



Beliefs in miraculous healings, religiosity and meaning in life



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INTRODUCTION:

For centuries many philosophers, theologians, physicians and psychologists offered interpretations of miraculous healings. Different approaches to miracles originated from differences in understanding God (transcendent or immanent) and nature (deterministic or indeterministic) and the relationship between God and nature. Despite many sceptical arguments, a vast majority of people (even 87%; Mansfield, 2002) in modern Western societies share a belief in miracles, millions sick people pilgrimage to sanctuaries seeking for miracles and the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints proclaimed hundreds decrees about miracles through last decades and majority of them were miraculous healings (Pawlikowski, 2007).

AIM OF THE RESEARCH:

- Description the social perception of miraculous healings;
- Assessment of the relationship between the beliefs in miraculous healings, religiosity and meaning in life.

PARTICIPANTS:

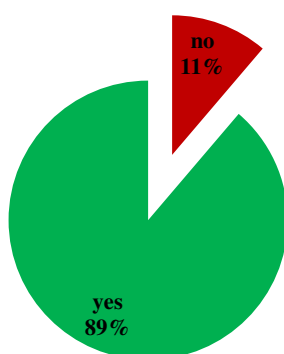
- N= 178 (women: 69,7%);
- Age: 18 – 30 years (M=21,5; SD=2,31);
- Denomination: 90% Catholics.

METHODS:

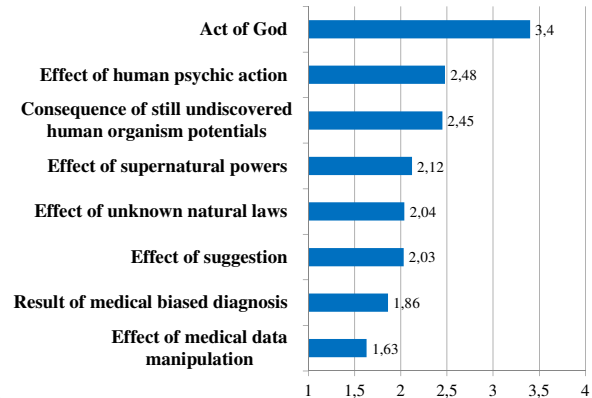
- Duke University Religion Index - DUREL (Koenig & Büssing, 2010);
- Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ: Presence of Meaning in Life, and the Search for Meaning in Life (Steger et al., 2006);
- Beliefs about Miraculous Healings Scale (Wiechetek & Pawlikowki, 2012).

RESULTS:

Belief in miracles:



Miraculous healing is (1 - definitely not; 4 definitely yes):



Interplay between religiosity and the interpretation of miraculous healing (Spearman's rank correlation coefficient):

| Miraculous healing is: | Religiosity: | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Organizational religious activity | Non-organizational religious activity | Intrinsic religiosity |
| Act of God | .655** | .469** | .680** |
| Effect of supernatural powers | -.025 | -.024 | -.037 |
| Result of medical biased diagnosis | -.458** | -.383** | -.453** |
| Effect of unknown natural laws | -.433** | -.341** | -.456** |
| Effect of human psychic action | -.488** | -.382** | -.543** |
| Effect of suggestion | -.516** | -.350** | -.516** |
| Effect of medical data manipulation | -.427** | -.303** | -.431** |
| Consequence of still undiscovered human organism potentials | -.488** | -.410** | -.548** |

* p<.05; ** p<.01

Interplay between meaning in life and the interpretation of miraculous healings (Spearman's rank correlation coefficient):

| Miraculous healing is: | Meaning in life | |
|---|-----------------|--------|
| | Presence | Search |
| Act of God | .171* | .024 |
| Effect of supernatural powers | -.057 | .089 |
| Result of medical biased diagnosis | -.230** | .047 |
| Effect of unknown natural laws | -.180* | .035 |
| Effect of human psychic action | -.139 | .036 |
| Effect of suggestion | -.090 | .061 |
| Effect of medical data manipulation | -.216** | .125 |
| Consequence of still undiscovered human organism potentials | -.159* | .036 |

* p<.05; ** p<.01

CONCLUSION:

Religiosity and meaning in life is connected with understanding miraculous healings in transcendental and non-naturalistic way. The Cause of those phenomena is perceived more as specific person than an unknown factor.

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