



Association Between Religiosity and Political Behavior

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Introduction

Religiosity

- The degree to which someone considers themselves religious.
- The extent to which religion influences their identity, behavior, decisions.

Political Identity & Behavior

- Identity typically refers to which political party a person aligns with.
- Behavior can refer to extent to which a person is politically active in the form of voting, registering to vote or registering with a particular party

Religion and Politics

- In the 2018 midterm elections, religious affiliation impacted voting decisions (Pew, 2018).
- Voter turnout is also positively associated with church attendance (Gerber, Gruber, & Hungerman, 2015).
- Less is known about the association between political behavior, like voting, and other aspects of religiosity

Method

Hypothesis

Individuals with higher religiosity will have higher tendency to demonstrate active political behavior through voting behavior.

Participants: $N = 305$, $M_{age} = 19.04$, $SD_{age} = 1.10$

Method

Procedure

Prior to the 2016 Presidential election, participants completed measures online as a part of the Department of Psychology's mass testing data collection.

Measures

Religious Commitment Inventory: Consisting of ten questions all assessing the level of one's religious commitment on a scale of 1 (Not at all true) to 5 (Totally true).

Religiosity Index: Two questions asking "How religious are you?" and "How strongly do you believe in God?" that were answered on a scale from 1 (Not at all) and 7 (Very strongly).

Voting Behavior: Measured the likelihood that participants would NOT be voting in the 2016 election on a 1(No, not at all) to 7 (Yes, definitely)

- Higher scores = less likely to vote

Political Identity: Participants rated their political identity on a 1 (Liberal) to 7(Conservative) scale.

Results

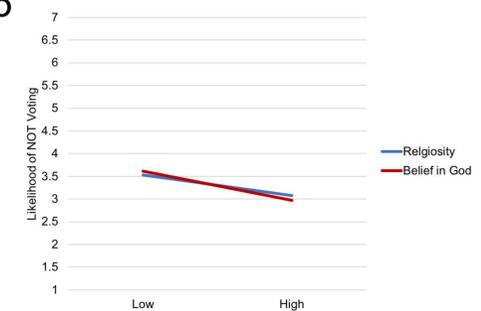
We examined whether religious commitment and responses to each item on the religiosity index in three separate analyses.

Voting behavior (i.e., likelihood of not voting in the 2016 election) was regressed onto the relevant religiosity measure while controlling for political identity, age, and sex

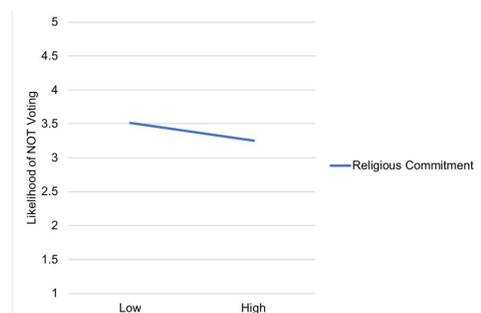
Results

Belief in God was positively associated with voting behavior, $B = -0.17$, $SE = 0.08$, $F(1, 249) = 4.23$, $p = 0.04$.

Religiousness was not significantly associated with voting behavior, $B = -0.13$, $SE = 0.09$, $F(1, 249) = 2.01$, $p = .16$



- Religious commitment was also not significantly associated with voting behavior, $B = -0.14$, $SE = 0.16$, $F(1, 248) = 0.69$, $p = .41$



Discussion

Our hypothesis, that religiosity is positively associated with voting behavior, was partially supported.

- People with a stronger belief in God reported a greater likelihood of voting in the 2016 Presidential election.

Future research should directly test what other religious factors would affect political behavior more specifically rather than broad religiosity in general.