

Beyond Negativity: Christians' Multifaceted Perception of Sufferings

A Text Analysis on Reddit Posts

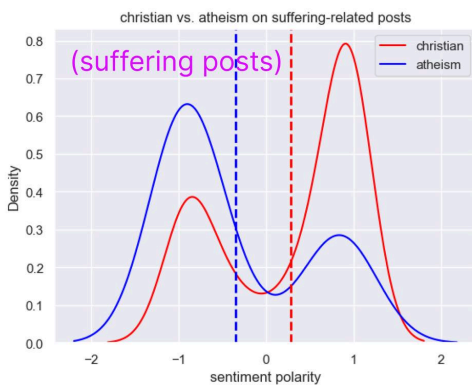
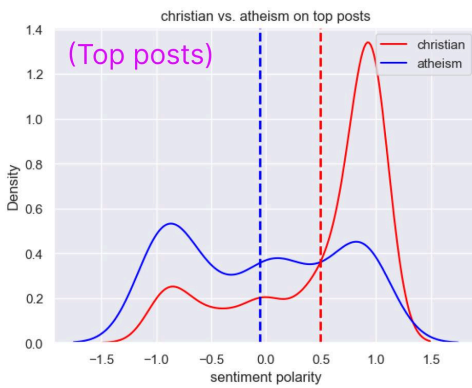
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Hypothesis 1

(Sentence-level) Christians' posts are more positive on sentiment.

Method

We collected posts from "Christian" and "atheism" subreddits and performed sentiment analysis.

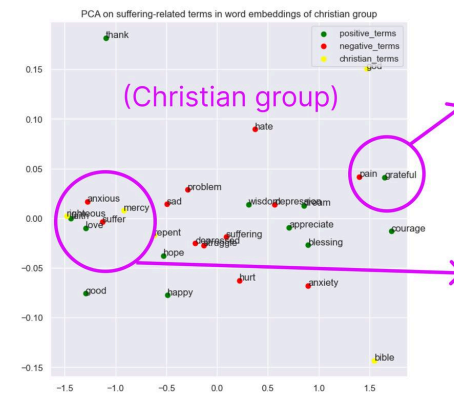
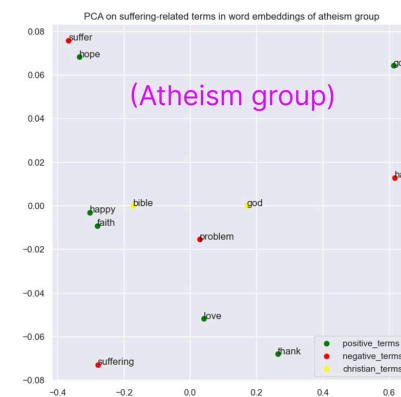


Hypothesis 2

(Word-level) Suffering-related terms are viewed positive by Christians.

Method

We built word2vec models on 2 groups and compared the word embedding of suffering-related terms.



Background

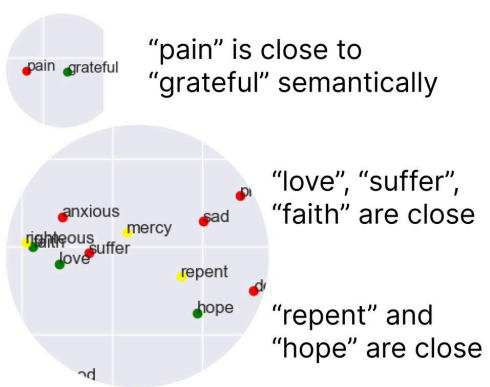
Many studies have focused on Christians' positive perspective on suffering at the psychological and theoretical levels, but only a few have focused on examining empirical evidence, particularly through quantitative research.

We fetched 203 top posts from "atheism" subreddit

id	title	id	upvotes	text	url	author	polarity
0	In honor of today's Supreme Court ruling...	iqpna	91882	Fuck this oppressive religion that has killed...	https://www.reddit.com/r/atheism/comments/1p...	iqpna	-0.8834
1	The quest is over ignoring the fact that...	koz08	68582	As soon as [the] [https://www.reddit.com/r/atheism/comments/koz08/]	https://www.reddit.com/r/atheism/comments/koz08/	relevance	0.4419
2	Republicans have introduced a bill which...	69521	196	Republicans introduce bill to ban abortion re...	https://www.reddit.com/r/atheism/comments/69521/	relevance	-0.9225
3	Under the new Texas law a man who rapes a...	qyrt4	69165	This new law is sickening. WTF! Great me...	https://www.reddit.com/r/atheism/comments/qyrt4/	relevance	-0.9810
4	I find it pretty sad that both sides raised a...	akuxk	57711	It just seems pretty sad that that people...	https://www.reddit.com/r/atheism/comments/akuxk/	canadell	0.5182

We fetched 904 top posts from "Christian" subreddit

id	title	id	upvotes	text	url	author	polarity
0	Today is my 7th birthday After 54 years of b...	iodaa	1533	Helps everyone. Christian or not family or no...	https://www.reddit.com/r/Christian/comments/i...	ChristianConversion	0.9637
1	I got saved!!!	12u4ho	1124	I'm a 23 year old male and the first time I...	https://www.reddit.com/r/Christian/comments/12...	GuidanceOverton	0.9311
2	Hate the sin love the sinner	2842fs	740	Christians. If you're ever trying to address...	https://www.reddit.com/r/Christian/comments/2...	Durga115	-0.9190
3	I converted from Islam to Christianity. Physic...	12havo	697	I converted to Christianity after years of bac...	https://www.reddit.com/r/Christian/comments/12...	gms8800	0.8834
4	Bye	m26a	658	I am leaving Christianity and don't mean any...	https://www.reddit.com/r/Christian/comments/m...	Paperp17	0.9625



Results

The sentiment score of the Christian group is **significantly more positive** than the atheism group on both general posts ($p < 0.001$) and suffering-related posts ($p < 0.001$).

Results

Suffering-related terms in the Christian group were **semantically related to positive terms**, whereas terms in the atheism group were more scattered.

Top terms

- Christian group**
('god', 1412)
('pray', 512)
('jesus', 491)
('know', 457)
('life', 401)
('us', 369)
('love', 337)
('feel', 329)
('people', 325)
('time', 320)
('thank', 296)
('christ', 267)
- Atheism group**
('people', 136)
('church', 88)
('god', 80)
('religious', 73)
('religion', 70)
('christian', 59)
('know', 56)
('christians', 56)
('think', 53)