

The Impact of Modernization and Secularization on Religious Values

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Abstract

“If our religion is fundamentally irrelevant to our politics, then we are recognizing political realm outside of the reign of God.” (Turner, 2011, p. 136)

In the changing world, all things are changing, where religion is not left. Religion also goes through several changes accordingly, where there are positive and negative sides. My intention is only to see the influences of contemporary situations such as modernization, secularization and their effects on religious/Christian values today in the modern societies, especially in the Nordic countries. This is my personal motivation after encountering different positive and negative attitudes towards religion in a liberal country like Norway.

To see the impact of the modernization coupled with secularization in the contemporary Nordic countries, especially in Finland, Norway and Sweden, we need to measure the results. Based on the results, it is possible to arrive at a conclusion. Therefore, quantitative research method is used to measure the impacts. On the contrary, collected data are from previously conducted surveys. The important to observable here that latest surveys are not available for three countries simultaneously, therefore, I have here utilized mostly the data of 2005-2009 of the World Values Survey. And other surveys are also used when and where they fit into concurrently.

Basically, the research argues predominantly based on the theory of existential security (Norris and Inglehart, 2011) which is associated with modernization, secularization and welfare. but other appropriate theoretical aspects are incorporated wherever they fit into the frame. Therefore, I don't try defending that religious values already eroded but a minor attempt to picture that the religious values are on gradual decline in the Nordic countries, because of the several factors, which have been discussed in the 4th chapter with available data accordingly.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The research is about to understand and then to visualize on what is happening to religious values in the contemporary Nordic countries especially in Finland, Norway and Sweden. As most of us are aware that the industrial revolution modernized the world. Globalization brought changes and challenges connecting people around the world. Thus, the demographic profile of the Nordic countries changed. There are faster human development and they have an influence on religion.

For instance, Historically, Norway was understood a traditional community, held together with a common language and geography. At the same time, Norway as a community of belief, sharing beliefs or values emphasized solidarity and interdependence. What happened today in Norway that historical heritage is adjusted in order to cater entire population based on diversity of communities, where Christianity tends to decline (Kjell Å Modéer and Hanne Petersen, 2009, p. 7). And the Nordic countries Finland, Norway and Sweden are similar in certain aspects, therefore, all the Nordic countries are adjusting their potential heritages, which is the result of the modernization and secularization because this also made homogenous to multicultural and pluralistic societies today.

Religion played a strong role in connecting social structures in our societies but today, nation states connect all social structures including religion. Gradually, religion is losing its significance but not in all countries. Comparatively, there were also process of changes in earlier generations but those did not significantly affect religion but today, the changes are faster than we imagine and affect very much. The societies have inherited the values, which we have now. When changes affect religion and thus, influence societies as well. The question is whether we are losing those values in the contemporary societies. Where do we stand with regard to inherited religious values?

Therefore, my argument is that modernization and secularization affect religion/Christianity and its values. How do we know that it is happening now in the Nordic countries? In order to see how the modernization and secularization affect religion, I am attempting to explore it but not in broad manner because it is very vast. The typical example is the constitutional changes in Norway. For example; the original Article was “The King shall at all times profess the Evangelical-Lutheran religion and uphold and protect the same” but the changes in 2012 is “The King shall at all times

profess the Lutheran-Evangelical religion.” (Cranmer, 2017). It is clear that there are a few changes in deed affect religion and its values.

1.2 Relevance of the Study

The world moves faster, and our lives also moves faster keeping busy and demanding. Concurrently, science and technology turn out to be inevitable components of our life, thus somehow divide people from religion, where involvement of religious beliefs and practices become less and less. On the other hand, intellectual and intelligent life styles tend to question or else seek reason for every single action that encounter in everyday life.

As I have studied the influx of immigrants with multiple cultures, traditions, languages, beliefs, and practices became common phenomena. Thus, make states to acquire adequate policies and law based on human rights to manage them equally for a harmonious living. Though, it leads to better and communal life, it also gradually paves way for getting rid of state religion/Churches to majority religions or Churches, where equality is matter.

People often speak of liberal democracy, freedom and human rights, where individualism and individual freedom are considered as highest priority. Religion and its engagements have no binding over any individual because it’s a choice of every individual based on human rights and individual freedom. Mandatory observances become alternatives choices. There was a time that people adjusted their time in accordance with religious engagements, but now religious engagements are adjusted in accordance with individual requirement. Individual emancipation becomes central of our time.

This study is to research status of religious values among people especially in the three Nordic countries such as Finland, Norway and Sweden, because the assumption that religious values are on steady decline in those countries. The primary purpose of the research is to see how religious values have been changed in the contemporary Nordic countries.

Therefore, it is academically and socially relevant to explore and conduct this research to see the implications of modernization cum secularization on religious values.

1.3 Background for Selecting the topic

Let me begin with my personal observation, which motivated me to explore it. This was a recent participation in a Church service on a Sunday in Stavanger. This participation made me to think more on religion because the church was almost empty and only few elders and kids. What is happening to Christianity? I felt that religiosity and piety were seemingly lacking because throughout the celebration children were shouting and playing, while priest was reciting his celebration of the order of mass and I couldn't concentrate. Then I understood that there are ample of differences between my country and Norway or else developed countries. Why such trend is growing in Norway, which was Christian nation?

This incident made me to investigate more on religious values in the Nordic countries because, the following comment appropriately illustrate what is happening to religious values today in the world. Especially, it may be appropriate to the Nordic countries.

“once the world was filled with the sacred – in thoughts, practice, and institutional form. After the Reformation and the Renaissance, the forces of modernization swept across the globe and secularization, a corollary historical process, loosened the dominance of the sacred. In due course, the sacred shall disappear altogether except, possibly, in the private realm.” (Norris and Inglehart, 2011, p. 3)

And Norris and Inglehart (ibid, p.79) also argue that when society moves from traditional communities to modern communities, their common practices such as personal piety, expression of spirituality and habitual observances, will also decline. Therefore, this explains the contemporary context, especially it is typically applicable to the contemporary Nordic society because they are modernized society with many scientific advancements. Thus, leaves unintentionally their inherited assets behind or else it creates a situation, where the modernized society could not prioritize their inherited assets as important.

When thinking of the Nordic countries, it is acceptable that those countries are well advanced among other European countries comparatively and more specifically, in social welfare and individual freedom. What Furseth (2018, p. 4) writes that very clearly explains that the Nordic countries differ comprehensively with other European countries on their social welfare system. Those countries social welfare systems are included universalism, comprehensive risk coverage,

generous benefits, and equality, which means individuals are existentially secured regardless of their position or status in the society. This is very essential to understand the research. This is also somehow encouraging people to acquire secular values. Therefore, I am personally motivated to investigate the contemporary religious situation in three countries such as Finland, Norway and Sweden.

1.4 Context and Challenges

The rapidly changing environment especially in the selected countries Finland, Norway and Sweden, due to the immigration and governments' policies, makes those countries no more homogenous. Furseth (2018, p. 3) writes that once the Nordic countries were religious monoculture before the immigration but after the immigration, those countries were transformed into diverse nations especially in terms of religious diversity. This brought huge changes to the state's religious situation. All the Nordic countries are no more homogeneous but pluralistic states with diversities.

The majority Evangelical-Lutheran Churches were closely interwoven with state, but the formal union started losing at the beginning of 19th century between church and state. The modernity contributed to the development of secularization, which made religion to decline (ibid) and then to separate religion and states. The modernization improved socioeconomic development of people and brought distinctive changes in people's world views (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005).

Inglehart and Welzel writes (2005, p. 5) that the modernization also brought cultural changes, which they call a shift from survival values to self-expression values. The self-expression values are primarily based on human freedom and choice, where people look for choice, autonomy and creativity.

Another important context is existential security which is linked to religious values. Because Inglehart and Norris (2011, p. 246) write that few people in postindustrial and welfare states regard religious values as important in their lives. People in those countries feel more secured which reduces their worries and ensure their well-being to a certain extend. Therefore, the assumption is that when people are happy with present life and also their future is guaranteed, there will be tendency to ignore religious engagement. This might be a reason to decline religious values in the Nordic countries.

Hypothesis and Development of Research Questions

Primarily my intention is to understand what is happening to religious values in the selected Nordic countries because, my personal understanding was completely backed from my home country, where religious values are highly regarded and playing an important role in all part of life such as participation in religious services and sacraments. What I have observed here, motivated me to explore more on the issues. Therefore, I wanted to see how and why the modernization and secularization make religion and its some values to decline and may be disappear in near future.

Accordingly, I have developed a set of hypotheses in order to build my research, so that the expected outcome could be possibly achieved.

1. Formally, religion was separated from states. Then states became the sole provider and protector of their citizens. The modern states provide well established welfare facilities with their unique requirements of each country. Thus, making people to realize that they are secured, catered and protected, which mean their physical survival is guaranteed. Survival is core of every individual born on the earth. When the physical survival is adequately fulfilled, people will be content and satisfied, where there are less worries, anxieties. Especially fears of present and future is over thrown. In such situation, there is a possible tendency that people may ignore rather take it for granted religion and religious values. There, religion gradually loses its place significantly. When religion becomes unimportant, it is obvious that the values will also have less important in the society.
2. Today, science takes the place of religion. Leaders don't want to run their governments with religious traditions/cultures but scientific knowledges. It is made clear that more money spend on science than religion. Religion is one of the components of states but not primary component. States want to progress with scientific ways not with religious ways, where separation is inevitable. When nation states are secularized, it is possible that religious values will increasingly fade away. Therefore, the research question is formed as; *“The impact of modernization and secularization on religious values in the selected Nordic countries.”*

In order to understand more about the impacts, I employ the following question to answer my research.

- What is happening to religion and its values?
- Why do religious values fade away in the contemporary society?

1.5 Limitation and Expectation of Findings

This is very essential to accept and acknowledge that I have certain limitations. Since my research is a text-based study, where I have to solely rely on already conducted researches including surveys and other academically reliable statistics. It is also important to consider that it is not a descriptive study, but it is a quantitative study.

My primary objective is to draw a possible and acceptable picture to bring forth to show where religious values stand in the contemporary society in the Nordic countries. I admit here that It is not to find negativity in the modern society but to see what is happening to religious values in the modern society. It is interesting to view what is really going on around us due to modernization and secularization with regard to religion/Christianity. The findings could be useful to examine the existing situation in order to understand and then to make possible changes if required, or else it can lead to further investigation.

1.6 Research Plan

The research is structured with five chapters so that, I could construct proper paper work with my findings. In chapter one, I provide with fundamental details of my research and its background information. Chapter two gives theoretical framework of the research, explaining the theories and concepts pertaining to my findings, such as existential security, religious values and welfare system. The chapter three deals with research methodologies on how the research is conducted in aligning with required methods. I explain about my findings, which will be discussed in connection to the theories in chapter four and this chapter will have many data with tables of already conducted surveys. The chapter four will also have four sections and each section will have brief illustration of the findings and then discussion. There is no separation discussion because there are many data, which may confuse therefore, I have designed in this way. The chapter five contains conclusion and recommendations.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

The conceptual and theoretical literature are very crucial to construct findings because findings and results are primarily associated with them. This is to see how religious values are on the process of decline in the contemporary society. As mentioned, the world is changing rapidly, where people's views are also changing every day. Because, the changing attitude will impact on religion. I want to explain here that religious values are declining in a changing world. The changes are taking place in socioeconomic and political arenas. Therefore, I have derived certain concepts to explain the changes in the contemporary world especially in the selected Nordic countries.

It is frequently raising question on what is happening to religious values in the contemporary Nordic countries (Finland, Norway and Sweden), because there are remarkable changes taking place every day in the lives of people in those countries. Our lives are not only shaped by our own values but at the same time, the values we receive from outside as well. Values are the foundation of our lives and changing values reshape religious beliefs and practices (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005. P.15).

Where did the values come from? Who did create values? How do values shape our lives? These are basic questions when we speak of values. In the human history, religion was the primary provider from the beginning, thus, shaped and guided our lives. Today, there seems to be a strong shake because, the world where we live is full of changes through providing things instantly. There are numbers of reasons discussed with many scholars with various concepts and theories. My primary analysis is based on the following theories and concepts in order to understand how these impacted on religious values. There are many scholars but primarily, I use few distinctive writers such as Roald Inglehart, Christian Welzel, Pippa Norris, Inger Furseth, Turner Bryan S and other relevant writer where necessary.

2.2 Modernization

How to put modernization into a framework with regard my research? Because it carries vast knowledge. There are different opinions and understanding of modernization illustrated but quite general understanding of modernization is the process of development. Inglehart argues (1997, p. 69) that modernization is industrialization, urbanization, economic development, occupational specialization and spread of mass literacy, thus closely linking with sociopolitical change. Further, Inglehart and Welzel (2005, p.16) write that there are limitations that the nature has imposed on humans, but science and technology has broken those limitations and challenged the divine revelation. Gradually, the intellectual monopoly of the Church was questioned. Later, the situation has changed. Initially, religion assigned a place for science but today, science assigned a place for religion.

Further elaborating (ibid, p. 18-19) that when science and technology develop, minds of people will also move towards predictable changes. When existential security is met, concurrently science and technology developed. Thus, make life more comfortable. When things around are comfortable and convenient, there is a possibility to behave differently and thus, change attitudes of people. Which Inglehart (1997, p. 73) brings to argue that the modernization is a shift from religion-oriented worldview to rational-legal worldview. This process of modernization transformed the traditional religious values into secular values, which is called a cultural shift. The cultural shift affects religious values. Further adding that one of the outcomes of modernization is socioeconomic development, thus will bring notable changes in culture, attitudes, sexual norms and gender roles in the societies.

Therefore, the changes with regard to religious values, take place in the lives of people in the developed countries more than in the developing countries. People are economically high, and their prosperity is increased. This is more than normal survival which means needs and wants are extremely fulfilled. People become less worried with regard to their existence. The important is the fulfillment will also lead to a new direction of change in to self-expression. The self-expression leads to human choice, autonomy, creativity and democratization (ibid, 2005), where culture of consumption become high priority than religion or its values such as church attendance and involvement in church related activities, especially prayers.

According to Inglehart and Welzel (2005, p.28-29) the modernization endows people with higher level of prosperity, higher level of literacy and individual freedom emphasize human choice, which they divide into three parts;

- People experience high level of prosperity and welfare states fulfills everyday needs, where the existential security and physical survival is guaranteed undoubtedly.
- High level of literacy makes people intellectually more independent and rational.
- People become socially liberal, which means social ties shifts from community of necessity to elective affinities. Especially, from 'we' feeling to 'I' feeling.

The above three concepts above influence people to change their traditional way of living and thinking towards secular ways of living and thinking.

Franz-Xaver Kaufmann (1997) writes about modernization that it transforms habits of life. This means that the inherited traditional habits of life associated with religion and cultures are replaced with modern habits of life, which is called secular values. For example; living together and same sex marriage are the course of modernization and higher level of literacy. Obviously, modernization somehow introduces new culture of values where religious values slowly fading away from the society.

2.3 Secularization

There are different debates and opinions of secularization from various scholars and academics, but my concern is only related to my research, therefore, I have derived the concepts to develop my research and then to justify my findings.

Roof and Juergensmeyer (2012) write that secularization is not an easy topic to define today because it consists of multiple opinions and debates around. But some scholars define secularization as the institutional differentiation of church and state, others as the privatization of religious faith and practice, and yet others as the decline and eventual disappearance altogether of religious belief and practice. On my point of view, secularization is introduced to separate religion and its authorities from bond of people, because it is the strong bond that bind people and religion together s one entity.

What Inglehart and Norris (2011, p. 3) write about secularization is;

“ever since the Age of Enlightenment, the leading figures in philosophy, anthropology, and psychology have postulated that theological superstitions, symbolic liturgical rituals and sacred practices are products of the past that will be outgrown in the modern era.”

Therefore, the products of past, which means values of our ancestors are to be forgotten or to be ignored. The question then arises, why such products of past will be outgrown? Because people have modern and secular values, therefore, just discarding religious values because they seem to be no binding force. It must not be. People who discard religious value are more towards the the influence modernization supported with secularization. Generally, the understanding is that secularization is a product of modernization, which somehow keeps religious values away from people because as Turner (2011, p. xxvii) argues secularization involves the dilution of the collective and emotional character of religious practices alongside the erosion of community by modernization.

Historically speaking, Casanova (1994, p. 21-25) writes the process of secularization was heavily supported with four primary developments such as;

- The protestant Reformation
- The formation of modern states
- The growth of modern capitalism
- The early modern scientific revolution

Further, he added that these four carriers contributed towards the development of secularization, which was conceived as a universal teleological process and the final outcome of the development is the ‘death of God’. What is described above is the uniqueness of secularization. The final result of secularization is ‘death of God’.

Then moving towards what Norris and Inglehart write (2011, p. 5) secularization is the systematic way of destroying religious practices, values and beliefs, especially in the developed nations. Accordingly, what they suggest is not that people don’t believe in God but the vitality of religion in their daily lives is slowly in the process of destruction. But this tendency is not applicable to the entire world but only to postindustrial nations. This can influence to other parts of the world

so quickly due to globalization of technology and communication. Therefore, religious values are prominent in the lives of people in the developing countries because secularization is very much associated with socioeconomic development. Many will disagree with the statement above, but it has a valid point for my study.

What is notable with Inglehart and Norris is Max Weber's claim of Protestant ethic, which later generated the spirit of capitalism (ibid, p. 160). This can also be understood as the accumulation of materials to ensure fundamental physical survival, which Inglehart and Norris define as 'Existential Security'. Protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism contributed to the development of secularization. Accordingly, Inglehart and Norris (Religion, Secularization and Gender Equality, Chap 3) argue that secularization theories propose that modernization leads to the decline of religious beliefs such as poor church attendance, denominational allegiance, loss of faith in religious authorities, loss of prestige and influence of religion's symbols, doctrines and institutions, and growing separation between the church and state.

Gradually, modernization brings enlightenment through growing levels of literacy and education. The wider sources of information strengthened the rational belief in scientific and technological knowledge. Traditionally, priests, ministers, rabbis and mullahs are regarded as the only one source of authority and information. But, today necessarily the most important expertise of experts is like psychologists, physicists, and physicians. Inglehart and Norris further suggest that there are ample of evidences to point out that secularization is pretty clear in Western Europe. Because recent studies have found that many people have less interests in regular attendance to church, except few special occasions such as Christmas and Easter, weddings and funerals. What is striking to note that the impacts of modernization and secularization are prevalence among the younger generations (ibid). Therefore, future is question on religious values and its sustainability.

2.4 Existential Security

What is existential security? The term existential security is associated with Norris and Inglehart (Scared and Secular). According to Norris and Inglehart (2011) the existential security theory is meant to explain religiosity in a modernized society.

The theory of existential Security means prevalence of insecurity in poor societies due to life threatening risks such as famine, disease and environmental disasters and thus increase high levels of religiosity and poor people, who live in rich societies also face greater insecurity so therefore are more religious. On the contrary, most of the people in rich societies have a high standard of living which leads to a greater sense of security and therefore have lower levels of religiosity. Therefore, they drive a conclusion that religious values decline in the developed countries in the Europe.

The reason according to Norris and Inglehart (2011) that many European countries concentrate more on welfare system. At the same time, the Nordic countries also developed a more secured welfare delivery system so that their citizen would benefits, and the everyday life becomes normal. When people lead their everyday life without any difficulty, there is a possible tendency that may encourage them to take certain habitual traditions for granted. As I have discussed above that Norris and Inglehart (ibid, p.79) argue that when society moves from traditional communities to modern communities, their common practices such as personal piety, expression of spirituality and habitual observances, will also decline. This may be happening now.

So far, it is evidently clear that modernization in deed affect religion and its values. Thus, modernization affects religious participation and other religious engagements such as prayers and Sunday schools (catechism). Therefore, according to Norris and Inglehart research (ibid) that decline of participation in religious services in the developed countries and highest participation in religious services in developing countries are depending on their level of security and developments. This is also notable that many don't agree with the above theory, but it has a valid point to acknowledge. For instance; I was told that when there was no rain for cultivation, my forefathers performed some kind of ritual to please the Sun God or some goddess, so that they would show mercy with the provision of rain. This is a traditional belief that there is a supernatural power over us. Are all people still believe? Why don't we believe? In the contemporary world such a practice is no more accepted because man's victory over nature with science and technology made them unreal or superstitions.

Existential security diminishes religious values because the provision of high levels of security provide stress free life increasing feelings of psychological well-being, which gradually reduces the importance of religious values in the developed societies. Some don't agree with this statement

but there are negatives as well but those are man-made implications. The transition from agrarian to industrial societies improves security, where religious values tend to reduce. The greater protection, longevity, health care in developed societies especially in welfare states somehow reduce the importance of traditional religious values in people's lives (ibid, p.246).

Multilevel analysis done to examine how contextual and individual factors affect religious participation. The results proved that personal and societal insecurities affect religious participation. Further Norris and Inglehart (2011, p. 255) write that Gill and Lundsgaarde's study examined that relationship between welfare state spending and religious attendance and they concluded that;

“The most secure European welfare states with well-developed social safety net, exemplified by Scandinavian societies, tend to have the emptiest churches.”

Therefore, according to Norris and Inglehart the developed states strengthen feelings of security and increase human development towards societal modernization, thus impact significantly on religious values today in the societies. Accordingly, in the postindustrial societies believe in God, the importance of God, important of religion and its values on steady declines because the provision of greater security and welfare weaken religion and religious sentiment with its values in the modern societies, there influence become less pressing and insignificant in the lives of all people.

Therefore, my assumption is that those feel secured have the tendency to less believe in God and those who feel unsecured have strong believe in God. There are disagreements over, which I do accept to a certain extend but not as whole. Therefore, I am employing it here.

2.5 Welfare State

What is a welfare state? It is quite difficult to provide definitions, but Cambridge Dictionary (2019) defines that a government set up a system to deliver social services of healthcare, protection and unemployment benefit to all people who need them, paid for by taxes. Whereas Paul Spicker (2000) writes that the name Welfare is an ambiguous term because the term is defined in such a way to indicate both people's well-being and the systems which are carefully designed to support

for people. Therefore, welfare means to cater well-being of people and then develop system to provide and protect well-being of the people.

On the contrary, Encyclopedia Britannica (2019) define on what is welfare state;

“concept of government in which the state or a well-established network of social institutions plays a key role in the protection and promotion of the economic and social well-being of citizens. It is based on the principles of equality of opportunity, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for those unable to avail themselves of the minimal provisions for a good life. The general term may cover a variety of forms of economic and social organization”.

Zlatica Zudová-Lešková, Emil Voráček et al (2014, p.19) state from the Czech sociologist Miloš Večeřa's writing that the state is democratically organized power through social legislation and the work of state authorities and institutions, thus;

- Generally, the state guarantees a basic income of each individual and family at the subsistence level,
- The state provides social benefits making it possible to prevent the social hazards of potential social events such as illness, injury, or unemployment to ensure an adequate level of social security and social sovereignty of the individual,
- And also, the state provides public social services especially, in the field of education and health care to all individuals irrespective of their social status.

As I have mentioned that Norris and Inglehart (2011) repeatedly argue that existential security is linked heavily with the welfare system. The objective of the welfare states is to ensure all individuals' existential security for a decent living. This somehow, brings relief and less worries about this present and the future survival, because in the developing countries future survival is a question because. When future is ensured and secured, there are certain possibilities created which divert the concentration from religious values.

According to Pal Spicker (2000, p. 116-130) that obviously legitimate governments protect the welfare of its citizens. Generally, governments' primary objective is to serve their citizen believing that their citizens will benefits. Such action is named as social protection, which is vital for welfare.

Because, Spicker further writes that one of the most ancient principles is that governments exist to promote welfare, because;

- The welfare of the people is the highest law
- Democratic governments secure welfare

Therefore, the welfare states become simply institutional forms of social protection. In developed countries the welfare is linked with social protection which is generated through collective social action.

Moving towards welfare in Nordic countries, Christiansen and Markkola (2006, p. 21-23) write that in the post-war year social engineers in the Nordic countries developed a plan for ‘good society’. They focused on social security, pensions, care for the elders, children, the handicapped, health services, education, research and cultural policies. They agreed that economic growth is the precondition for welfare. In the Nordic welfare model universalism became one of the standard features in all areas especially education and health services. This means the generous provision of social care services became an essential characteristic of the Nordic welfare states. This also created an environment for female labor market, where women engaged in paid labor. Thus, later changed family structure in the Nordic countries.

According to Greve (2007) the core of the Nordic model is primarily to improve the ability of society to control its problems so that they enrich and equalize the living conditions of all individuals and families. The center of the model is universalism. Kuhnle and Hort (2004) also comment that the Scandinavian or Nordic welfare state possess primarily two characteristics;

- Public responsibility for welfare provision
- Universal coverage, which is based on the idea of social rights

All their welfare benefits are included into the system. Further Normann, Rønning and Nørgaard (2014, p. 21) also write that Nordic welfare states models are characterized as follows;

- Nordic welfare policy covers a wholistic inclusion of social security, social services, health care, education, training, housing, and employment, etc. The purpose is to meet fundamental needs.
- Government involvement has been strong in all political areas.

- The Nordic welfare systems are based on universalism to ensure that every individual is entitled to basic social security, apart from their position in the labor market.
- Income protection is based on two elements: In most schemes, there is an income-independent basic insurance and an income-dependent benefit to those who have been in the labor market.
- Social and health services are a public responsibility and are financed by way of taxes with a relatively low degree of user payment.
- The income distribution is relatively equal.
- Gender equality is a basic principle. The employment rate among Nordic women is generally high.

The welfare state is an essential institution in any modern society. Generally, a welfare state organizes its power is to modify and regulate the market forces in order to;

- Guarantee minimum income for all individuals and families irrespective of the market value of their work or their property.
- Enable all individuals and families to meet uncertain challenges such as sickness, old age and unemployment.
- Ensure that all citizens receive the best standards of social services available in the society (Andersen, 2012, p. 4)

What is notable in all literatures of welfare states according to Norris and Inglehart (2011) is that the existential security is core in welfare system. As mentioned above that fundamental core of the welfare system is to meet basic needs of every individual to run their normal life, which means, on the other hand to ensuring survival of its citizens regardless of positions in the societies.

There seem to be a connection between utopia and welfare but my aim here to see how it is linked with welfare states in modernized world, called welfare utopianism According to Britannica (2019) utopia means “an ideal commonwealth whose inhabitants exist under seemingly perfect conditions. Hence utopian and utopianism are words used to denote visionary reform that tends to be impossibly idealistic.” And Ruitinga (2011) writes that Utopian theory is concentrated essentially framing an ideal commonwealth, where aspiration of hope can be found for a better state of existence in this life. What could be interesting here to note about utopia, that the states

are expected to establish better environment and conditions for fundamental survival. Through welfare utopianism states are set to establish a better place with basic needs to secure survival for all individuals.

Therefore, the modern states organize systematically their systems to provide better services to all its citizen regardless of their position in the society to lead normal basic life style. In other word, states responsibility to create better welfare system so that people's existential security is perfectly ensured for decent living.

2.6 Religious/Christian Values

Religion becomes a debatable subject in the contemporary society because it influences across all areas of life. Religion connects everything. I think religion is some kin of gel that binds people together, but the bond is fading away.

openly speaking, it is known to all that religion plays a vital role in shaping human behavior. Accordingly, religious beliefs and participation in religious services influence a number of economic and demographic outcomes, including employment, marriage, and fertility. It is evidently proved that religion is transmitted across generations and how individuals choose best levels of religious activity in their lives (Cohen and Elder, 2018). Further Cohen and Elder write that parents' religious exposures influence their children acquiring those religious practices and attitudes. This is indeed true and understandable in most of people's lives. Church, family and society are very crucial in acquiring religious values.

Anand, Pratap and Goutami (2012) write that religious values are defined in terms of faith in God, attempt to understand him, fear of divine wrath and acting according to the ethical codes prescribed in the religious books, living a simple life, having faith in the religious leaders, worshipping God and speaking the truth. This was the culture and tradition that people were brought up historically. But such culture and tradition are lost or else on steady decline.

What I could understand about the religious values throughout my life are ethically from traditions, texts and beliefs. Religious based values are scriptures and established norms traditionally. Values are inherited and even transferred from one generation to the other generation, which are to be

preserved because I understand that history is essential. Ethics play a vital role in religious values because values without ethic are invaluable. For example, can man marrying man or woman marrying a woman be norm and ethics today? But it may be in future because, what is happening now is an example.

When speaking of Christian religious values, basically, Christian values are based on God and His son Jesus' teachings. The Old Testament and New Testament teach us to keep God first and no any other God (Exodus 20: 2-3, Proverb 3: 6 & Matthew 6: 33). The gospel of Matthew (Matthew 6:33) also confirms to seek His righteousness. Christian ethics are derived from Jesus' teaching in the New Testament. Poorjebelli et al (2014) write that ethical and religious believes helps people improving their life style and contribute more on society. There are also other interpretations, but my concentration is on what is more relevant for this research, so that it is easier to develop. There are possibly different disagreements though, those secular norms and values are not historical and traditional.

There are more values, but my concentration is very basic such as believe in God, attending church services, important of religion and other values. Because, I assume that when we have these values, it will direct gain other religious values such as love of enemies, forgiveness, respect nature and compassion so on.

Therefore, the theoretical approach is very crucial in conducting research, because it helps to put things into a completer and more rightful frame so that the work does not deviate from the normal structure and writings. Therefore, I have brought in some fundamental perspectives into my research to explain what I am supposed to complete.

All what is described above are in line with my research question. This is to illustrate my findings and then to validate in the contemporary world, that religious values are on decline. What are contributing factors that make religious values disappear in the contemporary world? My understanding is that rapid development namely modernization, secularization coupled with existential security, which have been illustrated with few theoretical perspectives.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The objective of my research is to portray the contemporary situation of the traditional religious values. The first question is to ask what method is to use? Then how I collect data, and by which method I can collect data are preliminary questions to be investigated. Basically, according to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) that ethnographic research is a combination of empirical study and theoretical interpretation of culture and society. Therefore, my research also involves culture and tradition because religion is very much associated with culture and tradition.

My research requires quantitative data so that I will be able to verify and then to justify my findings. For example; Today a few people attend to religious services. How do we say that few people attend to religious service? This kind of question require numerical results. In order to prove or justify evidently, there is a need of numerical data. Then it is easy to prove that this percentage of people don't attend to religious services or don't believe in God. At the same time, the collection of data is very crucial. Therefore, here I will employ quantitative method to collect my data. I believe this is more appropriate research method for my study.

In my research I will be employing quantitative method and for collecting my data I will use already conducted surveys and other available academic resources. Primarily my research will rely solely on secondary data.

3.2 Quantitative Research Method

The initial question to ask is what it means by quantitative method. It is used to measure a quantity. Therefore, it is simply related to quantity, which is countable or calculatable. Quantitative research methods deal with numbers and measurable indicators. To seek numerical answer to a specific question, quantitative method is required to employ to deliver results.

Generally speaking, quantitative methods are not much flexible compared to qualitative because they have a standardized procedures and techniques, which are used to collect, organize, and analyze the data. The importance of the systematic and standardized data collection procedures is to help to collect required data and then allow to utilize the findings to make generalized outcome

(Kuada, 2012, p. 104). This will assist in my research to compare conducted survey results to bring considerable conclusion.

There are numbers of data collection techniques to employ in quantitative research such as;

- Questionnaires
- Survey
- Interviews

Among the above techniques, my research will employ the survey technique to collect data, but my research will use already conducted survey data because it is a text study. At the same time, available academic related statistics from government websites will also be utilized. In today's context technology provides valuable access to online resources. The online survey is one of them to gather data for researches. Quantitative research is a 'top down' process because first to ask a question and then follows the theory to explain the findings (Fallon, 2016, p. 3). My research will also follow such a way to explain my findings with research questions.

Generally, quantitative research method helps to collect data using two methods to gather data such as primary data and secondary data because it is not necessary to rely only on primary data but can also use already collected data for conducting researches. Accordingly, my research will primarily employ secondary data to analyze and complete (ibid).

Survey: Actually, the survey technique is one of the techniques used in a quantitative research where researchers set up predetermined questions to an entire group. It is indeed a very helpful approach to explain a prevailing situation of a group based on the questions. Here my research does not conduct any survey but depends on already conducted survey in the recognized and academic data bases because my research is not an empirical one, therefore, I have to rely on already conducted studies. Therefore, based on certain theoretical background, my research will analyze the contemporary relevance to justify my research question.

3.3 Data collection and analysis

Data are collected for my research through survey of quantitative method. I have identified already conducted survey data are available. Those data will be used for appropriate analysis because my research question is about religious values in selected Nordic countries. To accommodate the

collected data into my research, certain specific theoretical perspectives are included. As mentioned in the fieldwork that several academic related resources are used here for gathering most appropriate data.

The collected data are from secondary sources based on quantitative method because the research question requires such data to justify the status of religious values in the contemporary Nordic countries. Those data are examined carefully whether they can be used in an acceptable manner without violating research ethics. The presented analysis will be based on the already conducted surveys for academic purposes. Therefore, analyzed data will be used in a way to picture current status of religious values in the contemporary context in the Nordic countries.

3.4 The choice of subject and its reliability of the thesis

The selected topic is religious values in the contemporary epoch of the Nordic countries because, it is believed that religious values are declining due to modernization and secularization. I believe that the choice of this project is appropriate, and relevant based on today's context of the Nordic countries. Numbers of researches and surveys have been conducted but this project will look into certain specific countries to understand the current situation on religious values. Historically, religion played a pivotal role across all sectors but in today's context it is not, but Religion became a debatable topic in the contemporary world because of modernization.

One of the vital parts of the thesis is reliability because reliability of research project is essential in any research. Because the data and their authenticity are to be highly ensured that have not violated the norms especially rules and regulation drawn accordingly. Yilmaz (2013) writes that reliability means consistency, where variable must be constant under the same condition with the same subject. What is important is that reliability applies to data not to measurement instruments. At the same time, reliability must be coupled with validity, where researcher must also ensure that data are accurate. Therefore, reliability and validity are very crucial in a research.

3.5 Field Work

My field work was not required involving with people or groups for observation and interview to conduct research. My research solely depends on text studies, where I concentrate on certain recommended academic books, which are ensured that they are absolute relevance to my project. At the same time, there are other academic related documents from online such as World Values Survey, Europa Survey, PEW Research Center and Government Statistics. Therefore, what I write here are based on certain theories and findings from the survey and statistics. More specifically, I have also derived certain questions in association with already conducted survey to receive appropriate answers to my project to complete. My main focus is on the following academic resources.

1. 'Sacred and Secular': Religion and Politics Worldwide by Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. The both gives ample resources to conduct my research because it is very similar to my project but not in Nordic perspective, but my entire concern is based on Nordic perspective especially 'existential security', which provides a complete differentiation between developed and undeveloped countries.
2. Religious complexities in the public sphere: Comparing Nordic countries by Inger Furseth. This book gives an overall understanding of the contemporary situation of Nordic countries especially on religious values status.
3. World Values Survey: This survey possesses huge data, but this is online. My research will borrow many data because it is very much relevant to my research.
4. PEW Research Center, European Values Study and other texts and online academic resources are also used here for theoretical purposes to illustrate the foundation for the research such as Government statistics from three countries such as Finland, Norway and Sweden.

Therefore, my fieldwork was based on exploring relevant information and data to see what is happening to religious values. I will make sure that the collected data are very relevant to my project so that I can evidently justify my stand in the research.

3.6 Research Ethics and Quality Requirement

In the technological world, ethics plays a vital role in all sectors. Research ethics is very crucial in academic activities. Such ethics are equally important in quantitative and qualitative researches, but I consider that ethics is considered utmost important in quantitative research because it involves with human beings as well.

Bryman (2012) mentions that Diener and Crandall emphasized four main areas where research ethics must pay careful attention.

1. Whether there is harm to participants
2. Whether there is lack of informed consent
3. Whether there is an invasion of privacy
4. Whether deception is involved

Accordingly, my research will not bring the above mention facts because as already mentioned, it is a text study based on already conducted survey results. But it will ensure that deception in any form will not be permitted. Then it is not an empirical research but solely a text study especially focusing on what is already done and available. Those data will be utilized accordingly and amicably not violating any norm. My research will also consider possible inclusion of research ethics based on text studies that not to violate research norms, rules and regulation expected by the respective institution.

As mentioned, this research is a text study but will include all research ethics and will pay more attention on zero tolerance for plagiarism. This will ensure all references will be fully acknowledged as required.

Therefore, in the 3rd chapter the fundamental basic of a research methodology and ethics are outlined and on what basis the research will be characterized and analyzed. This research will use quantitative data collection method to analyze the findings. Since this research is not a empirical study, it solely relied on secondary data from different sources based certain theoretical aspects from specific authors, which I have already mentioned above.

Chapter 4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The intentional question is what is really happening to religion and to its values in the contemporary world because of modernization, which is the mother for all other products like secularization. This undoubtedly true that religion remains but religious attitude, culture, tradition and behaviors have been changed considerably. Of course, change is unchangeable especially, inevitable but does it mean that giving up? What is interesting according to Furseth, Inglehart and Norris that many European countries are moving towards more secular values than religious values. Is it true? Yes or no, but my purpose is not to see whether it is true not but how far religious values in Nordic countries especially in Finland, Norway and Sweden decline. These countries are faster than other European countries comparatively. They are more towards secular values, which I have learnt while performing my field work based on text studies.

To understand the situation in the Nordic countries, this research will focus to see where religious values stand in three selected countries Finland, Norway and Sweden. Therefore, my research question is;

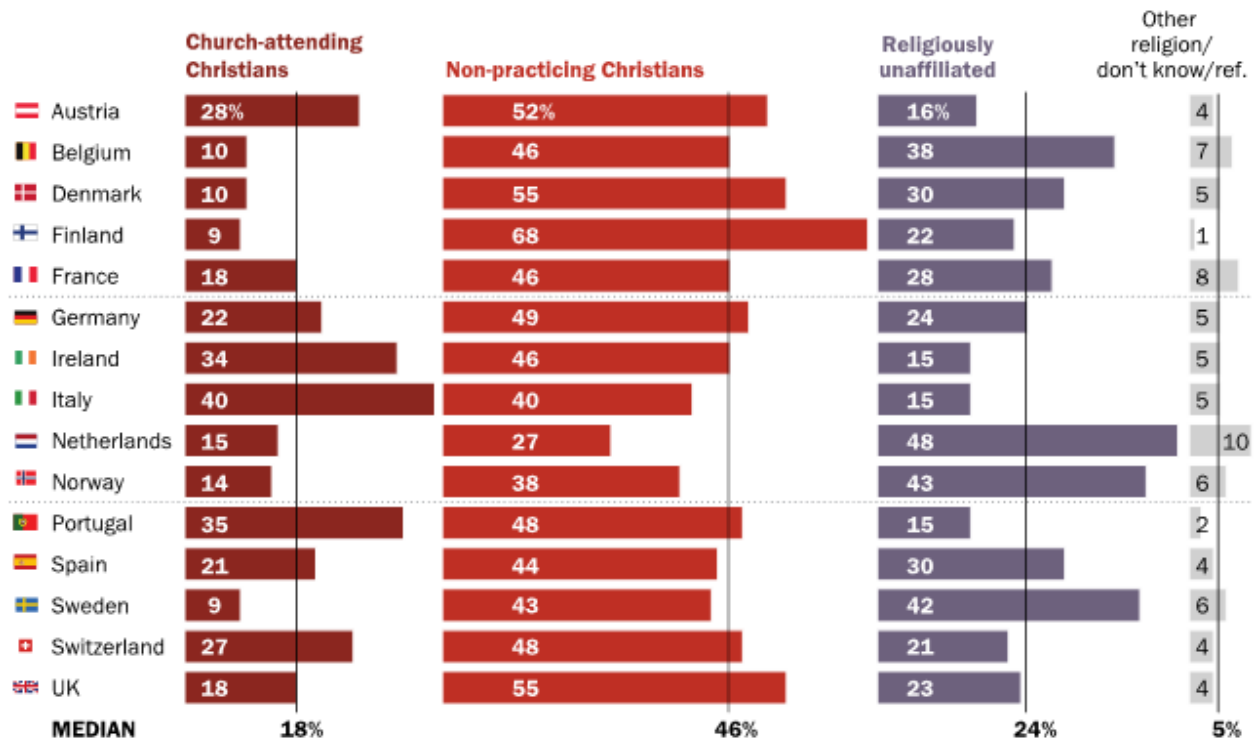
‘Impact of modernization and secularization on religious values in Nordic countries’

Based on the question, the underlining basic assumption is today’s development across all sectors somehow make religion and its value disappear. Development leads to modernization which paves way for secularization, that finally makes religious values disappear. Therefore, the data is utilized to analyze in order to see the situation. Thus, I have used four basic concepts specifically to use in a way to make clearer of religious values, such as *religious beliefs, religious practice, religious attitude and religious anomie*.

Specifically, the way I provide my findings for each country with tables and followed by brief description and then discussion. This would help for better understanding of each section.

To begin my findings and discussion, let me also brief situation of Christian in Western Europe. According to PEW research center (2018) that clearly describes that Christianity is on decline in Western Europe. The figure will illustrate the contemporary situation.

Figure 1: Christian in Western Europe



Source: PEW Research Center, (2018), Being Christian in Western Europe

The figure above gives over all understanding of Christian in Western Europe. There are four types of people, such as church attending Christians, non-practicing Christians, non-affiliated and other religions. What is interesting here to see that almost all countries given above are poor in church attending comparatively but Italy and Portugal and a few countries are little high in church attendance. On the contrary, non-practicing Christians are considerably high, where Finland has highest per centage in non-practicing Christians, which is one of the Nordic countries.

My research will only look for Finland, Norway and Sweden as whole to represent the Nordic countries. It is also better to have religious status of the three countries (Table 1). This clearly describes the current situation in those countries, where people stand in religiosity or describing whether they are religious or not. The data are from different years such as Finland 2005, Norway 2007 and Sweden 2006. According to the table below, it is clear that many people don't think of themselves as religious person today. Almost three countries are on the similar category of religiosity. At the same time, there is another group of people growing which is atheist.

Table 1: Religious status in Finland, Norway and Sweden

Religious person	Total	Country		
		Finland	Norway	Sweden
A religious person	44	58.5	40.9	32.7
Not a religious person	45.1	35.8	51.3	48.2
A convinced atheist	8.8	3	6.7	16.8
Not asked by the interviewer	0	0.1	0	0
No answer	1	0.3	0.6	2.2
Don't know	1	2.4	0.5	0
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003

Source: World Values Survey, wave 5 2005-2009, V187

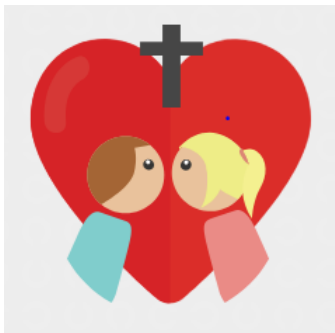
According to the data above, it is clear that almost half of the people agree that they are not religious in the Nordic countries. Therefore, the Nordic countries are more secular than religious.

Figure 2: Religious Composition in Sweden

62 per cent of Swedes are members of the Church of Sweden but only 29 per cent of Swedes claim to be religious



Other big Churches and Faiths:
 United Church in Sweden
 Islam
 Pentecostal
 Catholicism
 Syrian Orthodox



One in three get married in Church in Sweden

Sweden legalized same sex marriage and Church started same sex marriage ritual at church in 2009. As reported in 2014 that about 5,356 women and 4,212 men married person of the same sex.

Source: sweden.se, updated on 8th February 2018 by Scott Sutherland

The above figure 2 illustrates the current situation of Sweden with regard to religion status. This also indicates that Sweden is no more homogenous country in the Nordic countries, where same

sex marriage is approved. Generally, Sweden is more secular than other Nordic countries (Sweden.se).

Table 2: Religious View in Sweden

Irrespective of whether you attend a place of worship or not, would you say you are?			Does religion generally play a positive role, negative role or no role in your country?				
A religious person	Not a religious person	A convinced atheist	Positive	Negative	No role	Do not know / no response	Net Score (Positive-Negative)
19	59	17	23	37	19	59	-14

Source: Gallup International’s Voice of the People 2015 (numbers are in per centage)

It true that Sweden is a more secular country because about 59 per cent reported that they are not religious but only 19 per cent reported that they are religious. This suggests that there is a tendency of not believing in God. It is clear that the huge deviation between religious person 19 per cent and not religion person 59 percent, whereas 17 percent is convinced atheist. Therefore, comparatively people become non-believers gradually, and the growth of atheist is increasing which is 17 per cent. Therefore, it suggests that there is less important for religious values.

Figure 3: Religious Composition in Norway

70.6 per cent are member of Church of Norway.



Source: ssb.no, published in 2017

Norway legalized same sex marriage and Church started same sex marriage ritual at church in 2017. As reported in 2017 that about 278 same sex marriages, and 121 between two men and 157 between two women.

Other big Churches and Faiths outside the Church of Norway: Baha'ism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Sikhism, Philosophy and other religious and philosophical communities

In 2016, 22 500 couples married, which is 1 000 fewer than the average for the preceding ten years but 9 300 divorces and 10 800 separation took place.

Source: ssb.no, published in 2017

Table 3: Religious view in Norway

Would you say you are	Number of cases	Total
A religious person	419	40.9
Not a religious person	526	51.3
A convinced atheist	69	6.7
No answer	6	0.6
Don't know	5	0.5
(N)	(1025)	100

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2009, V187

To note that the above data for Norway is not available with Gallup International's voice of the people 2015, therefore, it is taken from World Values Survey. This data above gives a general understanding of religious situation in Norway. Almost half of the people say that they are not religious, which is 51.3 percent, whereas only 40.9 percent say they are religious. What is striking that there is new growth of people who are convinced atheist in Norway, which is 6.7 per cent. Therefore, it is very clear that there is growing tendency of secularity in Norway, where religious is slowly declining.

Figure 4: Religious Composition in Finland

70.9 per cent are member of Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.



Source: ssb.no, published in 2017

Same sex marriage was effect from 2017 and Church started same sex marriage ritual at church in 2017.

Other big Churches and Faiths outside the Church of Finland:

- Greek Orthodox
- Other Christian faiths
- Unaffiliated

In 2016, 22 500 couples married, which is 1 000 fewer than the average for the preceding ten years but 9 300 divorces and 10 800 separation took place.

Source: Official Statistics of Finland (OSF)

Table 4: Religious View in Finland

Irrespective of whether you attend a place of worship or not, would you say you are?			Does religion generally play a positive role, negative role or no role in your country?				
A religious person	Not a religious person	A convinced atheist	Positive	Negative	No role	Do not know / no response	Net Score (Positive-Negative)
56	32	10	50	25	56	32	+25

Source: Gallup International’s Voice of the People 2015 (Numbers are in per centage)

The data above give a contrasting view comparing with Sweden because 56 per cent of people agree that they are religious in Finland but there is convinced atheist at about 10 percent and people who say they are unsure of religious is about 32 per cent. Therefore, it is also explaining an unpredictable situation in the contemporary society to determine the situation in Finland, but religion is declining whatsoever.

What is the reason behind that people become not believing in God and then became atheist in the Nordic society today? PEW Forum (pewforum.org, 2018, Attitude towards spirituality and religion) published article that says nearly half of Swedes don’t to believe on beliefs or feelings about supernatural force. It also says that their recent survey identifies that nearly 47 per cent don’t believe. On the contrary, the PEW Forum also points out that 50 per cent believe that religion causes more harm than good. This means that people think that religion causes problems. Therefore, there seems to be a growing situation, where people do not believe in God and religion and then people become atheist in Sweden. This might be true that there is a prevailing situation, to which science contribute to make religion is irrelevant or unnecessary in people’s lives in the modern world. Because the survey shows about 42 per cent believe that science makes religion irrelevant in the contemporary Sweden.

Why people do believe that religion cause problem than good. What really make them to believe in this way. Because many people have negative feeling about religion in Sweden according to the data above, which is about 50 per cent (ibid). My objective is not figure what are reason for every

act, but this kind of attitude causes religious values to decline. There are many reasons behind, but my focus is on religion and its values, which are declining in the Nordic countries due to modernization and secularization, which are the core contributors.

The very first question is 'believe in God'. One of key debatable concept rather issue in the contemporary world because science has already replaced religion where God created human being is questioned. Thus, made believing in God uncertain for people especially in the developed society. There are some striking religious changes took place in the Nordic countries namely Church separation from states. In the Nordic countries, the majority Lutheran Churches were knotted with states. The majority Churches were not considered as single entity from 16th century to mid of 19th century. The majority churches were called Evangelical Lutheran State Churches. Every citizen of those countries are members of the Churches but may be not now.

It is also interesting to see how it affected religious values and its strong implications when Churches were separated in Finland, Norway and Sweden. There seemed to be some form of implications might be understood in the light of modernization, resulting secularization.

4.2 Separation of Church in Finland, Norway and Sweden and implications

Lene Kuhle et al write (Furseth, 2018, p. 82) that according to "Silvio Ferrari that European modernization doesn't imply Church-State separation but a moderate involvement of States with religion and Religion-state relations of the Nordic countries may, therefore, be paradoxical but important keys for unlocking modern connection between religion and secularity." This is clear that the Church and State separation in the Nordic countries is due to secularization, which is the outcome of modernization.

It is complex to discuss the separation of Lutheran Churches in the Nordic countries because there are marginal differences country to country in the Nordic regions. As I have mentioned above that the Lutheran Churches in the Nordic countries are interwoven with states. From the beginning of the reformation, they were not separate bodies but one single entity until the middle of 19th century (Furseth, 2018, p. 42). The support for Churches is also changed. Finland and Sweden have direct church tax but Norway subsidies to churches and religious organizations on per capita basis (concordatwatch.eu) after the separation.

Matti Kotiranta (iclrs.org) writes that formally the church separation began in 1919 in Finland, but the Evangelical Lutheran church functioned as the same. There are two churches, Evangelical Lutheran church and Finnish Orthodox Church. The Freedom of Act (2003) prescribed Lutheran church and Finnish Orthodox Church and other religious are also existing. Historically, the Christian Churches and other religious communities used baptism as a criterion to count their members but not many because certain other churches don't accept infant baptism but only adult's baptism (Baptists and other Pentecostal churches). Later year, number of Muslims increased because of the globalization.

The Freedom of Religion Act (2003) provided opportunity for all to choose their own free will to a member of churches but it is notable that there has been no change so far in this basic policy in Finland (ibid and o-re-la.org). The separation is not the direct course for decline of religion, but it is the beginning of the decline of religion in the modern context.

When comes to Norway, it has a different story than Finland because the state of Norway is separated from Church of Norway in 2012. As we all hear and see in television and newspaper that the world repeatedly speaks of democracy and Human Rights, thus also influenced Norway. One of the important characteristics of democracy is religious freedom, thus, to ensure respect of religious diversity. With regard to Sweden, the relationship between Church and Sweden changed in 2000 (Furseth, 2018, p.42 and concordatwatch.eu).

What is important to note here that Finland and Sweden and Norway don't constitute a wall of separation, because Nordic majority churches are semi-autonomous with different degrees of autonomy from state (Furseth, 2018, p.42). The Church and state separation brought considerable implications. First and foremost, there is a slight Constitutional change. For example; in Norway the new amendments to the Constitution made in 2012 says "Our values will remain our Christian and humanist heritage. This Constitution shall ensure democracy, a state based on the rule of law and human rights." but the Original Article says, "All inhabitants of the realm shall have the right to free exercise of their religion. The Evangelical-Lutheran religion shall remain the official religion of the States. The inhabitants professing it are bound to bring up their children in the same." (Cranmer, 2017). This is very important change occurred. This is also taken for consideration in analyzing religious values.

Secondly, in the Nordic countries civil and religious authorities can perform religious ceremony like Worldview communities in Norway. Another important fact that Church of Norway in 2016 and Church of Sweden in 2009 decided to have same sex wedding ritual in the church (Furseth, 2018, p.93). Therefore, it is clear that there are certain apparent implications brought through the state and church separation in the Nordic countries. There may be few other implications or changes, which are broad to discuss here in this thesis.

4.3 Religious Beliefs

Generally speaking, our beliefs are based on oral and text traditions. There is a decline in beliefs especially in Nordic countries. Furseth (2018, p.55) writes based on recent survey conducted by European Values Studies from 1990 to 2010, where she argues that there is a gradual decline on believing in God in the Nordic countries. This provoke to ask why such a trend is growing? she provides answers (ibid, 2018, p. 41) that the Nordic countries are much progressed in security and welfare delivery system, where people are less worried of their living. This also one of the reasons for declining religious values. I will discuss religious beliefs under the following concepts for better illustration.

- Believe in God
- Important of God in your life
- Important of religion

To begin my finding and discussion, let me start with believe in God. Because all other beliefs and practices are based on believing in God. if don't believe in God, then what is the use of discussing religious practices. The central of all religious activities and ceremonial engagement are based on believe in God.

4.3.1 Believe in God

Can I pause question? Do we all believed that God created human? The straight answer was yes and we all believed but now there is no straight answer.

My argument is that believe in God is declining in Sweden. why? let's me explain with data below. Sweden is relatively more secular country than the other Nordic countries like Norway and

Finland. The data below taken from World Values Survey, which is conducted from 1981 to 2014. This is also notable that the very latest data is not available after 2014.

Table 5: Believe in God in Sweden

Answer	Total	Sweden					
		1981-1984	1989-1993	1994-1998	1999-2004	2005-2009	2010-2014
No	41	35	46	38	41	41	50
Yes	44	51	38	48	47	35	41
No answer	2	7	0	0	0	1	2
Don't know	13	7	16	14	13	23	7
Sample selected	8372	1908	1047	1009	2028	1174	1206

Source: World Values Survey, 1981 – 2014 time series, F050 (numbers are in per centage)

The data (Table 5) illustrate year between 1981–2014, which mean almost 4 decades of survey data presented to analyze how timely progress has been made in Sweden. Especially, data of 2010 to 2014 give contemporary status in Sweden. When comparing previous survey of 2005-2009 with survey of 2010-2014, it is clear that people who don't believe in God is increased from 41 per cent to 50 per cent, which means half of the participants says that they don't believe in God. On the contrary, people who believe in God in the same year is increased from 35 per cent to 41 percent, which is also remarkably important to note. Those who say don't know decreased from 23 per cent to 7 per cent. This may be understood that they don't believe in God. Therefore, it is clear that half of the participants don't believe in God in Sweden.

Looking at the status of Norway on believe in God (Table 6), it is comparatively viewed four period of time from 1981 to 2009 but after 2009 the data are not available in the survey. Therefore, I am analyzing the four sets of data to illustrate the status of believe in God in the contemporary Norway. Norway is not same as Sweden.

Table 6: Believe in God in Norway

Do you believe in God	Total	Norway			
		1981-1984	1989-1993	1994-1998	2005-2009
No	32	23	31	30	43
Yes	62	70	58	65	54
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0
No answer	4	0	10	0	3
Don't know	3	7	0	5	0
Sample selected	4507	1051	1239	1127	109

Source: WVS 1981-2009 time series, F050 (numbers are per centage)

When looking at the above data, it is assumable that there is gradual increase of those who don't believe in God which is from 30 per cent (1994-1998) to 43 percent (2005-2009). On the contrary, those who believe in God is decreased from 65 percent to 54 per cent, which shows that those who don't believe in God is growing.

According to Atlas of European values (atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu) that conducted survey in 2008 says 56 per cent of people do believe in God. This is similar with world value survey result. But it is not possible to see current trend like Sweden because of the unavailability of current data. There is a question of what would be the per centage today, based on the above survey, it could be more than what is presented here.

Table 7: Believe in God in Finland

Answer	Finland				
	Total	1989-1993	1994-1998	1999-2004	Other+Sysmis
No	19	19	17	16	25
Yes	66	61	73	74	56
No answer	6	1	0	2	19
Don't know	8	20	10	8	0
Selected sample	3747	588	987	1038	1134

Source: World Values Survey, 1981-other plus sysmis, time series, F050, (numbers are per centage)

In the similar way looking at Finland, it is more or less similar to Norway. When comparing 1999-2004 with other plus system missing data that those who don't believe in God increases from 16 per cent to 25 per cent, which shows 9 per cent escalation. At the same time, those who believe in God is decreased by 18 per cent (Table 7). The Atlas of European Values say that 69 per cent of people believe in God in Finland in 2008. This is very high in comparison with Norway and Sweden. What is notable here that believing in God is slowly decrease, while don't believe in God is increasing. Therefore, almost half of the participants believe in God in Finland and in Norway and but not in Sweden. Therefore, Sweden is more secular than Finland and Norway.

PEW research center (2018) published survey findings on believe in God, which clearly illustrates the contemporary situation in the Nordic countries, on where do they stand (Table 5).

Table 8: Believe in God in Finland, Norway and Sweden

Country	Believe in God, absolutely certain	Believe in God, fairly certain	Believe in God, less certain	Don't believe in God
Sweden	14	15	7	60
Norway	19	19	11	47
Finland	23	26	8	37

Source: PEW research center, (2018) religious practice and belief

The data above shows two extreme sides that those who believe in God absolutely certain in three countries are not even 25 per cent, and even those who believe in God fairly certain is same as earlier one. Whereas those who don't believe is 60, 47 and 37 per cent in Sweden, Norway and Finland. Therefore, it potentially describes that almost half of the population don't believe in God, as per the analyzed data above by PEW research center.

Simultaneously, Furseth (2018) writes that believe in God is declining in the Nordic countries. Therefore, the assumption is that there will be a growing tendency of decline of religious values in the Nordic countries. She is also providing data (2018, p. 56) of the religious situation of the three Nordic countries (Table 9) from 1990-2010. Those who believe in God is 61, 65 and 38 per cent in Finland, Norway and Sweden. Sweden shows very low in believe in God compare with other two countries.

What could be assumed that from 1990 to today, the Nordic countries have tremendously progressed in all sectors. As I have discussed in Chapter 2 that when moving from agrarian societies to industrial societies, it is inevitable that people leave their values behind and attached towards secular values.

Table 9: Believe in God

Believe in God	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Yes	61	65	38
No	19	35	46
Don't know	20	0	16
Selected sample	584	1113	1029

Source: European Values Study from Religious Complexity in the Public sphere, 1990-2010, by Furseth, p. 56

Few data are available for Finland and Norway but for Sweden it has data up to 2010-2014 in World Values Survey. This is sufficient to arrive a conclusion that religious values are declining in the contemporary Nordic countries. For a broad understanding, I have to depend on other sources PEW Research and European Values Study. Form the three surveys, we could assume believe in God is on gradual decline. When looking at the times series, it is also clear that gradually believe in God is declining

Since it is the basic for all believes, I am explaining in detail so that it would support for all the following findings and description based on World Values Survey, PEW Survey and European Values Study. Here I am also comparing each one to arrive at a conclusion. Therefore, the below given data (Table 10) is compiled for my discussion on believe in God.

Table 10: Overall surveys of believe in God in the last year of the survey from each country

Country	World Values Survey		PEW survey		European Values Study	
	Believe	Don't Believe	Believe	Don't Believe	Believe	Don't Believe
Finland	74	16	49	45	61	19
Norway	54	43	38	58	65	36
Sweden	41	50	29	67	38	46

Source: Data retrieved from the above tables of the last year survey to compare (numbers are in percentage)

To begin with my discussion, it is appropriate to pause a question that why believe in God is declining? As per Furseth's writing (2018) that Nordic countries are well advanced in all development sectors, economy, education and health care to provide better life style to all its citizens. According to Hexham & Poewe (1997, p.149) that at the beginning of 19th century, many scholars believed especially Thomas Henry Huxley and Karl Marx that science would take the place of religion to provide meaning for universal existence. Therefore, science plays pivotal role in changing attitude of many people in the world especially in the developed countries in Europe. At the beginning meaning of life was interpreted and connected with religious perspectives. Religion provided meaning for every activity of daily life but now it is questioned because science provides answers to all question in our daily life.

Advanced scientific technology made life comfortable therefore, Norris and Inglehart (2011, p.246) speak of existential security. Accordingly, the existential security provides comfortable life style where people are with less stress, which means future is guaranteed and people's well-being is secured. Thus, somehow create an environment for people to become detached to religion and religious sacraments. Therefore, the results in World Values Surveys illustrate that in Finland believe in God is 74 percent in the year between 1999-2004 and in Norway in 2005-2009 it is 54 per cent. Comparing Sweden with Finland and Norway it is more secular because the survey result in the recent past 2010-2014 shows 41 per cent only believe in God.

This clearly illustrates a gradual decline of religious values in Nordic countries except Finland, which is typically different in such attitudes when comparing all series of Finland survey, where notable growth of believe in God is highly observable rather than decline.

What could be the reasons? Is Church separated form State the reason? No, it is not only the reason, but it also contributes. According to Furseth (2018) and Lene Kühle (2011) write that religion is intertwined with states in Nordic countries in different forms of activities in the Nordic countries. But Norris and Inglehart (2011, p. 246) reiterate that currently growing security in postindustrial societies have the trendies to lose religious values because those societies are well advanced to secure physical existence of people, providing better economic support and health care and other facilities, which are necessary for smooth daily living. Therefore, less worries about future detach people from religious values. These religious values have less important in modern world today.

Concurrently, Turner (2011, p. 84) writes that people become less believe in God because the modern culture, the changing nature of social solidarity, decline of social functions of religious rituals making them to questioning personal authenticity in every case they encounter. Therefore, people become less believe in God because, the world is a changing every day. So, people also change accordingly. Ultimately, as I have mentioned that religion is replaced with modernity, where science is the key.

4.3.2 How important God in your life

This is an assumption that when people don't believe in God and the important of God become less in the lives of people. There might be a reason that God becomes unimportant or least important in the lives of people in the modernized world today. Here, the analysis is pictured on how important God in your life. This survey was conducted by World Values Survey in the period between 2005-2009 but very latest analysis is not available with World Values Survey but available only for Sweden in between 2010-2014. What is given below is a general view of how people think of God in their lives. The analysis is set answer from 1 (not at all important) to 10 (very important).

Table 11: How important God in your life in Finland, Norway and Sweden

How important God in your life	Total	Country		
		Finland	Norway	Sweden
Not at all	23.3	9.5	27.6	33
2	11.4	7.6	13.1	13.7
3	9.5	8.2	10.6	9.8
4	5.8	6.4	5.7	5.5
5	9.9	10.1	11.5	8.0
6	6.5	9.4	5.1	4.9
7	7.5	10.3	6.2	5.8
8	8.2	11.1	5.9	7.6
9	4.9	8.1	3.4	3.2
Very important	11.7	17.8	9.9	7.5
Not asked by the interviewer	0.1	0.2	00	00
No answer	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9
Don't know	0.4	0.9	0.4	00
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003

Source: World Values Survey Wave 5: 2005-2009, Wave 5, V192

God is not important at all in their lives shows 23.3 per cent together in three countries. Looking at individual country, Sweden stands high which is 33 per cent and least is Finland, which is 9.5 per cent. On the contrary, God is very important in their lives is just 11.7 per cent in all three countries. Individually, God is very important in Finland stands highest among the three countries, which is about 17.8 per cent and Sweden is 7.5 per cent but Norway in the middle. What Furseth (2018 p. 55) writes that Nordic people are more secular, and she claims that they are most secular in the world comparatively.

The analyzed data shows that in deed the Nordic people are more secular than other countries in the world. Here let's look, where Sweden stands. Because Swedes is more secular therefore, it is important to note whether God important or not (Table 12).

Table 12: How important God in your life in Sweden

How important God in your life	Number of cases	Total
Not at all important	472	39.2
2	145	12
3	91	7.6
4	48	4
5	107	8.9
6	55	4.5
7	62	5.1
8	65	5.4
9	31	2.6
Very important	94	7.8
dropped out survey	15	1.3
No answer	8	0.6
Don't know	13	1.1
(N)	1206	100

Source: world Values Survey 2010-2014, wave 6, V152

The data above shows almost the current situation of Sweden, which is more secular (Sweden.se) than other two countries. God is not important in the lives of Swedes is about 39.2 per cent whereas God is very important is 7.8 per cent which is not even half of those who feel God is not important in their lives. Therefore, God is important in your life vary country to country but as whole, it is possible to picture that these countries are secular countries, where religion loses its place.

The data shown above is described about the important of God in your life as a general view but looking at overall, it is clear that important of God is declining throughout the period. It would be interesting to see how different age group think of God is important in their lives. I have divided into three age groups as given below. Looking at more specifically, what category of people fell that God is important in their lives and God is not important in their lives.

- God is important - age up to 29
- God is important – age 30 to 49
- God is important – age 50 and above

As per the data (Table 13) that Sweden stand highest that people at the age of 29 indicating that God is not important at all, which is 47.2 per cent and Norway is almost the same as Sweden but Finland shows vast different, which is only 16.1 per cent. Therefore, individually Sweden and Norway are more secular than Finland among people of age up to 29 but overall it is 36.2 percent in the three countries. Overall, they are secular and individually they are different.

Table 13: God is important in your life, age up to 29

How God is important in your life	Country			
	Total	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Not at all	36.2	16.1	45.6	47.2
2	15.4	13.7	17.1	15.5
3	10.0	10.1	10.4	9.5
4	4.8	7.0	3.1	4.3
5	5.8	10.6	4.1	2.5
6	6.0	9.7	4.7	3.6
7	6.5	8.2	5.2	6.0
8	4.7	7.5	4.1	2.6
9	3.7	7.0	0.5	3.5
Very important	6.1	8.8	4.7	4.6
No answer	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.6
Don't know	0.1	0.4	-	-
(N) Up to 29	573	192	193	188

Source: WVS, wave 2005-200, wave 5, V192

Table 14: God is important in your life, age 30 to 49

How important is God in your life	Country			
	Total	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Not at all	24.2	9.3	26.2	38.6
2	12.8	6.4	16.1	16.0
3	10.2	9.5	11.8	8.9
4	6.0	7.5	4.6	6.1
5	10.0	10.7	11.8	7.1
6	6.3	9.3	5.8	3.7
7	7.6	12.4	4.8	5.5
8	7.2	10.9	4.6	6.2
9	4.0	6.6	4.1	1.1
Very important	10.9	17.2	9.4	5.7
No answer	0.4	-	0.2	1.0
Don't know	0.4	0.3	0.7	-
(N) 30-49	1147	386	416	345

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2009, wave 5, V192

Then the data (Table 14) above is the age between 30 to 49. This shows how this age people feel that God is important in their lives.

According to the analysis, it almost portrays similar trend like the age up to 29 (Table 13). When looking at overall picture it shows 24.2 percent of this category people say God is not important at all but individually, it varies. Finland shows least but Norway and Sweden are in the similar categories in this age group. Therefore, it is possible to assume that the Nordic countries are moving towards secular direction especially the younger generation. This is slow in Finland.

Let's also see below (Table 15) the age 50 and above. How do they think whether God is important or not? This category of people expresses similar attitude toward the important of God in their lives, which is about 17 per cent together with Finland, Norway and Sweden. As mentioned in other categories that Finland is the least expressed that God is not important at all in their lives, which is 6.7 per cent. The other two countries show more than 20 per cent say God is not important at all at the age of 50 and above.

Table 15: God is important in your life, age 50 and above

How important is god in your life	Country			
	Total	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Not at all	17	6.7	20.7	23.2
2	8.5	5.9	8.2	11.3
3	8.8	6.1	9.6	10.5
4	6.2	5.2	7.9	5.5
5	11.6	9.4	14.7	10.8
6	6.7	9.2	4.6	6.4
7	7.8	9.5	8.2	6.0
8	10.6	12.9	7.9	10.7
9	6.2	9.9	4.1	4.7
Very	14.8	22.2	12.7	9.9
Missing	0.10	0.4	-	-
No answer	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.0
Don't know	0.6	1.60	0.2	-
(N) 50 and up	1321	436	416	470

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2009, wave 5, V192

Therefore, God is not important is growing in the Nordic countries but individually they are different but collectively they are toward secular orientation. When God is not important, it is possible to say that religions also have less important. Then what about religious values. When God is not important, it will lead to less important of religious values especially among younger generation.

4.3.3 Important of Religion

The third question to be investigated under religious beliefs is important of religion in the three countries. I could remember that one day, we were discussing in the lecture that people in Norway don't want to identify with religion. This might have different meaning but there is a question of why. God is not important because, they don't believe in God. Thus, means religion is not important.

Table 16: Religion Important

Religion Important	Total	Country			Year	Religion Important		
		Finland	Norway	Sweden		Finland	Norway	Sweden
Very important	12.5	17.6	10.5	9.3	1990	38	40	27
Rather important	23.2	27.4	22.2	19.9				
Not very important	40.8	40.4	41.3	40.7	1999	45	38	35
Not at all important	23.2	14.2	26	29.6				
No answer	0.2	0.1	0	0.5	2008	30	38	22
Don't know	0.1	0.3	0	0				
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003				
Source: World Values Survey, waves 5, 2005-2009					ATLAS-European Values			

The data (Table 16) shows two types of data, one is from World Values Survey and the other one is taken from Atlas European Values. This is just to demonstrate a contrasting view of religion whether important or not. Accordingly, the data obviously vary but as a whole it is clear that people don't regard religion as important. According to European Values Study that all three countries are on the similar attitudes toward religion, but World Values Survey slightly differs, but it has six responses.

Therefore, the conclusion is the important of religion has least value in the contemporary societies. I want to see here what category of people think that religion is not important. When looking at

World Values Survey data below (Table 17), it will clearly illustrate the important of religion at different age.

Table 17: Important of Religion - Age up to 29

Religion important	Age up to 29			
	Total	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Very important	8	11.3	6.2	6.6
Rather important	16.8	23.8	13.5	13.0
Not very important	40.7	45.1	41.5	35.3
Not at all important	34.2	19.9	38.9	43.9
No answer	0.4	-	-	1.1
(n) up to 29	573	192	193	188

World Values Survey, waves 5, 2005-2009, V9

According to the data above (Table 17) that religion is not important in the lives of younger generation in those countries in the period of 2005 to 2009. Previously submitted all data show that religious perspective and attitudes in Finland are high comparatively with Norway and Sweden. When it comes to younger generation, the important of religion is at low level in the three countries. It is also clear that not very important and not at all important of religion are quite high in all three countries. The young people don't regard religion as important.

As we understand that there is a generational gap in regarding religion as an important factor in daily life, so, the young people don't give important to religion in the contemporary society. Therefore, religion is least important among young people in the Nordic countries. It quite true that when parents are not religious, their children would not acquire religious values (see child quality table 40).

There is another category of people at the age of 30 to 49. What do they think of religion in their lives? The middle age people must have different feeling about religion. Therefore, let's see what they think of religion.

Table 18: Important of Religion- Age 30 to 49

Religion important	Age 30-49			
	Total	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Very important	10.60	15.50	9.10	7.00
Rather important	19.30	23.10	20.00	14.30
Not very important	45.40	46.70	44.00	45.60
Not at all important	24.60	14.70	26.90	32.90
No answer	0.10	-	-	0.30
(n) 30-49	1,147	386	416	345

World Values Survey, waves 5, 2005-2009, V9

The above data clearly illustrates what people at the age of 30 to 49 think of religion, whether it is important or not. What is interesting here that comparing two age groups (Table 17 and Table 18) age up to 29 and age 30 to 49, that almost their responses are similar, but there is an increase with Finland and Norway about the important of religion in their lives. The response of not very important and not at all important are comparatively not so high than the age group up to 29. When looking at individually, Sweden seems to be high especially those who say not important at all. It is pretty understandable that generational gap has an important factor in deciding what is important for their life. Those data are belonged to 2005-2009 but today there might be considerable variation in all data because of the prevailing situation. What is the status of age 50 and above?

Table 19: Important of Religion- Age 50 and above

Religion important	Age 50 and up			
	Total	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Very important	16.00	22.20	13.90	12.00
Rather important	29.40	32.80	28.60	26.80
Not very important	36.90	32.90	38.50	39.20
Not at all important	17.30	11.30	19.00	21.50
No answer	0.20	0.20	-	0.50
Don't know	0.20	0.70	-	-
(n) 50 and up	1,321	436	416	470

World Values Survey, waves 5, 2005-2009, V9

This is notable that the important of religion is predominantly high among the age of 50 and above. When comparing the three categories of data, it is observable that young people don't feel that religion is important in their lives, but it varies country to country. It is also noticeable that Finland always shows higher on religious values than the other two countries Norway and Sweden. But in general, those three countries are showing lower rate in regarding religion important in their lives.

Therefore, the conclusion is religion is not important among younger generation, while older generation shows not big difference but very marginal with regard to important of religion in their lives. This can be varied country to country. Sweden stands highest that many almost half of the participants don't regard religion as important in their lives, which is also growing in Norway as well.

4.3.4 Discussion

The generalized conclusion would be that when people don't believe in God, there is a possibility of regarding religion less important in their lives. When people believe in God, it will inspire to attach with religion and other religious engagements, especially motivate to bring up children in a religious environment. At the same time, it is debatable.

What are the important and basic needs to live a very decent life style today? Generally, there are many needs and wants but, fundamentally, a person needs a decent house with adequate income, health care, education and etc. There are many countries lacks in such facilities but as per my knowledge all these facilities for a decent survival are availed to all people in the Nordic countries. As I have discussed above in chapter 3 of literature that the Nordic welfare delivery system is very systematic to cater all their citizens.

Furseth (2018, p. 61) writes that the growing secularity is the killing of religion by welfare utopianism. What Furseth tries to illustrate that modernized welfare system is one of the pivotal systematic tools that make people away from the attachment of religious values and engagements. In another way that Norris and Inglehart (2011, p.246) emphasizes that the existential security provides stress free life and satisfy existential survival of their well-being. Once existential survival is met, there is a tendency of losing faith in God. therefore, it is clear that once people don't believe in God, then there is no significance for religion. Thus, gradually reduce religious values from the societies. My understanding is that this modern world makes people take religious

values for granted because it is not mandatory. Therefore, welfare system enhances existential security, thus, support religious values to fade away slowly.

As I have already discussed that Inglehart and Welzel (2005, p. 5) write that cultural changes play a key role in changing religious attitude or sentiments of people in the contemporary society. When societies are modernized, culture and tradition will also be adjusted accordingly so that they can exist in the societies. Therefore, it is emphasized that modernization brought huge cultural changes. The cultural changes are like shifting from one after the other. When survival is met, it will then move to self-expression values. The self-expression values are primarily based on human freedom and choice, where people look for choice, autonomy and creativity but not religious values

On the contrary, Inglehart and Welzel (2005, p.16) write that there are limitations that nature imposed on human but science and technology broke limitations and overcame more less all challenges. Thus, now is challenging divine revelation. What is important here to note that people in the developed countries like the Nordic countries are content with science and technology because, they plays a major role in their lives. The attitude is that science and technology will secure people from all barriers and challenges, therefore, there is no need of a supernatural power. This kind of tendency is prevailing today in our societies. The important of religion is declined greatly in the Nordic countries. It is obvious that when there is decline of believing in God, there is great chance of declining the importance of religion in lives of people, especially lives of young people.

Therefore, there is great decline on religious values because if don't believe in God, then why religion is important and why to attend religious services. These mentalities will grow. This is evident that people are becoming more secular than religious, where religious values has less important especially among the younger generation.

4.4 Religious Practice

One of important factor to measure the effects of modernization and secularization on religious values. Norris and Inglehart (2011, p.21) write that every religion defines its own habitual observance days and events. For instance; Sunday is for Christians but today it is questionable because life style is changing. Therefore, it is interesting to see whether people attend to religious services not. How many people attend to religious services in the Nordic countries? Are all people attend to religious services?

4.4.1 Religious attendance

Religious attendance is one of key indicators to measure the impact of modernization and secularization in the contemporary societies. As I have mentioned that there is a decline in attending to religious services in the Western Europe especially in the Nordic countries. Let's see what is happening to religious attendance in those three countries.

Firstly, I will look at overall attendance in religious services in the Nordic countries. Then I will look individually. I will also analyze the data in three categories of age such as up to 29, 30 – 49 and then age 50 and above, so that it will give clear picture to see who are more frequent to religious services in Finland, Norway and Sweden. There is another interesting point, which I was able to read an article in Fodor's Travel (2018). It says they have beautiful hotels, which were used as churches and monasteries but now are being used hotels and resorts. Therefore, let us see what are the per centages of religious attendance or why churches are empty these days?

Table 20: Attendance of religious services

How often do you attend religious service	Total	Country		
		Finland	Norway	Sweden
More than once a week	1.2	2	0.8	0.8
Once a week	3.6	4.7	3.7	2.4
Once a month	6.2	7.8	6.2	4.7
Only holy days	15.9	23.3	14.9	9.5
Once a year	16.1	16.7	15	16.6
Less often	17.6	19.8	17.6	15.4
Never	39	25.4	41.1	50.5
No answer	0.2	0	0.5	0.1
Don't know	0.1	0	0.2	0
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003

Source: World Values Survey, wave 5, 2005 – 2009, V186

Poor attendance to religious services is increasing. Therefore, religious values are on steady decline in the Nordic countries. The data above (Table 20) illustrates that more than half of the participants say that they don't attend to religious service in Sweden, which is about 50.5 per cent. 41.1 per cent of the participants say they don't attend to religious services in Norway but in Finland such trend is very slow because only 25.4 per cent report that they don't attend to religious services. What striking here to emphasize that people who attend to religious services more than once week is not even 10 per cent in all three countries. In Finland only 2 per cent attend more than once a week but, in Sweden and Norway not even 1 per cent reported that they attend to religious service more than once a week. When we look at age wise data about the attendance to religious services, it will give different view.

Table 21: Attendance to religious services age up to 29

How often do you attend religious services	Age Up to 29			
	Total	Finland	Norway	Sweden
More than once a week	1.2	2.4	0.5	0.5
Once a week	2.8	3.9	2.1	2.5
Once a month	3.6	4.7	2.1	4.2
Only holy days	13.8	17.7	15.5	8.1
Once a year	14.0	18.9	10.4	12.8
Less often	17.8	19.9	20.7	12.6
Never	46.3	31.6	48.2	59.3
Not asked by the interviewer	0.3	0.9	-	-
No answer	0.2	-	0.5	-
(N) Up to 29	573	192	193	188

Source: World Values Survey, wave 5, 2005 - 2009

What could we observe above? It is also clear that young people seldom attend to religious services because nearly half of participants reported that never attend to religious services, while only 2.4 per cent attend to religious services more than once a week in Finland. In Norway and Sweden only 0.5 attend to religious service more than once a week. What is notable here that even young people don't attend to religious services on holy days as well. When it comes to overall, it is only 13.8 per cent very attend to religious services on holy days.

Table 22: Attendance to religious service age 30 to 49

How often do you attend religious services	Total	Age 30 to 49		
		Finland	Norway	Sweden
More than once a week	12.0	1.6	1.4	0.3
Once a week	3.4	4.9	3.8	1.2
Once a month	4.8	6.0	4.8	3.4
Only holy days	16.0	22.5	16.1	8.7
Once a year	16.0	16.9	15.9	15.3
Less often	17.9	22.0	17.8	13.5
Never	40.5	25.9	39.9	57.5
Not asked by the interviewer	0.1	0.2	-	-
Don't know	0.10	-	0.2	-
(N) 30-49	1147	386	416	345

Source: World Values Survey, wave 5, 2005 – 2009, V186

The above data shows similar trend among the age of 30 to 49 (Table 21) that nearly half of the participants reported that they don't attend to religious services but little escalation on holy days which is about 16 per cent in all countries compared to the age group of 29. What would be among another category of age 50 and above?

Table 23: Attendance to religious services at the age of 50 and above

How often do you attend religious services	Total	Age 50 and above		
		Finland	Norway	Sweden
More than once a week	1.2	2.0	0.2	1.2
Once a week	4.1	4.8	4.3	3.2
Once a month	8.6	10.7	9.6	5.8
Only holy days	16.7	26.4	13.5	10.7
Once a year	17.1	15.5	16.3	19.2
Less often	17.2	17.8	15.9	17.9
Never	34.5	22.0	38.0	41.8
Not asked by the interviewer	0.1	0.4	-	-
No answer	0.4	-	1.0	0.2
Don't know	0.1	-	0.2	-
(N) 50 and up	1,321	436	416	470

Source: World Values Survey, wave 5, 2005 – 2009, V186

Attending to religious services are poor among older people as well because overall 34.5 per cent of people in all three countries don't attend to religious services. This trend is high in Sweden and Norway, but it is little slow in Finland. Atlas European Values conducted a survey on attendance

to religious services in 2008. According to the survey, those who attend to religious services at least once a week apart from wedding, funeral and christening is 7 per cent in Finland, 9 per cent in Norway and Sweden. therefore, more than half of the people do not attend to religious services.

Therefore, it is also evidently illustrating that the Nordic countries are more secular in the contemporary world, where religious values are slowly declining. Here I just want to restate what Furseth (2018) mention about religious attendance in the Nordic countries.

Table 24: Religious attendance in Nordic countries

Question	1990-1993			2008-2010		
	Finland	Norway	Sweden	Finland	Norway	Sweden
At least monthly	11	13	10	10	12	8
Special Holidays	23	22	13	15	24	9
Once a year	16	11	11	15	11	16
Less often/never	50	54	66	59	54	66
Don't know	0	0	0	1	0	1
N	584	1228	1017	1134	1086	1161

Source: Religious Complexity in the Public Sphere: Comparing Nordic Countries (Furseth, 2018. P. 56)

What does it say about religious attendance in the Nordic countries? According to the data above (Table 24) that people seldom participate in religious services in the Nordic countries. When comparing all three countries, it is also clear that almost those countries are picturing similar trend on religious participation. More than half of the participants reported that they never attend to religious services. Comparing both set of data between 1990-1993 and 2008-2010, it clearly shows that there is very little difference, but overall people do not show interest in religious services.

4.4.2 Membership of Churches and religious organizations

As I have discussed in chapter 2 that people want to remain outside the faith in the Nordic countries (Furseth, 2018). This is also an outcome of modernization and secularization. As I have mentioned that generally people became members of the Church when they received baptism but now it is not the case. There are different churches where no infant baptism allowed. There are other religious organization provide sacraments especially, marriage and other services. Churches are not only the place to baptize or perform other religious service today.

Table 25: Membership of Church or religious organization

Membership of Church or religious organization	Total	Country		
		Finland	Norway	Sweden
Not a member	43.0	20.8	62.1	45.8
Inactive member	45.8	61.3	29.6	46.7
Active member	10.9	17.5	8.3	6.9
No answer	0.3	0.3	0	0.6
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003

Source: World Values Survey, wave 2005-2009, V24

The data shows that when comes to membership of churches and religious organization, we could see that almost half of the population not members. Even though they are members, they are not active because the data (Table 25) shows 45.8 per cent members are not active, whereas only 11 per cent are active members in all three countries. There is a decline of membership to churches and religious organizations in the Nordic countries. We will look commitment of churches and religious organization under religious attitude.

There is a tendency of approaching churches for only special occasions (Table26). We have observed that less membership in the Nordic countries, it will also affect receiving sacraments in the churches.

4.4.3 Important of Religious Sacraments

Table 26: Important of having religious ceremony on special occasions

Country	Important to hold a Religious service			Important to hold a religious service for death			Important to hold a religious service for a marriage		
	1990	1999	2008	1990	1999	2008	1990	1999	2008
Finland	58	84	69	83	90	74	64	83	63
Norway	66	-	56	81	-	81	70	-	61
Sweden	56	60	50	80	78	68	59	62	58

Source: Atlas European Values

The Atlas European Values shows (Table 26) that people look for churches for special occasion such as christening, marriages and funerals but not all people. This is interesting to point out that

all most all three countries show similar attitudes towards ceremonial attendance to churches. When look the data comparatively, it is observable that there is decline time to time. Therefore, at least people approach churches and religious institutions for sacramental activities, but it is also declining.

4.4.4 Prayers in the lives of people and experience with Church

Table 27: Prayer in their lives

Country	Daily	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
Finland	18	15	30	37
Norway	18	12	20	50
Sweden	11	10	16	62

Source: PEW Research Center, Data from April to August 2017

Prayer is one of the keys for people of different denominations to be connected with God or super natural force/spirit, whatever it might be of the person. For any religion, prayer is the heart, which on the other had bind people together with God as well. Today, frequency of prayers is so much declined. The PEW research center (2018) published recently that daily prayer is declined in the contemporary societies but those who seldom and never pray, is increased considerably (Table 27). Among the three countries, Finland shows little lower value of those who never pray but it does not mean they more religious than others. The other two countries show high rate of those who seldom or never pray, which are 50 per cent for Norway and 62 per cent for Sweden.

Therefore, prayer that connects people and God, become less important in the lives of people in the contemporary world, especially in the Nordic countries. The connection between human and God is prayer, but the value of prayer is declining in today's world. It is clearly illustrating that the modernized world eats away the habits of prayer, thus, breaks the bond between God and people.

Table 28: People's experience with Churches

Churches give answers for the problems of family life	Total	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Yes	26.6	46.8	15.6	17.4
No	63.6	46.2	81.2	63.2
No answer	6.6	0.3	0.4	19.4
Don't know	3.1	6.4	2.8	0

Source: World Values Survey, wave 5, 2005-2009, V 189

Believe in God, important of religion and other values are slowly fading away. This shows that people's experience with churches are not commendable. The data (Table 28) above shows that people's experience with churches are not satisfactory level especially Norway and Sweden. Only about 20 per cent of participants agree that churches give answers to the problems of family life, while more than 60 per cent say they don't agree that churches provide answers to their family problems.

This situation is prevailing in the contemporary Nordic countries. Let me pause a question? Why such trend is growing today? Why people think in this way? There might be other reasons. But for me it is interesting to bring Aldridge (2000, p. 66) writes that modernization brought advanced technologies and expertise and further Aldridge points out that the situation today is like specialists without spirits, and sensualist without hearts. Initially, churches provided humanistic services to all people because church was the central in the society. Today, those services are available outside the churches especially states also provide all facilities and services, since they are concentrating on social welfare. Thus, lessening significance of churches among people. What Furseth (2018, p. 41) that Nordic countries are much progressed in security and welfare delivery system and take care of all its citizens, where churches are supposed to be confined to only religious matters.

Further Furseth (ibid, p. 47-48) writes that there prevail different opinions among people especially who left Churches. Those left church, felt that Church lost its significance because they are more conservative, lack religious identities, beliefs and especially unwilling to pay tax. These reasons might be different country to country. But it brings bitter experience for people so that they are

leaving. Therefore, membership with religious organization also decline (Table 25 about membership with Churches or religious organization).

4.4.5 Discussion

In the modern world, religious practices become unimportant in daily lives of many people in the Europe especially, in the Nordic countries. Because, there is no binding force over and mandatory becomes choice. As I have already discussed above that the Nordic countries are more secular than other European countries. Since I am measuring the impact of secularization and modernization in the Nordic countries, I would here discuss certain factors to see the effects.

As many of us know, that one of the indicators to measure secularization is church attendance, membership, prayers, sacraments and attachment to Churches. Firstly, I would bring what Furseth (2018, p.55) writes that roughly half of the Nordic population never attend religious meetings, but such trend is comparatively high in Sweden. The World Values Survey conducted in 2005-2009, which illustrates that 25.4 per cent of people never attend to religious services in Finland but only 2 per cent attend to religious services once a month. Comparatively, Norway and Sweden stand high of poor religious attendance because the results show 41.1 percent in Norway and 50.5 per cent in Sweden never attend to religious services (refer Table 20).

According to the Statics Norway (2016) that there is steady decline in number of church attendances in Norway. It presents that the number of services and persons attended to the services declined in recent years. The reduction in attendance from 2014 to 2015 was 122 000 or 2 per cent but the greatest fall is on Sunday services with 104 000. What is notable is that averagely only 93 people attended to each religious service.

One of the reasons, Furseth et all (2018, p. 63) suggest that expansion of middle class into higher education and employment in service sector and in welfare state related jobs such as education, health and social care affect religion very much in the Nordic countries. Especially, they suggest that there was a transformation with regard to women education and employment, which also changed family structure and pattern in the Nordic countries. This had considerable secularizing effect on women because traditional life style and Christian practices are connected, thus reduced marriages and made women to follow men in a secular direction. When women are directed

towards secular direction, their children will also follow them. That's why, it is observable that poor church attendance among young people in the Nordic countries (Table 21).

This has some connection with existential security (refers chapter 2), which is emphasized by Inglehart and Norris (2011, p. 246). Greve (2007) also writes that welfare delivery system also supports to poor attendance to churches because, education and employment ensure a secured future, which means future survival is guaranteed. On the contrary, as mentioned in the literature, that (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005, p. 5) contemporary cultural changes, which is named as a shift from survival values to self-expression values. The self-expression values are primarily based on human freedom and choice, where people look for choice, autonomy and creativity. Today, many people think that Churches are too conservative, therefore, people look for alternatives, which are available.

Obviously, it is true that there is a steady decline of membership to churches or religious institutions in the Nordic countries. In the results from World Values Survey between 2005-2009, it is analyzed that almost half of the population are not members to churches or religious organizations. In Norway and Sweden 62.1 per cent and 45.8 per cent are not members to church or religious organization, whereas in Finland only 20.8 per cent is not members to church or religious organization. (Table 25). When we look at how far people involve in receiving sacraments that people don't show much interest in religious sacraments (Table 26). There is steady decline in receiving sacraments in churches because in Sweden only one in three hold wedding in Church (Figure 2).

The reason for such trend is that many people found religion outside of holistic milieus (Furseth et al, 2018, p. 65). What they really suggest is that there are general changes towards individualized and subjective approach to religious and secular worldviews and practices. The emphasis is on the growth of individual choice, thus make people to decide to remain where they want. Therefore, religion is a matter of personal choice and there is shift from 'truth to self'.

Another interesting fact is that formation of humanist organizations by the cultural elites (ibid), where we could see the secular options. The humanist organizations initiated to provide christening or name giving ceremonies, confirmation, which are popular among people today. There is growth of accepting different opinions with regard to religious beliefs and practices in the Nordic countries. The moral question in the Nordic countries is to adopt contemporary changes to

religion/churches because of the development, changing worldviews and individual freedom. For example; as already mentioned that Church of Norway and Sweden decided to allow same sex marriages to be held in the churches but there are still debate on going between those who favor and oppose within the churches.

It is also discussed the membership (Table 25) in the Nordic countries decline due to diversity (ibid, 65-66) because the Nordic countries are no more homogenous because of immigration in the recent time changed demography in the Nordic region. The growing religious diversity in the Nordic countries also contributed to the decline of Christianity but the interesting is that religion outside Christianity is growing. This means religion/Christianity is already declined.

Therefore, we could see that there is strong decline of people in religious practices due to the several factors discussed above. We also see that decline of church attendance, membership, prayer and sacrament are predominantly decline in the contemporary Nordic countries because modernization and secularization influenced very much into religious values and continue to change.

Therefore, in this section, I have clearly illustrated in the discussion based on few findings with literature that people in today's world are no more interested in religious life style, while they show more interest in other pattern of life according to the changes taking place in the contemporary world.

Therefore, religious attendance is highly decline in those countries, while shows that religious ceremony has some sort of involvement but not to a great extend except wedding and funeral rites. When comes to church or religious organization membership and prayer, which also show that people express too little concern in the Nordic countries.

Therefore, it definitely justifies that modernization and secularization played important role in changing religious values in the Western Europe but especially in the Nordic countries Finland, Norway and Sweden. therefore, religious values are on the edge of decline today.

4.5 Religious Attitudes

Another important area in declining religious values is religious attitude in the contemporary societies in the Nordic countries. Here, I will give you my findings with few illustrations on how people feel about religious expression. Today, people do not want to describe them as religious especially the young generation. While I was in my first year, I was told that people don't want to know about their religion or generally, people in Norway don't ask about their religion. It is true because there seems to be less opportunities for religion to be visible. As Furseth (2018, p. 61) writes that it becomes common that lesser opportunities for religion to become visible and especially in the systemized welfare states of the Nordic countries. The question why religious attitude started fading away.

4.5.1 Religious person

It is the question how people describe themselves religious or not today because, it is a pluralistic society, where religion is not important as we discussed above. Let's see below what people express about their religiosity.

Table 29: Religious person

Would you say that you are religious?	Total	Country		
		Finland	Norway	Sweden
A religious person	44	58.5	40.9	32.7
Not a religious person	45.1	35.8	51.3	48.2
A convinced atheist	8.8	3	6.7	16.8
Not asked by the interviewer	0	0.1	0	0
No answer	1	0.3	0.6	2.2
Don't know	1	2.4	0.5	0
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2009, V187

My findings above show that how people describe themselves in the contemporary societies on their religiosity. When looking as a whole on the Nordic country based on Finland, Norway and Sweden that explains almost half of the participants say that they are not religious. When we look at individually, it is also showing that Finland is little low in rating not religious, but in Norway and Sweden approximately 50 per cent of participants fall into not religious category.

The important is the growth of convinced atheist, which is 8.8 per cent over all but this group of people are growing in Sweden, which is 16.8 per cent. This situation shows a gradual decline that people who don't want to describe them as religious in the Nordic countries. On the contrary, PEW research center (2008) published their survey about how people say about themselves like religious, spiritual, some are religious and spiritual, and others are neither religious nor spiritual (Table 30). This is to note that there are few variations between both data of World Values Survey and PEW Survey.

4.5.2 How people describe themselves

Table 30: Describing Religious or Spiritual

Country	Religious	Spiritual	Religious and Spiritual	No Religious and Spiritual
Finland	32	38	25	54
Norway	27	21	10	62
Sweden	19	27	12	66

PEW research Center (2018), Attitude towards spirituality and religion

The survey data above illustrate the prevailing situation in the Nordic countries because it is published in 2018. Accordingly, half of the people describe themselves neither religious nor spiritual in the three countries, which is almost 60 per cent altogether. When looking at individual country, it is apparent that Sweden is the highest in describing neither religious nor spiritual and Norway as well. Comparatively, Finland is little low, but it is in the same boats. What it suggests that there is a tendency of growing 'none', which means they don't belong to any affiliation. Furseth (2018, p. 43) also writes that there is the growth of 'NONES' in the Nordic countries because, people chose to remain outside any faith.

4.5.3 People's aspects of souls and supernatural force

The PEW research published this survey as well. Here it is discussing that how people think of souls and supernatural forces in today's context. Our general understanding that It is the tradition that all people believed that they have souls and there is a supernatural power over us but when time passed by, the advancement of science and technology in deed broke the understanding of the

concept and attitudes. Thus, gradually made people to think in different ways that we could see below how people now think of that they have souls or not.

Table 31: people believe they have soul

Country	I have soul and physical body	I feel a connection to something that cannot be seen or measured scientifically	There are NO spiritual forces in the universe, only the laws of nature	When people die, that is the end; there is NO life after death
Finland	73	46	49	42
Norway	70	46	48	46
Sweden	39	39	54	50

Source: PEW Research Center, Attitudes toward spirituality and religion

According to the PEW research center (2018) that people in Finland and Norway believe that they have souls and physical bodies, which is an average of 70 per cent, whereas only 39 per cent of people in Sweden claim that they have souls and physical bodies. Another striking claim that nearly 50 per cent people say that there is no life after death and that is the end of life. On the contrary, some people believe that there is no spiritual but only law of nature, which is approximately 50 per cent. Therefore, half of the people don't believe that they have souls and physical bodies and there is only law of nature, not spiritual force in three countries. The book of John 5: 24 in the Bible says, "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life" (biblestudytools.com). This is clear that people began not to believe even the Bible as well.

4.5.4 Spirituality and its acceptance

Table 32: Status of spirituality

Country	Reject Spirituality	Mixed View	Embraced Spirituality
Finland	32	24	45
Norway	33	26	39
Sweden	47	25	28

Source: PEW Research Center, Attitudes toward spirituality and religion

Do people accept spirituality or reject spirituality? Mostly people reject spirituality. According to the data (Table 32) that there is also a growth of rejecting spirituality today in the society. The question is that do you reject spirituality or embrace spirituality? The answer is that many people reject accordingly 32,33 and 47 per cent in Finland, Norway and Sweden. But it is very important to note that there is a mixed view which means unable to distinguish where they stand. Because people are in doubtful situation in deciding. Generally, people of Finland show highest in embracing spirituality than rejecting which is 45 per cent. This is also to be noted that Sweden stands highest in all survey, and here is 47 per cent reject spirituality, while 27 per cent embrace it.

4.5.5 Sentimental attitude towards religion

The sentiment that binds people and religion together. But today, there is a growth of negative sentiment towards religion in the Nordic countries.

Table 33: Religious sentiment

Country	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Religion helps me choose between right and wrong	47	44	30
Religion gives meaning and purpose to my life	38	40	25
Overall, religion causes more harm than good	41	48	50
Science makes religion unnecessary in my life	34	42	42

Source: PEW Research Center, Attitudes toward spirituality and religion

The data explain that there is a growing tendency of negative sentiment towards religion. This is very striking statement about religion because this is why people leave church, I suppose. The data shows nearly half of the participants say that religion causes more harm than good, while positive about religion is little lower. More than 40 percent of the participants from Finland and Norway agree that religion helps them to distinguish between right and wrong and also give meaning and purpose to their lives. Nearly 40 per cent say that science makes religion irrelevant to their lives. When looking at over all, there is a negative sentiment towards religion. This data also pictures Sweden as more secular than other two countries.

4.5.6 Religion is positive or negative

Generally, many believed that religion is a positive, but the data here says negative or a confused situation. According to the data (Table 34) that half of the participants in Sweden claim highest that religion is negative, while Norway and Finland 45 and 36 per cent. There is no single country with 50 per cent agreeing that religion is positive. Each country stands in different position in the Nordic region. Almost half of the people in the Nordic countries show a negative attitude towards religion, which is 36, 45 and 50 per cent in Finland, Norway and Sweden, while positive attitude towards religion is low. What is very common in all three countries is the growth of doubtful situation. The mixed view of religion, whether religion is negative or positive, is 26, 17 and 26 per cent in Finland, Norway and Sweden. Therefore, I could say that people attitude towards religion is changing and becomes doubtful. This explain that religion is significantly losing its place in the society.

Table 34: Viewing Religion as negative or positive

Country	Negative	Mixed	Positive
Finland	36	26	38
Norway	45	17	37
Sweden	50	26	23

Source: PEW Research Center, Attitudes toward spirituality and religion

So far, I have illustrated about the changing attitudes of people towards religion. The world is changing, where people also change their thoughts, attitudes, thinking pattern. This kind of attitudes influence their religiosity. Therefore, there are remarkable changes with regard to describing religious or not, believing souls and physical bodies and acceptance of spirituality and so on but those changes are more negative than positive.

Therefore, it shows a tendency, where religious values are steadily declining in the Nordic countries. This clearly indicates that the Nordic countries are moving toward secular direction, where religion is not important. There are several reasons behind, and my intention has been explained in the literature.

4.5.7 Discussion

My argument is that religious attitude is declining in the contemporary society in the Nordic countries. I have arrived at the conclusion with my findings, which I have illustrated above in each heading.

I have clearly described the current situation in the Nordic countries because Furseth (2018, p. 292) writes that there is a tendency, where secularity is growing especially on individual level. This have been measured in this section. Therefore, it is assumed that people in the Nordic countries are becoming less religious and more secular. They chose to remain outside any faith because it is their individual choice. I have mentioned that more than 50 per cent of people don't want to say that they are religious, while considerable people are convinced atheist in the Nordic countries. Especially, it is growing as well. Those trends are more prominent in Sweden but progressively growing in Finland and Norway.

Why religious values are declining in the Nordic countries? Furseth (ibid) argues that there seems to be a question of dogma, faith and practices, thus affect several religious traditions, not only Christianity. And also, Norris and Inglehart (2011, p.79) argue that when society moves from traditional communities to modern communities, their common practices such as personal piety, expression of spirituality and habitual observances, will also decline. This also bring negative attitudes towards religion. As we have seen above that many people don't agree that they have souls because they might be atheist. That is why Furseth (2018, p. 43) writes there is a growth of 'NONES' in the Nordic countries. Those people remain without any religious affiliation in the society. As I have already indicated that higher literacy level and education in the Nordic countries also contribute to towards making the Nordic countries more secular. The process of rationalization is another contributor to question religion because today people started question dogma which means seeking for reasons in every encounter.

When looking at how political institutions play role towards religious attitudes. According to Furseth (2018, p. 295) that the Nordic countries attempted to adjust their political system from one dominant religion to religious diversity. As I have discussed earlier that the Nordic countries are no more homogenous because they are pluralistic countries, where every religion equally supported, thus influenced to bring changes even in the Constitution (refer Separation of Church and States). We could see that there is growth of immigrants in the recent time. This made all

Nordic countries as pluralistic countries. Thus, diminishing dominant religious culture, tradition and practices in the modern societies in the Nordic region. What I have discussed have some form of impact on religious/Christian values in the contemporary societies. There is necessity for the states to protect all people regardless of country, religion and so on because, the new Article 2 in the Constitution in 2012 says “ ... The Constitution shall ensure democracy, a state based on the rule of law and human rights” (Cranmer, 2017), Therefore, political systems try to modify or amend the existing policies in order to treat all religions equally.

Another interesting point with Inglehart and Norris (2011, p. 61) that “those most filled with the spirit of capitalism tend to be indifferent, if not hostile, to the church”. This explains that people who acquired or acquiring more wealth in the societies, try to be different. This means modernizing their traditional and habitual life style, which might be religion/Christian heritage. Therefore, the modernized world is about acquiring materialistic wealth, which slowly detach people from religious orientation. Therefore, people are leaving churches because new life style does not match with Christian values. Once people become affluent there is more chances of getting away from churches. The materialistic acquisition ensure security which, Inglehart and Norris say (2011, p. 19) that people who grow with more secure situation and tend to diminish religious values. This in deed reiterates that when people acquire more wealth and material to build up their physical and environmental securities, their religiosity will have a negative impact.

Therefore, advanced industrial societies of Nordic countries are moving towards more secular direction due to the rising levels of human security and human development. This means the influence of modernization and secularization greatly weaken religious/Christian values in the affluent societies. Therefore, religious values are gradually declining in the Nordic countries.

4.6 Religious Anomie

What is anomie? According to Encyclopedia Britannica (2018) that Anomie is condition of instability in societies or individuals, which resulted a collapse of standards and values because of lack of purpose. why I am using it here as religious anomie because Émile Durkheim believed that the reason for one type of suicide was due to the breakdown of social standard. I here want to translate into the changes taking place in the society, which I would call breakdown of social standard.

My argument is that modernization and secularization are contributing for breaking down of religious standard in the contemporary societies, which can be called morality. I am going to see some examples for religious anomie in the societies.

Firstly, marriage is one of the sacraments in mainland Churches especially in Christianity. As far as I understand that, divorce is not allowed in mainland Churches and few other Churches as well because, the Bible (Matthew 16:6) says that “So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate.” This was and is the tradition of not breaking marriage in any form. But today there are remarkable changes taking place over and over, where it is an individual choice. Therefore, based on Bible, divorce is not allowed in the Church. And According to Luke (16:18) and Mark (10:6-8) that “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.” It seems very strange in the modernized world.

4.6.1 Status of marriage and divorce and same sex couple in three countries

Here, I am going bring my finding about marriage between man and woman, same sex marriage and in Finland, Norway and Sweden. As mentioned above, marriage is a sacrament in Christianity, which is expected to happen between man and woman but today, it is changing.

Table 35: Marriage and Divorce in Norway

	2017	2018	Changes
Marriages contracted	22 111	20 949	-1 162
Divorces	9 848	9 545	-303
Separations	10 594	10 630	36

Source: Statistics Norway, 2019 (number are not in per centage)

I have given data of two years, 2017 and 2018. What could be observable in the above given data (Table 30 & 31). Apparently, it is clearly illustrating that there is a decline in contracting marriages in Norway. There were 22111 marriages contracted in 2017 but in 2018 there were 20949, which shows 1161 less than previous year. At the same time, divorce is also increasing comparatively. Above all, what is important to note that there were total marriages in 2018 is 20949 but divorce and separation are 9545 and 10630. Therefore, it explains that the important of marriage is

declining. The Sacrament is marriage doesn't have values among Christians, therefore, people look for living together or cohabiting, which have already been discussed.

According to Atlas Europe Values conducted a survey in 2008, that says, 88 per cent people in Norway agree that it is alright to live together without being married (atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu). This was the situation in 2008 but now let's just imagine. After 10 years, it might have increased remarkable. One of the important issues that this generation is facing marriage and family issues, where morality is not considered as virtue. World Values Survey reports that 44.9 per cent of people agree that a child needs a home with father and mother (worldvaluessurvey.org, 2005-2009, V57), which means more than half of the people say that a child does not need a home with father and mother. How do we describe this situation today? Therefore, a child needs either mother or father with a home or child does not need father and mother because someone there to care. Is this the situation now? This type of situation is prevailing in the contemporary Nordic societies. Then what is happening to same sex marriages in the Norway.

Table 36: Marriage and divorce among same sex couple in Norway

	2017	2018	Changes
Marriages contracted	333	331	-2
Divorces	91	80	-11
Separations	94	141	47

Source: Statistics Norway, 2019 (numbers are not in per centage but number)

Why do people choose same sex marriages in the contemporary Nordic countries? They are not satisfied with ordinary marriages or modern culture forces them to involve same sex marriages. This needs to be explored. People already started to choose same sex marriage in the contemporary societies, but even this kind of marriages also don't last. When comes to marriage, divorce and separation among same sex couple, there is not much successive progress made because, the data above shows a very little difference but there are many separations among same sex couples in 2018, which are 141 separations. Here we could see that there is change that even same sex couple could not live together for longer time. Where is the problem? This both suggests that there is a problem not with marriages but with modern culture, which kills morality. I wanted to give my personal experiences here. I met a man in Norway, and we were discussing, then I asked do you

have kids. He said that I have two kids and my wife has one kid. At the beginning, I couldn't understand but later I understood the situation.

As a whole, the sacrament of marriage is declining, at the same time divorce and separation are also showing different trend in Norway. But Atlas European Values says that only 45 per cent of people in Norway agree that marriage or long-term relationship is necessary to be happy in 2008 and others don't (atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu).

Table 37: Marriages and divorces in Sweden

	2017	2018	Changes
Marriages contracted	52497	50796	-1701
Divorces	24210	24958	748

Source: statistikdatabasen.scb.se (not in per centage)

When looking at Sweden, which shows highest number of marriages were recorded in 2018 but comparatively it is less than 2017 (Table37), which is 1701. The data also share that almost half of the marriages ended up in divorces. The prevailing situation is complicated because, it shows less marriage but high divorces comparing 2017 with 2018.

The data for same sex marriage could not be collected in the database but the Eurostat (ec.europa.eu) reports that about 652 women and 498 men registered in Sweden married a person of the same sex. But in 2013, 4 883 women and 3 962 men registered that they were same-sex in marriage or registered partner. Sweden has the highest numbers in same sex marriages in the Nordic countries.

What is very striking to note that in Sweden according to Eurostat; that it becomes a common phenomenon living together without being married. In 2011, 1.3 million people at the age of 21 and above started living together, which is the highest numbers recorded in Europe. Another trend in Sweden is that 54.4 percent of the children were born to an unmarried mother in 2013, which means most of the children born in Sweden out of wedlock (ibid). How to describe such situation in the Nordic societies? Is this not breaking of social morality or social standard? If it so, what would the end? Whatever, it might be, but it is a social issue, which religion does not allow but it is happening now. The modernized contemporary societies in the Nordic countries creating a

society with fatherless children, or how do we suggest? There are different opinions based on secular values, but morality is an issue in the contemporary societies.

Moving to Finland, that doesn't seem much different with its counterpart in marriages and especially in same sex marriages. Let's see the below data what it explains to us.

Table 38: Marriage and divorce in Finland

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Contracted marriages	31 008	27 238	26 551	26 735	26 503	26 542
Divorces	13 251	13 989	13 915	14 170	13 775	13 485

Source: Statistics Finland

The data above (Table 38) explains the current situation of marriages and divorces in Finland. This gives an unpredictable situation about marriages and divorce up to 2018. The data show almost half of marriages ended up in divorce in Finland, which is 13485 in 2018. What is happening to marriages even in Finland? Why marriages are not lasting? Finland shows considerable religious situation in all other data but with regard to marriage, it stands equally with Norway and Sweden. The Atlas European Values (atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu). reports that only 28 per cent agree that in order to be happy, long term of marriage relationship is necessary. Therefore, such negative tendency may grow in Finland, where traditional marriages will fade away. According to Statistics Finland that the total 26542 marriages recorded in 2017 and among them 554 were marriages between same-sex couples but divorce and separation are not reported separately.

The sacrament of marriage has little value today in the societies. This suggests that there is a strong decline in marriages but high rate of divorces and separation in the Nordic countries. On the contrary, it raises special concern over social morality because, many children were born out of wedlock or unmarried women/couples. As I have mentioned above this clearly shows that social standards are declining. The below I give a general picture of three countries about marriages and divorces in 2017 and 2018 for a quick view.

Table 39: Marriage and divorce in all three countries in Finland, Norway and Sweden

Country	2017		2018	
	Marriage	Divorce	Marriage	Divorce
Finland	26503	13775	26542	13485
Norway	22111	9848	20949	9545
Sweden	52497	24210	50796	24589

Source: derived from above analysis of each countries

The above data illustrate the contemporary situation in the Nordic countries. What could be seen above (Table 39) that almost half of the marriages ended up in divorce in the three countries in 2017 and 2018. Therefore, there is a steady decline of marriages in those countries. According to Eurostat (ec.europa.eu) which clearly explains about marriages in Finland, that it is not possible to see the family structure in Finland because of the latest trend of cohabitation, which began in 1970 and 1980 but this kind of life style is more common especially among young generation. According to 2011 population census, 15 per cent of Finns aged at least 20 were cohabiting. For at least nine out of ten young adults, cohabitation was their first union. The current trend might be more than 2011, which could be assumed based on the report above.

4.6.2 Child Quality requirement

As far as I know that foundation is very important in every one's life. Family is best and core of the foundation for children to learn qualities for their rest of lives. Therefore, generally, all children are encouraged to learn good qualities in their families because the proverb says, "Charity begins at home". Because, children's hearts and minds are not like pencils and white papers, where write and erase and then write but they are like pens and white papers, where write but cannot erase. Even if erase, it would hurt and tear paper. It is very responsible task to bring up children with social and personal morals. Therefore, children are basically encouraged to learn at home from their fathers, mothers and the environments. What we see below is interesting that parents

encourage their children to learn very important qualities for their children lives but the qualities vary drastically with regard to religious faith (Table 40).

Table 40: Child quality on religious faith

The question is will you encourage your children to learn the following qualities such as religious faith, independence, imagination, feeling of responsibility, and obedience. The responses are very striking to read.

Child qualities: religious faith	Total	Country		
		Finland	Norway	Sweden
Mentioned	8.9	12	8.6	6.1
Not mentioned	91.1	88	91.4	93.9
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003
Child qualities: independence				
Mentioned	78.9	69.3	90	77.4
Not mentioned	21.1	30.7	10	22.6
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003
Child qualities: imagination				
Mentioned	49.9	37.9	54.6	57.1
Not mentioned	50.1	62.1	45.4	42.9
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003
Child qualities: feeling of responsibility				
Mentioned	90.2	90.1	89.1	91.4
Not mentioned	9.8	9.9	10.9	8.6
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003
Child qualities: obedience				
Mentioned	25.7	32.7	28.7	15.6
Not mentioned	74.3	67.3	71.3	84.4
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003

Source: World Values Survey, waves 2005-2009, V19

I have given five qualities above. Among the five qualities, parents were asked to mention what kind of qualities they think important for their children to learn. The survey provides different answers from parents. It has somehow made me very strange that many parents did not mention religious faith as expected level. Only 8.9 per cent of 3042 people mentioned that they would

encourage their children to learn religious faith at home in the three countries, but others didn't select religious faith. It is about 91 per cent of parents didn't select religious faith in the three countries that they would consider important that their children to learn. At the same time, only 25 per cent reported that they would consider important to learn. What is happening to religious values in the contemporary Nordic countries? Many parents encourage their children to learn independence, imagination, feeling of responsibility rather than religious faith and obedience in the contemporary societies.

what does the situation explain to us today? Is this effect of modernization and secularization? Or else Is it due to the changing role of women in the current societies? Today, the situation of women is heavily changing. Furseth (2018. p.40) writes that due to the public policies on gender equality, female employment and institutional gender equality, changed role of women today in the welfare states, thus, attributing to the different development in children's lives in Nordic countries. There are several reasons behind the scenes according to my understanding after doing this research;

- It may be a growing tendency of times that children spend with their parents especially with mother are very less than nannies/caretakers in the day care centers in today's context.
- Growing divorces don't give space for children to grow with parental care and affection
- Requirement of modern life style and the culture, where parents are forced to engage in full time employment.

Many of the children in the Nordic countries are not encouraged to involve in religious activities which motivate them towards religious faith. If it so, then what would be the future situation? Are these effects of modernization and secularization?

4.6.3 Peoples' attitudes towards other people with strong religious belief

As we have seen that there is a decline in religious values in the Nordic countries. At the same time secular values are also growing in entire Europe especially more prominent in the Western Europe. thus, has changed people to adopt such values more quickly than religious values. Gradually, when people live more with secular values make them to react differently towards people with strong religious beliefs. What we see below that shows how people think for their neighbors or other people with strong religious beliefs.

Table 41: People’s reaction towards people with strong religious beliefs

Better if more people with strong religious beliefs	Total	Country		
		Finland	Norway	Sweden
Agree strongly	1.7	2.3	1.9	0.8
Agree	6.1	9.3	4.3	4.6
Neither agree nor disagree	14.5	21.1	9.1	13.4
Disagree	29.9	42.5	10.5	37
Strongly disagree	46.7	23.7	73.2	42.8
No answer	0.7	0.1	0.5	1.6
Don’t know	0.5	0.9	0.6	0
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003

Source: world values survey, 2005-2009, wave 5, V196

What is given above may be the contemporary situation in the Nordic countries that people do not like other people with strong religious beliefs. This survey shows a different type of trend in the Nordic countries, because many seem to be different. Over all in three countries, only 8.8 per cent (strongly agree and agree) response positively that they agree people with strong religious beliefs. But 76.6 per cent (strongly disagree and disagree) response negatively that they do not accept people with strong religious beliefs.

When looking at individual level, Norway is showing highest that 73.2 per cent response that they disagree that it is not better if more people with strong religious beliefs and Finland and Sweden are little behind, but such situation is growing considerably.

4.6.4 People on politicians and their belief

So far, I have discussed about people on their religious values. But here what is interesting to see that people also have opinion of their politicians and their religious beliefs. There are people with different opinions but generally, people expect their politician to be neutral. In the contemporary Nordic countries, it seems to be indifferent that people think that those who are in politics are expected to be less religious in their public lives. It is assumable that when those who do not believe in God in public office, they will encourage their followers in the same direction, or their supporters will follow them. The data (Table 42) shows below with different point of opinions of people of their politicians in the Nordic countries.

Table 42: People’s expectation of politicians on their religious belief

Politicians who don’t believe in God unfit for public office	Total	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Agree strongly	2	4	1.4	0.7
Agree	3.6	5.3	2.4	2.9
Neither agree nor disagree	11.8	19.7	6.2	9.6
Disagree	29.4	43.2	8.8	36.4
Strongly disagree	52.1	26.1	80.4	49.4
No answer	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.9
Don’t know	0.6	1.4	0.3	0
(N)	3042	1014	1025	1003

Source: World Values Survey, Wave 5, 2005-2009, V194

Generally speaking, many people don’t want person with religious beliefs in politics (Table 42). This shows that only 5.6 per cent (strongly agree and agree) people say their politician are expected to be religious in the Nordic countries but 81.5 per cent do not want their politician with religious beliefs in public office. When looking at individual score on their stand, it is clear that people of Norway do not want their politicians with religious beliefs, which is the highest of 80 per cent, Sweden is second, but I have discussed Sweden is more secular than other two countries, but the result is different.

When looking at overall or individually about the three countries among the Nordic countries, they are more secular. Therefore, it is inevitable that people expect their leaders in politics to be irreligious or less religiosity. I am assuming that such people in politics or in power will not definitely encourage Government to support or unite with states.

4.6.5 People’s view of Church and Government

What do people think of Church and Government in the contemporary Nordic countries? Do they agree that Government and Church to be united or separated? This is to see what really people respond in relation Church, Government and their policies in the Nordic countries. The data I taken from PEW Research Center under Religion and Society.

Table 43: People’s view of Church and Government

Country	Government policies must support religious values and beliefs	Religion must be kept from Government policies
Finland	15	80
Norway	36	59
Sweden	20	77

Source: PEW Research Center (2018) on Religion and Society

According to the data (Table 43) generally, people that in the contemporary societies, agree that Government must not support religion and separated from Government. Overall, people in the Nordic countries don’t want Church and Government together, because more than 60 per cent of people believe that Government and religion must be separated in all three Nordic countries. At the same time, only 15 per cent agree that Government must support religion in Finland but in Norway 36 per cent and in Sweden only 20 per cent agree for such statement.

Therefore, it is clear that people become more secular and they expect Government to be secular than religious, especially the politicians. There is little possibility for religious values in such situation.

4.6.6 Discussion

What I have already illustrated are about religious anomie. What I try here to portray that there are religious values tied with social standard. Those tied social standards are fading away from the contemporary societies. The findings above clearly demonstrate that there is tendency of breaking those set standard in the modernized societies.

As made aware, that family is the core of a societies. This family becomes means a husband and a wife with children. But this kind of family is slowly fading away in the modernized world. What I have tabled above that people became less attached to marriages but interested in temporary relationship. As mentioned, many young people are interested in living together than married, thus also resulting numbers of children born out of wedlock in the Nordic countries.

Another social standard is broken due to numbers of divorces and separation. For any issue in family or other areas of lives, separation is not then end. If separation is end, then everything needs to be separated. This clear that there are huge numbers of divorces reported in the Nordic countries, thus suggest people are not interested in permanent relationship in name of sacrament through churches.

Concurrently, people are not interested to educate children on religious faith. The very prominent example is illustrated above, where I have simply explained that how parents think of their children in acquiring qualities at home and outside. The data on child quality clearly illustrates that out of five qualities, religious faith was not considerably encouraged by parents that their children to learn at home. Other qualities were encouraged to learn at home. Why parents don't want religious faith to be learnt at home? Those children are future of those countries. As I have already described that Furseth et al (2018, p. 63) clearly illustrated that expansion of middle class into higher education and employment somehow transformed women and family structure in the Nordic countries. This had considerable secularizing effect on women because traditional life style and Christian practices are somehow connected. And they suggest that women are directed towards secular direction. This will have considerable effect on children. That's why, it is observable that poor church attendance among young people in the Nordic countries

The reason behind such trend to grow might be the family structure, which I have discussed somewhere above that changing structure of family because women's role is changing. Many individuals look for cohabiting rather than marriage. According to the data (see all tables on marriage) that half of the marriage ended up in divorce and what happened to children? This is indeed a different situation today as I have explained above that many children are born out of wedlock. There are ample of chances that children might be affected due to divorces and then moving to other families if both remarry or cohabit someone else. it provokes to think whether people don't consider religious faith as an important quality that children are motivated to learn or not.

Growing secularity did keep religion and its values in another direction because, Furseth (2018, p.61) writes that religion was forced out by an aggressive and secular state. On the contrary there is no need of necessity for modern societies to be organized as 'churches' because they are unified

with shared system of beliefs and practices (Casanova, 1994, p. 37), which became states' activities.

In today's societies, what could be shared beliefs and practices? The shared beliefs and practices are secular beliefs and practices, which influence many young people. The cohabiting, living together, same sex marriages, and divorces etc. There is a growth of such people in the contemporary societies. Therefore, there might be a tendency that people who don't like other people to be with strong religious faith and belief.

Pluralism plays pivotal role in changing attitudes and behaviors of the people in the current societies. What Wilson (1996, p. 24-25) writes that religious pluralism is endogenous to Christianity. Pluralism became an investable phenomenon because of globalization. Thus, contributes to the process of migration, which carries diverse and fissile strands. The existing cultures and tradition well integrated with multiple infusion. The creating of religious diffusion in the selected Nordic countries demand to amend and adapt common and appropriate policies, law and system so that all people would be treated equally, and their equal survival is ensured. This also means pluralism really affects Christianity because Furseth (2018) also write that because of the pluralism Christianity is getting reduced but minority religion outside Christianity is growing.

In many of the European countries more specifically in the Nordic countries, Islam is the second largest religion and this influence very much the society. What Wilson (ibid) writes that Islam became the second largest religious denomination, thus, makes a great religious diffusion in the exiting or predominant religion like Christianity especially in Protestant Sweden. The states are forced to manage religions. This also contribute to make Christianity insignificance in the contemporary society.

Therefore, it is absolutely clear that in the contemporary societies, religious values are on steady decline. The modernization and secularization greatly impact on religious/Christianity values undoubtedly. What I have discussed above are few samples of religious anomie.

Chapter 5 Conclusion and recommendation

In this section I will briefly explain my conclusion based on the findings and discussion with few background information. This will also justify that the modernization and secularization in deed force religious values away from the contemporary Nordic countries.

5.1 Conclusion

“If our religion is fundamentally irrelevant to our politics, then we are recognizing political realm outside of the reign of God.” (Turner, 2011, p. 136)

When people do not believe in God, it will undoubtedly affect religious practice, attitude, and then there will also be a breakdown of social standard. Because Inglehart and Welzel (2005, p.16) write that there are limitations that nature imposed on human but science and technology broke limitation and challenged divine revelation.

Certainly, the modernization and secularization greatly affect religious/Christian values especially in Western Europe more specifically in the Nordic countries. It is notable that from the time of 1980 the Nordic countries went through multiple and tangible changes across all sectors such as economy, politics, labor forces, family institution, and the role of women (Furseth, 2018, p. 292). These changes occurred due to the process of modernization and technological advancement in the Western Europe, but it is more specifically in the Nordic countries.

Further, according to Furseth (ibid) that there are several trends exist in the Nordic countries contributing to decline of religious/Christian values;

- Many religions coexist at different level
- People chose to remain outside any religious faith
- Question of faith, dogma, practice affect religious tradition and culture
- Religious diversity

What have discussed above are results of modernization, which brought secularization. These two perspectives greatly affect religious values at different level in different age as well. I have already discussed that due to the religious diversity, minority religions grow, while Christianity decreases. Thus, resulting in poor attendance to churches, lack of interest in involving in sacraments and other religious engagements. Globalization is the best product of modernization. What Turner (2011, p.

viii) writes that globalization brought predominantly multicultural societies, multi faith societies, where role of the state becomes inevitable. Because states' responsibilities are increased to ensure coexistence in a peaceful environment. This leads to reduce Christian environment and growing multi-cultural and religious environment because Islam is second largest religion in the Nordic countries especially in Sweden and other minority religions as well (Furseth, 2018).

The existential security also contributes towards diminishing religious/Christian values because Inglehart and Norris (2011) write that people those who grow in a secured society become less religious. This is also clear that the Nordic countries are more secured economically, politically and scientifically and the Government also ensure people's needs and wants are satisfactorily met. Therefore, parents also do not encourage their children to learn religious values than secular values. On the other hand, the changing role of women and family structure in the Nordic countries contribute considerably towards secular orientation even for their children.

The secular values are predominant highly in the developed countries because, Turner (2011, p. xi) writes process of modernization as necessarily entailing secularization, continue to play a major role in politics, society and culture. This is indeed true that process of modernization already established secular values because Turner reiterates (ibid, xxvii) quoting Durkheim and Macintyre that secularization involves the dilution of the collective and emotional character of religious practices alongside the erosion of community by modernization. This is somehow true because I have evidently discussed above the community bond between religion and people is broken.

Accordingly, the examples or findings that I have discussed above show the dilution of collective and emotion of religious values in the Nordic countries. People do not want other people with strong religious beliefs. The modernization created a division between religion and people and secularization is using the gap by filling with secular values in the contemporary Nordic societies. For example, the bond kept people to attend religious services or engage people in religious commitments. Thus, also broke the core foundation of Christian faith of believe in God. When the foundation is shaken, there lacks religiosity. Therefore, the gel that binds people with religion is values. So, the modernized or secular values eat off the gel which slowly loose the bond between people and religion. Then another interesting is people's attitudes are under constant change due to several influencing factors in the modernized world. Davie (2007, p.36) writes that there is a

great shift from “obligation” to “consumption” primarily based on choice, which is not only materialistic aspect, but it can cover entire personal life today.

Further, individualism also attributed to the erosion of collective emotional character of religion. There is social root for our belief, which is destroyed by the growth of modern individualism and by the technology of communication that bypass embedded social relationship (ibid). Church participation is a communal bond, which is broken through aspect of individualism. Turner (2011, p. 136) writes that the industrial revolution brought huge changes in the lives of all people. At the same times, it also led to considerable destruction to the forms of communal life, to which religion gave a symbolic expression. Because as we know that the general function of religion is an expression of a society’s moral unity. Another primary function of religion is communal participation as one congregation but not just individual. The forms of communal life style is replaced with individualism, supported with consumer life style, where societies’ morality and unity are questioned in different ways in the contemporary societies.

This also makes to question on what is really happening to religion today? From the beginning, our everyday lives were under significant influence of religious values in all societies, where those values were kept as the central of our lives whatsoever. But when time passed by, the development and technology advanced, where science became the central of lives, therefore our lives moved under the influence of science. That indeed made religion become less influence in our lives (ibid). this what Norris and Inglehart (2011, p.79) reiterate that when society moves from traditional communities to modern communities, their common practices such as personal piety, expression of spirituality and habitual observances, will also decline. This what is happening to religious values today in the contemporary Nordic countries. Therefore, the modernization and secularization destroy religious values with welfare utopianism.

Generally speaking, religious values are transmitted through religious education by Churches and institutions. Another question that, are there room for religious instructions and religious practices in schools in the contemporary Nordic countries? It is seldom in practice in the Europe. because, (thejournal.ie) there are many issues around religion and education. For example; Parents do not want their children to be educated in schools with religious instruction because the growing secularization in Germany. When looking at the Nordic countries, it is also the same cause, because after introduction of European Court of Human Right in 2007, that emphasizes religious

information but not preaching or religious practices (thejournal.ie). This is very important to note that parents are showing less important of their children's learning of religious faith in educational institutions, which I have already discussed (Table 40). Then where will children learn religious values? It is available only in Churches but there are only a few attends to religious services.

Further Norris and Inglehart (2011, p. 255) write that Gill and Lundsgaarde's study examined that relationship between welfare state spending and religious attendance and they concluded that; "The most secure European welfare states with well-developed social safety net, exemplified by Scandinavian societies, tend to have the emptiest churches." This does explicitly explain the reason behind poor attendance to churches or religious services today but there are scholars who don't agree with it but as I have already explained that it has a valid point to say that welfare state effectively affect churches attendance. Thus, diminish religious values in the Nordic countries.

Finally, let's take Norway for an example. Historically, Norway was understood as both a traditional community. The traditional community was held together with a common language and geography. At the same time, Norway as a community of belief, sharing beliefs or values emphasized solidarity and interdependence. What is important to specify that historically, homogenous Christian heritage influenced in both legislation and normative practices in Norway. What happened today in Norway that historical heritage is adjusted in order to cater entire population based on diversity of communities, where Christianity tends to decline (Kjell Å Modéer and Hanne Petersen, 2009, p. 7). This situation is applicable to other Nordic countries such as Finland and Sweden. Therefore, modernization and secularization have great impact on declining religious values in the Nordic countries and there are other factors contribute as well but my research don't explore them.

5.2 Recommendation

My research found that it is absolute to adjust existing system to integrate other minority religions based Human Rights and democracy whatsoever, but that does not mean to allow to decline community of belief, sharing beliefs based on homogenous Christian heritage influenced in both legislation and normative practices in the Nordic countries Finland, Norway and Sweden. What happened today in the Nordic countries that historical heritage is adjusted in order to cater entire population based on diversity of communities, where Christianity tends to decline. Therefore, it is

recommended highly to consider how to transmit the inherited religious beliefs and practices to the next generation, where future researches are to be explored.

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