

Introduction

The investigation of religion has consistently been a significant subject in sociology, given its fundamental role in human existence. The objective of this study is to present a scholarly article that explores the correlation between religion and the general sentiment of the public regarding same-sex relationships, marriage, and adoption. The study conducted by Perry and Whitehead (2016) will be utilized in a precise manner. The study is titled "Religion and Public Opinion Toward Same-Sex Relations, Marriage, and Adoption: Does the Type of Practice Matter?" and was published in the "Journal for Scientific Study of Religion." The article investigates the correlation between religion and public attitudes toward same-sex relationships, marriage, and adoption. The authors have observed that same-sex sexual activities, marriage, and adoption are distinct practices that possess varying degrees of commitment, public legitimization, and power dynamics. Hence, the authors assert that the attitudes of Americans towards various practices could be impacted by religious elements in diverse manners. However, there has been no scholarly investigation conducted to ascertain whether the impact of religion on public opinion varies depending on the type of religious practice under consideration.

The following paper will expound upon the descriptive statistics, research hypotheses or questions, data collection and analysis methods, findings, sociological interpretation, and concluding remarks on the investigation carried out by Perry and Whitehead.

Descriptive statistics

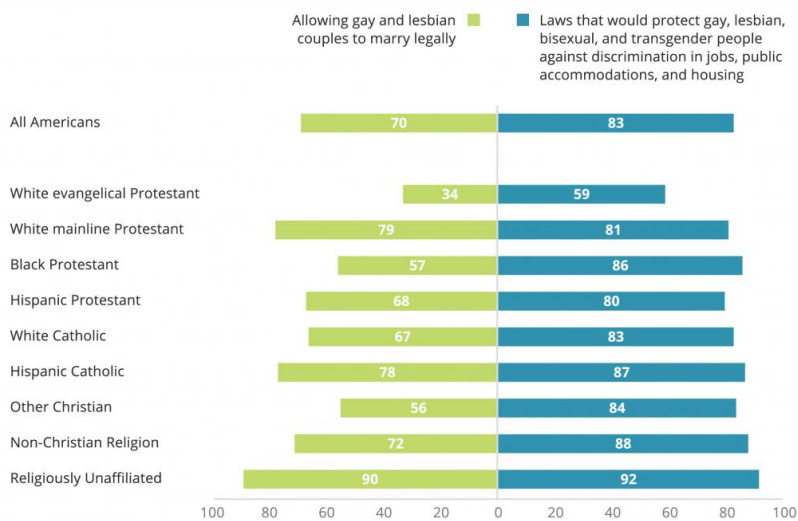
The statistical measure that will be utilized pertains to descriptive analysis and is derived from a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in the year 2020 (Dueling Realities: Amid Multiple Crises, Trump and Biden Supporters See Different Priorities and Futures for the Nation). The survey inquired of the participants whether they were in favor or against the legalization of marriage for homosexual couples. According to the findings, a significant proportion of the American population (70%) express support for the legalization of marriage for same-sex couples, while a minority of 28% of Americans hold an opposing view. The data reveals that a significant proportion of Democrats (80%) and independents (76%) are in favor of same-sex marriage, while a notable proportion of Republicans (50%) also express support for this issue.

The study found that only white evangelical Protestants oppose homosexual and lesbian marriage. This group opposes the concept 63% to 34%. Religious majorities favor marital equality. 90% of religiously unaffiliated Americans, 79% of white mainline Protestants, 78% of Hispanic Catholics, 72% of non-Christian religious group members, 68% of Hispanic Protestants, 67% of white Catholics, 57% of Black Protestants, and 56% of other Christian religious groups agree.

The survey inquired about the respondents' perspectives on legislation that safeguards individuals who identify as LGBTQ from discriminatory practices in areas such as employment, public facilities, and housing. The research found that 83% of Americans supported LGBT rights legislation. In contrast, a minority of 16% of the American population holds a stance against the enactment of the aforementioned regulations. It is noteworthy to mention that a significant proportion of individuals who self-identify as Democrats, independents, and Republicans exhibit endorsement of these regulations. This indicates a tendency towards increased inclusivity of LGBTQ individuals in the United States.

Empirical evidence indicates that solely white evangelical Protestants, among the primary religious factions, exhibit a prevailing stance opposing the legalization of same-sex marriage. This demographic constitutes a significant segment of the American populace, and their opposition to same-sex marriage could have profound implications for the legal and societal recognition and inclusion of the LGBTQ community. It is noteworthy that a significant proportion of individuals from various prominent religious groups, such as white mainstream Protestants, Hispanic Catholics, and followers of non-Christian faiths, express support for the legalization of same-sex marriage.

FIGURE 3.12 Support for Same-Sex Marriage and LGBTQ Nondiscrimination laws, by Religious Affiliation
Percent who favor:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

Hypotheses or Research Questions

The research inquiry is directed by a number of pertinent questions. Initially, the authors inquire as to whether there exists a variation in the level of endorsement for same-sex relationships, marriage, and adoption among diverse religious affiliations. Subsequently, the researchers

analyze whether there exist variations in the impact of religiosity on attitudes towards diverse categories of same-sex practices. The authors investigate whether specific aspects of religiosity, such as adherence to biblical literalism and frequency of church attendance, exhibit a stronger correlation with resistance towards same-sex practices compared to other dimensions.

The authors of the study are testing a set of research questions instead of explicit hypotheses, resulting in implicit hypotheses. Several key hypotheses can be deduced from the authors' analysis of prior research and their stated research inquiries. Initially, the authors propose that there exists a possibility of diversity in perspectives regarding same-sex practices among distinct religious customs. The authors observe that particular religious customs, such as evangelical Protestantism, tend to exhibit greater resistance towards homosexual conduct in comparison to other traditions. One conjecture posits that the degree of endorsement for same-sex practices may differ among various religious traditions, with evangelical Protestants exhibiting comparatively diminished levels of support in contrast to other cohorts.

The authors posit that the impact of religiosity on attitudes towards same-sex practices may exhibit variations across diverse categories of practices. The aforementioned hypothesis is grounded on antecedent studies that propose a convoluted and diverse correlation between religion and perspectives toward homosexual conduct. Several studies have reported that religiosity exhibits a robust correlation with resistance to same-sex marriage, but a comparatively weaker correlation with resistance to same-sex relationships in general. One hypothesis posits that the relationship between religiosity and attitudes toward same-sex practices may exhibit variability across distinct types of practices. Specifically, religiosity may demonstrate a more robust association with opposition to same-sex marriage as opposed to same-sex relationships or adoption.

However, the authors suggest that biblical literalism and church attendance may be more strongly associated with same-sex practices than other religions. The prior study suggests that different religions may have different opinions about same-sex practices. Several research has shown a high link between biblical literalism and rejection of same-sex practices, while church attendance may not. Thus, a hypothesis suggests that certain religious aspects correlate more strongly with same-sex practice reluctance than others.

Data and Methods

The study conducted by Perry and Whitehead (2016) utilized information obtained from the first wave of the Baylor Religion Survey (BRS) to explore the correlation between religion and the general public's stance on same-sex relationships, marriage, and adoption. In 2005, a survey called the BRS was administered to American adults to evaluate their religious attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. A mixed-mode approach involving both telephone and mail surveys was employed to conduct the survey. The response rate obtained was 66.1 percent. The study's outcome variables comprised three inquiries to measure participants' sentiments towards same-

sex sexual relations, marriage, and adoption. The participants were requested to express their opinion regarding the ethicality of these actions, specifically whether they deemed them to be universally unacceptable, mostly unacceptable, occasionally unacceptable, or not unacceptable at all. The authors conducted a comparative analysis of the impact of different aspects of religious life on each same-sex practice due to the uniform phrasing of the questions and responses.

The authors incorporated several independent variables in their analysis in addition to the outcome variables. The variables under consideration encompassed religious tradition, religious practice, and theological conservatism. The assessment of religious tradition was conducted by utilizing seven overarching classifications: evangelical, mainline Protestant, Catholic, black Protestant, Jewish, other, and unaffiliated. The category denoted as "other" encompassed religious groups such as Mormons, Muslims, and other traditions that were not analyzed separately due to insufficient sample sizes. The reference category was represented by individuals who identified as Evangelicals. In order to assess diverse aspects of religious conduct, the authors devised a religious practice metric by utilizing three BRS inquiries that pertain to the frequency of religious service attendance, sacred text reading, and prayer among respondents. Respondents were allowed to indicate the frequency of their religious service attendance and sacred text reading, ranging from never to several times a week. The participants were presented with a range of options, from never to several times a day, to indicate their frequency of prayer. The aforementioned measures were subjected to standardization using Z scores and subsequently aggregated to generate the religious practice scale ($\alpha = .83$). The researchers additionally accounted for the participants' adherence to biblical literalism, which indicates theological conservatism. Each of the multivariate models incorporated a set of controls that have been previously utilized in research about attitudes toward same-sex relationships. These controls encompassed gender, race, marital status, children, education, income, and political ideology.

Results

The study conducted by the authors revealed a negative correlation between religiosity and the endorsement of same-sex sexuality, marriage, and adoption. The data suggest a negative correlation between the frequency of religious activities such as attending church, engaging in prayer, and reading sacred texts and the level of support for same-sex sexuality, marriage, or adoption. The study conducted by the authors revealed variations in the magnitude of the correlation between religiosity and endorsement of same-sex relationships, contingent upon the specific type of practice under consideration. The study found that a higher frequency of engaging in religious practices such as attending church, prayer, and reading sacred texts was linked to a decreased level of endorsement for same-sex sexuality, marriage, or adoption. Individuals who believed that the Bible necessitated interpretation, contained human fallibility, or were uncertain about the matter exhibited more significant support for same-sex relationships

than biblical literalists. This was remarkably accurate in terms of endorsing same-sex sexual orientation.

Additionally, the researchers discovered variations in the endorsement of homosexual relationships among various religious denominations. Black Protestants and evangelicals supported same-sex behaviors similarly. Jews, non-Christians, and atheists were more likely to support same-sex partnerships than evangelicals. Catholics and mainstream Protestants supported same-sex partnerships less consistently than evangelicals. Mainline Protestants are more likely than evangelicals to support same-sex marriage and adoption. Catholics prefer same-sex adoption to evangelicals.

The researchers additionally discovered that political affiliation was contingent on the nature of the same-sex relationship under consideration. As an illustration, an individual's political affiliation proved to be a more robust indicator of their endorsement of same-sex marriage or adoption than their level of religious observance. Regarding endorsing homosexuality, religious observance emerged as a more robust predictor than political affiliation with the Democratic Party. The proposition implies that same-sex marriage and adoption are prone to political and legal disputes, rendering matters greater significant for individuals aligned with the Democratic Party. Conversely, same-sex sexuality may be perceived as a moral-ideological matter and may be more closely associated with religious beliefs and practices.

Sociological Explanation

Cultural cognition explains the greater difference between Bible literalists and same-sex sexuality advocates. Same-sex marriage and adoption are exceptions to this sociological finding. Moreover, this phenomenon is bolstered by the process of constructing one's identity, wherein individuals who perceive their religious identity to be fundamental to their self-concept are inclined to adopt strict construals of the Bible.

Furthermore, the finding mainline Protestants and Catholics are less likely than evangelicals to support gay marriage, intercourse, and adoption can be elucidated through the lens of social identity theory. The idea indicates that mainstream Protestants are more likely than evangelicals to accept gay marriage and adoption owing to their different social identity, while Catholics are more likely than evangelicals to favor same-sex adoption. According to religious social identity theory, people get self-esteem and identity from social groupings like religion. Individuals are therefore motivated to maintain positive evaluations of their social group's norms and values. This results in individuals conforming to the beliefs and behaviors supported by their social group and rejecting those who deviate from the norm.

Conclusion

Perry and Whitehead's (2016) study delves into the correlation between religion and the general populace's viewpoints regarding same-sex partnerships, marriage, and adoption. The research

indicates that religious factors exert a significant influence on the attitudes of Americans towards these pursuits, manifesting in diverse ways. The findings indicate that solely white evangelical Protestants exhibit a significant opposition towards same-sex marriage. The aforementioned circumstance could potentially yield implications for the societal and juridical acknowledgment of individuals who identify as LGBTQ within the United States. Legalizing same-sex marriage is strongly favored by various significant religious groups, such as white mainline Protestants, Hispanic Catholics, and followers of non-Christian religions. Additionally, the survey findings indicate that a significant proportion of the American populace endorses the enactment of laws aimed at safeguarding individuals who identify as homosexual, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender from discriminatory acts.

The analysis conducted by the authors of previous literature and their research inquiries suggests that there may be varying perspectives on same-sex practices across different religious traditions. The study emphasizes the need for more research to identify how religion affects public opinion depending on religious attendance.

References

Perry, S. L., & Whitehead, A. (2016). Religion and Public Opinion Toward Same-Sex Relations, Marriage, and Adoption: Does the Type of Practice Matter? *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 55(3), 637–651. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12215>

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