

**Religiosity, political orientation and attitudes toward abortion among  
university students in Canada**

(Draft)

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*Prepared to be submitted to 2020 Meeting of European Population Conference, Padova, Italy, 24-27 June, 2020*

*Dated: 27-October-2019*

## **Abstract**

### ***Background***

The current political climate in Canada has brought about the debate over the morality of terminating a pregnancy via medical abortion. Religiosity and political orientation lie at the heart of this debate.

### ***Objective***

This research aims to identify the role of religiosity and political orientation in attitudes toward abortion practices.

### ***Methods***

An online survey questionnaire was developed and conducted among university students at Nipissing University in North Bay, Ontario during January-April 2019. A total of 66 students completed the survey questionnaire. Multivariate linear regression and path Analyses were used.

### ***Results***

Most participants (66-73%) strongly supported abortion under primarily medically related circumstances, and were less likely to agree with circumstances attributed to social circumstances. The majority (83%) agreed with aborting a pregnancy resulted from rape or incest. Path analysis showed that religiosity (measured by religious beliefs and participation) largely affected attitudes towards abortion directly rather than indirectly through political orientation, with a greater effect induced from religious participation than beliefs. Students with more liberal political orientations held more positive attitudes toward abortion. Mothers' religious affiliation affected students' religious beliefs more than that of their fathers'. Multivariate results showed that the greater conservative political orientation and religious participation were associated with more negative attitudes to abortion, and higher income was linked with more positive attitudes to abortion.

### ***Conclusion***

The results shed more light on the link between religiosity, political orientation and abortion in a relatively secular country, with implications for the future of public policy on abortion in Canada.

## Introduction

The right to have an abortion legally in Canada began in 1969 with the rise of women's and social justice groups as well as the notorious Dr. Henry Morgentaler). That year, the Canadian government passed an amendment to existing abortion law that rendered abortions legal. This new legislation, Section 251 of the Criminal Code of Canada, allowed abortion under rigid conditions. These conditions stipulated that pregnant women were permitted to seek an abortion *only* in a hospital setting and to the discretion on a doctor or team of doctors that deemed the pregnant women's health was at risk (Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada, 2017).

Nearly two decades later, in 1988, the Federal government struck down the existing law on abortion, which found that the conditions outlined in section 251 were unconstitutional, violating section 7 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* which protects the right to security, liberty and privacy of the person (ARCC, 2017). Despite this feat, abortion was once again confined to strict regulations under Bill C-4, which outlined, once again, conditions in which an abortion may be performed, with the permission of a doctor based on the physical, mental and psychological health of the woman. Finally, in 1991, bill C-43 was struck down and abortion was allotted the same definition as all other medical procedures (Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada, 2017). Since then, Canadian women have the right to obtain an abortion without the burden of seeking permission from medical professionals.

Despite the legality of medical abortion, conversations about abortion often turn into greatly complex dialogues with arguments pertaining to issues of morality, body autonomy, women's rights and for the sake of this research, religiosity. Religion and abortion often go hand-in-hand and have continuously been a topic within social and political discussions. However, the rise in attitudes towards abortion from a religious standpoint only really became relevant in the late 19th century when religious groups were beginning to concern themselves with politics and a divide between what we would now call "pro-life" and "pro-choice" movements (Holland, 2016)

Since then, many studies have been conducted in order to discover correlations between religious beliefs and practices and attitudes toward abortion. Generally, these studies found that higher levels of religiosity have been linked to lower approval of abortion (Finner & Gamache, 1969). In addition, sex, age, marital status, education and socio-economic status also have affected a respondent's views on abortion. Generally, those with higher levels of education and socio-economic status report more positive attitudes toward abortion practices. Additionally, women and younger individuals are more likely to agree that obtaining an abortion under certain circumstances is agreeable. (Finner and Gamache, 1969; Adamczyk, 2007; Adamczyk, 2009) Furthermore, religion has also been found to be an extenuating factor for predicting or determining abortion behaviours, where with the rise in religiosity levels, the incident of abortion shrunk (Adamczyk & Felson, 2008).

Despite these findings, primarily from the United States, there lacks literature on Canadian religiosity and attitudes toward abortion. In the past few decades, Canada has seen a decline in religious affiliation (Wormald, 2013). Moreover, the recent election of Liberal Party representative Justin Trudeau reignited conversations about gender and sexuality rights, including women's reproductive health. Canada's law on abortion hasn't

changed in decades, as mentioned above. However, this comes in stark contrast to the current political situation in the United States with the election of Donald Trump. This couples with the strong presence of both Canadian and American political representatives on social media has created a space for individuals from all walks of life to converse and, more prominently, argue over issues such as the legality and access to abortion. Given the proximity of Canada and the U.S., many ideas and opinions are shared in regards to the latter. Given the current political times, this research serves to establish whether the decrease in religiosity observed in recent years as well as political orientation have shifted Canadian's attitudes toward abortion, specifically those enrolled in post-secondary at Nipissing University in North Bay, Ontario.

The role of religion in society varies greatly if we consider geographical location, considering that some nations are still very much under religious authority, while others have become increasingly secularized. In the Middle Eastern country of Iran, where, although having seen some secularization, religion plays a significant societal role (Khosrokhavar, 2007), studies have shown a relationship between the degree of religiosity and abortion behaviours, where higher rates of religiosity were linked with lower rates of abortion (Erfani & McQuillan, 2008). In Canada however, the literature examining a direct relationship between Canadians' levels of religiosity and abortion attitudes is limited and arguably outdated, dating back to the late 1980s and early 1990s (Balakrishnan et al., 1988; Krishnan, 1991). This study aims to fill this gap in the literature.

### **Conceptual Framework**

This research examines Nipissing University students' attitudes toward abortion based on their level of religiosity as independent variable. Because a person's religiosity is largely influenced by social interaction in the values and norms adopted by individuals (White, 1968), an individual's religious participation and behaviours, which are influenced by parental religiosity, serve as a predictor to an individual's attitudes toward abortion. Furthermore, research by Kinsey et al found that religiosity served as a predictor for both sexual behaviour and attitudes (Kinsey et al., 1948, 1953; Ahrold et al., 2011).

Religious beliefs also play an integral role in shaping attitudes toward abortion. Since abortion is commonly thought of as a moral issue, it is unsurprisingly that religious beliefs would affect an individual's attitudes toward abortion. As Kangwa points out, "Religion and culture enable people to share organized life in groups called society. As a result, many emotions surrounding abortion are the result of people's religious and cultural worldviews." (Kangwa, 2017). Therefore, religious behaviours and beliefs are two dimensions of religiosity that are related to attitudes toward abortion. The term religious beliefs is defined as the belief in mythical, supernatural or spiritual aspect of religion, while religious behaviours encompasses participating in religious ceremonies, attending religion institutions and praying, for example.

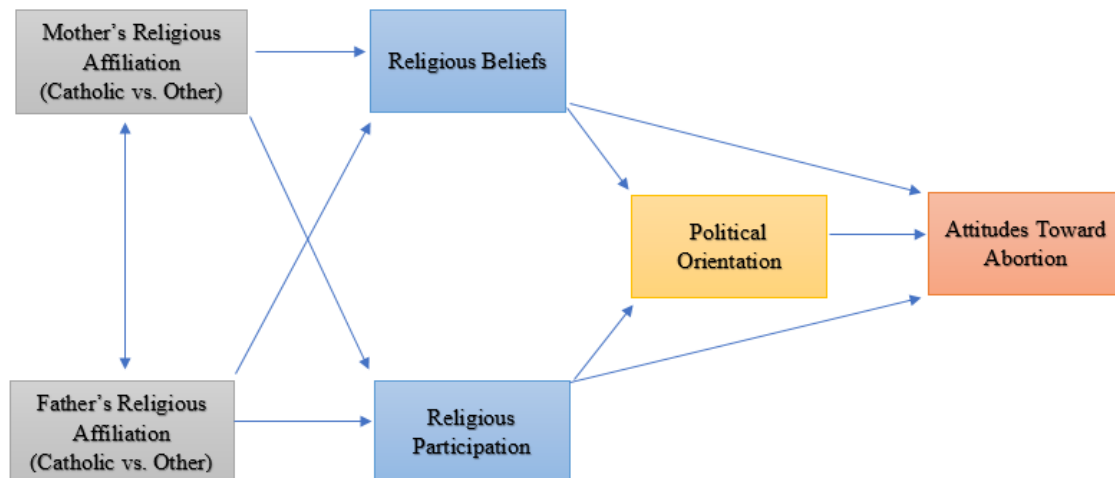
This research aims to examine the link between religious behaviours and beliefs and attitudes toward abortion. Attitudes encompass a person's feelings or way of thinking about something, in this case, abortion. An abortion (i.e., induced abortion) is the deliberate interruption of a pregnancy by way of medical procedure or the ingestion of prescribed medication for the purpose of terminating a pregnancy. There are many

reasons a woman may seek to obtain an abortion. Among the most common are unwanted or unplanned pregnancy resulting in drastic change to the mother’s circumstances. The most common reasons for women to obtain an abortion in the U.S. were that their lives would dramatically change (74%) and that they did not believe they would be able to afford to have a child at the time of pregnancy (73%) (Finer et al, 2005).

In this study, political orientation was used as an intervening variable, which mediates the effect of religiosity on attitudes toward abortion. Religious beliefs and behaviors are still important predictors of political orientations. Although religion has lost its position of power within politics and government officially, wherein religious ideals are not granted the opportunity to override laws simply on the basis of religious morals and beliefs, they still influence an individual’s political orientation. Previous research has found that higher levels of religiosity are linked to political orientation with conservative values. On the contrary, individuals who reported having a Liberal political ideology had lower levels of religiosity in general (Brooks & Manza, 2004). Furthermore, political orientation has been linked to attitude towards reproductive issues, notably attitudes toward abortion rights and behaviors. While liberal politics encompass a more accepting narrative of abortion rights, conservative politics view abortion as a morally reprehensible act (Hess & Rueb, 2005). Therefore, political orientation is assumed to mediate the effect of religiosity on attitudes toward abortion, as illustrated in Figure 1.

The diagram in Figure 1 shows that the higher levels of religiosity are associated with a more conservative (versus liberal) political orientation and more negative attitudes toward abortion. Moreover, individuals’ degree of religiosity is assumed to be influenced by their parents’ religious affiliations (catholic versus others). This study aims to examine this conceptual model.

**Figure 1: Causal diagram illustrating relationship between religiosity and attitudes toward abortion, mediated by political orientation.**



## **Methodology**

### ***Data***

A survey questionnaire was developed to examine the conceptual model discussed before. The survey was conducted online between January 2019 and April 2019, and was accessible to population of students who were attending Nipissing University in North Bay, Ontario during the 2018/2019 academic year. Participants in the survey were largely undergraduate and partly graduate students studying on the main campus of Nipissing University, in the fields of Sociology, Social Welfare, Criminal Justice, Nursing and Gender Studies.

Using the online survey tool *Qualtrics*, students in selected undergraduate and graduate classrooms were invited to participate in the study anonymously. Recruitment of participants was done by the second author by speaking to classes at Nipissing University and providing the students with a link to the online survey. This method of online survey was ideal due to the nature of the study and the sensitivity of the topic. The use of *Qualtrics* allowed the students the reassurance that their identities would not be linked to their responses. The Nipissing University Research Ethics Board (NUREB) granted an ethics approval for the survey (NUREB approval Number: 101947). Although a sample of 330 students initially was aimed to complete the survey (with 95% confidence interval and 5.5% marginal errors), the survey ended up with 66 completed questionnaires that were analyzed in this study. The online nature of the survey, small class sizes and time constraints were the main reasons for the low response rate.

The survey included questions that measured variables in the conceptual model (Figure 1) and some students' demographic characteristics, including age, gender, education levels, employment status, household income, marital status, and number of children. However, students' age, education levels and marital status ended up with very low variation, so they were excluded from all analyses.

### ***Measurement***

The dependent variable, attitudes toward abortion, measured by factor analysis of eleven relevant items regarding circumstances for which a woman may have an abortion (see Table 1). These eleven items were measured on a 7-point Likers scale scored from 1 "strongly agree", to 2 "agree", 3 "somewhat agree", 4 "neither agree nor disagree", 5 "somewhat disagree", 6 "disagree" and 7 "strongly disagree". The standardized distribution of the weighted, summated rating scale, produced by factor analysis, ranges from -.96 to 2.7 for attitudes toward abortion, where larger positive values indicate more negative attitudes toward abortion (see Table 2). The reliability of the items was evaluated by Cronbach alpha and validity of the scale was measured by factor analysis of the items. The reliability results (Cronbach's alpha = 0.960) and statistics produced by factor analysis (percent variance explained = 72.37; eigenvalue = 7.96, KMO = .917) indicate acceptable reliability and validity for the latent factor, labeled 'attitudes toward abortion' (see Table 2).

Religiosity is the key independent variable in this study, determined by two dimensions: religious beliefs and participation. Religious participation was measured by six questions, asking students how often they participate in religious institutions and events (see Table 1). These six questions were measured on a 7-point ordinal scale scored from 1 "Never" 2 "Once a year" 3 "Every few months" 4 "Once a month" 5 "Several times a

month" 6" Once a week"7"Several Times a Week". A factor analysis of these six items extracted a latent factor, labeled scale of religious participation. The standardized distribution of the weighted, summated rating scale of religious participation ranges from -1.14 to 2.6, where the higher positive values on the scale indicate a stronger religious participation (see Table 2). The reliability analysis results (Cronbach's alpha =0.926) and statistics produced by factor analysis (percent variance explained = 73.74 eigenvalue= 4.4, KMO= .853) indicate acceptable reliability and validity for the items measuring religious participation (see Table 1).

The dimension of religious beliefs was also measured by six questions, asking students to what extent they believe in God, heaven, hell, angels, miraculous healing, and afterlife. These six questions were measured on a 3-point ordinal scale scored from 1 "Not at all" (weak religious belief) 2 "Unsure" (moderate) 3 "Completely" (strong religious belief). A factor analysis of these six items extracted a latent factor, labeled scale of religious beliefs. The standardized distribution of the weighted, summated rating scale of religious beliefs ranges from -1.87 to 1.19, in which the larger positive values indicate stronger religious beliefs. The reliability analysis results (Cronbach's alpha =0.874) and statistics produced by factor analysis (percent variance explained = 62.00 eigenvalue= 3.72, KMO= .884) indicate acceptable reliability and validity for the items measuring religious beliefs

Political orientation as the intervening variable in the conceptual model was measured by three questions, asking respondents whether they believe in gun control, free borders, and legitimization of alternative forms of marriage (see Table 1). The three questions were measured on a 3-point ordinal scale scored from 1 "Not at all" (liberal view) 2 "Unsure" (moderate view) 3 "Yes, completely" (conservative view). A factor analysis of the three items extracted a latent factor, labeled scale of Political Orientation. The standardized distribution of the weighted, summated rating scale of political orientation ranges from -0.77 to +3.72, in which the larger positive values indicate more conservative views. The reliability analysis results (Cronbach's alpha =0.533) and statistics produced by factor analysis (percent variance explained = 53.88 eigenvalue= 1.617, KMO= .616) indicate a moderate toward low reliability and validity for the items measuring Political Orientation (see Table 2).

All other control demographic variables were measured by asking respondents to determine their gender, age, educational levels, employment and marital status, and family income. The initial study accounted for age, education and marital status, however, they were later deleted as they presented no statistically significance contribution to the study due to their small variation among students who participated in the study, as they were from close demographic cohorts. The definition and descriptive statistics of variables are shown in Table 2.

### ***Methods***

This study used two types of multivariate statistical analysis to examine the conceptual model depicted in Figure 1. First, path analysis was used to examine the direct and indirect effect of religiosity on attitudes toward abortion. Furthermore, linear regression models were applied to examine the net effect of religiosity and political orientation on attitudes toward abortion.

**Table 1.** Factor analysis and reliability analysis of indicators measuring Attitudes Toward Abortion, Political Orientation, Religious Beliefs and Religious Participation (n=66), Nipissing University, Ontario, Canada: 2019.

<b>Summated Rating Scale</b>	<b>Indicators (rotated factor score)</b>	<b>KMO</b>	<b>Eigenvalue</b>	<b>% Variance Explained</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
<b>Attitudes Toward Abortion</b>  ("Indicate your level of agreement – abortion should be legal...")	1) If there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby (0.813) 2) If the woman's health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy (0.828) 3) If it agreed upon by a woman and her physician (0.841) 4) If the family has a very low income and cannot afford to care for a child (0.910) 5) If conception is the result of rape or incest (0.813) 6) If the pregnancy happens outside of marriage (0.830) 7) If the fetus' survival rate outside of the womb is extremely low (will likely die at birth) (0.849) 8) If the mother will be a "single mother" (0.864) 9) If the pregnancy is the result of failed birth control (0.869) 10) If it is within 3 months of conception (0.852) 11) If the mother is still a teenager (below the age of 20) (0.883)	.917	7.961	72.371	.960
<b>Political Orientation</b>	1) Do you believe that gun control and strict gun laws create a safer society? 2) Do you believe in free borders? (in terms of immigration) 3) Do you believe that forms of marriage should be legitimate? (e.g. gay marriage)	.616	1.617	53.885	.533
<b>Religious Beliefs</b>	1) Do you believe in a God/Gods or a higher power? 2) Do you believe in Heaven? 3) Do you believe in Hell? 4) Do you believe in angels? 5) Do you believe that miraculous healing sometimes occurs? 6) Do you believe in the afterlife?	.884	3.720	62.007	.874
<b>Religious Participation</b>	1) How often do you attend church or any other type of religious institution? (0.910) 2) How often do you pray outside of a church or any other type of religious institution? (0.882) 3) How often do you celebrate or participate in religious holidays or traditions? (E.g. Christmas, Hanukkah, Ramadan etc.) (.649). 4) How often would you say that you practice other spiritual activities? (0.863) 5) How often would you say that you read the Bible, Quran or other sacred texts? (0.899) 6) How often would you say that you discuss your faith with family or friends? (0.918)	.853	4.424	73.742	.926



## Results

Table 2 indicates the definitions and descriptive statistics of the responses as well as immediate and background variables used in the analysis. The results indicate that 75% of respondents identified as female. Moreover, most participants indicated that they were working part-time (62.1%) compared to working full-time (21.2%). In terms of income, the majority of respondents indicated that their family household income was \$60,000 or more (39.4%). Table 2 also shows that most respondents indicated that both their mothers' (63.6%) and fathers' (56.1%) religious affiliation was Catholic (which includes all other branches of Christianity).

Table 3 shows that among all 11 attitude items, measuring attitudes toward abortion, participants were more likely to "strongly agree" or "agree" with abortion under circumstances that were primarily medically related. Specifically, participants strongly agreed/agreed most with abortion where it is agreed upon by the woman and her physician (72.7%), if the fetus' survival rate outside the womb is extremely low (will likely die at birth) (68.2%), if there is a strong chance of serious defect in the baby (68.1%), and if the woman's health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy (66.4%).

In addition to medical circumstances, the results show that participants were less likely to strongly agree or agree with circumstance attributed to social circumstances, such as not being able to afford another child (59.1%), the pregnancy happens outside of marriage (39.4%), the mother is be a "single mother" (43.9%) or a teenager (below the age of 20) (59%).

Notably, participants strongly agreed or agreed with seeking an abortion if the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest (83.3%).

Variable	Definition/Coding	Mean or %	SD
Attitudes Toward Abortion	Standardized interval scale (range: -0.96 to 2.78) (the larger positive values, the more negative attitudes toward abortion)	.000	1.00
Religious Beliefs	Standardized interval scale (range: -1.87 to 1.19) The larger positive values, the stronger religious beliefs.	.000	1.00
Religious Participation	Standardized interval scale (range: -1.18 to 1.19) The higher positive values, the stronger religious participation).	.000	1.00
Political Orientation	Standardized interval scale (range: -0.77 to 3.72) The larger positive values, the more conservative views.	.000	1.00
Gender	Dummy variable (0= male, 1=female)	75.0%	
Employment	Ref. "Unemployed"		
<i>Full-Time</i>		21.2%	
<i>Part-Time</i>		62.1%	
Income	Less than \$20,000 \$20,000 to \$30,000 \$30,000 to \$40,000 \$40,000 to \$50,000 \$50,000 to \$60,000 \$60,000+ Prefer not to say	13.6% 6.1% 9.1% 9.1% 12.1% 39.4% 10.6%	
Mother's Religiosity	Catholic vs. Other (ref.)	63.6%	
Father's Religiosity	Catholic vs. Others (ref.)	56.1%	

<b>Table 3.</b> Percentage distribution of respondents on attitude items, measuring attitudes toward abortion based on abortion circumstances: Nipissing University, 2019			
Attitude Items	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Unsure	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree
1) If there is a strong chance of a serious defect in the baby	68.1%	6.1%	10.6%
2) If the woman’s health is seriously endangered by the pregnancy	66.4%	1.5%	4.5%
3) If it agreed upon by a woman and her physician	72.7%	3%	10.6%
4) If the family has a very low income and cannot afford to care for a child	59.1%	3%	18.2%
5) If conception is the result of rape or incest	83.3%	3%	6.1%
6) If the pregnancy happens outside of marriage	39.4%	16.7%	27.3%
7) If the fetus’ survival rate outside of the womb is extremely low (will likely die at birth)	68.2%	6.1%	7.6%
8) If the mother will be a “single mother”	43.9%	13.6%	25.8%
9) If the pregnancy is the result of failed birth control	50%	9.1%	19.7%
10) If it is within 3 months of conception	66.6%	7.6%	13.6%
11) If the mother is still a teenager (below the age of 20)	59%	7.6%	18.2%

***Path Analysis***

Figure 2 illustrates path analysis of the conceptual model examining the relationships between religiosity and attitudes toward abortion. As shown in the path analysis below, there is a significant positive relationship between political orientation and attitudes toward abortion. That is, participants who reported liberal political affiliation were more likely to be accepting of abortion under circumstances provided in the survey.

Moreover, religious participation proved to be more significant in predicting attitudes toward abortion by direct effect (Path coefficient = 0.493, P-value = 0.001), compared with the the direct effect of religious beliefs (Path coefficient = -0.008, P-value > 0.05). Religious participation was also significant in predicting political orientation where higher religious participation meant more conservation political affiliation.

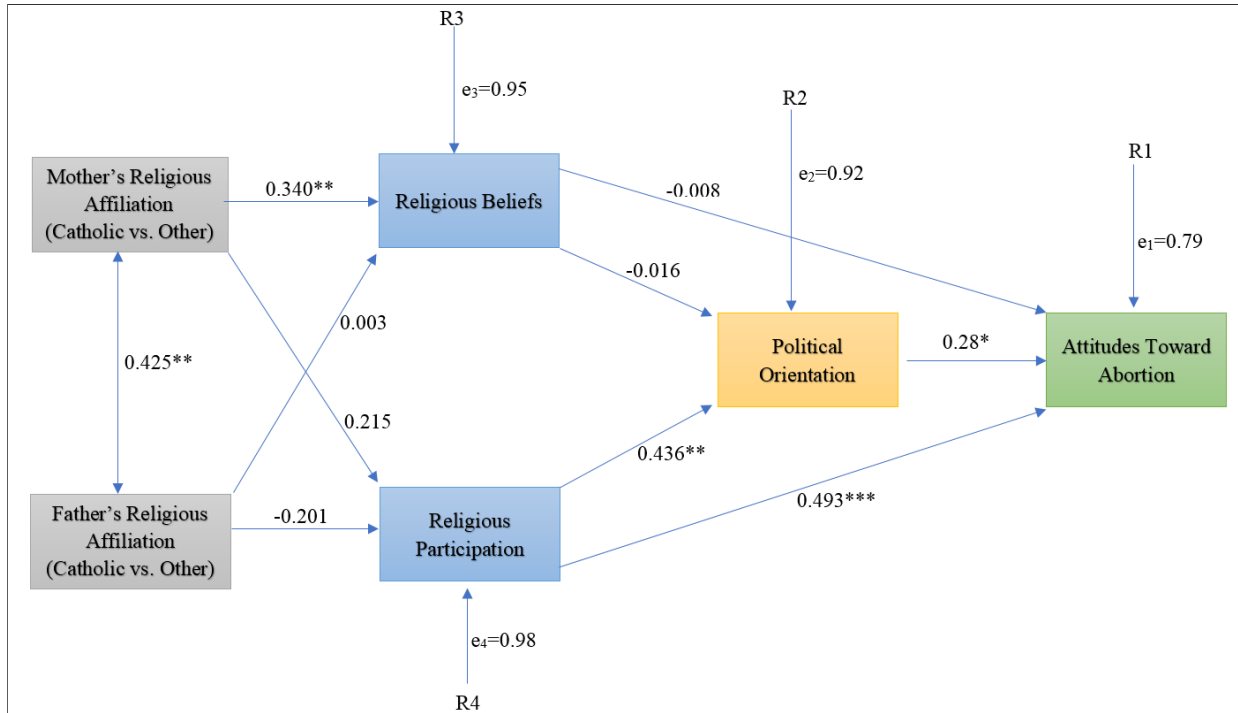
The direct effect of religious beliefs on attitudes to abortion was two times greater than its indirect effect through political orientation. Also, the direct effect of religious participation was nearly three times larger than that of its indirect effect, indicating that religious participation did not affect attitudes toward abortion through political orientation as much as their direct effect.

Moreover, the total direct effect of both religious beliefs and religious participation was much larger than their total indirect effect. Therefore, although political orientation in its own proved to be a significant predictor for attitudes toward abortion, its role as an intervening variable is not as substantial as originally hypothesized.

The model also illustrates the effects of participants’ mothers’ and fathers’ religious affiliation (catholic vs. others) on participants’ religiosity. As shown below, mother’s

religious affiliation had a strong positive effect on religious beliefs but not as strong on their participation. Fathers' religious affiliation did not indicate any significant effect on participants' religiosity although it was significantly related to mother's religious affiliation, indicating that most likely mothers and fathers share religious affiliations. Lastly,  $e_2=0.79$  indicates a great impact of variables outside of the model on attitudes toward abortion.

**Figure 2: Path Analysis of the Conceptual Model Examining Relationship between Religiosity and Attitudes toward Abortion, Nipissing University, 2019 (N=66)**



Note: Significant at \* $p = 0.05$ ; \*\* $p = 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p = 0.001$

Direct effect of Religious Beliefs on Attitudes toward Abortion = -0.008  
 Indirect effect of Religious Beliefs on Attitudes toward Abortion = -0.004  
 Direct effect of Religious Participation on Attitudes toward Abortion = 0.493  
 Indirect effect of Religious Participation on Attitudes toward Abortion = 0.122  
 Total indirect effect of Religiosity on Attitudes toward Abortion = 0.118  
 Total direct effect of Religiosity on Attitudes Toward = 0.485

**Multivariate Analysis**

Table 4 presents the results of regressions analysis of attitudes toward abortion on immediate and independent variable factors and selected background variables in the conceptual model. The first model examines the relationship between the intervening variable (political orientation) and the outcome variable (attitudes toward abortion), while the second model examines the relationship between the independent variables (religious participation and beliefs) and the outcome variable. The third model includes both

immediate factors and independent factors, while the fourth model also adds all background factors and makes a full model.

The multivariate results in the first model indicates that conservative political orientation is significant related with more negative attitudes toward abortion. Moreover, the second model indicates that while religious beliefs did not appear to be significantly related to attitudes toward abortion, religious participation is positively correlated. The third model indicates that when the immediate factor is controlled, only religious participation remains significant. Lastly, the fourth model indicates that the greater levels of conservative political orientation and religious participation are significantly associated with more negative attitudes to abortion, and the higher levels of income is related with more positive attitudes to abortion.

**Table 4.** Estimated coefficients from the linear regression model assessing associations between political orientation, religious beliefs and participation and background factors with attitudes toward abortion. (N=66) Nipissing University, 2019.

Covariate	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Political Orientation	0.477***	0.116			0.265	0.113	0.265*	0.122
Religious Beliefs			-0.030	0.133	-0.008	0.127	-0.067	0.140
Religious Participation			0.625***	0.132	.500**	0.138	0.554***	0.135
Gender (ref. male)							0.385	0.272
Employment (ref. unemployed)								
<i>Full Time</i>							-0.233	0.324
<i>Part-Time</i>							-0.299	0.290
Income							-0.103*	0.054
R <sup>2</sup>	0.203		0.336		0.382		0.465	

Note: Significant at \* p = 0.05; \*\*p = 0.01; \*\*\*p = 0.001; ref. = reference group

### Discussion and Conclusion

The results from this study show that, although it was originally hypothesized that participants' level of religiosity as a whole would be negatively associated with attitudes toward abortion, the results of the proposed conceptual model indicates that religious participation rather than religious beliefs played a larger role in predicting attitudes toward abortion among students at Nipissing University. This finding suggests that religious participation presents a strong sense of religiosity as a whole. Those who indicated higher levels of religious participation had more negative attitudes toward abortion.

While participants' religious participation is a significant predictor of attitudes, mothers' religious affiliation significantly affected participants' religious beliefs and participation more than that of their fathers. When considering the role that mothers generally play in child rearing, it is understandable that their religious affiliation have a

higher effect on children's attitudes toward abortion than that of fathers.

Secondly, multivariate regression results and the results of path analysis showed that political orientation is significantly associated with attitudes toward abortion. Participants with liberal political views were more likely to have positive attitudes toward abortion. Third, of all background factors, only income was significantly related with attitudes to abortion. Those with higher levels of income, had more positive attitudes toward abortion. The results of this study shed more light on the topic of abortion and religiosity in a relatively secular country.

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