

Who is more religious and ethical, Republicans, Democrats or others?

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Abstract

Reports show most religious groups in the United States, especially Christian evangelicals, are showing more affiliation to the Republican political party. Nonetheless, members of the Democratic political party are also weaving faith into their rhetoric. A citizen's affiliation with a political party can change over time, and political affiliation might influence behavior. This study compares and contrasts individuals affiliated with political parties and those who are not on their: (1) decision-making process purchasing everyday products, (2) relationship with God, (3) and ethical and sustainable behaviors. Using Pew Research data (n=3,278), this study compares and contrasts individuals affiliated with political parties and those who are not on their decision-making process in purchasing everyday products, relationship with God, and ethical and sustainable behaviors. Despite significant differences between political parties, most of them have thanked God for something and almost half of them have asked God for help and guidance. The results show people in the U.S. with various party affiliations are somewhat religious and spiritual. The notion that only Republicans will be guided by religious beliefs is misguided. Almost half of Democrats in this study show strong religious values.

The study has several limitations. First, Republican leaners and Republicans or Democrat leaners and Democrats were not separated. People who are leaning toward a political party may have different attitudes toward various issues. Future research may investigate this issue and contrast differences between these groups. Second, the study did not look at differences between religion and denomination.

The paper makes several contributions to this area of study. First, similarities and differences between individuals affiliated with political parties are determined. Second, myths about stigma toward a particular political party are debunked, and finally, insights for religious and political leaders on their followers' behavior are provided.

Keywords: Religion; ethics; Republican; Democrat; Independent

Introduction

Political parties in the U.S. have become increasingly divisive over the years (Avlon 2019; Geoffrey 2007; Vacari and Morini 2014). People with affiliation in one of the country's two main political parties—Republican and Democratic—have accused each other of various unethical behaviors. Democrats blame Republicans of being unethical by supporting the family separation immigration policy of President Donald Trump's administration, and Republicans accuse Democrats of being unethical by allowing abortion (Long 2019; Rowly 2021). Studies have indicated that people who are affiliated with the Republican Party tend to be more religious than non-Republicans (Glaeser et al. 2005; Punyamut-Carter et al. 2010). Reports show most religious groups, especially mainline Protestants, are more Republican affiliated (Gryboski 2019). Nonetheless, Democrats are also

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weaving faith into their rhetoric (Schor 2019). A citizen's affiliation with a political party can change over time, and this affiliation may also change the citizen's behavior (Kotzaivazoglou 2011).

To date, this field of study does not have many comparative analyses exploring ethical differences and religious values between people from different political party affiliations. Party identification is a central component of political behavior; the concept has been continually evolved and been modified (Campbell et al. 1960; Greene 2004; Kopko 2012). Hence, more studies on how a citizen's affiliation with political parties influences their perception and behaviors are needed. Scholars suggest that there are limited empirical studies have been conducted to explain the potential relationship between religiosity and ethical behaviour (Arlı and Leo 2017; Chan-Serafin, Brief, & George, 2013). Hence, the study asks the following research questions: (1) *What are the impact of citizens' religious beliefs on their subsequent ethical behavior?*; (2) *Are there differences between citizens' political affiliations and their subsequent ethical behavior?*

Using Pew Research data, this study compares and contrasts individuals affiliated with political parties and those who are not on their: (1) decision-making process purchasing everyday products, (2) relationship with God, (3) and ethical and sustainable behaviors. The three topics were selected due to several reasons. Consumers judge human reality based on a set of adopted and adapted moral criteria such as political affiliation and religious affiliation (Vitell et al. 2005; Arlı and Tjiptono 2014). Therefore, most religions and their consequential religious beliefs incorporate strong teachings about appropriate ethical behavior (Parboteah et al. 2008). Consumers decision making process will be influenced by their relationship with God and subsequently impacting their ethical and sustainable behaviors.

The paper will make several contributions to this line of study. First, the paper will update similarities and differences of individuals affiliated with political parties (Republican and Democrat) on ethical and religious beliefs. Second, the study will debunk the stigma toward individuals with a particular political party affiliation, and finally, the study will provide insights for religious leaders and political leaders on the behavior of their followers. More specifically, this research may help political marketing strategists and political candidates to effectively promote their policies to their followers. Finally, businesses may create targeted campaign to reach a certain segment of the population.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical framework – Social identity theory

Social identity can be defined as “that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to the membership” (Tajfel 1978, p. 2). The theory suggests that individuals will maximize differences between the in-group and the out-group, thus showing significant differences between both groups (Tajfel and Turner 1986). Social identity has been widely used to identify people's affiliation with political parties (Green 2004; Huddy 2001); religion and religious fundamentalism (Greenfield and Marks 2007; Herriot 2014); sports' team identity (Heere and James 2007; Platow et al. 2009); and ethnic prejudice (Meyer 2007; Nesdale 1999). In general, people will behave according to the group in which they identify (Stets and Burke 2000). For example, both liberals and conservatives were politically intolerant and prejudiced toward ideologically dissimilar groups (Crawford 2014). Social identity mediates the relationship between the self and the broader social structure of the group a person belongs to (Terry et al. 1999). Hence, it will be beneficial to analyze individual's behavior based on how they identify themselves with a group such as political



affiliations. Social identity is the main underlying factor of self-conception in group membership and intergroup relations (Hogg 2006). The next literature review will discuss the impact of religion on political affiliations, voting behavior, the rise of populism, identity politics, Islamic populism, party polarization and ethnic violence. The purpose of this comprehensive review is to provide an overview of the significant impact of religion on politics in the US and globally.

Religion and political affiliations

Studies have identified that religion is associated with partisanship in the United States (Campbell et al. 2010; Green 2007). In the last two decades there has been a shift in political association with Evangelicals becoming one of the most loyal of the Republican Party's voting groups, while Catholics are more loyal to the Democratic Party (Kohut et al. 2000; Layman 2001). Subsequently, researchers have concluded that there are certain behavioral differences between political affiliations (Erikson 2001; Layman 1999). Studies have found key differences on various issues such as: (1) *Attitude toward the environment*. Self-identification as Republican negatively influences support for a curbside textile-recycling policy. Study shows Republicans are less pro-environmental than non-Republicans (Arp 1994; Daneshvary et al. 1998); (2) *Ethical consumption*. Democrats are willing to pay more than Republicans on ethical products (Park 2018); (3) *Moral acceptability*. Republicans and Democrats differ significantly in their views of abortion and buying/wearing fur. Republicans are more likely to accept these issues as morally acceptable compared to Democrats (Carroll 2006); (4) *Extrinsic and intrinsic values*. Republicans tend to endorse extrinsic values (i.e. financial success) and place less emphasis on intrinsic values (i.e. helping others). Democrats are more likely to be considered pro-social, while Republicans are more likely to be considered pro-self (Sheldon and Nichols 2009); (5) *Healthy lifestyle*. Republicans enjoy better health status as a consequence of individual responsibility. For example, Republicans are less likely to smoke compared to Democrats (Subramanian and Perkins 2009); (5) *Religious behavior*. People are more likely to report attending religious services and praying when the opposite political party controls the White House, and rates of reported religious behaviors (such as praying) decline when a co-partisan is president is in office (Margolis 2016). The results demonstrate political identities' strength and ability to influence nonpolitical behaviors, even those thought to be stable and impervious to politics.

In addition to differences, limited studies found similarities between political affiliations such as a preference toward in-group versus out-group. Republicans and Democrats gave more to recipients who are from their own party (Fowler and Kam 2007). Additionally both political parties exhibit similar views on extrinsic value (i.e. appealing image and fame) (Sheldon and Nichols 2009).

Religion and voting behavior

Political parties are groups of people with the primary purpose on winning political office with their chosen candidates and elective office holders (Downs 1957; Aldrich 1995; Rohde 1991; Cox and McCubbins 1993; 2005; Iyer et al 2017). Studies have reported how political parties' preference have long been affected by religion (Kotler-Berkowitz, 2001; Layman, 1997; Manza & Brooks, 1997). This can be seen from the recent case of United Kingdom where the majority of UK Anglicans (Church of England) voted for Brexit in opposition with the majority of Christian Evangelical (Smith & Woodhead, 2018). Literature further suggest that religion matters in British politics as much as it did in the past, particularly on the association between religious denominations with parties and how these connections were passed down from parents to their children (Tilley, 2015).

Studies found that political candidate with the same beliefs and religion with the majority often attract more voters (Botterman & Hooghe, 2012; Pepinsky, Liddle, & Mujani, 2012). Religion, along with ethnicities have been used as identities to influence candidate or political parties preference (Mccauley, 2014). As such, political candidate's ethnicity and religious background matter on voting preference. This can be seen in the recent case of Indonesia, the world's third largest democracy. The second win of Joko Widodo in Indonesia's 2019 presidential election who chose Ma'ruf Amin, a prominent Muslim leader of *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (Indonesian Ulema Council) and influential member of *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa* (one of the largest Islamic parties with moderate view) was considered as a strategy to 'shield' him from attacks by Muslim conservatives (Saat, 2019). Moreover, study found that the win of far-right wing populist, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil was due to his capacity in deploying religion to justifies his authoritarian and racism persona along with his proposed policies, which gained significant support from religious-conservative voters such as the Catholics and evangelicals (Byline, 2018). Similar case occurred in India with the win of Narendra Modi through Bharatiya Janata Party, which associated its politics with cultural nationalism and the pursuit of politics based on identity and religion (Schöttli & Pauli, 2016). These studies highlighted the facts that religion is inseparable for winning electoral politics and that it can be infused in proposed policies to appeal for religious voters.

Religion and the rise of populism

In contemporary politics, religion has become the verdict for the emergence of a phenomenon currently experienced by most democratic countries; the rise of populism (Dehanas & Shterin, 2018; Kriesberg, 2019). Populism has been defined as a political style that sets 'sacred' people against two enemies: the elites and the 'others' (Dehanas & Shterin, 2018), where a successful populist will be acknowledged as 'a hero that will save the people from villains' (Mudde, 2004). Thus, the ongoing trend of populism explains why political parties tend to antagonize different beliefs including religion to attract voters in contemporary politics, which will lead to divide between communities. Such cases can be seen in French with the instrumentalization of Christianity in its politics by the *Front National* (Roy, 2016) and the win of Donald Trump (Republican) with about 81% Christian Evangelical voted for him in the 2016 United States of America presidential election (Smith & Woodhead, 2018). In general, the rise of populism in North Atlantic societies share a kind of vision in which Islam is perceived to have a regressive culture and therefore is a threat for their civilizational integrity (Brubaker, 2017), this has strengthened the vision of Christian right as a global movement (Byline, 2018). Such narration drove the emergence of right-wing populisms with their negative stereotypical campaigns and proposed policies such as banning Muslims immigration and the construction of Mosque (Schmuck, Matthes, & Paul, 2017). This is apparent through right-wing political parties in Europe (Betz, 2013; Hafez, 2014), UK and Australia (Hogan & Haltinner, 2015) and in the US (Schmuck et al., 2017).

In addition to the emergence of populism influenced with Christian-right view, studies reported that Islamic right-wing populism has rapidly grown in the world's largest Muslims population, Indonesia (Diprose, Mcrae, & Hadiz, 2019). Islamic right-wing populism in Indonesia may share similar vision with its counterparts in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) such as contempt on Leftist capital accumulation and challenges to private property and alertness on political liberalism agenda in making a secular national state (Hadiz, 2014, 2016). Study suggest that the most successful Islamic right-wing party in Indonesia is *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (Prosperous Justice Party), this party has similar strategy with Egypt Muslim Brotherhood where mobilization of followers is based on political identity (Hadiz, 2018).



However, various studies argued that the main reason for this surge was due to the alleged blasphemy case to Islam made by the former governor of Jakarta (capital city of Indonesia), Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or Ahok (Hadiz, 2018; Setijadi, 2017). Ahok's blasphemy case led to massive demonstration at Monumen Nasional, Jakarta with Muslims across Indonesia gathered to demand him sent to jail. The government was alarmed over the enormity of the crowd in this mass demonstration claimed to stem from religious fervor (Bourchier, 2019). However, there are arguments that this demonstration is a mere political movement to overthrow Ahok, (Djuyandi & Ramadhani, 2019; Törnquist, 2019) who have won his first round of 2017 gubernatorial election, as many Islamic preachers were reported to deliver hate speech on Ahok during sermons in the election campaign period (Nastiti & Ratri, 2018). Study further reported that the politics of identity and religion in this case was driven by fear that the minorities may secure power in government and gained cultural hegemony (Osman & Waikar, 2018). Regardless, the populism actors fit well into these cases, a battle between the claimed 'good people' against a common 'evil' enemy (Dehanas & Shterin, 2018; Mudde, 2004) fueled by religion.

Religious sentiment on political parties and ethnic violence

Previous studies reported that ethnic violence tend to polarize electorates (Fearon and Laitin, 2000; Greenberg et al., 1990). In extreme cases, the religious sentiment agenda manifested into several cases of massacre on Rohingya Muslims by the Buddhist monks in Rakhine state, Myanmar (Brooten, 2015). Aung San Suu Kyi, who was known as the voice of the people and leader of National League for Democracy remained silent, allegedly due to pragmatic reason for the sake of her electorate win in 2015 election considering 65% of Myanmar population are overwhelmingly Buddhist and Muslims only account for 4-5% of the total population (Lee, 2014). Other case of religion-based politics that led to violence was recently demonstrated in India. The Bharatiya Janata Party who delivered Narendra Modi to presidential seat pushed the Citizenship Amendment Act that is highly controversial due to its discrimination to the Muslims (Bhat, 2019). This proposed change attracted protesters to the street and ended up with 39 people killed in an allegedly targeted violence to Muslims by Hindu nationalists who were mainly supporters of BJP (Malik, 2020).

Religion and party polarization

The nature of populism to set a battle between people against 'elites' and 'others' have thus led to religion-based political parties' polarization. Such evidences can be seen in the world's largest democracies like India (Nellis, Weaver, & Rosenzweig, 2016), Indonesia (Setijadi, 2017; Ubaid & Subandi, 2018) and as previously mentioned in UK (Kotler-Berkowitz, 2001; Layman, 1997; Manza & Brooks, 1997) and Europe (Cebolla, Montero, & Segatti, 2013; Freire, 2008). In Turkey and Israel, party polarization emerged due to the battle in choosing the state's direction whether to go secular or maintain its religious polity (Tepe, 2013). Polarization refers to a process where individuals cluster around mutually exclusive positions, whilst the number of those who maintained conciliatory position between them decreases (Tepe, 2013). Based from this literature review, the common cause of religion-based party polarization around democratic countries seems to be due to the battle between conservatism versus secularism or liberalism and the fear of losing hegemony as the majority religion.

There are numerous amount of studies that proposed USA political parties have been polarized due to factor of religion (Baker, Tuch, & D'antonio, 2013; Hirschl, Booth, Glenna, & Green, 2012; Layman & Weaver, 2016; Mctague & Pearson-Merkowitz, 2013), which suggest that this phenomenon is firmly established in the US politics. Study reported that the driving factors of party polarization in the US are gender, race and religion (Freeman, 1999). Religion is one of the main

factors that drive the “culture wars”, a battle between conservatism and liberalism in American politics which divided the nation since decades (Castle, 2019). Further evidence suggests that religion drives partisanship in US legislative and that political ideologies from both parties were grounded in religion (Baker et al., 2013); Republican with its Bible-centered Orthodoxy and Democrats with its Abrahamic traditions.

Literature proposed various impacts associated from political party polarization. The negative sides include the divide on communities within the nation, increasing tension which may lead to conflict and growing distrust to political institutions (Layman, Carsey, & Horowitz, 2006). Voters will most likely develop affection over their preferred parties or candidates and view their rivals as ‘evil’, thus elections will be fueled by hatred which is the most dangerous consequence of partisan polarization (McCoy, Rahman, & Somer, 2018). Emotion and hatred can be effectively aroused through negative campaigns utilizing fear and loathing, as affective polarization or the number of people who view the opposite partisan negatively while the co-partisan positively increases (Iyengar & Westwood, 2015). In some cases, one commitment to his or her faith may be questioned should the person decided to support rival candidates, this adds social or religious pressure to voters (Lim, 2017) and lower level of satisfaction to democracy (Wagner, 2020). Furthermore, the use of mass media and social media may amplify this hatred, as those with political agenda can freely attack their rivals by ostracizing those with different religion or ethnicity as outsiders or branding them to possess ideologies that are perceived negative by the people (Engesser, Ernst, Esser, & Büchel, 2017). Thus, the freedom of speech as a product of democracy has seeded the freedom to spread hate speech and accusations which stimulates polarization and may lead to ethnic and religious conflicts (Lim, 2017).

There are also the positive side of political party polarization: (1) political parties will be more consistent with their policy agenda and candidates, making voters easier to distinguish them (Layman, 2010); (2) The negative campaigns associated with party polarization prove to be more informative for voters and that negative campaigning tends to stimulate voter turnout (Geer, 2008; Jackson & Carsey, 2007); (3) Higher levels of affective polarization are related to higher levels of voter turnout, participation and perception of electoral choice (Wagner, 2020).

Methodology and Data Collection

Based on the previous analysis, this study focuses on political affiliations, and survey data were taken from *American Trends Panel Wave 6* by Pew Research Center (see: <https://www.pewforum.org/dataset/american-trends-panel-wave-6/>). The data provides results on three political choices of Republican, Democrat, and Other. Based on these affiliations, we explore differences among them. The final number of survey respondents is 3,278 with 2,923 participating online and 355 participating by mail (Pew Research 2014). There is almost an equal number of male and female respondents, 48% and 52%. Most respondents are between the ages of 50-64 (32%), followed by 30-49 (28%), 65+ (25%), and 18-29 (15%). In the demographic data of political affiliation, 43% of respondents are Republicans, 39% are Democrats, and 18% are Others/Don’t Know (see *Table 1*).

Using SPSS version 25, cross tabulation (cross-tab) was used to examine differences between nominal and ordinal variables. Cross-tab allows us to compare differences and similarities in responses from different groups (Kamakura and Wedel 1997). The survey covers various questions on: individuals’ religiosity; important factors when making purchasing decisions for everyday products (1=*A major factor in your decision*, 2=*A minor factor in your decision*, 3=*Not a factor in your decision*); important factors of being a religious individual (1=*essential to what being religious means to you*, 2=*important but not essential*, 3=*not important to what being religious means to you*, 99=*refused*); and relationship with God (1=*essential to*



what being religious means to you, 2=important but not essential, 3=not important to what being religious means to you, 99=refused).

Table 1. Respondents Profile

Demographic (n=3278)	Percentage
Gender	
Male	48%
Female	52%
Age	
18-29	15%
30-39	28%
50-64	33%
65+	25%
Party (lean)	
Republican	43%
Democrat	39%
Others/ Don't know	18%

Results

The first analysis exploring the decision-making factors when purchasing everyday products. This study only showing the percentage of participants choosing a *major factor* or *essential*. The results show less variations between political parties in regard to how participants perceived the quality of products ($p > 0.05$). Most of them consider the quality of a product as a major factor for purchasing everyday products. The study shows 92% of the Republicans, 92% Democrats, and 90% Others/Don't Know consider the quality of products as a major factor. For the product cost, there is significant difference between political parties with 73% of the Republicans, 75% Democrats, and 79% Others/Don't Know considering product cost as a major factor in their decisions ($p < 0.05$).

Furthermore, the results indicate differences on the importance of whether a company pays its employees a fair wage (15% Republicans consider it important, 28% Democrats, 30% Others/Don't Know); how environmentally responsible the company is (16% Republicans, 33% Democrats, 27% Others/Don't Know) and how it protects the environment (46% Republicans, 60% Democrats, 50% Others/Don't Know). In general, Democrats are more likely to consider fairness and sustainability issues as a major factor when purchasing everyday products compared to Republicans and Others (see Table 2 and 3).

Table 2. How much, if at all, do you consider each factor when making purchasing decisions for EVERYDAY PRODUCTS?

<i>Chi-Square=0.007</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
How much the product costs.	A major factor in your decisions	73%	75%	79%
	A minor factor in your decisions	25%	24%	17%
	Not a factor in your decisions	2%	1%	4%
	Refused	0%	0%	0%

<i>Chi-Square=0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Whether the company pays its employees a fair wage.	A major factor in your decisions	15%	28%	30%
	A minor factor in your decisions	36%	47%	29%
	Not a factor in your decisions	49%	25%	40%
	Refused	0%	0%	1%
<i>Chi-Square=0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
How environmentally responsible the company is.	A major factor in your decisions	16%	33%	27%
	A minor factor in your decisions	52%	51%	49%
	Not a factor in your decisions	32%	15%	24%
	Refused	0%	0%	0%
<i>Chi-Square =0.400</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
The quality of the product.	A major factor in your decisions	92%	92%	90%
	A minor factor in your decisions	7%	7%	8%
	Not a factor in your decisions	1%	1%	2%
	Refused	0%	0%	0%

Table 3. How often do you recycle or reduce waste in order to protect the environment

<i>Chi-Square= 0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Protect the environment?	Whenever possible	46%	59%	50%
	Most of the time	28%	24%	30%
	Occasionally	22%	14%	16%
	Never	4%	3%	4%
	Refused	0%	0%	0%

In regard to their relationship with God, Republicans (70%) are more likely to ask God for help compared to Democrats (46%) and Others/Don't Know (65%). In addition, Republicans (81%) are also more likely to thank God for something compared to Democrats (61%), and Others/Don't Know (76%). No significant differences were found in regard to participants' anger toward God, donations to the poor, losing their temper and eating too much. However, there is a significant difference between political parties in regards to telling white lies. Democrats have the highest percentage (45%) followed by Republicans (43%) and Others/ Don't Know (37%) (see Table 4 & 5)



Table 4. In the past week:

<i>Chi-Square: 0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Did you ask God for help or guidance about something?	Yes	70%	46%	65%
	No	30%	54%	34%
	Refused	0%	0%	1%
<i>Chi-Square: 0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Did you thank God for something?	Yes	81%	61%	76%
	No	19%	39%	23%
	Refused	0%	0%	0%
<i>Chi-Square: 0.143</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Did you ever become angry at God?	Yes	5%	7%	8%
	No	95%	93%	91%
	Refused	0%	0%	1%
<i>Chi-Square: 0.067</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Did you donate money, time or goods to help the poor and needy?	Yes	52%	47%	54%
	No	48%	53%	46%
	Refused	0%	0%	0%

Table 5. In the past week:

<i>Chi_Square: 0.030</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Did you tell a white lie?	Yes	43%	45%	37%
	No	57%	55%	62%
	Refused	0%	0%	1%
<i>Chi-Square: 0.240</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Did you lose your temper?	Yes	39%	38%	41%
	No	61%	62%	58%
	Refused	0%	0%	1%
<i>Chi-Square: 0.054</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Did you ever eat too much?	Yes	65%	58%	57%
	No	35%	42%	43%
	Refused	0%	0%	0%

Moreover, in regard to the importance of a particular issue related to people’s religiosity, there are significant differences between political parties ($p < 0.05$). Results show 73% of Republicans consider believing in God as essential compared to 42% of Democrats and 64% of Others. Republicans (48%) and Others/Don’t Know (48%) are more likely to pray compared to Democrats (26%). Others (20%) and Republications (25%) consider attending religious service as an essential part of their religiosity

compared to Democrats (13%). Moreover, Others/Don't Know (16%) and Republicans (12%) consider resting on Sabbath as an essential part of their religiosity compared to Democrats (5%). Other/Don't Know (30%) and Republications (30%) consider reading the Bible as an essential part of their religiosity compared to 15% of Democrats.

In regard to ethical issues, Republicans (68%) and Others/Don't Know (58%) are more likely to be honest at all times compared to Democrats (58%). Republicans (20%) and Others/Don't Know (20%) are more likely to help out in congregations compared to Democrats (14%).

Democrats show more agreement toward fairness and sustainability issues. Democrats (21%) considered buying from companies that pay fair wages as compared to 13% of Others/Don't Know and 7% of Republicans ($p < 0.05$). Moreover, Democrats (35%) are also more likely to work to protect environment, compared to 21% of Others/Don't Know and 16% of Republicans ($p < 0.005$).

In regards to the acts of kindness and behavior toward family, the study found no significant differences between political parties on helping the poor and needy. However, Republicans (63%) consider forgiving others as essential to their religiosity compared to Democrats (58%) and Others/Don't Know (57%) ($p < 0.05$). Republicans (48%) are also more likely to spend time with family in comparison to Others/Don't Know (46%) and Democrats (43%) ($p < 0.05$).

In regards to lifestyle, there is a significant difference between political parties. Others/Don't Know (17%) followed by Democrats (16%) and then Republicans (14%) considered living a healthy lifestyle as essential. In addition, Others/Don't Know (24%) consider dressing modestly as important compared to Republicans (20%) and Democrats (10%) ($p < 0.05$). Finally, for emotionally related questions, the results found no significant differences on not losing one's temper in the face of frustration (see Table 6).

Table 6. How importance each of the following is to what being 'Religion' means to you:

<i>Chi-Square = 0.000</i>		Republican (n=594)	Democrat (n=548)	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused (n=257)
Believing in God.	Essential	73%	42%	64%
	Important but not essential	14%	14%	12%
	Not important	13%	44%	23%
	Refused	0%	0%	2%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Praying Regularly	Essential	48%	26%	48%
	Important but not essential	30%	24%	20%
	Not important	22%	50%	31%
	Refused	0%	0%	2%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.001</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Being honest at all times.	Essential	68%	58%	65%
	Important but not essential	29%	39%	29%
	Not important	3%	3%	5%



	Refused	0%	0%	1%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.243</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Being grateful for what you have.	Essential	67%	63%	64%
	Important but not essential	28%	31%	30%
	Not important	5%	6%	5%
	Refused	0%	0%	1%

Table 6. How importance each of the following is to what being 'Religion' means to you (Cont)

<i>Chi-Square = 0.000</i>		Republican (n=594)	Democrat (n=549)	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused (n=257)
Buying products from companies that pay their employees a fair wage.	Essential	7%	21%	13%
	Important but not essential	46%	56%	51%
	Not important	48%	23%	35%
	Refused	0%	33%	67%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.142</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Working to help the poor and needy.	Essential	42%	45%	46%
	Important but not essential	49%	48%	43%
	Not important	9%	8%	11%
	Refused	0%	0%	1%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.053</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Not losing your temper in the face of frustration.	Essential	22%	25%	30%
	Important but not essential	60%	57%	53%
	Not important	18%	18%	16%
	Refused	0%	0%	1%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Resting on the Sabbath.	Essential	12%	5%	16%
	Important but not essential	38%	22%	36%
	Not important	50%	72%	47%
	Refused	0%	1%	2%

Table 6. How importance each of the following is to what being ‘Religion’ means to you (Cont)

<i>Chi-Square = 0.000</i>		Republican (n=594)	Democrat (n=549)	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused (n=257)
Attending Religious Services	Essential	25%	13%	27%
	Important but not essential	38%	25%	30%
	Not important	37%	62%	42%
	Refused	0%	0%	2%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Helping out in your congregation.	Essential	20%	14%	20%
	Important but not essential	48%	33%	37%
	Not important	33%	53%	41%
	Refused	0%	0%	2%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.049</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Living a healthy lifestyle by eating right and exercising regularly.	Essential	14%	16%	17%
	Important but not essential	53%	51%	54%
	Not important	33%	33%	28%
	Refused	0%	0%	2%

Table 6. How importance each of the following is to what being ‘Religion’ means to you (Cont)

<i>Chi-Square = 0.001</i>		Republican (n=594)	Democrat (n=549)	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused (n=257)
Committing to spend time with family.	Essential	48%	43%	46%
	Important but not essential	43%	46%	39%
	Not important	10%	10%	14%
	Refused	0%	0%	2%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.011</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Forgiving those who have wronged you.	Essential	63%	58%	57%
	Important but not essential	30%	33%	31%
	Not important	8%	10%	11%
	Refused	0%	0%	2%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Working to protect the environment.	Essential	16%	35%	21%
	Important but not essential	51%	50%	57%
	Not important	33%	14%	21%
	Refused	0%	0%	1%



Table 6. How importance each of the following is to what being ‘Religion’ means to you (Cont)

<i>Chi-Square = 0.000</i>		Republican (n=594)	Democrat (n=549)	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused (n=257)
Reading the Bible or other religious materials regularly.	Essential	30%	15%	30%
	Important but not essential	37%	23%	30%
	Not important	33%	61%	39%
	Refused	0%	0%	1%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
Dressing modestly.	Essential	20%	10%	24%
	Important but not essential	41%	35%	38%
	Not important	38%	54%	37%
	Refused	0%	0%	1%
Chi-Square = 0.000		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
With your immediate family?	At least once a week	34.80%	17.00%	31.50%
	Once or twice a month	15.00%	15.30%	8.90%
	Several times a year	16.50%	15.50%	16.00%
	Seldom	22.40%	34.90%	25.70%
	Never	11.30%	17.30%	16.70%
	Refused	0.00%	0.00%	1.20%
Chi-Square = 0.000		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
With your extended family?	At least once a week	12.50%	5.30%	14.00%
	Once or twice a month	16.00%	9.90%	10.10%
	Several times a year	20.00%	17.90%	15.60%
	Seldom	34.70%	39.10%	35.80%
	Never	16.80%	27.90%	23.30%
	Refused	0.00%	0.00%	1.20%
Chi-Square = 0.000		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
With people outside your family?	At least once a week	19.90%	10.80%	21.00%
	Once or twice a month	15.20%	12.20%	14.00%
	Several times a year	17.80%	19.70%	16.00%
	Seldom	34.30%	39.60%	30.70%
	Never	12.80%	17.70%	17.50%
	Refused	0.00%	0.00%	0.80%

Republicans are more likely to talk about religion with the immediate family (34.80%) followed by Others/Don't Know (31.5%) and Democrat (17%). Others/Don't Know are more likely to talk about religion with their extended family (14%) compared to Republican (13%) and Democrat (5%). Similarly, Others/Don't Know (21%) are also more likely to talk about religion with people outside of their families (see Table 7).

Table 7. How often do you talk religion?

<i>Chi-Square= 0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
With your immediate family?	At least once a week	34.80%	17.00%	31.50%
	Once or twice a month	15.00%	15.30%	8.90%
	Several times a year	16.50%	15.50%	16.00%
	Seldom	22.40%	34.90%	25.70%
	Never	11.30%	17.30%	16.70%
	Refused	0.00%	0.00%	1.20%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
With your extended family?	At least once a week	12.50%	5.30%	14.00%
	Once or twice a month	16.00%	9.90%	10.10%
	Several times a year	20.00%	17.90%	15.60%
	Seldom	34.70%	39.10%	35.80%
	Never	16.80%	27.90%	23.30%
	Refused	0.00%	0.00%	1.20%
<i>Chi-Square = 0.000</i>		Republican	Democrat	(VOL) Other/Don't know/Refused
With people outside your family?	At least once a week	19.90%	10.80%	21.00%
	Once or twice a month	15.20%	12.20%	14.00%
	Several times a year	17.80%	19.70%	16.00%
	Seldom	34.30%	39.60%	30.70%
	Never	12.80%	17.70%	17.50%
	Refused	0.00%	0.00%	0.80%

Discussion

The study shows insights into differences and similarities between individuals affiliated with different political parties. In general, most Republicans are more religious and focus more on religious activities than the other political parties. This is consistent with previous studies (Glaeser et al. 2005; Punyamut-Carter et al. 2010). Consequently, Republicans are less likely to focus on social and environmental issues such as protecting the environment as compared to Democrats.

Pew Research (2009) found that a third of Americans deny evidence of global warming, where Republicans are more skeptical than Democrats (Schuldt, Konrath and Schwarz, 2011). The result is in contrast with other studies suggesting that individuals who are religious are more likely to support ethical behavior compared to the non-religious individuals (Arli and Tjiptono 2014; Vitell et al. 2015).



Further investigation on the discrepancies between political parties and religious and ethical behaviors could be considered.

Furthermore, despite significant differences between political parties, most of them have thanked God for something and almost half of them have asked God for help and guidance, as shown in Table 4. The results show people in the U.S. with various party affiliations are somewhat religious and spiritual. The notion that only Republicans will be guided by religious beliefs is misguided (Gyboski 2019). Almost half of Democrats in this study show strong religious values.

In regard to individuals' understanding of being religious, Republicans and Others/Don't Know focus on religious activities such as believing in God, praying regularly, and reading the Bible. For Democrats, the importance of being religious is shown in protecting the environment and being fair toward others. This is consistent with other studies suggesting Democrats are more likely to support extrinsic values than Republicans (Sheldon and Nichols, 2009). Surprisingly, almost all political parties did not consider attending religious service as important.

The results also show similarities in regards to charitable behavior. All political parties have donated the money and working to help the poor. In summary, the study highlights key differences and key similarities between political parties. Individuals who are choosing Others/Don't Know show more similarities toward the Republican Party. Most of them are religious and consider religion an important element of their daily life. This is an interesting insight for researchers and political parties exploring voters who do not affiliate with the two main parties. These voters may be able to be persuaded toward the party that can display more religious values.

Practical Implications

The results of this study provide several marketing implications for businesses to reach a particular segment. The findings is not new but highlighting that the partisan gap persists. Businesses need to ensure paying their employee a fair wages and working to help the poor and needy. Most US citizens from all political parties considered fair wages as an important factor. By helping the poor through various platforms such as Corporate Social Responsibility, companies may appeal to all consumers from various political affiliations. With nearly 40 million Americans living in poverty in 2017, and the 39 million who have limited access to healthy food stores (Cardello 2019), focusing on the lower-income market will benefits all stakeholders involved.

Furthermore, appealing to religious consumers will provide good business opportunities irrespective of political parties. The results of this study indicated large percentages of Republicans, Democrats and Independents are believing in God. For example, Chick-fill-A has been very successful in attracting religious consumers based on their religious beliefs and excellent customer services. The company encourage each location to show caring and compassion for their employees, a key factor for consumers making a purchase decision. Moreover, based on the key issues supporting by political parties. Businesses operating in predominantly Republicans voters can focus on supporting religious freedom. For example, in addition to show support of their race, gender or sexual orientation, companies may show support to employees' religious beliefs. For businesses operating in predominantly Democrat voters can focus on being environmentally responsible. More Democrats see climate change as priority and show more concerned than Republicans.

Furthermore, this study also provides several implications for political parties in the US. Political candidates can focus on the key issues supporting by Republicans or Democrats to maintain their current voters or to attract others to change their political affiliation. For Democratic presidential

candidates or other political candidates, they can share about their faiths to reach out voters who support Republican Party. Vice versa, Republican presidential candidates can share their plan to tackle various environmental issues. The GOP has been considered out of touch on the environment (Ridge 2020). Hence, clear and strategic planning will draw the attention of lean Democratic voters.

Limitations and Future Research

The study has several limitations. First, Republican leaners and Republicans or Democrat leaners and Democrats were not separated. People who are leaning toward a political party may have different attitudes toward various issues (Olivola et al. 2012). Future research may investigate this issue and contrast differences between these groups. Second, the study did not look at differences between religion and denomination. For example, are Muslim Republicans different than Christian Republicans on ethical beliefs? Similarly, are Muslim Democrats similar to Christian Democrats? Third, the study did not explore differences between ethnicities, such as Republicans and Democrats who are Hispanic or Asian. Future research may segment and investigate how ethnicities and denominations influence ethical beliefs and religious values. Despite these limitations, this study has offered new insight into how people with various political affiliations differ on their relationship with God.

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