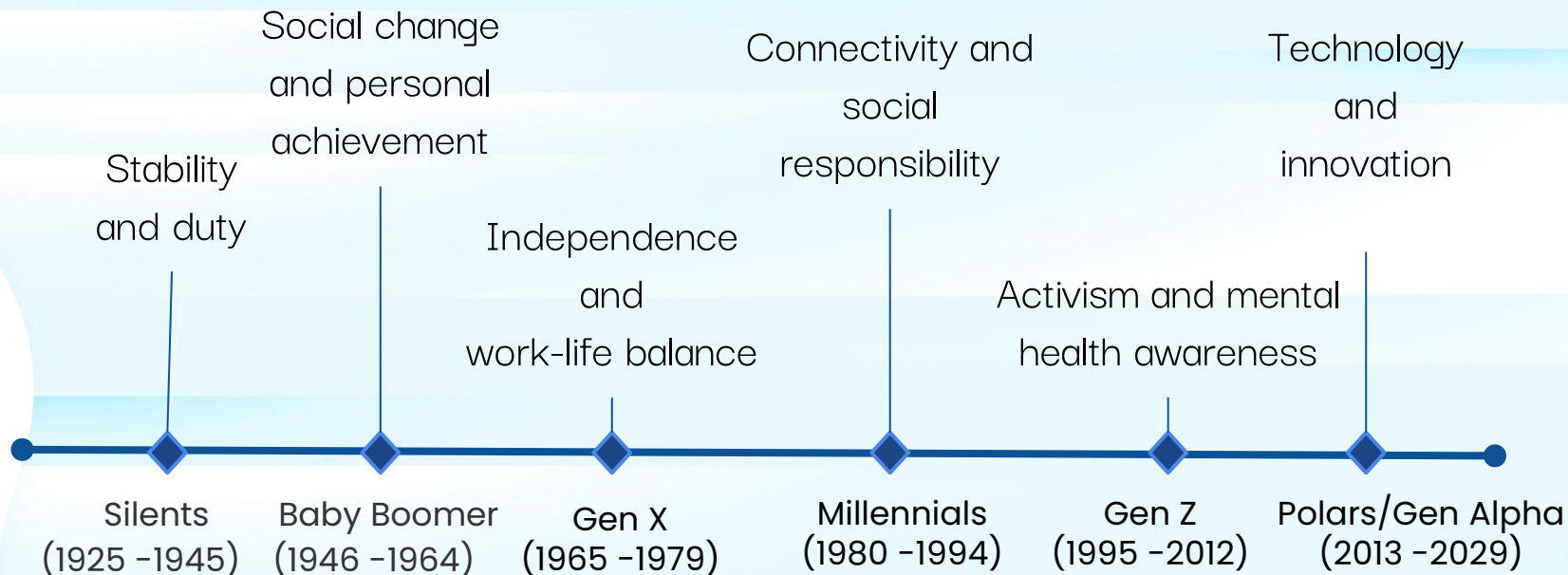


The Evolving Influence of Family, School, Event, and Church on Youth Religious Faith



Vy Cao and Chang-Ho Ji

Generations

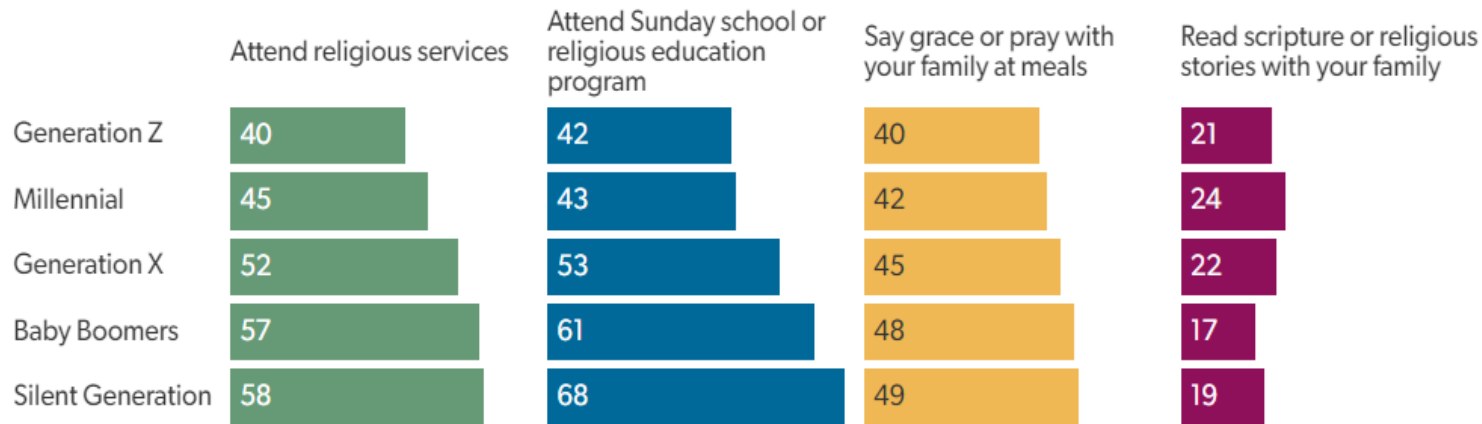


Twenge, J. M. (2020). *The real differences between Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers, and Silents and what they mean for America's future*. Atria Books.

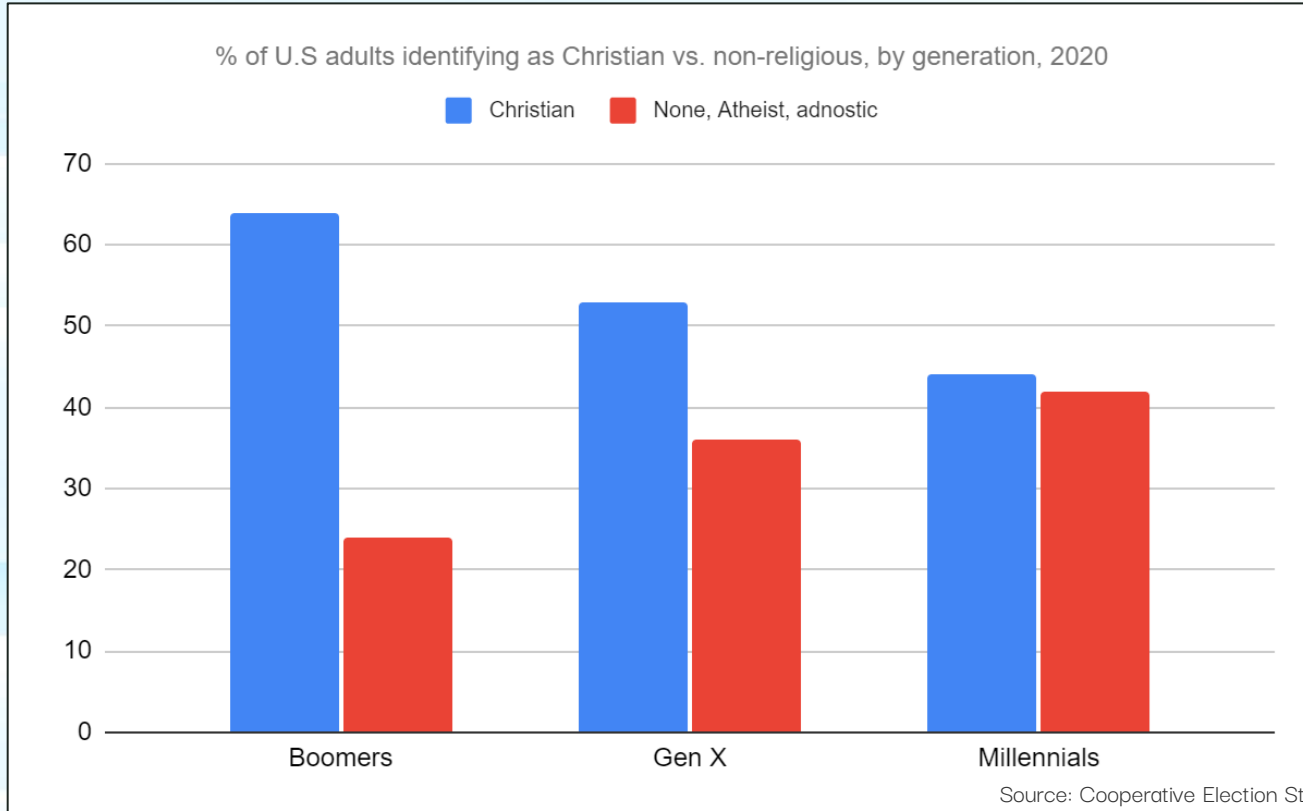
Percentage of People Participating in Religious Services



Percentage of each generation who say their families did the following weekly or more when they were growing up



An increase in non-believers



Twenge, J. M. (2020). *The real differences between Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers, and Silents and what they mean for America's future*. Atria Books.

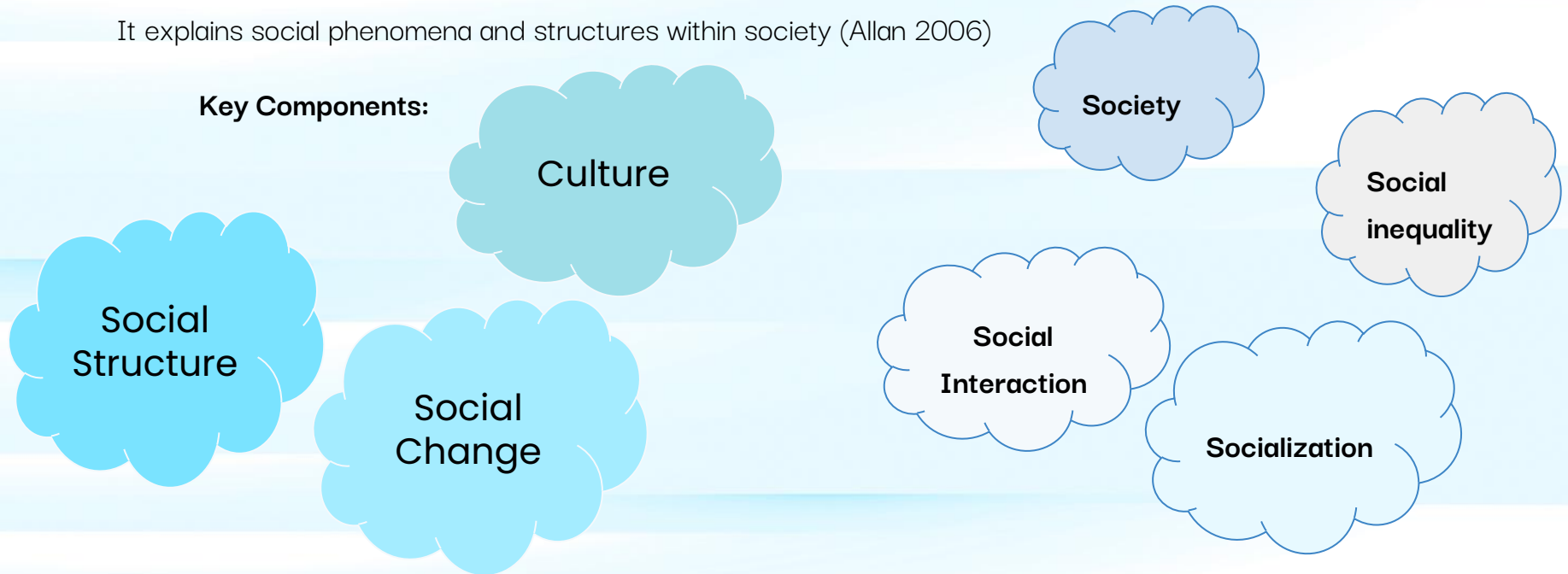
Theoretical Framework

Social Theory

A set of interrelated concepts linked together into specific relationships

It explains social phenomena and structures within society (Allan 2006)

Key Components:



Factors Traditionally Considered

family



church



school

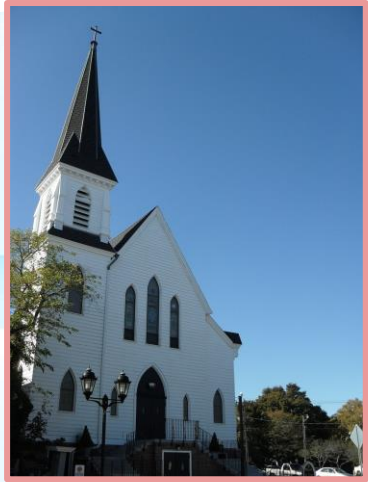


How family influences faith



- Interprets religious ideology
- Behavioral modeling
 - Induction and Indoctrination of:
 - Beliefs
- Disciplinary tactics, rewards and punishments
- Regular family rituals
- two religious parents have ~50% chance of transmitting their faith to their children

How church & school influence faith



Valuegenesis Research

30-year nationwide cohort survey

VG1 - 1990 (Millennials)

VG2 - 2000 (Gen Z)

VG3 - 2011 (Gen Polars)

VG4 - 2021 (Gen Polars)

Purpose of The Study

Identify factors and patterns have influence youth religious faith development

Variables: 26 variables associated with family, church, and education

Variables

- **Family:** Family worship, Mother's faith, Father's faith, Grandparents faith
- **Church:** Sabbath Sunday, Personal devotion, Church service, My pastor, Morning worship, Weekly chapels, Bible classes, Week of Prayer
- **School:** School Bible/Lead Camp, Community outreach at school, Campus chaplain, My Bible teacher, Teacher's faith, Attending an Adventist school
- **Event:** Religious youth organization at church, Pathfinder, Conference youth camps/reallies, Evangelical outreach

Population

6th-12th graders in Parochial School system:

VG 1: 13,266

VG 2: 11,481

VG 3: 11,586

VG4: 9,165

Demographic

Gender: Male & Female

Age: Junior (6th-8th grade) and Senior (9th-12th grade)

Ethnicity: Hispanic, Black, Asian, White, and Multi-ethnic

Descriptive Analysis of Influence Factors

Mean Score

Mean Score (Min-Max: 1 - 5)

Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4	Total
Event	2.64	2.79	3.02	2.93	2.84
Family		3.50	3.60	3.67	3.59
Church	3.49	3.63	3.69	3.43	3.56
School	3.33	3.48	3.71	3.77	3.56

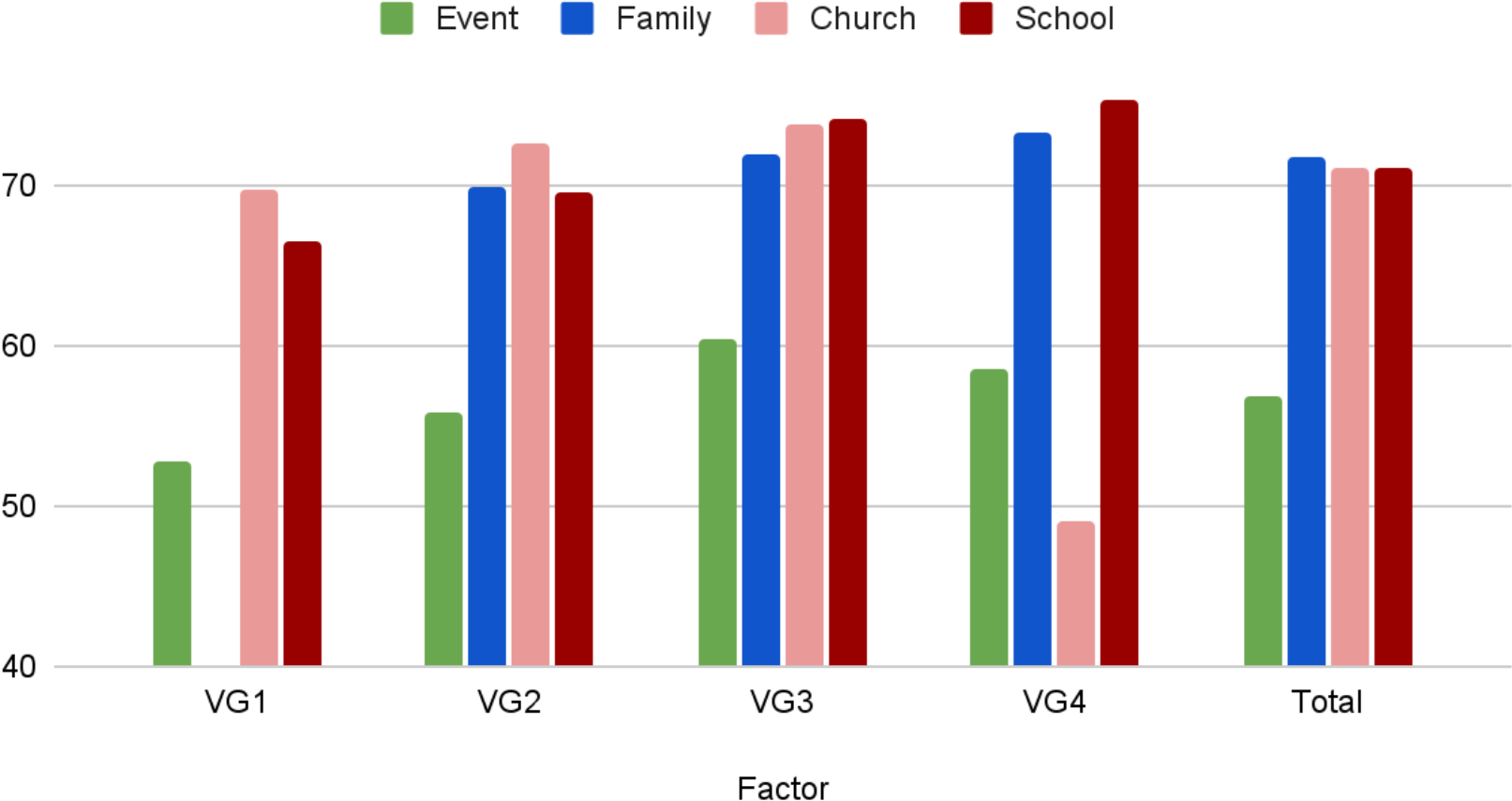
% of Maximum

Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4	Total
Event	52.8	55.8	60.4	58.6	56.8
Family		70.0	72.0	73.4	71.8
Church	69.8	72.6	73.8	49.0	71.2
School	66.6	69.6	74.2	75.4	71.2

Note. N: Event = 44062, Family = 31549, Church = 44135, School = 44101; ** $p < .01$.

Influence Factors: % of Maximum Mean Score

Event Family Church School



Descriptive Analysis of Family Influence Factors

Mean Score

Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4
Family Worship		3.15	3.31	3.50
Mother's faith		3.76	3.83	3.91
Father's faith		3.42	3.51	3.64
Grandparent's faith		3.26	3.43	3.52

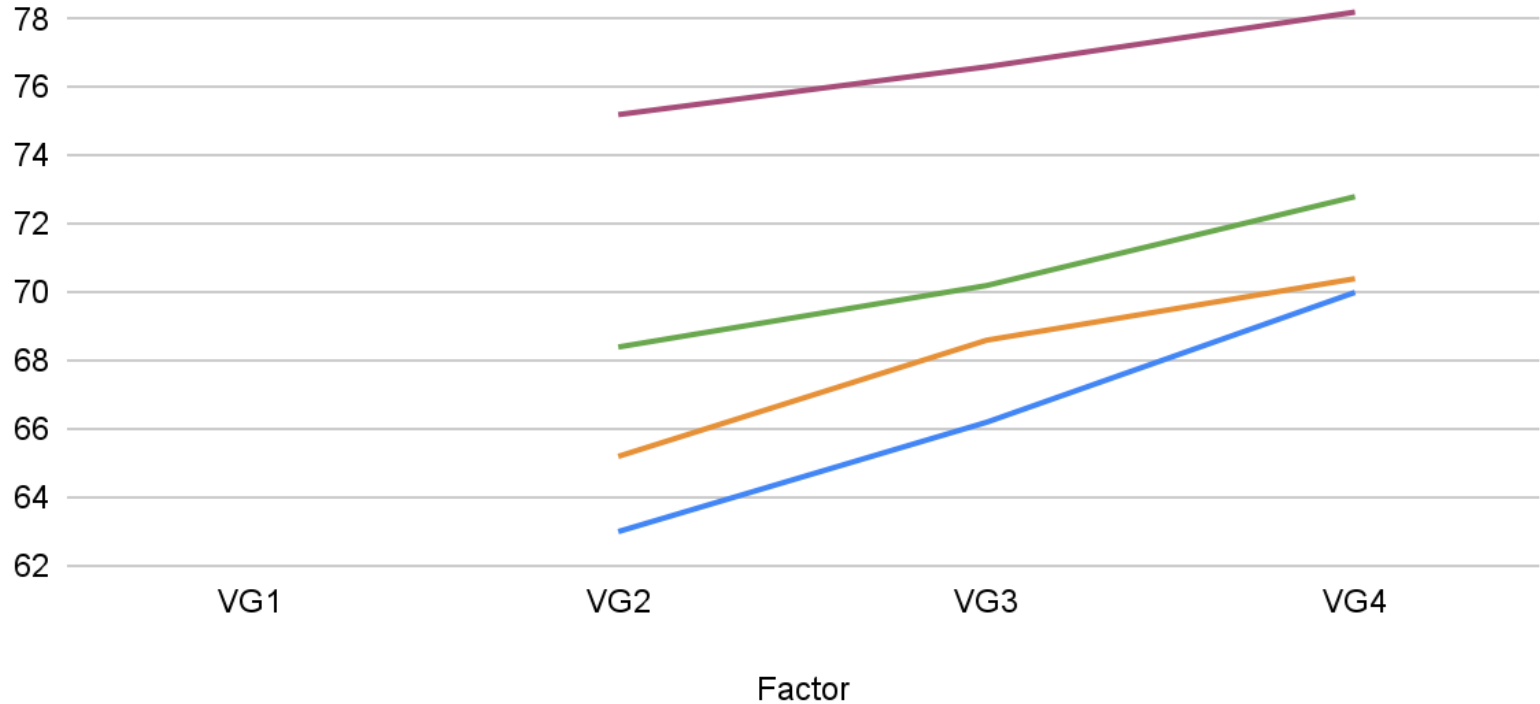
% of Maximum

Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4
Family Worship		63.0	66.2	70.0
Mother's faith		75.2	76.6	78.2
Father's faith		68.4	70.2	72.8
Grandparent's faith		65.2	68.6	70.4

Note. N: Family Worship = 31368, Mother's faith = 31390, Father's faith = 31368, Grandparents faith= 31336; ** $p < .01$.

Family Factors: % of Maximum Mean Score

Family Worship Mother's faith Father's faith Grandparent's faith



Descriptive Analysis of Church Influence Factors

Mean Score

Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4	Total
Sabbath Sunday	3.57	3.63	3.73	2.94	3.50
Personal devotions	3.29	3.68	3.61	3.38	3.49
Church Services	3.60	3.70	3.85	3.74	3.72
Religious youth organization at church	2.69	2.47	3.06	3.11	2.82
My pastor		3.51	3.58	3.66	3.58

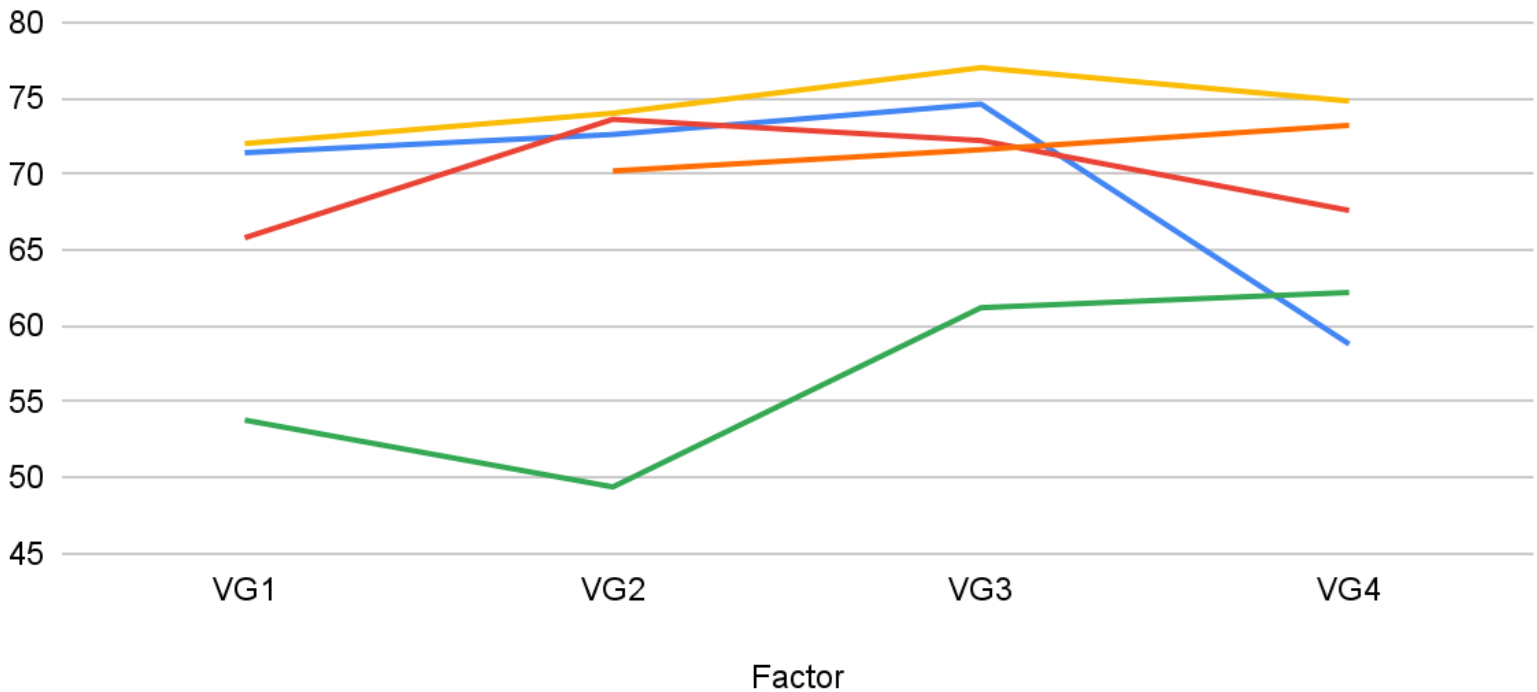
% of Maximum

Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4	Total
Sabbath Sunday	71.4	72.6	74.6	58.8	70.0
Personal devotions	65.8	73.6	72.2	67.6	69.8
Church Services	72.0	74.0	77.0	74.8	74.4
Religious youth organization at church	53.8	49.4	61.2	62.2	56.4
My pastor		70.2	71.6	73.2	71.6

Note. N: Sabbath= 44019, Personal devotions = 43898, Church service = 43847, Religious youth organization at church = 42621, My pastor = 31316; **p < .01

Church Influence Factor: % of Maximum Mean Score

Sabbath Sunday Personal devotions Church Services
Religious youth organization at church My pastor



Descriptive Analysis of Event Influence Factors

Mean Score

Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4	Total
Pathfinders	2.70	2.51	2.77	2.84	2.70
Conference youth camps/reallies		2.94	3.17	2.89	3.00
Short-term mission project	2.50	2.67	2.99	2.75	2.72
Evangelical outreach	2.48	2.77	2.82	2.70	2.69

(Min)

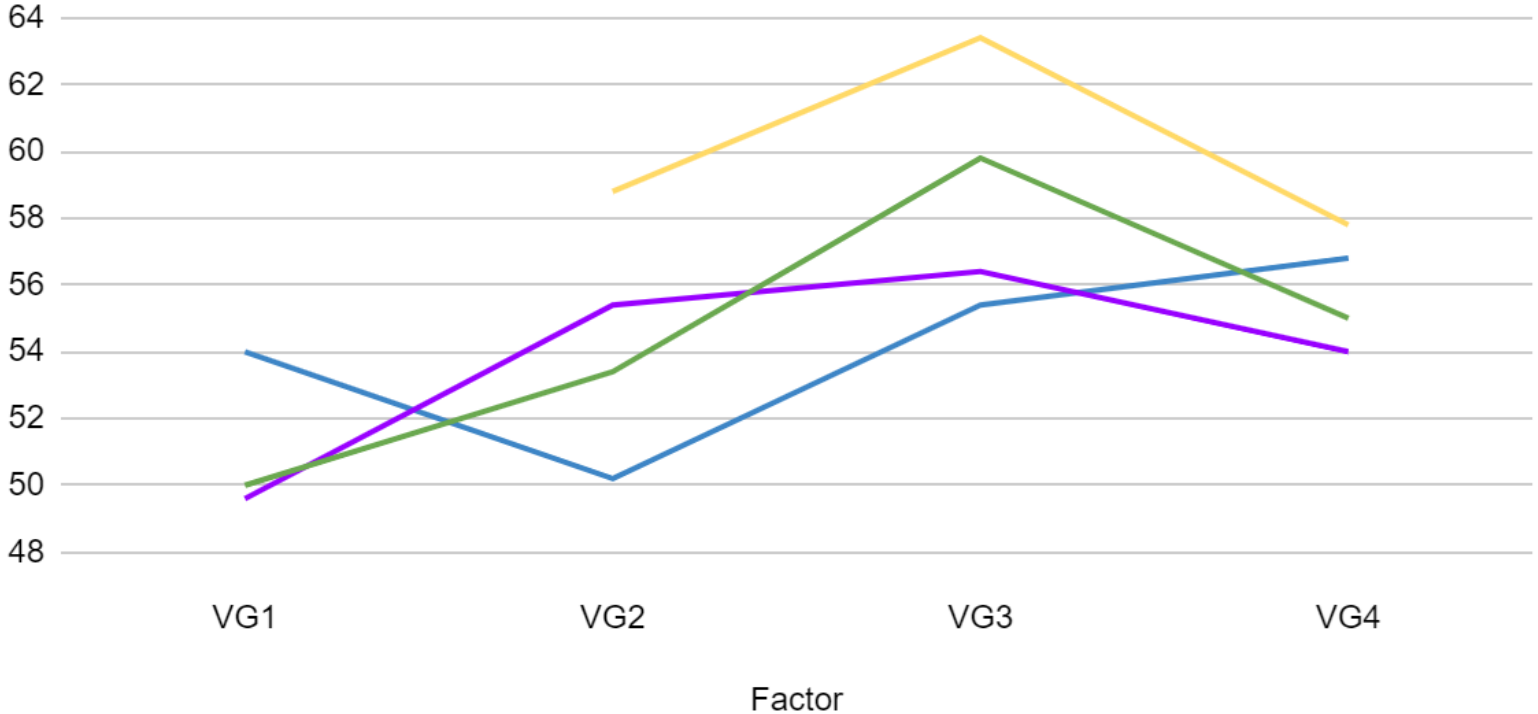
% of Maximum

Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4	Total
Pathfinders	54.0	50.2	55.4	56.8	54.0
Conference youth camps/reallies		58.8	63.4	57.8	60.0
Short-term mission project	50.0	53.4	59.8	55.0	54.4
Evangelical outreach	49.6	55.4	56.4	54.0	53.8

Note. N: Pathfinders = 43688, Conference youth camps/reallies = 31298, Short-term mission project = 43560, Evangelical outreach = 43577; **p <.01.

Event Influence: % of Maximum Mean Score

Pathfinders Conference youth camps/reallies Evangelical outreach
Short-term mission project



Descriptive Analysis of School Influence Factors

Mean Score

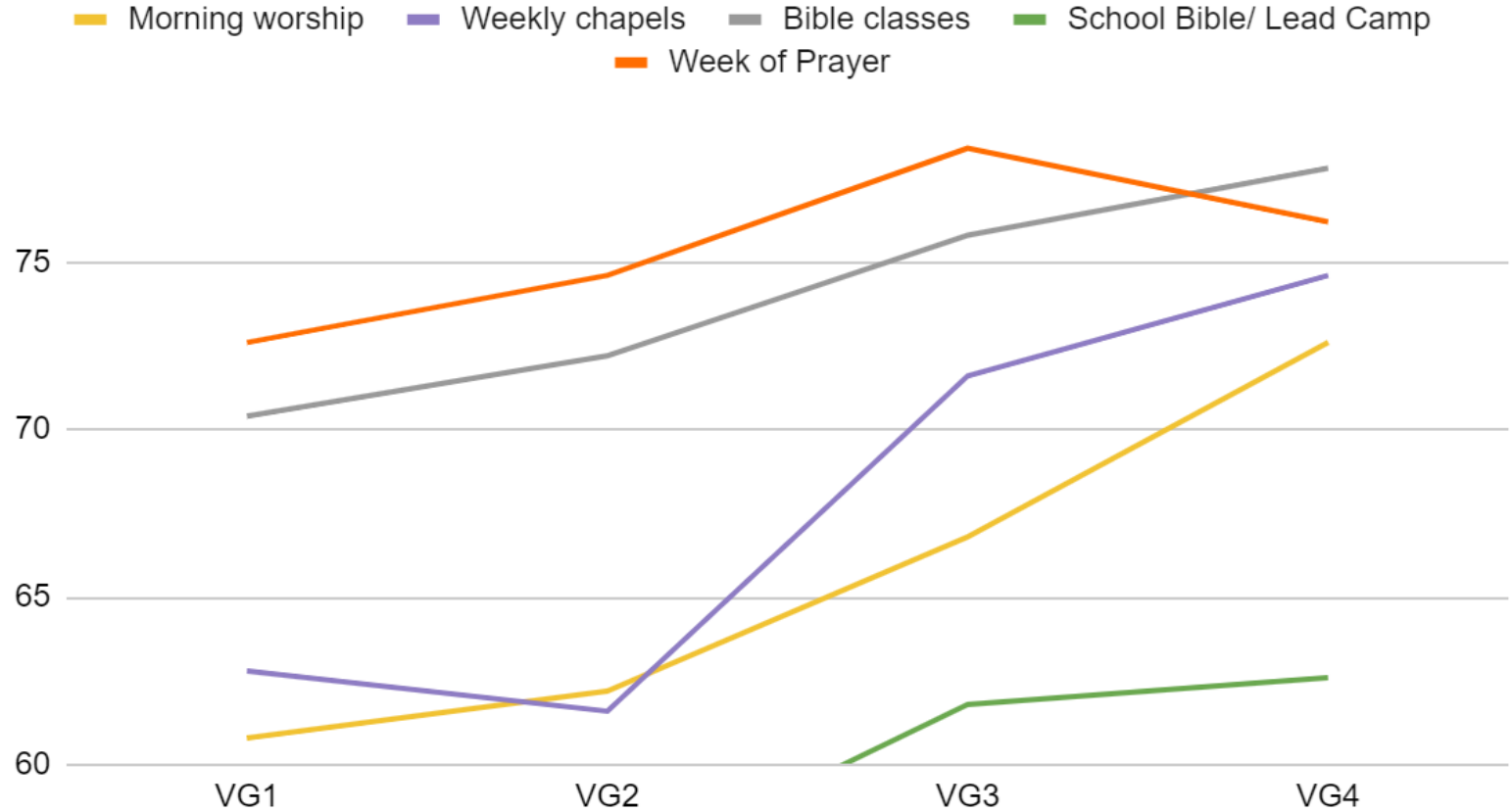
Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4	Total
Morning worship	3.04	3.11	3.34	3.63	3.26
Weekly chapels	3.14	3.08	3.58	3.73	3.36
Bible classes	3.52	3.61	3.79	3.89	3.69
School Bible/ Lead Camp	2.78	2.83	3.09	3.13	2.94
Week of Prayer	3.63	3.73	3.92	3.81	3.77

% of Maximum

Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4	Total
Morning worship	60.8	62.2	66.8	72.6	65.2
Weekly chapels	62.8	61.6	71.6	74.6	67.2
Bible classes	70.4	72.2	75.8	77.8	73.8
School Bible/ Lead Camp	55.6	56.6	61.8	62.6	58.8
Week of Prayer	72.6	74.6	78.4	76.2	75.4

Note. /: Morning worship = 43879, Weekly chapels = 43831, Bible classes = 43861, School Bible/ Lead Camp = 43753,, Week of Prayer = 43822; **p <.01.

Descriptive Analysis of School Influence Factors



Descriptive Analysis of School Influence Factors

Mean Score

Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4	Total
My bible teacher		3.54	3.72	3.78	3.67
Teacher's faith		3.38	3.53	3.54	3.48
Campus Chaplain			2.78	2.82	2.80
Community outreach at school	2.66	2.83	3.23	3.00	2.92
Attending an Adventist school		3.93	4.16	4.04	4.04

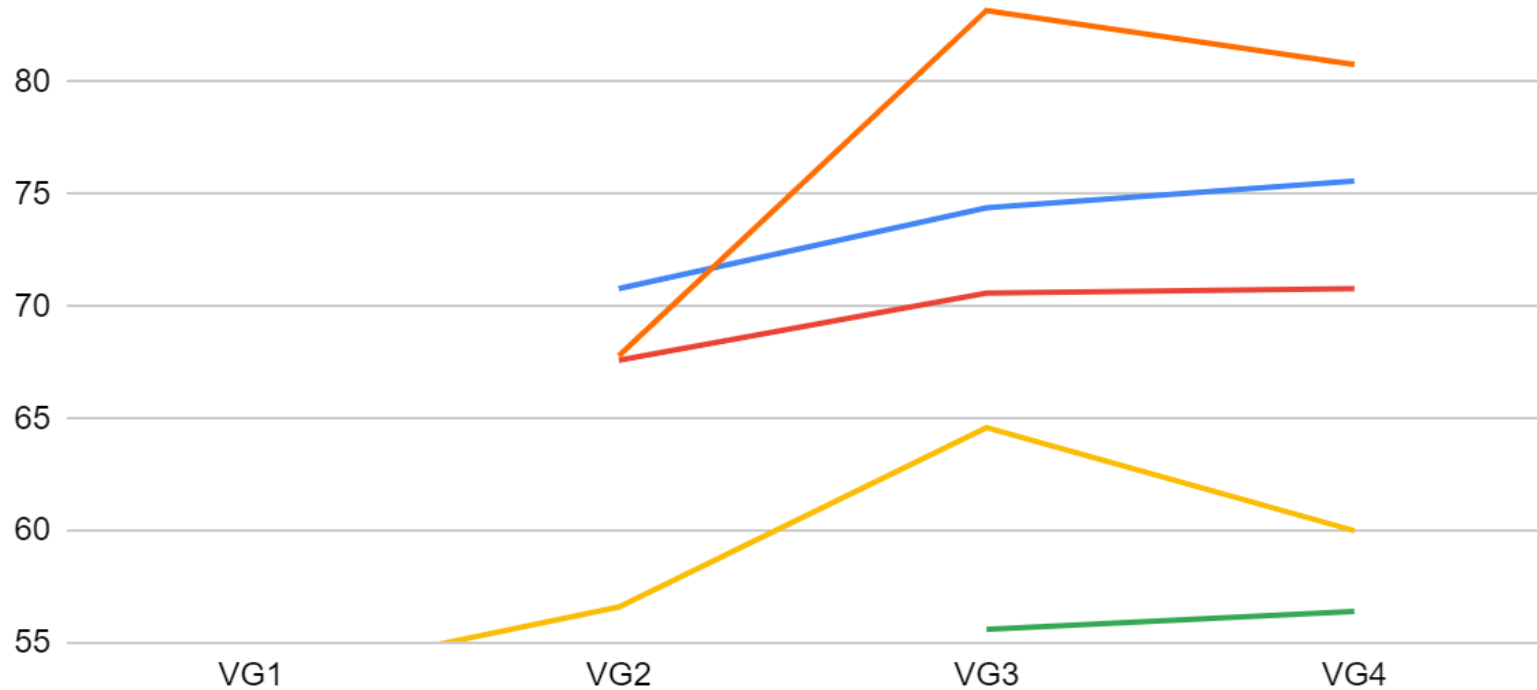
% of Maximum

Factor	VG1	VG2	VG3	VG4	Total
My bible teacher		70.8	74.4	75.6	73.4
Teacher's faith		67.6	70.6	70.8	69.6
Campus Chaplain			55.6	56.4	56.0
Community outreach at school	53.2	56.6	64.6	60.0	58.4
Attending an Adventist school		67.8	83.2	80.8	80.8

Note. N: My bible teacher = 31417, My bible teacher = 31338, Campus Chaplain = 19838, Community outreach at school = 43708, Attending an Adventist school = 31349; **p <.01.

School Influence Factor: % of Maximum Score

My bible teacher Teacher's faith Community outreach at school Campus Chaplain
Attending an Adventist school



Predicting Family and Church Factor to Youth Religious Faith

Predictor	Family			Church		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β
Constant	3.59**	.01		3.52**	.01	
Female	.05**	.01	.03	.10**	.01	.06
Senior	-.19**	.01	-.10	-.13**	.01	-.07
Asian	.07**	.02	.02	.00	.02	.00
Black	.13**	.02	.04	.12**	.02	.04
Hispanic	.06**	.02	.02	.03*	.02	.01
White	.03**	.01	.02	.07**	.01	.04
<i>F (df)</i>	62.180** (6, 31542)			68.730** (6, 44109)		
<i>R sq.</i>	.01			.01		

Note. * $p < .01$; ** $p < .05$

Predicting School and Event Factor to Youth Religious Faith

Predictor	School			Event		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β
Constant	3.55**	.01		2.84**	.01	
Female	.13**	.01	.07	.05**	.01	.03
Senior	-.18**	.01	-.10	-.07**	.01	-.03
Asian	.11**	.02	.04	.05**	.02	.02
Black	.16**	.02	.06	.13**	.02	.04
Hispanic	.13**	.06	.05	.20**	.02	.07
White	-.05**	.01	-.03	-.10**	.01	-.05
<i>F (df)</i>	177.904** (6, 44075)			99.095** (6, 44036)		
<i>R sq.</i>	.02			.01		

Note. * $p < .01$; ** $p < .05$

#1 Take-Home Findings

Influence of Factors on Youth Religious Faith:

- Event < Church = School < Family
- School and family consistently influence over church-related factors
- Youth's activities and programs are comparatively less impactful

2 Take Home Findings

Differences of Pattern Influence: VG1- VG4

	Most Influence (M >3.5)	Less Influence (M <3.0)
VG1	Attending an Adventist school (3.93), Week of prayer at school (3.63)	Evangelical outreach (2.48), Short-term mission project (2.50)
VG2	Attending an Adventist school (3.93), Mother's faith (3.76)	Religious youth organization at church (2.47), Pathfinder (2.51)
VG3	Attending an Adventist school (4.16), Mother's faith (3.83)	Pathfinder (2.77), Campus Chaplain (2.78)
VG4	Attending an Adventist school (4.04), Mother's faith (3.91)	Evangelical outreach (2.70), Short-term mission project (2.72)

Findings #1 and #2

Similarities: Family and Event Influence

Christian Smith's works, *Soul Searching* (2005) and *Souls in Transition* (2009),

- **Significant Parental Influence:** Parents play a crucial role in shaping their children's religious beliefs and practices.
- **Limited Impact of Youth Programs:** Participation in evangelization missions and youth groups does not predict religiosity in young adulthood.
- **Exaggerated Perception of Decline:** There is an exaggerated perception of a sharp decline in religiosity among youth.

Related Research: School Influence

While many studies suggest that schools have limited or indirect influence on youth faith development, our research indicates that **schools actually play a significant role**, with their impact increasing over time.

#3 Take Home Findings

- **Gender Differences:**

- Factors influencing faith development tend to affect females more than males.

- **Age Impact:**

- As youth mature, the influence of family, church, school, and event on their faith tends to decrease.

- **Ethnicity:**

- Different ethnicities experience these factors in varied ways, affecting their religious beliefs and practices.

Conclusion & Implication

The factors influencing youth in their faith development—such as family, church, school, and various events have changed over time

Demographic differences moderate how these factors contribute to youth faith development.

=> **These changes highlight the potential impacts on religious education and the future of the church.**

Thank You!

Website: <https://faithinstitution.org>



Three Decades of Understanding Adventist Youth

The ValueGenesis (VG) Project is a research effort that has been going strong for over thirty years, providing a unique window into the lives, beliefs, and experiences of Adventist young people. This enduring collaboration involves the North American Division (NAD) Office of Education, the John Hancock Center for Youth and Family Ministry at La Sierra University (LSU), and a dedicated team of researchers. Together, they have conducted three previous studies known as VG1 (1990), VG2 (2000), and VG3 (2010). These investigations have offered crucial insights into the Seventh-day Adventist community.

Questions or Observations

**The Evolving Influence of Family, School, and Church on Youth
Religious Faith**

Vy Cao & Chang-Ho Ji