INTRODUCTION

Although substantial research has explored sustainable consumption (cf., Reisch & Thogersen, 2015 for a review) and happiness/subjective well-being (c.f., Deiner, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999 for a review), research has yet to explore adequately how core consumer values influence these constructs, especially in relation to religion. With over 70% of consumers around the world adhering to some kind of religious belief (Hunt & Penwell, 2008), consumers’ religious beliefs are potentially noteworthy to take into consideration in an effort to understand sustainable consumption and resulting subjective well-being. Minton and Kahle (2014) state that religion serves as one of the most enduring and wide-reaching systems that influence attitudes and behaviors in the marketplace. A growing body of research shows that consumers’ religious beliefs influence a wide variety of marketing activities (Mathras, Cohen, Mandel, & Mick, 2016), including advertising (Minton, 2015), branding/retail evaluations (Tang & Li, 2015), consumer choice (Choi, Kale, & Shin, 2010), and company attributions (Minton, 2016). This research aims to provide insights into how religion may influence participation in sustainable consumption. Prior research has not paid enough attention to this topic, despite religion being one of many consumers’ most important values. A few exceptions to this research, however, show mixed findings, leaving the direction of influence unclear between a consumer’s religion and sustainability (Johnson et al., in press; Leary, Minton, & Mittelstaedt, 2016). Thus, our research is different from prior studies and addresses a gap in the literature because our research identifies the extent and direction of religion’s influence on sustainable consumption.

In addition, this research aims to answer whether sustainable consumption can provide benefits to individuals, as it does to environments and societies. Subjective well-being has been considered as one of the main, ultimate goals of life (Haidt, 2006). As such, can achievement of subjective well-being be an outcome of participation in sustainable consumption? Previous research seems to suggest it can. For example, literature examining pro-social behaviors shows that these behaviors (of which sustainable consumption could be a part) lead to increased subjective well-being (Chancellor & Lyubomirsky, 2011) and that materialism (arguably in part the opposite of a sustainable lifestyle) is related to lower subjective well-being (Ruvio, Somer, & Rindfleisch, 2014); however, direct examination of the relation between sustainable consumption and subjective well-being has been largely left unanswered, nor has this relation been explored simultaneously while examining religion’s influence on sustainability.

Examination of the relations among religion, sustainable consumption, and subjective well-being can provide useful knowledge.
to marketing practitioners in addition to contributing to theory. A growing number of businesses acknowledge the importance of physical environment changes (e.g., climate change, decreases in nonrenewable resources), and accordingly engage as well as promote sustainable practices (e.g., decreasing emissions, increasing recycling, using energy-efficient transportation systems) (Connelly, Ketchen, & Slater, 2011; Kahle & Gurel-Atay, 2013); however, many consumers still resist participating in sustainable consumption practices (Huang & Rust, 2011). For example, religious people may believe that “God controls the climate, therefore people can’t be causing global warming” (Roser-Renouf, Malbach, Leiserowitz, & Rosenthal, 2016). Meanwhile, Chicago Cardinal blásé Cupich has called for actions by tweeting, “Climate change is real. Failing to protect the earth is not just a failure of leadership. It is a moral failure," to echo the decision of Pope Francis to make environmental protection a priority (Gibson, 2017). The inconsistent information leaves marketing practitioners who have lack of knowledge and guidance puzzling over whether and how to promote environment-friendly products to highly religious consumers. Understanding a consumer’s values, such as religion, and their influence on consumption of sustainability-related products and services can be critical to marketing plans of businesses, organizations, and policy makers to promote sustainable practices.

In sum, research has yet to test a comprehensive model including all three constructs to see how core religious values influence sustainable consumption practices, resulting subjective well-being, and related consumer well-being. Understanding these relations will address gaps in the literature and serve the growing need for understanding of sustainable consumer behavior, and it will contribute insight toward marketing practices to the increasing market of sustainable products and services. Additionally, understanding these relations will build on prior literature in sustainability and consumer well-being to contribute more broadly to identifying ways to enhance consumer well-being rooted in sustainability. Stated more specifically, this research has four main purposes: (a) identify the relations among religion, sustainable consumption, and subjective well-being, (b) respond to research requests regarding religion’s inconclusive positive or negative relation with sustainable consumption, (c) provide insight for consumer well-being with means for identifying and encouraging such positive consumer outcomes, rooted in religion and sustainable consumption, and (d) inform marketers of sustainable products and services about value-based constructs (religion) and affect-based constructs (subjective well-being) that have the potential to be used to encourage sustainable consumptions. To address these purposes, this research quantitatively tests these relations using national survey data in the United States.

2 | RELIGION’S INFLUENCE ON THE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

According to the valueattitudebehavior hierarchy (Homer & Kahle, 1988), core consumer values influence creation of attitudes that then lead to behaviors. One of the most enduring and wide-reaching values is religion, which has been shown to influence consumers’ attitudes and behaviors in the marketplace (Minton & Kahle, 2014). Similarly, valuebeliefnorm theory (Stern, 2000) describes that core values influence beliefs (similar to the attitude component of the valueattitudebehavior hierarchy), and these beliefs then influence societal norms of behavior. In contrast to the valueattitudebehavior hierarchy, valuebeliefnorm theory notes the importance of norms/standards of conduct. These norms can be evidenced at a macrolevel (e.g., a country or culture) or at a microlevel (e.g., a religious subgroup within a culture) (Aguinis & Glavas, 2013). Such norms could be reflected in behavioral differences between religious and nonreligious consumers. More importantly, both of these theories show the importance of values, inclusive of religious values, in understanding consumer behavior, inclusive of sustainable consumer behavior.

Sustainable consumption is described as “the consumption of goods and services that satisfies the needs of the present generations without compromising the needs of future ones” (Thompson, Anderson, Hansen, & Kahle, 2010, p. 320). The topic of sustainable consumption has received considerable attention in research in a variety of disciplines (Schraeder & Thøgersen, 2011). For example, prior research has shown that consumers who endorse social-oriented values (e.g., conformity, self-direction, universalism) or traditional values (e.g., being humble, respecting traditions, holding no extreme ideas or feelings) are more likely to engage in sustainable consumption than people who hold person-oriented values (e.g., existing life, ideal world) or power-related values (e.g., being influential, preserving image, having authority) (Pinto, Nique, Añaña, & Herter, 2011).

Arguably, religion (consisting of religiosity and religious affiliation) is one such value that has received inadequate attention in the literature, despite it potentially being a driver behind many decisions in a consumer’s life (Mathras et al., 2016). Throughout this manuscript, we follow Minton and Kahle’s (2014) definitions for religiosity as “the degree to which one holds religious beliefs and values both through an internal spiritual connection and external religious practices and behaviors” (pp. 12, 13), and religious affiliation as “a commonly held set of beliefs and values that guide external behavior and internal search for meaning” (p. 14). Core religious values inform attitudes and resulting sustainable actions (Leary et al., 2016; Minton, Kahle, & Kim, 2015; White, 1967); however, prior research on religion and sustainability reveals conflicting findings. Although one body of research shows that religious consumers can be more sustainable than less or nonreligious consumers (Leary et al., 2016; Minton et al., 2015), a separate body of research shows the opposite with religious consumers being less sustainable than nonreligious consumers (Minton, 2013; Wolkomir, Futreal, Woodrum, & Hoban, 1997).

The connection between religion and sustainability can be linked to religious scriptures as well as teachings during religious meetings (Djupe & Gwiasda, 2010; Johnson et al., in press). Western religious scriptures (e.g., the sacred texts followed by Christians, Muslims, and Jews) provide commandments to care for God’s creation, and Eastern religious scriptures (e.g., the sacred texts followed
by Hindus and Buddhists) acknowledge God(s) as being connected with nature, both of which would suggest that religious consumers would be more sustainable than nonreligious consumers (Minton et al., 2015). Additionally, James (1902) describes that Western religious scriptures state that God created nature and gave humans the role of having dominance over nature, but Eastern religious scripture follows more of the pantheistic view that God is in and through all elements of nature; therefore, destroying an element of nature is destroying part of God.

According to White's (1967) thesis, Western religious views of dominance over nature stem from scripture such as Genesis 1:26—“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’” The Qur’an has similar wording in stating in An-Nahl 16.12—“He has made the sun and moon subservient to you in their predictable paths. He has made the night and day subservient to you, and He has given you something of everything you have asked of Him.” Other interpretations of Western scripture, however, look at the words “dominion” or “subservient” to be interpreted more as religious followers being stewards of creation, suggesting a positive relation between religion on sustainable practices (Leary et al., 2016). Additionally, recent movements and groups have been encouraging sustainability among Western religious followers, suggesting the need for more of a stewardship rather than dominion perspective to sustainability (Catholic Climate Covenant, 2015; Kirchgaessner, 2015; Wilson, 2012).

Similar discussion of nature is found in Eastern religious scripture/documents as well. For example, in the Hindu Veda, Ishavasya Upanishad, the statement is made, “This entire universe is to be looked upon as the Lord.” This view is followed in the Bhagavata Mahapurana 2.2.41 saying that, “air, fire, water, earth, planets, all creatures, directions, trees and plants, rivers and seas—they are all organs of god’s body. Remembering this perspective, a devotee respects all species.” In Buddhism, a prominent component of sacred teachings is the eightfold path, which represents a way of life that can directly influence sustainability (Falvey, 2005). For example, one of the components of the eightfold path is “right understanding,” which can be connected to how sustainable actions have implications for all, including the environment, animals, and other people. Additionally, the eightfold path component of “right mindfulness” can be connected to being caring and mindful to all creations and the life of the planet (Daniels, 2010; Schmidt et al., 2014).

However, all religious scriptures highlight other commandments that may be more important than caring for the Earth, such as sharing one’s faith for Western religions and personal meditation for Eastern religions (Schmidt et al., 2014). In this sense, sustainability is a moral choice between following scripture from or relating to one’s god(s) as well as deciding which commandments or principles are the most important. This moral choice is increasingly challenging for consumers as they face limited time and resources to live a moral life as well as to follow all of life’s other, nonmoral-based demands. These conflicting directions of focus may help explain why prior research in this area has showed varying patterns of effects. In this sense, all religious affiliations likely view sustainability as not the most important behavior in contrast to the nonreligious who may view sustainability more as a key for sustaining life and family for generations to come.

Of importance to note here is our focus on religiosity, rather than religious affiliation, as the key variable of interest given that religiosity describes the degree or strength of one’s religious beliefs (Mathras et al., 2016), which would also explain the degree or strength of following religious commandments and teachings. Given that prior research shows varying findings regarding the relations between religion and sustainable consumption, with one body of research showing that religious consumers can be more sustainable than less or nonreligious consumers (Leary et al., 2016; Minton et al., 2015), and a separate body of research showing the opposite pattern of effects with religious consumers being less sustainable than nonreligious consumers (Minton, 2013; Wolkomir et al., 1997), the following competing hypotheses are proposed:

H1 Religiosity positively influences sustainable consumption.

H2 Religiosity negatively influences sustainable consumption.

Sustainable consumption’s positive influence on consumers’ subjective well-being is supported broadly by research on prosocial behavior and subjective well-being, as well as intrinsic motivation. First, research shows that strong social relations are pivotal for people’s subjective well-being (Diener & Seligman, 2002) and that prosocial activities influence subjective well-being (Dunn, Gilbert, & Wilson, 2011). For example, research demonstrates that prosocial spending, such as spending money on others or donating money to charity, makes people happier (Dunn, Akinin, & Norton, 2008). As such, participation in prosocial activities should enhance a consumer’s subjective well-being.

Prosocial behavior refers to acts undertaken for the welfare of others (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990), such as volunteer work and donations, which all involve intentions to benefit others (Weinstein & Ryan, 2010). Correspondingly, sustainability encompasses a broad range of attitudes and actions that meet current needs without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their needs (Brundtland, 1987). This definition of sustainability suggests that sustainability practices are fundamentally others-focused; thus, such practices are a type of prosocial behavior with the potential to positively influence subjective well-being. In addition, research has shown that activities involving intrinsic goals produce more subjective well-being than ones involving extrinsic goals (Dunn et al., 2008). Thus, findings from this general research suggest that engagement in sustainable consumption practices should positively influence consumers’ subjective well-being. Prior research also indicates that sustainability’s influence on subjective well-being is an area where future research is particularly needed to show personal outcomes for sustainable behaviors that consumers may otherwise not feel incentivized to join (Paralkar, Cloutier, Nautiyal, & Mitra,
Building off prior research in examining community-level measures of sustainable behavior (Cloutier et al., 2017; Paralkar et al., 2017), we expect that individual-level sustainable consumption practices will positively lead to subjective well-being.

**H3** Participation in sustainable consumption practices positively correlates with consumers' subjective well-being.

In sum, a broader model is proposed where religiosity influences sustainable consumption, which then influences consumer well-being. This expectation follows the connection between religiosity and sustainable consumption, as discussed in support for H1 (cf., Leary et al., 2016; Minton et al., 2015) and H2 (cf., Minton, 2013; Wolkomir et al., 1997), as well as sustainable consumption’s positive connection with subjective well-being, as discussed in support for H3 (cf., Cloutier et al., 2017; Dunn et al., 2011; Paralkar et al., 2017). With this mediating expectation, we acknowledge that many other mediators likely exist between religiosity and consumers’ subjective well-being (e.g., integration in a social network, decreased participation in risky behaviors, altered views of anxiety or stress producing situations). Only sustainable consumption is explored in this study, to provide focused insight for the ever-increasing concerns regarding sustainability. Thus:

**H4** Sustainable consumption mediates the relation between religiosity and consumers’ subjective well-being.

### Study

This study tested the relations among religion, sustainability, and consumers’ subjective well-being, as well as tested hypotheses 1–4. Specifically, this study tested the relations among religion and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men (%)</td>
<td>Non-Hispanic White or Euro-American (%)</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>209 (50.7) Non-Hispanic White or Euro-American (%)</td>
<td>53 (12.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Latino or Hispanic American (%)</td>
<td>53 (12.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18–24 (%)</td>
<td>Asian American (%)</td>
<td>62 (15.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–44 (%)</td>
<td>Others (%)</td>
<td>39.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45–64 (%)</td>
<td>Religious affiliation</td>
<td>71 (17.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 or over</td>
<td></td>
<td>71 (17.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income level</th>
<th>Christian—Protestant</th>
<th>179 (43.4)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $15,000 (%)</td>
<td>Christian—Catholic</td>
<td>105 (25.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000 to less than $35,000 (%)</td>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>13 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to less than $75,000 (%)</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>4 (1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 to less than $100,000 (%)</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>9 (2.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $100,000</td>
<td>Spiritual but not religious</td>
<td>23 (5.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Agnostic (not sure)</td>
<td>22 (5.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school (%)</td>
<td>Atheist (believe there is no God)</td>
<td>22 (5.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate (%)</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>18 (4.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college (%)</td>
<td>Prefer not to answer</td>
<td>13 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate or Bachelor (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>96 (23.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master and higher (%)</td>
<td>42 (10.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sustainability as either a positive relation (H1) or a negative relation (H2), as well as examined the relation between sustainability and subjective well-being (H3), specifically with sustainable consumption as a mediator between religiosity and subjective well-being (H4).

3.1 | Method

A consumer survey was conducted in the United States using a Qualtrics survey panel. The Qualtrics panel data (n = 412) matched U.S. census data in distributions of age, gender, U.S. geographic region, ethnicity, income, education, and religious affiliation; see Table 1 for descriptive statistics for the sample. The percentage of missing data was less than five percent for each variable, and those missing data were randomly distributed. The missing data were handled using maximum likelihood (ML) estimation. Pre-existing scales were adapted to measure religiosity (Minton, 2015), subjective happiness (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999), life satisfaction (Pavot & Diener, 2008), sustainable consumption (Minton, Lee, Orth, Kim, & Kahle, 2012), and the happiness value (Rokeach, 1973). See Appendix A for a full list of items.

3.2 | Results

In accordance with Anderson and Gerbing’s (1988) two-step method, a measurement model was first estimated examining the constructs of religiosity, sustainable consumption, and subjective well-being before a structural model was produced in a second step. LISREL 9.2 assessed the covariance matrices in all analyses.

3.2.1 | Measurement model results

Prior to conducting a confirmatory factor analysis, we inspected normality of the observed variables. Some of the variables had high skewness and kurtosis values. The ML estimation method is considered to be robust, even with data with high skewness or kurtosis values; however, prior research posits that ML produces a high chi-square statistic, leading to rejection of many true models when the variables are highly nonnormal (West, Finch, & Curran, 1995). To deal with this problem, the Satorra–Bentler corrected chi-square was used in all analyses. To estimate the measurement model, five constructs, namely, religiosity, sustainable consumption, subjective happiness, life satisfaction, and the happiness value (control variable), were modeled as freely correlated first-order factors with their respective indicators.

3.2.2 | Structural model results

The Satorra–Bentler scaled chi-square value was 319.07 with 143 degrees of freedom. Given the relatively large sample size, the Satorra–Bentler scaled chi-square value was significant at the 0.001 level (Bagozzi, 2010); however, other goodness-of-fit statistics suggested a close fit to the data RMSEA = 0.069, confidence interval [0.0623–0.0775], CFI = 0.94, SRMR = 0.0512, and GFI = 0.90. Therefore, fit was determined to be adequate.

The summary of tests related to the convergent validity of the constructs is shown in Table 2. To demonstrate convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct should be greater than 0.50, and the composite reliability of a factor should be equal to or greater than 0.60 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As Table 2 shows, only one of the constructs had an AVE less than 0.50. More specifically, the AVE was 0.441 for sustainability. Because its composite reliability (0.822) and Cronbach’s alpha (0.817) were relatively high, its AVE was considered acceptable. Other AVE values ranged from 0.714 to 0.772. Composite reliabilities were greater than 0.60 with a range of 0.822–0.925. Similarly, coefficient alphas were high and ranged from 0.817 to 0.921. Furthermore, all factor loadings were significant at the 0.05 level. All these results imply that convergent validity was satisfactory for the constructs.

To test for discriminant validity, the squares of correlations between any two constructs were compared with the AVE estimates of those two constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The squared correlations ranged from 0.014 (between happiness and religion) to 0.430 (between happiness and life satisfaction). The AVE for each construct was greater than its squared correlation with any other construct. Accordingly, discriminant validity was supported.

3.2.2 | Structural model results

The Satorra–Bentler scaled chi-square value was 492.18 (df = 149, p < 0.001). Other goodness-of-fit statistics suggested a close fit to the data RMSEA = 0.0899, confidence interval [0.0828; 0.0971], CFI = 0.902, SRMR = 0.129, and GFI = 0.859); therefore, fit for the structural model was judged adequate. Furthermore, all path coefficients were significant at the 0.001 level and in the expected directions. Religiosity (standardized estimate = 0.121, t = 2.16) was significantly and positively related to sustainable consumption at the 0.05 level. Sustainable consumption, in return, related significantly and positively to the two general subjective well-being factors of current happiness (β = 0.490, t = 6.96) and life satisfaction (β = 0.463, t = 7.28). The Sobel test was also significant for both current happiness (z = 2.14, p < 0.03)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2</th>
<th>Internal consistency results (N = 412)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coefficient alpha Composite reliability AVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>0.921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable consumption</td>
<td>0.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>0.909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>0.921</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. AVE = Average variance explained
and life satisfaction ($z = 2.17$, $p < 0.03$). Additionally, the control variable of the social value of happiness significantly and positively related to sustainable consumption ($\beta = 0.214$, $t = 3.52$). These results provide overall support for the conceptual model. See Figure 1 for a summary of path coefficients matched to the conceptual model and Table 3 for means, standard deviations, and correlations among constructs.

### 3.3 | Discussion

Findings show that in a sample of the United States, religiosity positively influences sustainable consumption, thereby supporting H1 and not supporting H2. This result adds to a growing body of recent research showing a positive correlation between religiosity and sustainability (Leary et al., 2016; Minton et al., 2015). Although earlier research showed a negative correlation between these constructs (Minton, 2013; Wolkomir et al., 1997), the more recent positive effects of religion on sustainability may be due to sustainability being encouraged in more religious institutions (Catholic Climate Covenant, 2015; Kirchgaessner, 2015; Wilson, 2012). The present study used an arguably superior sampling strategy for representing the United States. Additionally, results show that sustainable consumption positively influences consumer subjective well-being, thereby supporting H3; and sustainable consumption mediates the relation between religiosity and consumer subjective well-being, thereby supporting H4.

### 4 | GENERAL DISCUSSION

This research addressed the four purposes set forth in the introduction. First, the relations among religion, sustainability, and subjective well-being have been identified, such that religiosity positively influences sustainable consumption, which then positively influences consumer’s subjective well-being. Second, this research has helped to clarify the conflicting body of prior research on religion and sustainability by showing that religiosity can positively influence sustainable consumption and not vice versa, as some prior research has suggested. Third, this research has provided insight for consumer subjective well-being by identifying sustainable consumption and religiosity as influencers to well-being. Fourth, this research provides insight for marketing practitioners of sustainable goods and services by showing the role that consumer values play in sustainable consumption as well as subjective well-being outcomes, both of which could be incorporated into target market selection and development of marketing communications. As such, this research addresses gaps in the literature, rooted in the limited knowledge of religion’s influence on sustainability as well as how this influences consumer well-being.

#### 4.1 | Theoretical contributions

The results from this study supported the value-attitude-behavior hierarchy (Homer & Kahle, 1988) and value-belief-norm theory (Stern, 2000). Specifically, findings showed that religious values influence...
attitudes and behaviors that guide sustainable consumption. In fitting with the literature on religion and consumption (Mathras et al., 2016; Minton & Kahle, 2017), religious values served as one of the core influencers on daily life and should therefore be taken into consideration when understanding consumer behavior.

Beyond general influences on consumption, this research provided novel findings regarding the relations among religiosity, sustainability, and consumers’ subjective well-being. This research demonstrated that sustainability positively influences consumers’ subjective well-being, which builds on prior research that has shown that community-level sustainability influences subjective well-being (c.f., Cloutier et al., 2017, Paralkar et al., 2017). Here, our research addressed a gap in the literature by looking at individual-level sustainable consumption practices and showing that such practices also influenced the consumer’s subjective well-being. Stated another way, both individual-level sustainable behaviors as well as those of a community as a whole positively influenced consumers’ subjective well-being. This finding is meaningful in informing ways to encourage consumers to engage in sustainable consumption practices. Additionally, this research shed light on common lay beliefs regarding sustainable consumption practices to show that such practices may actually produce happiness, in part due to satisfaction in showing reverence to one’s god(s), thus possibly producing longer-term consumer well-being; therefore, this research built on the mixed findings regarding religiosity’s influence on sustainable consumption (c.f., Leary et al., 2016; Minton, 2013; Minton et al., 2015; Wolkomir et al., 1997) shows that religiosity does in fact positively influences sustainable consumption, leading to higher subjective well-being. This contributes broadly to value-based models (c.f., Homer & Kahle, 1988, Stern, 2000) to show that religion should be understood as an important value influencing consumer behavior as well as psychological outcomes of such behavior.

4.2 Implications for practitioners

In addition to relevance for the academic literature, these findings also benefit marketing practitioners, particularly for those who desire to encourage sustainable consumption and/or increase consumers’ subjective well-being. First, our finding on the positive effects of religiosity on sustainable consumption provides confidence and encouragement to marketing practitioners to identify as well as investigate religious consumers as potential target markets for sustainable products. Secondly, our research suggests that integrating religious belief cues into advertising can be a useful tactic for reaching consumers who are highly religious and for facilitating their consumption choices. This facilitation can lead to greater participation in sustainable consumption practices, which then should increase consumers’ subjective well-being. For example, this research showed that different interpretations of religiosity can lead to opposing behavioral tendencies toward sustainable consumption. Therefore, companies who are promoting sustainable products (e.g., a retailer specializing in health foods and green products such as free-range chicken and environment-friendly detergents) in highly religious markets may leverage this finding using messages in marketing communications to indicate, emphasize, or prompt thoughts related to god’s connection with nature or caring for the earth and other creations of god(s), in order to help religious consumers engage in their sustainable consumption and behaviors. This suggestion aligns with prior research showing the positive effects of religious priming on encouraging religiously relevant behaviors (Johnson et al., in press; Minton, 2016).

Furthermore, the positive relation between sustainable consumption and consumers’ subjective well-being showed that marketers involved with sustainable products could highlight subjective well-being as one of the outcomes of purchasing and using sustainable products. Alternatively, companies that market activities or products designed to trigger consumer well-being (e.g., companies specializing in photo, artistic, or recreational activities) could integrate sustainable practices into business operations to encourage sustainability among consumers.

4.3 Future research and boundaries

Given that this research was conducted with a U.S. sample, future research should examine the relations among religiosity, sustainability, and consumers’ subjective well-being in cross-cultural studies and with Eastern religions. Specifically, follow-up studies testing these relations in countries with different religious profiles (e.g., countries that have higher or lower atheist proportions) would be insightful. Further research is also particularly in need of both quantitative and qualitative designs to understand construct relations more comprehensively and using more comprehensive, multi-item measures for all items. Additionally, we measured all of our constructs in one survey, which may have led to a common method variance (CMV). To minimize the CMV, we mixed the order of questions and used different scale types. Moreover, the results of the measurement model indicated high convergent and discriminant validity, signaling low CMV (Chang, Van Witteloostuijn, & Eden, 2010). Future research should use other sources of information for some of the constructs to deal with the CMV ex ante. For instance, sustainability may be measured through participants’ observed behaviors.

This research examined religiosity as a one-dimensional construct. Prior research in marketing has shown differing findings using multidimensional religiosity constructs (c.f., Minton, 2015). Future research could investigate whether affective religiosity components are connected more to consumers’ subjective well-being. Additionally, this research is limited by not examining ethnicity, religious affiliation, income, or education in our model of religiosity’s influence on sustainability and subjective well-being. Future research should examine how results may differ based on these demographic factors. For example, sustainability’s link to subjective well-being may be stronger for Eastern religions, such as Hinduism, that follow a pantheistic view that their gods are in and through all elements of nature (Sarre, 1995; Schmidt et al., 2014); therefore, destroying an element of nature is also directly harming their gods.

In addition, our research demonstrated the positive effects of sustainable consumption on consumers’ subjective well-being;
however, underlying relations (e.g., intrinsic thoughts related to meaningfulness, commitment, or engagement) were not tested. Thus, future research that empirically tests these relations would provide deeper understanding of how sustainability influences consumers’ subjective well-being as well as the role of religious values in informing such relations. Other sustainable consumption outcomes (e.g., willingness to pay for sustainable products, support for sustainable policy, or word of mouth intentions to friends regarding sustainable practices) could also prove interesting and beneficial aspects to study as mediators in the relation between religiosity and consumers’ subjective well-being. Of course, sometimes social constraints will redirect behaviors. Future research should consider the type of people and roles (i.e., a type of social constraint) that facilitate or hinder the processes we found. Future research should also explore how religion may influence subjective well-being as related to consumer behaviors other than sustainable consumption.

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**APPENDIX A. MEASUREMENT ITEMS**

**Happiness Value**

(1 = not important at all; 9 = very important).

1. Happiness (contentedness).

2. Religion (all items: 1 = strongly disagree; 9 = strongly agree).

3. I believe in god.

4. I have no doubts that god lives and is real.

5. There is life after death.

6. The scripture for my religious affiliation is the word of god.

**Sustainable Consumption**

(1 = strongly disagree; 9 = strongly agree).

1. Sustainability is very important to me.

2. When purchasing a car, I specifically look for an energy-efficient model.

3. I seek to reduce the overall number of purchases I make to help the environment.

4. Buying more than I need hurts the environment.

5. I volunteer time to organizations and causes that support sustainability.

6. I donate money to organizations and causes that support sustainability.

**Subjective Well-Being Component #1—Subjective Happiness Scale**

In general, I consider myself: (1 = not a very happy person; 9 = a very happy person)

1. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself: (1 = less happy; 9 = more happy)

2. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you? (1 = not at all; 9 = a great deal)

**Subjective Well-Being Component #2—Overall Life Satisfaction**

(all items: 1 = strongly disagree; 9 = strongly agree).

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

2. The conditions of my life are excellent.

3. I am satisfied with life.

4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

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(all items: 1 = strongly disagree; 9 = strongly agree).

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