

# What can values teach us about meaning of being moral among religious and Non-religious Groups?

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# What is morality?



- Classic views of morality: A social infraction is judged as a moral violation if it violates an **objective obligation**
- Growing evidence of cross-cultural differences regarding what is included in the moral domain (e.g., Guerra, & Giner-Sorolla, 2010; Haidt & Graham, 2007)

- Schwartz Values Theory (1992) - a unifying theoretical perspective for exploring cross-cultural differences in moral outlooks.

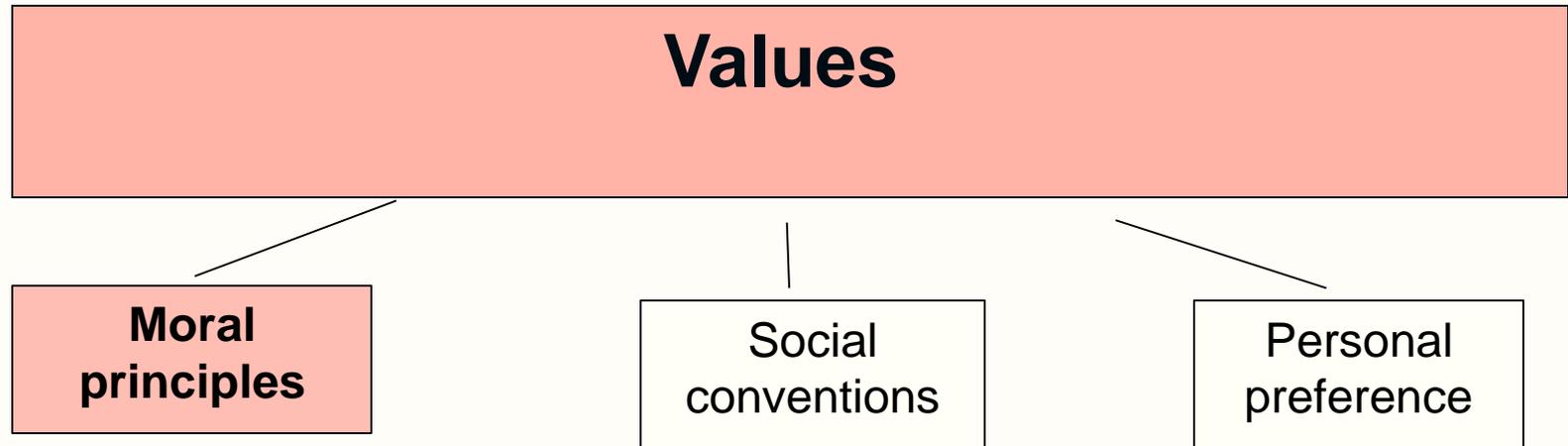
# Values (Like Moral Principles) are:

- **Criteria** to select/evaluate/justify actions, people and events.
- **Transcend specific** circumstances.
- Inherently **socially desirable**.

(Sverdlik , Roccas , & Sagiv, 2012)



# Values (Unlike Moral Principles) are:



**Values:** Any socially desirable broad motivational goal.

(Sverdlik , Roccas , & Sagiv, 2012)

# **Religiosity and the value of being moral**

(Sverdlik &Rechter , European Journal of Social Psychology, 2019)

# Religiosity

- An important cultural dimension (Tarakeshwar, Stanton, & Pargament, 2003).
- Religious and non-religious sectors of the population represent distinct subcultures, with different norms and modes of behaviors (e.g., Katz-Gerro, Raz, & Yaish, 2009).



# **Study 1. The importance of being moral as a function of peoples values and religiosity**

- What are the values associated with the importance of being moral?
- How does religiosity moderate these associations?

# Study 1. The importance of being moral as a function of peoples values and religiosity

## Method

- **Sample:** Religious and non-religious (N=337) undergraduate Israeli Jews (82% female,  $M_{age}=24.4$ ,  $SD=4.6$ , ranging between 19 and 57).
- **Measures:**
  - **Religiosity affiliation.** Participants rated their level of religiosity on an 8-point scale, ranging from 0 (*Not at all religious*) to 7 (*Very religious*).
  - **Values:** SVS (46- items; Schwartz, 1992)
  - **Being moral:** To the SVS we added an item labeled "being moral."

בשאלון זה עליך לשאול את עצמך: **"אילו ערכים חשובים לי כעקרונות מנחים בחיי, ואילו חשובים לי פחות?"**  
 בהמשך העמוד מופיעה רשימת ערכים. בסוגריים ליד כל ערך מופיע הסבר שיכול לעזור לך להבין את משמעותו.  
 עליך לציין את מידת החשיבות של כל ערך עבורך, כעקרון מנחה בחיך. השתמש בסולם החשיבות שלמטה:

(0) משמעותו שהערך כלל אינו חשוב לך, כלומר אינו רלוונטי לך כעיקרון מנחה.

(3) משמעותו שהערך חשוב לך.

(6) משמעותו שהערך חשוב לך מאד.

ככל שהמספר גבוה יותר (0,1,2,3,4,5,6), כך הערך חשוב לך יותר כעקרון מנחה בחיך.

(-1) יציין ערכים המנוגדים לעקרונות המנחים אותך בחיך.

(7) יציין ערך בעל חשיבות עליונה כעקרון מנחה בחיך; בדרך כלל לא צפויים להיות יותר משניים כאלה.

**ליד כל ערך רשום את המספר** (0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7, -1) המצביע על חשיבותו של אותו ערך עבורך אישית.

נסה להבחין ככל האפשר בין הערכים על ידי שימוש בכל המספרים. יהיה עליך, כמובן, להשתמש באותו מספר יותר מפעם אחת.

		כעקרון מנחה בחיי, הערך:								
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	-1
מנוגד לערכי	לא חשוב				חשוב			חשוב מאד	בעל חשיבות עליונה	
	חשוב									

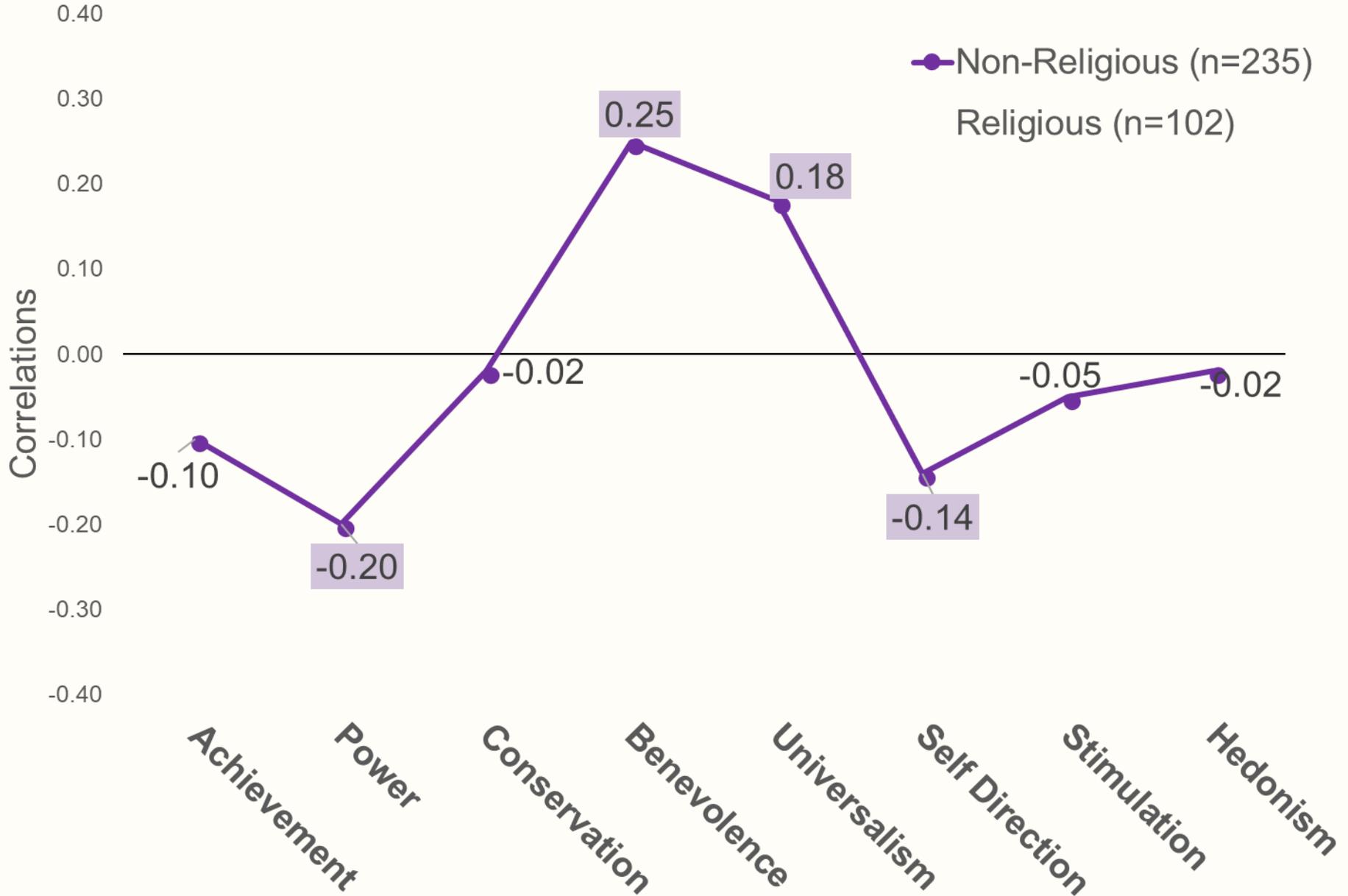
**לפני שתתחיל**, קרא את הערכים 1 עד 47 ובחר את הערך החשוב ביותר עבורך. ציין את חשיבותו.

**לאחר מכן**, בחר את הערך המנוגד ביותר לערכיך, וציין אותו ב -1. אם אין כזה, בחר בערך הפחות חשוב עבורך, וציין אותו ב 0 או ב 1, לפי חשיבותו. **לאחר מכן**, ציין את חשיבותם של שאר הערכים. השתמש בסולם שלמעלה.

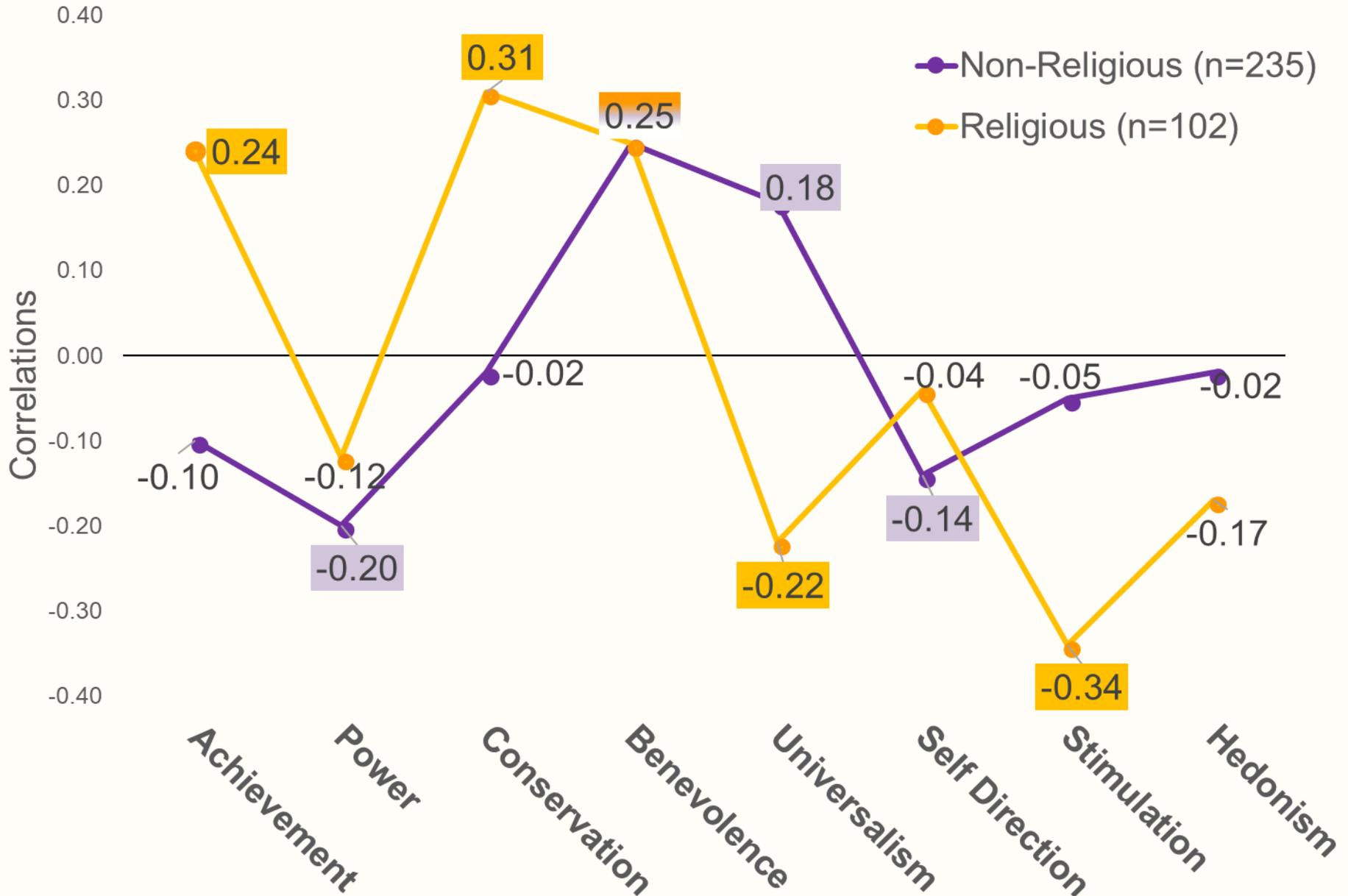
1. _____ שוויון (שוויון הזדמנויות לכל)	24. _____ נאמן (מסור לחברי ולבני קבוצתי)
2. _____ כוח חברתי (שליטה על אחרים, דומיננטיות)	25. _____ שאפתן (עובד קשה, בעל אמביציה)
3. _____ עונג (סיפוק צרכים)	26. _____ רחב אופקים (סובלני לדעות ואמונות שונות)

47. \_\_\_\_\_ להיות מוסרי (לנהוג בדרכים מוסריות)

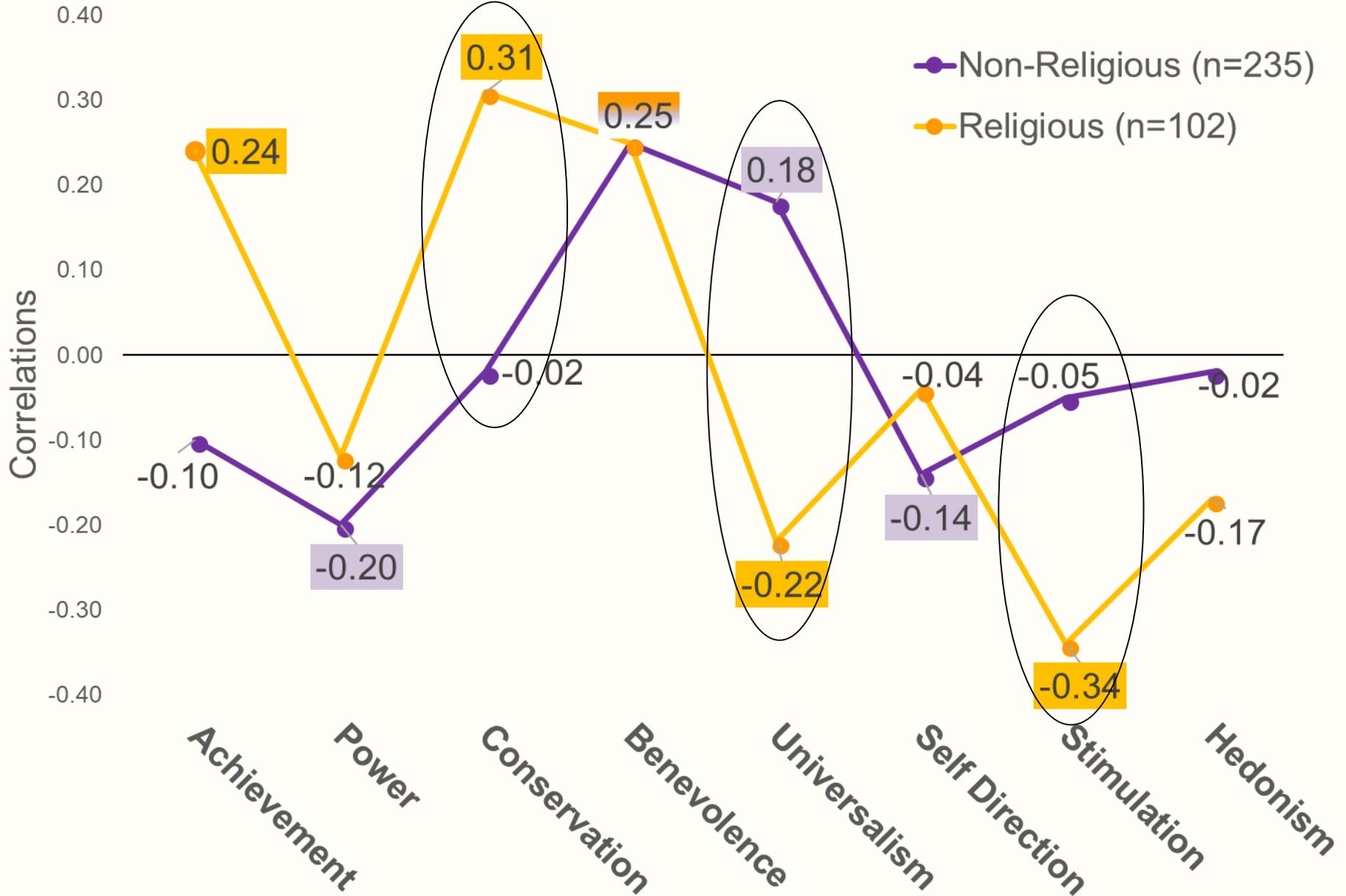
# Correlations between values and the importance of “being moral” among religious and non religious individuals



# Correlations between values and the importance of “being moral” among religious and non religious individuals



# Correlations between values and the importance of “being moral” among religious and non religious individuals



# Study 1: Summary

- The importance of being moral is positively related to benevolence in both sub-cultures.
- But, other values are differentially associated with the importance of being moral as a function of people's religiosity.
- The meaning of morality.

# Study 2: Which values make you the “Ideal moral person”?

- Moving to examine differences in the morality attributed to people with different values.



# Study 2: Which values make you the “Ideal moral person”?

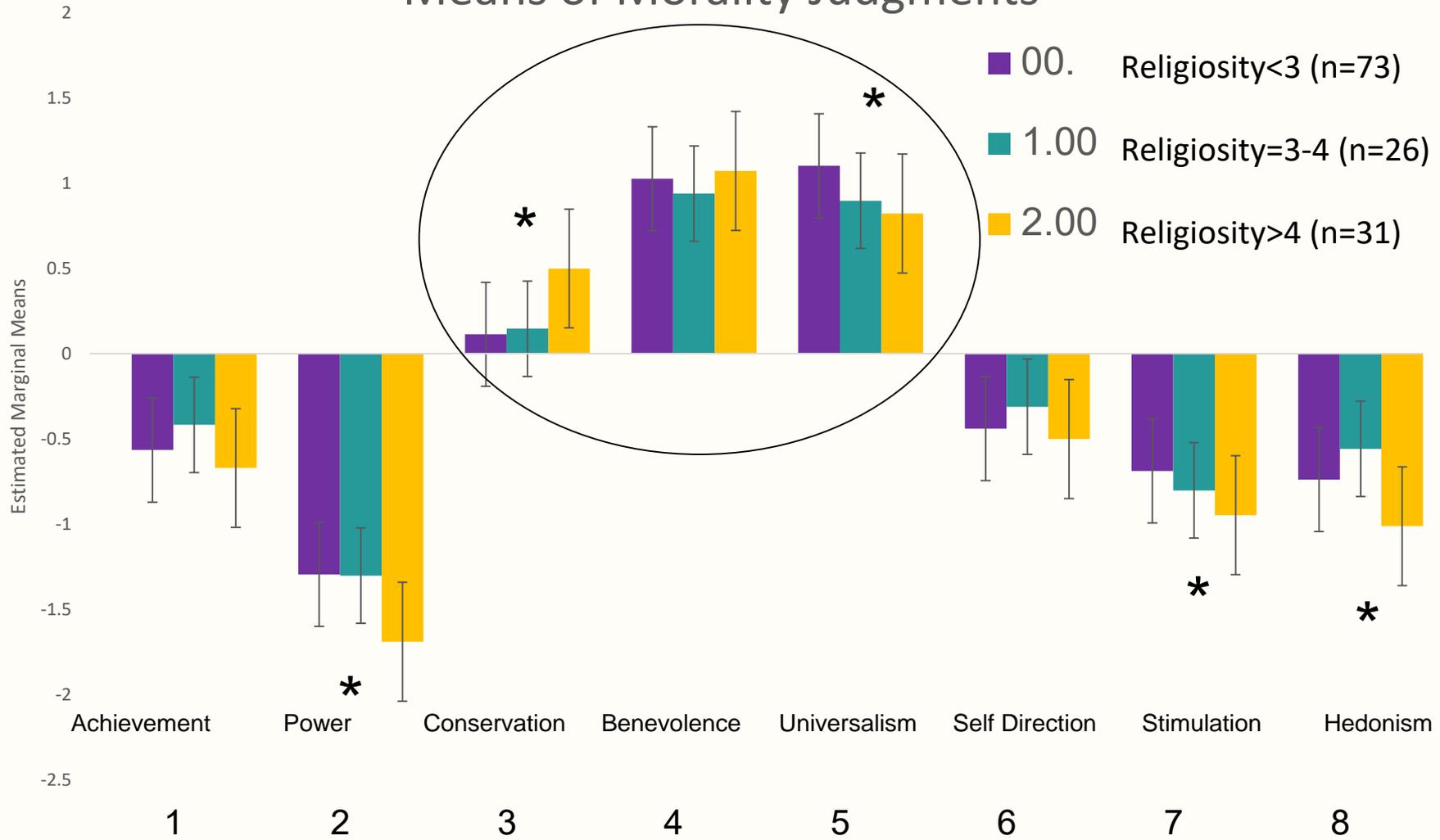
## Method

**Sample:** Participants were 131 Jewish Israeli students (88.5% females, 83.2% Israeli born,  $M_{age}=26$ ,  $SD=5.5$ , ranging between 18 and 46).

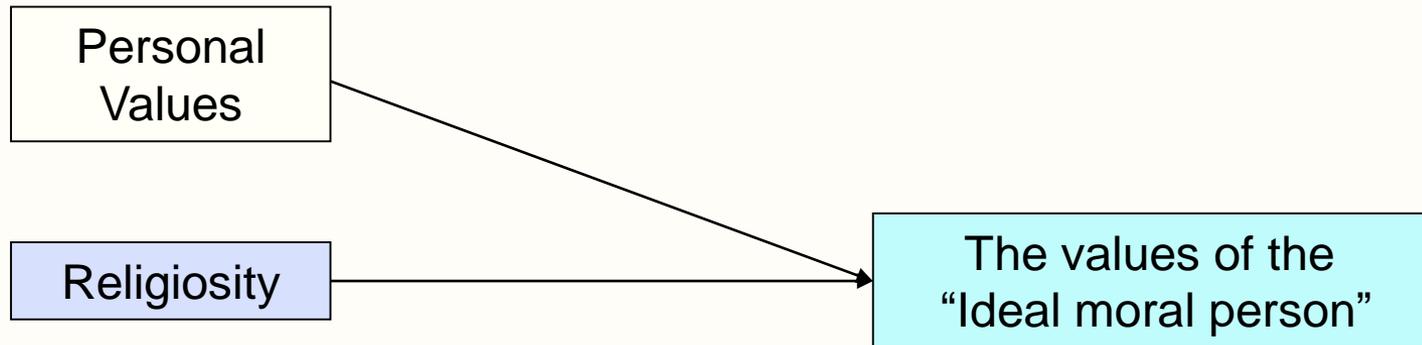
לפניך תיאורים קצרים של גברים שונים. קרא/י בבקשה כל תאור ובהתבסס עליו חשוב/חשבי עד כמה כל דמות מוסרית בעיניך. סמני X בריבוע משמאל המתאר עד כמה הגבר המתואר מוסרי.

עד כמה גבר זה מוסרי בעיניך?							
בכלל לא מוסרי	לא מוסרי	קצת לא מוסרי	אולי מוסרי ואולי לא מוסרי	די מוסרי	מוסרי	מאד מוסרי	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. חשוב לו להעלות רעיונות חדשים ולהיות יצירתי. הוא אוהב לעשות דברים בדרך מקורית משלו.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. חשוב לו להיות עשיר. הוא רוצה שיהיה לו הרבה כסף ושהיו לו דברים יקרים.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. לדעתו כל אדם בעולם צריך לקבל יחס שווה. הוא מאמין שלכל אחד מגיעות הזדמנויות שוות בחיים.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. חשוב לו מאוד להפגין את כישוריו. הוא רוצה שאנשים

# Means of Morality Judgments



Are the effects of religiosity on morality judgments fully explained by differences in individual values priorities?



## Study 2: Regression Analyses for Religiosity Affiliation and Personal Values Predicting Morality Judgments of Value-Portrait, Controlling for Age (N=131)

Variable	B	SE	$\beta$	p
<b><u>Conservation Portrait</u></b>				
Age	-.01	.01	-.10	ns
Conservation Values	.21	.06	.30	.001
Religiosity affiliation	.04	.02	.24	.011
<b><u>Universalism Portrait</u></b>				
Age	.00	.01	.01	ns
Universalism Values	.23	.07	.29	.001
Religiosity affiliation	-.04	.02	-.20	.022
<b><u>Stimulation Portrait</u></b>				
Age	.01	.01	.08	Ns
Stimulation Values	.05	.04	-.12	Ns
Religiosity affiliation	-.05	.02	-.19	.037

# Study 2: Summary

- Morality judgments of value manifestations are predicted by participants subculture.
- A cultural “morally-ideal” person is defined based on the values which that person promotes or suppresses.

**Religious and secular roads to justify wrongdoing: Values interact with culture in explaining moral disengagement attitudes**

(Sverdlik & Rechter ,under review)

# Study 3: Cultural differences in the relationship between values and moral disengagement attitudes

- **Moral disengagement:** Cognitive mechanisms that deactivate moral self-regulatory processes that normally inhibit unethical behavior
- **8 moral disengagement mechanisms.**

(Bandura, 1986).

**Moral justification**

It's ok to steal to take care of your family's needs.

**Advantageous comparison**

Damaging some property is no big deal when you consider that others are beating up people.

**Euphemistic labeling**

Sharing test questions is just a way of helping your friends.

**Minimizing/misconstruing the consequence**

Insults don't really hurt anyone

**Attribution of Blame**

People who are mistreated have usually done things to deserve it

**Dehumanization**

Some people deserve to be treated like animals

**Displacement of responsibility**

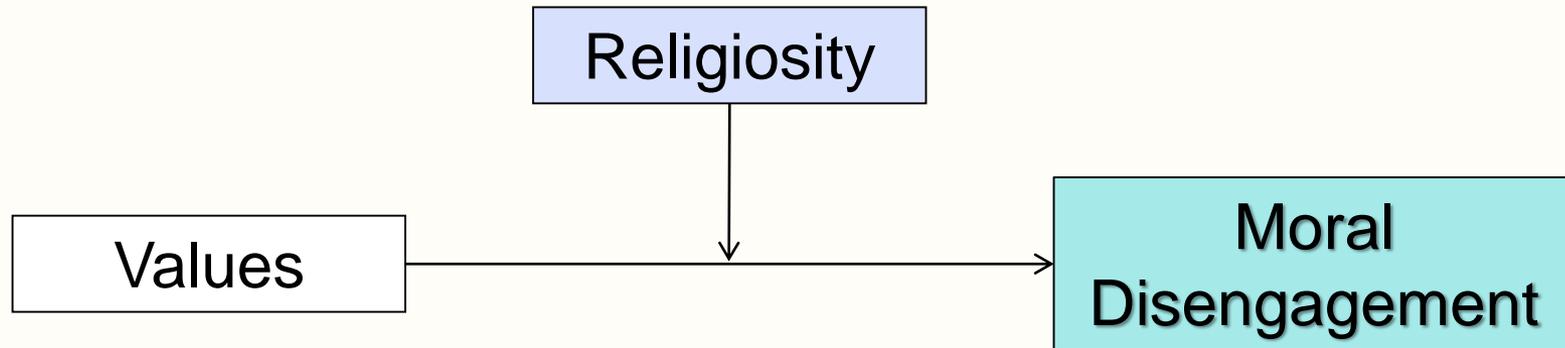
People cannot be blamed for misbehaving if their friends pressured them to do it

**Diffusion of responsibility**

You can't blame a person who plays only a small part in the harm caused by a group

**(Detert, Klebe-Treviño, & Sweitzer, 2008)**

# Study 3: Cultural differences in the relationship between values and moral disengagement



# Study 3: cultural differences in the relationship between values and moral disengagement strategies

## Method

**Sample:** Israeli Jewish college and university students (N=333; 63.1% females;  $M_{age} = 23.91$ ;  $SD = 4.23$ ; age range 18-54)

- Graduated from secular state schools (n=176)
- Graduated from orthodox independent schools (n=117)
- Graduated from religious state-schools (n=40).

# **Study 3: cultural differences in the relationship between values and moral disengagement**

## **Method**

### **➤ Measures:**

➤ Values: SVS (46- items; Schwartz, 1992)

➤ Moral disengagement: (24-items, Detert, e al., 2008)

# Study 3: Summary

- Are you indeed more moral if you have your “cultural-moral-ideal” values priority?
- Findings support this idea to some extent.

# Study 4: Values' effect on Dehumanization

- Dehumanization: the perception of a person or a group as lacking humaneness.

	Conservation	Universalism	Openness
Religious	-		++
Nonreligious	++	-	

# Method

**Participants:** Participants were Jewish Israeli female college students ( $N=251$ ;  $M_{\text{age}}=23.21$ ,  $SD=4.26$ , range 18–50). Of these, 119 had graduated from a secular state school (secular group) and 132 from an ultra-Orthodox independent school (orthodox group).

## DV- Dehumanization:

e.g., “Some people deserve to be treated like animals” ( $\alpha=.84$ ).

1	2	3	4	5	22. יש אנשים שמגיע להם שהתנהגו אליהם כמו לחיות.
1	2	3	4	5	23. זה בסדר להתייחס רע למי שהתנהג כמו חיה.
1	2	3	4	5	24. למישהו מגעיל לא מגיע יחס של בן-אדם.

# Method-Cont.

**Values manipulation.** A modification of Roccas et al.'s (2010) accessibility of values manipulation.

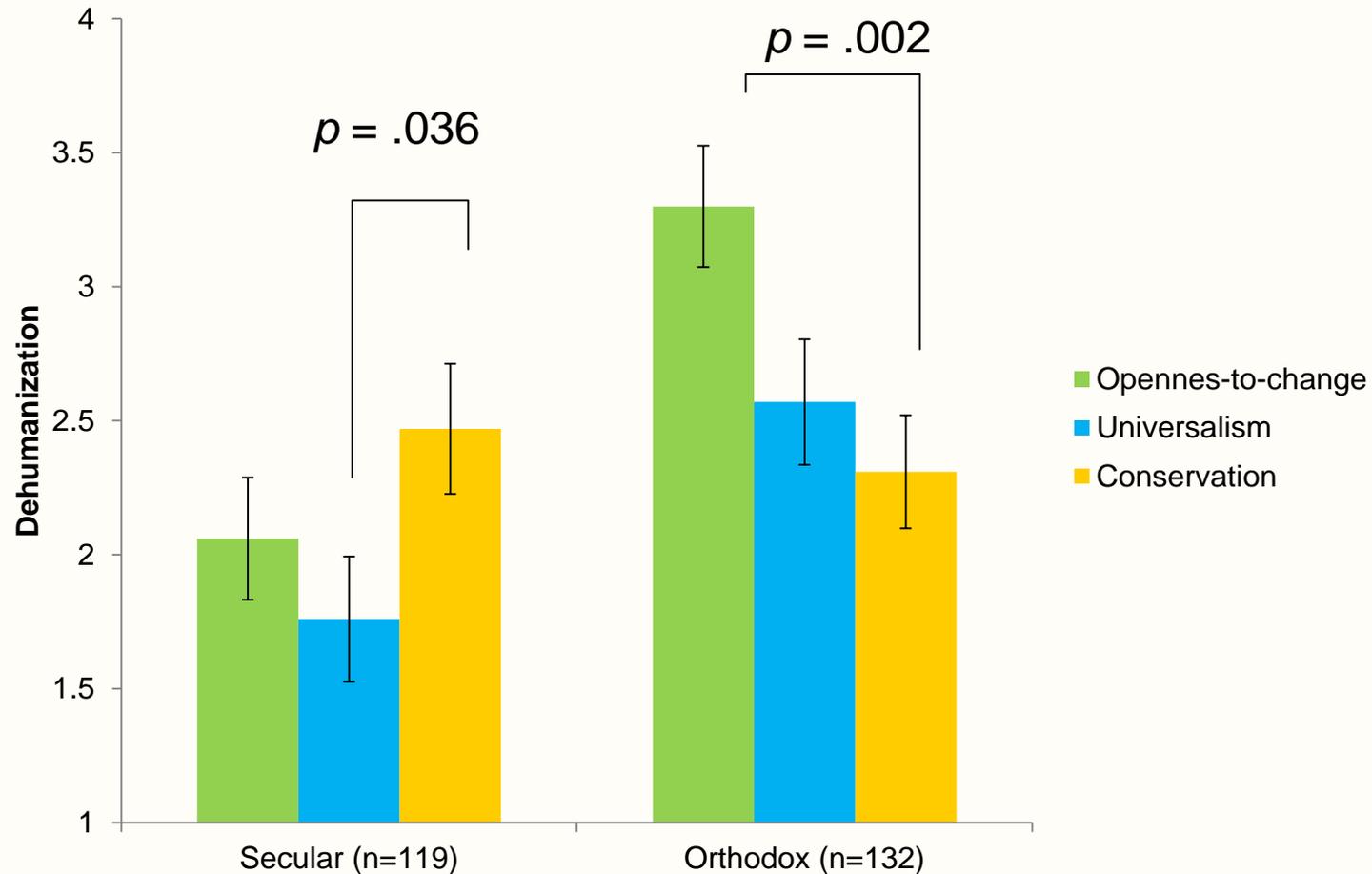
*Here are descriptions of 6 students who need to hand up in couples an academic assignment. Please read the description of each student and allocate 2 students to each couple, matching them according to how similar they are.*

**Conditions** (with examples of 2 out of 6 students for each condition)

	<b>Group 1: Conservation</b>	<b>Group 2: Universalism</b>	<b>Group 3: Openness to Change</b>
<b>Student 1</b>	<i>It is important to her to live in secure surroundings. She avoids anything that might endanger her safety</i>	<i>She thinks it is important that every person in the world be treated equally. She believes everyone should have equal opportunities in life</i>	<i>It is important to her to make her own decisions about what she does. She likes to be free to plan and to choose her activities for herself</i>
<b>Student 2</b>	<i>She thinks it is best to do things in traditional ways. It is important to her to keep up the customs she has learned</i>	<i>She wants everyone to be treated justly, even people she doesn't know. It is important to her to protect the weak in society</i>	<i>She likes surprises. It is important to her to have an exciting life</i>

- Values are culturally related inhibitors of moral disengagement e.g., conservation values contribute to greater accountability in comparison to openness to change values, only in cultures that highlight conservation.

*Means and standard errors of dehumanization attitudes in each cultural group as a function of values accessibility manipulation (N=251)*



$F(2, 245) = 4.94, p = .008, \eta^2 = .036.$

# The Take Home Message

- By exploring the links between personal values and moral related attitudes/behaviors we can better understand what is the meaning of being a moral person for people from different sub-cultures.
- Revealing these differences can promote a “tailored educational intervention” approach.

**Thank You**