

## Impact of Conservatism on Religiosity among Graduate Students of Muzaffarpur District of Bihar

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### Abstract

Religiosity is a quality of being very or too religions. It's refers to an individual's degree of religions commitment encompassing attitudes behaviour and value related to their faith and Conservatism refers to the tendency to preserve or keep intact and unchanged existing institution and values. The present study tries to focus on the impact of conservatism on religiosity among 240 graduate students of Muzaffarpur district. Selected samples were administered on the Religiosity scale developed by Dr. L. I. Bhushan and conservatism scale developed by Dr. Hardeo Ojha were used for assessing the religiosity and conservatism of the graduate students of Muzaffarpur district. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the obtained data using statistical tools such as, correlation, means, SD, t-ratio. The analysis of data concluded that a positive and significant correction has been obtained between the scores of religiosity and conservatism of the graduate students, which indicates that both variables have significant positive relation. Again, the comparison between high and low conservative groups by using t-test has shown there is a significant difference between high conservative group and low conservative group in term of religiosity. It indicates that conservatism plays a significant role to determining the religiosity.

**Keywords:** Religiosity, conservatism and graduate students.

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### Introduction

Religiosity refers to religions faith. It's the quality or state of being religious. According to Galloway (1956), 'Religiosity means faith in a power beyond himself whereby the seek to satisfy emotional need and gain stability of life and which he expresses in acts of worship and service. Chaplin (1975) defined religiosity as a complex system of beliefs attitude etc which relates the personal to define being. Reber and Reber (2001) define in this way, 'Religiosity as involvement interest and participation in religion.' Again, 'Religiosity is a quality of being very or too religions. It's a multidimensional concept measuring both internal convictions and external practices such as prayer or attendance rather than just religious affiliation. Thus Religiosity refers to an individual's degree of religions commitment encompassing attitudes behaviour and value related to their faith.

Again, Conservatism refers to the tendency to preserve or keep intact and unchanged existing institution and values. In general it denotes to opposition to change. According to

Chaplin (1975), 'The term conservatism refers to a tendency to resist change, adherence to established institutions and modes of behaviour.' Fairchild (1976) in his 'Dictionary of Sociology' has written that 'Conservative is a person who clings to the status opposing all changes on the assumption that anything new is going to be worse. He reveres his past and is the one believing that nothing should be tried for the first time.' Though resistance to change is stressed as the most formal definition of conservatism it is widely recognized that conservatives' favours changes that contribute the maintenance of existing order or that reverses unpalatable developments. Conservatives person have stronger attachment to the symbol and rituals than their liberal than counterparts. Conservatives feel greater difficulty in adjusting to environmental changes and have more stress arising out of felt uncertainly and in security. Thus conservatism is one's psychological status of elements to accept a specific pattern chosen over the adolescent cycle. Conservatism is simply not s phenomenon to adhere to particular conduct but rather it is

the cycle of not allowing getting involved all through time. Ray (1974) finds conservatism as a cynical and hardened view of humanity. Wilson's (1973) book entitled, 'Psychology of conservatism' enlisted eight prominent characteristics of an ideal or extreme conservatism. These are Religion fundamentalism, Rightwing political orientation, Insistence on strict rules and punishment, Militarism, Intolerance of minority groups, Preference for conventional are clothing and institutions, Anti-hedonistic outlook including restrictions on sexual behaviour and Resistance to scientific progress and adherence to superstitious belief and fatalism.

### Review of Literature

There are so many studies conducted by the researcher on conservatism and religiosity. Some important researches and their findings are discussed here.-

Brain F Schaffner *et al.*, (2025) conducted a study and found that American conservatives tends to rate their mental health more positively than their liberal counterparts. Conservatives also score higher on personality and attitude measures such as religiosity, marital status and patriotism, which are associated with better mental health.

Johannes Pienaar *et al.*, (2021) investigated the existence of a sound mind if a male adolescent is generally conservative. The authors define psychological health as the ability to adapt to society, life fulfilment, and survival in a world that seems to exhibit a constant change in culture and other activities. The model used by the authors consisted of 1238 male adolescents from the Eastern Cape and Gauteng Province of South Africa. The authors concluded their study by highlighting that religious conservative male adolescents were found to show very minimum psychological disturbances and were leading healthy and happy life.

Pedro A. Costa *et al.*, (2014) presented the outcomes of their study on the role played by religious Conservatism in parenting. This research was conducted in a sample consisting of 993 participants in Portugal. The study was done on the people aged 18 to 69. Although same-sex marriage has become more acceptable than before, teens with conservative views, often influenced by their religious beliefs, fail to accept it. They have a tendency to hold into traditions taught in their families through generations. Research suggests that kids raised by same-sex parents often face emotional challenges and social stigma, like feeling out of the peer group at school. For example, a teen may find it tricky to explain their family dynamic to classmates, which can cause emotional distress to them. The study showed that children raised by opposite-sex couples generally have stronger psychological health compared to those raised by same-sex couples.

Leticia & Alexander (2009) address the role of religious belief in shaping an individual's personality. The authors made use of the reports from the databases that are available online, namely PubMed and Psych Info. They used the data that was available till January 2008. The study found that the adolescents who are conservative and who believe in God involve themselves in risky activities. They think they are given the strength to tackle life challenges and apply themselves in taking risks but in a positive way and neglecting to follow illegal or immoral practices.

Nicole & J. Galss (2008) have spoken about the behaviour of religious conservative's male adolescents and their participation in household chores. The authors brief that the male adolescents who believe in religious faiths showed more

remarkable restraint to premarital sex. It is found that adolescents from conservative families showed a transition to adulthood very early. It is found that men from such backgrounds gave importance to family and children and they worked minimum hours and earned less money. They preferred to spend more time caring for their children and were involved in many of the activities at home. The study was conducted considering the data reported by the National Survey of Families and Households between 1988 and 1993. Michael *et al.*, (2003) presented the findings of their study about the association between religious conservatism and the personality of individuals. The study was done in a model that considered 492 adolescents between of 12 and 18. As suggested by other researchers, this group also agrees that adolescents who believe in religious principles are conscious of their work. Concerning other qualities, the authors concluded by stating that if a person lacks emotional stability, there is an absence of a relationship between their personality and religious background. People who are emotionally intense from childhood perform better, even if they are not religious conservatives.

In their article, Christian Smith *et al.* (2002) present how conservative adolescents concerning religious practice can be highly responsible for happy family establishment. The study was accompanied in 3 aspects of spiritual life: affiliation, attendance, and religious fervour and, in some cases, a combination of the above features. In most conservative adolescents, cohabitation ended in marriage, and the percentage of married pairs parting after marriage was meagre. The study was conducted on a sample of youth from the United States.

B. B. Benda (2002) attempted to study the relationship between religious conservative persons and crimes committed by them. The author relied on a model in which he chose males aged 15 to 24. This research was conducted in a boot camp in the southern part of the USA. The author concluded that being religious conservative is unrelated to social control. It was reported in the research that the relationship between an adolescent believing in religious practices and involving in crimes such as having a weapon, illicit drug usage, and selling, is inverse.

Cheung & Kwok (1996) proved that Conservatism in male adolescents results in them acting as authorities at work and home. Domination by husbands is quite common in many religious conservative families. This has become a social issue. This dominating control has negatively affected the development of the society. There is also a presence of ego among the males. This male ego sometimes results in insecure masculinity and it has done no good for the welfare of the society.

Gail and Bernard (1993) discussed the advantages and disadvantages of Conservatism. The researchers discussed about the importance of Conservatism in developing discipline and controlling anger. It was found that conservative males are not much concerned about the social issues. Generally conservative males do not get affected by the suffering in the society. The motivation to help others was found extremely low in most of the conservative males. The conservative males believed that if a person is suffering from a problem, it is his destiny. Therefore, they did not help in most cases and left the person under distress to recover on his own.

In their work, Monica and Adrain (1985) explored the disadvantages of not holding conservative values. They identified that poverty can have many causes, like limited

education or poor money management, but a lack of personal discipline generally contributes as well. For instance, someone who struggles to stay organized or make tough choices might find it harder to break free from financial struggles. One who is conservative in their adolescent age will practice the teachings of their elders, and their psychology will not allow them to resort to immoral practices. They will be leading a more comfortable life than ones that involve in corrupt practices. This study was conducted among male adolescents from the Barbados islands, considered a fairly wealthy province in West Indies, and Dominica, a relatively poor island.

**Objective of the Study**

The study was designed to attain the following objectives:

- A. To examine the relationship between conservatism and religiosity among graduate students.
- B. To study the difference between high and low conservative groups of graduate students on religiosity.

**Hypotheses of the Study**

Keeping in view the above aims there are two major hypotheses has been formulated for empirical verification. These are:

- H1. There will be significant positive correlation between conservatism and religiosity of graduate students.
- H4. The high conservative group of the graduate students will show more religiosity than the low conservative group of the graduate students.

**Methodology**

This study was carried out after voluntary and verbal consent from the participants and taking permission from the college authority. The convenient and purposive sampling procedure was followed to select the participants for the study.

**Sample**

The study involved a total sample size of 240 graduate students of college of Muzaffarpur district, divided into two group i.e. 120 high conservative group and 120 low conservative group.

**A Complete Sample Distribution is given below:**

|                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Total Sample (240)            |                              |
| High conservative group (120) | Low conservative group (120) |

**Inclusion Criteria**

- 1. Age between 18-22 years was included.
- 2. Educational qualification of samples was graduate.

**Exclusion Criteria**

- 1. Education qualification below graduation excluded.
- 2. Education qualification above graduation excluded.

**Tools used**

The data for the study was collected by using the following tools:

**Personal Data Sheet (PDS):** Personal data sheet was prepared by the researcher herself for participant’s identification. The detailed information regarding participants i.e. name, age, sex, religion, residence, qualification, name of institutions, father name, address etc. included.

**Religiosity Scale (RS):** Religiosity scale is used to measure the religiosity of the participants. It developed by Dr. L. I. Bhushan and published by National Psychological

Corporation Agra. This scale consists 36 items with multiple choice items like five point likert type scale. Its reliability and validity is .69 and 0.57 respectively.

**Conservatism Scale (CS):** Conservatism scale used to measure the conservative tendency of the Participants. It developed by Dr. Hardeo Ojha and published by Agra Psychological Research cell, Agra. This scale consists 30 items with multiple choice items likes five point likert type scale. Its reliability and validity is .72 and .68 respectively.

**Procedure**

After contacting the prospective participants and taking their verbal consent, the Religious scale and Conservative scale along with personal data sheet were given to participants. The purpose of the study was explained and proper information was given to them. The participants gave their responses separately. After the screening the procedure was completed.

**Result and discussion**

First of all religiosity scale and conservatism scale was administered on all 240 sample and data obtained. The correction was computed between the score of religiosity and conservatism scale. The correlation has been shown in Table no.1.

**Table 1:** (Co-efficient of correlation between religiosity and conservatism scores)

| Variable                     | N   | r   | <P   |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|------|
| Religiosity V/s Conservatism | 240 | .58 | 0.01 |

Pondering over this table no.1, it is observed that, there is a positive and moderate correlation between religiosity and conservatism of all 240 respondents i.e. .58 and it is significant on 0.01 levels. It means that both variables are positively related.

In this study, on the basis of this finding it can be remarked that the hypothesis formulated above, ‘There will be significant positive correlation between religiosity and conservatism of graduate students’ is accepted.

Again, conservatism scale was administrated on all sample and obtained the score. Again all samples were divided into two groups on the basis of high and low score on conservatism scale, which is called high conservative group and low conservative group. Again the religiosity scale was administrated on all samples and the basis of high and low conservatism group M, SD and t were calculated and tabulated in table no.2.

**Table 2:** (N, M, SD and t of high and low conservative group on religiosity)

| Group                   | N   | M      | SD    | t    | <P   |
|-------------------------|-----|--------|-------|------|------|
| High conservative group | 120 | 124.28 | 6.68  | 6.78 | 0.01 |
| Low conservative group  | 120 | 113.36 | 10.84 |      |      |

Pondering over this table no 2, it is observed that, it has the comparison between high and low conservative groups in term of religiosity, it is clear that the N, M, SD of high conservative group are 120, 124.28, 6.68 while the N, M, SD of low conservative groups are 120, 113.36, 10.84 respectively. The t-ratio of these two groups is 6.78, which is significant on 0.01 level, so it is clear that the research hypothesis i.e. ‘The high conservative group of the graduate students will show more religiosity than the low conservative group of the graduate students’ is accepted.

### Findings of the Study

The findings of the present study are as follows: -

- i) Religiosity and Conservatism both variables are positively correlated.
- ii) High conservative group shows more religiosity than low conservative group.

### Conclusion

On the basis of this study, it can be concluded that, a positive and significant correlation has been obtained between the scores of religiosity and conservatism of the graduate students, which indicates that both variables have significant positive relation. Again, the comparison between high and low conservative groups by using t-test has shown there is a significant difference between high conservative group and low conservative group in terms of religiosity. It indicates that conservatism plays a significant role in determining the religiosity.

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