

DECONSTRUCTING YOUNG ADULTS' RELIGIOUS (DIS)ENGAGEMENT
IN STATISTICS CANADA'S RELIGIOSITY INDEX

by

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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY & SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

This research explored whether Statistics Canada's religiosity index is an adequate measurement tool to capture the degree of young adults' (aged 15-29) religious engagement in contemporary Canada. The impact of the agency's four religiosity dimensions (affiliation, attendance, importance and private practice) on the index by age group was analyzed using Cycle 25 of the General Social Survey. Next, quantitative data was collected using a cross-sectional web-based survey of young adults (aged 18-29) in Halifax, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island (N=634). This survey examined the differences in representation of religious engagement based on either traditional or personalized dimensions. In conclusion, my findings suggest that Statistics Canada's religiosity index does not measure religiosity consistently across age groups, nor does it assess important personalized dimensions of young adults' religiosities. Consequently, the current religiosity index provides only a partial understanding of young adults' degree of religious engagement and should be considered for revision.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

EDS	Ethnic Diversity Survey
ARDC	Atlantic Research Data Centre
PEI	Prince Edward Island
GSS	General Social Survey
EVS	European Values Study
PTCS	Project Teen Canada Survey
SRS	Systematic Random Sample
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares
CMA	Census Metropolitan Area
CA	Census Agglomeration

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But there's a story behind everything. How a picture got on a wall. How a scar got on your face. Sometimes the stories are simple, and sometimes they are hard and heartbreaking. But behind all your stories is always your mother's story, because hers is where yours begins. (Mitch Albom, For One More Day, p. 194)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 STATISTICS CANADA'S RELIGIOSITY INDEX

The primary religious trend pinpointed by Statistics Canada in recent years is declining levels of religious service attendance among Canadians of all age groups—which the agency then links with declining levels of religiosity (Lindsay 2008). This trend has been reported to be particularly drastic among young adults (ages 15-29) (Lindsay 2008; Bibby 1995, 2011). Canadians of this age group, according to Statistics Canada, are the most likely of all groups to report having no religious affiliation and are the least likely to attend religious services (Clark & Schellenberg 2006). “Consistent with previous studies, young adults are the group with the weakest attachment to organized religion” reports Statistics Canada. Furthermore, “[...] even when other forms of religious behaviour are considered, almost half of Canadians aged 15 to 29 still have a low degree of religiosity” (Clark & Schellenberg 2006, p. 7).

Statistics Canada's findings are based on an assessment of four individual dimensions of religiosity: 1) affiliation 2) frequency of service attendance 3) importance of the respondent's religion in his or her life and 4) frequency of private religious practices (Clark & Schellenberg 2006). One survey question (also referred to as a religiosity dimension) is used to measure each dimension individually. In addition, as explained in Statistics Canada's 2006 *Canadian Social Trends* publication “Who's Religious?” (Clark & Schellenberg), the four dimensions are combined to form a “religiosity index”, which evaluates the overall degree of religious engagement. This index – the focus of my research – is a product of Statistics Canada's General Social Survey (GSS) and 2002 Ethnic Diversity Survey (EDS) and is used to assess religious engagement among all Canadian adults over the age of 15. Statistics Canada's religiosity index offers Canadians an important snapshot of religiosity trends in our country. However, it is important to consider whether this index is an adequate measurement tool to capture the degree of religious engagement across age groups. Do young adults engage in religion in the same way as older Canadians? Does Statistics Canada's tradition-based religiosity index reflect the personalized dimensions of young adults' religiosities?

In the chapters that follow, I will show that religious engagement has undergone considerable transformation in contemporary Canadian society, and argue that as a result, modifications to Statistics Canada's religiosity index are necessary. Given that Statistics Canada's current index largely overlooks personalized religiosity dimensions that are important to many young adults, it offers Canadians only a partial understanding of the extent of religious engagement among this age group. In my research I explore Statistics Canada's limited framework of analysis using a two phase approach. First, I use statistical analyses of Statistics Canada's GSS Cycle 25 (Family) micro-data file at the Atlantic Research Data Centre (ARDC) to determine the impact of each of the agency's four religiosity dimensions on its overall index by age group. Second, I use a cross-sectional web-based survey of religious engagement among a sample of young adults in Halifax, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island (PEI). This survey, which uses Statistics Canada's four religiosity questions coupled with alternative, more personalized religiosity indicators from other prominent researchers in the field, acts as a tool to explore the differences in the way religiosity is represented based on either traditional or personalized dimensions. The combined results from both of my research phases indicate that Statistics Canada's religiosity index does not measure religious engagement consistently across age groups and that there are important personalized dimensions of young adults' religiosities that it does not capture.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER STRUCTURE

In Chapter 2, I will provide an overview of the development of Statistics Canada's religiosity index, discussing the way in which "religion" is defined and how this definition relates to the fragmented and individualized nature of religion in contemporary Canada. I will introduce my theoretical framework and summarize the alternative, non-traditional dimensions of religiosity which have recently been used in the sociology of religion. In Chapter 3, the methodological details of my work will be addressed, including an explanation of each of my research phases and their underlying research questions. I will also explain the format and content of my survey and my rationale for selecting Halifax and PEI as research sites. My results will be presented in Chapter 4, and in Chapter 5, I will discuss these results by highlighting my main findings and their

implications. To conclude, Chapter 6 will identify the contribution my findings make to the sociology of religion and provide directions for future research. As a whole, my thesis will show the need for a rethinking of the structure and content of Statistics Canada's religiosity index.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 STATISTICS CANADA'S RELIGIOSITY INDEX

2.1.1 Development of the Index

Initially, Statistics Canada compiled data on religious engagement among Canadians using only two of the current four dimensions of the religiosity index: religious affiliation, and frequency of attendance at religious services (Clark & Schellenberg 2006). This means that at the outset, Statistics Canada's assessment of religion was based exclusively on affiliation and attendance as indicators of religiosity. It was only in 2003 that the GSS included indicator questions on two additional dimensions of religion for the first time: importance of religion to the respondent and frequency of private religious practices (Clark & Schellenberg 2006). This change in the composition of Statistics Canada's GSS seemingly reflects a change in the agency's conception of what makes a person religious. With the addition of these two dimensions, affiliation and attendance – traditional-based indicators of religious engagement – were no longer the sole measures of religiosity. This change in the structure of the index appears to reflect the increasingly fragmented and individualized nature of religion in contemporary Canadian society (Bibby 1995) which will be further discussed in Section 2.2.

Despite the addition of these two dimensions, the scoring of the index continued to emphasize the key role of tradition in evaluating religiosity. Respondents who reported a religious affiliation received 1 point, and were then asked one additional question for each of the remaining three dimensions of religiosity (see Table 2.1 below). An affiliated Canadian was attributed a religiosity index ranging from 1 to 13 depending on his or her additional responses. If he or she attended religious services and engaged in private religious practices on a weekly basis, and indicated that religion was "very important" in his or her life, his or her religiosity index would be 13. If the respondent declared a religious affiliation but never attended religious services, never engaged in private religious practices and identified religion as "not at all important", he or she would be attributed an index of 1. Meanwhile, individuals who declared no religious affiliation were attributed an immediate index of 0 and *were not asked the remaining three*

questions about religiosity. Consequently, based on the index classification of “low” (0-5), “moderate” (6-10) or “high” (11-13) (Clark & Schellenberg 2006), these individuals were classified as having a low degree of religious engagement because they did not have a religious affiliation. In this way, affiliation operated as a filter question within Statistics Canada’s data collection. This highlights that even after Statistics Canada added two increasingly individualized, more personal-based religiosity indicators to the index, affiliation was quite influential in the agency’s determination of what makes a person religious.

In 2006, Statistics Canada abandoned the debatable practice of using affiliation as a filter question (Statistics Canada 2010b). This decision, though relatively recent, was critical given that as concluded by Binkerhoff & Mackie (1993), a person who does not declare a religious affiliation may still engage in any number of religious behaviours, including participating in a religious youth group, reading the Bible, praying to a God or saying Grace before dinner. By eliminating the practice of using affiliation to determine whether or not a Canadian is religious, Statistics Canada seemed to be acknowledging that the nature of religion was changing in contemporary Canada. Similarly to the agency’s decision to add two somewhat less traditional indicators to their religiosity index three years prior, this adjustment to the index scoring structure in 2006 again reduced the emphasis placed on affiliation in evaluating religious engagement. However, given that all four questions on religiosity are only included in the GSS every 10 years, the effects of eliminating affiliation as a filter question will not be fully clear until the release of religiosity data from the 2011 GSS in mid- to late- 2013. Moreover, despite the elimination of affiliation as a filter question, the manner in which “religion” is defined by Statistics Canada continues to underline affiliation as a central determinant of religious engagement within the index.

Table 2.1: Additive Structure of the Religiosity Index

Dimensions of Religiosity	Possible Scores					Possible Cumulative Total (Religiosity Index)
	0	1	2	3	4	
Religious affiliation	No affiliation	Has a religion				1
Religious attendance	Not at all	Once or twice a year	At least 3 times a year	At least once a month	At least once a week	5
Frequency of private religious practices	Not at all	Once or twice a year	At least 3 times a year	At least once a month	At least once a week	9
Importance of religion in one's life	Not important at all				Very important	13

(Source: Clark & Schellenberg 2006).

2.1.2 Centrality of Affiliation in the Index

The following definition of “religion” was approved as a Statistics Canada departmental standard in April, 2011:

Religion refers to the person's self-identification as having a connection or affiliation with any religious denomination, group, body, sect, cult or other religiously defined community or system of belief. Religion is not limited to formal membership in a religious organization or group. For infants or children, religion refers to the specific religious group or denomination in which they are being raised, if any. Persons without a religious connection or affiliation can self-identify as atheist, agnostic or humanist, or can provide another applicable response. (Statistics Canada 2011, para. 1)

This newly approved definition replaces the agency's previous, less-inclusive “religious denomination”, which “focused on membership in a religious group” (Statistics Canada 2011). Yet the current definition continues to place central importance on affiliation as a determinant of religion and religiosity. Despite the fact that affiliation may no longer be used as a filter question within the index, an affiliation-based definition of religion remains at the core of the religiosity index.

2.1.3 Defining “Religion”

“Religion” has been defined in countless ways over time and across disciplines. It seems, however, that each definition has been subject to critique because of a narrow, sometimes implicit emphasis on one facet of religion. Edward Burnett Tylor defines religion as “the belief in Spiritual Beings” (1871, p. 8). This definition is arguably one of the most elementary within the sociological-anthropological study of religion. However, though this definition is central in many present-day conceptions of religion, it is also widely criticized for ignoring the emotional, collective and symbolic dimensions of religion (Lambek 2009, p. 24). According to Émile Durkheim, “[a] religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden – beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them” (1912, p. 62). Although Durkheim argues that religion can be understood as society experiencing itself, emphasizing the elements of the collective and the symbolic that Tylor’s definition lacks, Durkheim fails to account for the role of historical change in his conceptualization (Lambek 2009, p. 36). Some look to Clifford Geertz’s work for a more all-encompassing definition of religion. According to Geertz, religion is:

(1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic. (1966, p. 90)

However, despite the credit Geertz’s definition widely received for its cultural emphasis, it too has been criticized, for a constricted focus on interiority (Asad 1983). What is evident in any overview of understandings of religion both historically and across contexts is the common, yet problematic, reductionist approach to such a complex phenomenon. An emphasis on one facet of religion necessarily overlooks other key elements that might be important to some people. Although both practical and valuable on its own terms, Statistics Canada’s affiliation-based definition, and an index based on this definition, is limiting for this reason.

In Statistics Canada’s case, “religion” is defined narrowly in that it privileges traditional, institution-based dimensions of religion – affiliation and attendance— over alternative

aspects of religion such as belief or private practice. Two of the four dimensions of the index – affiliation and frequency of attendance – center on membership, while only one dimension evaluates religion cognitively and only one assesses private practices. Although the current structure of Statistics Canada’s religiosity index now makes it *possible* for non-affiliated individuals to be categorized as “moderate” or “high” in religiosity, it would be unlikely for a person who reports no religious affiliation to also report frequently attending religious services, given that services are by nature specific to a particular religion. This affiliation-based definition of religion at the core of the index has visibly shaped the selection of indicators for inclusion in the index. For young adults, who, according to Statistics Canada are the most likely of all Canadians to report having no religious affiliation¹ and are the least likely to attend religious services (Clark & Schellenberg 2006), the religiosity index seems to be constructed in such a way that ranking “high” or even “moderate” in degree of religious engagement is unlikely.

The contemporary trend of declining levels of religiosity among Canadian young adults as identified by Statistics Canada, is in line with a traditional conceptualization of religion as governed by formal membership and directed by religious sources of authority. Membership to and participation in a formal, organized religious structure is the central determinant of one’s religious engagement. Consequently, when Statistics Canada indicates that affiliation and religious service attendance are declining significantly among Canadian young adults, the implication is that religion is becoming less important for this age group. This is neither an inherently positive or negative claim but it reflects traditional secularization theory, which posits that the social significance of religion declines with modernity (Berger 1999).

2.1.4 Secularization Theory

¹ This is echoed by Reginald Bibby, a leading Canadian sociologist of religion, whose latest Project Teen Canada survey found that 32% of the nation’s teens reported no affiliation. This is the “highest level of non-affiliation in Canadian history” Bibby reveals (2011, p. 32).

The concept of secularization has its origins in the Latin word *saeculum* which means “an age” or “an era” but by the fourth and fifth centuries, the meaning behind this word had evolved. For clergy and monks, secularization represented the outside world; a way of life set apart from or “at odds with God” (Christiano, Swatos & Kivisto 2008, p. 55; Berger 1969, p. 106). Later, in the sixteenth century, “secularization” came to be used to refer to the practice of removing property or territory from church-related authorities (Berger 1969: 106; Shultz 2006). The theory – which is based on the notion that with the evolution and prominence of science in modernity, religion would fall away (Bibby 2011) – can be traced to the Enlightenment or Great Transformation, when secularization was largely considered to be a favourable process that ushered in rationality (Berger 1999; Christiano, Swatos & Kivisto 2008; Bellah 1970). Max Weber’s work on secularization has been particularly influential in the sociology of religion, though Weber rarely used the term “secularization” directly (Hughey 1979). Weber explained secularization as the “double-sided rationalization-disenchantment [(*rationalität-entzauberung*)] process” (Christiano, Swatos & Kivisto 2008, p. 56) and is recognized as one of the fathers of secularization theory. Rationalization, according to Weber, is the process through which we come to understand the world and humans’ actions within it in terms of scientific, rational reasoning (1958). Disenchantment – the devaluing of mystical or magical interpretations of the world – particularly where religion is concerned, is the inverse of rationalization. More precisely, disenchantment is:

[...]the historical process by which the natural world and all areas of human experience become experienced and understood as less mysterious; defined, at least in principle, as knowable, predictable and manipulable by humans; conquered by and incorporated into the interpretive schema of science and rational government. (Jenkins 2000, p. 12)

With this process of rationalization-disenchantment, religious explanations for human action are eclipsed by scientific explanations (Hughey 1979).

Building on Weber’s rationalization-disenchantment, Steve Bruce explains that secularization theory originated during the Protestant Reformation, at a time when rationality and individualism triumphed. “[I]ndividualism threatened the communal basis of religious belief and behaviour, while rationality removed many of the purposes of religion and rendered many of its beliefs implausible”, explains Bruce (1996, p. 230).

With the onset of modernity, individualism began to occupy an increasingly central role in the daily lives of Canadians (Pettersson 2006; McCleary & Barro 2006). Consequently, from early sociological writings, modernity/individualism and religion came to be understood as mutually exclusive phenomenon. Largely for this reason, secularization became the dominant theoretical framework with which to understand religion's role in Canadian society (Chaves 1994). The theory itself dates to the 1960s, when religious service attendance first took a sharp decline (Berger 1999), particularly in North America. Today, whether the process of secularization is regarded as constructive or destructive – a Marxist freeing from the chains of religion or the extinction of religion – its meaning has evolved and taken on an evaluative meaning since its first usage centuries ago (Berger 1969). In contemporary society, according to Berger, secularization can be defined as “the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from domination of religious institutions and symbols” (1969, p. 107). Berger also summarizes the distinctions between institutional secularization and secularization of the consciousness. Institutional secularization, he explains, is visible “[...] in the decline of religious contents in the arts, in philosophy, in literature, and, most important of all, in the rise of science as an autonomous, thoroughly secular perspective on the world” (ibid. 1969, p. 107). Secularization of consciousness on the other hand, has to do with a person interpreting his or her surroundings without religious tenets of any sort (ibid.). Both types of secularization involve a decline in the social significance of religion, and this is what Statistics Canada signals with its findings of low religious engagement among young adults.

A decline in attendance at religious services, often coupled with decreasing affiliation between the 1960s and 1990s is typically considered obvious confirmation of the secularization theory's applicability (Bibby 2011, 2006). Perhaps for this reason, in Canada, secularization has been widely regarded as self-evident. The majority of Canadian academics and policy makers never thoroughly questioned the ability of secularization theory to describe religion's situation in Canada given that the weekly attendance decline seemed convincing and fit with what people had been experiencing (Bibby 2011). In 1945, a Gallup poll found that 60% of Canadians attended religious

services “on a close to weekly basis”. Nation-wide, in the late 1950s, 85% of Roman Catholics and 40% of Protestants reported attending religious services weekly (Bibby 1990). By the mid-1970s, however, this proportion had decreased to approximately 30% of Canadians and by the year 2000, it had fallen within the 20% range (Bibby 2006). It appears, as indicated by Statistics Canada, that many people – particularly young adults – are choosing not to attend religious services (Clark & Schellenberg 2006). Today, religion in Canada is largely à-la-carte, an amalgamation of beliefs and practices individually hand-picked. Theological religious truth has become decentralized and we now privilege a new pick-and-choose religious practice (Bibby 1990: 87). Given these changes in the nature of religion, it is reasonable to expect that secularization theory has also given rise to alternative formulations (Chaves 1994).

To situate my research, I echoed Stark & Bainbridge’s interpretation of secularization theory, which argues that “[...] secularization means the transformation of religion, not its destruction” (1987, p. 279). It is merely “[...] the progressive loss of power by religious organizations” (Stark & Bainbridge 1987, p. 293) and religious authority. Through my research, I did not contest that attendance at religious services is on the decline. “It is universally accepted that churchgoing has been declining for at least the last four decades [...]” (Voas & Crockett 2005, p. 17). Rather, with my cross-sectional survey of young adults, I wanted to explore the implications of Statistics Canada’s religiosity index being founded upon the traditional affiliation/attendance-based warrant that the secularization theory is a suitable framework of interpretation for religion in contemporary Canada. It takes for granted that Canadians accept secularization – the decline of religion in contemporary society – as an undeniable truth, and in so doing, obscures the recent developments within the sphere of religious studies and developing theoretical frameworks, which suggest the importance of alternative interpretations of secularization theory.

2.2 INDIVIDUALIZATION AND FRAGMENTATION OF RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY CANADA

2.2.1 Overview

Today, religion in Canada has become individualized and fragmented as a result of an infusion of pluralism into our nation. In 1971, the federal multicultural program was launched by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, and as a result, in 1988 the Canadian Multiculturalism Act was implemented. This marked the birth of the national mosaic symbol, along with the crystallization of what had once been a mere demographic trait – pluralism² – into a globally-recognized national value (Bibby 1990). This notion of a “mosaic” quickly overflowed into our institutions, changing religion and its role in society. Because pluralism promoted personal freedom and individualism, which have since occupied center stage in religion, Canadians have come to believe that diversity not only in religious affiliation but also in practices and beliefs, is accepted and even welcomed (Bibby 1990). As a result, never before has the ability to make one’s own choice been as important (Pettersson 2006) and religious engagement in Canada, has, because of this, become very personalized as compared to its past form (Hoover & Schofield Clark 2002). Pluralism has promoted the notion that as Canadians, we can benefit from a combination of diverse, personalized components (Bibby 1990) – a notion that has become pervasive in religion.

With this personalization of religion came a significant increase in relativism (McCleary & Barro 2006; Bibby 1990) – the conviction that one’s beliefs are a product of one’s cultural, social and intellectual setting. This is the basis for the importance the country attributes to individual freedom (Bibby 1990). Canada has become, suggests Bibby, an environment in which acceptable religious behaviour means understanding that religious commitment depends entirely on the individual (ibid.). In this sense, in most religions, “[e]xternal [religious] authority is out; personal [religious] authority is in” (Bibby 1995, p. 21); the church is no longer the exclusive or central authority in determining which religious traditions and forms of religious engagement are acceptable (Bellah 1970). There is an increasing amount of space in which individuals can create their own standards of what it means to be religious and consequently, the degree of “human community” is in a sense becoming less central to one’s religion (Swatos 1983, p. 326).

² Pluralism is the condition of at least two religious groups living in relative harmony among each other and with the state (Stark & Bainbridge 1987; Berger 1969).

Yet it is important to understand that this widespread personalization of religion and ensuing decline in the importance of the community is not necessarily the case for members of some minority religions in Canada, which continue to emphasize the importance of traditional affiliation and community. In particular, for Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims, who represent approximately 0.9%, 1.0% and 2.0% of the Canadian population respectively (Statistics Canada 2001), religious identity remains largely community-based. Consequently, despite the rise of pluralism in our nation in recent years and the accompanying surge of individualism, within these groups, religious engagement has not necessarily become increasingly personalized as it has for the many Christians who constitute over three quarters of the Canadian population (Statistics Canada 2005).

For the majority of Sikhs, the community – also known as the Panth – continues to play a central role in constructing and maintaining one’s religious identity (Woodhead et al. 2002). This is true to an arguably much greater extent than for most Christians, whose community has largely become inferior to the individual’s religious and personal needs. Although Sikhism involves a variety of beliefs, practices, customs and cultures, which may each differ to some degree from person to person (Choquette 2003), the Panth continues to serve as the principal authority given that Sikhism does not rely on a hierarchy of authoritative specialists (Woodhead et al. 2002). In contemporary Hinduism, the notion of community also remains central in Canada and is rooted in the concepts of interdependence and divinity, while for most Hindus, contemporary Canadian values of individualism and independence are secondary (Hodge 2004). Islam is another example of a religion whose affiliates may not exhibit personalization in their religious engagement. “The Muslim sense of community is reinforced by the [...] rituals or ‘pillars’ of the faith” (Woodhead et al. 2002, p. 188) such as *salat* – ritual prayer five times daily – which is “performed in the direction of Mecca, the focal point of community worship”, *zakat* – alms-giving – which helps to sustain the community, and *hajj* – a pilgrimage to Mecca – which unites Muslims from across the globe in community. The self is significant in Islam in that “every Muslim is ultimately responsible for his/her own salvation before God” (ibid.) but the individual is never the

final authority in determining which forms of religious engagement are or are not acceptable. In this, personalization in religious expression has not become a leading feature to the extent that it has in most numerically dominant religions in Canada. Despite the continued emphasis on community for some religious groups, "[f]or the vast majority of Canadians the phrase is about as self-evident as grass being green: religion is a personal matter. The fact that the idea is taken for granted is symptomatic of the extent to which the cultural emphasis on individuality has invaded, dominated, and reshaped religion" (Bibby 1990, p. 86). Canada's mosaic has, through religious pluralism and the resulting increase in individualization, fragmented religion (Bibby 1990) and Canadians today are likely to be more receptive to personalized forms of faith and religious engagement (Bibby 2011) than to traditional, community-based manifestations of religion. In part due to the cultural and religious pluralism which is now integral to Canadian society, religion has grown to be largely à la carte; an amalgamation of a mixture of beliefs and practices hand-picked for convenience. Pluralism has decentralized theological religious truth and has instead privileged a hodgepodge pick-and-choose belief system (Bibby 1990). Consequently, it appears that many Canadians are making the choice not to attend religious services. Religious adherence and affiliation has become optional and consequently often difficult to guarantee (Berger 1969). When Gallup conducted its first attendance poll of the nation in 1945, 60% of Canadians reported attending religious services weekly (Bibby 2002). In 1946, this had risen by approximately 7% (Clark 2003). Yet by the 1970s, weekly attendance had dropped alarmingly, from 75% in 1950 to 37% in 1990 (Bibby 2002). By 1990, only 37% of Canadians attended religious services regularly – at least once a month. This was down from 41% in 1985. By 1995, only 33% attended regularly. By 2000, the regular attendance rate had fallen to 31% and in 2004, the situation remained largely unchanged, with only 32% of the Canadian population attending regularly (Clark & Schellenberg 2006). "The national drop-off in attendance at services is merely a symptom of the increasing tendency of Canadians to consume religion selectively", explains Bibby (1987, p. 81).

Given that society encourages us to compartmentalize our days in order to maximize time, for many Canadians, fragments of religion are much more easily consumed than traditional forms (Posterski & Bibby 1985). "Late-twentieth-century Canada is filled with a[n industrialized] consumer approach to religion", writes Bibby (1987, p. 110). Religion, like so many other aspects of society, is "purchased" or overlooked as a commodity depending on the whims of the shopper (Bibby 1998; Wilson 1979). "As the century draws to a close, people in greater and greater numbers are drawing upon religion as consumers, adopting a belief here and a practice there" (ibid, p. 80). Elements of religious participation and engagement have become, in the eyes of most, optional to the religious experience. According to Bibby, "Cafeteria Christianity" has been adopted by a large segment of the population as a style of religious engagement (p. 240). Consequently, religious organizations have had to adjust to the demand for fragments (Bibby 1987). While religious "bricolage" or "hybridity" may be perceived as a threat to organized religion, we cannot assume that it "[...] *necesssarily* weaken[s] the overall presence and influence of religious and spiritual factors in individual lives or in society as a whole" (Ammerman 2007, p. 8). Nor can we assume that mixing and matching religious elements is an automatic signal of a lower degree of religious commitment, argues Ammerman (2007). Canadians – young adults above all –are undeniably still engaging in religion, but they are doing so in an increasingly selective manner.

2.2.2 Individualization and Fragmentation of Religion Among Young Adults

It is one-dimensional to claim that the lives of young adults today are predominantly separate from religion. As Bibby puts it: "The gods of old have neither been abandoned nor replaced. Rather, they have been broken into pieces and offered to religious consumers in piecemeal form" (1987, p. 85). Younger people are more likely to "adopt fragments" of religion, while older Canadians are more likely to "profess commitment" (Bibby 1987, p. 81). Whether it is called "tinkering" or "cultural bricolage", many young adults are assembling religious beliefs and practices in an improvisational way, mixing tradition with individuality. Most young adults believe that they have every right to be the central authority in their own personalized religion and feel free to switch

denominations from that of their parents (Wuthnow 2007; Ammerman 2007). Young adults, in their “new voluntarism” (Clark Roof & McKinney 1987) appear to be mirroring older Canadian adults, who exhibit a “general pattern of 'polite detachment' yet ongoing identification with and consumer-like use of religious organizations [...]” (Bibby & Posterski 1985, p. 127).

Precisely because we can no longer assume religious engagement to be traditional in form, it is important to question Statistics Canada’s use of affiliation and attendance as two of four measures of religious engagement among young adults. Statistics Canada indicates that close to half of young adults engage in private religious practices and over half report religion to be moderately-to-highly important in their lives (Clark & Schellenberg 2006). However, the agency’s religiosity index findings indicate that the degree of religiosity among young adults is low. On the whole, it appears that there are inconsistent interpretations of the data within the body of literature on levels of religious engagement among young adults. This seemingly stems from the fact that religiosity is multi-faceted, and consequently, the degree of individuals’ religiosity can vary depending on which aspects of religious engagement are included in its measurement. That is, dimensions that constitute Statistics Canada’s religiosity index, while valuable, may not necessarily form a comprehensive measure of young adults’ religiosity. There is a certain degree of tension between traditional and newer, more modern ways of measuring and understanding religious engagement.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

On an individual level, religion continues to know remarkable resilience in Canada. No organization in the country has more people, short of citizenship, who identify with it. One in four people claim to attend services close to every week; what organization, including professional sports teams, can even begin to think of having such followings? Much is made of the demise of organized religion. The demise is relative; organizationally, religion continues to be a significant force with a significant following in Canada. (Bibby 2001, p. 114)

2.3.1 Neosecularization Theory

For my research, given the present-day less traditional nature of religion in Canada, I adopted a theoretical framework based on Mark Chaves' (1994) neosecularization and Woodhead & Heelas' (2000) detraditionalization theories. Chaves proposes a reframing of secularization theory that centers on the influence of religious authority. He explains that secularization is best conceptualized as a *decline in the influence held by figures of religious authority* in contemporary society – not a decline in the social significance of religion, as posited by the original secularization theory (1994). In support of Chaves' theory, David Yamane (1997) argues that it is not church attendance that is particularly important in understanding secularization theory as it relates to contemporary society. Instead, it is vital to understand how individuals perceive religious authority. Chaves and Yamane's both argue that secularization theory has never involved the altogether disappearance of religion but rather a change in its social significance (Yamane 1997). This reformulation of secularization theory is referred to as *neosecularization theory*.

Studies framed according to neosecularization theory suggest that this decline in the influence of religious authority does not preclude the notion of religion as a strong force in contemporary society. Chaves' perspective allows us to see that religious affiliation and practices can be understood as no longer directed or controlled primarily by external authority. According to Chaves, neosecularization happens at three levels: societal, organizational and individual. This means that figures of religious authority have increasingly less power to exert control over 1) other spheres of social life such as education or politics 2) resources within their own religious sphere and 3) individual people's actions (1994). Declining rates of affiliation or service attendance – which we often interpret as signs of the decline of religion's social significance – might in fact be indicative of “a more revolutionary change: the replacement of the institutional specialization of religion by a new social form of religion” (Luckman 1967, p. 91).

2.3.2 Detraditionalization theory

Components of Woodhead & Heelas' (2000) concept of detraditionalization which signals the fragmented and individualized nature of religious beliefs in contemporary society are also particularly valuable in situating my research. According to Woodhead &

Heelas' theory of detraditionalization, the consumerization of society leads to detraditionalization (Heelas, Lash & Morris 1996). While in the past, tradition almost always served as a guideline or framework for the creation of the self, this is not the case in contemporary society (Heelas, Lash & Morris 1996). "As traditions lose their hold in many spheres of social life, individuals are obliged increasingly to fall back on their own resources to conduct a coherent identity for themselves", explain Heelas, Lash & Morris (1996, p. 90). Woodhead and Heelas make clear that *detraditionalization* means something very different for religion in modern society than does the traditional secularization thesis. While secularization involves a decrease in the significance of religion – or its disappearance altogether – detraditionalization posits the *transformation* of religion (2000). I have chosen to primarily explore the utility of “the individualization of religion”, which is the third variety of detraditionalization as described by Woodhead and Heelas, in the interpretation of levels of religiosity among young adults.

Woodhead and Heelas are preceded by Robert N. Bellah (1967) in their premise that detraditionalization involves “the internalization of authority” and “the individualization of religion” which Bellah explains: “[...] has profound consequences for religion” (1967, p. 233). One such consequence is a decrease in the rigidity of traditional belief (Bellah 1970). Woodhead & Heelas contend that a shift takes place from commitment to a particular religion and reliance on religious sources of authority to a focus on the self as the main authority in creating one's own personal religiosity. Religious leaders are no longer always critical in shaping and creating religious meaning. This shift happens through 1) a weakening of religion, which takes place when religious beliefs and rituals – which are typically created and perpetuated by institutions and religious authority – are challenged or questioned and 2) the individualization of religion which means that the individual's choice in terms of religious beliefs is favoured over the beliefs and practices perpetuated by the church as an institution and religious authority. The mix-and-match version of religion that is central to contemporary Canada can therefore be conceived as being a sign of detraditionalization. As early as the 1060s, *Entkirchlichung* was used by some German analysts to describe the "de-churchification" happening in religion. People were "practicing their religiosity in non-traditional, individualized and institutionally

loose ways" explains Berger (2001, p. 447) and this seems to be occurring even more so today. Thomas Luckmann (1967), whose work on "invisible religion"³ is widely cited, argued that it is not fruitful to use the traditional, official form of religion "as a yardstick for assessing religion in contemporary society" (p. 91). It is important to note that detraditionalization does not imply that all elements of tradition are obsolete. It merely posits that a shift in authority has taken place in the way we live religion. This reflects the coexistence thesis of detraditionalization theory – tradition is not eradicated by modernity but is merely competing with and thriving alongside it. The coexistence thesis posits that the present is a mix of tradition and individual-based reality and it is therefore much too simplistic to pigeonhole our current existence as one or the other (Heelas, Lash & Morris 1996). This combination of traditional and personalized religiosity is evident in the more recent research within the field, which largely emphasizes less traditional indicators of religious engagement (Ammerman 2007).

2.4 ALTERNATIVE INDICATORS OF RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

2.4.1 Overview of Alternative Indicators of Religious Engagement

Although Statistics Canada's collection of religious engagement data based on the religiosity index continues to contribute important knowledge to our understanding of religion in contemporary Canadian society, several researchers have used alternative indicators of engagement in their study of religion's role in the lives of young adults. These alternative indicators are important because many are arguably more reflective of the individualization and fragmentation that characterizes religion today than are the dimensions of Statistics Canada's religiosity index. The widespread use of these alternative indicators lends support to the idea that neosecularization and detraditionalization theories are equally if not more important than secularization theory in understanding religious engagement among young adults in contemporary Canada.

Statistics Canada's findings of low levels of religious service attendance among young adults is reinforced by Bibby's Project Canada Survey results, which indicate that of

³ Luckmann described "invisible religion" as privatized and individualized religion, not shaped by the church alone.

those Canadians who attend religious services weekly, only 14% are between the ages of 18-34 (1995). The work of other researchers also appears to stress a low degree of religious engagement among young adults. Pew Internet & American Life Project has explored the role of internet use in religious engagement and concluded, based on their 2003 survey, that young adults between the ages of 18-29 are less likely than older adults to “use the internet for religious or spiritual purposes” (Hoover, Schofield Clark & Rainie 2004). In addition, Bibby reports that only 20% of teens are involved in religious groups (2001), which suggests that this dimension of religion is not particularly important to them.

However, Bibby also cautions that despite this low level of religious service attendance and apparent disinterest in religion, for young adults, religious engagement means more than affiliation and attendance at services. Although Statistics Canada has found that the majority of young adults exhibit a low degree of religious engagement (Clark & Schellenberg 2006), Bibby (2001) draws attention to signs of religious engagement among this group. For example, 72% of youth between the ages of 15-19 believe in angels, 75% believe in Heaven, (2001), 85% believe in God (Posterski & Bibby 1985) and 78% believe in life after death (2011). It is also important to note that according to Bibby, the majority of Canadians who do not identify a religious affiliation in any given year of the Canadian Census do not permanently remain in this unaffiliated category (1987). 89% of teens indicate that in the future they expect to have a religious wedding. On top of this, 70% reported expecting to have a future birth-related rite of passage such as baptism carried out for them by a religious figure of authority, and 86% expect to attend a religious funeral (2006). The nature of one’s religion has also been explored by Bibby in his earlier Project Canada and Project Teen Canada Surveys. In 1980, he found that about 39% of teens are committed to their religion while only 25% do not consider themselves to be religious people, and 22% are interested in religion though they do not see themselves as deeply religious (Bibby 1985).

Although Statistics Canada reports that many teens do not declare ties to any particular religion, Ammerman (2007) argues that their lives are often shaped by religious

representations in media including movies, video games, and television shows (2007) and about one third of teenagers who “never attend services and/or say they have no religion” report having spiritual needs (Bibby 2011, p. 122). Interest in spirituality, which is regarded by many researchers as distinct from religion, is characteristic of many young adults (Bibby 2011, p. 133). In a 2003 study, Bryant, Choi & Yasuno found that among students who reported having no religious preference, over 12% ranked high in spirituality. Similarly, Bibby found spirituality to be “very important” to about 30% of teenagers, while involvement in an organized religious group was important to only about 10% of teens (2001). Overall, one in three Canadian teens who do not attend services and/or report no affiliation, along with one in seven atheists, report having spiritual needs (2011). This bears great resemblance to the larger picture of Canadians on the whole. In 2005, approximately 38% of Canadians indicated on the Project Canada Survey that “spirituality” is “very important” to them and another 32% indicated that spirituality was “somewhat important” to them (Bibby 2006). Perhaps most interestingly, 25-30% of the Canadians who report never attending religious services also indicate that they have spiritual needs and/or place a high value on spirituality. This is also true for 25-40% of people who report having no religious affiliation (Bibby 1995).

Despite Statistics Canada’s findings of overall low degree of religious engagement among young adults, the agency also indicates that close to half of young adults engage in private religious practices (Clark & Schellenberg 2006). This finding is supported by much of the literature on religious engagement among young adults. According to Posterski & Bibby (1985), 50% of teens surveyed reported praying privately sometimes or frequently (Posterski & Bibby 1985). What is particularly important to highlight is the fact that even some individuals who report never attending religious services say that they engage in private religious behaviour of some kind. Among Canadians who reported never attending religious services in the past year, 27% practiced some form of private religious behaviour weekly (Clark & Schellenberg 2006). Furthermore, Bibby found that 13% of people who report no religion also report praying at least weekly (Bibby 2002). Some people also find their religious needs met by technology of some kind, especially teenagers (Larsen 2001).

In addition, as highlighted by Lee (2002), although college students may attend religious services less frequently than older adults, this does not mean that this group has weaker religious beliefs than those who attend regularly. The fact that some individuals who do not attend services have been found to engage in private religious practices on a regular basis acts as a reminder that we cannot allow religious service attendance to overshadow other indicators of religious engagement. For example, importance of religion to an individual has widely been explored as a measure of religious engagement. Statistics Canada, as previously mentioned, found that close to half of young adults consider religion to be moderately to highly significant in their lives (Clark & Schellenberg 2006), yet this finding is overshadowed by the low levels of affiliation and religious service attendance. Uecker, Regnerus & Vaaler (2007) argue that because religiosity or religious engagement involves a cognitive aspect, we ought not to measure religious service attendance (or affiliation for that matter) but rather more personal things such as confidence in religious authorities and strength of private religious beliefs despite the fact that these measures are more difficult to predict than service attendance. This cognitive focus also finds support in Arnett & Jensen's 2002 work in which they reveal that "[r]eligious beliefs were more likely than attendance at religious services to be important to emerging adults" (p. 462). Although about half of the young adults in their sample reported that it was "not at all important" to them to attend religious services, only 18% reported this level of insignificance for their religious *beliefs*. Looking at the importance of religious faith in daily life, 47% of young adults reported that their religious faith was "quite" or "very" important, while only 27% reported that attending religious services was this important (Arnett & Jensen 2002). Furthermore, Schofield Clark (2003) explains that many young people fall into a category which she calls "the Experimenters" which means relying on one's emotions to determine what is and what is not a religious experience and gaining a sense of empowerment from religious experiences. For "the Experimenters", elements of the supernatural and the traditional combine to create a religious experience. As Clark & Schellenberg of Statistics Canada (2006) make clear: although "[p]ublic religious behaviour, religious affiliation and attendance, have been

declining among much of the population, [...] this captures only one aspect of peoples' religiosity (p. 3).

The findings summarized in this section emphasize that "we should not over-estimate church-going as a measure of religiosity. Belief, private prayer [and] religious experience [...] are, for an increasing number of persons equally or more important dimensions of religious orientation" (Crysdale & Wheatcroft 1976, p. 251). In fact, Arnett & Jensen explain that "[...] for the most part, [young adults] have concluded that at this time of their lives their beliefs are best observed not through regular participation in a religious institution with other, like-minded believers, but by themselves, in the privacy of their own hearts and minds, in a congregation of one" (2002, p. 465). For young adults, focusing on attendance and affiliation as has done the traditional conceptualizations of religion, is particularly likely to eclipse even more seriously the actual story of what is taking place in terms of religious engagement. Many are satisfied by their personal religious beliefs and by private prayer" (Stark & Bainbridge 1985, p. 78). Given that affiliation and attendance are both more traditional-based measures of religious engagement, and it has been shown that religion has grown increasingly personalized and individualized in contemporary Canada, it is arguably essential to explore alternative measures of religious engagement as well.

2.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY & INTRODUCTION OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As I have shown, rates of religious affiliation and service attendance among young adults in contemporary Canadian society are at an all-time low (Bibby 2011), and Statistics Canada's GSS religiosity index findings identify young adults as the group with the lowest degree of religious engagement in the nation. Despite the important changes Statistics Canada's religiosity index has undergone since its initial conception, the definition of religion upon which the index is presently based continues to reflect a traditional conceptualization of religiosity. As it centres almost wholly on affiliation/membership, the definition –and consequently the agency's index –focuses only minimally on more contemporary, individualized aspects of religiosity. As a result, cognitive/belief-based dimensions of religion – which may be particularly important for

young adults – are not as represented within the index as traditional-based dimensions. This reliance on tradition reflects Statistics Canada’s warrant that secularization theory can be used to understand and interpret the social significance of religion for young adults in contemporary society.

Through my research, I questioned this reliance on secularization theory, and I argued that young adults’ low levels of affiliation and frequency of service attendance may not necessarily signal minimal religious engagement. Religion in contemporary Canada has witnessed considerable transformation with the onset of multiculturalism and pluralism, and it is important to acknowledge that the individualism, relativism and fragmentation that now characterize religion may be reworking the ways in which young adults engage religiously. Existing research, particularly by Bibby, suggests that many young adults regard themselves as their own religious authorities. Because of this, many are selectively choosing non-traditional manners of participating in religion. This hints that neosecularization theory, which has not been thoroughly explored in empirical studies to date (Kleinman, Ramsay & Palazzo 1996) as well as detraditionalization theory, may be fruitful in understanding religious engagement among this age group. With my own cross-sectional survey, I collected data on religious engagement based on indicators alternative to those within Statistics Canada’s index. In so doing, I was also able to explore the following two subsidiary research questions: 1) which dimensions of religious engagement are most important to young adults? and 2) does the degree of religiosity among this group vary according to the dimensions of religiosity examined? This allowed me to answer my primary research question: In what ways does Statistics Canada’s religiosity index shape its representation of levels of religious engagement among young adults? Is it possible that what constitutes religiosity varies by age group? In Chapter 2, I will discuss the methodological aspects of my work in more detail.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGN

To enhance the external validity of my research, it was necessary for me to operationalize two central concepts: young adults and religious engagement. I conceptualized *young adults* as outlined by Statistics Canada, which classifies 15-29 year olds as such (Clark & Schellenberg 2006), but given my focus on post-secondary students as well as ethical considerations, I included in my survey analysis only the 18-29 year old portion of the young adult population. This eliminated 15, 16 and 17 year olds who would be under the age of majority in both of my research sites. I approached *religious engagement* with a conceptualization that extended beyond Statistics Canada's four dimensions of religiosity (affiliation, frequency of service attendance, frequency of private religious practices and importance of religion). Rather than focusing on these four dimensions alone, I also considered alternative indicators of religious behavior to be potentially important. These alternative indicators, which formed the bulk of my survey, were more in line with detraditionalization and neosecularization understandings of religious engagement as individualized and governed by the self rather than by religious leaders.

In order to explore Statistics Canada's religiosity index-based findings of low religious engagement among young adults, I carried out two primary research phases. First, I gained access to and analyzed Statistics Canada's General Social Survey (GSS) Cycle 25 individual micro-file data at the Atlantic Research Data Centre (ARDC). This was necessary to examine religiosity among individual ages within the agency's 15-29 year-old "young adult" age group (Clark & Schellenberg 2006). Through my ARDC analysis, I sought to answer my primary research questions: In what ways does Statistics Canada's religiosity index shape its representation of levels of religious engagement among young adults? Does what constitutes religiosity vary across age?

The second phase of my research involved the use of alternative indicators to constitute a measure of religiosity for young adults. I created and distributed a web-based cross-sectional survey (see Appendix A) to a sample of young adults in PEI and Halifax, Nova Scotia, to examine the seemingly conflicting data interpretations on religious engagement among this age group, as outlined in Chapter 2. I wanted to further explore which dimensions of religiosity are central for this age group, and why young adults are reportedly low in religiosity despite additional findings that appear to signal the contrary. My survey consisted of questions replicated from Statistics Canada's GSS but I also used questions from other sources which use religiosity indicators different from those within Statistics Canada's GSS. As such, with the use of my survey, I was able to collect the necessary data to explore my subsidiary research questions:

- Which dimensions of religion, widely used as religiosity indicators, are most important to PEI and Halifax young adults?
- In what way(s) does the representation of young adults' religiosity vary according to the dimensions included in the measurement tool?

3.2 ANALYTICAL PROCESS

3.2.1 Phase 1 of Data Analysis

In this first phase of my data analysis, I used the data from Statistics Canada's GSS, Cycle 25 (Family) individual micro-file data at the ARDC. With my work at the ARDC, I addressed my primary research question: In what ways does Statistics Canada's religiosity index shape its representation of levels of religious engagement among young adults? Does what constitutes religiosity vary across age groups and within the young adult age group itself?

The GSS, Cycle 25, was a cross-sectional survey, with a target sample size of 25,000 Canadians⁴. Although religion was not a core topic addressed in this cycle of the GSS, religiosity indicators were included among Statistics Canada's "standard set of socio-demographic questions" (Statistics Canada 2012, para. 6). The GSS, Cycle 25, was a

⁴As with all cycles of the GSS, Canadians in the sample were aged 15 and over, living in a private household in one of the nation's 10 provinces.

voluntary survey conducted via telephone between February 1st and November 30th, 2011 using Random Digit Dialing. “Each of the ten provinces [was] divided into strata [...]” based on geographic areas for a total of 27 strata (Statistics Canada 2012, para. 10). “Coverage of the GSS-25 targeted population [...] is estimated to be approximately 86% complete; rates of telephone service are very high in Canada” indicates Statistics Canada (2012, para. 39). The agency reports the non-response rate at 34%.

3.2.1.1 Research Questions

Using STATA 11.0, I explored correlation coefficients of religiosity (my principal variable) with each of the four dimensions of religious engagement on which the religiosity index is based: 1) affiliation 2) frequency of service attendance 3) frequency of private religious practice and 4) importance of religion in respondent’s life. I investigated these four dimensions using each of the following variables, respectively: RELIG17, RELIGATT, RLR_Q120 and RLR_Q110. Calculating the correlation coefficient of overall religiosity with each religiosity dimension allowed me to determine whether each of the four dimensions has a different degree of impact on Statistics Canada’s religiosity index and by running the model separately by age group, I was able to explore whether the strength of this impact varies across age groups and within the young adult age group itself. I weighted data using the variable WGHT_PER. I also ran a regression model for each individual dimension with the religiosity index variable in order to examine the size of the effect of each dimension on the index in cases where there were large gaps in the size of correlation coefficients between age groups.

I also needed to determine whether what constitutes religiosity varies across age groups and between sub-age groups of young adults. To do this, I ran a correlation model of binaries of dimensions, by age group. According to a study by Willits & Crider (1989), it is between the ages of 18-25 that many young adults begin to establish their own religious practices and beliefs, in some cases set apart from those of their parents. Consequently, for this part of my analysis, I broke down the 15-29 year old young adult age category into three smaller categories: 15-17 (which precedes this period of transition), 18-24 (during the transition period itself) and 25-29 (when young adults could

be reasonably expected to have completed this transition period). My dependent variable was the religiosity index and I used the four dimensions of religiosity as my independent variables of interest. I examined the correlations between measures of Statistics Canada's four religiosity dimensions – which resulted in a total of 6 pairings. I explored these correlations across age groups as well as between sub-age groups within the young adult age range. By running the model separately for various age groups, I examined whether the degree of correlation among dimensions varies differently by age group. I again weighted the data using the variable WGHT_PER.

Finally, for the last part of my work in the ARDC, I constructed two separate religiosity indexes using the four dimensions of religiosity which constitute Statistics Canada's index. I combined the two traditional dimensions – affiliation and attendance – into a traditional index ranging from 0-5, and the two personalized dimensions – importance and private practice – into a personalized index ranging from 0-7. I compared the distribution shapes resulting from each index.

In the ARDC phase of my research, I defined my population of interest according to age, using the variable AGE. I analyzed data at the national level, for young adults between the ages of 18-29. According to the Census 2011, this age group's population is approximately 6,535,175 (Statistics Canada 2012e). Within the GSS Cycle 25 (Family) confidential micro-file data, my nation-wide sample size of young adults was 2,403 (Statistics Canada 2012). This meant that I was able to complete my analysis while respecting the confidentiality of the GSS respondents. Although Statistics Canada's public-use GSS micro-file data provides users with *grouped* data based on age range, with ARDC access to confidential data files, I was able to look at *ungrouped* data, looking at individual ages within the “young adult” age segment of 15-29 year olds. This first phase of my research helped me to contextualize the data I collected at the regional level in the second phase of my analysis, which is described in the subsequent section.

3.2.2 Phase 2 of Data Analysis

In the second phase of my data analysis, I addressed my two remaining subsidiary research questions: 1) Which dimensions of religion, widely used as religiosity indicators, are most important to PEI and Halifax young adults? and 2) In what way(s) does the representation of young adults' religiosity using only Statistics Canada's 4 religiosity dimensions differ from a representation based on alternative indicators? Addressing these questions involved collecting and analyzing data through my own cross-sectional survey, outside of the ARDC. It was necessary for me to create my own cross-sectional web-based survey because in order to answer my secondary research questions, I required indicators alternative to those included in the GSS to constitute a measure of religiosity for young adults. It is important to note however, that at no point did I merge my own survey data with GSS data, which remained in the ARDC, nor did I intend to contest or replicate Statistics Canada's GSS findings on religious engagement. In what follows, I will explain the details of my survey data collection.

3.3 SURVEY INSTRUMENT

3.3.1 General Information

The survey instrument I used in my research (see Appendix A) consisted of two basic parts. The first section of the survey included a total of fifteen religiosity indicator questions. I asked questions on the following aspects of religious engagement: religious affiliation; importance of religion; frequency of religious service attendance; frequency of private religious practice; personal nature of religion; religion as a source of comfort and strength; religiosity outside of organized religion; importance of regular group worship/prayer; importance of solitary meditation/prayer; importance of talking with a spiritual advisor; strength of commitment to religious faith; interest in spirituality and membership to a worship group. In order to ensure that I created a survey with high content validity, I replicated or adapted each religiosity indicator question from previously existing, widely-accredited surveys in both North America and Europe. (I discuss these questions more specifically in Section 3.3.2.) In the second part of my survey, I invited participants to provide basic demographic information including the following: their year of study; home province or territory; sex; the city or town in which the majority of their childhood was spent; and age. Prior to the collection of data, I tested

my survey in several web browsers and piloted my survey with a small number of young adults, then made minor adjustments to its content based on feedback I received.

3.3.2 Survey Questions by Source

In order to assess affiliation, frequency of service attendance, importance of religion and frequency of private religious practice among young adults, I replicated questions one through four of my survey from Statistics Canada's 2010 General Social Survey (GSS): Cycle 24 (Time-Stress and Well-Being). The additional thirteen questions were religiosity indicators less centered on affiliation and traditional conceptualizations of religiosity. I asked participants to select the option which corresponded to their response. I chose these questions based on their fit with my theoretical framework of neosecularization and detraditionalization as described in Chapter 2.

I replicated questions one through four of my survey from a combination of Cycle 24 of the GSS and the 2002 Ethnic Diversity Survey (EDS). The GSS Cycle 24, which is currently the most recent source for data on religion available to the Canadian public, is a cross-sectional survey, conducted using random digit dialling to establish voluntary telephone interviews. Data for Cycle 24 was collected between January and December of 2010 using a sample of 25,000 Canadian adults residing in one of the ten provinces. This sample includes approximately 1,700 Canadian young adults between the ages of 18-29. The EDS, on the other hand, was a one-time joint initiative between Statistics Canada and Canadian Heritage, for which participants (N=42,476) were selected from the list of those who answered the long-form Census in 2001 (Statistics Canada 2003). The EDS was a voluntary survey conducted between April-August using telephone interviews and it contains all four GSS questions on religiosity, with a slight difference in wording for some questions.

I adapted question five on my survey from Reginald W. Bibby and Donald C. Posterski's 1984 Project Teen Canada Survey (PTCS) which was conducted between May and October of 1984 (N=3,600). PTCS was a paper questionnaire distributed through schools

to students in grades 10-12 between the ages of 15-19. Multistage stratified and cluster sampling techniques were used, based on region of Canada, community size and type of school system. A total of 200 schools were randomly selected and there was a 76% response rate which resulted in 3,530 completed questionnaires (Bibby & Posterski 1985). Given that Bibby has long been one of the leading Canadian scholars in the sociology of religion and the findings from his seven Project Canada Surveys are widely cited as important sources of information on religious engagement trends in our nation, I decided to include one of his questions on the nature of religion. Although arguably dated and Christian-focused, this question had the potential to provide insight into religious engagement in a way that the GSS religiosity questions did not, by exploring the possible differences between and/or intersections of being “committed to” or “interested in” a religion, being “religious”, believing in God without believing in religious organizations, and regarding oneself as Christian without practicing regularly (1980, p. 33). I also found this question suitable for my survey given that over 85% of both PEI and Halifax adults report a Christian affiliation (Statistics Canada 2001b; 2001c); I knew that my samples would likely consist of mainly Christian participants. In spite of its focus on Christianity, question five would appropriately assess the religious engagement of the approximate 1% of PEI young adults and 5% of Halifax young adults who were of a non-Christian affiliation⁵ (Statistics Canada 2001b; 2001c) should these individuals happen to be randomly selected for participation in my survey.

I adapted Questions six through eight and fourteen of my survey from The European Values Study (EVS), which collects data from countries in Europe and North America in order to compare values cross-nationally (EVS 2011). The 2nd Wave of the EVS, which is the most recent wave to include a Canadian sample was conducted in 1990 by Gallup between May 1st and June 30th, using a representative multi-stage random sample of Canadians 18 years of age or older (Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences 2011). The EVS is unique in comparison to the other 3 surveys from which I adapted/replicated my

⁵ It is important to note that these percentages are used as an approximation, given that they are based on the religious affiliation statistics for 15-24 year olds; statistics for 18-29 year olds are not available for either location.

survey questions in that data was collected using face-to-face interviews rather than by telephone or using paper surveys. EVS data is weighted for age and gender. The 4th Wave of the EVS, from which I replicated the last of my four EVS religiosity indicators, was conducted in 2008 and did not include Canada (Leibniz Institute 2010). It was a representative-multistage sample or stratified sample depending on the country and it, like the 2nd Wave described above, was conducted using face-to-face interviews. Adults aged 18 and over were surveyed (N= approximately 1,500 per country)⁶. Data was weighted by gender and age categories as well as by country. The EVS, being comprehensive and cross-national, acts as an invaluable resource for religiosity indicators that are reliable and valid in the measurement of religious engagement. I chose questions six and eight (p. 8-9) in order to consider religiosity as potentially separate from religious service attendance. I chose question seven (p. 10) so as to investigate religion as a source of comfort and strength – something that has been shown to be particularly important for many people, particularly those who consider themselves to be religious (see Bjorck, Braese, Tadie & Gililland 2010) but has not been widely researched among young adults. I chose question fourteen (p. 9) in order to assess spirituality as distinct from religion – not necessarily arising from one’s religious tendencies (Doka 2011) but instead an alternative to religion for some individuals (van der Veer 2009). Though it has been recently addressed in several studies including Doka’s and van der Veer’s (see also Collins & Kakabadse 2006; Schlehofer, Omoto & Adelman 2008), spirituality is not assessed through Statistics Canada’s GSS.

Finally, I adapted questions nine through eleven, thirteen and fifteen from Pew Internet & American Life Project’s Religion Callback Survey 2001. Princeton Survey Research Associates International conducted the survey interview via telephone (N=500) between July 24th and August 15th. I also used question twelve from the Pew Internet & American Life Project Poll 2003, which, just like the Religion Callback Survey, was conducted via telephone by Princeton Survey Research Associates International (N=2,013) between November 18th and December 14th, 2003. I chose these questions, which deal with the

⁶ With the exception of Armenia, where data was collected from individuals aged 15 and up.

importance of particular aspects of religion (including group prayer and talking with a religious leader) in the religious lives of young adults, to facilitate the examination of one of my research questions: Which indicators are most relevant to young adults, and how are these represented in Statistics Canada's index? I chose question fifteen because it provides a manner of assessing religious engagement among young adults in terms of a less traditional, potentially more personalized form of religious engagement – *belonging* to a worship group – rather than by using the traditional question of whether or not a young adult has a *religious affiliation*.

3.3.3 Survey Format

My survey was hosted on Dalhousie's Opinio Web-server. I chose an online format for my survey⁷ given that Eagle (2011) found that postal mail surveys may be more likely to be completed and returned by individuals to whom religion is important and consequently, results may not offer an accurate representation of religiosity among target sample group members. Additionally, Hoonakker & Carayon (2009) have identified multiple advantages of the web-based survey as compared to postal mail surveys. Using a web-based survey allowed me to increase the return time for completed surveys which was extremely important given that I needed to draw replacement random sample units when I received no response from a department secretary/program coordinator after a period of fourteen days. Because of my timeline, I did not want to allow for a two-to-three week return time which would have been the case for a postal mail survey. My use of a web-based survey format also allowed me to keep survey-related costs to a minimum (Umbach 2004; Couper 2000). Lastly, the web-based survey format was particularly convenient because it significantly reduced errors in data entry as compared with a paper survey (Hoonakker & Carayon 2009), and because Opinio provided quick and easy

⁷ It is important to note that the surveys from which I adapted my questions were not originally web-based. The GSS and PEW Internet & American Life Project Polls & Religion Callback Surveys were conducted by telephone, Bibby's PCS was a mail-in survey, and the EVS was carried out face-to-face. For this reason, it was necessary for me to adapt the religiosity indicator questions from each survey's codebook or master questionnaire, in such a way as to ensure that each question would be suitable for my web-based survey format.

exportation of survey data into SPSS format, which I then easily converted into STATA format for analysis.

Despite the abovementioned advantages of web-based surveys, I was nonetheless attentive to the limitations of this form of data collection. First, I acknowledge that nonresponse error – both unit nonresponse and item nonresponse – have been found to be higher in web-based surveys than in paper surveys (Hoonakker & Carayon 2009). However, I used students’ professors/instructors as a means of inviting students to participate in my survey, which meant that concerns for security and a high rate of nondeliverability due to errors in email addresses were both unlikely. In this way, I minimized the issue of unit nonresponse to some degree. I also made sure to keep my survey short (5-7 minute completion time) and to use page breaks and a progress bar to increase the ease with which participants could fill out the survey. Including these elements in web-based surveys has been shown to be particularly important (Umbach 2004). Lastly, another concern with web-based surveys is the possibility of non-sample members completing the survey. To minimize this risk, I made my survey password-protected, with a distinct URL address for each research site to keep PEI and Halifax data separate.

3.4 PARTICIPANTS

3.4.1 Rationale for Target Group

Participants in my research were all post-secondary students, enrolled in public universities or colleges in PEI or Halifax. Despite Statistics Canada’s practice of grouping 15-29 year olds together as “young adults”, findings on religious engagement suggest that from the high school to post-secondary level, young adults’ religiosity is often very different. A study by Willits & Crider (1989) found that church attendance declined as participants moved from the teenaged years on to their early- to mid-twenties. There is also evidence to suggest that levels of religious affiliation typically decline considerably from high school to the post-secondary level (Sandomirsky & Wilson 1990). On the basis of these findings, I framed young adulthood as being constituted in

large part by these two distinct periods of schooling which characterize the lives of the majority of members of this age group: *high school* and *post-secondary education*.

I focused solely on students at the postsecondary level because it is widely proposed that post-secondary education is the stage in life during which young adults have the chance to decrease their level of engagement in activities which they may not find particularly interesting or rewarding. For example, Bibby & Posterski (1985) found that among young adults who regularly attend religious services, only 24% reported finding religious services to be a source of enjoyment. In many cases, religious service attendance is an activity that young adults abandon at this stage in their lives (see for example: Uecker, Regnerus & Vaaler 2007; Hoge, Johnson & Luidens 1993). In fact, "[y]oung adults are vastly more likely to curb their attendance at religious services than to alter how important they say religion is in their life or to drop their religious affiliation altogether" (Uecker, Regnerus & Vaaler 2007, p. 1681). It is during young adulthood, particularly between ages 18-25 that individuals often question the religion (if any) in which he or she was raised, and begin to selectively choose manners of expressing religiosity that best fit with their newly independent lives. For many young adults, this form of religiosity relies little on membership with an organized religion (Willits & Crider 1989). This means that at the postsecondary level, students' religiosity can reasonably be expected to depend less on factors such as parental desire for religious participation (which I did not address in my research) and more on young adults' personal sense of interest or reward.

For this reason, I decided to focus solely on postsecondary students despite the fact that my decision created a class and education bias in my sample. My research is nonetheless valuable in helping to better understand religious engagement among 18-29 year old students in PEI and Halifax. Although I provided no direct benefits or compensation of any kind to participants who completed my survey, students may have indirectly benefited by knowing that the answers they provided might contribute important insights to analyses of religious engagement among young adults in Halifax and in PEI.

3.4.2 Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

As I clearly stated on the first page of my web-based survey, in order for participants to take part in my research, they were required to be between the ages of 18 and 29 and to be residents of either one of my two research sites. This was important in order to allow me to examine a subset of the group Statistics Canada refers to as “young adults”. Given that I conducted my sampling at the post-secondary level, I did not have to delete a great deal of survey data from participants who were younger than 18, but I did have to eliminate survey data from some participants over the age of 29. The “under 18” and “over 29” options on the last question of my survey (see Appendix A, section 2, question 5) allowed me to determine when this was necessary.

3.5 RESEARCH SITE RATIONALE

For the purposes of my research, it was beneficial for me to obtain data from locations where levels of affiliation among young adults have been found to differ noticeably. Statistics Canada’s focus on the traditional conceptualization of religion (affiliation) would presumably *increase* the religiosity index score of young adults who report an affiliation, while those who report no affiliation would likely experience an index score *decrease*. This considered, I conducted my survey in PEI, and Halifax: two locations with distinctly different religious affiliation climates. According to the most recent available Census data on religion, only 9% of PEI young adults report having no religious affiliation, while 24% of Halifax young adults report having no religious affiliation⁸ (Statistics Canada 2001b; 2001c). This means that within the Maritime region, PEI young adults have the highest rates of religious affiliation, while Nova Scotia young adults have the lowest. I selected Halifax on the basis of its standing as the capital city of the province, while I did not deem Charlottetown suitable as a research site based on its relatively small population size of 34,562 residents (Statistics Canada 2012b). Given that the population of 69,985 young adults aged 18-29 in Halifax is over eleven times that of the 6,300 young adults in Charlottetown (Statistics Canada 2012b; 2012d), PEI as a province acted as my research site.

⁸ Please note that these percentages are used as an approximation, given that they are based on the religious affiliation statistics for 15-24 year olds; statistics for 18-29 year olds are not available for either location at this time.

3.6 SAMPLING METHODS

3.6.1 Population & Sampling Frame

As previously stated, the population of interest within my research consisted of PEI and Halifax young adults between the ages of 18-29. According to the Census 2011, the sizes of populations of this age group are estimated at 19,995 and 69,985 in PEI and Halifax respectively (Statistics Canada 2012b; 2012d). In each research site, I included all public postsecondary institutions in my sampling frame. This means that in PEI, my sampling frame included students from one university (the University of Prince Edward Island) and one college (Holland College). In Halifax, my sampling frame consisted of students from four universities (Mount Saint Vincent University, Saint Mary's University, University of King's College and Dalhousie University), and two colleges (Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, and Nova Scotia Community Colleges) (see Appendix E). These sampling frames captured about 41% of the young adult population in PEI (P.E.I. Statistics Bureau 2011; Statistics Canada 2012b) and 55% in Halifax (O'Neill 2010; Statistics Canada 2012d).

3.6.2 Sample size and Sampling Procedures

I calculated my target sample size to be 960 students, which consisted of 480 students per region. This sample size was based on a power calculation⁹ to detect low religiosity of young adults. It was calculated so as to estimate the population proportion of young adults with low religiosity as 50% with 5% of margin of error. The estimated proportion of "low religiosity" for young adults was set at 50%¹⁰. This sample size is comparable to many of those within previous studies in my field (see for example: McNamara Barry &

⁹ $n = p(1-p)\left(\frac{z}{M}\right)^2$, where p is expected probability of low religiosity, z is the standardized score to construct the confidence interval, and M is the desired margin of error.

¹⁰ "p" is set at 0.50 based on Statistics Canada's finding that 48% of young adults have a low religiosity index (Clark & Schellenberg 2006, p. 7).

Nelson 2005; Arnett & Jensen 2002; Binkerhoff & Mackie 1993). I also inflated my sample size by 25% so as to account for possible nonresponse bias and the sample design effect¹¹.

I stratified schools in my sampling frame first by region (PEI or Halifax) and next by institution type (university or college). My third level stratum was based on university faculty/field of study or college program. I adapted this third level stratum classification system from Gaff & Wilson's (1971) use of "faculty subcultural groups" to classify professors in order to better understand similarities and differences across fields of study. I began by stratifying each university department (unit) (such as the Department of English or School of Public Administration) according to one of the following four fields of study: Humanities & Interdisciplinary Studies; Social Sciences; Natural Sciences or Professional Studies¹². To stratify colleges, I grouped programs according to the following categories: Carpentry & Trades; Technology, Arts, Hospitality & Tourism; or Professional Programs¹³ (see Appendix E for complete classification scheme).

I was not able to obtain complete lists of the number of students in each university department or college program. Consequently, in order to reach my target sample size of 960 young adults divided equally by region, I began by compiling my sampling frame of departments/college programs and the email addresses of the associated secretary/administrative staff/program coordinator. I then drew a systematic random sample (SRS) of 2 third level units (university departments/college programs) from each second-level faculty/field of study stratum and I emailed the units (departments/programs) randomly selected. Given the range in the size of units at both the university and college levels, I drew additional SRSs of 2 units as needed. My sample did not necessarily contain a proportional number of young adults from each unit.

¹¹ The formula in footnote 9 produces the required sample size of 384 per research site. The final target sample size is set as 480 per research site, which includes an additional 25% of 384.

¹² "Professional Studies" encompassed programs such as: Education, Business Administration, Public Relations and Engineering.

¹³ At the college level, professional programs included, among others, those designed for a career in the medical, legal, administrative or scientific fields.

However, because my goal was not to analyze and compare patterns of religiosity among young adults from different fields of study, this is not particularly problematic. In addition, it is possible that students invited to complete my survey from a particular department/program were not majoring in that field but rather taking a particular departmental class as an elective. Nevertheless, my sample is more representative of the post-secondary population of young adults than might be a sample not stratified by department/program. (See Appendix C for unit sizes and probabilities of selection by region and institution type.)

3.6.3 Recruitment & Data Collection Procedures

After drawing my initial SRS of 2 units per faculty/field of study stratum, I sent my recruitment email to the department/program secretary/administrative staff, asking him or her to forward it to professors/instructors in the department/program. I also asked secretaries/administrative staff to reply to me via email and indicate whether or not they had forwarded the email¹⁴. This recruitment email explained to professors the nature of my research, what was involved in my survey, and the ways in which it was possible for them to pass my survey information along to the students in their classes/program. This email included the survey link and password and made clear that participation in my research was completely voluntary (see Appendix B). I asked professors to contact me via phone or email to indicate whether or not they had chosen to pass along my survey invitation to students. During this communication, I invited them to ask any questions they may have and/or to request that I visit their class to personally provide an overview of my survey to students. In cases where I received no response after a period of seven days – and the secretary/administrative staff reported having forwarded the email – I considered this to be a decline of my participation invitation and I then drew another unit by SRS from my sampling frame in that same faculty/field of study stratum.¹⁵

¹⁴ In cases where a secretary/administrative staff did not reply within a period of seven days, I sent a reminder email and after a period of fourteen days, I considered this a decline for participation and drew another SRS from that faculty/field of study grouping.

3.6.4 Informed Consent Process

In accordance with Dalhousie's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board, students completion of my survey acted as their consent to participate. On the first page of my web-based survey, I made clear the voluntary nature of participating in my research, and informed students that if they chose to participate, they could leave any question blank which they did not feel comfortable answering. I also assured students that their academic performance would in no way be affected by their participation or refusal to participate in my research. Given that I did not obtain students' email addresses but instead used professors as a means of distributing my survey information, students remained anonymous to me, and their responses were kept confidential because each student was linked to his or her survey responses only by a six-digit respondent ID number automatically created during survey completion.

3.7 DELIMITATIONS OF MY RESEARCH

Like any research, my work is characterized by several limitations. First, despite the generally perceived urban-rural difference between PEI and Halifax, I did not include urban-rural covariates in my data analysis. The post-secondary institutions in my sampling frame were by nature urban in both research sites, which means that my findings cannot address the presence or absence of an urban-rural divide in degrees of religiosity. While this divide is a very interesting subject of exploration, it has been thoroughly researched thus far in the literature (see for example: Chalfant & Heller 1991; Luck 2010) and for this reason, was not the focus of my investigation. Second, given that over 85% of both PEI and Halifax residents report a Christian affiliation (Statistics Canada 2001b; 2001c), my sample consisted of mainly Christian respondents. This means that my findings do not necessarily speak to religiosity among non-Christian post-secondary students in PEI or Halifax. However, it is important to note that 77% of all Canadians are Christians (Statistics Canada 2005), which indicates that comparatively, the proportion of Christians in both PEI and Halifax is not overwhelmingly high. In addition, my survey was created in such a way as to also explore other faiths aside from Christianity. Being Christian was in no way a necessary criterion for participation in my

survey. Lastly, the fact that I only sampled postsecondary students means that my sample is not representative of, or generalizable to, the non-student or high school student population of PEI and/or Halifax. I acknowledge that my sample is significantly less representative of young adults in general than it might have been had I included non-students. However, as previously indicated, I considered this class/education bias to be necessary for reasons of convenience and accessibility to my target population.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 PHASE 1 -- ARDC DATA ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOSITY AMONG CANADIANS

4.1.1 Overview of ARDC Research Questions

In the first phase of my analysis, as signaled in Chapter 2, I analyzed Statistics Canada's GSS, Cycle 25 (Family) individual micro-data file at the ARDC in order to answer my primary research question: *In what ways, if any, does Statistics Canada's religiosity index shape its representation of levels of religious engagement among young adults?* I

explored this question by addressing each of the following subsidiary research questions:

- For young adults, does each of Statistics Canada's religiosity dimensions have a different degree of impact on the overall religiosity index? Does this impact vary across age groups and within the young adult age group itself?
- Does what constitutes religiosity vary across age groups and within the young adult age group itself?

In the following sections, which correspond to my subsidiary research questions, I will present my findings from this ARDC phase of my research.

4.1.2 Impact of Each Dimension on the Religiosity Index

For young adults, does each of Statistics Canada's religiosity dimensions have a different degree of impact on the overall religiosity index? Does this impact vary across age groups and within the young adult age group itself?

In this first part of my analysis, I used a weighted correlation matrix to examine the relationship between Statistics Canada's religiosity index and its four dimensions of religiosity. In this way, I was able to determine whether there is a difference in the degree of impact each dimension has on the index across age groups and within the young adult age group itself. Figure 4.1 below shows the correlation coefficients between each dimension and the index, which indicate the degree to which each individual dimension is represented in the religiosity index. For young adults, I found that the correlation coefficients for the dimensions of "private practice" ($r=0.8967$), "importance" ($r=0.8464$) and "attendance" ($r=0.8443$) were all positive and quite large, which means that the index

well represents these dimensions. It captures “affiliation” to a lesser degree ($r=0.5651$); this correlation coefficient was only moderately strong relative to the other dimensions. This is not surprising when we consider that affiliation contributes a maximum of only one point to an individual’s religiosity index, while the other three dimensions add up to four points each. Yet the religiosity index, which combines both traditional (“attendance” and “affiliation”) and personalized (“private practice” and “importance”) dimensions, may reflect Canadians’ religiosity differently across age groups.

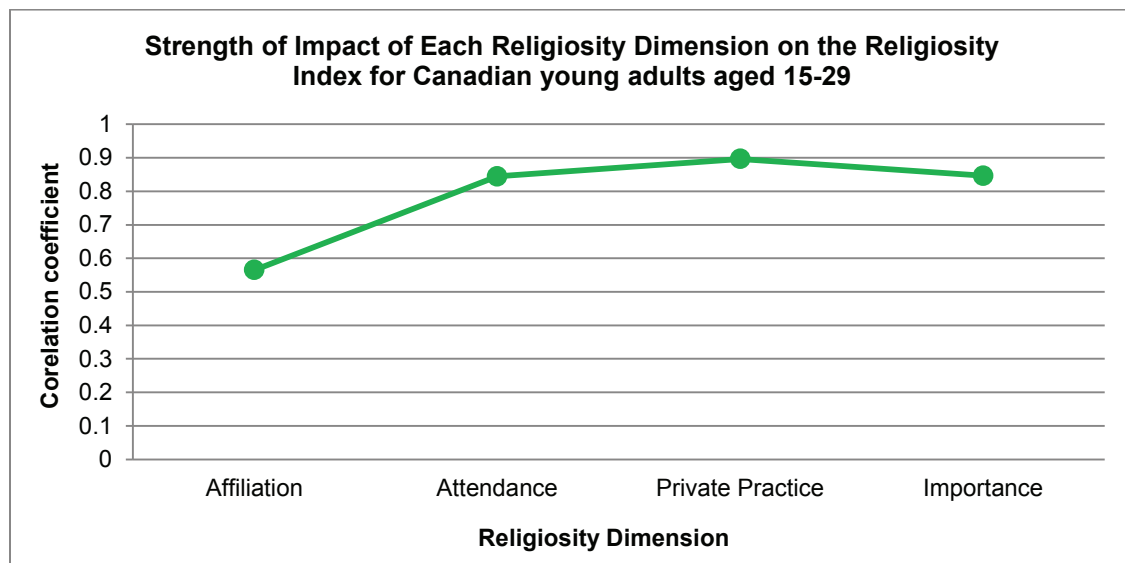


Figure 4.1. Correlation Coefficients for the relationship between each individual religiosity dimension and the religiosity index. (N=2,403 for Canadian young adults aged 15-29.) (Source: Statistics Canada 2012).

When I calculated the correlation coefficients for the relationship between each dimension and the index – this time across age groups – I found that just as was the case for young adults, the index well represents the dimensions of “participation”, “importance” and “attendance” and to the lesser degree “affiliation” for all age groups of Canadians. However, the *degree* of representability fluctuates across age groups. The representability of the index, measured with correlation coefficients, is relatively stable across age groups for “private practice”, “importance” and “attendance”. The largest gap is observed for affiliation (see fig. 4.2). What does this imply for Statistics Canada’s religiosity index? To explore this, I used simple Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression model, which estimates the effect of each dimension on the overall measure (the religiosity index). By comparing the standardized coefficients from my bi-variate OLS

model, this allowed me to analyze the size of increase in the overall index score by the level of increase of each measure. By running a separate regression model by age group for the effect of affiliation (my independent variable) on the religiosity index (my dependent variable), I found for young adults “affiliation” had an effect of 0.5093; this was greater than the effect of “affiliation” for all other Canadian adult age groups. In fact, as the age group of Canadians increased, the effect of “affiliation” decreased (see fig. 4.3). This means that one standard deviation increase in a young adults’ affiliation leads to a 0.5093 of a standard deviation increase in his/her overall religiosity index, while a one standard deviation increase in the affiliation score of a Canadian 60 years or older increases his/her overall religiosity index by only 0.1556 of a standard deviation. Likewise, if a young adults was not affiliated (which means his/her affiliation dimension score was 0), his/her score on the overall index decreased by 0.5093 of a standard deviations, while an unaffiliated Canadian 60 years or older experienced an index decrease of only 0.1556 of a standard deviation.

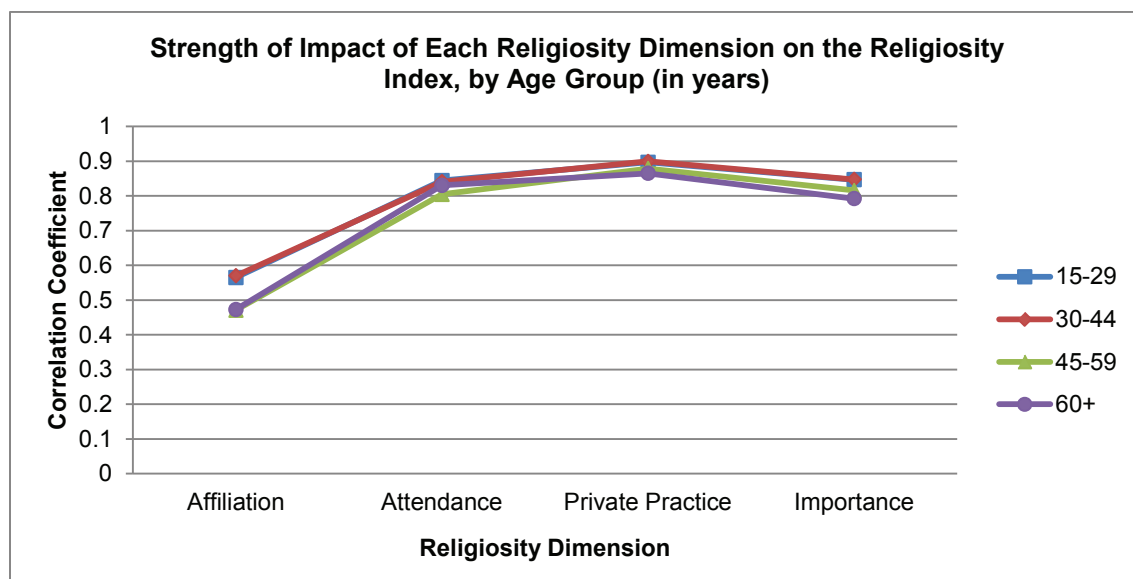


Figure 4.2. Correlation Coefficient for the relationship between each individual religiosity dimension and the religiosity index (across age groups). (Source: Statistics Canada 2012).

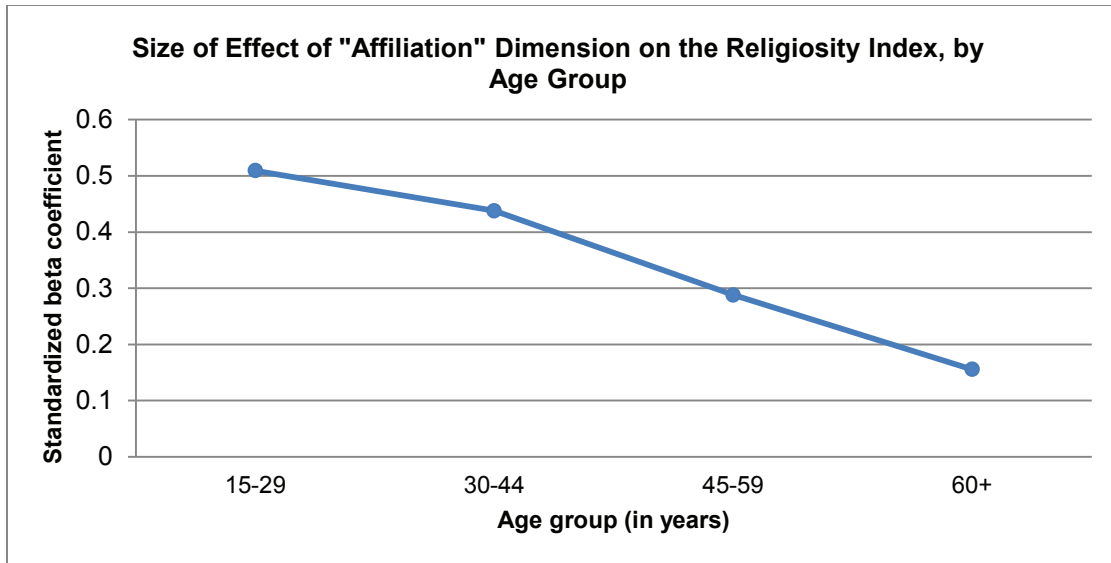


Figure 4.3. Standardized beta coefficients for the effect of “affiliation” on the religiosity index, by age group of Canadians. (Source: Statistics Canada 2012).

Figure 4.4 below shows the effect of each dimension on the overall index score, by sub-group of young adults (aged 15-17, 18-24 or 25-29 years). Just as for the young adult age group as a whole, the index represents each of the four religiosity dimensions relatively similarly across *sub*-age groups. The weaker correlation coefficient between the index and “affiliation” is consistent across all sub-age groups.

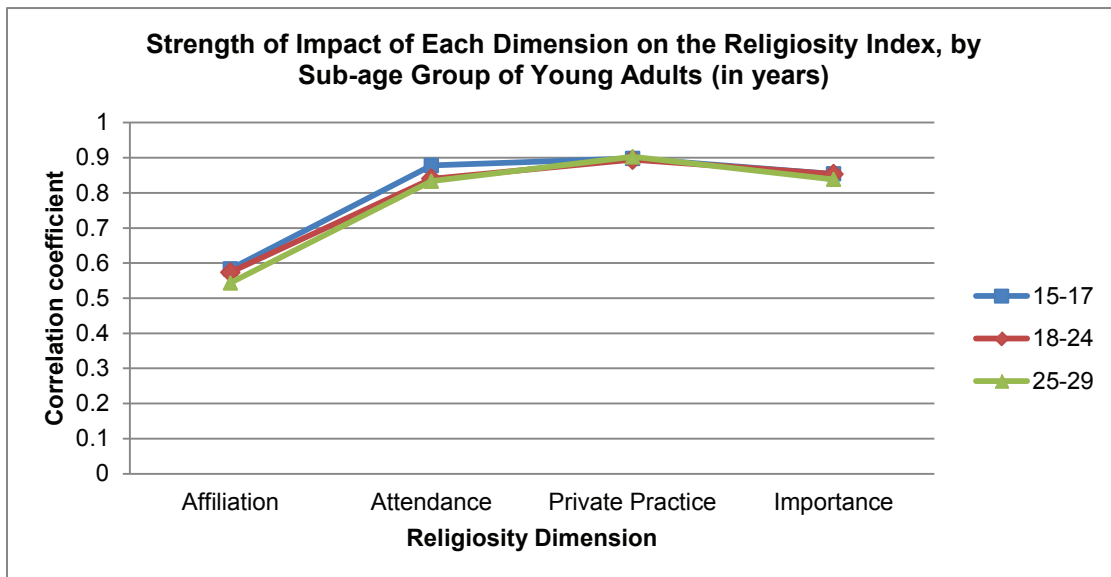


Figure 4.4. Correlation coefficients for the relationship between each individual religiosity dimension and the religiosity index (across sub-age groups of young adults). (Source: Statistics Canada 2012).

4.1.3 Composition of Religiosity by Age Group

Does what constitutes religiosity vary across age groups and within the young adult age group itself?

After establishing the difference in the strength of effect for each dimension on the index (across age groups and between sub-age groups of young adults) I again used a weighted correlation matrix to determine whether what constitutes religiosity varies across age groups and sub-age groups of young adults. This time, rather than focusing on relationships between each individual dimension and the index, I was concerned with the relationships between pairs of individual dimensions. Fig. 4.5 below shows the correlation coefficients between pairs of dimensions of the index. I found that the correlation between traditional religiosity dimensions (“affiliation” and “attendance”) and personal religiosity dimensions (“importance” and “private practice”) is higher among young adults than among older Canadians. This represents the largest gap between age groups. The correlation coefficients are all positive, which implies two things: First, when Canadians are affiliated with a religious group, they tend to feel that religion is more important. The inverse is also true; when Canadians are not affiliated with a religious group, they tend *not* to feel that religion is important. This tendency is strongest among young adults, relative to older Canadians. This means that relative to older Canadians, young adults’ sense of importance of religion is more strongly correlated with whether or not they have a religious affiliation. Second, when individuals are affiliated with a religious group, they tend to engage in private religious practices more frequently than those who are not affiliated. This tendency is strongest among young adults relative to older Canadians. This means that as compared to older Canadians, the frequency with which young adults engage in private religious practices is more influenced by their affiliation.

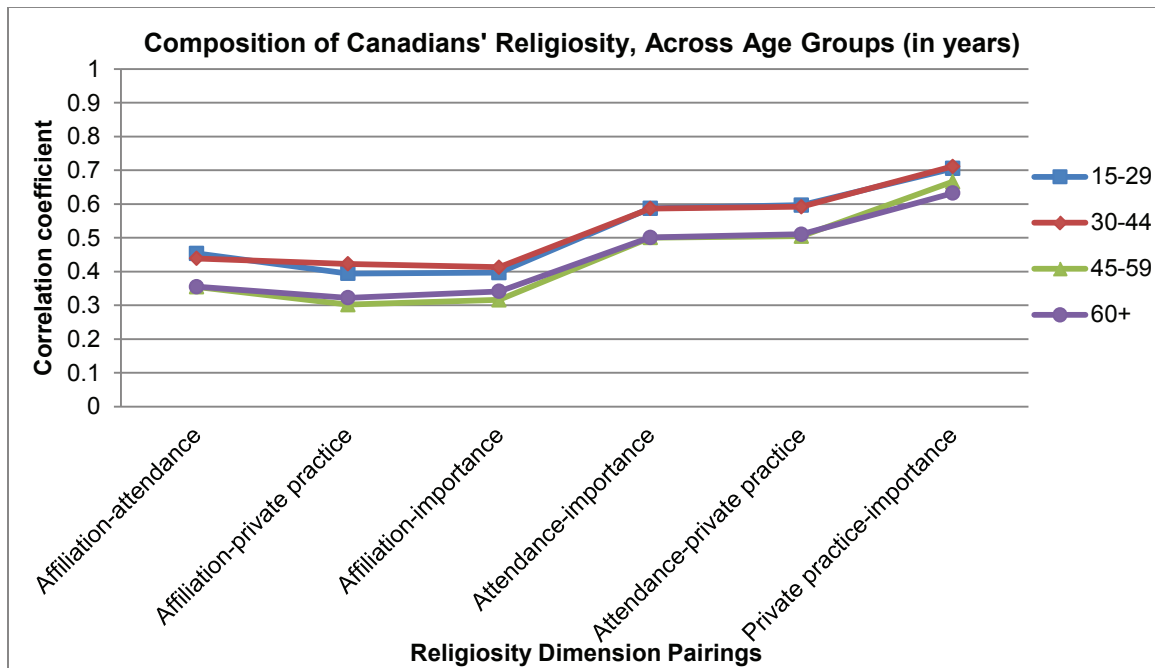


Figure 4.5. Correlation coefficients between dimension pairings, across age groups. (Source: Statistics Canada 2012).

However, it is important to note that this does not imply that young adults are more religious in the traditional sense. In fact, when I constructed two separate weighted religiosity indexes – one using the two traditional dimensions of “affiliation” and “attendance”(see fig. 4.6) and the other using the more personalized dimensions of “private practice” and “importance” (see fig. 4.7) – I found that the representation of young adults’ religiosity varies based on the measures included. When religiosity is measured with the traditional measures (i.e. “affiliation” and “attendance”), the distribution of religiosity among young adults is right-skewed. This leads to the conclusion that young people have a low degree of religious engagement. Yet when we create a religiosity index using only the two personalized measures of religious engagement, there is a sizable proportion of young adults in the higher levels of engagement. In fact, the distribution is almost bi-modal at the lowest and highest degrees of religiosity.

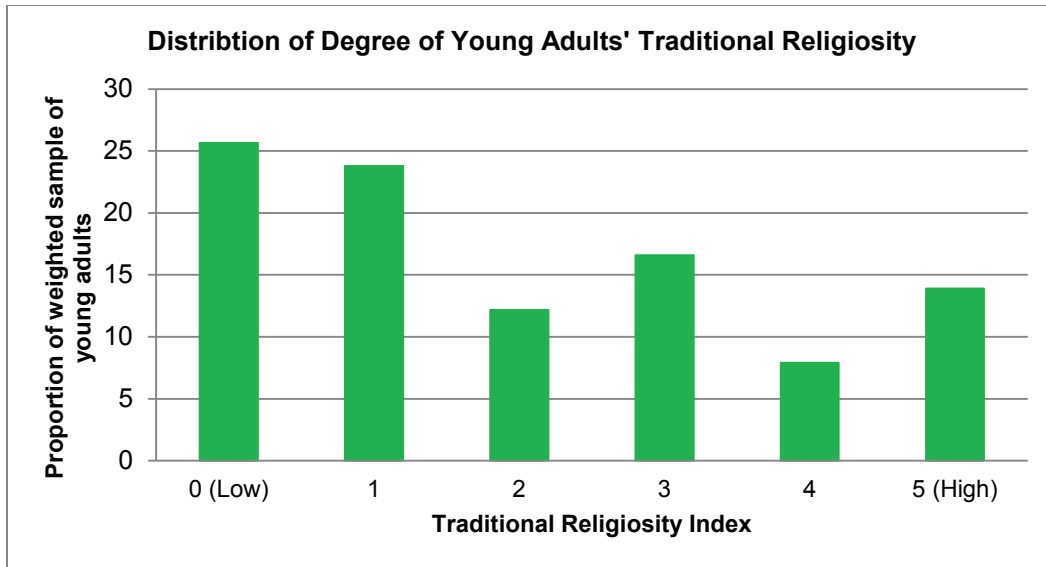


Figure 4.6. Distribution of young adults' religiosity scores using a traditional religiosity index of 0-5, based solely on "affiliation" and "attendance". (Young adults aged 15-29). (Source: Statistics Canada 2012).

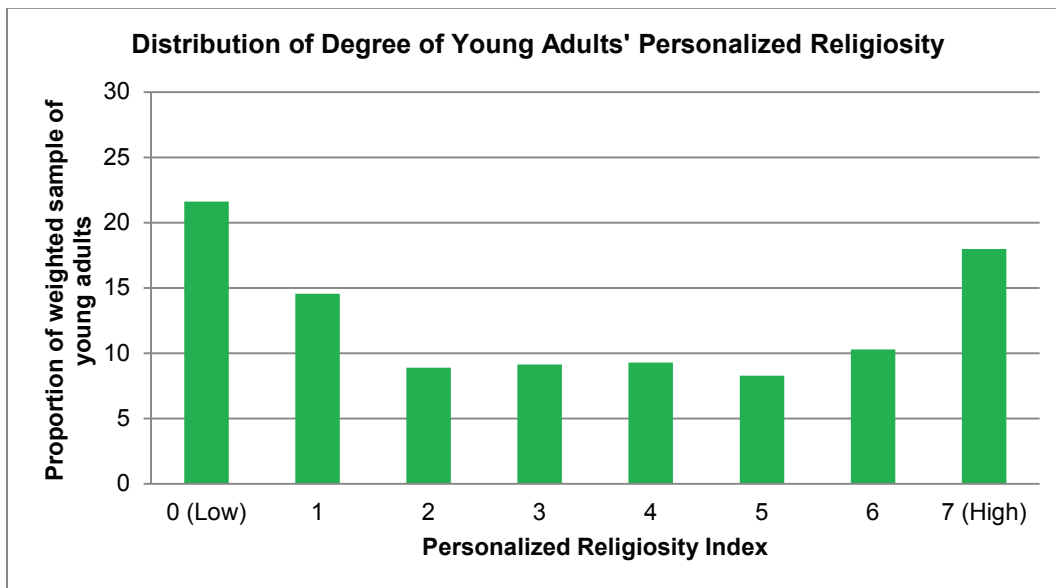


Figure 4.7. Distribution of young adults' religiosity scores using a personalized religiosity index of 0-7, based solely on "importance" and "private practice". (Young adults aged 15-29). (Source: Statistics Canada 2012).

The fact that the representation of religiosity varied noticeably based on the dimensions used in the index suggested the need for further exploration of alternative, more personalized dimensions of religiosity and the way they represent religious engagement. In section 4.2, I will present the results of my survey on religious engagement in order to show what representation of religious engagement we obtain using alternative dimensions

and which dimensions young adults indicated to be most important to their religious/spiritual lives.

4.2 PHASE 2 – SURVEY ON HALIFAX AND PEI YOUNG ADULTS’ RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

4.2.1 Overview of Survey Research Questions

In this second phase of my analysis, I examined the data I collected from my survey on religious engagement among Halifax and PEI young adults between the ages of 18-29. This data allowed me to answer the last two of my research questions: First, *in what way(s) does the representation of young adults’ religiosity using only Statistics Canada’s four religiosity dimensions differ from a representation based on alternative dimensions?* Second, *which dimensions of religion, widely used as religiosity indicators, are most important to PEI and Halifax young adults?* In the sections which follow, I will present my findings from this survey portion of my research.

4.2.2 Description of My Sample

My sample (see Table 4.1) consisted of 674 university and college students in Halifax (N=540) and Prince Edward Island (N=134). In my Halifax sample, 70.3% of students were female, 28.1% were male and 1.4% preferred not to disclose their sex/reported their sex as “other”. My PEI sample was similarly constituted; 75% was female, 24% was male and 1% preferred not to disclose their sex/reported it as “other”. The mean ages of Halifax and PEI young adults were 20 and 21 years respectively. About 40% of my Halifax respondents were first year university or college students. The remainder were relatively equally distributed between second, third, fourth year or later or were graduate students. In my PEI sample, only a little fewer than 20% were first year students and just fewer than 5% were graduate students. Consequently, relative to my Halifax sample, my PEI sample contained more students in second year or later of their undergraduate degree. Almost half of Halifax young adults spent the majority of their childhood in a Canadian Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)¹⁶, while about a third grew up in a more rural (non-

¹⁶ “A census metropolitan area must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the core” (Statistics Canada 2012c, para. 1).

CMA/Census Agglomeration¹⁷) location. A little less than 10% reported a Census Agglomeration (CA) as their hometown and another 10% lived outside of Canada for the majority of their childhood. About 10% of my PEI sample, like the Halifax sample, was comprised of students who grew up outside of Canada. However, only 6% reported their hometown to be a CMA, while over a third grew up in a CA. Just under half of PEI young adults indicated a non-CMA/CA as the location in which they spent the majority of their childhood. In summary, my samples were very similar in terms of sex and age, and somewhat diverse in terms of year of study and rural/urban nature of their hometown.

Table 4.1.
Key Characteristics of My Samples

		HALIFAX			PEI		
			Mean	SD		Mean	SD
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES							
Age			20	2.71		21	2.37
Sex		Percent of Sample			Percent of Sample		
	Male	28.0			24.0		
	Female	70.0			74.0		
	Other/Prefer not to disclose	1.0			1.0		
Year of Study (College or University)	First year	39.0			17.0		
	Second year	15.0			22.0		
	Third year	15.0			27.0		
	Fourth year or later	17.0			31.0		
	Graduate student	13.0			4.0		
Hometown	Canada –CMA	48.5			6.3		
	Canada – CA	8.1			36.0		
	Canada – Non CMA/CA	33.0			47.7		
	Outside of Canada	10.4			10.2		
	Sample Size (N)	540			134		

¹⁷ “A census agglomeration must have a core population of at least 10,000” (Statistics Canada 2012c, para. 1).

4.2.3 Results of First Research Question: Representation of Religious Engagement Among Young Adults

4.2.3.1 Theoretical Conceptualization of Dimensions

Religiosity can be measured using a variety of dimensions which, within the scope of my research, can be theoretically conceptualized as either traditional or personalized ways of engaging with religion. In the sections that follow, I will provide an overview of the results from the personalized dimensions of my survey. Next, I will give an overview of the results from the traditional survey dimensions. This loose dichotomization reflects Woodhead & Heelas' detraditionalization theory and Chaves' neosecularization theory which collectively act as the theoretical framework for my research. As I outlined in Chapter 2, Woodhead & Heelas' detraditionalization theory posits that religious engagement has grown individualized and that the self has become central in governing what it means to be religious and how to express one's religiosity. Similarly, Chaves' neosecularization theory posits that religious affiliation and practices are not necessarily under the primary authority of religious/spiritual leaders. Detraditionalization and neosecularization theories can help us understand the fragmentation that has come to characterize religion in contemporary Canada – something which is particularly evident among young adults (Bibby 1987). Conceptualizing religious engagement using this theoretical framework, we would expect that the most personalized religiosity dimensions would be most likely to show the highest rates of religious engagement among young adults relative to traditional dimensions.

In section 4.1, I summarized the results from the ARDC phase of my research, which indicated that compared to older Canadians, young adults' religiosity is particularly shaped by "affiliation" in Statistics Canada's religiosity index. Young adults' low degree of religiosity, as outlined in Chapter 2, is based on the cumulative score obtained from the combination of all four religiosity dimensions (affiliation, attendance, importance and private practice). The religiosity index is a 14 point scale ranging from 0-13¹⁸. The index I

¹⁸ As was indicated in Chapter 3, I used a 13 point scale (categories of 0-5, 6-10 and 11-12) based on my survey data rather than the 14 point scale used by Statistics Canada (categories of 0-5, 6-10 and 11-13). This was due to the difference in the importance of

established using the same four questions on my own survey revealed similar findings as those from Statistics Canada's Ethnic Diversity Survey 2002 (for more detail on this survey, refer to Chapter 2). When we use Statistics Canada's dimensions, we find that the bulk of young adults have a "low" degree of religiosity.¹⁹

In table 4.2 below, I show the distribution of young adults by each of the three degrees of religiosity (low, moderate and high), from both Statistics Canada's data²⁰ (15-29 year olds) and my Halifax and PEI samples (18-29 year olds). In my Halifax sample, like in Statistics Canada's EDS 2002 young adults sample, over half of respondents (63.4%) had a low degree of religiosity, while only about a quarter of young adults (26.4%) had a moderate degree of religiosity. In PEI, the proportional distribution was noticeably different however; a relatively even proportion of young adults had a low or moderate degree of religiosity (46.7% and 47.5% respectively). In both of my regional samples – just like with the EDS 2002 sample – according to the religiosity index, young adults with a high degree of religiosity constituted the minority. In my Halifax and PEI samples, this minority was even smaller than in Statistics Canada's sample. It is here that my research question is useful to explore these results. *In what way(s) does the representation of young adults' religiosity using Statistics Canada's religiosity index differ from a representation based on alternative, more personalized dimensions?*

religion scale in question 3. The GSS question which I replicated for my survey uses a 1-4 scale to rate importance of religion while the 2002 EDS uses a 1-5 scale. This consequently adds one point to the EDS-GSS religiosity index in Clark and Schellenberg's "Who's Religious?" (2006) from which this data was obtained, as compared to the religiosity index variable I constructed from my survey data.

¹⁹ The differences in distribution of the degree of religiosity was statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.000. However, since the regional differences in distributions were not significant for the majority of dimensions, I do not summarize my findings by research site. The data I present are for the combined PEI-Halifax sample (N=674) unless otherwise stated.

²⁰ This is based on the EDS 2002 uses the same questions as the GSS, with slight differences in question wording. Data used in Clark & Schellenberg's 2006 article "Who's Religious" is based on a combination of EDS and GSS data.

Table 4.2.

Religiosity Index Distribution by Sample (Survey Questions 1-4)

Degree of Religiosity	EDS 2002 (%)	Halifax (My sample) (%)	PEI (My sample) (%)
Low	48.0	63.4	46.7
Moderate	30.0	26.4	47.5
High	22.0	10.2	5.8
Sample size (N)	n.d.	541	137

(EDS 2002 data source: Clark & Schellenberg 2006).

4.2.3.2 Dimensions Which Indicate a Greater Degree of Religiosity than Statistics Canada’s

My survey on religious engagement, which contained several personalized religiosity dimensions alongside Statistics Canada’s, included two dimensions focused on spirituality/the sacred. The results from these dimensions – self-described spirituality/religiosity (fig. 4.11) and interest in spirituality/the sacred (fig. 4.8) – both indicate signs of moderate religious engagement.

Fig 4.11 shows the distribution of responses to the question “In general, which of the following would you describe yourself as?” (Options were as follows: “spiritual but not religious”, “religious but not spiritual”, “religious and spiritual” and “not spiritual and not religious”). I replicated this religiosity dimension question from Pew Internet & American Life Project Poll 2003. In my overall sample, the majority (42.6%) of young adults indicated that they consider themselves to be “spiritual but not religious” while only 7.8% reported being “religious but not spiritual”.

Table 4.3.

Self-Described Religiosity/Spirituality

	Halifax	PEI	Overall sample
Spiritual but not religious	43.9	37.5	42.6
Religious but not spiritual	6.1	14.7	7.8
Religious and spiritual	16.5	18.4	16.9
Not spiritual and not religious	33.5	29.4	32.7
Sample size (N)	556	136	692

I also asked respondents the following question from the 4th Wave of the European Values Study (EVS 2010): “Whether or not you think of yourself as a religious person, how spiritual would you say you are, that is how strongly are you interested in the sacred or the supernatural?” Fig. 4.8 indicates that the response distribution for my overall

sample is similar to the EVS results for all young adults aged 18-29; the majority respondents in this age group indicated that they are “somewhat interested” in the sacred or the supernatural, while the smallest proportion indicated that they are “not at all interested”. This self-described degree of spirituality/interest in the sacred – a personalized religiosity dimension – is a left-skewed distribution, which reveals a higher concentration towards the upper end of religious engagement than Statistics Canada’s index.

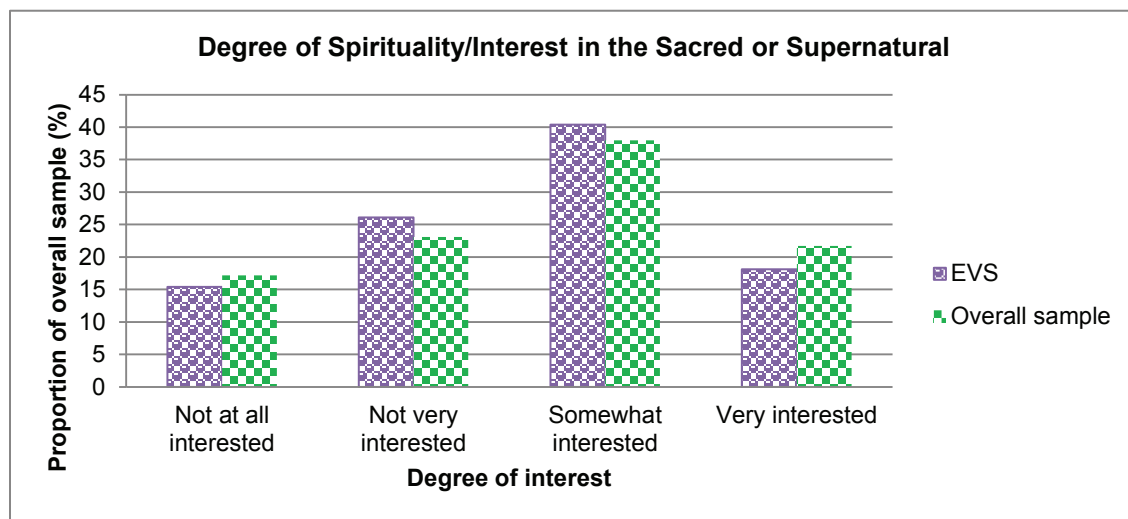


Figure 4.8. Distribution of responses to the following question: “Whether or not you think of yourself as a religious person, how spiritual would you say you are, that is how strongly are you interested in the sacred or the supernatural?” (N=658 for my overall sample; N=14,257 for 4th Wave EVS sample of 18-29 year olds in all participating countries.) (Source: EVS 2010).

Aside from personalized dimensions which measure elements of spirituality/interest in the sacred, my survey also contained personalized dimensions which measured religious self-image and religion as a source of comfort and strength. Like the two spirituality dimensions, these additional personalized dimensions showed signs of religious engagement that Statistics Canada’s religiosity index results did not. I replicated the following question on religious self-images from Reginald Bibby and Donald Posterski’s 1984 Project Teen Canada Survey (PTCS): “Which of the following statements comes closest to describing the nature of YOUR religion?” (See table 4.4 for response options). Table 4.4 below compares the distribution of responses between the 1984 PTCS and my overall sample from both research sites.

Table 4.4.²¹

Religious Self-Images

Category of Religious Self-Image	PTCS 1984 (Canada) (%)	My overall sample (%)
The Committed* “I regard myself as a committed Christian” OR “I am deeply committed to a religion other than Christianity”	39.0	17.1
The A-Religious “I have a mild interest in Christianity and other religions, but I do not see myself as deeply religious”	22.0	5.3
The Inquisitive “I find myself interested in a variety of religions, but not committed to any particular one”	4.0	7.8
The Non-Religious “I am not a religious person”	25.0	41.8
Other “I believe in God but not in religious organizations” “I regard myself as a Christian but do not practice regularly”	10.0 **	14.4 13.7
Sample size (N)	3,530	645

*The bolded category labels in the table are those used by Bibby & Posterski (1985)

**Although this category was not represented in Bibby & Posterski’s PTCS findings, I show the proportions for my combined Halifax and PEI sample

There is evident variation in the distributions of young adults by religious self-image between the two surveys. First, the proportion of “committed” young adults is considerably smaller in my sample than it was in the PTCS. Second, relative to the PTCS, there were also fewer “a-religious” young adults in my sample than there were teenagers in this category in the PTCS. The proportion of *non-religious* young adults from my samples, however, was *greater* than the PTCS proportion. It is also important to note that

²¹ It is important to reiterate that Bibby and Posterski’s survey included only 15-19 year olds – teenagers – rather than young adults. In addition, the PTCS data in table 4.4 is for all Canadian teenagers – not for the Halifax and PEI regions specifically – although regional differences between the distributions of responses were found to be statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.000.

while the option “I regard myself as a Christian but do not practice regularly” was not chosen by young adults on the PTCS, 13.7% of my respondents selected this as best reflecting their religious self-image. These substantial differences between the samples may be in large part attributable to the nearly 30 year difference between the administration times of the surveys. Nonetheless, it is valuable to note that the majority of young adults in my Halifax-PEI sample did not consider themselves to be religious people. However, there was a considerable number of young adults who were neither a-religious nor religiously committed but appear to fall somewhere in between; 5.3% of my sample, though they were not deeply religious, expressed interest in religions; 7.8%, though they were not committed to a religion, were interested in religions; 14.4% believed in God but not in religious organizations; and 13.7% were non-practicing Christians.

My results also revealed that just under half of young adults in my overall sample personally get comfort and strength from religion while just over half do not (see fig. 4.9 below). This finding is based on the following question: “Do you find that you get comfort and strength from religion or not?” which I replicated from the 2nd Wave of the EVS, 1990 (Leibniz Institute 2011). Relative to the EVS findings for Canadian young adults 18-29, where 46.9% did not get comfort and strength from religion while 45.9% did, my sample results are quite similar.

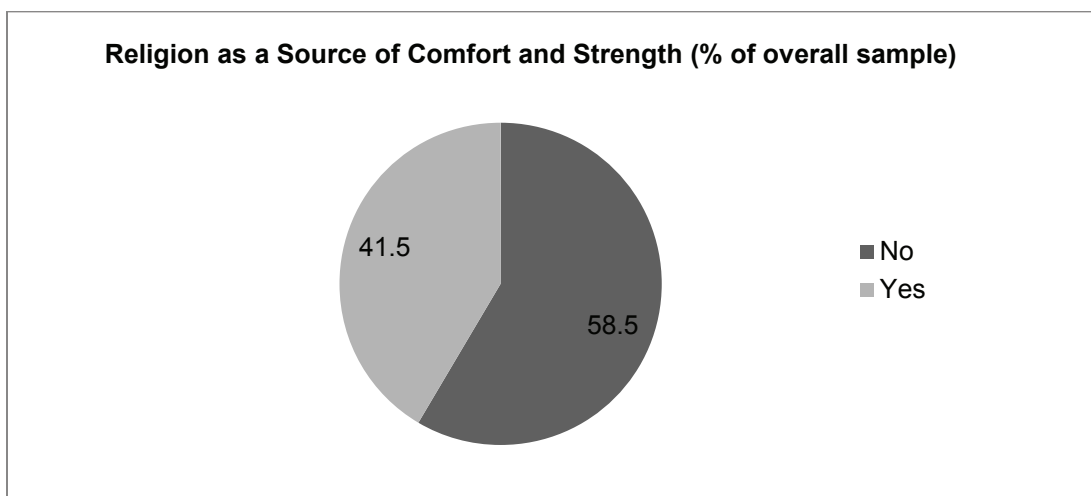


Figure 4.9. Distribution of responses (% of my overall sample) to the following question: “Do you find that you get comfort and strength from religion, or not?” (N=586)

The last two personalized religiosity dimensions I included on my survey were directly from Statistics Canada's religiosity index – importance of religion and frequency of private practice. Unlike the index's other two dimensions (affiliation and attendance), these dimensions are not traditional and taken on their own, result in data that represent religiosity differently than the data obtained using the overall religiosity index.

First, I assessed frequency of private religious practice using the following question: “In the past 12 months, how often did you practice religious or spiritual activities on your own? This may include prayer, meditation, and other forms of worship taking place at home or in any other location.” Respondents could choose a frequency category ranging from “Not at all” to “At least once a week”. The results of my overall Halifax-PEI sample were quite similar to the GSS national-level results; the majority of young adults in my sample (43.5%) never engaged in any type of religious or spiritual activities on their own (see fig. 4.10). On top of that, as fig. 4.10 below illustrates, relative to the GSS results distribution, a smaller proportion of young adults in my sample reported practicing a religious or spiritual activity at least once a week (22.9%). However, it is important to note that “not at all” and “at least once a week” were the two modal response categories for this question while the remainder of responses were relatively evenly distributed between the frequency categories of “at least once a year”, “a few times a year” and “at least once a month”.

I also asked respondents to indicate the degree of importance their religious or spiritual beliefs have on their lives with the question: “Using a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is not at all important and 4 is very important, how important are your religious or spiritual beliefs to the way you live your life?” Just like the question on frequency of private religious practice, I replicated the importance dimension from Statistics Canada's 2010 GSS. Figure 4.11 below shows the distribution of responses for both the 2010 GSS and my overall sample. The distribution of responses for my sample was quite similar to those from the 2010 GSS at the national level. Young adults in each sample were relatively evenly distributed between levels of importance they attribute to religion. By combining the two highest degrees of importance and the two lowest, we see that approximately half

of young adults in my sample (54.6%) considered religion to be “not at all” or “not very” important while the other half (45.4%) indicated that it is “somewhat” or “very” important.

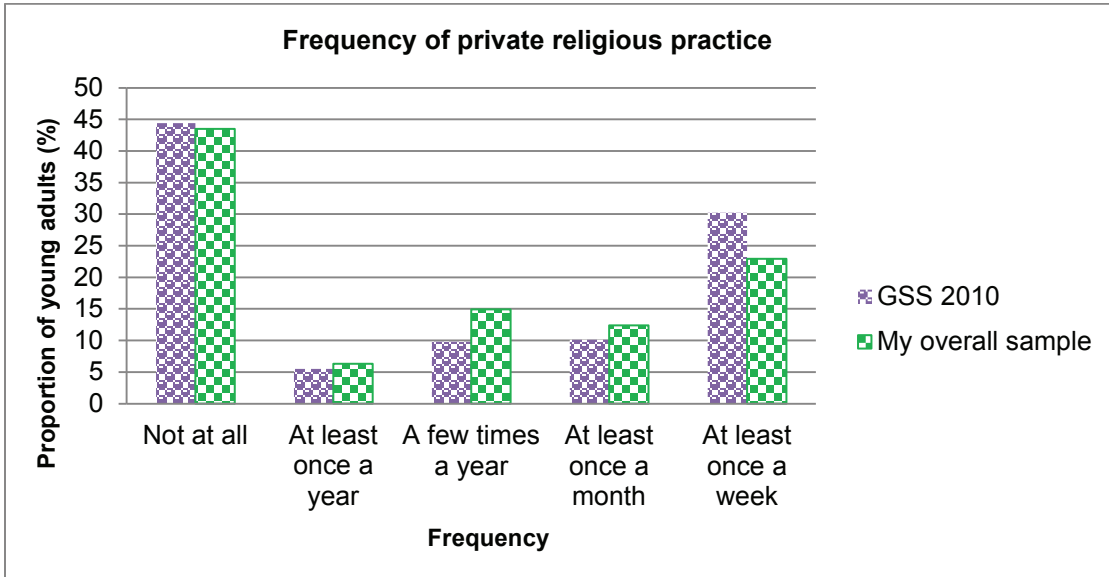


Figure 4.10. Distribution of responses (%) to the following question: “In the past 12 months, how often did you practice religious or spiritual activities on your own? This may include prayer, meditation, and other forms of worship taking place at home or in any other location.” (N=1688 for 2010 GSS; N=703 for my overall sample.) (Statistics Canada 2011).

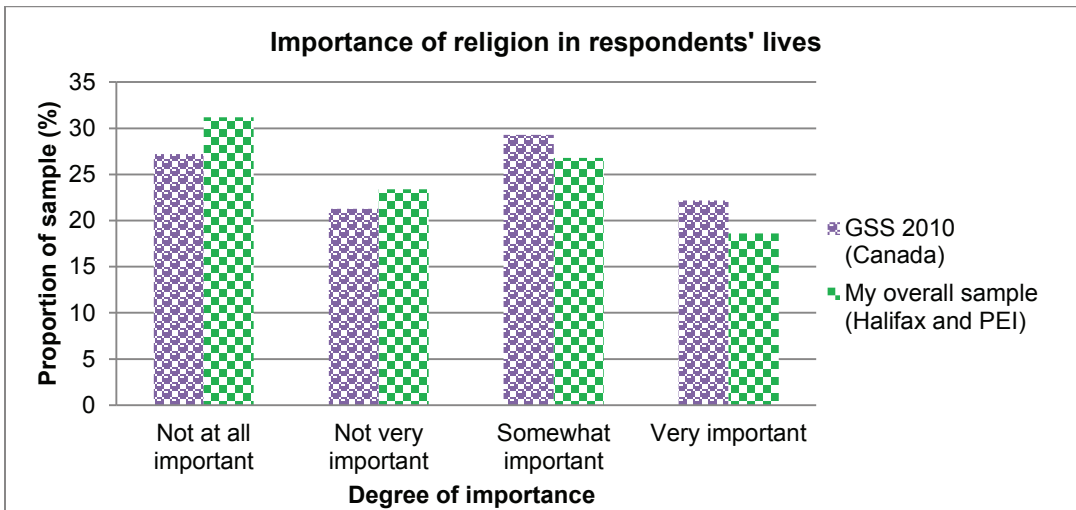


Figure 4.11. Distribution of responses (%), by survey sample, to the following question: “Using a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is not at all important and 4 is very important, how important are your religious or spiritual beliefs to the way you live your life?” (N=1683 for GSS 2010; N=721 for my overall sample.) (Source: Statistics Canada 2011).

4.2.3.3 Dimensions Which Indicate a Similar Degree of Religiosity as Statistics Canada's

Despite the results above which show moderate religious engagement among young adults in my samples, a portion of my results mimic the low degree of religiosity among young adults posited by Statistics Canada's religiosity index. These dimensions are as follows: connection with the divine outside of religious services, strength of commitment to religious faith, and self-identification as a religious/atheist person.

First, I will summarize the results of the question: "I have my own way of connecting with the Divine without churches or religious services.' *Please check the box which describes how true the above statement is for you*". Respondents were provided with a scale ranging from 1-5, 1 being "Not at all" and 5 "very much". I replicated this question from the 4th Wave of the European Values Study, 2008. Data presented in fig. 4.12 below is for young adults aged 18-29 in all countries surveyed given that Canada did not participate in this wave of the EVS.

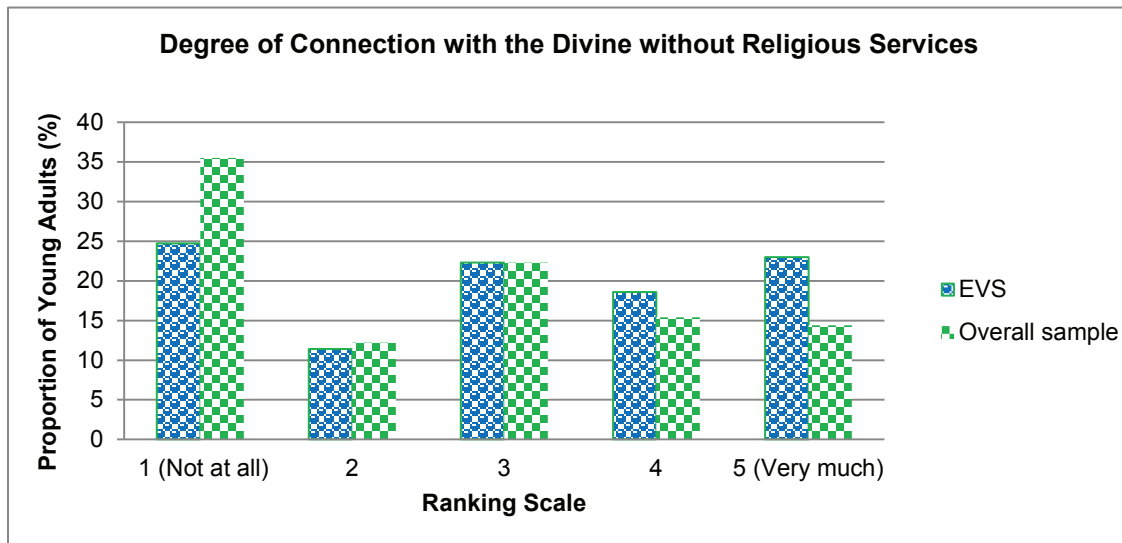


Figure 4.12. Distribution of responses (%) to the following question: "I have my own way of connecting with the Divine without churches or religious services.' *Please check the box which describes how true the above statement is for you*". (N=13,352 for EVS; N=658 for my overall sample).

Fig. 4.12 above shows that relative to the EVS 2008 sample of young adults, a greater proportion of young adults in my sample (35.5%) indicated that they do "not at all" have

their own way of connecting with the Divine without religious services (as compared to 24.7% of young adults in the EVS sample). In my sample, there were also considerably less young adults (14.4%) who indicated that they “very much” agree with the statement relative to the EVS sample (23.0%).

The next personalized dimension I analyzed was young adult’s degree of commitment to their faith. I replicated this question from the PEW Internet & American Life Project Poll: “Which of the following best describes your commitment to your religious faith?” This resulted in a response distribution similar to Statistics Canada’s. Fig 4.17 below shows the right-skewed distribution of young adults in my sample by degree of commitment to their religious faith. The majority of young adults (44.8%) reported that their commitment to their religious faith is “not strong at all” and the smallest proportion of young adults (12.7%) indicated that they have a “very strong” commitment to their religious faith. However, a little over 40% of young adults had a degree of commitment that fell somewhere in the middle.

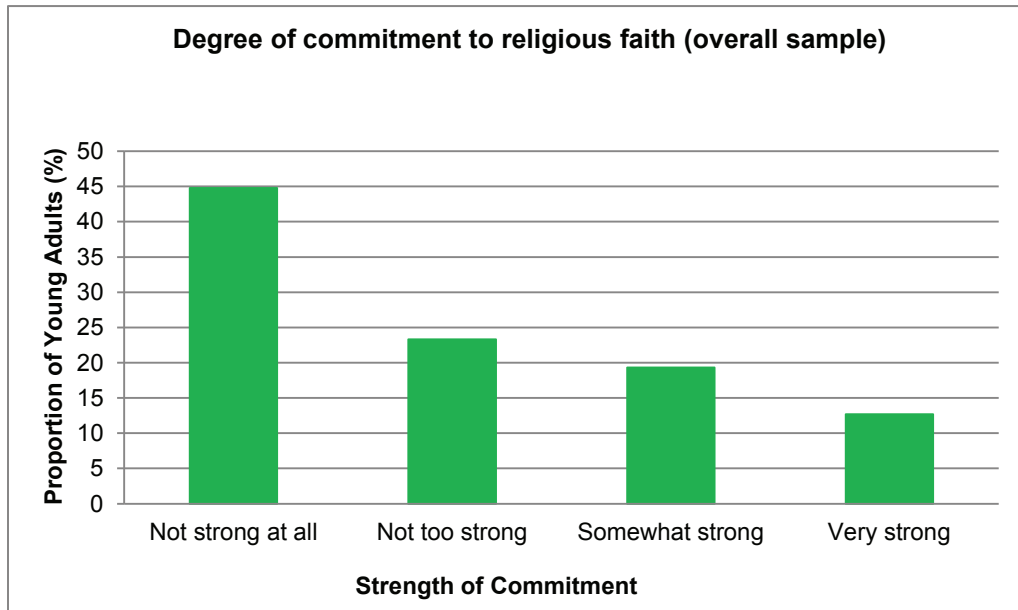


Figure 4.13. Distribution of responses (%) to the question: Which of the following best describes your commitment to your religious faith -- very strong, somewhat strong, not too strong, or not strong at all? (N=688).

Finally, we also see a low degree of religious engagement when we look at the distribution of responses the following question, replicated from the 2nd Wave of the EVS (1990): “Independently of whether or not you go to a church, temple, synagogue, or

mosque, which of the following would you say best describes you?” with options of “a convinced atheist”, “not a religious person”, “a religious person” or “unsure”. Data summarized in figures 4.18 and 4.19 below are for Canadian young adults between the ages of 18-29 as this wave of the EVS included Canada.

Figures 4.14 and 4.15 below show that as compared to the 1990 EVS sample of Canadian young adults, a greater proportion of young adults in my combined Halifax-PEI sample described themselves as “a convinced atheist” or “not a religious person”. Consequently, the proportion of young adults in my sample describing themselves as “a religious person” was about 30% lower than the proportion in the EVS sample. This could be partially due to the two decade gap between the two surveys and the changes in the nature of religious engagement which took place in that period.

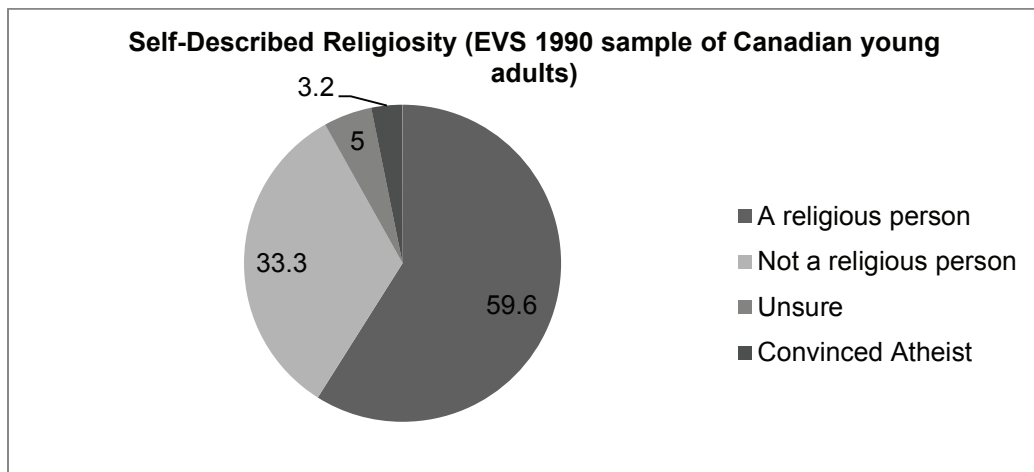


Figure 4.14. Distribution of EVS responses to the following question: “Independently of whether or not you go to a church, temple, synagogue, or mosque, which of the following would you say best describes you?” (N=403 for Canadian young adults aged 18-29, EVS 1990.) (Source: EVS 2011).

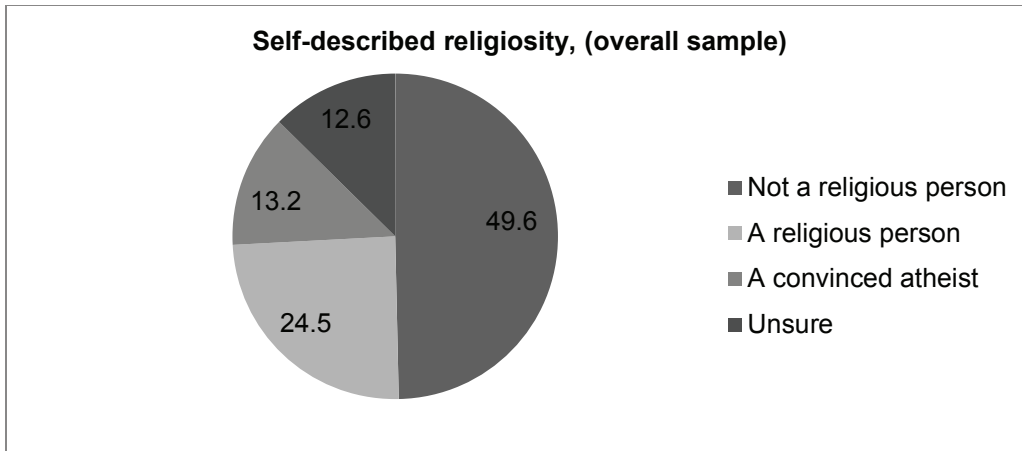


Figure 4.15. Distribution of my overall sample to the following question: “Independently of whether or not you go to a church, temple, synagogue, or mosque, which of the following would you say best describes you?” (N=697 for my overall sample aged 18-29.)

Although the majority of the religiosity dimensions on my survey were personalized, I also included both of Statistics Canada’s traditional dimensions – affiliation and attendance – as well as a dimension on belonging to a church or religious group, for a total of three traditional dimensions. The results from these three dimensions represent young adults’ religiosity in a way that matches the representation given by Statistics Canada’s religiosity index. This is different from the picture of religious engagement shown by the majority of the personalized dimensions on my survey.

Statistics Canada measures affiliation by asking respondents: “What, if any, is your religion?” and the distribution of responses by sample is summarized in Table 4.5 below. My Halifax sample contained slightly more unaffiliated young adults (49.0%) than did the 2010 GSS (36.5%), while my PEI sample contained slightly fewer (33.8%). In both of my samples, Catholics and Protestants were the modal religious groups among affiliated young adults; this is also the case in the GSS sample. However, the majority of young adults in each of my samples and in the GSS sample are religiously unaffiliated. Minority religious groups were marginally represented in both samples but members of these groups were somewhat greater in number in my samples than in the GSS sample itself. In my overall sample, almost half of young adults (44.7%) were not affiliated with a religion.

Table 4.5.
Proportional Distribution of Affiliation

Affiliation (if any)	GSS 2010 Canada (%)	Halifax (My sample) (%)	PEI (My sample) (%)
Catholic	32.8	17.8	29.6
Protestant	20.0	13.4	16.9
United Church	3.5	3.8	8.5
Eastern Religions (including Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism)	8.0	6.8	1.4
Christian Orthodox	N/A	5.1	4.3
Other religions (including Traditional Aboriginal, para-religious groups, Spiritualists)	0.1	4.0	5.6
No religion	35.6	49.0	33.8
Sample size (N)	1,664	573	142

To measure frequency of religious service attendance, Statistics Canada asks respondents: “Other than on special occasions, (such as weddings, funerals or baptisms), how often did you attend religious services or meetings in the past 12 months?” Respondents then select a frequency ranging from “Not at all” to “At least once a week” (Statistics Canada 2010). I replicated this question on my survey and the results show a distribution skewed to the right; about half of young adults in my overall sample (50.6%) reported never attending religious services (see fig. 4.16).

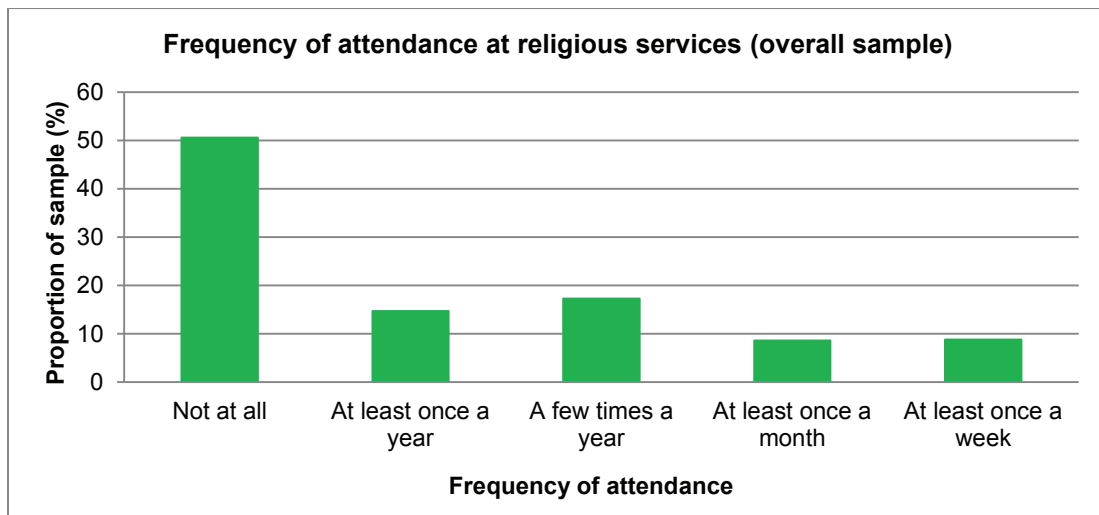


Figure 4.16. Distribution of responses to the following question: “Other than on special occasions, (such as weddings, funerals or baptisms), how often did you attend religious services or meetings in the past 12 months?” (N=713)

Table 4.6 below shows the distribution of young adults by the frequency of their service attendance, both according to the 2010 GSS sample and my PEI and Halifax samples. There are no poignant differences between my samples and the 2010 GSS sample of Canadian young adults; in all three samples, close to half of young adults never attend religious services. Just over 10% of young adults indicated they attend weekly, according to the GSS. My Halifax sample suggests that even fewer young adults in this region attend services weekly (7.1%) while my PEI sample indicates that slightly more young adults attend this frequently (15.8%). In all three cases, young adults who attend services weekly or monthly represented between a fifth and slightly over a quarter of this age group and are overshadowed by those who do not attend at all.

Table 4.6.²²
Frequency of Service Attendance

Frequency	GSS 2010 (Canada) (%)	MY SURVEY (Halifax) (%)	MY SURVEY (PEI) (%)
Not at all	47.0	52.3	43.9
At least once a year	12.4	15.3	12.2
A few times a year	19.7	17.4	16.6
At least once a month	9.3	7.8	11.5
At least once a week	11.7	7.1	15.8
Sample size (N)	1,692	574	139

Finally, the low degree of young adults’ religious engagement depicted by Statistics Canada’s religiosity index is similarly represented by the third traditional religiosity dimension on my survey. I asked respondents: “Do you currently belong to a particular church, congregation, synagogue, or other worship group in your local community?” – a question I replicated from PEW Internet & American Life Poll. Results indicated that the modal category for both samples was “no” – in my overall sample, 72.1% of young adults indicated that they do not belong to a particular church or other worship group, while only 27.9% reported that they *do* belong²³.

²² Regional differences in frequency of attendance at religious services was statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.009.

²³ The graph shows that among PEI young adults, the distribution between those who belong and do not was relatively even, while for Halifax, the difference between the two categories was noticeably different. Using a chi-squared test, I found these regional differences to be statistically significant at the 0.000 level.

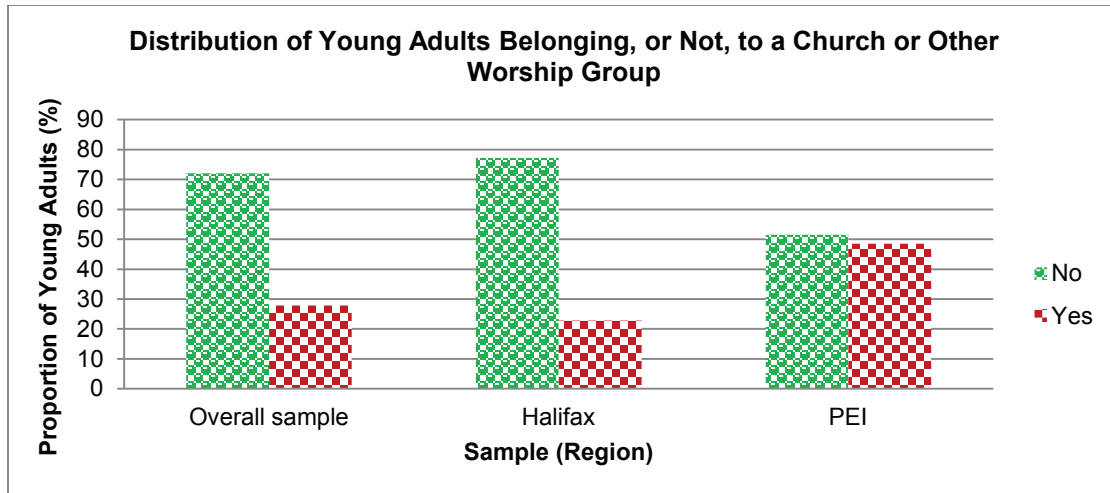


Figure 4.17. Distribution of responses (%) by sample to the following question: “Do you currently belong to a particular church, congregation, synagogue, or other worship group in your local community?” (N=556 for Halifax; N=136 for PEI; N=692 for overall sample.)

4.2.4 Survey Results of Second Research Question: Importance of Religiosity Dimensions to Young Adults

I have shown that the alternative religiosity dimensions on my survey provide a different representation of young adults’ religiosity than Statistics Canada’s index. Next, I will explore which of three dimensions is most important to young adults’ religious/spiritual lives. As indicated in Chapter 2: Methodology, three of the questions on my survey assessed the importance of particular dimensions of religiosity to young adults: 1) talking with a religious or spiritual leader 2) group prayer or worship 3) solitary prayer or meditation. I adapted these three questions from Pew Internet & American Life Project Religion Callback Survey 2001 (for further information on this survey, see Chapter 2). Including these dimensions on my survey allowed me to answer the question “*Which dimensions of religion, widely used as religiosity indicators, are most important to the religious/spiritual lives of young adults in PEI and Halifax?*” I used first two of the three questions above were to address this research goal by examining the importance of traditional dimensions of religiosity, while the remaining question examined the importance of a personalized dimension.

Figure. 4.18 below shows the distribution of Halifax and PEI young adults’ responses to the question “How important is regular group worship or group prayer to your religious

or spiritual life?” The modal category of importance was “not at all” in both research sites – over half of young adults (67.2% in Halifax and 52.2% in PEI) reported that regular group worship or prayer is not at all important to their religious or spiritual lives. The distribution is visibly skewed to the right. If we combine the two lowest degrees of importance (“not at all” and “not very” important) and the two highest degrees of importance (“somewhat” and “very” important), this right-skewedness is even more pronounced; 81.8% of Halifax young adults and 78.3% of PEI young adults reported that group worship/prayer is “not at all” or “not very” important to their religious/spiritual lives, while only 18.2% of Halifax young adults and 21.6% of PEI young adults indicated that this dimension is “somewhat” or “very” important.

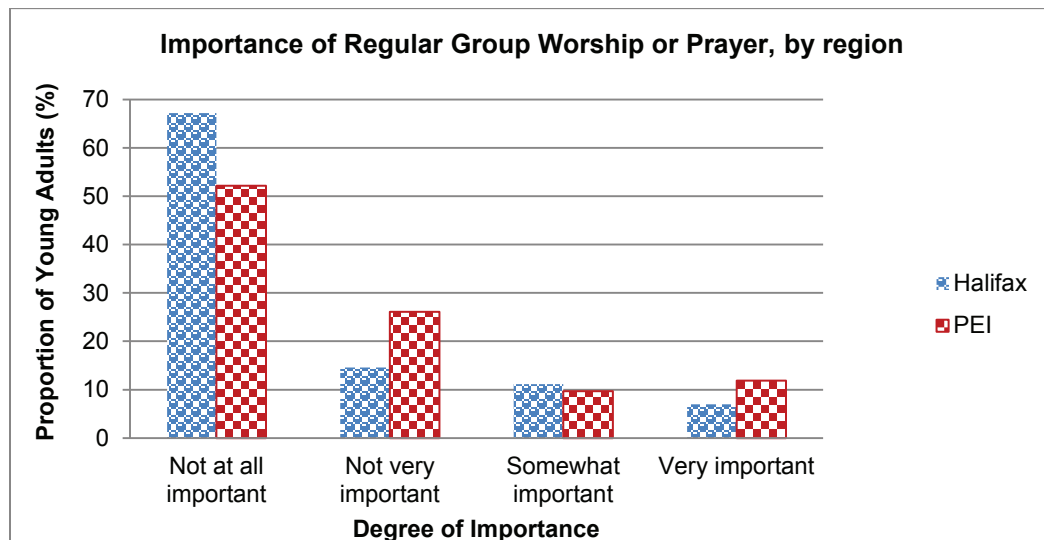


Figure 4.18. Distribution of young adults’ responses (%) by degree of importance, to the following question: “How important is regular group worship or group prayer to your religious or spiritual life?” (N=134 for PEI; N=561 for Halifax).

Fig. 4.19, which shows the distribution of responses to the question: “How important is talking with a minister, priest, or other spiritual advisor to your religious or spiritual life?” is similarly skewed to the right. If we again combine the two lowest and two highest degrees of importance, talking with a minister, priest or other spiritual advisor is “not at all” or “not very” important to the religious/spiritual lives of 84.5% of Halifax young adults and 80% of PEI young adults, while only 15.5% of Halifax young adults and 20.1% of PEI young adults reported that this dimension is “somewhat” or “very” important.

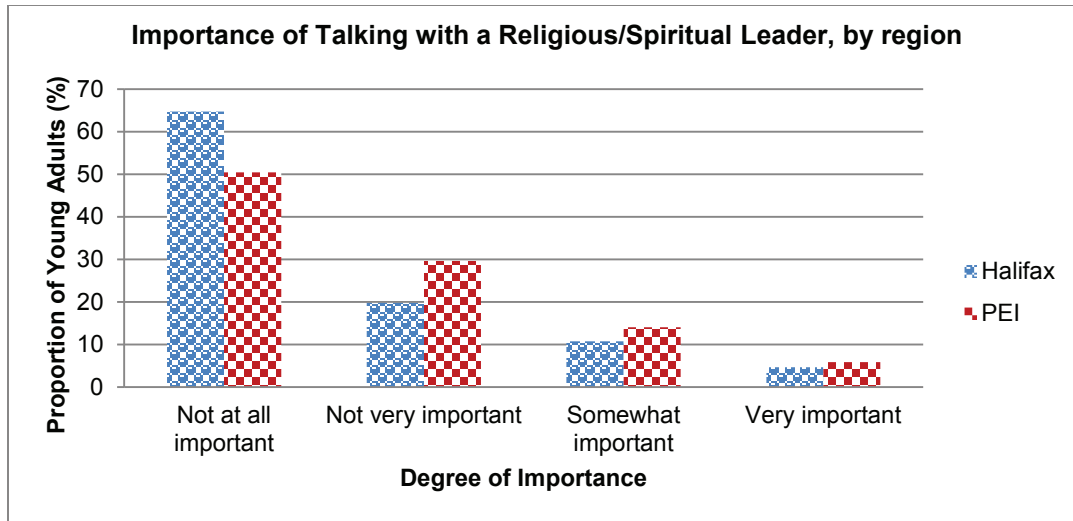


Figure 4.19. Distribution of young adults' responses (%) by degree of importance, to the following question: "How important is talking with a minister, priest, or other spiritual advisor to your religious or spiritual life?" (N=135 for PEI; N=555 for Halifax).

We see slight differences in the distribution of responses by region in figures 4.18 and 4.19. A chi-squared test indicated that these regional differences are significant²⁴.

Unlike figures 4.18 and 4.19, where the distribution of responses is positively skewed, fig. 4.20 below shows a much more even distribution of responses by degree of importance. For this question: "How important is solitary meditation or prayer to your religious or spiritual life?", although the modal degree of importance is "not at all", (37.5%), the concentration of responses is much less dense in this lower importance category as compared to the responses to the questions regarding the importance of a) regular group worship/prayer (64.3%) and b) talking with a religious leader (61.9%). For solitary meditation/prayer, there is also an increased proportion of young adults concentrated at the upper level of importance -- 42.6% of my overall sample reported that this dimension is "somewhat" or "very important" to their religious/spiritual lives.

²⁴ P-values were 0.001 and 0.021 for importance of regular group worship and talking with a religious leader, respectively.

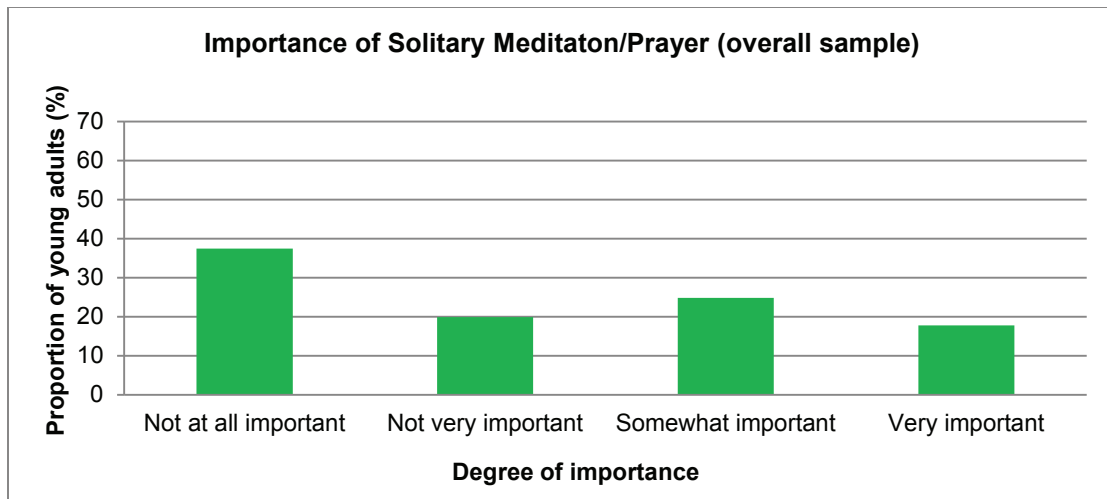


Figure 4.20²⁵. Distribution of young adults' responses (%) by degree of importance, to the following question: "How important is solitary meditation or prayer to your religious or spiritual life?" (N=136 for PEI; N=561 for Halifax.)

According to the proportional distributions of young adults by degree of importance (figures 4.18-4.20), young adults in my sample ranked solitary meditation/prayer – a personalized dimension of religiosity – as more important than group prayer/worship and talking with a religious/spiritual leader – both traditional dimensions.

4.3 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

In the Chapter that follows, I will discuss the principal findings of my data analysis in the ARDC and from my cross-sectional survey of religious engagement among young adults. First, I will address the differing impact Statistics Canada's affiliation dimension has on its overall religiosity index across age groups. I will show how this is connected to the differing impact the personalized religiosity dimensions of the index have on the traditional religiosity dimensions by age group. I will then link these ARDC-based research findings to those from my survey on religious engagement by showing how the picture of religious engagement I obtained from my survey data using personalized religiosity dimensions differs noticeably from that of Statistics Canada's index. Finally I will address the fact that the majority of young adults in my survey sample attributed less importance to both traditional dimensions of religiosity (group prayer/worship and

²⁵ Given that any regional differences in the distribution of responses between Halifax and PEI were not statistically significant, fig. 4.20 shows only the overall sample distribution.

talking with a religious/spiritual leader) than to the personalized dimension (solitary prayer/meditation). I will discuss PEI young adults' higher degree of traditional religious engagement relative to Halifax young adults and I will conclude by highlighting the importance of spirituality dimensions in future studies of young adults' religious engagement.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

I undertook this research in order to explore Statistics Canada's assertion of low religious engagement among young adults and to determine whether the religiosity index, on which the agency's conclusion is based, shapes the way we understand the degree of religious engagement among this age group. I analyzed whether the representation of young adults' religious engagement changes according to the way religiosity is measured. In this chapter, I will provide a critical discussion of my results, from both ARDC and cross-sectional survey phases of my work. I will show how the results from each phase inform one another and I will situate my findings in the existing literature and theory as outlined in Chapter 2.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF ARDC-BASED FINDINGS

5.2.1 Summary of Main Findings

My analysis of Statistics Canada's GSS, Cycle 25 individual micro-data file at the ARDC revealed that the agency's religiosity index captures three of the four religiosity dimensions equally well across age groups: attendance, importance and private practice. In other words, relative to older Canadians, young adults' degree of religiosity is not more nor less affected by their score on any one of these three dimensions than by their score on the other two. However, relative to older Canadians, a young adult's score of 0 or 1²⁶ on the fourth religiosity dimension – affiliation – has a greater impact on his/her scores on the other three religiosity dimensions (attendance, importance and private practice). This means that the religiosity index does in fact shape the snapshot Statistics Canada presents of young adults' religious engagement; the index does not reflect all four dimensions of religiosity in the same way across age groups.

²⁶ A respondent is attributed a score of 0 on the dimension if he/she has no religious affiliation and a score of 1 if he/she does.

Not only did I discover that as compared to older Canadians, young adult's affiliation impacts their overall religiosity scores more strongly, but my results also indicate that traditional religiosity dimensions of the index (affiliation and attendance) are both more strongly correlated with personalized religiosity dimensions (importance and private practice) among young adults. Because of this, if a young adult is not affiliated and/or does not attend religious services, the degree of importance he/she attributes to religion and the frequency with which he/she engages in private religious practices are likely to be lower²⁷. This finding contradicts the literature (as summarized in Chapter 2), which shows the opposite: that even if a person does not claim a religious affiliation – which is the case for many young adults – he or she may still take part in meetings of a religious nature, or may engage in an array of private practices such as prayer or scripture reading (Binkerhoff & Mackie 1993). This opposition between Statistics Canada's index structure and the nature of religiosity as outlined by existing literature suggests a need to further explore the way each dimension of religiosity is reflected in the index.

5.2.2 Implications of Results and Contribution to the Field

Given that affiliation is more strongly correlated with young adults' overall religiosity index scores relative to older Canadian adults, when a young adult has a religious affiliation, his/her degree of religiosity would increase slightly more than would an older affiliated Canadian's. The inverse is also true; when a young adult reports *no* religious affiliation, his/her degree of religiosity will *decrease* slightly more than would an older unaffiliated Canadian's. This means that what constitutes religiosity *does* vary by age group. Given the structure and additive nature of Statistics Canada's religiosity index, relative to older Canadians, when young adults' traditional religiosity is low, this is more likely to affect their personalized religiosity. As I indicated in Chapter 2, young adults are the most likely of all Canadians to have no religious affiliation (Clark & Schellenberg 2006; Bibby 2011). My ARDC-based research results are valuable because they reveal new knowledge: as compared to older Canadians, affiliation has a slightly greater impact

²⁷ As compared to the degree of importance an unaffiliated, non-attending older Canadian attributes to religion, and the frequency with which he/she engages in private religious practices.

on young adults' religiosity index. This finding, coupled with the existing literature which shows a trend of low rates of affiliation among this age group, highlights the importance of more careful interpretation of future religiosity-index based conclusions on the degree of young adults' religious engagement.

As I highlighted in Chapter 2, young adults are more likely to engage in fragmented forms of religious engagement, piecing together an assortment of personalized elements of religion rather than engaging in religion in exclusively traditional ways (Bibby 1987). However, since I have found that – relative to older Canadians – young adults' religiosity scores on both personalized dimensions of Statistics Canada's index (importance and private practice) are more likely to be impacted by their scores on traditional dimensions (which we know are generally low), the actual extent to which young adults are religiously engaged in personalized, more contemporary ways may be at least partly obscured. However, my results indicate that young adults' affiliation affects their religiosity index score only *slightly* more than affiliation affects older Canadians' religiosity index scores. It would be advisable to repeat my analyses on earlier and more recent cycles of the GSS (when they become available), in order to determine whether affiliation's differing impact by age group is a consistently discernable pattern.

5.3 DISCUSSION OF SURVEY-BASED FINDINGS

5.3.1 Summary of Main Findings

To build on my ARDC results concerning Statistics Canada's religiosity index, I analysed the data from my cross-sectional web-based survey of religious engagement among young adults in Halifax and PEI. First, I found that the majority of young adults in both my Halifax and PEI samples consider regular group worship and prayer, and talking with a religious or spiritual leader – traditional religiosity dimensions – not at all important to their religious or spiritual lives. This supports Statistics Canada's religiosity index-based conclusion that the majority of young adults have a low degree of religious engagement.

Despite this, when I asked young adults about the importance of solitary meditation or prayer in their religious/spiritual lives, relative to the two traditional dimensions, this

personalized dimension was important to a noticeably greater proportion of the sample. This finding – that most young adults consider traditional elements of religion to be peripheral to their religious engagement²⁸ – reinforces current literature which suggests that for many young adults, personal, individualized dimensions of religiosity are more central to their religious engagement than are more traditional, community-based dimensions. (For additional detail on this, refer to Chapter 2.) Talking with a religious or spiritual leader and group prayer/worship are both religiosity dimensions in line with a conceptualization of religion as governed by external religious authority. The fact that young adults report that these dimensions are not at all important to their religious or spiritual lives supports my use of Chaves’ neosecularization and Woodhead & Heelas’ detraditionalization theories as a framework for conceptualizing Halifax and PEI young adults’ religious engagement. Religious engagement is *not* necessarily governed or defined by external religious authority; in many cases, the individual is the primary religious authority. My survey results indicate a need for further study into the applicability of the specific combination of neosecularization and detraditionalization theories in understanding religious engagement among Halifax and PEI young adults.

Although Statistics Canada indicates that young adults are the group with the lowest degree of religious engagement in the nation, my survey results revealed signs of moderate to high levels of religious engagement among many young adults. For example, close to half of respondents from each of my samples reported that they find comfort and strength in religion – a dimension of religiosity not assessed by Statistics Canada’s index. In addition, while the majority of young adults in my sample reported that they never engage in private religious practices and that they do not consider religion important to the way they live their lives – which supports Statistics Canada’s conclusions – I found that a considerable proportion of young adults engage in private practices “at least once a week” and consider religion to be at least “somewhat important” in the way they live their lives. Here, my results appear to signal a polarization between

²⁸ This refers only to the two traditional dimensions I asked young adults about on my survey – importance of group worship/prayer and importance of talking with a religious/spiritual leader.

young adults who are religiously engaged and those who are not. My results suggest that this aspect of religious engagement which has only recently begun to be addressed in the literature (Bibby 2011), warrants increased attention.

5.3.2 Regional Religiosity Differences

In comparing the results from each of my regional samples, what was perhaps most evident was that juxtaposed with my Halifax sample, a greater proportion of PEI young adults exhibited a “moderate” degree of religious engagement. This finding was not surprising considering that according to Statistics Canada, PEI young adults are the most highly affiliated of all Maritime Provinces (Statistics Canada 2001). In the ARDC phase of my analyses, I found that affiliation – a traditional religiosity dimension – is more highly correlated with the index, and that for young adults, traditional religiosity dimensions have more of an impact on personalized dimensions. It follows then, that my sample of PEI young adults was more traditionally religious than my Halifax sample. This was further evidenced by my survey results on spirituality, which showed that a greater proportion of Halifax young adults self-reported as “*spiritual* but not religious” or neither spiritual nor religious while most PEI young adults selected “*religious* but not spiritual” or both religious and spiritual. If we consider being “spiritual” as a more contemporary, personalized form of religious engagement, while conceptualizing being “religious” as an example of traditional religious engagement, intriguing differences are present between my Halifax and PEI samples. My survey results indicate that when we gauge young adults’ religiosity using spirituality-based dimensions of engagement, we obtain a very different picture of religious engagement among this group than we do using Statistics Canada’s dimensions. In my overall sample, the majority of young adults were “somewhat” or “very” spiritual (that is, interested in the sacred or supernatural) and a greater proportion of young adults in my sample considered themselves to be “spiritual but not religious” than neither spiritual nor religious. This lends support to the notion that in contemporary Canada, forms of religious engagement are changing and it is no longer sociologically valuable to conceptualize religion as consisting purely of traditional dimensions (Bellah 2008; Bibby 2011; Ammerman 2007).

5.3.3 Implications of Results and Contribution to the Field

My findings reinforce contemporary literature in the sociology of religion, as discussed in Chapter 2, and reinforce my use of neosecularization and detraditionalization theories to explore religious engagement among Halifax and PEI young adults. In addition to this, my survey results contribute to a more nuanced understanding of Statistics Canada's religiosity index and the way in which social scientists assess religious engagement in contemporary Canada.

First, my results indicate that one of Statistics Canada's religiosity dimensions – attendance – may not be important or relevant to contemporary Halifax and PEI young adults' religiosities. Although I did not directly ask young adults about the importance of Statistics Canada's traditional attendance dimension in their religious/spiritual lives, I did ask them about the importance of group worship/prayer and talking with a religious/spiritual leader. These two dimensions are both traditional in nature and closely in line with Statistics Canada's attendance dimension; both dimensions involve behaviours which typically take place in a church or other place of worship. My results showed that the majority of young adults in both my Halifax and PEI samples consider these attendance-linked religiosity dimensions to be “not at all” important in their religious/spiritual lives. My results for the personalized dimension, on the other hand, signaled that Statistics Canada's private religious practice dimension is more important to young adults' religious/spiritual lives. As indicated in Chapter 2, Statistics Canada's affiliation-based definition of religion informs the four dimensions which contribute to the agency's religiosity index. Because of this, the index seems to be structured in such a way that the contemporary nature of young adults' religiosities means that the majority of young adults are attributed a “low” degree of religiosity. It is important to acknowledge that Statistics Canada's index includes dimensions on importance and private practice, but as I showed in Section 5.2.1, if a young adult is low in traditional religiosity, he or she is more likely than an older Canadian to then also rank low in the two personalized dimensions of the index, resulting in a lower overall religiosity index score.

Second, between my Halifax and PEI samples, there were statistically significant differences in the degree of importance young adults accorded to either traditional dimension of religiosity (group worship/prayer and talking with a religious/spiritual leader). PEI young adults in my sample seemed to be more traditional in their religious engagement than Halifax young adults; a larger proportion of PEI respondents ranked group worship/prayer as “very” important and a smaller proportion ranked this dimension as “not at all” important. The same was true for the other traditional dimension – talking with a religious/spiritual leader. This makes sense given that a larger proportion of my PEI sample had a religious affiliation relative to my Halifax sample. Based on my results, I propose that it would be worthwhile to further examine these regional differences in traditional and personalized dimensions, particularly in direct relation to Statistics Canada’s religiosity index.

Although the bulk of my survey findings showed a stronger representation of religious engagement than Statistics Canada’s religiosity index, it is important to note that two dimensions of religious engagement on my survey did show a similar picture of low religious engagement among young adults. According to my survey results, young adults’ strength of commitment to their religious faith is low overall, as is their frequency of attendance at religious services. This is particularly true for Halifax young adults; relative to PEI young adults, greater proportions of Halifax young adults indicated that a) their commitment to their religious faith is “not strong at all” and that b) they never attend religious services²⁹. Although these two dimensions of commitment to faith and attendance reinforce Statistics Canada’s findings on low religious engagement among young adults, both dimensions are traditional – not personalized.

5.4 OVERALL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM BOTH RESEARCH PHASES

My survey results on traditional dimensions of religiosity – young adults’ strength of commitment to their faith, or the frequency with which they attend religious services – reinforce Statistics Canada’s conclusion of low religious engagement among young adults. However, my overall results from my ARDC work, along with the personalized

²⁹ These regional differences were statistically significant.

religiosity dimensions on my survey, indicate that way religiosity is represented differs according to which dimensions we use in our assessment. Relative to older Canadians, I found that affiliation – a traditional dimension – has a greater impact on young adults’ overall degree of religiosity than on older Canadians’ religiosities. In addition, as compared to older Canadians, young adults’ traditional religiosities (based on affiliation and attendance) have a greater impact on their personalized religiosities (importance and private practice). In fact, the older the age group, the smaller the effect of traditional religiosity on personalized religiosity. However, I found that traditional dimensions of religiosity appear to be less important to young adults’ religious/spiritual lives than personalized dimensions. In particular, a comparison between my regional samples showed that PEI young adults are engaged in more traditional ways than Halifax young adults; they attend religious services more frequently, have a higher degree of religiosity according to the religiosity index, and a greater proportion belong to a church or other religious group. Yet this does not necessarily imply that religious engagement is low among Halifax young adults. The majority of young adults in my overall sample were “spiritual but not religious” and this was particularly true among Halifax young adults, suggesting that contemporary dimensions of religious engagement – such as self-described spirituality – may be centrally important in future studies of Halifax and PEI young adults’ religious engagement.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

The results of my research indicate that when we use personalized rather than traditional dimensions to measure religiosity, we obtain a much different picture of the degree to which young adults are religiously engaged. When young adults in my samples answered survey questions about traditional dimensions of religiosity (such as affiliation, the strength of their commitment to their faith, or the frequency with which they attend religious services), I found an overall low representation of religious engagement – very similar to Statistics Canada’s. However, when I analyzed my survey data from questions about personalized religiosity dimensions (such as their degree of interest in the sacred or whether they get comfort and strength from religion), I found several signs of moderate to high religious engagement. I also found that young adults in my PEI sample appeared to be religiously engaged in more traditional ways as compared to young adults in my Halifax sample. These results are valuable because they begin to fill a gap in data on religious engagement among young adults in Halifax and PEI specifically, highlighting important regional differences which warrant further exploration.

The results from my ARDC work also signal a point which has not yet been addressed in the literature: Statistics Canada’s religiosity index does not capture religious engagement in the same way across age groups. By examining a correlation matrix of GSS, Cycle 25 (Family) micro-file data for the effect of each of Statistics Canada’s four religiosity dimensions on its overall religiosity index across age groups, I found that relative to older Canadians, young adults’ religiosity index scores are more strongly impacted by whether or not they have a religious affiliation. This means that for young adults, Statistics Canada’s religiosity index captures affiliation more than it does for older Canadians.

My results also make an important third contribution to the sociology of religion. The majority of young adults in my Halifax and PEI samples do not regularly attend religious services, and indicate that group worship/prayer and talking with a religious/spiritual leader are not at all important in their religious/spiritual lives. This finding raises

fundamental questions about the use of attendance – a traditional religiosity dimension – as a component of Statistics Canada’s religiosity index and reinforces a significant body of work in the sociology of religion. Several existing studies posit that for young people, frequency of religious service attendance is neither particularly important nor is it central to understanding religious engagement among this age group (see Schofield Clark 2003; Uecker, Regnerus & Vaaler 2007; Arnett & Jensen 2002).

6.2 LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In order to expand my research, I would first need to address the primary limitations of my sample: My PEI sample contained only 134 young adults – considerably less than my target size of 360 – and consisted primarily of university students, with very few college students. There was also an overrepresentation of females in both of my samples (70% in Halifax and 75% in PEI). It is possible that this below-target sample size and unequal female to male ratio may have affected my results. Despite these limitations, my research indicates important directions for future work in the sociology of religion and with Statistics Canada’s religiosity index. First, as the majority of young adults in my overall Halifax-PEI sample identified themselves as “spiritual but not religious” this suggests that self-described spirituality may be a central non-traditional religiosity dimension for young adults. In fact, several existing studies have concluded that spirituality is an important part of the lives of many individuals in this age group (see Ammerman 2007; Bryant, Choi & Yasuno 2003; Bibby 2001). Consequently, I suggest that it merits particular attention in future studies of religious engagement among young adults in Halifax and PEI – and potentially nation-wide. Second, my research findings highlighted regional differences in religious engagement between Halifax and PEI young adults; I found the latter to be more traditionally religious, with a greater proportion belonging to a church or other religious group, and attending religious services more regularly. Further research is necessary to determine which factors may account for these statistically significant differences between Halifax and PEI young adults’ degree of traditional religious engagement.

An index (and its measurement scale) is out of necessity marked by the conditions and context of its production and orientated by the precise questioning of its creator; the index is but a prism which provides a particular picture of limited scope of the spectrum of possibilities [...]. (Hamel, Mongeau & Vachon 2007: 61, own translation)

Above all, the results of my research suggest a need to rethink Statistics Canada's religiosity index and the four religiosity dimensions it contains. Signs of traditional religious engagement are undeniably low among young adults. My results support Statistics Canada's assertion that Canadians between the ages of 15-29 are "[...] the group with the weakest attachment to organized religion" (Clark & Schellenberg 2006: 7). However, I also found substantial indication that this does not necessarily mean that young adults are low in religious/spiritual engagement. There are signs of religious/spiritual vitality among Halifax and PEI young adults, which may not be captured by the tradition-based index used by Statistics Canada. Religion is a source of comfort and strength for almost half of the young adults in my sample and more young adults identify themselves as "spiritual but not religious" than "not spiritual or religious". Furthermore, the majority are "somewhat" or "very" interested in the sacred/supernatural. My results suggest that the incorporation of one or more of these personalized religiosity dimensions into the index might allow for a more accurate and nuanced description of religious engagement among young adults. Statistics Canada's religiosity index has undoubtedly been invaluable in the study of young adults' religious engagement in Canada. Yet religion and the ways in which young adults engage with it have undergone a great deal of change since Statistics Canada first began collecting data on religion from Canadians in the mid-1980s (Clark & Schellenberg 2006). Religion in contemporary Canada has been broken into pieces and individualized. Our national religious mosaic consists of an increasingly diverse combination of religious groups, practices and beliefs. In most religions, what is right and true now changes according to "the eye of the beholder" (Bibby 1995: 21) and spirituality has grown increasingly important in Canadian society. With these distinctive changes to the nature of religion in recent years, it is important to consider the effect these transformations might have on the measurement tools we use to assess and understand religious engagement – Statistics Canada's religiosity index in particular.

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APPENDIX A

Survey of Religious Engagement among 18-29 Year Old Young Adults (text version of web-based survey)

We invite you to take part in a research study being conducted by Ashley Doyle who is a graduate student at Dalhousie University, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, as part of her Master's of Arts in Sociology. This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Christopher Helland.

This survey is intended for individuals between the ages of 18-29 who reside either in Halifax or on Prince Edward Island. If you meet these criteria, and may wish to participate, please read on.

This survey will take you approximately 5 minutes to complete. **You have no obligation to participate in this research or to answer all the questions on the survey.** Your academic performance will not be affected by whether or not you participate or by the answers you provide should you choose to participate.

You should discuss any questions you might have about the study with the researcher who can be reached at a.doyle@dal.ca or the research supervisor who can be reached at chelland@dal.ca. In the event that you have difficulties with, or wish to voice concerns about, your participation in this study, you may contact Catherine Connors, Director of Research Ethics at Dalhousie University at (902) 494-1462 (ethics@dal.ca) or UPEI Research Ethics at the University of Prince Edward Island at (902) 620-5104 (reb@upei.ca).

By completing this survey, you are providing your consent to participate in this research. Thank you for your cooperation.

[PAGE BREAK]

SECTION 1: INFORMATION ON RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

1) For some people, religion may be an important part of their ethnicity or culture, while for others it is not. What is your religion, if any?

- No religion (including Agnostic, Atheist)
- Roman Catholic
- Ukrainian Catholic
- United Church
- Anglican (Church of England, Episcopalian)
- Baptist
- Lutheran
- Pentecostal

- Presbyterian
- Mennonite
- Jehovah's Witnesses
- Greek Orthodox
- Jewish
- Islam (Muslim)
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Sikh
- Other – please specify _____

2) Other than on special occasions, (such as weddings, funerals or baptisms), how often did you attend religious services or meetings in the past 12 months?

- At least once a week
- At least once a month
- A few times a year
- At least once a year
- Not at all
- Don't know

3) Using a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is not at all important and 4 is very important, how important are your religious or spiritual beliefs to the way you live your life?

1	2	3	4	5
Not important at all				Very important

4) In the past 12 months, how often did you practice religious or spiritual activities on your own? This may include prayer, meditation, and other forms of worship taking place at home or in any other location.

- At least once a week
- At least once a month
- A few times a year
- At least once a year
- Not at all
- Don't know

5) Which of the following statements comes closest to describing the nature of YOUR religion?

- I am not a religious person
- I regard myself as a committed Christian
- I am deeply committed to a religion other than Christianity
- I find myself interested in a variety of religions but not committed to any particular one
- I have a mild interest in Christianity and an inquisitive interest in other religions, but I hardly regard myself as a strongly religious person
- I regard myself as a Christian but do not practice regularly
- I believe in God but not in religious organizations
- Undecided

[PAGE BREAK]

6) Independently of whether or not you go to a church, temple, synagogue, or mosque, which of the following would you say best describes you?

- A religious person
- Not a religious person
- A convinced atheist
- Don't know

7) Do you find that you get comfort and strength from religion or not?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

8) "I have my own way of connecting with the Divine without churches or religious services." *Please check the box which describes how true the above statement is for you.*

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				Very much

9) How important is regular group worship or prayer to your religious or spiritual life?

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not too important
- Not at all important

10) How important is solitary meditation or prayer to your religious or spiritual life?

- Very important
- Somewhat important

- Not too important
- Not at all important

[PAGE BREAK]

11) How important is talking with a minister, priest, or other spiritual advisor to your religious or spiritual life?

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not too important
- Not at all important

12) In general, which of the following would you describe yourself as?

- Spiritual but not religious
- Religious but not spiritual
- Religious and spiritual
- Not spiritual and not religious

13) Which of the following best describes your commitment to your religious faith?

- Very strong
- Somewhat strong
- Not too strong
- Not strong at all

14) Whether or not you think of yourself as a religious person, how spiritual would you say you are, that is how strongly you are interested in the sacred or the supernatural?

- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not very interested
- Not at all interested
- Don't know

15) Do you currently belong to a particular church, congregation, synagogue, or other worship group in your local community?

- Yes
- No

[PAGE BREAK]

SECTION 2: INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

16) What is your grade or year of study?

- 1st year undergraduate, university, college
- 2nd year undergraduate, university, college
- 3rd year undergraduate, university, college
- 4th year undergraduate, university, college
- Graduate student
- Other (please specify) _____

2) Which of the following would you identify as your home province or territory?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newfoundland and Labrador | <input type="checkbox"/> Saskatchewan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prince Edward Island | <input type="checkbox"/> Alberta |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Brunswick | <input type="checkbox"/> British Columbia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nova Scotia | <input type="checkbox"/> Yukon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quebec | <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest Territories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ontario | <input type="checkbox"/> Nunavut |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manitoba | <input type="checkbox"/> I am not a Canadian citizen |

3) Where did you spend the majority of your childhood? *Please enter your answer in the following format: "City, Province"* _____

4) What is your sex?

- Male
- Female
- Other

5) What is your age?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 26 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 27 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 28 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 29 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 or above |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 22 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 23 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 24 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 | |

[PAGE BREAK]

Thank you for your participation in this survey. The information you provided today is very important and may help to better understand religious engagement among young adults in Canada, specifically in the PEI and Halifax regions.

APPENDIX B

Email to Departmental Secretaries/Administrative Staff *(and forwarded to professors)*

Dear department secretary/administrative staff or program coordinator/chair,

My name is Ashley Doyle and I am a Master's student in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University. I ask that you forward the information below to any professors/instructors teaching in your department/program.

Please reply to *a.doyle@dal.ca* indicating whether or not you forwarded this email. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and I look forward to your reply.

Warm regards,

Ashley Doyle
MA in Sociology candidate
Department of Sociology & Social Anthropology
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 3P9
(902) 817-0679
a.doyle@dal.ca

Dear professor/instructor or program coordinator,

My name is Ashley Doyle and I am a Master's student in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University. Under the supervision of Dr. Christopher Helland, I am currently working on a research project which explores religious engagement among university and college students between the ages of 18-29, in PEI and Halifax. I expect to survey a total of 960 young adults.

My research consists of a 5-minute-long web-based survey for students, made up of questions from pre-existing studies including Statistics Canada's General Social Survey. The students in your department/program have been randomly selected for participation in my research. I have received clearance to conduct this research from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board at Dalhousie University and the Research Ethics Board at the University of Prince Edward Island. Should you have any questions about the nature of, or wish to voice concerns about, any aspect of this research, please do not hesitate to contact Catherine Connors, Director of Research Ethics at Dalhousie University at (902) 494-1462 (*ethics@dal.ca*) or UPEI Research Ethics at the University of Prince Edward Island at (902) 620-5104 (*reb@upei.ca*).

Your help with this research is important. I ask that you the following link: <https://surveys.dal.ca/opinio/s?s=16445> and survey password: “religion study” to students in your class(es)/program(s) via email. Alternatively, you may wish to post the link and survey password on an online platform such as Moodle, S.A.M. or OWL (BbLearn), to which your students have access. You may also wish to provide the link and survey password to students by including it in a PowerPoint Presentation, writing it on the board during one of your classes, or in any other way you see fit. If it is helpful to you, I would be very happy to send you a short student information text which can accompany the survey link and password. **I very much appreciate you taking the time to do this.**

Please email a.doyle@dal.ca or contact me by phone at (902) 817-0679 and indicate whether or not you chose to pass my survey information on to your students. I am happy to address any questions you may have regarding this research and where possible, I will gladly make every effort to arrange a 5 minute visit to your class to personally explain my survey to your students and invite them to participate. Please make mention of a visit in your correspondence with me if it is something that interests you.

Again, I appreciate your time and look forward to hearing from you,

Ashley Doyle

MA in Sociology candidate
Department of Sociology & Social Anthropology
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 3P9
(902) 817-0679
a.doyle@dal.ca

Research Supervisor: Dr. Christopher Helland
Department of Sociology & Social Anthropology
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 3P9
(902) 494-6757
CHelland@dal.ca

APPENDIX C

Sample Unit Sizes and Probability of Selection

Appendix C Table. Unit Sizes and Probability of Selection by Region and Institution Type.

Second-level Faculty/ Field of Study Strata	Research Site	
	PEI	Halifax
Humanities & Inter-disciplinary (University)	N ³⁰ =7 k ³¹ =4 P ³² =2/7 (28.5%)	N=22 k=11 P=2/22 (9%)
Social Science (University)	N=8 k=4 P=2/8 (25%)	N=20 k=10 P=2/20 (10%)
Natural Sciences (University)	N=11 k=6 P=2/11 (18.1%)	N=34 k=17 P=2/34 (5.7%)
Professional (University)	N=6 k=3 P=2/6 (33.3%)	N=19 k=10 P=2/19 (10.5%)
Carpentry & Trades (College)	N=10 k=5 P=2/10 (20%)	N/A
Technology, Arts, Hospitality & Tourism (College)	N=11 k=6 P=2/11 (14.2%)	N=8 k=4 P=2/8 (25%)
Professional (College)	N=22 k=11 P=2/22 (9%)	N/A

³⁰ In each cell of the table (which corresponds to a faculty/field of study strata), N represents the unit size – that is, the number of departments/programs within that strata.

³¹ $k = N/n$, where n is the desired sample size of 2 units per faculty/field of study strata. *k* is referred to as the skip number. Because I used a systematic random sample, I selected a unit at random from the first *k* names in the sampling frame and selected every *k*th unit after that.

³² P is the probability of selection of any given unit within a particular stratum. It is obtained by dividing n (in this case 2) by N. The number in brackets below P is the probability in percentage form.

APPENDIX D

Student Information Form

(Provided to professors who posted survey link on an online platform such as Moodle)

Dear university/college student,

As a student in your department/program, you have been randomly selected to participate in a 5-minute-long, anonymous survey about your level of religious engagement, whatever it may be. This survey is intended for individuals between the ages of 18-29 who reside either in Halifax or on Prince Edward Island. If you meet these criteria, and may wish to participate, please read on.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you are in no way obligated to answer all the questions on the survey. The answers you provide on the survey may contribute important insights to understanding religious engagement among 18-29 year old university and college students in PEI and Halifax. **If you agree to participate in this survey, please click the link below or copy and paste it into your browser.** By doing so, you will be taken to the survey password page. Please enter the survey password. After you have completed the survey, simply click “complete survey” and close the window. By completing this survey, you are providing your consent to participate in this research.

survey link: <https://surveys.dal.ca/opinio/s?s=16445>³³

survey password: religion study

Thank-you for your cooperation,

Ashley Doyle

MA in Sociology candidate
Department of Sociology & Social Anthropology
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 3P9
(902) 817-0679
a.doyle@dal.ca

Research Supervisor: Dr. Christopher Helland
Department of Sociology & Social Anthropology
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 3P9
(902) 494-6757
CHelland@dal.ca

³³ This survey link was unique for each research site

APPENDIX E

Stratified Sampling Frame

A1) PEI→UNIVERSITY→HUMANITIES & INTERDISCIPLINARY

1. Theatre Studies: theatre@upei.ca
2. Religious Studies: jay@upei.ca
3. Philosophy: mmackay@upei.ca
4. English: tjohnston@upei.ca
5. Classics & Fine Arts: blmaclean@upei.ca
6. Music: sstensch@upei.ca
7. Journalism: ddeserud@upei.ca

A2) PEI→UNIVERSITY→SOCIAL SCIENCE

- Sociology & Anthropology: nahrgang@upei.ca
History: scurrie@upei.ca
Political Science: mmackay@upei.ca
Psychology: hrussell@upei.ca
Island Studies: gbaldacchino@upei.ca
Global Issues: vmacswain@upei.ca
Women's Studies: abraithwaite@upei.ca
Economics/ International Development Studies: economicsdept@upei.ca

A3) PEI→UNIVERSITY→NATURAL SCIENCES

- Mathematics & Statistics: pjharris@upei.ca
Biology: samartin@upei.ca
Chemistry: japaquet@upei.ca
Physics: dmacausland@upei.ca
Computer Science & Information Technology: rstanley@upei.ca
Environmental Studies: samartin@upei.ca
Nursing: gaudet@upei.ca
Veterinary Medicine--Biomedical Sciences: dgallant@upei.ca
Veterinary Medicine--Companion Animals: Fisher@upei.ca
Veterinary Medicine--Health Management: healthmgt@upei.ca
Veterinary Medicine--Pathology & Microbiology: rsaunders@upei.ca

A4) PEI→UNIVERSITY→PROFESSIONAL

- Engineering: upeiengineer@upei.ca
Business Administration: mcooke@upei.ca
Cooperative Education Program: jamussel@upei.ca
Public Administration: scgraham@upei.ca
Education: bamcquillan@upei.ca
Child & Family Studies and Foods & Nutrition: kegraham@upei.ca

A5) PEI→COLLEGE→CARPENTRY & TRADES

- Architectural Technology: bcollins@hollandcollege.com

Construction, Technology & Management Program: tmckenna@hollandcollege.com
Heritage Retrofit Carpentry: jlsilver@hollandcollege.com
Outdoor Power Equipment: jrbernard@hollandcollege.com
Plumbing/Steam Fitting & Pipefitting/Welding Fabrication:
pmacphee@hollandcollege.com
Welding Level 1: pwcheverie@hollandcollege.com
Power Engineering: smacfarlane@hollandcollege.com
Aircraft Gas Turbine Engine Repair and Overhaul Technology/Automotive
Technology/Carpentry/ Wind Turbine Technician/Wood Manufacturing &
Cabinetmaking: motivepower@hollandcollege.com
Electrical Technology/Electromechanical Technology/Heating, Ventilation & Air
Conditioning Technology/ Precision Machinist: aerospace@hollandcollege.com
Energy Systems Engineering Technology: bparsenault@hollandcollege.com

A6) PEI→COLLEGE→TECHNOLOGY, ARTS, HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

Video Game Art & Animation: nroe@hollandcollege.com
Computer Information Studies/Computer Networking Technology:
computerstudies@hollandcollege.com
Electronics Engineering Technology: computerstudies@hollandcollege.com
Dance Performance/Performing Arts: preddin@confederationcentre.com
Music Performance: adowling@hollandcollege.com
Fundamental Arts: GaBranchRice@hollandcollege.com
Graphic Design: nroe@hollandcollege.com
Journalism: rmaclean@hollandcollege.com
Photography & Digital Imaging: amurchison@hollandcollege.com
Culinary Arts: eblack@hollandcollege.com
Applied Degree in Culinary Operations: mmullally@hollandcollege.com
International Hospitality Management: gtorrville@hollandcollege.com
Golf Club Management/Professional Golf
Management: pmurnaghan@hollandcollege.com
Sport & Leisure Management: winman@hollandcollege.com

A7) PEI→COLLEGE→PROFESSIONAL

Maritime Christian College, General email: pching@mccpei.com
Commercial Diving: stwhite@hollandcollege.com
Bioscience Technology: mjgibson@hollandcollege.com
Environmental Applied Science Technology: boneill@hollandcollege.com
Wildlife Conservation Technology: bhoteling@hollandcollege.com
Accounting Technology: ajcampbell@hollandcollege.com
Administrative Assistant: slroberts@hollandcollege.com
Business Administration: mmoliver@hollandcollege.com
Human Resource Management: caclements@hollandcollege.com
Legal Administration: AHMacDonald@hollandcollege.com
Marketing & Advertising Management: kscases@hollandcollege.com
Medical Support Services: pfaulkner@hollandcollege.com
Paramedicine: paramedicine@hollandcollege.com

Child and Youth Care Worker: mmcusack@hollandcollege.com
Dental Assisting: rmthorne@hollandcollege.com
Early Childhood Care & Education: sashley@hollandcollege.com
Human Services: kjwakelin@hollandcollege.com
Practical Nursing: pgauthier@hollandcollege.com
Resident Care Worker: dproud@hollandcollege.com
Basic Firefighting/Correctional Officer: sclarkin@hollandcollege.com
Conservational Enforcement: jmaceachern@hollandcollege.com
Police Science: pstrachan@hollandcollege.com
Law & Science: grmcconnell@hollandcollege.com

B1) HALIFAX→UNIVERSITY→HUMANITIES & INTERDISCIPLINARY

Linguistics: linguistics@smu.ca
Philosophy: mark.mercer@smu.ca
Religious Studies: Kathleen.jewell@smu.ca
Modern Languages & Classics: rachelle.warner@smu.ca
English: gwen.hardiman@smu.ca
Film Studies: Jennifer.vanderburgh@smu.ca
English/History/Writing: tracy.mcdonald@msvu.ca
Arabic: Rodica.Firanescu@dal.ca
Chinese (Mandarin) Studies: sluo@dal.ca
Russian Studies: rusn@dal.ca
Spanish & Latin American Studies: pam.noseworthy@dal.ca
French: natalie.wood@dal.ca
Italian Studies: k.stratton@dal.ca
German: Annett.Gaudig@dal.ca
Music: Music@Dal.ca
Religious Studies: Donna.Edwards@Dal.Ca
Philosophy: dalphil@dal.ca
Theatre: Julie.clements@dal.ca
English: carole.poirier@dal.ca
Foundation Year Programme: pat.dixon@ukings.ca
Journalism: kelly.porter@ukings.ns.ca
History of Science and Technology/ Contemporary Studies Programme/Early Modern Studies Programme : sharon.brown@ukings.ca

B2) HALIFAX→UNIVERSITY→SOCIAL SCIENCE

Canadian Studies: cana@dal.ca
Anthropology : anthropology@smu.ca
Sociology & Criminology: lindia.smith@smu.ca OR sandi.cole-pay@smu.ca
History: history@smu.ca
Political Science: politics@smu.ca
Psychology: psychology@smu.ca
Atlantic Canadian Studies: nicole.luttrell@smu.ca
Psychology: marisa.grant@msvu.ca
Political Science: psadmin@dal.ca

Sociology& Anthropology: rachel.fox@dal.ca
History: tina.jones@dal.ca
Economics: monique.comeau@dal.ca
Gender & Women's Studies: mdc@dal.ca
International Development Studies: idsgrad@dal.ca
Geography: anne.baker@smu.ca
International Development Studies: cassie.macdonald1@smu.ca
Canadian Studies/Religious Studies/Economics/Political Studies: sharon.baker@msvu.ca
Cultural Studies: phoebe.smith@msvu.ca
Family Studies & Gerontology: cynthia.black@msvu.ca
French/Women's Studies: phoebe.smith@msvu.ca

B3) HALIFAX→UNIVERSITY→NATURAL SCIENCES

Chemistry: maryjane.macneil@smu.ca
Astronomy & Physics : chair@ap.smu.ca
Mathematics & Computing Science: rose.daurie@smu.ca
Biology : janet.white@smu.ca
Biology: kerri.alsaidi@msvu.ca
Information Technology: sharon.baker@msvu.ca
Chemistry & Physics/Mathematics & Computer Science: Kerri.AlSaidi@msvu.ca
Biochemistry & Molecular Biology: Catherine.Currell@dal.ca
Biology & Marine Biology: julie.walker@dal.ca
Chemistry: sean.hartwell@dal.ca
Earth Sciences: ann.bannon@dal.ca
Microbiology & Immunology: c.anjowski@dal.ca
Oceanography: sharon.earl@dal.ca
Physics & Atmospheric Science: heather.ann.jennex@dal.ca
Psychology & Neuroscience: nancy.gibbons@dal.ca
Mathematics & Statistics: chair@mathstat.dal.ca
Computer Science: inquiries@cs.dal.ca
Geology: geology@smu.ca
Faculty of Medicine: Tracy.Teed@dal.ca
Applied Oral Sciences: Denise.Brown@Dal.Ca
Dental Clinical Sciences: Angela.Faulkner@dal.ca
Oral and Maxillofacial Sciences: kt831070@dal.ca
School of Biomedical Engineering: sandra.pereira@dal.ca
School of Dental Hygiene: Joyce.MacDonald@Dal.Ca
School of Nursing: nursing@dal.ca
College of Pharmacy: Pharmacy@dal.ca
School of Health and Human Performance: hahp@dal.ca
School of Health Administration: hahp@dal.ca
School of Human Communications Disorders: hucd@dal.ca
School of Social Work: socialwk@dal.ca
School of Occupational Therapy: michelle.mahoney@dal.ca
School of Physiotherapy: judith.hollett@dal.ca
School of Health Sciences: health.sciences@dal.ca

College of Sustainability: monique.driscoll@dal.ca
Environmental Science/Environmental Studies: envs@smu.ca

B4) HALIFAX → UNIVERSITY → PROFESSIONAL

Business: sobey.bcomm@smu.ca
Education: education@msvu.ca
Business Administration: miriam.gallant@msvu.ca
Public Relations/Science Communication: kathryn.britten@msvu.ca
Tourism & Hospitality Management: miriam.gallant@msvu.ca
School of Information Management: jenn.mitton@dal.ca
School of Public Administration: Dolene.Lapointe@Dal.ca
School for Resource and Environmental Studies: sres@dal.ca
Marine Affairs Program (Masters): marine.affairs@dal.ca
Bachelor of Management: margie.muise@dal.ca
Civil Engineering/ Mineral Resource & Engineering : shelley.parker@dal.ca
Engineering Mathematics & Internetworking: karen.conrod@dal.ca
Industrial Engineering: cindi.slaunwhite@Dal.ca
Department of Mechanical Engineering: mechanical.engineering@dal.ca
School of Biomedical Engineering: bme@dal.ca
Schulich School of Law: megan.dixon@dal.ca
Faculty of Architecture & Planning: arch.office@dal.ca
Applied Human Nutrition: cynthia.black@msvu.ca
Child & Youth Studies: child.youth.study@msvu.ca

B5) HALIFAX → COLLEGE → CARPENTRY & TRADES = NO UNITS

B6) HALIFAX → COLLEGE → TECHNOLOGY, ARTS, HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

Institute of Technology Campus: it.info@nsc.ca
Nova Scotia Centre for Arts & Technology T: 1.902.429.1847 (no email)³⁴
Media Arts/Fine Arts: jfarmer@nscad.ca
Craft/Design: hharris@nscad.ca
Foundation Year: potoole@nscad.ca
Historical and Critical Studies: krice@nscad.ca
Waterfront Campus: waterfront.info@nsc.ca³⁵
Akerley Campus (Culinary arts, aviation, transportation centre): akerley.info@nsc.ca

B7) HALIFAX → COLLEGE → PROFESSIONAL

Atlantic School of Theology: mmartin@astheology.ns.ca

³⁴ 3 programs: Arts & Technology, Digital Entertainment, Information Technology Careers

³⁵ Includes Radio & Television Arts, Photography, Medical Engineering Technology, Business Program etc.

APPENDIX F

Follow-up Email to Departmental Secretaries/Administrative Staff

Dear department secretary/administrative staff or program coordinator/chair,

My name is Ashley Doyle and I am a Master's student in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University. Last week, you received an email asking that you forward the information below to any professors/instructors teaching in your department/program.

To date, I have not received a reply at *a.doyle@dal.ca* indicating whether or not you forwarded this email. If you could help me out by letting me know either way at your earliest convenience, I would really appreciate it.

Again, thank you in advance for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Warm regards,

Ashley Doyle

MA in Sociology candidate
Department of Sociology & Social Anthropology
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 3P9
(902) 817-0679
a.doyle@dal.ca

Dear professor/instructor or program coordinator,

My name is Ashley Doyle and I am a Master's student in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University. Under the supervision of Dr. Christopher Helland (who can be reached at *CHelland@dal.ca*), I am currently working on a research project entitled "Deconstructing Religious (Dis)engagement in Statistics Canada's Religiosity Index". My project explores religious engagement among university and college students between the ages of 18-29, in Prince Edward Island and Halifax. I expect to survey a total of 960 students.

My research consists of a 5-minute-long web-based survey for students, made up of questions from pre-existing studies (including: Statistics Canada's General Social Survey; PEW Internet & American Life Project Surveys, the European Values Study and Project Canada Surveys). The students in your department/program have been randomly selected for participation in my research. I have received clearance to conduct this research from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board at Dalhousie University and the Research Ethics Board at the University of Prince Edward Island. Should you have any questions about the nature of, or wish to voice concerns about, any

aspect of this research, please do not hesitate to contact Catherine Connors, Director of Research Ethics at Dalhousie University at (902) 494-1462 (ethics@dal.ca) or UPEI Research Ethics at the University of Prince Edward Island at (902) 620-5104 (reb@upei.ca).

Your help with this research is important. I ask that you forward the text below to students in your class(es)/college program. Alternatively you may wish to post the following link: <https://surveys.dal.ca/opinio/s?s=16445> and survey password: “religion study” on an online platform such as Moodle, S.A.M. or OWL (BbLearn), to which your students have access. You may also wish to provide the link and survey password to students by including it in a PowerPoint Presentation, writing it on the board during one of your classes, or in any other way you see fit. If it is helpful to you, I would be very happy to send you a short student information text which can be posted or pasted alongside the survey link and password. I very much appreciate you taking the time to do this.

Please email a.doyle@dal.ca or contact me by phone at (902) 817-0679 and indicate whether or not you forwarded this email to students and/or provided students with the survey link and password in an alternate manner. I am happy to address any questions you may have regarding this research and I will gladly make every effort to arrange a 5 minute visit to your class to personally introduce my survey to your students and invite them to participate. Please make mention of a visit in your correspondence with me if it is something that interests you.

Again, I appreciate your time and look forward to hearing from you,

Ashley Doyle

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Department of Sociology & Social Anthropology
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Research Supervisor: Dr. Christopher Helland
Department of Sociology & Social Anthropology
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 3P9
(902) 494-6757
CHelland@dal.ca