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## Mental Health, Religion & Culture >

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# Relationship between church attendance and mental health among Mormons and non-Mormons in Utah

Ray M. Merrill & Richard D. Salazar

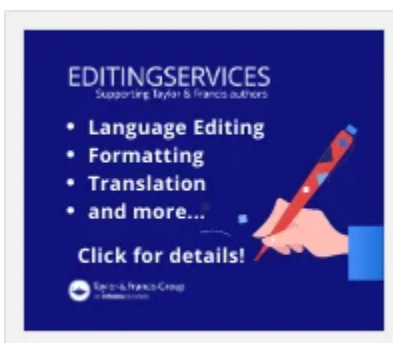
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A prevention model was applied to assess the protective effect of religion and church attendance against mental illness among respondents to the 1996 Utah Health Status Survey. Compared to Mormons that attend church weekly (active), less active Mormons, less active non-Mormons, and those with no religious preference, because of emotional problems, are at increased risk of accomplishing less than desired (model 1); having trouble doing work or other activities as carefully as desired (model 2); and seeking professional help (model 3). After adjusting for alcohol and tobacco use, education, income, physical activity, general health status, employment, body mass index, gender and age, only less active Mormons and those with no religious preference remained at significantly increased risk in model 3. Self-reported health status was the strongest predictor of mental health in each model. Active Mormons reported having the best health status and, consequently, the lowest levels of mental illness.

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