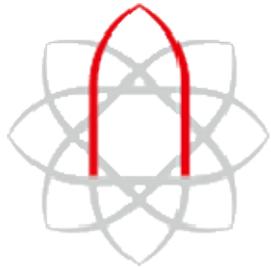
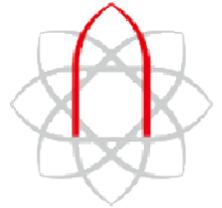

Sabbath and Health



Jerry W. Lee, PhD
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Loma Linda University School of Public Health

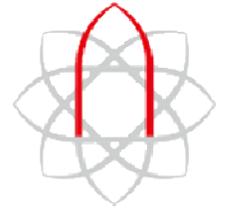
Presented at the Mind and Spirit In Dialog meeting at Loma
Linda University, January 24, 2009

Almost no empirical literature



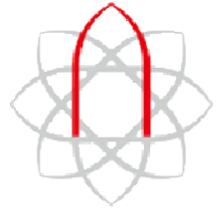
- Marital intimacy greater among couples who observe Sabbath for intrinsic reasons
 - (Boyd, 1999, doctoral dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Psychology)
 - In Israel death declines on Sabbath, increases on Sunday
 - (Anson & Anson, 2000, *Population Research and Policy Review*)
 - (Anson & Anson, 2001, *Social Science & Medicine*)
-

Purpose



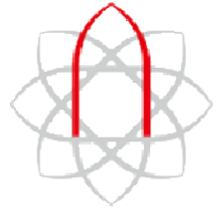
- Develop a measure of Sabbath beliefs and activities
 - Determine the structure of these beliefs and activities
 - Compare the structure in Adventists and Christians who attend church on Sunday
 - Learn how Sabbath beliefs and activities relate to health
-

Methods



- Developed a list of 51 Sabbath beliefs and activities
 - Internet survey of employees of Loma Linda University and Medical Center
 - 1,123 responded — 928 with less than 10% missing data
 - *Examined two subgroups*
 - *Adventists (599 individuals)*
 - *Christians who worship on Sunday (286 individuals)*
-

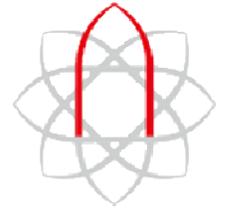
Analysis 1



- Exploratory factor analysis
 - in two-thirds of Adventists
 - to learn the structure of Sabbath beliefs and activities

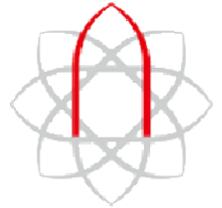


Analysis 2



- Confirmatory factor analysis in full sample to
 - Confirm the structure
 - Compare Adventists and Christians who worship on Sunday
 - Do they group beliefs and activity items into the same sets?
 - If so, do the sets of beliefs and activities relate to each other in different ways in the two groups?
 - Do the two groups differ in
 - agreement with the beliefs and
 - how often they do the activities?
-

Analysis 3

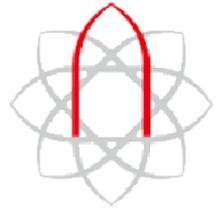


- Multiple regression
- How do the sets of Sabbath beliefs and activities relate to health?



The Structure of Sabbath Beliefs

(sample items)



■ Sabbath gives rest

- I feel a calm on Sabbath I experience less frequently on other days.
- Sabbath helps relieve my stress.

■ Keep Sabbath from social pressure

- I keep Sabbath to avoid criticism from other people.
- The primary reason I keep Sabbath is to fit in with others in my church.

■ Sabbath helps bonding with others

- Sabbath helps me bond with others.
- Sabbath makes me feel part of a wider community.

■ Keep Sabbath from duty or shame avoidance

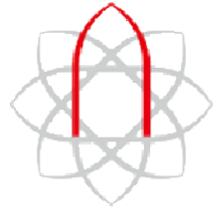
- Sabbath keeping is my duty.
- When I don't keep Sabbath I feel guilty.

■ Elective helping on Sabbath is OK

- Painting the house of a needy elderly couple would be a good Sabbath activity
 - Volunteering to help at a food bank would be a good Sabbath activity
-

The Structure of Sabbath Activities

(sample items)



■ **Secular Activities**

- ❑ Go shopping
- ❑ Go out to see a motion picture

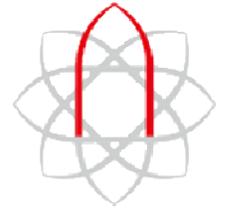
■ **Sabbath visiting**

- ❑ Cook a meal for a shut-in.
- ❑ Have people over for evening worship.

■ **Communal activities**

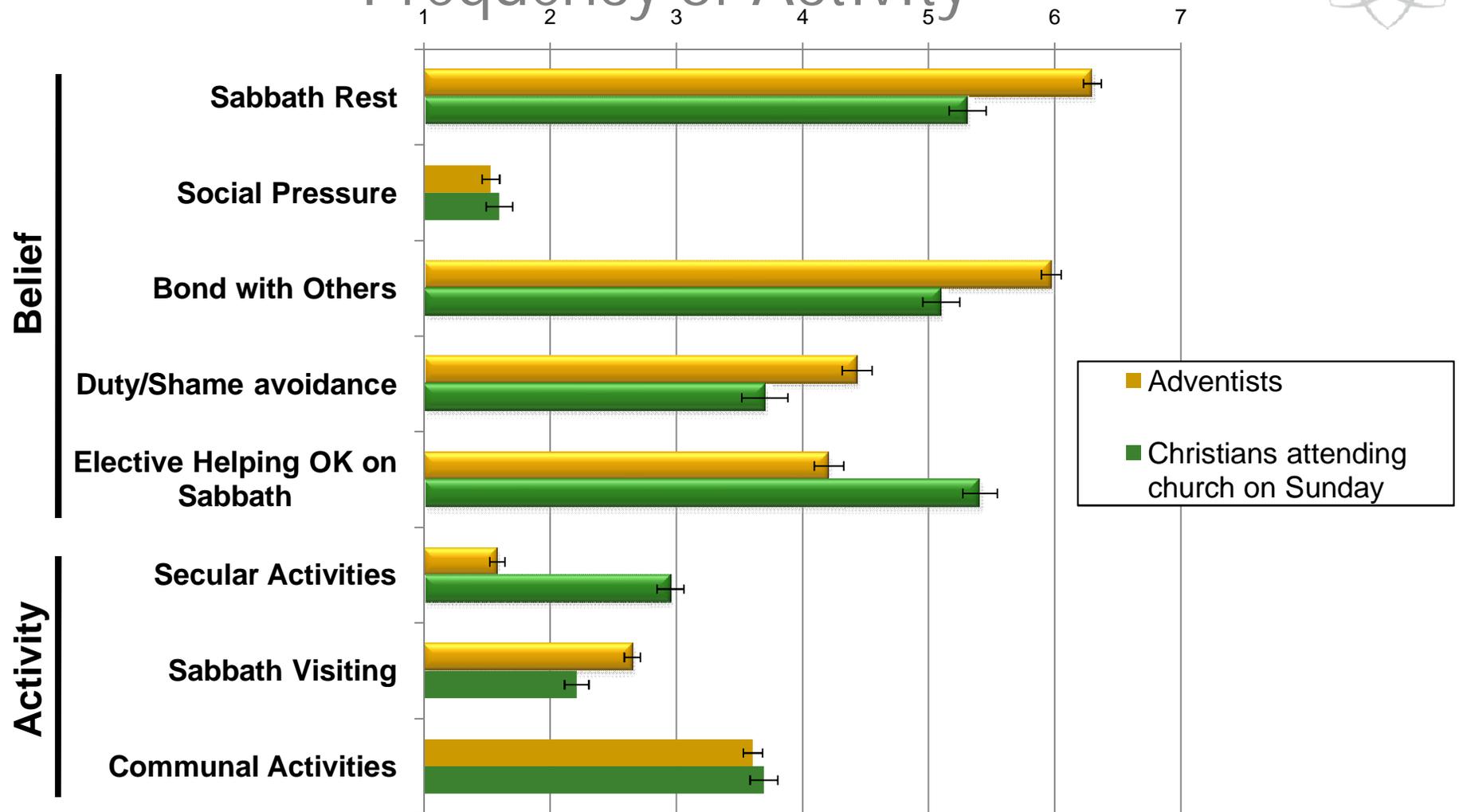
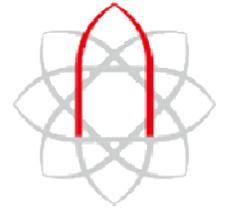
- ❑ Do food preparation
 - ❑ Go for a walk
-

Differences in Structure— Adventists and Sunday Church Attenders



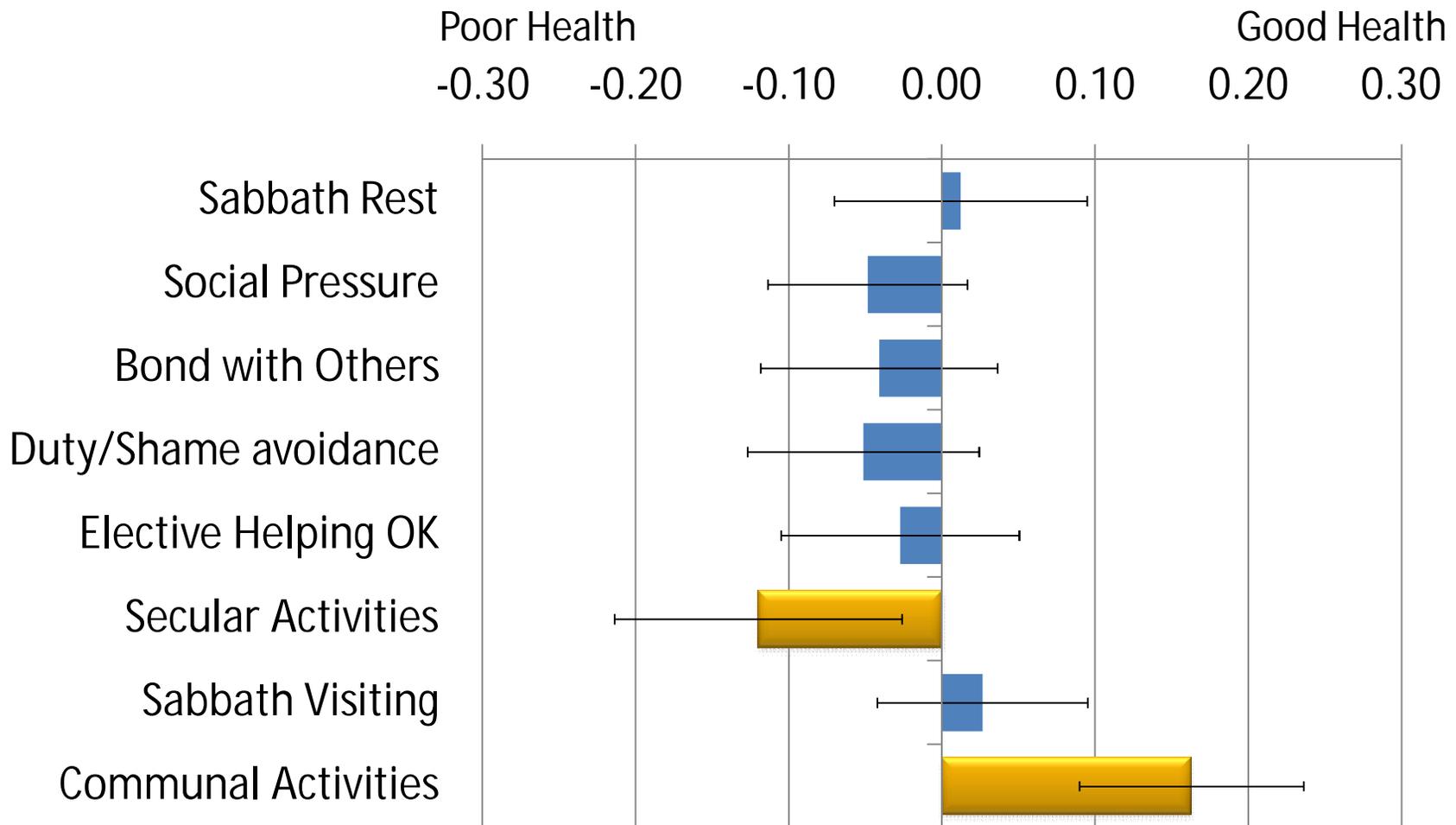
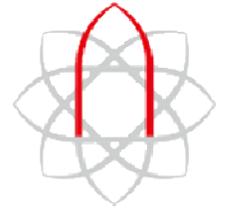
- 28 possible correlations among 8 factors
 - Only 3 showed large differences
 - When Sabbath rest was high, attending from duty or shame avoidance was also high
 - Stronger for Sunday attending Christians than for Adventists
 - When attending from social pressure high, engaging in secular activities on Sabbath also high
 - Stronger for Adventists than Sunday attending Christians
 - In fact association was absent for Sunday attending
 - Those who believed elective helping on Sabbath was OK also engaged in more communal activities
 - Stronger for Adventists than Sunday attending Christians
-

Agreement with Belief / Frequency of Activity



Relationship to Physical Health

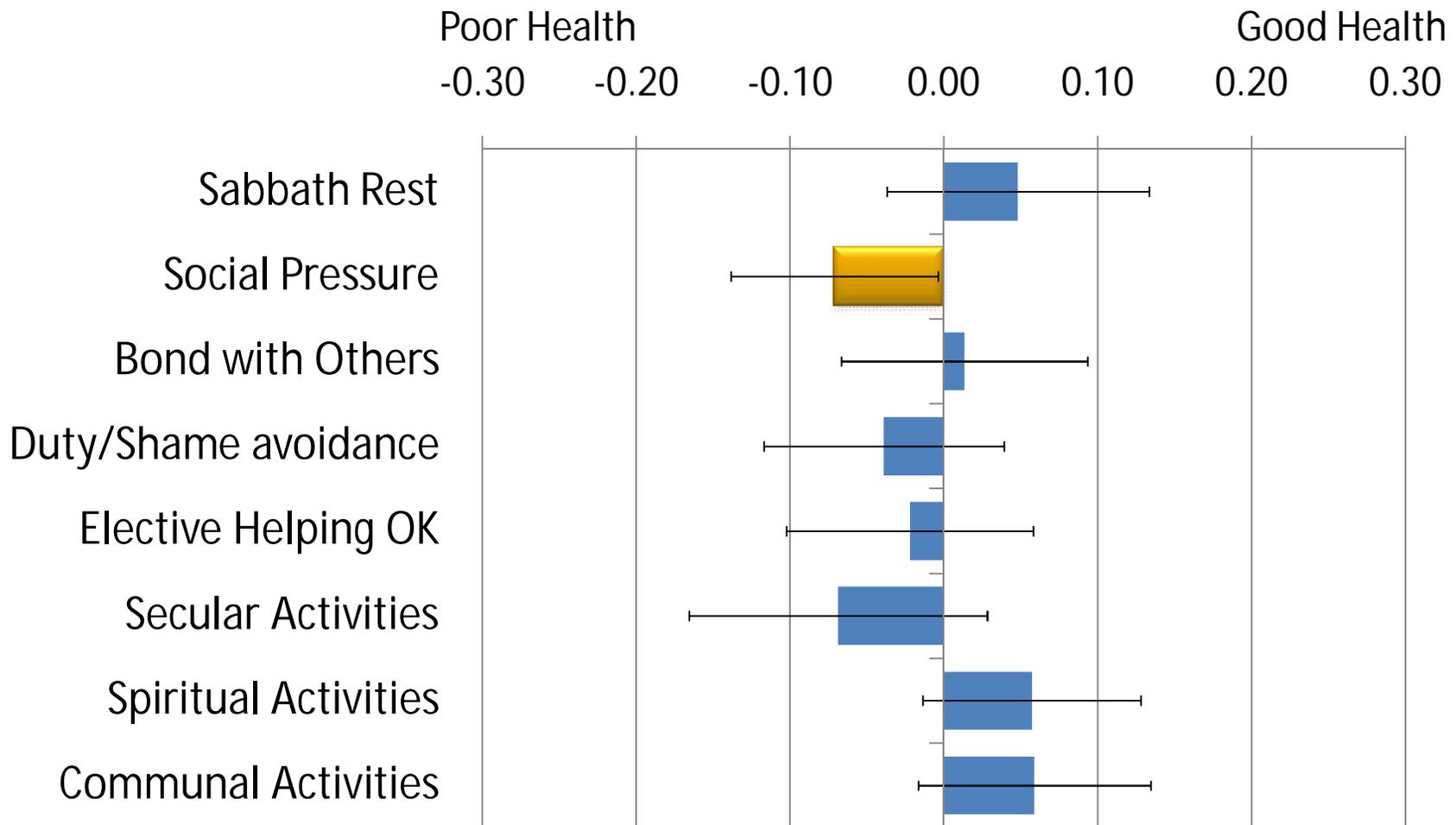
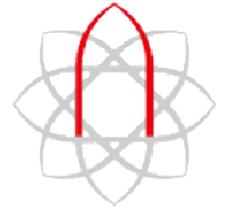
(Beta Coefficients)



Controlling for differences in gender, age, education, ethnicity, and religion.

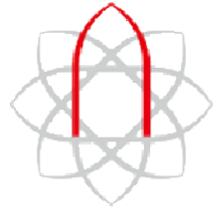
Relationship to Mental Health

(Beta Coefficients)



Controlling for differences in gender, age, education, ethnicity, and religion.

Next questions



- Do some Sabbath beliefs and activities:
 - relate to quality of life in the main data set?
 - reduce the influence of stress on health?
 - increase the influence of stress on health?
 - predict later
 - hospitalization?
 - mortality?
-