



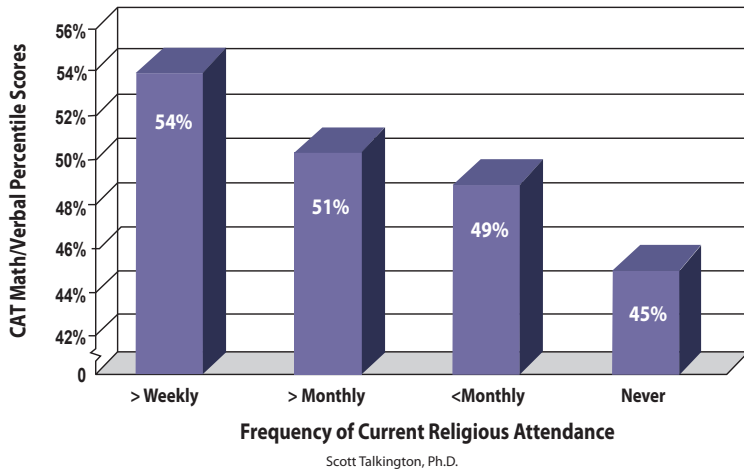
Mapping America™

Marriage, Religion, and the Common Good – Number 108

“CAT (Common Admissions Test) Math/Verbal Percentile Scores” by Current Religious Attendance and Structure of Family of Origin

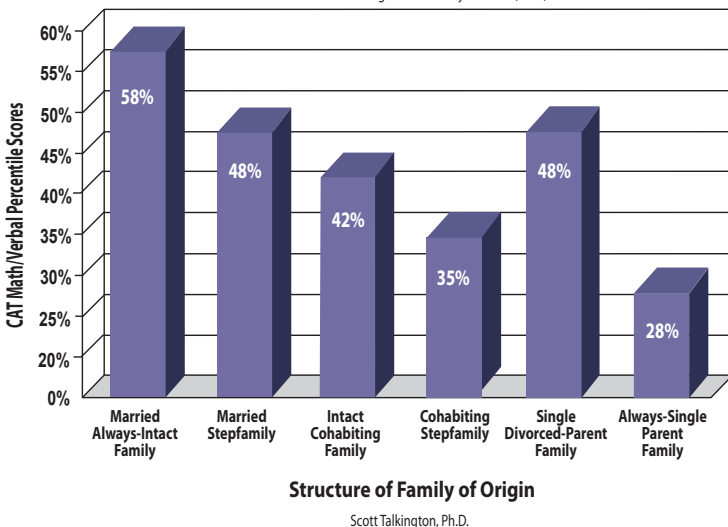
“CAT Math/Verbal Percentile Scores”
by Current Religious Attendance

Source: National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (1997)

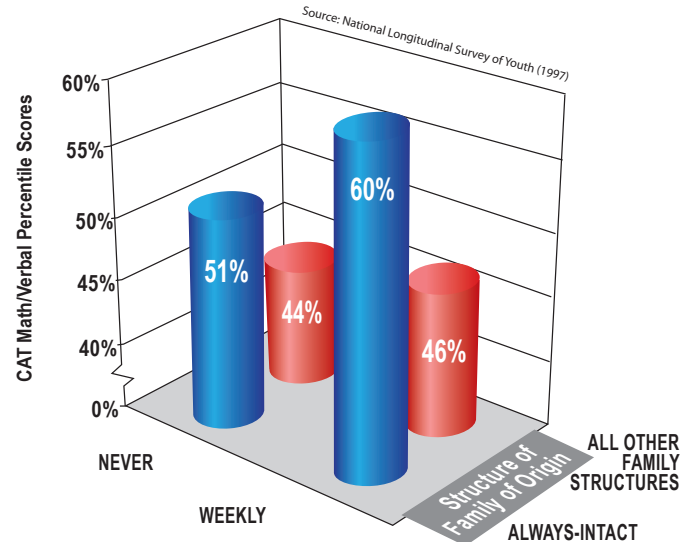


“CAT Math/Verbal Percentile Scores”
by Structure of Family of Origin

Source: National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (1997)



“CAT Math/Verbal Percentile Scores”
by Current Religious Attendance and Structure of Family of Origin



Current Religious Attendance and Structure of Family of Origin Combined
Scott Talkington, Ph.D.

This chart looks at the percentile rankings of those who have taken the CAT (Common Admissions Test) at the extremes of four demographic quadrants.

These four quadrants are derived from combining two sets of family structures (always-intact vs. all other family structures*) and two sets of religious attendance (weekly vs. never).

The families occupying the four corners (or four extremes) of these quadrants are:

The always-intact married family that worships weekly;

The always-intact married family that never worships;

All other family structures* that worship weekly;

All other family structures* that never worship.

(*The non-intact group consists of individuals in the following categories: married stepfamily, cohabiting stepfamily, single divorced parent, and always-single parent. In all these structures, there has been rejection between the biological father and mother, and thus the original pairing is no longer intact.)

“CAT (Common Admissions Test) Math/Verbal Percentile Scores” by Current Religious Attendance and Structure of Family of Origin

The 1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth shows that those who grew up in an intact married family and currently worship at least weekly have higher CAT (Common Admissions Test, the entrance exam for Indian business schools) math and verbal scores.

Description: Examining only **structure of family of origin**, children from married, always-intact families scored in the 58th percentile, followed by children from married stepfamilies and divorced single-parent families (48th percentile). Children from intact cohabiting families scored in the 42nd percentile, children from cohabiting stepfamilies scored in the 35th percentile, and children from always-single parent families scored in the 28th percentile.

Examining only **current religious attendance**, those who attend religious services at least weekly score in the 54th percentile, those who attend at least monthly score in the 51st percentile, those who attend less than monthly score in the 49th percentile, and those who never attend religious services score in the 45th percentile.

Examining **current religious attendance and structure of family of origin combined**, those from always-intact families who attend religious services at least weekly score in the 60th percentile on the CAT. Those from always-intact families who never attend religious services score in the 51st percentile. Among those from all other family structures, the difference is less pronounced: those from all other family structures who attend religious services at least weekly score in the 46th percentile, and those from all other family structures who never attend score in the 44th percentile.

Related Insight from Other Studies

A study conducted by Grace Kao of the University of Chicago found that among Asian youth in the United States, living in a single-mother family had a particularly detrimental affect on grades.¹

The results of a study of religiosity and the academic achievements of minority students by Professor William H. Jeynes of California State University, Long Beach, “indicate that very religious Black and Hispanic students outperformed less religious students in academic achievement.”²

Patrick F. Fagan, Ph.D. and Scott Talkington, Ph.D.

Dr. Fagan is senior fellow and director of the Marriage and Religion Research Institute (MARRI) at Family Research Council.

Scott Talkington has been Research Director for the National Association of Scholars and Senior Research Fellow at George Mason University School of Public Policy since 1998.

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1. Grace Kao, “Asian Americans as Model Minorities? A Look at Their Academic Performance,” *American Journal of Education*, Vol. 103, No. 2 (Feb. 1995): 148-149.
 2. William H. Jeynes, “The Effects of Religious Commitment on the Academic Achievement of Black and Hispanic Children,” *Urban Education* 34.4 (1999): 473.

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FAMILY RESEARCH COUNCIL
801 G STREET NW
WASHINGTON DC 20001
800-225-4008
WWW.FRC.ORG

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