Religious and Moral Conviction Survey (#4511)

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1) Have any data been collected for this study already?

No, no data have been collected for this study yet

2) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?

The goal of this research will be to explore the degree to which religious convictions (RC) and moral convictions (MC) are similar or different. The golden thread hypothesis posits that religion provides the motivational source of moral concerns. According to this view, MC and RC should be highly correlated. The secularization hypothesis suggests that morality and religion have become increasingly separate overtime and, therefore, predicts that religiosity and RC associated with a given attitude will interact to predict whether the attitude is also experienced as a MC. RC should only predict MC when religiosity is high, and not low. The culture war hypothesis suggests that holding policy positions with both MC and RC may be more likely for those on the political right than left. The culture war hypothesis (in its broad form) predicts that RC will more strongly predict MC for conservatives than it will for liberals. A narrower form of the culture war hypothesis, however, is that this pattern of results might only emerge for religious conservatives, and not all conservatives. The narrow culture war hypothesis therefore predicts that we will observe the strongest relationship between MC and RC associated with target issues (particularly issues involving sexual taboos like abstinence only sex education, abortion, and transgender bathrooms) among religious conservatives, and weaker relationships between MC and RC for secular conservatives, as well as secular and religious liberals. The distinct constructs hypothesis suggests that morality and religion are fundamentally different constructs and, therefore, should not be highly correlated (i.e., below .70).

3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.

The key dependent variable is moral conviction, which is measured with four items ("To what extent is your position on [issue]… 1) a reflection of your core moral beliefs and convictions? 2) connected to your beliefs about fundamental right and wrong? 3) a moral stance? 4) based on moral principle?" measured on a scale from 1-not at all to 5-very much). Assuming $\alpha > .70$, we will average all four scores.

4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?

The current research is correlational in design and all participants will respond to all items (there will be no conditions). Participants will be asked to provide their moral conviction and religious conviction for seven issues (abstinence only education, physician-assisted suicide, abortion, prayer in schools, climate change, raising taxes on top 1%, and transgender bathrooms). Participants will also answer a measure of religiosity using a 3-item version of the Santa Clara Faith Questionnaire and political orientation.

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.

To test the golden threat and distinct constructs hypotheses, we will examine bivariate correlations between moral conviction and religious conviction for each issue. To test the secularization and culture war hypotheses, we will conduct hierarchical multiple regression analyses predicting moral conviction from political orientation, religiosity, and religious conviction in step 1, all two-way interactions in step 2, and the three-way interaction in step 3 for each issue.

6) Any secondary analyses?

We will also test the role of affective reactions (e.g., anger, disgust, fear) to each topic as a potential mediator for the relationship between religious conviction and moral conviction.

7) How many observations will be collected or what will determine sample size? No need to justify decision, but be precise about exactly how the number will be determined.

We will attempt to collect data from at least 400 Mturk participants with an equal number of liberals and conservatives. An a priori power analyses based on previous research suggested a sample size of at least 375 to detect a small effect with 80% power for a two-way interaction and a medium-sized effect for a three-way interaction.

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., data exclusions, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)

We will exclude participants who fail both of our instructional manipulation check items (e.g., "if you read this, mark 'slightly'."). We also include support/opposition for each issue, additional attitude strength measures (importance and certainty), political candidate evaluations, and basic demographic information but do not have any direct hypotheses for these constructs.