

Beliefs About Faith and Work: Development and Validation of Honoring God and Prosperity Gospel Scales

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Abstract Disputes over the connection between beliefs and behaviors, coupled with the relative paucity of survey measures of specific theological beliefs related to work and its association with financial success, motivated the development of two beliefs scales: beliefs about work as a means to honor God and beliefs about God promising prosperity for believers. Analyses demonstrated these two scales to be distinct from one another and reliable. Using a national sample of over 1,000 working adults, we assessed the relationship of the specific belief scales to Lynn et al.'s (J Bus Ethics 85(2):227–241, 2009) faith at work scale, Mirels and Garrett's (J Consul Clin Psychol 36(1):40–44, 1971) Protestant Work Ethic scale, two personality scales (Conscientiousness and Neuroticism), entrepreneurial behavior, helping behavior, and religious tradition. Results indicate convergent and divergent validity and demonstrate the potential utility of these beliefs scales for predicting work-related attitudes and practices.

Keywords Religious beliefs · Scale development · Prosperity gospel · Work

Introduction

“We humans are believers at our core,” states Christian Smith (2003: 58). Humans, as self-conscious beings, attempt to align themselves with some objective moral order, he contends. Therein he finds the foundational motivation for human action. Humans reside within larger normative systems that provide a shared story guiding human life. “It is by finding ourselves placed within a particular drama that we

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come to know our role, our part, our lines in life—how we are to act, why, and what meaning that has in a larger scheme of reality” (Smith 2003: 78). For many, the guiding storyline comes from religion.

Others see a more dubious relationship between religious beliefs and behaviors. Assuming religious beliefs to be congruent with behavior represents a religious congruence fallacy, according to Chaves (2010). In his critique of the persistent and problematic impulses toward religious congruence, Chaves (2010) points to the tribal rainmaker who refuses to dance for rain during the dry season and the agnostic divinity student who decides to practice as a minister of the church as examples of incongruence. These anecdotes are described as but the tip of the iceberg of empirical evidence that finds incongruence more often than congruence (Chaves 2010).

Vaisey (2009) attempts to account for proposed incongruences by creating a dual process model of cognition, in which beliefs act as both a source of motivation and justification for the actor. Vaisey theorizes that actors are driven by internalized processes or beliefs on the subconscious level, but that actors are also capable of justification and deliberation on the conscious level, leading to perceived incongruence between beliefs and action. The rarity of finding support for congruence between beliefs and actions resulted in a call for the abandonment of studying beliefs in favor of practices (e.g., Lichterman 2008; Neitz 2004; Palmer and Steadman 2004). We propose that the pendulum has swung too far and there is room for a middle ground of exploration that includes the investigation of specific religious beliefs through surveys, in particular beliefs related to an individual’s work.

Beliefs and Work Behavior

Despite arguments to the contrary, there is evidence of beliefs relating to behavior in the study of religion as well as in related fields. For example, a belief in free will is related to lower levels of conformity in judgments and behaviors (Alquist et al. 2013). Likewise, Ellison and McFarland (2011) found that belief in biblical inerrancy reduces the likelihood of gambling. As they argue, a strict interpretation of the Bible is likely associated with adherence to particular injunctions regarding greed and irresponsible use of money. Research using implicit person theories, which pertain to beliefs about human nature, demonstrates a similar connection between beliefs and behaviors in work contexts. Managers’ beliefs about the nature of others are associated with managers’ coaching behavior with employees (Heslin et al. 2006). Many studies like these continue to emerge showing direct and indirect effects of religious beliefs on a variety of behavioral outcomes such as physical activity (Benjamins 2012) as well as civic engagement, political participation, and consumer behavior (Driskell and Lyon 2011).

Though a century ago Weber (1904–1905/1992) argued that specific beliefs within Protestantism were linked to work productivity and entrepreneurialism in the Western context, surprisingly little research until recently has investigated the potential effects of belief on work outcomes. The purpose of this research was to

develop and test theologically informed belief scales that have particular relevance to work and work-related behavior. Our assumptions guiding this research are as follows: (1) beliefs can help explain behaviors, but they are not the sole or, even perhaps, the dominant influence on behavior; and (2) beliefs, if narrowly defined and theoretically relevant, are most helpful to explain behavior.

Beliefs are but one factor influencing behavior. To believe otherwise would be to ignore the foundational understanding in social psychological research that the situation influences behavior (e.g., Hitlin 2008; Simpson and Willer 2008; Swidler 2000; Trevino 1986). To exclude beliefs as a potential contributor to behavior would take this assertion too far, but to suggest that beliefs overrule the situation in all cases also would be too extreme. Within the realm of work contexts, the beliefs of interest in this study are proposed to influence behavior that is subject to both situational and personal influences. Moreover, beliefs are but one of many personal influences that include but are not limited to cognitive schemas, emotions, and dispositions.

Our assertion that specific beliefs can better predict behavior than general scales is based upon research that suggests that what is measured is particularly important in drawing conclusions about associations between variables (Weaver and Agle 2002). We argue that more specific measures of distinct variables provide different and more meaningful insights than general measures. Weaver and Agle (2002) concluded that inconsistent or weak results in research connecting religion and ethical behavior were often due to a lack of specificity. “A failure to discover clear connections between religiosity and ethical behavior in organizations may merely reflect failure to examine religious role expectations in sufficient detail” (Weaver and Agle 2002: 85). The need for specificity is readily apparent in early research of religious orientation by Allport and Ross (1967). They found that relationships with discriminatory attitudes differed based on whether they used general pro-religious orientation or the more specific extrinsic and intrinsic orientations. By defining religious orientation with more specificity they were able to determine that an intrinsic motivation was less discriminatory than an extrinsic orientation or a general religious sentiment (Allport and Ross 1967). In the psychological literature, one clear example of the utility of specificity comes from research on self-efficacy. Broad measures of self-efficacy that assess an individual’s overall confidence level in performing a variety of tasks can predict job performance, but task-specific measures of self-efficacy are better predictors of task performance (e.g., Yeo and Neal 2006).

In this research, we describe the development of two specific beliefs scales for surveys that we assert have the potential to help explain work-related behavior and will have utility over more general religious belief measures.

Review of Commonly Used Scales

In survey research, there is a relative paucity of measures of specific theological beliefs related to work that hold potential for explaining work behavior. There are a number of measures of religious beliefs or motivations, but these have tended to be

general and lack clear connections to work. With a few exceptions, most scales assessing religion and spirituality are not directly relevant to the workplace and lack validity in predicting workplace outcomes (Miller and Ewest 2011). For those that have been contextualized to relate to work, their assessment of beliefs is broad and sometimes includes experience. Before presenting two specific theological beliefs associated with work, we briefly review important exemplars of religious belief scales and faith and work scales to demonstrate the need for additional measures to address this lacuna in survey research.

Religious Belief Scales

The most commonly used religious belief scales share a tendency toward measuring general motivations or generic beliefs. Religious Orientation scales by Allport and Ross (1967) delineate between extrinsic and intrinsic motivations; yet these distinctions focus on underlying motivations that are broad and lack clear transference to other contexts (see Carpenter and Marshall 2009; Flere 2007; Ghorbani and Watson 2006; Neyrinck et al. 2010; Ysseldyk et al. 2011). Hoge (1972) built off the work of Allport and Ross to develop a unidimensional measure of the centrality and motivational influence of faith in his Intrinsic Religious Motivation. The scale has been used to assess general religious motivations but not as these motivation apply to work settings (see Abdel-Khalek 2007; Clements 1998; Hathaway and Pargament 1990; Hoge and Carroll 1973; King et al. 2001).

Allport's (1950) description of religious maturity also stimulated the development of a measure of being open to and continuously seeking new truths that eventually came to be known as the Quest Scale (Batson and Ventis 1982). In response to concerns about Batson and Ventis's scale, Dudley and Cruise (1990) created a Religious Maturity Scale that assessed adhering to a religious faith while maintaining a psychological state high in openness and low in dogmatism. Like Batson and Ventis's scale however, the Religious Maturity Scale measures general beliefs without theoretical associations to work (see Cole and Wortham 2000; Ryckman et al. 2004; Schludermann et al. 2001; Williamson and Sandage 2009). Other scales were developed to measure spirituality or spiritual well-being (Ellison 1983; Fetzer Institute 1999; Gorsuch and Miller 1999) in a personal sense or in relation to others, yet these too were general and lack direct relevance to work.

McFarland (1989) added to the previous scales a measure of fundamentalism that focused on behavior adherence to the perfect and authoritative core tenants of the Bible. The addition of fundamentalism was intended to identify a more discrete or specific aspect of intrinsic motivation and was demonstrated to have different relationships with discriminatory attitudes than the more general measures (for its use in subsequent research see Fulton et al. 1999; Hunsberger 1995; Kirkpatrick 1993; McFarland and Warren 1992). Sorenson's (1981) development of Calvinist and Armenian theology scales were specific, but not contextualized. The work of McFarland and Sorenson identified and measured more specific beliefs than are typically assessed, but without relevance to the domain of work.

Faith and Work Scales

There are a handful of scales that assess specific beliefs relevant to work. One prominent example is Mirels and Garret's (1971) Protestant Work Ethic (PWE) scale. The PWE includes beliefs about leisure, hard work, character, and asceticism that have been linked to hard work (Poulton and Ng 1988) and lower levels of social loafing behavior (Smrt and Karau 2011). Once again, as measured, these beliefs are not explicitly linked to the spiritual moorings that were theorized to inform these beliefs. Ashmos and Duchon (2000) developed a multi-dimension scale examining spirituality at the individual, work unit, and organizational levels. Although overall their items are helpful measures of the manifestation of spirituality at work, many of their individual level items are detached from work (e.g., "I feel hopeful about life" and "Prayer is an important part of my life") and others assess conditions not explicitly associated with spirituality and work (e.g., "I am evaluated fairly," "I look forward to coming to work most days," and "I am encouraged to take risks at work"). Kinjerski and Skrypnek (2006) assessed engagement in work, sense of community, the connection of spirituality with work, and mystical experiences. Yet, they focus on the manifestation of spiritual experiences without addressing underlying beliefs or theological motivations or demonstrating the association of their measure with work outcomes.

A recent scale measuring specific spiritual beliefs that have both theological relevance and demonstrated application to work behaviors is Lynn et al.'s (2009) Faith at Work Scale (FWS). The FWS measures beliefs and manifestations of spiritual experiences that relate to one's relationship with God, the meaning of work, interacting with others, personal piety, and stewardship. The FWS was demonstrated to be associated with frequent church attendance, age, faith maturity, and congregational characteristics (Lynn et al. 2011). Recently, Walker (2013) assessed associations with work attitudes and behaviors. The FWS was positively associated with organizational commitment and intentions to leave the organization while being negatively associated with job performance (Walker 2013). Although offering value in measuring spiritual beliefs that are relevant to work outcomes, the breadth of the FWS suggests that more specific beliefs may have greater utility in predicting work outcomes, specifically behavior.

Honoring God in Work and the Prosperity Gospel

With the guiding principles of relevance and specificity, in this research we were interested in beliefs related to how work honors God and how work may be blessed by God. Weber (1904–1905/1992) asserted that religious motivations undergirded a work ethic contributing to the success of individual entrepreneurs as well as to the economic progress of Western societies. This Weberian work ethic presupposed a strong Calvinist extrinsic motivation to prove salvation through hard work and the denial of earthly pleasures. Weber also noted that Luther's initial notions of faith motivating work behavior were not narrowly focused on salvation, but instead on a broader affirmation of a variety of types of work as destined by and holding potential for honoring God (McGrath 1999). Our interest is in a specific intrinsic

motivation of honoring God, not for instrumental spiritual gain, but out of gratitude or adherence to a calling or purpose for one's life.

Beliefs about honoring God may be a reciprocal response to past benefits or it may reflect a sense of meaning and purpose in work. If a person has been the recipient of a gift or benefit, an appropriate response is to be thankful. In turn, gratitude promotes reciprocal beneficial behavior, even at some cost to the person who is grateful (Bartlett et al. 2012). Further, if a person considers one's work to be of service to God, this imbues work with meaning (Rosso et al. 2010). In turn, fulfilling God's plans honors or pleases God.

Honoring God represents a belief that is generally accepted by a range of religious traditions. For example, Ahmad and Owoyemi (2012) described an Islamic view of work as having spiritual and social value that is pleasing to God. Similarly, Wang and Yang (2011) found evidence of Chinese Muslim entrepreneurs believing that work honors God. Specifically, working is a more meaningful way to "serve Allah" than living in the mosque and doing business is "Allah's plan" (Wang and Yang 2011: 557).

Another belief with profound economic significance is the conviction that God blesses faithful followers with monetary rewards. The prosperity gospel emerged out of Pentecostal Christianity. It teaches that divine rewards are not reserved for the afterlife. Rather, God intends for humans devoted to him to enjoy the material comforts of the present life. Prosperity preachers point to biblical examples such as Abraham and Solomon who were men of great wealth (see Copeland 1985: 19–21). Even the ministry of Jesus is understood as God's plan to deliver people from their sins and other forces of evil, including poverty (Yong 2012). Thus, the prosperity gospel is a form of empowerment, especially for those of lower social standing (Harrison 2005; Marti 2012). The prosperity gospel has proven popular and has spread across denominations and cultures (Harrison 2005).

While borne out of Pentecostalism, a study of ten countries found surprisingly high rates of agreement in the population of religiously affiliated adults to the statement: "God will grant material prosperity to all believers who have enough faith." It was estimated that 46 percent of religious American adults agreed; this included individuals outside Christianity (Pew Forum 2007). Two-thirds of religious adults agreed in Brazil and Guatemala and over 80 % of the religious populations agreed in Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, India and the Philippines. Others affirm that prosperity beliefs are spreading globally (Hunt 2000; Attanasi and Yong 2012). Indeed prosperity beliefs may not be limited to Christianity. An interviewee in Wang and Yang's study of Chinese Muslim entrepreneurs attributed the success of his business to "the mercy of Allah" (2011: 556).

Much of the research on prosperity beliefs has been qualitative (e.g. Harrison 2005; Marti 2012; Attanasi and Yong 2012). Others use a single-item indicator (e.g. Pew Forum 2007). One of the only statistical analyses on prosperity beliefs featuring a multi-item scale is the dissertation of Koch (2009). Koch used national survey data collected for Time magazine. Prosperity beliefs were measured using ten items, which included "Material wealth is a sign of God's blessing;" "If you pray enough, God will give you what money you ask for;" and "Poverty can be a blessing from God" (reverse-scored). The scale had reasonable internal reliability

(Cronbach's alpha = .74), but it included items that relate to social attitudes and issues of personal piety, for example "Giving away 10 % of your income is the minimum God expects" and "Christians in America don't do enough for the poor." It is uncertain by what process these items were developed or whether they adequately capture prosperity beliefs in a parsimonious fashion.

Altogether, our brief review of evidence linking beliefs and behavior coupled with a review of scales that have limited associations with work behaviors motivated the development of new belief scales with relevance to work and with more specificity than previous scales. The methods for developing and testing these scales and the associations of the resulting scales [Honoring God in Work (HGW) and Prosperity Gospel Beliefs (PGB)] with other variables, including work behaviors, are described in the following sections.

Method

The scale development process proceeded in four stages. The first stage was the identification of theoretically meaningful constructs that are in need of measurement and developing potential items that represent those constructs. The second stage involved having informed respondents (i.e., those with some relevant expertise), who had not generated the items, attempt to sort items according to clearly identified categories or constructs. This is essential to provide evidence of content validity. The third stage had yet another group of respondents complete a survey using the focal items to explore the psychometric characteristics of the potential scales. The fourth stage involved testing the proposed scales in a national sample of working adults. The purpose of the fourth stage was to provide evidence of convergent and divergent validity as well as demonstrate that the scales have utility in predicting or explaining other relevant constructs.

Stage 1: Item Development

Guided by an awareness of theological concepts relevant to our interest, the authors independently developed items for theological beliefs related to (1) honoring God—beliefs about how work honors God or demonstrates gratitude; and (2) prosperity gospel—beliefs about financial blessings associated with believers who trust God. As part of a larger project developing items to assess the association of religious beliefs to work and business, 16 items were generated to measure honoring God in work and the prosperity gospel.

Stage 2: Content Validity

At this stage we set out to determine if each individual item appropriately represented the theoretical construct of interest. The content validity of particular items reflects the degree to which they are "relevant to and representative of the targeted construct" (Haynes et al. 1995: 238). A survey consisting of the 16 focal items was administered to five content experts representing the educational domains

of religion and theology (3), and management and entrepreneurship (2). Each content expert was provided with the definitions of the constructs and asked to determine which construct each item represented as well as rating the relevance of the item to work or business. Consistent with standards in other investigations of rater agreement (Neubert et al. 2008; Schriesheim and Hinkin 1990), a 70 % threshold of agreement on the appropriate category and its relevance (indicated by either agreeing or strongly agreeing that the item is relevant) were targeted. Items that met the relevance standard of 70 % were identified as focal items for the theological beliefs constructs. This reduced the number of items to eleven.

Stage 3: Psychometric Properties of Scales

The eleven items for honoring God in work and the prosperity gospel were part of a survey administered to 44 undergraduates enrolled in introductory and upper level sociology courses at a southern university. Approximately 57 % of the students were male. Respondents to the survey were asked to provide their personal opinions regarding “what you believe, not what you have been taught or what you think is the popular response.” Their level of agreement on each item was assessed on a Likert scale (strongly disagree = 1 and strongly agree = 5). We conducted an exploratory factor analysis of the total number of beliefs items using a principal component extraction method and a varimax rotation on the retained items to explore the factor structure of the items. An analysis of the Scree plot and item factor loadings identified two factors that matched theoretical constructs of interest. Additional analyses examining factor loadings resulted in retaining six items comprising two distinct factors with Eigenvalues of 2.547 and 1.584. The two scales and their reliabilities were as follows:

Honoring God in Work (HGW)

This is a three item scale that assesses beliefs about the role of work in honoring or expressing gratitude to God. Component items were “When we are creative, we honor God by acting according to God’s character;” “I work very hard to do my best out of gratitude to God for his blessings;” and “My work honors God.” The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .75.

Prosperity Gospel Beliefs (PGB)

This is a three item scale measuring beliefs that faith and faithful behavior lead to success at work and in business. The prosperity items included “God promises that those who live out their faith will receive financial success;” “Believers who succeed in business are evidence of God’s promised blessing;” and “I believe faithful believers in God receive real financial benefits in this life.” The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .79 (Table 1).

We also assessed the factor structure in a large sample of working adults. We contracted with Knowledge Networks to conduct a web survey of full-time working adults. Using a probability based web panel, screening questions limited the sample

Table 1 Item factor loadings

Items	Student sample		National sample	
	HGW	PGB	HGW	PGB
When we are creative, we honor God by acting according to God’s character	<u>.787</u>	.240	<u>.785</u>	.268
I work very hard to do my best out of gratitude to God for his blessings	<u>.761</u>	.153	<u>.880</u>	.169
My work honors God	<u>.850</u>	-.063	<u>.859</u>	.230
God promises that those who live out their faith will receive financial success	-.016	<u>.823</u>	.091	<u>.905</u>
Believers who succeed in business are evidence of God’s promised blessing	.139	<u>.819</u>	.288	<u>.844</u>
I believe faithful believers in God receive real financial benefits in this life	.137	<u>.859</u>	.321	<u>.812</u>
Eigenvalues	1.584	2.547	1.191	3.475

Underlined factor loadings indicate the items retained for each scale

to English-speaking adults, age 18 and over, employed full-time. The survey was divided into two parts and administered at two separate time periods 3 weeks apart. Questions at Time 1 asked about respondents’ religious beliefs, behavior, and features of their place of worship (if they had one). Questions at Time 2 pertained to work attitudes and practices. The time lag in data collection is valuable to minimize common method bias (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Hence, our methodology helps ensure measures of religion are independent from measures of work. Sixty percent of individuals selected for the study-specific sample completed both waves of the survey. The final sample included 1,022 individuals. The mean age of respondents was 44 years old. Over half (56 %) were men. Eighty percent were white, non-Hispanic. Average education level was some college but no degree. In this sample, the factor loadings changed but the two factor solution was confirmed with Eigenvalues of 1.191 and 3.475. The two belief scales also had high internal reliability. Cronbach’s alpha for HGW was .84. Cronbach’s alpha for PGB was .86. While the two are correlated ($r = .49$, $p < .01$), the results we present below demonstrate that the scales tap substantively different beliefs.

Stage 4: Convergent and Divergent Validity

The final stage of scale development involved analyzing the belief scales with other measures. Using the national sample, we assessed the relationship of the belief scales to Lynn et al.’s (2009) FWS adapted to assess what is emphasized in the respondent’s congregation and Mirels and Garrett’s (1971) PWE beliefs scale. Convergence with Lynn et al.’s FWS would be expected given respondents’ personal beliefs about HGW and PGB are likely influenced to some degree by social learning in their congregation (Bandura 1986). Additionally, despite the Mirels and Garret PWE measure being devoid of religious language, historically the work ethic it measures has been attributed to faith beliefs. Therefore, we would expect some level of convergence with

the PWE scale and our beliefs scales. We found significant associations of the FWS and PWE scales with HGW ($r = .63, p \leq .01$, and $r = .24, p \leq .01$, respectively) and PGB ($r = .30, p \leq .01$, and $r = .17, p \leq .01$, respectively).

Divergent validity was assessed in the same sample by exploring the relationship of the belief scales with two personality variables, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism. Since we have no theoretical reason for expecting convergence and the measurements were separated in time, we did not expect substantial associations. We used established three-item scales to measure Conscientiousness and Neuroticism (Goldberg et al. 2006). HGW was not significantly associated with Conscientiousness ($r = .05$), but was associated with Neuroticism ($r = -.08, p \leq .05$). PGB was significantly associated with Conscientiousness ($r = -.07, p \leq .05$), but not Neuroticism ($r = .03$). Although a few small associations were evident, overall the associations indicate that these beliefs scale differ from personality scales.

Given our interest in our beliefs scales predicting behavior, we made simple comparisons of our scales with two types of workplace behavior. Entrepreneurial behaviors are the actions taken in the process of discovering, evaluating, and realizing opportunities to create new or improved goods and services (McCline et al. 2000; Shane and Venkataraman 2000). Entrepreneurial behavior can manifest inside an existing organization and, therefore, contribute to innovation and continuous improvement or it can be directed toward starting a new entity. Historically, religious beliefs have been linked to the entrepreneurial behavior of individuals (Elangovan et al. 2010). Helping behavior in the workplace involves voluntary acts of consideration and cooperation (Van Dyne and LePine 1998). Outside the workplace, helping behavior has been related to intrinsic religious motivations and church attendance (Benson et al. 1980). Both opportunities to be entrepreneurial and help others within an organization are broadly available to most workers. We expect both types of behavior to be positively associated with our belief scales.

To test these relationships, we used the 11-item entrepreneurial behavior scale from Pearce et al. (1997). An example item is, “I boldly move ahead with a promising new approach when others might be more cautious.” The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .89. We used a two-item helping scale created by VanDyne and LePine (1998). The two items are “I have helped others in my organization with their work responsibilities” and “I have assisted others in my organization with their work for the benefit of the organization.” The Cronbach alpha of this scale was .77.

The correlations shown in Table 2 demonstrate the potential utility of our belief measures. HGW was positive and significantly correlated to entrepreneurial behavior ($r = .13, p \leq .01$) and helping behavior ($r = .09, p \leq .01$). In regression models (not shown), we explored the relationship of workplace behaviors and HGW controlling for gender, age, education, religious tradition, conscientiousness, congregational FWS, and PWE.¹ The control variables did not alter the basic

¹ Regression results are available from the authors upon request. They are not provided here since the purpose of this paper is to introduce HGW and PGB belief scales. More rigorous analyses using these scales is planned for research to follow.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics and correlations for convergent and discriminant comparisons

	Mean	Std. dev.	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) HGW	3.30	.91	1.00	.49**	.24**	.63**	.05	-.08*	.13**	.09**
(2) PGB	2.50	.94	.49**	1.00	.17**	.30**	-.07*	.03	-.005	-.10**
(3) Protestant work ethic	3.23	.40	.24**	.17**	1.00	.19**	.09**	-.08*	.28**	.08**
(4) Congregation faith at work	3.33	.90	.63**	.30**	.19**	1.00	.04	-.12**	.12**	.08*
(5) Conscientiousness	3.61	.65	.05	-.07*	.09**	.04	1.00	-.16**	.23**	.17**
(6) Neuroticism	2.68	.74	-.08*	.03	-.08*	-.12**	-.16**	1.00	-.22**	-.13**
(7) Entrepreneurial behavior	3.48	.54	.13**	-.005	.28**	.12**	.23**	-.22**	1.00	.40**
(8) Helping behavior	3.59	.82	.09**	-.10**	.08**	.08*	.17**	-.13**	.40**	1.00

* p \ .05; ** p \ .01

relationships observed. The estimates for HGW remained positive and significant ($b = .07$, $p < .10$ for entrepreneurial behavior, $b = .08$, $p < .10$ for helping behavior). With PWE excluded, HGW was significant at $p < .05$ in both models. This hints at a possible mediating effect of PWE worth further investigation. Nevertheless, based on our overall findings, individuals who believe that God is honored by their work are more likely to engage in creative, innovative actions at work. They are also more likely to be collaborative in their work. These relationships follow our expectations.

The relationships of prosperity beliefs to the two workplace behaviors are less straight-forward. PGB was not significantly correlated with entrepreneurial behavior and its relationship to helping behavior was significant but negative ($r = -.10$, $p < .01$). In regression models (not shown), the association between helping behavior and PGB remained significant ($b = -.08$, $p < .05$) when controlling for gender, age, education, religious tradition, conscientiousness, congregational FWS, and PWE. Believing that God rewards the faithful with financial gain is not associated with risk-taking, change-oriented activity as measured in the entrepreneurial behavior scale. In addition, persons with prosperity beliefs may be more independent, thus less inclined to engage in collaborative, helping behavior at work.

Additionally, we compared our belief scales across religious traditions. We used measures of religion, denomination, and congregation to categorize individuals into broad religious traditions of Evangelical Protestant, Black Protestant, Mainline Protestant, Catholic, other traditions, and no affiliation (Steensland et al. 2000; Dougherty et al. 2007). Religious tradition is a recognizable measure of religion with wide application in social science research. Religious traditions capture differences in doctrine, history and culture. For example, among Christians, Evangelical Protestants and Black Protestants tend to be the most orthodox in religious belief and practice (Kohut et al. 2000; Steensland et al. 2000; Dougherty et al. 2007). The view of God in these traditions is as an active presence with clear ideals for right and wrong (Froese and Bader 2010). It is within Evangelical and Black Protestant traditions that Pentecostalism, and presumably the prosperity gospel by extension, is most prevalent (Smidt et al. 1999). On the other end of the religious continuum are those with no religious affiliation. To the extent that they believe in God or some higher power, the unaffiliated think of the divine as disengaged with humanity; consequently, it is up to human effort to remedy social ills (Froese and Bader 2010). Between the polls of secular and orthodox stand

Table 3 Work-relevant beliefs by religious tradition (means and standard deviations)

	HGW	PGB
Evangelical Protestant	3.59 (.76)	2.74 (.91)
Black Protestant	3.93 (.72)	3.43 (.87)
Mainline Protestant	3.48 (.85)	2.39 (.85)
Catholic	3.27 (.80)	2.45 (.89)
Other	3.02 (1.04)	2.30 (.99)
No affiliation	2.44 (.88)	1.95 (.81)
N	921	922

Means for each belief scale are significantly different across religious traditions (ANOVA F test, $p < .01$)

moderate to liberal (Mainline) Protestants and Catholics (Roof and McKinney 1987). With this background, we can look for predicable patterns in our belief scales by religious tradition.

Table 3 reveals statistically significant differences across religious traditions for both scales. Mean scores for HGW and PGB are highest within the Black Protestant tradition (3.93 and 3.43, respectively). Evangelical Protestants have the second highest scores on these scales (3.59 and 2.74, respectively). As expected, persons with no religious affiliation were lowest on both scales.

Conclusion

Beliefs about cosmic order and the purpose of life are foundational to human beings. Yet, the connection between beliefs and work-related behavior has received limited attention due to on-going disagreements among religious researchers regarding the import of religious beliefs to behavior and a paucity of available, validated, and specific belief scales. Encouraged by recent evidence of specific beliefs explaining behavior (e.g., Driskell and Lyon 2011) and building on a long-standing interest in the overlap of religion and work, we set out to create work-related belief scales for survey research.

Our contribution lies in developing new scales that assess two specific religious beliefs: (1) belief that work honors God; and (2) belief that God promises financial prosperity to the faithful. These scales emerged from a systematic process of the authors generating items, experts rating content validity, and pilot testing of psychometric properties of potential scales. The scales also showed acceptable levels of convergent validity with constructs deemed to have theoretical relevance to the proposed beliefs and demonstrated divergent validity with constructs that lacked theological relevance.

We believe these two scales represent an important addition to studies of religion and work. They are more specific and relevant to work and business than existing scales. They demonstrated strong reliability in a pilot test with students as well as in a national sample of working adults. The two scales are distinct and not reducible to religious tradition. Although both sets of beliefs presume a divine being that takes interest in human action (thus the two are correlated much as are religious behaviors such as attending religious services and prayer), the scales tap into different understandings about the nature of God and, thus, have different implications for explaining work-related behavior.

Honoring God beliefs are related to entrepreneurial behavior and helping behavior in the workplace. With confidence that their work is honoring God, people may be willing to take more risks or, conversely, to take only risks with a high likelihood of positive results. This requires more fine-grained attention to the types of entrepreneurial behavior beliefs about HGW may promote and which behaviors it may prevent such deviance behavior. Employees with these beliefs seem to provide assistance to co-workers out of a sense that these actions please God. Are they also strong contributors as team members? This needs to be explored as well as how honoring God beliefs might affect persistence in challenging tasks or resilience in

the face of failure. Overall, this points to the potential of beliefs about HGW to promote behavior that contributes to organizational success and the need to explore this potential through additional research.

We believe the mixed findings for our PGB scale in predicting the behaviors in this study should not be interpreted as a failure of the measure. A careful process of scale development is behind the measure. Moreover, experts and pilot testing establish the scale as valid and reliable. What our preliminary findings indicate is that prosperity beliefs correspond to a more independent orientation toward work that does not translate into entrepreneurial activity and may impede helpful interactions with others. In contrast to behaviors that have collective benefit, prosperity beliefs may motivate individuals to engage in individually-oriented performance behavior such as making sales to earn a commission or completing tasks that might lead to a raise or promotion. Studies of work choices and work habits for those who hold prosperity beliefs would be a fascinating addition to the literature. Numerous intriguing questions await further research. Do those who believe that God will provide financial success work harder, longer, or at more arduous tasks to achieve the promised blessing? Do prosperity beliefs motivate individuals to start or persevere in particular types of businesses? What other productive or counterproductive behaviors might PGB predict?

There are limitations that must be acknowledged. These belief items may best capture Christian beliefs. Although our pilot sample of students and national sample of working adults were not restricted to Christians, Christianity was the dominant religious perspective of the respondents. Additionally, our samples consisted of people from within the United States. Religious beliefs about the role of work and business are likely to differ across religions and cultures. Additional research is necessary to test these scales on a larger sample of non-Christian respondents. Further research should consider Muslim, Jewish and other world religion belief systems with comparable metrics that account for different conceptions of the divine, human relationship to the divine, and the effect on work and entrepreneurial enterprises. Finally, our scales are certainly not exhaustive of all religious beliefs pertaining to work, nor can they explain all types of work behavior. Our findings are promising but future research should explore other beliefs and their relation to work behavior.

In sum, this research makes a contribution to supporting the assertion that beliefs can influence behavior, particularly when the beliefs are specific and relevant to the behaviors of interest (Weaver and Agle 2002). In developing and testing two specific belief scales related to work, we've contributed to the rich and yet still ripe field of research exploring associations of religion and economic activity (Tracey 2012). There is more to be learned. We hope these scales and our initial findings linking religious beliefs to work and business will inspire additional research.

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