Informed Consent

Investigator(s): Kimya Rezai

Study Title: The Relationship between Religious Practices and an Individual's Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic

I am a student at The Chicago School. This study is being conducted as a part of my dissertation requirement for The Chicago School.

I am asking you to participate in a research study that will examine the benefits of religious practices on mental health during COVID-19. You will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which will take 15-20 minutes to complete. This may cause loss of confidentiality, invasion of privacy, and emotional distress or upset. Although you may not benefit, it will help to understand the impact of religious practices during times of global adversity.

Please take your time to read the entire document and feel free to ask any questions before agreeing to participate.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to understand whether there is a connection between religious practices and mental health when experiencing pandemic-related stressors throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Procedures: The participants will be asked to open an online link to lead them to the survey containing a complete demographic questionnaire and four questionnaires mentioned above (ROS, PHQ-9, GAD-7, and PSS-10-C). The link to the survey on SurveyMonkey will be posted online on SurveyMonkey's survey platform and Reddit. The demographic questionnaire, the ROS, the PHQ-9, GAD-7, and PSS-10-C will roughly take about 15-20 minutes to complete. Upon completion of the survey, participants will be directed to a debriefing page that will thank them for completing the survey. This page will explain the study and its purpose and provide the contact information of the investigator, the chair of the investigator, and the IRB's contact information in case questions arise.

Risks to Participants: The risks of study participation are loss of confidentiality, emotional distress or upset, and invasion of privacy. To minimize the risk of invasion of privacy or emotional distress, participants will have the option to skip any questions they find too upsetting or private and can quit the survey at any time. Additionally, access to data will be strictly limited to authorized personnel, and all records will be stored in a secure, password-protected database.

Benefits to Participants: You will not benefit from this study. However, the information obtained from this study may benefit future mental health practitioners in understanding the impact of religious practices during times of global adversity.

Alternatives to Participation: Participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw from study participation at any time without any penalty.

Confidentiality: During this study, information will be collected about you for the purpose of this research. This includes your age range, gender, ethnicity, marital status, income, and religious affiliation. All information received will remain in the primary investigator's password-protected computer and will also be uploaded to a secure cloud storage platform, Microsoft OneDrive, linked to the investigator's school account, which has encryption and access controls. An IP address will not be collected. All data will be deleted from SurveyMonkey immediately after it is transferred out. Data will also be presented in aggregated form, preventing the identification of individual participants and instead showing group trends. Per American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines, research materials will be kept for a minimum of five years after publication.

It is possible that your data may be used for future research or distributed to another researcher without your consent. However, information that could identify you will be removed.

Your research records may be reviewed by federal agencies whose responsibility is to protect human subjects participating in research, including the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) and by representatives from The Chicago School Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees research.

Questions/Concerns: If you have questions related to the procedures described in this document please contact: Kimya Rezai, PsyD Doctoral Candidate krezai@ego.thechicagoschool.edu or Beatriz Lopez PhD, Dissertation Chair, blopez@thechicagoschool.edu

If you have questions concerning your rights in this research study you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB), which is concerned with the protection of subjects in research projects. You may reach the IRB office Monday-Friday by calling 312.467.2335 or writing: Institutional Review Board, The Chicago School, 325 N. Wells, Chicago, Illinois, 60654.

Consent to Participate in Research:
I have read the above information and have received satisfactory answers to my questions. I understand the research project, and the procedures involved have been explained to me. I agree to participate in this study. My participation is voluntary, and I do not have to submit this form if I do not want to be part of this research project. I may print out a copy of this consent form for my own records.

Participant:

Clicking below indicates that I have read the description of the study, and I agree to participate in the study.

Back at the survey tab, choose which option to indicate that I have read the description of the study, and I agree to participate in the study.