

Divorce Bill in the Philippines: Perspective of Religious Sectors in the Municipality of Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the perspectives of various religious sectors in the Municipality of Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, on the proposed Divorce Bill in the Philippines. It aimed to analyze how religious beliefs, doctrines, and moral principles influenced local attitudes toward the legalization of divorce. Utilizing a descriptive-quantitative research design, data were gathered from 169 respondents representing different religious denominations through a researcher-made survey questionnaire. The study focused on key areas such as legal grounds, financial settlement, and child custody and support, along with the moral, doctrinal, and social implications of the Divorce Bill. Findings revealed a generally moderate level of support for the Divorce Bill among respondents, with variations observed based on demographic profiles such as age, gender, religious affiliation, and educational attainment. Statistical analysis showed significant differences in perspectives when grouped according to these demographic factors. Furthermore, a significant relationship was found between the extent of religious perspectives and their stance on the provisions of the Divorce Bill. The results highlighted the influential role of religious beliefs and cultural values in shaping public opinion on marital legislation. The study concluded that understanding these perspectives was essential for framing inclusive and balanced policies on divorce that considered both legal rights and deeply rooted moral convictions within Filipino communities.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of divorce has been a significant topic in various countries, as many societies have adjusted their legal systems to accommodate the changing nature of marriage and family life. In several Western nations, such as the United States and the United Kingdom, divorce laws have evolved to grant individuals more autonomy in dissolving marital unions that are no longer functional or are harmful to the well-being of the involved parties. These changes reflect broader shifts towards individual rights and the recognition of marital breakdowns as a complex social issue that requires legal recourse. Divorce has also been framed as a crucial means of safeguarding the personal happiness and safety of individuals, especially in cases involving domestic violence or irreconcilable differences (Amato & James, 2020).

In contrast to countries that have liberalized their divorce laws, the Philippines remains one of the few nations where divorce is not legally recognized. It has been a long-standing issue in the Philippines, as it is one of the last remaining countries where divorce is not legally recognized, alongside the Vatican. This lack of legal recourse for marital dissolution reflects the strong influence of the Catholic Church, which continues to uphold the sanctity and indissolubility of marriage. While annulment and legal separation are options, they are seen as insufficient by many advocates who argue that these processes are expensive, lengthy, and fail

to address the needs of ordinary citizens who are trapped in unhealthy marriages (Lichauco-de Leon, 2019).

The introduction of various versions of the Divorce Bill in the Philippine Congress over the years has reignited discussions on whether or not the country should legalize divorce. In 2018, the House of Representatives approved a version of the Divorce Bill, marking a significant step forward. However, its progress in the Senate has been slow, largely due to opposition from religious groups and conservative sectors. Other religious denominations, including various Christian sects and Muslim groups, have had differing views, adding complexity to the national debate (Nuguid, 2021).

The religious dimension was central to the discourse on the Divorce Bill in the Philippines. Religious institutions, particularly the Catholic Church, argued that marriage was a sacred bond that should not be broken, aligning with the Church's teachings on the permanence of marital union. Surveys conducted over the years showed that while many Filipinos, especially Catholics, maintained conservative views about marriage, there was also growing public support for divorce, particularly among younger generations and those living in urban areas (Mangahas & David, 2020). This trend suggested that while religious beliefs remained influential, societal attitudes were gradually shifting toward a more pragmatic view of marriage, one that acknowledged the realities of domestic abuse, infidelity, and the breakdown of marital relationships.

While annulment and legal separation existed as legal remedies, these processes were costly, time-consuming, and not accessible to the majority of Filipinos. In rural areas such as Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, access to these options was further limited by geographic, economic, and cultural factors. As in many parts of the Philippines, marriage in Tagoloan was viewed not only as a legal contract but also as a deeply sacred union, strongly influenced by religious beliefs. The Roman Catholic Church, which had a significant presence in Tagoloan, was vocal in its opposition to the Divorce Bill, adhering to the belief that marriage was a lifelong covenant. This perspective aligned with the Catholic doctrine on the indissolubility of marriage, where divorce was seen as undermining the sanctity of the family. Other Christian denominations in the area, such as the Iglesia ni Cristo and evangelical groups, may have shared similar sentiments, though there were nuances in their doctrinal interpretations (Nuguid, 2021).

Despite the ongoing national debate on the Divorce Bill in the Philippines, there was limited research that focused specifically on the views of religious sects at the local level, particularly in municipalities like Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental. Most studies on the Divorce Bill primarily examined the perspectives of legislators, women's rights advocates, and broader social groups, but very few delved into how religious groups in smaller, rural settings shaped public opinion on this issue. This created a gap in understanding how local religious beliefs, which were integral to many rural communities, influenced attitudes toward divorce legislation (Bernal, 2019). Examining the views of religious sects in Tagoloan could fill this gap by offering localized insights that might not be captured in national surveys or policy discussions.

The main purpose of this study was to examine and analyze the views of various religious sects in the Municipality of Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, regarding the proposed Divorce Bill in the Philippines. The aim was to understand how religious beliefs influenced local opinions on divorce legislation and to identify any potential impact these views may have had on the broader national debate.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design to systematically assess the perspectives of religious sectors in the Municipality of Tagoloan. A structured survey questionnaire was distributed to 169 respondents across different denominations, including Roman Catholic, Iglesia ni Cristo, Born Again Christians, Muslims, and others. The instrument measured perceptions across three key domains: Legal Grounds, Financial Settlement, and Child Custody and Support. Demographic data such as age, gender, religious affiliation, civil status, education, cultural background, and family income were also collected.

Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage distributions, mean, and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) to determine differences in perspectives among groups. Ethical standards were observed, including informed consent and confidentiality of responses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of Age, Gender, Religious Affiliation, Educational Attainment, Civil Status, Cultural Background, and Family Income?

Table 4. Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Age Profile

Age Range	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
18-22	22	13.02
23-27	19	11.24
28-32	20	11.83
33-37	19	11.24
38-42	27	15.98
Over 43 years old	62	36.69
Total	169	100

Table 4 reveals that the majority of respondents were over 43 years old, comprising 36.69% of the total 169 participants, indicating that mature adults dominate the religious sector in Tagoloan. This finding implies that religious activities and decision-making are largely influenced by older individuals who often hold leadership and advisory roles within their organizations. Their age and extensive experience contribute to more conservative perspectives on issues such as the Divorce Bill, reflecting long-held values that uphold the sanctity of marriage. The dominance of older respondents suggests that discussions and attitudes toward divorce within religious circles are guided by traditional beliefs rather than progressive or liberal views. Such a demographic trend may hinder acceptance of legal reforms related to divorce due to the influence of conservative leaders. Consequently, the limited representation of younger adults highlights a generational gap in perspectives, suggesting that future dialogue on the Divorce Bill may evolve only as younger members become more engaged in religious and social discourse.

Table 5. Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Gender

Gender	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Male	78	46.15
Female	91	53.85
Total	169	100

Table 5 reveals that the majority of respondents were female, accounting for 53.85% of the total 169 participants, while males comprised 46.15%, indicating a slightly higher representation of women in the religious sectors of Tagoloan. This finding suggests that women are more active participants in church-based activities, community outreach, and faith-related discussions, which made them more visible and engaged in the study. Their active involvement

in family and moral issues may have also influenced their willingness to express views on sensitive topics such as marriage and divorce. The predominance of female respondents implies that discussions surrounding the Divorce Bill within religious groups may have leaned toward nurturing, empathetic, and family-centered perspectives. Conversely, the slightly lower male participation hints at a potential underrepresentation of more traditional or patriarchal standpoints often associated with male leadership in religious settings. Overall, the gender composition underscores the importance of female voices in shaping the moral and emotional discourse on divorce, while also highlighting the need for gender balance to capture a more inclusive understanding of religious perspectives on marital and family issues.

Table 6. Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Religious Affiliation

Religious Affiliation	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Roman Catholic	35	20.71
Iglesia Filipina Independiente	22	13.02
United Church of Christ in the Philippines	16	9.47
Seventh Day Adventist	12	7.10
Iglesia Ni Cristo	42	24.85
Islam	8	4.73
Born Again Christian	34	20.12
Total	169	100

Table 6 indicates that the majority of respondents belonged to Iglesia Ni Cristo (INC), accounting for 24.85% of the total 169 participants, showing the group's strong religious presence and active engagement in Tagoloan. This dominance highlights the organizational structure and unity of INC members, who often participate collectively in civic and moral discussions due to their centralized leadership and shared doctrinal beliefs. Their strong adherence to traditional teachings on marriage likely influenced the overall conservative tone of opinions expressed toward the Divorce Bill. The results suggest that the religious discourse in Tagoloan may have been shaped predominantly by Christian perspectives, particularly those of the INC, which historically opposes divorce. The limited participation of minority religions such as Islam, which permits divorce under Sharia law, points to a lack of diversity in viewpoints. Consequently, future studies should consider broader religious inclusion to ensure a more balanced and representative understanding of moral and social issues, such as the legalization of divorce in the Philippines.

Table 7. Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Education Attainment

Education Attainment	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
High School Level	9	5.33
High School Graduate	32	18.93
Elementary Level	3	1.78
Elementary Graduate	6	3.55
College Level	54	31.95
College Graduate	60	35.50
Master's Degree	4	2.37
Doctorate Degree	1	0.59
Total	169	100

Table 7 reveals that the majority of respondents were college graduates, comprising 35.50% of the total 169 participants, indicating that a substantial portion of Tagoloan's religious sector was composed of individuals with higher education. This suggests that many participants possessed the knowledge and analytical skills necessary to engage in discussions about complex social and legal issues such as the Divorce Bill. Educated individuals are generally more exposed to diverse viewpoints and tend to approach moral debates with a balance of

critical thinking and empathy, leading to more informed perspectives. The predominance of college-educated respondents implies that the religious discourse surrounding divorce may have been influenced by participants who understood both the moral teachings of their faith and the societal implications of legal reform. However, the minimal representation of doctoral holders suggests a limited presence of advanced theological or academic analysis within the group. Overall, the data imply that education played a vital role in shaping how the religious community in Tagoloan perceived the Divorce Bill, with higher educational attainment correlating to more engaged and informed participation in moral and social discussions.

Table 8. Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Civil Status

Civil Status	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Single	53	31.36
Married	93	55.03
Widowed	18	10.65
Separated	5	2.96
Total	169	100

Table 8 reveals that most respondents were married, accounting for 55.03% of the total 169 participants, indicating that more than half of the religious sector in Tagoloan viewed the Divorce Bill through the lens of personal marital experience. This finding suggests that respondents' perspectives were influenced by their own relationships, religious convictions, and perceptions of marriage as either a sacred or reformable union. Married individuals often hold strong beliefs about the sanctity and permanence of marriage, which may lead to resistance toward divorce legalization, particularly among devoutly religious groups. However, some may also recognize divorce as a compassionate legal option for individuals trapped in toxic or abusive marriages, reflecting a nuanced and experience-based understanding. The dominance of married respondents highlights how lived marital realities, rather than purely doctrinal positions, shaped attitudes toward the Divorce Bill. Overall, their insights reflected a balance between moral principles and practical realities, demonstrating how marital status played a crucial role in defining the moral and social stance of Tagoloan's religious community on divorce.

Table 9. Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Cultural Background Profile

Cultural Background	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Traditional	105	62.13
Moderate	34	20.12
Liberal	14	8.28
Mixed	16	9.47
Total	169	100

Table 9 reveals that the majority of respondents, or 62.13% of the total 169 participants, came from a traditional cultural background, showing that conservative values strongly shaped the religious sector in Tagoloan. This dominance suggests that most respondents held deeply rooted beliefs regarding marriage as a sacred and lifelong union, guided by religious doctrines and societal expectations. Such traditional orientations likely contributed to resistance toward the Divorce Bill, as many perceived it as a threat to moral order and family unity. The small number of liberal respondents reflected a limited openness to reform and modern perspectives that advocate for personal well-being and legal protection in failed marriages. The prevailing traditional mindset indicates that the social discourse in Tagoloan remains anchored in preserving marital permanence over promoting legal flexibility. Consequently, this cultural dominance emphasizes how traditional norms continue to influence community attitudes and

may slow the acceptance of progressive laws such as the Divorce Bill in religiously conservative settings.

Table 10. Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Family Income Profile

Family Income	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Below 5,000	30	17.75
5,000-9,999	19	11.24
10,000-14,999	37	21.89
15,000-19,999	38	22.49
20,000-24,999	20	11.83
25,000-29,999	10	5.92
30,000 and above	15	8.88
Total	169	100

Table 10 reveals that most respondents belonged to the ₱15,000–₱19,999 income bracket, comprising 22.49% of the total 169 participants, indicating that a large portion of Tagoloan’s religious sector came from lower-middle-income families. This group’s economic condition likely shaped their views on the Divorce Bill, balancing moral values with financial realities. Individuals within this range often experience moderate financial pressure, which may make them more cautious about supporting divorce due to concerns over added expenses, child support, and single-parent living costs. However, some may still recognize divorce as a necessary legal remedy for those in abusive or irreparable marriages, showing both empathy and practicality in their views. Their economic vulnerability underscores how financial stability influences attitudes toward social reforms, particularly those affecting family structures. Overall, the findings suggest that income level played a significant role in shaping perceptions of the Divorce Bill, as lower-income respondents tended to weigh both moral convictions and the potential economic consequences of divorce.

2. What is the extent of the Divorce Bill in the Philippines from the perspective of religious sectors in terms of Legal Grounds, Financial Settlement, and Child Custody and Support?

Table 11. Extent of Divorce Bill in the Philippines as the Perspective of Religious Sectors in Terms of Legal Grounds

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. The recognition of adultery as a valid ground for divorce ensures fairness in addressing marital infidelity.	2.92	1.16	Moderate Support
2. The inclusion of domestic abuse as a legal ground for divorce provides necessary protection for spouses.	2.88	1.11	Moderate Support
3. The consideration of abandonment as a justification for divorce acknowledges the emotional and financial impact on the abandoned spouse.	2.82	1.07	Moderate Support
4. The presence of irreconcilable differences as a ground for divorce allows couples to part ways amicably when reconciliation is impossible.	2.62	1.03	Moderate Support
5. The recognition of psychological incapacity as a reason for divorce ensures that unfit marriages can be legally dissolved.	2.66	1.05	Moderate Support

Table 11 presents the opinions of religious groups in the Municipality of Tagoloan regarding the proposed grounds for divorce under the Philippine Divorce Bill. The overall mean of 2.73 with a standard deviation of 1.07 indicates *moderate support*, reflecting a growing openness

among religious respondents to acknowledge legal remedies in cases of marital breakdown. Although traditional teachings continue to oppose divorce, many participants recognized its necessity in situations involving abuse, infidelity, or psychological harm. Indicators such as adultery ($M = 2.92$), domestic violence ($M = 2.88$), and substance abuse ($M = 2.82$) received the highest support, suggesting a compassionate and practical stance that prioritized justice, safety, and emotional well-being over rigid adherence to doctrine. This finding aligns with Malonzo and Saavedra (2023), who emphasized that Filipino religious communities are gradually becoming receptive to laws protecting human dignity and equity within marriage.

Among the indicators, adultery emerged as the most supported ground for divorce, implying that religious individuals viewed betrayal of marital fidelity as a grave moral offense warranting legal recourse. This result highlights a balance between moral responsibility and fairness, where infidelity is seen not only as a sin but also as a legitimate breach of trust deserving legal acknowledgment. Tiglao and Perez (2023) observed a similar trend, noting that even among conservative religious groups, there is consensus that adultery undermines the moral core of marriage and justifies separation. On the other hand, moderate approval of grounds like domestic violence and psychological incapacity reflected a shift toward prioritizing safety and mental health within families, showing that religious respondents valued compassion and justice over mere marital endurance.

Conversely, the lowest mean score of 2.47 for continuous marital separation revealed moderate opposition, suggesting that many still believed prolonged estrangement alone was insufficient to dissolve a marriage. This resistance stems from deep-seated beliefs in the permanence of marital vows and the value of reconciliation, consistent with Gutierrez's (2023) observation that religious communities prefer restoration over dissolution. However, as Reyes (2023) argued, denying separation as a valid ground overlooks the emotional suffering of estranged spouses who live in indefinite limbo. This finding underscores the tension between moral ideals and human realities—religious communities are not entirely opposed to divorce but remain selective, supporting it primarily when moral or physical harm is evident. Overall, these insights reflect a transitional phase in Tagoloan's religious sector—one that respects tradition but increasingly acknowledges divorce as a necessary safeguard for justice, safety, and dignity.

Table 12. Extent of Divorce Bill in the Philippines from the Perspective of Religious Sectors in Terms of Financial Settlement

	Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	The fair division of marital assets ensures financial stability for both parties after divorce.	2.82	1.07	Moderate Support
2.	The provision of spousal support helps maintain the financial well-being of the economically disadvantaged partner.	2.83	1.09	Moderate Support
3.	The legal framework for property division ensures that both spouses receive an equitable share of their jointly acquired assets.	2.79	1.05	Moderate Support
4.	The inclusion of financial support in divorce settlements helps protect the welfare of children involved.	2.93	1.14	Moderate Support
5.	The enforcement of financial obligations after divorce ensures accountability and fairness between ex-spouses.	2.90	1.08	Moderate Support
6.	The clear legal guidelines on debt division help prevent financial disputes between divorced individuals.	2.77	1.06	Moderate Support
7.	The consideration of each spouse's financial contribution in dividing assets promotes fairness in financial settlements.	2.88	1.10	Moderate Support
8.	The legal protection of a non-working spouse's financial rights ensures economic security after divorce.	2.74	1.10	Moderate Support
9.	The establishment of post-divorce financial agreements	2.66	1.06	Moderate Support

helps prevent long-term financial difficulties for both parties.			
10. The proper implementation of financial settlement laws can contribute to a smoother transition for divorced individuals.	2.72	1.16	Moderate Support
Overall	2.80	1.09	Moderate Support
Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree/ Positive Support	1.76 – 2.50 Disagree/ Moderate Opposition		
2.51 – 3.25 Agree/ Moderate Support	1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree/ Strong Opposition		

Table 12 presents the perceptions of the religious sectors in Tagoloan regarding the financial settlement provisions in the proposed Divorce Bill, with an overall mean of 2.80 and a standard deviation of 1.09 interpreted as *Moderate Support*. This finding shows that respondents generally acknowledged the need for financial fairness in divorce proceedings, even though divorce itself remains a sensitive topic within faith-based communities. Religious participants seemed to recognize that, regardless of moral objections to divorce, it was essential to ensure just distribution of assets, spousal support, and protection for children. Their responses reflected a balanced perspective that viewed financial justice as a moral obligation aligned with compassion and family welfare rather than as a contradiction to religious belief. This gradual shift in perception echoes Reyes and Cruz (2024) and Smith and Tan (2023), who found that many religious groups now accept financial equity in divorce as an act of social responsibility and care for the vulnerable.

Notably, the strongest support centered on provisions that prioritized child welfare and fair economic treatment of both parties, demonstrating a collective moral concern for dependents affected by marital dissolution. These results implied that while the religious sector might not fully endorse the legalization of divorce, it strongly valued financial safeguards that protected children and financially dependent spouses from economic hardship. This alignment of moral and legal principles indicates that financial protection can serve as neutral ground between faith and law, promoting justice and stability without eroding the sanctity of marriage. As Mendoza and Almeda (2024) observed, well-structured financial regulations after divorce can minimize long-term conflicts and hardships, suggesting that religious groups are increasingly open to measures that uphold fairness while preserving moral integrity.

However, the lowest-rated indicator, “the establishment of post-divorce financial agreements,” received a mean of 2.66 and showed lingering skepticism among respondents. This modest approval reflected discomfort with formal mechanisms that might appear to normalize or encourage divorce by planning for its aftermath. Many religious adherents continued to view marriage as a lifelong covenant, preferring reconciliation to legal separation, consistent with the cautions raised by Santos and Del Rosario (2023). Still, this tension highlights an evolving dialogue: religious communities may resist divorce ideologically yet support financial justice pragmatically. The findings, therefore, suggest that clear communication and education are needed to frame post-divorce financial provisions not as incentives for separation but as compassionate safeguards ensuring equity and dignity for all family members involved.

Table 13. Extent of Divorce Bill in the Philippines from the Perspective of Religious Sectors in Terms of Child Custody and Support

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. The well-being of children is the top priority in determining custody arrangements.	3.13	1.08	Moderate Support
2. The legal system should ensure that both parents have fair opportunities to gain custody of their children.	3.14	1.08	Moderate Support
3. The option for shared custody allows children to maintain strong relationships with both parents.	3.01	1.09	Moderate Support
4. The financial support provided after divorce must	2.98	1.14	Moderate Support

adequately cover children's education and healthcare needs.			
5. The parent with primary custody should receive sufficient financial support to meet the child's daily needs.	2.98	1.13	Moderate Support
6. The court should consider the emotional and psychological needs of the child when deciding custody arrangements.	3.07	1.07	Moderate Support
7. The enforcement of child support payments ensures financial stability for children after divorce.	3.02	1.08	Moderate Support
8. The cooperation of both parents in custody agreements leads to better upbringing and stability for the child.	3.04	1.12	Moderate Support
9. The proper legal framework for custody and support helps prevent conflicts between divorced parents.	2.83	1.02	Moderate Support
10. The best interests of the child should always guide custody and financial support decisions.	2.96	1.05	Moderate Support
Overall	3.02	1.09	Moderate Support
Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree/ Positive Support 1.76 – 2.50 Disagree/ Moderate Opposition 2.51 – 3.25 Agree/ Moderate Support 1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree/ Strong Opposition			

Table 13 presents the perceptions of religious sectors in Tagoloan regarding the child custody and support provisions under the proposed Divorce Bill, with an overall mean of 3.02 and a standard deviation of 1.09, interpreted as *Moderate Support*. This finding indicates that while religious respondents maintained their belief in the sanctity of marriage, they nonetheless recognized the moral and social necessity of prioritizing children's welfare in divorce proceedings. The moderate level of support shows an emerging balance between faith-based ideals and practical compassion, suggesting that ensuring the well-being, stability, and protection of children transcends doctrinal opposition to divorce. Garcia and Mendoza (2024) observed that many religious groups in the Philippines have begun to accept child-focused custody and support measures as essential to social justice and moral duty. This demonstrates a gradual shift toward recognizing that upholding children's rights does not undermine religious values but rather fulfills them in a modern context aligned with global child welfare standards.

Among the indicators, the highest mean of 3.14 was recorded for the statement that both parents should have fair opportunities to gain custody of their children, also interpreted as *Moderate Support*. This reflects the respondents' acknowledgment of the importance of equal parental rights and responsibilities, showing growing acceptance of shared parenting as a fair and just approach. Religious communities appear to increasingly support the principle that children benefit most when both parents remain active participants in their upbringing, provided that their welfare remains the top priority. Santos and Villanueva (2024) emphasized that shared custody promotes family stability, fairness, and emotional security for children, aligning with global advocacy for joint custody arrangements. The finding suggests that religious groups may favor balanced custody systems that honor both parental rights and the moral obligation to protect the child's best interests, bridging the gap between legal fairness and faith-based compassion.

Conversely, the lowest mean of 2.83 for the statement on the legal framework's role in preventing parental conflicts reflects cautious skepticism among respondents. While the religious sector acknowledged the necessity of a proper legal structure for custody and support, they appeared doubtful about the law's ability to fully resolve emotional and relational challenges following divorce. This hesitation aligns with Gutierrez (2023), who argued that legal mechanisms alone cannot heal family rifts without mediation, counseling, and genuine cooperation between parents. The results suggest that religious groups viewed moral commitment and faith-based reconciliation as indispensable complements to legal processes.

Thus, while they supported child-focused provisions and fair custody arrangements, they remained wary of overreliance on the law to ensure lasting harmony. These insights underscore the importance of integrating both legal safeguards and value-driven, non-legal interventions to protect children’s well-being while fostering a cooperative post-divorce environment.

Table 14. Summary Table on the Extent of the Divorce Bill in the Philippines from Perspective of Religious Sectors

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Legal Grounds	2.73	1.07	Moderate Support
Financial Settlement	2.80	1.09	Moderate Support
Child Custody and Support	3.02	1.09	Moderate Support
Overall	2.85	1.08	Moderate Support
Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree/ Positive Support 1.76 – 2.50 Disagree/ Moderate Opposition			
2.51 – 3.25 Agree/ Moderate Support 1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree/ Strong Opposition			

Table 14 summarizes the perspectives of religious sectors in Tagoloan regarding the proposed Divorce Bill, with an overall mean of 2.85 and a standard deviation of 1.08, interpreted as *Moderate Support*. This result indicates that while respondents upheld traditional religious beliefs about the sanctity of marriage, they also recognized the need to address real-life marital problems that cause harm or suffering. The moderate support suggests that the religious community was cautiously open to reforming marital laws, balancing moral convictions with compassion and practicality. As Santos and Villanueva (2024) emphasized, many faith-based groups in the Philippines are gradually acknowledging that legal reforms are necessary to protect individuals trapped in irreparable marriages. This shift aligns with broader Southeast Asian trends identified by Lim and Reyes (2023), where religious institutions are beginning to engage constructively in discussions about family law modernization.

Among the three areas assessed, the highest mean (3.02) was found in *Child Custody and Support*, reflecting the strongest support for provisions that prioritize children’s welfare after divorce. This finding demonstrates that religious respondents were most concerned with protecting the physical, emotional, and financial needs of children, even when they opposed divorce on doctrinal grounds. Garcia and Santos (2024) observed that child-centered measures receive broad acceptance among religious communities because they align with universal moral values of compassion and responsibility. This moderate yet highest level of support suggests that faith-based groups could collaborate with policymakers in creating divorce laws emphasizing child protection and responsible parenting. Such shared advocacy could serve as a bridge between moral teachings and humanitarian goals, allowing religion and legislation to complement one another in addressing family welfare.

Conversely, the lowest mean (2.73) was recorded in *Legal Grounds*, indicating hesitation toward expanding the reasons legally justifying divorce. This cautious attitude stems from the enduring belief that marriage is sacred and permanent, as reinforced by Santos and Velasco (2024), who found that religious groups preferred annulment or legal separation to complete dissolution. However, Garcia and Ramirez (2023) argued that overly restrictive divorce grounds could perpetuate harm by trapping individuals in abusive relationships. This moral tension reveals that while the religious sectors advocate for compassion and protection, they remain wary of normalizing divorce as a solution. Overall, the moderate support reflected an evolving yet conflicted perspective—religious communities are not entirely resistant to legal change but seek reforms that uphold both moral integrity and human dignity, ensuring that compassion, justice, and faith coexist within the framework of Philippine family law.

3. What is the level of perspective among different religious sectors in the Municipality of Tagoloan regarding the Divorce Bill in the Philippines in terms of Moral Beliefs, Religious Doctrine, and Social Implications?

Table 15. Level of Perception Among Different Religious Sectors in the Municipality of Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, Regarding the Divorce Bill in the Philippines in Terms of Moral Beliefs

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. The sanctity of marriage should be preserved as a lifelong commitment between spouses.	3.66	0.66	Strong Endorsement
2. The value of forgiveness and reconciliation should be prioritized over divorce in marital conflicts.	3.44	0.79	Strong Endorsement
3. The Divorce Bill challenges traditional moral values that emphasize the permanence of marriage.	3.38	0.75	Strong Endorsement
4. The stability of the family unit is essential for upholding moral and ethical principles in society.	3.46	0.72	Strong Endorsement
5. The religious teachings on marriage and family life strongly influence my views on divorce.	3.36	0.80	Strong Endorsement
6. The moral responsibility of parents to their children should encourage efforts to keep marriages intact.	3.46	0.76	Strong Endorsement
7. The Divorce Bill considers the ethical consequences of separating legally married couples.	3.34	0.80	Strong Endorsement
8. The decision to divorce should align with moral and religious beliefs that promote family member interest.	3.24	0.89	General Support
9. The community plays a role in reinforcing moral values that strengthen marriages.	3.27	0.84	Strong Endorsement
10. The commitment made in marriage vows should be honored despite challenges in the relationship.	3.45	0.79	Strong Endorsement
Overall	3.41	0.78	Strong Endorsement
Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree/ Strong Endorsement 1.76 – 2.50 Disagree/ General Opposition 2.51 – 3.25 Agree/ General Support 1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree/ Strong Rejection			

Table 15 presents the perceptions of religious sectors in Tagoloan regarding the Divorce Bill in relation to moral beliefs, with an overall mean of 3.41 and a standard deviation of 0.78, interpreted as *Strong Endorsement*. This result indicates that moral and religious convictions strongly shaped the respondents' opposition to divorce, grounded in the belief that marriage is a sacred and lifelong covenant. The consistency of responses reflects a unified moral stance that views divorce not merely as a legal concern but as a moral challenge that contradicts long-held religious doctrines. Dela Cruz and Fernandez (2024) affirmed that Filipino faith communities consider marriage an unbreakable covenant, while Lim and Santos (2023) noted that across Southeast Asia, religious morality continues to anchor resistance to divorce reforms. These findings show that moral values—such as forgiveness, unity, and fidelity—remain deeply embedded in Tagoloan's religious culture and significantly influence public opinion on marital legislation.

The strongest endorsement ($M = 3.66$, $SD = 0.66$) was for the belief that “*the sanctity of marriage should be preserved as a lifelong commitment between spouses.*” This consensus underscores the religious community's firm conviction that marriage transcends legal arrangements and represents a divine covenant that should not be dissolved by human law. Mendoza and Alonzo (2024) emphasized that such convictions fuel persistent resistance to divorce laws, viewing them as threats to moral order and family unity. Similarly, Torres and

Lim (2023) highlighted that many global faith traditions frame marriage as a sacred spiritual bond rather than a civil contract. The implication is clear: for most Tagoloan respondents, legalizing divorce would signify moral decline and the weakening of family foundations. Policymakers and reform advocates must therefore engage with religious leaders and moral educators to reconcile ethical principles with social realities, ensuring reforms do not disregard these deeply rooted beliefs.

Meanwhile, the lowest-rated item ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.89$) concerned the view that “*the decision to divorce should align with moral and religious beliefs that promote family member interest*,” interpreted as *General Support*. Although still relatively high, this score reveals slight divergence within religious circles—some respondents recognized that in extreme cases, such as abuse or irreparable harm, divorce might align with moral duty if it protects family welfare. Reyes and Santos (2024) observed that a number of faith communities are adopting more compassionate interpretations of doctrine, while Lopez and Mariano (2024) noted growing acceptance among urban clergy that justice and human dignity may, at times, require legal separation. Nevertheless, Dela Cruz (2023) cautioned that many still fear such acceptance could erode marital sanctity. The overall pattern suggests a nuanced moral tension: while Tagoloan’s religious groups continue to reject divorce as a norm, an emerging minority acknowledges that compassion and protection of the vulnerable are also moral imperatives—signaling a slow but meaningful shift toward a more empathetic moral dialogue on marriage and divorce.

Table 16. Level of Perception Among Different Religious Sectors in the Municipality of Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, Regarding the Divorce Bill in the Philippines in Terms of Religious Doctrine

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. The teachings of my religion emphasize the lifelong commitment of marriage.	3.59	0.73	Strong Endorsement
2. The belief in the sacredness of marriage influences my perspective on divorce.	3.36	0.92	Strong Endorsement
3. The religious doctrines I follow discourage divorce as a solution to marital problems.	3.42	0.89	Strong Endorsement
4. The Divorce Bill contradicts the core teachings of my faith regarding marriage.	3.41	0.81	Strong Endorsement
5. The importance of family unity, as taught in my religion, should be upheld in all circumstances.	3.47	0.78	Strong Endorsement
6. The guidance of religious leaders plays a vital role in shaping my views on divorce.	3.36	0.86	Strong Endorsement
7. The principles of my faith encourage reconciliation and forgiveness over marital separation.	3.42	0.82	Strong Endorsement
8. The religious scriptures I believe in provide clear teachings about the permanence of marriage.	3.41	0.76	Strong Endorsement
9. The moral and spiritual consequences of divorce, as taught by my religion, influence my stance on the Divorce Bill.	3.29	0.80	Strong Endorsement
10. The role of religious institutions is important in promoting strong and lasting marriages.	3.51	0.74	Strong Endorsement
Overall	3.42	0.81	Strong Endorsement
Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree/ Strong Endorsement 1.76 – 2.50 Disagree/ General Opposition 2.51 – 3.25 Agree/ General Support 1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree/ Strong Rejection			

Table 16 presents the perceptions of various religious sectors in Tagoloan regarding the Divorce Bill in terms of religious doctrine, with an overall composite mean of 3.42 and a standard deviation of 0.81, interpreted as *Strong Endorsement*. This finding indicates that religious teachings and doctrines played a decisive role in shaping attitudes toward divorce,

emphasizing the sanctity, permanence, and spiritual significance of marriage. The consistent responses among participants reflected a unified conviction that moral and religious principles should govern decisions about marital dissolution. As Santos and Villanueva (2024) and Lim and Cruz (2023) both found, Filipino religious culture strongly anchors views on marriage within faith-based values such as forgiveness, unity, and fidelity. The results affirm that in Tagoloan, religion remains a dominant moral compass, deeply influencing public opinion on family issues and reinforcing traditional opposition to divorce.

The highest mean ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 0.73$) was associated with the indicator “*The teachings of my religion emphasize the lifelong commitment of marriage,*” interpreted as *Strong Endorsement*. This response highlights that for most religious groups, marriage is viewed not merely as a legal bond but as a divine and lifelong covenant that must be preserved despite challenges. Garcia and Santos (2024) and Lim and Velasco (2023) both emphasized that such beliefs create a moral obligation among followers to honor marital vows and discourage separation. This conviction forms the central reason behind religious resistance to the Divorce Bill, as legal dissolution is perceived to undermine divine intent and weaken family values. Hence, the belief in marriage’s permanence continues to serve as the strongest moral pillar in shaping religious communities’ opposition to divorce legislation in Tagoloan and beyond.

Conversely, the lowest mean ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 0.80$) corresponded to the indicator “*The moral and spiritual consequences of divorce influence my stance on the Divorce Bill,*” still interpreted as *Strong Endorsement* but with relatively greater variation. This suggests that while most respondents upheld religious doctrines, some exhibited nuanced understanding—acknowledging that in extreme cases like abuse or chronic infidelity, divorce might be morally justified. Santos and Cruz (2024) observed that certain faith communities are beginning to adopt compassionate interpretations, allowing divorce under exceptional circumstances, while Ramirez and Delgado (2023) maintained that traditional groups still view divorce as inherently immoral. This emerging diversity in interpretation reveals that religious perspectives are not entirely monolithic; rather, they are gradually evolving toward reconciling moral doctrine with compassion and realism. Such openness provides an opportunity for dialogue between religious institutions and policymakers to balance faith-based principles with humane and context-sensitive approaches to marital law.

Table 17. Summary Table on Level of Perception Among Different Religious Sectors in the Municipality of Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, Regarding the Divorce Bill in the Philippines

Indicators	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Moral Beliefs	3.41	0.78	Strong Endorsement
Religious Doctrine	3.42	0.81	Strong Endorsement
Social Implications	3.20	0.92	General Support
Overall	3.35	0.84	Strong Endorsement
Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree/ Strong Endorsement 1.76 – 2.50 Disagree/ General Opposition			
2.51 – 3.25 Agree/ General Support		1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree/ Strong Rejection	

Table 17 presents the summary of perceptions from various religious sectors in Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, regarding the Divorce Bill in the Philippines. The overall composite mean of 3.35 with a standard deviation of 0.84, interpreted as *Strong Endorsement*, indicated that religious respondents held well-defined and deeply rooted views on the issue. This strong perception reflected not necessarily full support for the Divorce Bill but a strong moral and spiritual stance—either in defense of traditional values or in cautious acknowledgment of needed reforms. The consistency of their responses suggests that religious groups were highly aware of the bill’s potential implications for faith, morality, and family stability. Similar

findings by Santos et al. (2023) and Santos and Cruz (2024) revealed that Filipino religious communities often expressed strong, conviction-based positions on family-related laws, demonstrating active engagement in public discourse and an enduring influence of faith and tradition on societal attitudes.

Among the three dimensions assessed, *Religious Doctrine* garnered the highest mean of 3.42 with a standard deviation of 0.81, interpreted as *Strong Endorsement*. This indicates that religious beliefs and teachings served as the most dominant foundation shaping respondents' perceptions of the Divorce Bill. For most faith-based groups, marriage remained a sacred, lifelong covenant, and legalizing divorce was viewed as a challenge to this divine principle. Santos and Villanueva (2024) emphasized that religious doctrines continue to guide Filipino views on marital permanence, while Cruz and Ramirez (2023) noted that emerging societal pressures have prompted some re-evaluation of these traditional stances. The results underscore that in Tagoloan, religious doctrines still hold substantial authority in defining moral positions, influencing not only personal opinions but also community responses to legislative change. This highlights the importance of respectful engagement between policymakers and religious leaders when crafting family laws that intersect with spiritual values.

The lowest mean, 3.20 with a standard deviation of 0.92, was recorded in the area of *Social Implications*, interpreted as *General Support*, indicating that religious respondents were more flexible when considering the social effects of divorce. While many remained wary of potential family disintegration and cultural decline, others recognized divorce as a possible remedy for individuals in abusive or irreparable marriages. Cruz and Mendoza (2024) observed that some religious Filipinos expressed cautious approval for divorce when it protected vulnerable spouses, whereas Navarro (2024) found that many still feared it could erode family unity. This variation explains the higher standard deviation, reflecting a broader spectrum of opinions on the societal impact of divorce. Overall, the results suggest that although religious sectors remained firm in their doctrinal convictions, they displayed a growing awareness of modern social realities. Their perspectives point to an evolving moral landscape—one that continues to uphold faith-based values while beginning to accommodate compassionate and socially responsive interpretations of marriage and family life.

4. Is there a significant difference in the extent of the Divorce Bill in the Philippines from the perspective of religious sectors when grouped according to their respondents' profiles?

Table 19. ANOVA Test Results on the extent of the Divorce Bill in the Philippines from the perspective of religious sectors when grouped according to their respondents' profiles

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects				
Source	F	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
<i>Corrected Model</i>	2.26	0.00	Rejected	Significant
Age	1.14	0.29	Accepted	Not Significant
Gender	0.62	0.43	Accepted	Not Significant
Religious Affiliation	4.35	0.04	Rejected	Significant
Educational Attainment	9.55	0.00	Rejected	Significant
Civil Status	12.04	0.00	Rejected	Significant
Cultural Background	0.02	0.88	Accepted	Not Significant
Family Income	1.39	0.25	Accepted	Not Significant
Legal Grounds	0.69	0.83	Accepted	Not Significant
Financial Settlement	1.78	0.07	Accepted	Not Significant
Children Custody and Support	2.82	0.00	Rejected	Significant

$R^2 = 0.882$ (Adjusted R Squared = 0.491); Dependent Variable: **MORAL BELIEFS**

<i>Corrected Model</i>	2.70	0.00	Rejected	Significant
Age	1.12	0.30	Accepted	Not Significant
Gender	0.05	0.82	Accepted	Not Significant
Religious Affiliation	5.24	0.03	Rejected	Significant
Educational Attainment	4.68	0.04	Rejected	Significant
Civil Status	4.59	0.04	Rejected	Significant
Cultural Background	0.00	0.99	Accepted	Not Significant
Family Income	0.04	0.85	Accepted	Not Significant
Legal Grounds	0.66	0.86	Accepted	Not Significant
Financial Settlement	2.03	0.04	Rejected	Significant
Children Custody and Support	2.07	0.03	Rejected	Significant

$R^2: 0.899$ (Adjusted R Squared = 0.566); Dependent Variable: **RELIGIOUS DOCTRINE**

<i>Corrected Model</i>	2.22	0.00	Rejected	Significant
Age	0.43	0.52	Accepted	Not Significant
Gender	0.71	0.40	Accepted	Not Significant
Religious Affiliation	0.49	0.49	Accepted	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	17.49	0.00	Rejected	Significant
Civil Status	9.38	0.00	Rejected	Significant
Cultural Background	0.05	0.83	Accepted	Not Significant
Family Income	2.91	0.10	Accepted	Not Significant
Legal Grounds	1.64	0.08	Accepted	Not Significant
Financial Settlement	1.05	0.43	Accepted	Not Significant
Children Custody and Support	1.52	0.14	Accepted	Not Significant

$R^2: 0.880$ (Adjusted R Squared = 0.485); Dependent Variable: **SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Note: $p < 0.05$ (significant) and $p > 0.05$ (not significant)

Table 19 presents the ANOVA test results on the extent of perception of the Divorce Bill among religious sectors in Tagoloan when grouped according to their profile variables. The analysis examined whether respondents' demographic characteristics—such as age, gender, religion, education, and civil status—significantly influenced their perceptions in terms of *Moral Beliefs*, *Religious Doctrine*, and *Social Implications*. For *Moral Beliefs*, the model yielded a significant result ($F = 2.26$, $p = 0.00$), indicating that profile variables collectively affected respondents' moral views toward divorce. Religious affiliation, educational attainment, civil status, and child custody/support emerged as significant factors, while age, gender, cultural background, and family income showed no significant influence. These findings suggest that moral beliefs about divorce were shaped less by demographic traits and more by spiritual teachings, education, and lived experiences. Salazar and Lim (2023) noted that moral perspectives on divorce among Filipinos often reflect a blend of religious conviction and practical concern, especially for children's welfare, revealing that moral judgments extend beyond doctrine to include compassion and ethical responsibility.

In terms of *Religious Doctrine*, the ANOVA results were also significant ($F = 2.70$, $p = 0.00$), showing that the combined profile variables significantly influenced how respondents interpreted religious teachings about divorce. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.566 indicated that over half of the variance in doctrinal perception could be explained by these variables. Significant differences were found across religious affiliation, educational attainment, civil status, financial settlement, and child custody/support, while age, gender, and income remained non-significant. This outcome implies that faith communities share overarching beliefs about the sanctity of marriage, yet interpretations vary based on denominational doctrine, education,

and personal experiences. Garcia and Santos (2024) emphasized that while religious teachings portray marriage as sacred and permanent, exposure to real-life marital issues can foster more flexible doctrinal interpretations. The findings suggest that many religious individuals are reconciling theological ideals with practical realities, balancing devotion to doctrine with empathy toward those facing marital hardships.

For *Social Implications*, the model again produced significant results ($F = 2.22$, $p = 0.00$), indicating that respondents' profiles collectively influenced how they perceived divorce's societal effects. However, only educational attainment and civil status were significant, implying that formal learning and marital experience were key in shaping how participants viewed the broader social consequences of divorce. Respondents with higher education were more open to nuanced discussions about family and societal welfare, while those with marital experiences tended to approach divorce as either a necessary social remedy or a moral dilemma. Lopez and Delgado (2024) found that divorce could both disrupt family unity and serve as protection against abuse, depending on one's perspective and experiences. Overall, the ANOVA results revealed that while strong religious beliefs unified respondents' moral and doctrinal foundations, education and lived experiences diversified their social outlooks. These findings underscore the need for faith-based and legislative dialogue that acknowledges both the enduring authority of religious doctrine and the evolving realities of Filipino families navigating marital and social challenges.

5. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of perspective among religious sectors in the Municipality of Tagoloan and the level of Divorce Bill in the Philippines?

Table 20. Correlation Between the Extent of Perspective Among Religious Sectors in the Municipality of Tagoloan and the Level of Divorce Bill in the Philippines

Correlation		Perspective of Religious Sectors			Over-all	Decision	Interpretation
Divorce Bill in the Philippines		Moral Beliefs	Religious Doctrine	Social Implications			
Legal Grounds	Pearson <i>r</i>	0.204	0.152	0.459	0.310	Reject H ₀	Significant
	p-value	0.008	0.048	<0.001	<0.001		
Financial Settlement	Pearson <i>r</i>	0.233	0.228	0.511	0.369	Reject H ₀	Significant
	p-value	0.002	0.003	<0.001	<0.001		
Child Custody and Support	Pearson <i>r</i>	0.198	0.231	0.399	0.314	Reject H ₀	Significant
	p-value	0.010	0.002	<0.001	<0.001		
Legend : Relationship Strength Scale:			1(Perfect)		p < 0.05 (significant)		
			±0.80 to ±0.99 (Very Strong)		p > 0.05 (not significant)		
			±0.61 to ±0.79 (Strong)				
			±0.41 to ±0.60 (Moderate)				
			±.21 to ±.40 (Weak)				
			±.01 to ±.20 (Very Weak)				

Table 20 presents the correlation results between the perspectives of religious sectors in Tagoloan and their views on the Divorce Bill in the Philippines, focusing on three key aspects: *Legal Grounds*, *Financial Settlement*, and *Child Custody and Support*. The results revealed that all three components were significantly correlated with the respondents' moral beliefs, religious doctrines, and social perspectives, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis in all

cases. For *Legal Grounds*, the correlations with moral beliefs ($r = 0.204$, $p = 0.008$), religious doctrine ($r = 0.152$, $p = 0.048$), and social implications ($r = 0.459$, $p < 0.001$) indicated a moderate overall relationship ($r = 0.310$, $p < 0.001$). These findings suggest that as understanding of legal justifications for divorce increased, such as in cases of abuse or abandonment, religious respondents became more open to its moral and social acceptability. Reyes and Morales (2024) supported this by noting that religious opposition softens when divorce addresses social harm and protects human dignity. Thus, while faith-based groups still uphold marital sanctity, they acknowledge the need for compassionate legal responses to protect individuals from suffering.

For *Financial Settlement*, the correlations were stronger—moral beliefs ($r = 0.233$, $p = 0.002$), religious doctrine ($r = 0.228$, $p = 0.003$), and social implications ($r = 0.511$, $p < 0.001$)—with an overall moderate correlation of $r = 0.369$ ($p < 0.001$). This shows that economic fairness and financial protection after divorce significantly influenced how religious sectors viewed its morality and societal impact. Villanueva and Santos (2023) found that when divorce laws ensure financial security, particularly for women and children, religious opposition tends to ease, reflecting a shift from moral condemnation to ethical concern for welfare. This correlation implies that financial justice serves as a bridge between moral conviction and social responsibility, allowing religious communities to support practical safeguards without compromising faith. It also suggests that divorce can be perceived less as moral failure and more as a legal mechanism for compassion and protection when grounded in equitable financial provisions.

Similarly, *Child Custody and Support* showed consistent significance, with weak but meaningful correlations with moral beliefs ($r = 0.198$, $p = 0.010$) and religious doctrine ($r = 0.231$, $p = 0.002$), and a stronger link with social implications ($r = 0.399$, $p < 0.001$), producing an overall correlation of $r = 0.314$ ($p < 0.001$). This pattern highlights that concerns for children's welfare strongly shaped religious respondents' moral and social stance on divorce. Garcia and Lopez (2022) emphasized that ensuring children's safety, emotional stability, and financial security remains a moral obligation across faith communities, influencing their support for child-centered divorce provisions. These results demonstrate that religious acceptance of divorce is highest when policies prioritize the protection of children and the vulnerable. Overall, the findings reveal that while religious doctrines remain rooted in traditional opposition, practical considerations—such as justice, equity, and compassion—significantly inform how moral and religious perspectives evolve. This evolving view points toward a more humane and socially responsive religious discourse on divorce, where safeguarding family well-being and dignity becomes central to faith-based participation in legal reform.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. This study confirmed that the majority of respondents from the religious sectors in Tagoloan were mature, married women, predominantly from the Iglesia Ni Cristo (INC), with college education and traditional cultural values. Their perspectives on the Divorce Bill were shaped by their religious beliefs, life experiences, and socioeconomic background, which collectively influenced their cautious stance on legalizing divorce.
2. This study confirmed that the religious sectors in Tagoloan moderately supported the financial settlement provisions of the Divorce Bill, acknowledging the importance of fair asset division and child support despite moral reservations. While some respondents expressed

skepticism, especially toward post-divorce arrangements, the overall responses reflected an understanding that financial justice is necessary if divorce is to be legalized.

3. This study confirmed that respondents from various religious sectors strongly upheld religious doctrine and moral beliefs that oppose divorce, viewing marriage as a sacred and lifelong commitment. While some accepted that divorce might be necessary in extreme cases and acknowledged potential social implications, the overall perspective remained largely rooted in faith-based opposition, with limited openness to specific circumstances.

4. This study confirmed that differences in perspectives on the Divorce Bill were significantly influenced by religious affiliation, educational background, civil status, and views on child custody and financial matters, particularly in terms of moral and doctrinal beliefs. However, variables such as age, gender, cultural background, and income did not lead to significant differences, indicating that moral and doctrinal positions were more affected by life experiences and religious teachings than by demographics alone.

5. This study confirmed that there was a significant relationship between the views of religious sectors on the Divorce Bill and their understanding of legal grounds, financial settlement, and child custody. Practical considerations, especially financial fairness and child welfare, influenced their moral and religious perceptions, suggesting that while religious teachings oppose divorce, real-life concerns led to some openness and nuanced perspectives.

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