		12 days		19 days	
6 days		13 days		20 days	
One week		Two weeks		3 or more weeks	

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very Dissatisfied  Very Satisfied  
 1  2  3  4  5

16. Do you participate in tourism activities (for example family vacations, traveling, visiting historic sites, visiting state/national parks, etc.) with family members?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

If YES how often?	
At least daily	
At least weekly	

For about how long per time? (check only one)					
< 1 hour		1-2 hrs		2-3 hours	
3-4 hours		4-5 hours		5-6hours	

At least monthly		6-7 hours		7-8 hours		8-9 hours	
At least annually		9-10 hours		>10 hours			
		1 day		8 days		15 days	
		2 days		9 days		16 days	
		3 days		10 days		17 days	
		4 days		11 days		18 days	
		5 days		12 days		19 days	
		6 days		13 days		20 days	
		One week		Two weeks		3 or more weeks	

How satisfied are you with your participation with family members in these activities?  
(please circle one)

Very Dissatisfied						Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5		

Below are seven statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by circling the appropriate number on the line following that item. Please be open and honest in responding.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	strongly disagree	Disagree	slightly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree
1. In most ways my family life is close to ideal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. The conditions of my family life are excellent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I am satisfied with my family life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in my family life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. If I could live my family life over, I would change almost nothing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Family leisure activities are an important part of our family life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Family leisure adds to the quality of my family life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix A-1d

Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire

## Joint Religious Activities Questionnaire

Directions: Please indicate how often you and your family do each of the following:

1. My family and I pray together.
2. My family and I pray for each other.
3. My family and I talk together about how to live out God's will.
4. My family and I talk together about our personal moral and spiritual issues.
5. My family and I attend church together.
6. My family and I go to religious education classes together.
7. My family and I go on spiritual or religious retreats together.
8. My family and I read books or articles about religious or spiritual topics.
9. My family and I participate in volunteer work through our religious organization.
10. My family and I talk about God's role in our family.
11. My family and I celebrate religious holidays together.
12. My family and I engage in religious rituals together (e.g., fasting, meditation).

Never

Sometimes

Very Often

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Appendix A-1e  
Sociodemographic Questions

**The following section asks some general questions about you and your family.**

Please complete the following on your **current** family. In addition, please indicate your relationship to each child in your family.

	Age	Sex	Ethnic Background	Lives in your home	Religious affiliation	Your relationship to Child
	In Years	M or F	A = Asian P = Pacific Islander B = Black not Hispanic H = Hispanic N = Native American W = White, not Hispanic	Yes or No	J = Judaism C = Catholicism E = Episcopalianism M = Mormonism O = Other ( <i>please indicate</i> )	B = Birth Parent A = Adoptive Parent S = Step-Parent F = Foster Parent P = Partner of child's birth, adoptive, or step-parent L = Legal Guardian
You						
Your spouse						
Child						
Child						
Child						
Child						
Child						
Child						
Child						

Marital status—Check all that apply to you **currently**:

- Single—Never married  
 Married—If yes, how many years to current spouse? \_\_\_\_\_ (in years)  
 Unmarried—Living with partner \_\_\_\_\_ (in years)  
 Separated—If yes, how long have you been separated? \_\_\_\_\_ (in years)  
 Divorced—If yes, how long have you been divorced? \_\_\_\_\_ (in years)  
 Widowed—If yes, how long have you been widowed? \_\_\_\_\_ (in years)  
 Other—Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Have you **ever** been divorced? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you have been divorced more than once, how many times have you been divorced? \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate the estimated **annual** income for your family.

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 40,000 – 49,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 80,000 – 99,999   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10,000 – 19,999    | <input type="checkbox"/> 50,000 – 59,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 100,000 – 124,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20,000 – 29,999    | <input type="checkbox"/> 60,000 – 69,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 125,000 – 150,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30,000 – 39,999    | <input type="checkbox"/> 70,000 – 79,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> Over \$150,000    |

State currently living in \_\_\_\_\_

Population of your place of residency: *Please mark one*

Urban/Suburban (more than 50,000)

Rural (less than 50,000)

**Thank you for your time and effort!**