SPIRITUALITY AND EMPATHY:
A STUDY AMONG RELIGIOUSLY UNAFFILIATED ADOLESCENTS WITHIN THE UK

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A number of research studies, like P. Heelas and L. Woodhead's book The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion Is Giving Way to Spirituality have been advocating the argument that within Australia, the UK, and the USA spirituality has been taking the place of religion, especially within the lives of young people. This claim raises a core conceptual question and two core empirical questions. The conceptual question concerns clarity regarding what is spirituality. The first empirical question concerns mapping the extent to which spirituality is indeed a recognised construct among religiously unaffiliated young people. The second empirical question concerns testing whether spirituality in fact fulfils the same function as religion in the life of young people. The present study explores these three issues, drawing on data provided by 3,860 adolescents (aged 13 to - 15 years) drawn from the four nations of the UK who identified themselves as having no religious affiliation. These adolescents completed the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (abbreviated) together with measures of spirituality and empathy. The data demonstrated a positive correlation between spirituality and empathy after controlling for personality, sex, and age. This finding suggests that in regard to enhancing empathy within the lives of young people, spirituality is fulfilling the same function as religion has traditionally, which has been established by earlier studies.

Keywords: Psychology of religion, empathy, spirituality, personality.

Introduction

The notions of spirituality and religion are intriguing but nonetheless problematic and contested constructs currently employed in a wide range of literatures. Recent research and commentary have suggested that there is declining interest in religion alongside growing interest in spirituality. In the introduction to their book, *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion is Giving Way to Spirituality*, P. Heelas and L. Woodhead [34, p. 1] write as follows.

The declining influence of religion – particularly Christianity – in western societies has been the chief topic of the study of religion for over a century, but in recent years the emergence of something called 'spirituality' has – increasingly – demanded attention. Survey after survey shows that increasing numbers of people now prefer to call themselves 'spiritual' rather than 'religious'.

The case is supported, for example, by studies like R. Fuller [30] in a book given the title, *Spiritual But Not Religious: Understanding Unchurched America*. Fuller found that 21% of all Americans placed themselves in that category of being spiritual but not religious.

According to R. Forman [21, p. 3] in 2001 59% of Americans described themselves as both religious and spiritual, while a further 20% viewed themselves as solely spiritual. The two findings that a number of people describe themselves as both religious and spiritual and that more people describe themselves as spiritual than describe themselves as religious is supported by a number of other surveys, generally conducted in the USA. For example, J. Flemming, D. Overstreet, and S. Chappe [20] reported in a study of 11,200 seniors at six Jesuit Catholic Institutions that 81% described themselves as spiritual compared with 60% who described themselves as religious. It is findings of this nature that influence much of the current debate about the distinctiveness and the commonality of these two constructs: religion and spirituality (see, for example, B. Zinnbauer & K. Pargament) [55].

What is also clear from the literature is that, as scientific interest in religion declines, so scientific interest in spirituality grows. This change of emphasis within empirical research in the fields of religion and spirituality has been documented by A. Weaver, K. Pargament, K. Flannelly, and J. Oppenheimer [52] in their examination of trends in the scientific study of religion, spirituality and faith between 1965 and 2000. They found a significant upward trend across the years for the rate of articles dealing with spirituality and with religion *and* spirituality, combined with a significant downward trend for the rate of articles dealing only with religion.

Attempts to clarify the connections and the distinctions between spirituality and religion have been pursued within the academic community both from conceptual and from empirical starting points. Theoretical studies that are concerned to clarify the notion of spirituality routinely lament the nebulous, arbitrary and imprecise ways in which the term is used (see for example, S. Rose [46]; P. Salander [48]; H. Westerink [53]. For example, in a collection of essays concerned with the connection between spirituality,

philosophy and education, I. Yob [54, p. 120] drew the following conclusion: 'Spirituality is a term that tends to be used indiscriminately, embodying different meanings within different contexts'.

In developing their theoretically-rooted understanding of spirituality, P. Heelas and L. Woodhead [34] draw on Charles Taylor's [49] analysis of 'the massive subjective turn of modern culture' [49, p. 26] to identify spirituality as bound up with the subjective life, while religion is seen as subordinating subjective life to an external authority of transcendent meaning, goodness and truth. Their argument is that it is the subjective turn of modern culture that directs people away from religion and towards spirituality. In similar vein, A. Bryant, J. Choi, and M. Yasuno [6, p. 74] offer the following account of spirituality.

> Spirituality involves seeking personal authenticity, genuineness, and wholeness; transcending one's locus of centricity (i.e., recognizing concerns beyond oneself); connectedness to self and others through relationships and community; developing a sense of meaning, purpose, and direction; and openness to fostering a relationship with a higher power or centre of value that transcends human existence and rational ways of knowing.

Empirical studies that purport to measure spirituality do so through quite a range of instruments. In an analysis of existing measures, M. Hyland, P. Wheeler, S. Kamble, and K. Masters [39] distinguish between three groups of items. The first group of items includes the terms *spiritual* or *spirituality*, allowing respondents to interpret these terms in their own way (for example, 'My spirituality is important to me'). The second group of items includes the terms *spiritual* or *spirituality*, but anchor these terms within a clearly religious context (for example, 'I find a sense of spirituality in my church'). The third group of items do not include terms like spiritual or spirituality at all but attempt to identify areas that may (or may not) be considered relevant to spirituality (for example 'I feel connected with the natural world'). M. Hyland *et al.* describe these three groups of items in the following way: first group as self-perceived spirituality items; second group as explicit connection items; and third group as implicit connection items.

What is also clear from this literature is that, apart from the work of P. Heelas and L. Woodhead [34], the research evidence originates largely from the USA. The first research objective to be addressed by the present study concerns assessing the extent to which religiously unaffiliated young people living and growing up in the UK recognise spirituality in their own lives and regard themselves as spiritual people.

Empirical correlates of spirituality

An interesting and developing research tradition has begun to explore the psycho-social correlates of religion and spirituality among young people. This group of studies has focused, more specifically, on how religion and spirituality are associated with markers of psycho-social adjustment throughout adolescence. For example, M. Good and R. Willoughby [32] investigated the interaction of religiosity (operationalised as frequency of church attendance) and spirituality (operationalised as belief in God or a higher power) with measures of psycho-social adjustment (operationalised as measures of well-being, risk behaviours, academic orientation, parental monitoring, parental relationship, peer victimisation, and friendship quality) included in a questionnaire completed by 6,578 young people aged between 13 and 18 in Canada. The interaction between religion and spirituality was investigated by creating four groups: church-attenders who do not believe in God or a higher power; non-church attenders who believe in God or a higher power; church-attenders who believe in God or a higher power; and non-church attenders who do not believe in God or a higher power. Findings demonstrated that across all markers the two church-attending groups reported higher levels of psycho-social adjustment, and that holding a personal belief in God or higher power (an indicator of spirituality) added no additional influence to this relationship. Reflecting on the finding that spirituality was not an important factor in discriminating psycho-social adjustment, M. Good and R. Willoughby propose that the presence or absence of belief in God or a higher power (an indicator of spirituality) may not be a salient characteristic in the lives of young Canadians.

Other studies employing different operationalisations of religion and spirituality, however, have demonstrated that religion and spirituality do function differently during adolescence. For example, D. Holder, R. DuRant, T. Harris, J. Daniel, D. Odeidallah, and E. Goodman [38] investigated the interaction of religion and spirituality with measures of voluntary sexual activity among 141 young people aged between 11 and 19 in the USA. This study included eight different measures of religion and spirituality including: frequency of religious service attendance; self-perceived importance of religion assessed on a four-point scale with responses ranging from 'not very important' to 'very important'; intrinsic and extrinsic religious motivation assessed by the Age-Universal I-E Scale (R. Gorsuch & G. Venable) [33]; belief in God assessed on a six-point scale with responses ranging from 'I don't believe in God' to 'I believe in God and have no doubt about it'; belief in divine support assessed by the item 'I experience a close, personal

relationship with God' measured on a five-point Likert-type scale; existential spirituality assessed by the Quest Scale (C. Batson, P. Schoenrade, & W. Ventis [5]; and spiritual interconnectedness assessed by 15-items measured on a five-point Likert-type scale. Initial analyses of the data revealed that higher levels of perceived importance of religion and higher levels of spiritual interconnectedness were associated with lower levels of voluntary sexual activity among young people. However, secondary analyses, controlling for age, race, gender, socio-economic status, and religious affiliation, demonstrated that spiritual interconnectedness emerged as the only significant predictor of lower levels of voluntary sexual activity among young people.

D. Hodge, P. Cardenas, and H. Montoya [36] investigated the interaction of religion and spirituality with measures of substance use among 84 young people aged between 12 and 17 in Mexico. In this study religion was assessed by frequency of participation in church-related activities, spirituality was assessed by the Index of Core Spiritual Experiences Scale (J. Kass, R. Friedman, J. Leserman, P. Zuttermeister, & H. Benson) [40], and substance use was assessed by frequency of alcohol, marijuana, and hard drug use (e.g., heroin, cocaine, LSD). Findings of the study demonstrated that religion and spirituality are both negatively associated with substance use among young people but impact on this relationship in different ways. Spirituality emerged as a significant predictor of drug use among young people but was unrelated to alcohol use, whereas religion emerged as a significant predictor of alcohol use among young people but was unrelated to drug use.

E. Dowling, S. Gestsdottir, P. Anderson, A. von Eye, J. Almerigi, and R. Lerner [12] investigated structural relations between religion, spirituality, and thriving by utilising the same dataset and measures of religion and spirituality as E. Dowling, S. Gestsdottir, P. Anderson, A. von Eye, and R. Lerner [13]. Thriving was assessed by 52-items representing nine key factors of thriving among young people including: rules of youth presented by mother, rules of youth presented by father, presence of moral compass, future orientation/path to a hopeful future, search for positive identity, personal values, engagement with school, view of gender equality, and view of diversity. Findings of the study demonstrated that spirituality is the strongest predictor of thriving among young people independent of any combined or mediated influence of religion on thriving.

Taken together, findings from this tradition of empirical research portray a somewhat fragmented and disparate view of the connections and distinctions between religion and spirituality during teenage years. The

second research objective to be addressed by the present study concerns exploring the association between spirituality and a psychological variate already known to be correlated with individual differences in religiosity and which for theoretical reasons may be thought relevant to the broader field of spirituality. The variable selected for this purpose is empathy.

Religion, spirituality and empathy

Empathy is an interesting psychosocial construct because of the way in which love for neighbour and respect for others has been so firmly embedded within the religious traditions of the world. Within the psychology of religion, empirical research concerned with the connection between empathy and religion can be traced back to C. Batson's early 'Good Samaritan' experiments (C. Batson, P. Schoenrade, & V. Pych) [4]. Baston and his colleagues argued that the theological account of the relationship between empathy and religion derives from the theory that religion promotes helping behaviour, as exemplified by the Parable of the Good Samaritan, while empathy is understood as fundamental to helping behaviour (J. Rushton) [47]. On this account, we would hypothesise a positive correlation between belonging to a religious group and empathy. The problem with this theological view is that it appeared to be contradicted by the bulk of the empirical evidence emerging from C. Batson's early studies within the psychology of religion. The experiments reported by J. Darley and C. Batson [9], C. Batson [2], and C. Batson and P. Gray [3] found no support for the notion that religion promotes pro-social or helping behaviour. At the same time, C. Batson's early work was the subject of a number of methodological criticisms that began to undermine the confidence that could be placed in the conclusions drawn from this strand of experimental research in the psychology of religion.

A second strand of empirical research within the psychology of religion has involved examining the direct relationship between psychometric measures of empathy and measures of religion. Examples of this strand of research are provided by P. Watson, R. Hood, R. Morris, and J. Hall [51], P. Watson, R. Hood, and R. Morris [50], L. Francis and P. Pearson [27], B. Duriez [14; 15], L. Furrow, P. King, and K. White [31], Z. Khan, P. Watson, and F. Habib [41], E. Paek [44], L. Francis [23], C. Markstrom, E. Huey, B. Stiles, and A. Krause [42], and L. Francis, J. Croft, and A. Pyke [25]. The main conclusion from these studies is that the relationship between empathy and religion varies according to the conceptualisation and operationalisation of religiosity employed.

P. Watson, R. Hood, R. Morris, and J. Hall [51] administered the scales of intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity developed by G. Allport and J. Ross [1] together with the Questionnaire Measure of Emotional Empathy (A. Mehrabian & N. Epstein) [43] and the Hogan Empathy Scale (R. Hogan) [37] to a sample of 180 undergraduate students. They found a positive correlation between empathy and intrinsic religiosity, but a negative correlation between empathy and extrinsic religiosity. A second study reported by P. Watson, R. Hood, and R. Morris [50] conducted among 215 undergraduate volunteers from an introductory psychology class, employing the intrinsic and extrinsic scales developed by G. Allport and J. Ross [1] and the Interpersonal Reactivity Index developed by M. Davis [10] confirmed a positive correlation between intrinsic religiosity and empathic concern and a negative correlation between extrinsic religiosity and empathic concern. Clearly religious orientation is a matter of importance in this debate.

Somewhat different findings concerning the connection between religious orientation and empathy were reported in two studies by Z. Khan, P. Watson, and F. Habib [41], and E. Paek [44]. In the first of these studies, Z. Khan *et al.* [41] found a positive association between empathy and intrinsic religiosity in a study conducted among 168 Muslim students in Pakistan who completed the extrinsic and intrinsic measures proposed by R. Gorsuch and G. Venable [33], and a three-item measure of empathic concern extracted from the seven-item measure proposed by M. Davis [10]. In the second study, further support for the association between Davis' measure of empathic concern and intrinsic religiosity but not extrinsic religiosity was provided by E. Paek [44] among 148 Christian churchgoers.

L. Francis and P. Pearson [27] administered the Junior Eysenck Impulsiveness Inventory (S. Eysenck, G. Easting, & P. Pearson) [19] together with the Francis Scale of Attitude toward Christianity (L. Francis & M. Stubbs) [29] to a sample of 569 school pupils between the ages of 11 and 17 years. They found a positive correlation between empathy and religiosity, after controlling for age and sex. In the light of the study by P. Watson, R. Hood, R. Morris, and J. Hall [51] this finding is consistent with the view that the Francis Scale of Attitude toward Christianity assesses a form of intrinsic religiosity (L. Francis & A. Orchard, [26]; Hills & Francis, [35]).

B. Duriez [14] administered to a sample of 375 first-year psychology students a Dutch translation of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (M. Davis) [10] together with the Post-Critical Belief Scale (B. Duriez, J. Fontaine, & D. Hutsebaut) [16]. The strength of this measure is that it distinguishes between two aspects of religiosity: being religious or not

(exclusion versus inclusion of transcendence) and the way in which religious contents are processed (literal versus symbolic). B. Duriez [14] found no relationship between empathy and the index of being religious or not, and a positive relationship between empathy and higher scores in the direction of processing religious content in a symbolic way. This finding was subsequently replicated by B. Duriez [15] using the same instruments, among two further samples: 1,133 university students following an introductory course in psychology, and 397 adults. Among the third sample, comprising 338 secondary school pupils (mean age = 16 years, SD = 0.93), reported in the same paper, a positive correlation was found between empathy and being religious (a tendency to include transcendence) as well as between empathy and processing religious content in a symbolic way.

L. Furrow, P. King, and K. White [31] investigated the connection between religious identity and prosocial concerns among a sample of 801 urban public high school students ranging in age from 13 to 21 years, employing the 56-item Prosocial Personality Battery (L. Penner, B. Fritzsche, J. Craiger, & T. Freifield) [45]. They reported positive correlations between three components of religious identity (active in church life, committed to religiously-informed ethical standards, and holding traditional beliefs) and three aspects of empathy (affective empathy, cognitive empathy, and self-oriented empathy).

C. Markstrom, E. Huey, B. Stiles, and A. Krause [42] investigated the connection between two measures of religiosity (frequency of religious attendance and importance of spiritual or religious beliefs), two measures of empathy (empathic concern and perspective taking accessed by M. Davis [10], among 428 students in grade ten and grade eleven. They reported a positive connection between both measures of empathy and importance of belief, but no connection between these measures of empathy and frequency of religious attendance.

Within empirical theology, empirical research concerned with the connection between empathy and religion can be traced back to the more recent work of L. Francis [23]. Francis argued that the ways in which individuals feel about themselves and feel about other people is connected with the way in which they imagine that God feels about them. To explore this theory L. Francis [23] examined the relationship between empathy, as assessed by the empathy scale of the Junior Eysenck Impulsiveness Questionnaire (S. Eysenck, G. Easting, & P. Pearson) [19], and God images, as assessed in terms of unidimensional semantic space ranging from negative affect to positive affect (L. Francis, M. Robbins, & H. Gibson) [28], among a

sample of 1,826 secondary school pupils in England. After controlling for sex, school year and individual differences in personality, as assessed by the short-form Revised Junior Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (W. Corulla) [7], the data demonstrated a significant link between high levels of empathy and positive God images and a significant link between low levels of empathy and negative God images.

Building further on the study reported by L. Francis [23], L. Francis, J. Croft, and A. Pyke [25] administered the Empathy Scale of the Junior Eysenck Impulsiveness Questionnaire (S. Eysenck, G. Easting, & P. Pearson) [19] and the abbreviated form of the Revised Junior Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (L. Francis) [22], together with the New Index of God Images designed specifically for that study among a sample of 5,993, 13- to 15-year-old students within the UK. The data demonstrated that the image of God as a God of mercy is associated with higher empathy scores while the image of God as a God of justice is associated with lower empathy scores.

The consistent conclusion that can be drawn from this diverse literature is that intrinsic religiosity, positive religious affect, and positive God images are associated with higher levels of empathy. The second research objective to be addressed by the present study concerns exploring whether a similar association emerges between spirituality and higher levels of empathy. Such an association might be hypothesised on the basis of the range of spiritual practices identified within P. Heelas and L. Woodhead's [34] account of the spiritual revolution that themselves imply exploration of self and interconnectedness with others.

Research question

Against this background, the present study was established to examine two research questions. Set within a framework established by works like P. Healas and L. Woodhead [34] that suggest that within the UK the space occupied by religion is being taken over by spirituality, the first research question was concerned to examine the extent to which 13- to 15-year-old students within the four nations of the UK who see themselves unaffiliated with conventional religion nonetheless see themselves as spiritual. The second research question was concerned to examine the association between spirituality and empathy among a sample of 13- to 15-year-old students who claimed no affiliation to institutional religion. This second research question was framed against evidence from earlier studies documenting the association between religion and empathy in order to test whether the same positive association existed between spirituality and empathy as between religion and empathy. These two research questions were operationalised by

defining spirituality in terms of responses to the item, 'I am a spiritual person' and by defining empathy in terms of the family of measures derived from A. Mehrabian and N. Epstein [43]. In view of the potentially contaminating effects of personal and psychological factors, this research question was located within a theoretical and empirical framework that takes into account sex, age and the three major dimensions of personality proposed by H. Eysenck and S. Eysenck [17; 18].

Method

Procedure

As part of a project concerning the social and psychological correlates of attitudes toward religious diversity within the four nations of the UK, classes of 13- to 14-year-old students and classes of 14- to 15-year-old students were invited to complete a detailed questionnaire survey. The participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity, and were given the chance not to participate within the research project. Completed questionnaires were submitted by 11,809 students.

Instruments

The following indices from the *Religious Diversity and Young People* questionnaire were employed in the present analyses.

Age and sex were assessed by dichotomous items: male (1) and female (2); 13- to 14-year-old years (1), and 14- to 15-years (2).

Religious affiliation was assessed by the question, 'What is your religion?', followed by a check list of religious groups and the option 'no religion'.

Spirituality was assessed by the item 'I am a spiritual person', rated on a five-point Likert scale: agree strongly (5), agree (4), not certain (3), disagree (2), and disagree strongly (1).

Personality was assessed by the abbreviated form of the Junior Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (L. Francis) [22]. This instrument proposes three six-item measures of extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. Each item is rated on a dichotomous scale: yes (1) and no (0).

Empathy was assessed by the 23-item empathy scale of the Junior Eysenck Impulsiveness Questionnaire (S. Eysenck, G. Easting, & P. Pearson) [19], an instrument derived from the adult measure of emotional empathy proposed by A. Mehrabian and N. Epstein [43]. Each item is rated on a dichotomous scale: yes (1) and no (0).

Participants

The present analyses were conducted among the group of students who checked the option 'no religion' to the question, 'What is your religion?'.

This group of students comprised 1,953 males, 1,883 females, and 24 of undisclaimed sex; 2,010 students aged 13 to 14 years, 1,840 students aged 14 to 15 years, and 10 students of undisclosed age.

Analyses

The date were analysed by the SPSS statistical package, drawing on the frequency, correlation, reliability, and regression routines. The regression routine employed fixed order blockwise entry, allowing for the effect of spirituality to be entered into the model in block three after the personal factors (age and sex) had been entered in block one, and after the psychological factors (extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism) had been entered in block two.

Results and discussion

Table 1

I am a spiritual person

	N	%
Disagree strongly	1501	39
Disagree	780	20
Not certain	1096	28
Agree	296	8
Agree strongly	187	5

The first step in exploring the data involved examining the distribution of responses to the core question, 'I am a spiritual person' among the sample of 3,860 students who had identified themselves as clearly positioned outside the field of conventional religion by identifying themselves as not belonging to a religious group. These data presented in table 1, demonstrate that one in every eight of these young people (13%) conceive of themselves as 'spiritual' people, five in every eight do not see themselves as 'spiritual' people (59%), and two in every eight are unsure (28%).

Table 2

Scale properties

Measures	N items	alpha	Mean	SD	Low	High
Empathy	23	.80	15.72	4.41	0	23
Extraversion	6	.70	4.65	1.58	0	6
Neuroticism	6	.69	3.03	1.82	0	6
Psychoticism	6	.59	1.32	1.37	0	6

The second step in exploring the data involved examining the psychometric properties of the four instruments involved in the enquiry. These data, presented in table 2, demonstrate that the measures of empathy, extraversion, and neuroticism all generated satisfactory alpha coefficients (L. Cronbach) [8] in excess of the threshold of .65 proposed by R. DeVellis [11]. The lower internal consistency reliability of the Psychoticism Scale is consistent with other published data and with the recognised difficulties in conceptualising and operationalising this construct (L. Francis, L. Brown, & R. Philipchalk) [24].

Table 3

Correlation matrix

	Spirit	Emp	P	N	E	Age
Sex	.22***	.38***	-.25***	.26***	.08***	.04**
Age	-.02	.05**	-.01	.01	.07***	
Extraversion (E)	.01	.11***	.04**	-.14***		
Neuroticism (N)	.14***	.39***	.01			
Psychoticism (P)	-.06***	-.40***				
Empathy (Emp)	.19***					

Note: $^* p < .05;$ $^{**} p < .01;$ $^{***} p < .001$

The third step in exploring the data addressed the core research question of examining the association between spirituality and empathy. The data presented in table 3 and table 4 approach this question from two perspectives. The data in table 3 present the bivariate correlations between the index of spirituality, empathy, the two personal variables (sex and age), and the three psychological variables (extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism). According to these correlation coefficients there is a clear significant positive correlation between spirituality and empathy ($r = .19$, $p < .001$). However, there are other clear significant correlations between empathy and both personal and psychological factors. Higher scores of empathy are associated with being female, with higher extraversion scores, with higher neuroticism scores, and with lower psychoticism scores. At the same time, these correlation coefficients also demonstrate that spirituality is correlated with sex, with neuroticism, and with extraversion scores. Higher scores on the index of spirituality are associated with being female, with higher neutoricism scores, and with lower psychoticism scores. It is as a consequence of the complex set of correlations that table 4 draws on a sequence of multiple regression models.

Table 4

Regression model: Empathy

	r	Model 1	Mode1 2	Model 3
Personal factors				
Sex	.38***	.38***	.18***	.17***
Age	.05**	.03*	.02	.02
Psychological factors				
Extraversion	.11***		.16***	.16***
Neuroticism	.39***		.37***	.36***
Psychoticism	-.40***		-.36***	-.36***
Spiritual factors				
Spiritual person	.19***			.08***
r²		.15	.38	.38

Note: *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

The first column in table 4 re-presents the relevant bivariate correlation coefficients from table 3 for ease of comparison with the beta weights in the other three columns. Model one lays the foundations for the regression analysis by entering the personal factors (sex and age) into the model as block one. Model two introduced the psychological factors (extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism) into the model. When the psychological factors are in the model, the strength of sex difference is reduced (as a consequence of the strong associations between sex and both psychoticism and neuroticism). Model three introduces spirituality as the third block. When all three sets of factors are in the model spirituality remains a significant (if not particularly strong) predictor of higher empathy scores ($\beta = .08$, $p < .001$). On the basis of this finding it can be concluded that spirituality functions in the same way as religiosity in impacting a core way in which individuals respond to other people.

Conclusion

This study was set within a conceptual framework proposed by studies like *The Spiritual Revolution* by P. Heelas and L. Woodhead [34] that argued that within the UK the space formerly occupied by religion was being occupied now by spirituality. Since there is less documented evidence within the UK, compared with the USA, regarding the prevalence of spirituality as a recognised concept, the first research question addressed by the present study concerned mapping the extent to which 13- to 15-year-old students across the four nations of the UK who were unaffiliated with conventional religion rated themselves as spiritual people. The data indicate that this concept is not widely endorsed among religiously unaffiliated young people within the UK. Only one in every eight of these young people conceived of themselves as 'spiritual people', while five in every eight are clear that they do not see themselves as 'spiritual' people, and the remaining two in every eight are unsure. In this sense 'spirituality' may not be a well-established concept within the self-consciousness of young people within the UK. As yet much of the space created by the withdrawal of religion from the lives of the young does not seem to have been colonised by a self-recognised turn to spirituality.

The second research question approached the theoretical framework proposed by studies like *The Spiritual Revolution* from a different perspective. The second research question asked whether spirituality in the lives of religiously unaffiliated young people may be associated with the same psychological correlates as conventional religion. This second research question was operationalised by identifying empathy as an established psychological correlate of religiosity and asked whether a similar correlation might emerge between spirituality and empathy among the religiously unaffiliated. The second research question was refined in two ways, by focusing explicitly on the conceptualisation and operationalisation of empathy as proposed by A. Mehrabian and N. Epstein [43] and by locating the association between spirituality and empathy within a network of personal and psychological factors, with a particular regard to sex and to the three dimensions of personality proposed by H. Eysenck and S. Eysenck [17; 18]. The data indicate that a significant positive association appertains between self-assessed spirituality and empathy among the religiously unaffiliated. In this sense spirituality may be serving a similar psychological function among the religiously unaffiliated to the psychological function of religiosity among the religiously affiliated.

While the present study has addressed effectively the two research questions that it set out to address, there are clear weaknesses with the present study that need to be addressed by future research. The first weakness concerns reliance on a single item measure for the assessment of spirituality. Future studies may wish to retain the single item measure employed in the present study, in light of its strong face validity, but also to augment that item with one or more spirituality-related scales. The second weakness concerns the reliance on a single correlate of religiosity

spirituality, in this case the A. Mehrabian and N. Epstein [43] conceptualisation and operationalisation of empathy. Future studies may wish to employ other multiple established correlates of religiosity to test the extent to which spirituality among the religiously unaffiliated may emulate the functions of religiosity among the religiously affiliated.

Note

Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project (AHRC Reference: AH/G014035/1) was a large-scale mixed methods research project investigating the attitudes of 13- to 16-year-old students across the United Kingdom. Students from a variety of socio-economic, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds from different parts of England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, with the addition of London as a special case, took part in the study. Professor Robert Jackson was principal investigator and Professor Leslie J. Francis was co-investigator. Together they led a team of qualitative and quantitative researchers based in the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit, within the Centre for Education Studies at the University of Warwick. The project was part of the AHRC/ESRC Religion and Society Programme and ran from 2009-2012.

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ДУХОВНІСТЬ І ЕМПАТІЯ: ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКА РЕЗУЛЬТАТІВ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ, ПРОВЕДЕНОГО СЕРЕД ПІДЛІТКІВ ВЕЛИКОБРИТАНІЇ, ЯКІ НЕ МАЮТЬ РЕЛІГІЙНИХ УПОДОБАНЬ

Леслі Дж. Френсіс, Крістофер А. Льюїс, Урсула МакКенна

Ряд дослідників, у тому числі автори книги «Духовна революція: чому релігія поступається місцем духовності?» П. Хілас і Л. Вудхед, є прихильниками думки про те, що в Австралії, Великобританії і США поняття духовність заміщає поняття релігії, особливо в житті молоді. З цього твердження випливають ключове концептуальне питання і два ключових емпіричних питання. Концептуальне питання зводиться до з'ясування, що собою являє духовність. Перше емпіричне питання, по суті, передбачає з'ясування ступеня усвідомлення сутності духовності як конструкту молодими людьми, які не мають релігійних уподобань. Друге емпіричне питання стосується перевірки того, чи дійсно духовність виконує ту ж функцію, що і релігія в житті молодих людей. Дане дослідження присвячене вивченню цих трьох питань на основі аналізу даних, отриманих в результаті проведення опитування 3860 підлітків (у віці від 13 до 15 років) з чотирьох націй Великобританії, які ідентифікували себе як ті, що не мають релігійної приналежності. Цим підліткам було запропоновано заповнити коротку форму Особистісного опитувальника Айзенка поряд з вимірюванням рівня духовності і емпатії. Отримані дані продемонстрували позитивну кореляцію між духовністю і емпатією після врахування особливостей особистості, статі і віку учасників дослідження. Цей висновок свідчить про те, що стосовно посилення емпатії в житті молодих людей духовність виконує ту ж функцію, що і традиційно релігія, що було встановлено в більш ранніх дослідженнях.

Ключові слова: *психологія релігії, емпатія, духовність, особистість.*

ДУХОВНОСТЬ И ЭМПАТИЯ: ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКА РЕЗУЛЬТАТОВ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ, ПРОВЕДЕННОГО СРЕДИ ПОДРОСТКОВ ВЕЛИКОБРИТАНИИ, НЕ ИМЕЮЩИХ РЕЛИГИОЗНЫХ ПРЕДПОЧТЕНИЙ

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Ряд исследователей, в том числе авторы книги «Духовная революция: почему религия уступает место духовности?» П. Хилас и Л. Вудхед, являются сторонниками мнения о том, что в Австралии, Великобритании и США понятие духовность замещает понятие религии, особенно в жизни молодежи. Из этого утверждения вытекают ключевой концептуальный вопрос и два ключевых эмпирических вопроса. Концептуальный вопрос сводится к выяснению, что собой представляет духовность. Первый эмпирический вопрос, в сущности, предполагает выяснение степени осознания сущности духовности как конструкта молодыми людьми, не имеющими религиозных предпочтений. Второй эмпирический вопрос касается проверки того, действительно ли духовность выполняет ту же функцию, что и религия в жизни молодых людей. Данное исследование посвящено рассмотрению этих трех вопросов на основе анализа данных, полученных в результате проведения опроса 3860 подростков (в возрасте от 13 до 15 лет) из четырех наций Великобритании, которые идентифицировали себя как не имеющие религиозной принадлежности. Этим подросткам было предложено заполнить краткую форму Личностного опросника Айзенка наряду с измерением уровня духовности и эмпатии. Полученные данные продемонстрировали положительную корреляцию между духовностью и эмпатией после учета особенностей личности, пола и возраста участников исследования. Этот вывод показывает, что в отношении усиления эмпатии в жизни молодых людей духовность выполняет ту же функцию, что и традиционно религия, что было установлено в более ранних исследованиях.

Ключевые слова: *психология религии, эмпатия, духовность, личность.*

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