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Fearn, Michael

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**A SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE OF SUBJECT
PERCEPTIONS OF A-LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES
STUDENTS**

A Socio-Psychological Profile of Subject Perceptions of A-Level Religious Studies Students

by

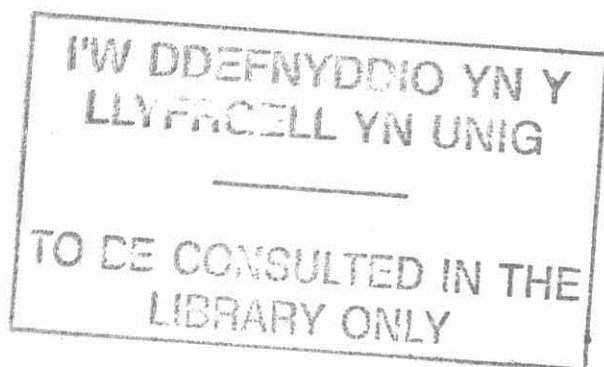
Michael Fearn

of

UNIVERSITY OF WALES, BANGOR

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Summary

This dissertation charts the history of religious education in terms of the legislative framework surrounding and governing religious education in England and Wales. Key academic stimuli to change in religious education are also considered. These dual foci of change contextualise the original empirical component of the research.

The impact of sex, personality and religiosity are investigated across a range of areas. It is shown that individual differences in students' motivations for studying religion at A-level, their perceptions of the aims of religious studies, their interests in different aspects of religious studies and their perceptions of efficacy of teaching methods within religious studies are all shown to be predicted by sex, personality, and religiosity.

Sex, Eysenckian personality constructs, and different aspects of religiosity each shape the perceptions and opinions of students across this range of subject perceptions within A-level religious studies.

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Introduction

This dissertation sets out to establish why A-level students choose to study religion. Religious education has, since its genesis, gone through many incarnations before arriving at its present identity as a secular subject concerned with providing information about, and insight into various religious traditions. The single factor that has remained constant in religious education is the reaction of those pupils who are exposed to it as a subject. The subject is not popular among pupils.

While religious education is technically compulsory for all pupils in state maintained secondary schools and sixth-forms, this requirement is often ignored. Students may therefore, generally speaking, have no meaningful contact with the subject. Many, however, choose to study religion at A-level. Although, religious education is such an unpopular subject, there is nonetheless a specific group of individuals who choose to study religion in what is effectively a post-compulsory context. This dissertation sets out to establish why this is the case.

Chapter 1 investigates the legislative development of religious education from its origins as an optional subject in the newly emerging dual education system in 1870, through its affirmation as a compulsory subject in state schools in 1944, to its present unique status as a part of the basic curriculum: a status which religious education has held since it was revolutionised in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Chapter 2 investigates the non-statutory developments that have impacted on religious education. Emphasis is placed on two academics and their work which revolutionised religious education in

England and Wales, and beyond. Ronald Goldman investigated the children who were the recipients of religious education. Ninian Smart investigated the subject matter and the remit of religious education. Despite the fact that these projects were essentially unrelated, their interaction provided more force for change in religious education than any legislative effort has done to date. Alongside an evolving legislative framework, academic influences affirmed the move from confessional religious instruction to secular world-religions based religious education.

Having shown in chapters 1 and 2 how religious education has changed, chapter 3 turns attention to the remarkably consistent reactions of pupils to religious education. Research carried out through the course of the twentieth century is evaluated. In summary, pupils tend to hold a less positive attitude toward religious education than toward almost any other area of the curriculum.

The trends identified in chapter 3 are investigated in greater detail in chapter 4 of the dissertation. Having identified sex, personality and religiosity as key predictor variables in the response of pupils toward religious education, it is necessary to explore further personality theories, religiosity and issues concerned with sex and gender.

Chapter 5 introduces methodological concerns that may arise when attempting to answer the questions raised in the earlier chapters. This evaluation of research methods includes an investigation of reliability and validity. The ways in which these issues impact on the current investigation are explored.

Chapter 6 introduces the research design. The theoretical and empirical rationale underpinning the development of the questionnaires is offered in this chapter. The research process is discussed.

Following this, the participants are profiled in terms of sex and religiosity. The psychometric credentials of the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity and the amended EPQR-A are explored among the participants.

Having explored the characteristics of the participants, and the functioning of the indices, it becomes possible to consider sex, personality and religiosity as being measured effectively. This enables these variables to be employed as independent variables in the following chapters.

Chapter 7 investigates the motivation of A-level students for studying religion. The items employed to investigate motivation are introduced and a general profile of student motivations is presented. Following this overview, the impact of sex, personality, and religiosity is considered in terms of students' motivation to study religion.

Chapter 8 investigates the interests of A-level students in different areas of religious studies. The items employed to investigate different levels of interest are introduced and a general profile of student interests is presented. Following this overview, the impact of sex, personality, and religiosity is considered in terms of students' interest in different areas of the curriculum.

Chapter 9 investigates the perceptions of A-level students as to the aims of religious studies. The items employed to measure perceived aims are introduced and a general profile of student perceptions is presented. Following this overview, the impact of sex, personality, and religiosity is considered in terms of students' perceptions of the aims of religious studies.

Chapter 10 investigates the A-level students' reaction to teaching methods that they have

experienced in religious studies. The items employed to investigate teaching methods are introduced and a general profile of student reaction to these methods is presented. Following this overview, the impact of sex, personality, and religiosity is considered in terms of students' perceptions of teaching methods.

The dissertation concludes by drawing together the main findings of this investigation. Suggestions are made as to how the findings should impact on religious education in England and Wales.

Chapter 1

Turning Points in Religious Education:

Legislative impetus to change

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Introduction

Numerous texts have been produced which chart the history of education in Great Britain. Several texts have also been produced in order to carry out the more focused task of producing a history of religious education in England and Wales. The aim of the current chapter is not to produce an exhaustive history of religious education in England and Wales. Rather, the aim is to demonstrate effectively one simple point, namely that religious education as it is currently conceptualised within the state maintained education system differs from religious education as it was conceptualised at the time of the 1870 Elementary Education Act. The specific change of emphasis that is to be considered is the change of emphasis from confessional religious instruction to secular religious education.

A straightforward chronological presentation of the history of religious education in England and Wales would serve the purpose of meeting the aim implicit within this current chapter. However, a straightforward presentation of the history of religious education in England and Wales could more than adequately fill several volumes. Selective attention must, therefore, be paid to the events fundamental to the changes in religious education pertinent to this chapter.

The academic field of religious studies has been examined in terms of 'turning points' (King, 1990). This chapter will proceed to examine developments in religious education in terms of 'turning points', which are seen to be pivotal moments in the definition of religious education. Legislative factors are the focus of this chapter, non-statutory factors are examined in chapter 2 of this dissertation. Legislative factors will feature as being an obvious source of change in religious education syllabuses. The clauses of the 1870 Elementary Education Act pertinent to religious education are examined. Following this, consideration is given to the sections of the

1944 Education Act that concern religious education. This Act is of particular prominence to religious educators as it is this Act that makes religious education a compulsory element of the school curriculum across England and Wales. The legal framework within which religious education currently finds itself was codified within the 1988 Education Reform Act. Having introduced both the 1944 Education Act and the 1988 Education Reform Act, these two pieces of legislation are contrasted in a bid to demonstrate the impact that changing legislation has had on developing syllabuses in religious education.

Legislation

As suggested in the introduction to the current chapter, legal changes have been among the most significant motivators of development and evolution in religious education syllabuses. The legislation which is of particular relevance to the current chapter includes the 1870 Elementary Education Act, the 1944 Education Act, the 1988 Education Reform Act and the 1993 Education Act. These pieces of legislation are examined in turn. It is demonstrated that although legislative changes are the main impetus to curricular change in religious education, there have been occasions when the law has been relatively ineffective.

A brief note about the legal system of the United Kingdom is appropriate in order to explore fully the impact of legislation on religious education. Prior to the limited devolution across the United Kingdom in the late 1990s, the United Kingdom Parliament was the legislative body that was able to pass legislation relating to the United Kingdom, or to Great Britain, or to any of the component areas of Great Britain. Scotland had a legal system which was a part of the United Kingdom legal system, but which was different to that of England and Wales. England and Wales shared a similar status in legal terms. The legislative framework imposed around education was identical in

England to that in Wales. By and large the same acts that significantly shaped religious education in England also significantly shaped religious education in Wales. This is not to say that these Acts made identical requirements of English education to those of Welsh education. In fact certain sections of the relevant Acts required important differences to be created and maintained between England and Wales in terms of the statutory framework within which religious education was offered.

It is generally assumed that laws are passed by a democratically elected parliament. This is certainly the case with Acts of Parliament. However, Acts of Parliament are not the only source of legislation. Statutory Instruments are as legally binding as Acts of Parliament and they are not required to be scrutinised by The House of Commons at any point before they are passed into Law. General assumptions about the passage of law through parliament may be misplaced.

In terms of religious education and legislation it is not really possible to judge which is the most appropriate manner for legislation to be passed. In the interest of public service, it may be the case that a conventional Act of Parliament may be desirable. However, recent displays of ignorance from the House of Commons on matters pertaining to religious education can serve to suggest that the House of Commons is by and large not well suited to the task.

For example, during the passage of the Census Amendment Bill through the House of Commons it was shown that some members of the Lower Chamber knew little about religion, education, or indeed legislation. Several members made mistakes in matters of fact. Others demonstrated that they were not fully briefed on conceptual nuances specific to religion, by, for example, confusing the difference between religious belief, practice and affiliation.

Although this criticism relates to the passage of the Census Amendment Bill through Parliament, it has a clear implication for legislation concerned with religious education. Politicians are not necessarily the right people to decide what the law should require of religious educators, as they do not necessarily have sufficient expertise in the subject in order to make informed decisions.

Religious Education in England and Wales prior to 1870

Prior to 1870 there had been no legislative venture into education. The state and the education system had very few points of contact. The state provided no schools, and it had no real control over what was taught in the schools that other groups volunteered to provide. The schools which were provided on a voluntary basis up to this point were generally provided by the various Christian churches. Although the state had no interest in providing schools before 1870, there was an initiative in which voluntary schools were provided with funding from the government.

This funding was available from 1833, and took the form of grants allocated to schools provided by religious bodies. The grant-funding of schools by the state set two important precedents which were to be the bedrock on which the 1870 Elementary Education Act was built. First, the state had finally acknowledged that it had a responsibility to provide a mechanism by which children in Britain may receive an education. Second, the state had demonstrated that it was possible, politically and administratively, to provide funding to for schools connected with the churches, both established and otherwise (Murphy, 1972).

The result of the haphazard method of providing school funding, combined with a lack of national and regional bureaucracies in order to assess and respond to educational needs, was a sporadic provision of schools which did not adequately meet demand. School provision was not linked to

needs of localities, and the funding provided centrally for such schools was not made available evenly throughout the country. By the late 1860s it was clear that the existing system was not working efficiently, and it needed to be improved.

1870 Elementary Education Act

The 1870 Elementary Education Act represented the first legislative venture into the field of education. Prior to this Act, there was no national framework within which schools were expected to function, indeed prior to the 1870 Act there was no national framework within which schools were expected to exist! The provision of schools prior to this act was voluntary and depended largely upon the Christian churches who were among the pioneers in the provision of schools in England and Wales. As education was unchartered territory in terms of legislative involvement, the 1870 Elementary Education Act therefore had no clear precedent. The result of a lack of clear widely shared vision led to a situation arising where the various interested parties had some idea of what they expected to see in an Education Bill.

Shaping the Act

The 1870 Elementary Education Act was designed to ensure that every child in England and Wales had access to elementary education. The Act did not attempt to ensure the universal provision of state elementary schools, rather the legislation set out to identify those areas of the country where there was insufficient elementary education provision and remedy the situation only in those areas. State schools were not seen to be necessary where there was existing voluntary provision.

The state did not attempt to replace existing voluntary schools, rather it set out to establish a network of state schools alongside the voluntary schools. The 1870 legislation laid the

foundations of the dual system which remains intact and expanding into the twenty-first century.

Two individuals were of key importance to the passage of the 1870 Elementary Education Act, W.E. Forster, and W. Cowper-Temple. Forster was the Vice-President of the Education Department. He had been promoted to this position in 1868. He had the primary responsibility for drafting the Elementary Education Bill. Forster had to respond to two main lobbying forces in the way that he shaped the Bill.

Faith communities

At the time of the drafting of the 1870 Education Bill, religion was treated seriously across Great Britain. Christianity and public structures were tacitly assumed to involve each other. It is therefore scarcely surprising that the main lobbying forces organised themselves in terms of religious loyalties.

The National Education League was established in 1869 (although it had as a forerunner, The Education Aid Society). Its aim was to campaign for non-denominational schools (Murphy, 1972), although Kay (1997) has suggested that there was some confusion within the League as to 'whether they were in favour of non-sectarian or secular education'. By and large, the National Education League was not satisfied with the situation whereby the Church of England was strengthening its dominance of education. It is important to note that although the National Education League was campaigning for these aims, its members were generally not atheists. Rather than rejecting a belief in God, they were rejecting a belief in the idea that the Anglican church should be gaining through state funding.

In addition to those campaigning against denominational education (whether simply non-denominational, or specifically secular) there was also a number of organisations dedicated to promoting specifically denominational confessional religious education. The National Society (Church of England) had invested considerably in education. It campaigned to provide Church of England denominational schools, and it sought state funding for these schools.

The Act

Clearly, the lobbying forces were pulling in two quite different directions. A lengthy parliamentary debate was needed before the Bill was deemed suitable to proceed to the statute books. Particular skill and diplomacy were evidenced by the two main political names associated with the Bill and Act, Forster and Cowper-Temple.

The Bill was introduced to Parliament by Forster, on behalf of the government, in his capacity as the Vice-President of the Education Department. As has already been asserted, Forster was very much aware of the denominational differences of opinion with regard to education. He was, however, driven more by pragmatism, than by sensitivity to religious pressures. His main concern was obtaining universal elementary education provision with as little financial investment as possible.

Administration

The 1870 Elementary Education Act made demands that the need for educational provision be assessed locally. Thus, School Boards were established in order to assess provision in their locality. Members of such school boards were to be elected locally, and these elections were to be financed by the school board out of the schools fund. Members were initially elected for a

period of three years. However, they were able to resign, as long as they gave a period of one month notice. In addition to holding the freedom to resign from their position, members could also be removed from office. Bankruptcy and custodial convictions immediately prohibited any individual from serving on any school board.

Where a shortfall in the supply of elementary school provision was identified, only then was new provision deemed necessary, and even then it was not necessarily the case that state provision would be seen to be required. When a deficiency in existing coverage was identified, the voluntary bodies were to be able to apply for a building grant in order to redress this shortfall before the state intervened in the educational provision of the area in question.

In introducing the Bill to Parliament, Forster was keen to point out the duty that the government had to the taxpayer. State funding was to be spared where it could be done without.

Our object is to complete the present voluntary system, to fill up gaps sparing the public money where it can be done without, procuring as much as we can the assistance of the parents, and welcoming as much as we might rightly can the co-operation of those benevolent men who desire to assist their neighbours.
(Hansard, CXCIX, 444)

Forster seemed to be convinced that the voluntary system, developed by 'those benevolent men who desire to assist their neighbours' was an institution worth keeping. He was working from the premiss those who had ventured into the field of educational provision without being compelled to do so, must have been motivated by some honourable altruistic tendency.

However, if more recent sociological reflection is brought to bear on the evidence with which Forster was confronted then it is quite possible to draw a contrasting conclusion. A neo-Marxist

perspective would question the motivation of the established church for providing education to the poor in its principles (the stated aim of the National Society). It is precisely this group, the poor, who represented the proletariat. The Marxist perspective could be seen to suggest that the state would attempt to force young members of the exploited classes to partake in the soothing opiate that is religion. If the young members of that community were absenting themselves from Sunday services, then what better way of remedying the situation than to present dogma to the young in the guise of education?

School status

As shown above, the existing voluntary schools were allowed to flourish. They were not to be replaced, but complemented with board schools. Due to the provision that additional voluntary schools may be built in order to meet deficiencies where they had been identified, it was clear that the number of voluntary schools would increase dramatically. The period during which applications for new voluntary schools had to be received was set at six months within the legislation, but, in practice this period lasted only until the end of 1870 (the Bill became an Act on 9 August, with the effect that the period of grace lasted less than 5 months).

Board schools were to be open to all pupils. There would be no religious tests and no discrimination on grounds of religious affiliation.

It shall not be required as a condition of any child being admitted into or continuing in the school, that he shall attend or abstain from attending any Sunday school, or any place of religious worship, or that he shall attend any religious observance or any instruction in religious subjects in the school or elsewhere from which observance or instruction he may be withdrawn by his parent, or that he shall, if withdrawn by his parent attend the school on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his parents belong. (1870 Elementary Education Act I, 7(1))

Religion in the curriculum

Religious subject matter in the curriculum of elementary schools after the passage of the 1870 Elementary Education Act was conceived differently in voluntary and board schools. The voluntary schools were permitted to continue to give denominational religious instruction. School boards were given the choice as to whether or not religious instruction was to be given in their schools. However, if the school board decided that religious instruction ought to be taught, then it must be non-denominational. This non-denominational requirement was perceived by some in the 'Cowper-Temple clause' of the Act, which insisted that:

No religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination shall be taught in the school. (1870 Elementary Education Act I, 14(2))

It is interesting to note that it is this portion of the Act that has been seen by many people since the passage of the legislation through Parliament as prohibiting denominational religious education from board schools. However, Murphy (1972) maintains that both Forster and Cowper-Temple were of the opinion that it was possible to teach in a sectarian manner without necessarily involving religious catechisms or formularies! It would then appear that a simple misunderstanding of the legislation has informed professional opinion and practice in religious education since as early as 1870. This, as we shall see later in this chapter, is a well established phenomenon in religious education which continues to the present day.

Although the different school boards had the right to exclude religious education from their schools, apparently only a few of them availed themselves of this opportunity. Francis (1987a) draws attention to the attempt of the Birmingham School Board to remove religion from the curriculum in 1873. This situation lasted for about six years, during which time clergy, or others

who were not responsible for secular education in the schools, were permitted to use school rooms outside normal school hours and then only as long as some sort of rent had been paid for the use of the rooms. This situation was met with resistance, and lapsed in 1879 when non-denominational religious instruction was introduced. The nature of 'non-denominational' religious instruction which characterised the period between 1870 and the passage of the 1944 Education Act will now be considered.

Hull (1984a) suggests that many of the syllabuses of religious education which arose during this time were modelled on those which were used in church schools. Amendments were made by simply removing the denominationally specific components. For example, the Anglican catechism would be removed from an originally Anglican syllabus, whereas the Apostle's creed and the ten commandments would remain. In the immediate aftermath of the 1870 Elementary Education Act, denominational rivalries were still fierce. It is for this reason that the basic and near universally accepted tenets of Christianity were all that board schools could risk including in their religious instruction.

As these denominational rivalries diminished the amount of prescribed material for school syllabuses of religion gradually increased, as the amount of proscribed material decreased. Syllabuses became substantial documents. This is the era that saw the beginnings of the agreed syllabi of religious education which were soon to be required in the 1944 Education Act. As there was no legal impetus pre-1944 to develop agreed syllabi of religious education they will not be considered in great depth in this chapter. Further consideration will be given to these syllabi in chapter 2 of the current dissertation.

1944 Education Act

Shaping the Act

At the time of its passage through parliament, The 1944 Education Act was not a high priority for the United Kingdom. The ongoing war effort ensured that updating educational legislation was something of a distraction from the main focus of the government. Perhaps, if the legislation had been put in place after the war, then the Act may have been shaped differently. Social concerns in post-war Britain were focussed on constructing a land 'fit for heroes'. Clearly there is much in the state provision and regulation of education that could have helped to achieve this aim. However, during the war, the Education Bill was not considered with great seriousness.

Although it has been possible to identify clearly the architects of the 1870 Elementary Education Act, it has not been possible to do the same with the 1944 Education Act. It is often asserted that R.A. Butler was the main proponent of the 1944 Bill. Indeed, Cruickshank (1963) even goes as far as referring to the 1944 Education Act as being 'The Butler Act'. However, it is equally asserted (Wallace, 1981) that:

Butler exerted little influence on the educational aspects of the Act. It is not his act in the sense that it embodies his policies or was designed by him. ... The principal authors of the Act were a group of civil servants who met at Branksome Dene Hotel, Bournemouth, to which they had been evacuated, between 1940 and May 1941. Their physical separation from their political leaders, who remained at the Board's offices in Kingsway, London, reinforced their independence from ministerial influence.

Although there is no consensus as to the authorship of the 1944 legislation, there is a high degree of agreement as to the skill of whoever was responsible for drafting the Bill. Denominational rivalries in education were still clearly remembered from the 1870 Elementary Education Act. The authors of the 1944 Education Bill were astute enough to realise that, once more, members of

faith communities were likely to be among the most vocal lobbying groups in the prelude to the passage of the Act.

Faith communities

The faith communities which were active in trying to shape the 1944 Education Act were predominantly Christian. Although this situation was not radically different from that in the run-up to the 1870 Act, the emphasis was different. In the nineteenth century, Anglicans, Catholics and non-conformists saw each other as a threat and worked hard to try to reduce the benefit that their competitors may derive from any Act. In the twentieth century these different denominations were more willing to work together to ensure that Christianity prevailed over secularism.

The various churches were in a strong position to influence the content of the Act. Between them the denominations owned a vast number of schools. The Government could not afford to buy these schools. The continuing war effort ensured that materials were not available to build new schools that might replace these voluntary schools. In short, the voluntary schools were a part of the education system that could not be simply replaced. However, it was clear that the system was not working effectively. What eventually resulted was a system that enhanced voluntary provision, rather than attempted to replace voluntary schools.

The Act

Administration

The school boards brought about by the 1870 Elementary Education Act were now obsolete. The 1944 Education Act heralded the onset of an age in religious education whereby the local education authorities gained much control and influence. The local education authorities were

required to convene an agreed syllabus conference. The constitution and duties of such syllabus conferences were clearly defined in the legislation and are considered later in the current chapter.

In addition to being required to establish a syllabus conference, local education authorities were also given permission to establish Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs). There was no requirement for such a SACRE to be established, and there was no real guidance given as to how such a SACRE should be constituted. Even if it was constituted successfully, there was no guidance given as to what a SACRE ought to do.

As there was no compulsion on local education authorities to convene SACREs, many did not do so. Between 1944 and 1988 it is suggested that 'Religious education in those authorities that did not choose to convene SACREs does not seem to have been greatly deprived' (Cox and Cairns, 1989). This suggests that these ill-defined SACREs did not necessarily have any real beneficial influence on religious education. This administrative situation in religious education persevered until the passage of the 1988 Education Reform Act.

School status

Dent (1944) suggests that 'the compromise on the "Dual Control" of schools is one of the outstanding triumphs of the Act: not because it satisfies everybody (in fact, it completely satisfies no one) [his parenthesis], but because it is a compromise which all parties concerned agreed to accept.'

The basic provisions relating to school status were relatively simple. All voluntary schools had to opt to choose one of two new statuses. They had to choose to become either voluntary aided

schools or voluntary controlled schools. Voluntary aided schools were to be aided by their local authority. Voluntary controlled schools were to lose some of their freedom and become controlled to some extent by the local authority.

The differences that there were to be between the two statuses were clearly defined within the legislation. The founding bodies of voluntary aided schools were to be permitted to appoint two-thirds of the school governors. Clearly, therefore, the founding bodies were able to retain a reasonable level of control over their aided schools. However, the governing bodies of these schools were then responsible for generating a proportion of the cost to carry out building projects and they were required to maintain the exterior of most school buildings. It was decided that a proportion of the required funding should be met from public funding. The 1944 Education Act set this level of public funding at 50%. This level of public funding was increased in 1967 to 75%. A further increase followed in 1974. At this point the figure was raised to 85%.

Religious education within voluntary aided schools was required to be in line with the foundation deed of the school. For example, a Church of England voluntary aided school in 1944 would have two thirds of its governors appointed by the Church of England, it would be responsible for meeting 50% of building and external maintenance costs, and its religious education would be permitted to be of a denominational nature.

Voluntary controlled schools were to differ from voluntary aided schools in numerous ways. First, the founding bodies of voluntary controlled schools were only allowed to appoint a minority of the governors, one third of the governing body. Such a governing body was to have no liability to raise finance required for external maintenance nor building work. The religious education

provided in voluntary controlled schools was to be in accordance with the appropriate locally agreed syllabus. Denominational religious education was only to be given in voluntary controlled schools if it was specifically requested by the parents of pupils. These schools could no longer take it for granted that the religious instruction that they provided was to be denominational in nature and appropriate to their founding body.

As suggested above (Dent, 1944), the parts of the Act that dealt with voluntary schools were a major compromise. The founding bodies may be seen to have 'sold' the control of their controlled schools to the local authorities. However, in selling the control of schools, they also passed on significant financial liabilities to the local education authorities. The founding bodies may equally be seen to have paid a relatively high price in order to keep their aided schools in the state maintained sector of education. The founding bodies retained control of their governing bodies, and they retained denominational religious education, the price that they paid for these allowances was financial liability for certain costs.

The two types of voluntary school status were devised in order that each voluntary body might have the option to choose a status appropriate for its schools. It may be seen that the two main options presented indeed reflected options that the voluntary bodies were able to select. The Anglicans were content to settle for a mixture of controlled and aided statuses for their schools, while the Roman Catholics felt that controlled status was not suitable for their schools. All but two of the Roman Catholic schools opted for aided status. The two exceptions arose only as the result of administrative errors (Francis, 1987a).

Religion in the curriculum

Religious subject matter that was to be taught in the classroom was defined by the 1944 legislation as being 'religious instruction'. Religious education was still more than 40 years away. The legislation introduces religious instruction as being compulsory in schools, although it was not prescribed by the law exactly what had to be taught. Instead of deciding centrally what had to be taught about religion, the legislators made provisions for the establishment of a series of local agencies to oversee the development of syllabuses appropriate to local needs.

The local agencies that were to be charged with the task of producing syllabuses locally were the agreed syllabus conferences. These conferences did not necessarily have to produce an original syllabus; they were at liberty to adopt a syllabus that had been generated by another syllabus conference. The formula by which conferences ought to be constituted was specified in the legislation. Section 29 in the fifth schedule of the act states that:

1. For the purpose of preparing any syllabus of religious instruction to be adopted by a local education authority, the authority shall cause to be convened a conference constituted in accordance with the provisions of this Schedule.

2. For the purpose of constituting such a conference as aforesaid, the local education authority shall appoint constituent bodies (hereafter referred to as "committees") consisting of persons representing respectively-

- (a) such religious denominations as in the opinion of the authority, ought, having regard to the circumstances of the area be represented;
- (b) except in the case of an area in Wales or Monmouthshire, the Church of England;
- (c) such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought, having regard to the circumstances of the area, to be represented; and
- (d) the authority:

Provided that where a committee is appointed consisting of persons representing the Church of England, the committee of persons representing other religious denominations shall not include persons appointed to represent that church.

Thus, it may be seen that four quite separate committees would exist, each one representing a different perspective. Unanimous agreement would be required between each of these committees in order to recommend that any particular syllabus be adopted. The requirement of four disparate groups to agree unanimously on a syllabus, can be seen as a safeguard against extremist and disproportionately balanced perspectives entering syllabuses.

In addition to specifying the composition of the syllabus conferences, the legislation set guidelines as to the permissibility of certain elements within syllabi of religious instruction. The Act was seen to forbid specifically denominational religious instruction.

the religious instruction given to any pupils in attendance at a county school in conformity with the requirements of subsection (2) of the said section shall be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus adopted for the school or for those pupils and shall not include any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular religious denomination.

This part of the Act (Section 26.2) contains the major retainments of the 1870 Act, the 'Cowper-Temple Clause'. This requirement held good only in the county schools. Voluntary schools that had opted for either of the two statuses outlined above were still permitted to offer some form of denominational religious education, though this was subject to certain restrictions. The details are complex, but the general impression is relatively simple to relate, religious instruction in voluntary schools is the responsibility of the managers or governors of that school, denominational religious instruction may be given. Reasonable provisions were required for those individuals, both staff and pupils who wish to take no part in religious instruction.

The major result of the 1944 Education Act in terms of syllabus content for religious instruction,

is that there would be provided a syllabus which would have the agreement of both Anglican and non-conformist committees within syllabus conferences. Non-denominational religious instruction was to be provided in all county schools. Denominational religious instruction was to be provided in voluntary aided schools and, when requested by parents, in voluntary controlled schools.

Worship

The 1944 Education Act required that all county and voluntary schools should begin every school day with an act of worship.

25.-(1) Subject to the provisions of this section, the school day in every county school and in every voluntary school shall begin with collective worship on the part of all pupils in attendance at the school, and the arrangements made therefor shall provide for a single act of worship attended by all such pupils unless, in the opinion of the local education authority or, in the case of a voluntary school, of the managers or governors thereof, the school premises are such to make it impracticable to assemble them for that purpose.

It was not stated specifically in the 1944 Education Act what sort of school worship was required. However, the absence of a clear instruction was not intended to cause ambiguity or misunderstanding. It was assumed that the required act of worship would be an act of Christian worship. Cox and Cairns (1989) suggest that 'At that time there were in Britain few adherents of other religions and the only form of worship that most could visualize was a Christian one.' Thus, the absence of any formal definition as to the nature of the worship that was to take place in schools, may be seen as something other than an omission. No formal definition was needed as there was seen to be no choice in the matter. Only when various choices exist, does it become necessary to limit and remove them. This is exemplified in the following section of the legislation.

26. Subject as hereinafter provided, the collective worship required by subsection (1) of the last foregoing section shall not, in any county school, be distinctive of any

particular religious denomination.

Here we see demonstrated that whereas there was no perceived possibility of an alternative to Christian worship, and consequently no formulae governing what type of worship ought to be provided, there were different alternatives perceived within Christian worship. Thus, the legislators found it to be necessary to define what was acceptable within Christian worship. As shown above, they concluded that denominationally distinctive worship was not permissible within county schools.

While it was a requirement for schools to hold an act of worship, it was not a requirement that all pupils must attend such acts of worship. Parents had the right to withdraw their children from worship.

25 (1) (4) If the parent of any pupil in attendance at any county school or any voluntary school requests that he be wholly or partly excused from attendance at religious worship in the school, or from attendance at religious instruction in the school, or from attendance at both religious worship and religious instruction in the school, then, until the request is withdrawn, the pupil shall be excused from such attendance accordingly.

This part of the legislation, the so-called conscience clause, ensures that parents who are not able to accept the kind of worship required by the Act, may choose to remove their children from such religious worship. The act of removing their children from worship was to be freely granted to parents without prejudicing other areas of education. Even other areas of religious education might be accepted by parents who chose not accept religious worship in the school. Teachers were also offered the protection of the conscience clause. No teacher could be discriminated against due to not wanting to take part in religious worship.

While it was decided that non-denominational Christian worship was the most appropriate kind of worship within county schools in 1944, the suitability of such worship has been challenged by writers who have the benefit of hindsight. This kind of worship has been shown to be of little value when examined either religiously or educationally.

Hull (1975) writing some 30 years after the passage of the Act, suggested that the most that a non-denominational act of worship could hope to achieve, was to bring pupils to the threshold of worship rather than to engage them in worship itself. Non-denominational worship was seen to be a low quality parody of 'proper' worship as experienced within a practising Christian community.

Cox (1983) writing almost 40 years after the passage of the Act, suggested that the situation might be aided if the legal requirement to hold such an act of worship were withdrawn. The teaching about religion was seen to be educationally valid to the point that it ought to be retained, however this kind of worship was not seen to be educationally valuable.

Although lacking in legal impetus to change between 1944 and 1988, religious education did not simply stagnate. Various influential trends in research emerged during this period. Among them, Goldman and Smart inspired new and unrelated movements in religious education which are considered in chapter 2 of the current dissertation. Also, the aims of religious education were totally revolutionised between 1944 and 1988. It is indeed an unusual situation whereby the entire educational and religious rationale for religious education can be altered without the law governing religious being altered at all during this time. This clearly raises the question as to whether the legal framework surrounding religious education has any relevance at all for the

subject that it allegedly governs and regulates. Following the 1944 Education Act, the next major piece of legislation was the 1988 Education Reform Act.

1988 Education Reform Act

The 1988 Education Reform Act may be seen to be a natural progression from the 1944 Education Act. The structures formalised in the 1944 Education Act were altered in 1988 in order to make them more relevant to the needs of contemporary society. Just as the 1944 Education Act was designed to reflect the religious profile of England and Wales, so too was the 1988 Education Reform Act. However, the religious profile of England and Wales had changed significantly between 1944 and 1988.

As with any piece of legislation, the 1988 Education Reform Act is rather complex. Parts of the Act, which do not directly concern religious education, may be seen to concern religious education indirectly. The following analysis will focus specifically on those parts of the 1988 Education Reform Act that directly impact on religious education.

Due to its importance for religious education, The Education Reform Act has been the focus of several commentaries that examine the Act and its relationship to religious education. Cox and Cairns (1989) brought considerable experience and understanding to their analysis of sections of the Act relevant for religious education. Hull (1989) managed to isolate the sections of the Act that directly impacted on religious education and evaluated their likely implications in practical terms. These commentaries will be further considered in the following chapter.

The following exploration of the 1988 legislation focuses on the legislation itself and not on the

opinions expressed in the evaluations that have been offered in response to the Act. None of the evaluations that were presented in the immediate aftermath of the Education Reform Act were in any way statutory documents, nor were they presented as such, although they must be seen as being greatly influential in the implementation of the Act as they formed the primary interface between the legislation itself and those individuals bound by the legislation. It is necessary to investigate the impact of such theories, although not in a chapter dealing with statutes.

Shaping the Act

Faith communities

The religious profile of England and Wales, the areas covered by the Act, changed substantially between 1944 and 1988. So too did the religious profile of Great Britain, the area reflecting the scope of the Act. The religious profile of the United Kingdom, whose Parliament passed the Act, also changed substantially since the passage of the 1944 legislation. Thus, a religious compromise, designed to satisfy all religious groups in 1944, is unlikely to have been able to satisfy all religious groups in 1988. Clearly a new legal framework was required to be placed around religious education. Indeed, as the religious profile of the British Isles had been changing steadily since 1944, then it may be argued that such a new piece of legislation was well overdue.

As demonstrated in the above section, the legislation of 1944 was designed to accommodate the largest religious groups of the time, the Anglicans and the Catholics. However, any new legislation was faced with a radically different set of competing religious priorities. It could no longer be assumed that the only religious differences would be denominational differences within Christianity. The religious situation within the United Kingdom required its Parliament to realise that there now existed religious differences between Christians and members of other religions;

between members of 'other religions' and other 'other religions'; and between 'denominations' within these 'other' religions in addition to the differences that have already been acknowledged to exist between members of different Christian denominations.

In order to understand the religious requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act, it is necessary, but not sufficient to be aware of the increase in religious diversity within the United Kingdom in the 44 year period prior to the passage of that act. An awareness of the changes in expressions of religiosity must also be held. Indeed, one cannot appreciate the religious profile of a nation without addressing the issues surrounding religious identity.

Theories and speculation abound about the nature of religious affiliation in the United Kingdom. Secularisation, privatisation, deinstitutionalisation, and pluralism are all presented as being accurate descriptions of recent and current movements in religious expression.

In addition to the legislative changes that have been shown to impact on religious education in Great Britain, also there have been wider societal changes in religiosity. Since 1870, certain expressions of Christian religiosity have clearly declined. Expressions of religiosity of non-Christian religions have, on the other hand, increased. Great Britain has, as a whole, become a pluralist society, whereas some of the specific cultural groups within Great Britain have become secularised. It is not suggested that religious changes in Britain have occurred independently of legislative changes, rather it is considered that, in order to be fully appreciated, the legislative changes outlined above need to be contextualised alongside the societal changes in religiosity.

It is suggested, in chapter 6 of the current dissertation, that religiosity is not a simple phenomenon

to measure. Religiosity may be measured through examining a variety of different beliefs, behaviours, and attitudes. A recent trend within religious studies has employed the same index of an affective predisposition toward Christianity in numerous different contexts. This disciplined approach to religious studies allows inter-generational claims to be made about changes in religiosity. However, prior to such initiatives, there was no systematic gathering of religious data. Consequently, the data presented to contextualise the legislative changes in the religious profile of Great Britain, must be interpreted with caution. Direct comparisons between different periods are not always possible, although, these data may be seen to present broad trends.

Differing expressions of religiosity lead to differing ways in which religion in society may be measured. Recent developments in religiosity have brought about changes in church attendance, baptisms, religious solemnisation of marriages and religious involvement in other rites. Societal changes in these aspects of religious expression may be seen to indicate that traditional religion in Britain has declined. However, such changes are not indicative of a societal decline in religiosity *per se*. Obviously, measures of traditional religious expression in Britain are not suitable measures of non-traditional religiosities. Nothing can be deduced about the state of non-traditional religion in Britain from knowledge of traditional religion in Britain.

Christianity in the United Kingdom

Data available on the more traditional forms of religiosity in Britain point to a decline. Through charting the levels of church membership, number of church buildings and number of ministers, Brierley and Wraight (1999) show the extent of the decline in traditional expressions of religiosity over the twentieth century. In 1930 church membership peaked in the United Kingdom when 10,000,000 members represented 31% of the adult population. By 2000, this figure has declined

to represent just 12% of the adult population. There can be no dispute that church membership has declined significantly over the past century. Similarly, there can be no dispute that church membership declined between the passage of the Education Act of 1944 and the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Brierley and Wraight (1999) present data relating to the number of church buildings in the United Kingdom. They show that the number of church buildings rose steadily in the first decades of the twentieth century, peaking in 1940 with 54,928 churches. This number has declined sharply and in 2000 has fallen to 48,695 church buildings in the United Kingdom. There can be no dispute that the number of churches declined substantially over the second half of the twentieth century. Again, this marker of traditional religiosity has shown that decline occurred between the 1944 Education Act and the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Brierley and Wraight (1999) also present data on the number of Christian ministers at different points through the twentieth century. It is shown that the number of ministers has declined from 45,408 in 1900 to 34,157 in 2000. Once again a major decline is shown with this marker of traditional religiosity. This decline is also reflected in the period between the 1944 Education Act and the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Brierley and Wraight (1999) have demonstrated that various markers of traditional religiosity in the United Kingdom all point toward a decline. It can be deduced that the religious composition of the United Kingdom changed substantially over recent decades. However, it is not possible to deduce that the religious composition of the United Kingdom has declined over recent decades. Simply addressing the issue of traditional religions in the United Kingdom does not examine the

complete religious picture of the population. In order to contextualise the data so far presented it is necessary to examine the impact of the non-traditional religions represented in the United Kingdom.

Non-Christian religions in the United Kingdom

In the context of the current chapter, the 'norm' is considered to be the United Kingdom in 1944. Therefore, any religious phenomenon not substantially present in the United Kingdom in 1944, and therefore not represented in the 1944 Education Act is considered to be not 'the norm' This is by no means suggesting that 'western' religiosities are any more or less normal than any other religiosities which may or may not be represented currently in the United Kingdom. Therefore, 'non-traditional' in this chapter relates to the current context, and not to the religions themselves.

Brierley (1999) presents data relating to a number of religious traditions. Data relating to these traditions are presented charting membership of religious groups between 1960 and 2000. Of the different religions mentioned by Brierley (1999) the 'six major world religions' (SCAA, 1994a) which are represented in Britain are included. It is suggested that in Britain in 1960 there were approximately 1,000 Buddhists. By 2000 this figure had increased to an estimated 52,400 Buddhists in the United Kingdom. It is suggested that in 1960 there were approximately 40,000 Hindus. By 2000 this figure had increased to an estimated 165,000 Hindus. It is suggested that in 1960 there were approximately 130,000 Jews. By 2000 this figure had decreased to an estimated 88,800 Jews in the United Kingdom. It is suggested that in 1960 there were approximately 30,000 Muslims. By 2000 this figure had increased to an estimated 675,000 Muslims in the United Kingdom. It is suggested that in 1960 there were approximately 50,000 Sikhs. By 2000 this figure had risen to an estimated 400,000 Sikhs in the United Kingdom. It is

unfortunate that these estimates are the best available figures. This is a matter that will be redressed shortly. The National Census of 2001 will enquire as to the religious affiliation of United Kingdom residents. Therefore more useful data relating to the religious profile of the United Kingdom will be available within the next decade.

It is clear that the trend among non-Christian religions within the United Kingdom has been for growth. The only exception to this general trend among these groups has occurred among the Jewish community which has found itself with fewer members in the United Kingdom than it had in 1960.

It is interesting to note that both of the religious communities whose schools were affected by the 1944 Education Act have been in decline between 1944 and 1988. Conversely, those faith communities who did not have their own schools in 1944 have all increased their presence in the United Kingdom between 1944 and 1988. Clearly the religious profile of the United Kingdom at the time of the 1944 Education Act was substantially different to the religious profile of the United Kingdom at the time of the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The Act

Administration

The 1988 legislation compelled local education authorities to assemble more sophisticated mechanisms for administering and controlling religious education. Both Agreed Syllabus Conferences and Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education were retained in the 1988 legislation.

The 1988 Education Reform Act required local education authorities to establish Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education. These bodies were no longer optional. Not only did a local education authority now have to constitute a SACRE, but also, it was given some idea as to what a SACRE should do.

It shall be the duty of every local education authority to constitute a standing advisory council on religious education-

- a) to advise the authority upon such matters concerned with religious worship in county schools and the religious education to be given in accordance with an agreed syllabus as the authority may refer to the council or as the council may see fit: and
- b) to carry out the functions conferred by section 12 of this Act on Councils constituted under this section.

In addition to being told that they must constitute a SACRE in order to carry out the tasks outlined above, the local education authorities were also given a specific formula governing the composition of their SACRE

(3) The council shall consist of-

- (a) the representative members required by subsection (4) below; and
- (b) where any agreed syllabus for the time being adopted by the authority is in use at one or more grant-maintained schools, a person appointed by the governing body or (as the case may be) by the governing bodies of the school or schools concerned;

and may also include co-opted members.

(4) Subject to subsection (5) below, the representative members required by this subsection are persons appointed by the authority to represent respectively-

- (a) Such Christian and other religious denominations as, in the opinion of the local authority, will appropriately reflect the principal religious traditions in the area;
- (b) except in the case of an area of Wales, the Church of England;
- (c) such associations representing teachers as, in the opinion of the authority, ought, having regard to the circumstances of the area, to be represented; and
- (d) the authority:

(1988 Education Reform Act, 1, 11, 2-3)

It is demonstrated that the constitution of SACREs as decided in 1988 was similar to that of the agreed syllabus conference as defined in 1944. One of the important distinguishing features of the 1988 legislation is the reference to 'Christian and other religious denominations'. The syntax of

this part of the legislation may be seen to imply that Christian denominations and denominations of religions other than Christianity ought to be represented on SACREs. The requirement for non-Christian representatives on SACREs is one of the most important legislative changes in terms of the content of the present dissertation. The transition from Christian based religious instruction to secular religious education was eased by representation of non-Christian religions on SACREs.

Each of the representative committees of the SACRE was to be entitled to a single vote, for example, the Church of England representatives would in an area of England receive one vote, as would the LEA representatives, as would the representatives of other Christian and other religious denominations, and as would the teachers' representatives. In some areas this may, in theory, mean that Methodist representatives become entitled to a single vote, whereas in other areas the Methodist representatives may share their single vote with Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish, Sikh and Roman Catholic representatives.

The 1988 Education Reform Act retained the Agreed Syllabus conferences which were initially required by the 1944 Education Act. However, the requirements placed on the conferences were altered slightly. The work of the Agreed Syllabus Conferences will be considered later in the current chapter in the section dealing with religion in the curriculum.

School status

The dual system that had developed throughout the legislative period was retained within the 1988 legislation. Some additional details were provided in order to facilitate religious education in grant maintained schools. These details are purely administrative and do not run against the broad trend outlined in this chapter.

Due to the increase in religious diversity in England and Wales since the passage of the 1944 Education Act it was, in 1988, time for new concerns to be addressed. Multifaith schools are now commonplace in England and Wales. The 1988 legislation did not specify an official formula or designation which would allow multifaith, or other largely non-Christian schools to be recognised or defined. However, provision was made for SACREs to lift requirements which would otherwise have to be met within the schools.

At its discretion a SACRE could waive the requirement of a school, or a section of the school community, to partake in 'broadly Christian' worship. This cannot be seen as excusing the pupils from collective worship, only from 'broadly Christian' collective worship. This does not impact upon the restrictions concerning denominationally distinctive acts of collective worship.

When a SACRE issues a determination to a school, it is deemed to last for five years, after which point the SACRE must reconsider the determination and, if appropriate, renew it. School designations are in no way affected by the presence or absence of such a determination. Again, it should be noted that school status in terms of its SACRE determination is not an official religious designation in the same way that the voluntary statuses are.

Religion in the curriculum

One of the changes implemented in 1988 was the introduction of new terminology relating to religious subject matter in the curriculum. Religious education had now replaced religious instruction. Much has been made of the terminology used to denote the religious content of the syllabus (Hull, 1989), although Cox and Cairns (1989) have suggested that perhaps too much has been made of this linguistic change. They explained it in terms of a changing fashion, rather than

seeing the 'old' religious instruction to be synonymous with authoritarian indoctrination, he suggests that the term was used in an earlier educational era, and religious instruction described then what was religious education.

The requirement for religious subject matter to be agreed locally and presented as a local agreed syllabus was retained in the 1988 Education Reform Act. No local education authority was required by the 1988 legislation to produce a new agreed syllabus. However, it was by this point legally required that, if an authority did develop a new syllabus, then that syllabus:

shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

The situation created here may seem to be something of a paradox. Responsibility for syllabus content is clearly seen as being a local issue, which must be agreed at a local level, yet it must also reflect the national religious profile. Local control of the syllabus of religious education may have been retained for purely political reasons. It may be assumed that if a government attempted to remove control of religious education from the locality, then this would not be seen as being a popular decision. However, in insisting that account is taken of 'religions represented in Great Britain' we see that the locality is relegated to an almost peripheral administrative unit.

However, it may be suggested that at the time that the Act was passed there was no serious intent that religious education should be altered in any way. Unless a new syllabus was developed or adopted, local authorities would be under no obligation to change their requirements of religious education. In effect there was at this point no legislative requirement to change agreed syllabi of religious education. The only thing that would bring about change would be change itself. Local

education authorities were not obliged to do anything at all in order to remain within the law on this matter.

A second, related issue concerns the religious profile of Great Britain. It must be assumed that the decision to require new syllabi to reflect the principal religions of Great Britain was purely arbitrary. The legislation was to apply to education in England and Wales, yet it was to reflect the religious profile of Great Britain. No rationale has been offered to suggest why the religious profile of the whole of the United Kingdom was not deemed relevant to the Act. In practical terms, there is much that is unique in the religious profile of those parts of the United Kingdom which fall outside the boundaries of Great Britain. The religious experience of Northern Ireland has educational potential which is specifically excluded by the 1988 Education Reform Act.

However, the law has been interpreted to mean something entirely different to what it actually says. Hull (1989) suggests that ‘... it is interesting to note that it would be appropriate for agreed syllabuses to reflect Christian and non-Christian religions in both Scotland and Northern Ireland, in so far as these are deemed to be relevant to the educational needs of children in England and Wales.’ In one sense Hull (1989) was correct in this assertion, insomuch as, it is indeed interesting. However, in another sense Hull (1989) was not correct, insomuch as, it would not be appropriate for an agreed syllabus to reflect the religions in Northern Ireland, whether deemed relevant to the educational needs of children in England and Wales or not.

Despite this weakness in the Act, the requirement to recognise principal religions in parts of the United Kingdom may be seen to be educationally valuable, particularly as the requirement to limit the scope of agreed syllabuses to principal religious traditions of Great Britain has been generally

misinterpreted and to mean that agreed syllabuses should expand their scope to the principal religious traditions of the United Kingdom.

Having considered exactly what is meant by 'Great Britain', it is now possible to consider what it means to 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.'

Religion is notoriously difficult to define. Having established the spatial boundaries within which religious traditions ought to be considered, it may appear that the act of considering such traditions is now frustrated by a lack of clear understanding of what can reasonably count as religion. Many of the pioneers within religious studies have stepped back from the term 'religion'. Worldviews are taken seriously in academic circles. The ideologies of nationalism and Marxism may be considered as worldviews alongside Christianity and Islam. Does the 1988 Education Reform Act require that such things as Marxism are considered to represent religious traditions in Great Britain? SCAA (1994a and 1994b) attempted to provide clarification in this area. However, it must be remembered that SCAA advice is not statutory. Indeed, statutory guidance as to how agreed syllabi should 'reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' has not been forthcoming. The statement, because it is incredibly vague, may be meaningless in practical terms.

The 1988 legislation refined one of the long established legal requisites, the Cowper-Temple clause. It will be remembered that this is the clause that had been interpreted by many (although

not its originator) to outlaw denominational religious education. The position was altered, or at least clarified, in the 1988 legislation. It is now stated that:

That syllabus shall not provide for religious education to be given to pupils at such a school by means of any catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular religious denomination; but this provision is not to be taken as prohibiting provision in that syllabus for the study of such catechisms or formularies. (1988, Education Reform Act, Chapter 40 part 1 84, 8)

This part of the legislation demonstrates the intent of the legislative body that denominational induction is not to be permitted within agreed syllabi, although learning about religious denominations is an appropriate pedagogical experience. It is unusual that this legislation has had to go to such lengths in order to clarify this situation. It is regarded as commonplace in other school subjects for teachers to impart subject knowledge to pupils without trying to convert them to a particular cause. Although this 'new' legal position is a welcome initiative, it may still be seen as being based on an outmoded perception of religious education in England and Wales.

Worship

Although worship may seem to be the antithesis of liberal religious education, it is, subject to the retained conscience clauses, still required by law. Some might see this to be the last remaining anomaly from the confessional era of a religious presence in education. However, there may be a valid educational rationale for the inclusion of worship in the school curriculum. The 1988 law suggests that the daily act of worship ought to be appropriate to the ages and aptitudes of the children. This may be an attempt to show that there is pedagogical merit to an act that takes account of the ages and aptitudes of pupils. Indeed it may even be suggested that an introduction to worship based upon the aptitudes of children is essential in educational terms. However, it may be suggested that such abstract religious concepts as worship are not compatible with the aptitudes

of most school pupils (eg. Goldman, 1965). This requirement may be seen as something of a paradox.

The 1988 legislation insists upon a daily act of collective worship. It is not the case that such an act of worship shall necessarily be at the start of the day. It is optional as to whether a single act of worship for the whole school is provided, or whether pupils are split down into age groups or other school groups.

Individuals who see worship in schools as representing an unwelcome confessional intrusion into the syllabus, may be appeased by the legal requirement that collective worship must be distinctive of no particular religious denomination.

The Act insists that:

in the case of a county school the collective worship required in school by section 6 of this Act shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character... For the purposes of subsection (1) above, collective worship is of a broadly Christian character if it reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. (1988 Education Reform Act, ch 40 part 1, 7.1&2)

These aspects of the law suggest two key points. First, that 'broadly' Christian worship was still considered, by and large, to be the most appropriate kind of worship for county schools in England and Wales. Second it is stated that denominationally specific Christian worship is not desirable or indeed permissible. Hull (1989) observes that this situation may be a little paradoxical in many respects as what is required is something akin to Christian although not distinctive of any denomination. However, what is distinctive of Christian worship is its denominational nature! Again we see signs of confusion on the part of the legislative body.

Having shown that there were certain anomalies in the 1988 legislation it can come as little surprise that another Act followed shortly after the Education Reform Act. The 1993 Education Act remedied some of the shortcomings of the 1988 Education Reform Act.

1993 Education Act

The most striking feature of the 1993 Education Act was its failure to make any original requirements. Rather its most significant contribution was to bring about the changes which were suggested, but not demanded by the 1988 legislation. As shown above the formulae governing the adoption of new agreed syllabuses was revolutionised in 1988. However, local education authorities were not compelled to write or adopt new syllabi. As a result many did not. This situation was clearly absurd. The 1988 Education Reform Act in this sense did not achieve its full potential.

The 1993 Education Act requires action on this point that had been previously ignored. It was now a requirement for local education authorities to reconsider their agreed syllabi within one year of the commencement date of the legislation if their syllabus was adopted before 29 September 1988. However, in local education authorities where the syllabus was adopted after the commencement date of the 1988 Education Reform Act then the local education authority need only undertake to review their agreed syllabus within five years of the date of its adoption.

The formula governing the construction of the syllabi was now amended subtly in order to give the LEA more control over their syllabi. Rather than simply having to 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' the syllabi now had to

appear to the local education authority to reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain.

A second feature which may be seen to shift the balance of power in 'locally agreed' religious education was the new power given to the secretary of State for Education. It was established that following the decision of a SACRE to issue a determination, or to withhold a determination from a school, then anybody may make a complaint to the Secretary of State, who may in some cases decide to overturn the decision of the SACRE. This clearly takes the control of religious education further out of the locality, and away from religious education experts. Control is thus located in Westminster in the hands of a politician.

The legal position in religious education has remained fundamentally unaltered by legislation between 1993 and 2001. The majority of legislative forays into religious education since 1993 being in the form of the surreptitious Statutory Instruments. The only reassurance to be given in this is that, as shown above, these statutory instruments are generally ineffective as many people are generally unaware of them.

Conclusion

It has been shown through the course of this chapter that an unmistakable trend has emerged within religious education since the earliest legislative endeavours to bring about regulation to the field. The trend has been to move religious education away from confessional Christian based religious instruction, and move it toward the secularised study of religions. It rests uneasily in the legislation set apart from other school subjects by outdated perceptions. It is regulated rather

dubiously by politicians who, in some cases do not seem well informed in their task. Often legislation drives no serious changes in religious education, and the profession remains happy to ignore legal requirements. Although, conversely, as will be revealed in the following chapter, legislation is not always necessary as a catalyst for changes within religious education.

Chapter 2

Turning Points in Religious Education:

Non-Statutory Impetus to Change

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Introduction

With regard to any phenomenon that is as tightly bound by legislation as religious education seems to be, one may be forgiven for assuming that legal amendments are likely to be the primary forces of change. However, although legislation is clearly linked to changes in religious education, as demonstrated in chapter 1 of the current dissertation, changes in legal duties are by no means the only influences on practice in religious education.

There are two other major factors which impact on the experiences of pupils in schools with regard to religious education and collective worship. Academic research into religious education has, over the last 40 years, led to significant changes in pedagogical practices. Following this introduction the work of the two academics who have had a major impact on religious education over the past few decades is considered. Ronald Goldman and Ninian Smart are shown to have been the key instigators of change in religious education in England and Wales since the 1970s.

Ronald Goldman demonstrated certain inadequacies in religious education in the 1960s. His research destabilised religious education. Ninian Smart presented a new idea for religious education in the 1970s which seemed to provide a direction when the subject needed one. These academics both impacted significantly on religious education by giving it new direction. This shows effectively that it is not necessary to have a change in the law in order to achieve a change in religious education.

Having introduced the major academic impetus to change in religious education this chapter proceeds briefly to introduce eight dominating strands of academic development in religious education. None of the dominant strands currently has inspired the kind of change in religious

education which was led by Goldman or Smart.

Legal inadequacy and the need for non-statutory stimuli in religious education

Chapter 1 of the current dissertation outlined many of the inadequacies of the legislation which governs religious education. Religious matters are often dealt with, in an unflattering manner by politicians who do not necessarily understand the issues which lie at the heart of religious beliefs practices and behaviours. In this regard, it is therefore, not surprising that legislation governing religious education is not always adequate. Despite the growing pressure on religious education, and the increasing religious diversity in the United Kingdom between 1944 and 1988 religious education was left without legislative permission or impetus to change.

The legislative inefficacy turned out to be something of a mixed blessing. Despite the assertion that legislation was lacking in relation to religious education, it remained useful to the profession that the legislation was so unsubstantial that visionaries who wanted to revolutionise the subject were entirely at liberty to do so without recourse to public debate or any other government scrutiny. The impetus to change came from a psychologist and a religionist working in the university sector.

Academic turning points in religious education

Academic research into religious education has an extensive and divergent history. Certain studies will contribute in a small way to an established tradition of research. Others are revolutionary and may be seen to initiate a new research tradition and generate a new understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

It is the latter group that are of immediate interest to the current section. New movements in religious education have been brought about by several key research initiatives over the past few decades. These new movements are the focus of the current dissertation, and so the research which inspired them must be considered. The work of Ronald Goldman and Ninian Smart will be considered. Both of these people altered the direction of religious studies differently. It is shown that academic research into religious education can, on occasion, instigate changes which are independent of legislative and other stimuli.

Goldman

Goldman was one of two academics who were able to alter radically religious education in England and Wales during a period of legislative inaction within the field of religious education. He serves as an effective demonstration of the way in which religious education can evolve independently of any legal impetus to change.

Goldman's research built upon the theoretical model developed by Piaget. Piaget developed a stage based theory to account for differential abilities of children to think during different stages of their development. Goldman applied this concept to religious thinking. Goldman's research led him to speculate that religious education in England and Wales was failing. However, more drastically, it was asserted that religious education as it was currently conceived was not compatible with anything other than failure.

Goldman's research was initially welcomed by the religious education profession. It was seen as providing impetus to the development of a new approach to religious education. The new breed of agreed syllabuses which took into account concerns raised by the issues surrounding the

concept of 'readiness for religion' were to form the basis of a new kind of religious education.

The research of Goldman

Goldman was inspired to apply Piagetian concepts to children's religious thinking when he encountered similar initiatives in other curriculum areas such as maths, history, geography and English. This inspired him to investigate the concepts which would allow him to answer the question as to whether it was possible to devise a programme of religious education which was suited to children's patterns of intellectual development.

Goldman based his initial research on the assumption that religious thinking is 'no different in mode and method from non-religious thinking. Religious thinking is a shortened form of expressing the activity of thinking directed towards religion, not a term meaning separate rationality' (Goldman, 1964). His emphasis was concerned with thinking orientated toward religious subject matter. Piaget, when defining his theory emphasised the qualitative differences between the processes involved with developmental stages, rather than the differences in content of thinking. This disparity between Goldman and Piaget has led some to suggest that Goldman was fundamentally misrepresenting Piagetian constructs (Francis, 2000).

Piaget considered that children developed in terms of clear progressive qualitatively distinct stages. Loewenthal (2000) efficiently summarised Piaget's position as showing 'how thinking shifted from the concrete, sensory-input dominated mode of early childhood, to the more abstract modes of adulthood'. Piaget suggested that children's thought develops in five stages. These stages have been summarised by numerous writers including Grimmitt (1973).

The first stage, known as the sensori-motor stage, is exemplified from birth to approximately two years of age. During this period the child develops motor reflexes to a range of stimuli. Following initial reflex actions the child begins to coordinate movements and actions.

The second stage, known as the pre-operational stage, is exemplified from approximately two years of age to approximately four or five years of age. During this period the child begins to develop the capacity to represent items with symbols. This is fundamental to the acquisition of language which children generally start to do during this stage.

The third stage, known as the intuitive stage, is exemplified from approximately five years of age to approximately seven years of age. During this period the child begins to develop concepts through experience. The child during this stage would generally see only one relationship at a time.

The fourth stage, known as the concrete operational stage is exemplified from approximately seven years of age to approximately eleven years of age. During this period the child develops conservation and reversal abilities. Conceptual thought becomes possible in this stage (such as reversal) if the concept can be demonstrated in a sensory manner.

The final stage is the formal operational stage which is exemplified from approximately eleven years of age. The child during this stage develops the ability to use abstract concepts. The child will continue to develop more advanced abstract abilities within this stage, however, there will be no further qualitative changes in terms of thinking abilities.

The sample employed by Goldman consisted of 200 white Anglo-Saxon Protestants between the

ages of 6 and 17. An equal number of males and females within each aspect of the age range was investigated. Goldman noted that the sample of 15-17 year olds was atypical due to the 'superior' IQ of those pupils who chose to remain in education beyond the compulsory minimum requirement.

Goldman carried out a series of clinical interviews in order to establish the relationship between Piagetian stages of thinking and the ability to think about religion. He selected bible stories, likely to appear in agreed syllabi, as stimuli in the interview context. These stories were paraphrased and relayed via audiotape to the respondents. Following the presentation of the stimulus material to the respondents a set of questions was asked. The data provided by the respondents to these questions were coded and analysed. These analyses were considered, by Goldman (1964), to illustrate Piagetian stages within religious thinking.

Following on from this, Goldman deployed a series of projective tests. Participants were presented with three images and were asked questions about each of them. The pictures presented to the respondent were designed to feature children of the same age and sex as the participants. For example, the participants may have been shown a picture of a young person, as part of a family group, entering a church.

The respondents would be given a standard commentary on the image 'The ... picture shows a mother and a father going into church with their son (daughter). The son [daughter] looks as though he [she] might be about your age. As you can see, the family is just about to enter the church to attend service. Look carefully at the picture. Now, can you tell me...'. The respondent would then be asked questions such as 'How often do you think they go there?' and 'Does the

son/daughter like going there?'. It is assumed that the respondents would project themselves into the image, and provide answers based on their own beliefs rather than merely randomly suggest what the person in the picture may be thinking (Goldman, 1964; Francis, 2000).

The resulting analyses led Goldman to conclude that religious thinking develops through a fixed sequence concurrent with Piagetian stages. Furthermore, prior to gaining competence in formal operations, around the age of 14 years, religious thinking was seriously limited. In effect, Goldman had concluded that religious education as it was then practised was failing because pupils were simply not capable of understanding curricular material with which they were confronted.

The impact of Goldman

The impact of Goldman was rapid and enduring. His work directly impacted on the content and composition of syllabuses of religious education. He inspired a new tradition in research, and perhaps most importantly for the current argument, he brought about much uncertainty in religious education. He convinced the profession that religious education was not working, but he did not provide an alternative model which was ultimately considered to be successful.

In the year following the publication of *Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence*, Goldman produced *Readiness for Religion* (1965). Goldman, having identified the inability of young people to understand biblical material suggested a new approach to religious education which taught religious themes without the over-reliance on psychologically inaccessible biblical material.

The *Readiness for Religion* approach seemed to be reasonable as Goldman presented it. It was

consistent with his research which was in turn consistent with established theory and practice in educational psychology. Consequently agreed syllabuses soon appeared which were based on this new movement. Hull (1984a) considered that the new emphasis on the 'centrality of the experience of the child' heralded a new generation of agreed syllabi. The first being the West Riding Syllabus (1966). This was followed by the new Wiltshire Agreed Syllabus (1967). Four syllabi incorporating Goldman's ideas were produced in the following year (Lancashire, 1968; Inner London, 1968; Kent, 1968; and Northamptonshire, 1968). The growing trend continued with several other syllabi through the early 1970s.

In addition to inspiring a new generation of agreed syllabi, Goldman inspired a new strand of research. Certain studies expanded Goldman's research into other areas closely related to religious education (Bull, 1969). Others focused on specific elements of what Goldman claimed to examine (Francis, 1976), while others criticised the methodology employed by Goldman (Slee, 1986), or Goldman's operational definition of religious thinking (Francis, 1979a). Into the late 1990s Goldman was still inspiring empirical and theoretical refinement (Smith, 1998).

Clearly, Goldman had made an important contribution across all spheres of religious education. Alves (1968), writing even before the full force of Goldman's work had materialised, suggested that Goldman had 'made an almost unparalleled impact on the world of the religious educator'. Aside from inspiring new movements in teaching and research in religious education, Goldman compelled the education establishment to see failure in religious education.

He apparently showed that religious education was fundamentally flawed. This led to traditional models of religious education being rejected. However, despite the rapid adoption of the

'readiness for religion' principles, religious education had at this point lost its direction. Goldman's practical suggestions failed to restore the confidence and direction which his research had undermined in 1964.

Was Goldman correct?

In evaluating the methodological weaknesses inherent in his study (Goldman, 1964), Goldman himself suggested two flaws in his research. First, Goldman raised the issue that it is by no means certain that children were projecting themselves into the pictures during the interviews. The second potential problem identified by Goldman is concerned with the extent to which children were able to verbalise their answers. He suggested that children may have developed concepts that outstrip their ability to articulate them. These are both important issues which were not fully resolved by Goldman. Rather he simply succeeded in drawing attention to these issues without fully accounting for them.

In addition to the two problems that Goldman identified, there have been numerous writers keen to focus on other issues which may have served to limit the influence of his research. Francis (1976) attacked Goldman on three fronts. First, it is suggested that Goldman had drawn conclusions about religious education when he has carried out research in an area that can only legitimately be considered to be Christian education. The promotion of attitude toward Christianity was not seen by Francis to be a legitimate aspect of secular religious education.

Second, Francis (1976) continued to challenge the language employed by Goldman (1964). It is asserted that no suitable definition of religious thinking is offered. Therefore, it cannot be precisely operationalised. Religious thinking is perhaps more than simply thinking about religion.

Third, it is asserted that the decision to apply a model to religious education, having seen that it may work with regard to mathematics was not satisfactory. Francis suggested that the likely implications of the Piagetian model of development were not assured to be the same in religious education as in mathematical education.

The final area of criticism, and perhaps the most important, was based around the observation that Goldman had discussed the relationship between cognitive and attitudinal development without demonstrating empirically the existence of such a relationship. Not only was the relationship undemonstrated, it actually remained uninvestigated. Therefore all of the assertions made about attitudinal decline across the school ages were, perhaps consistent with evidence, but not supported by evidence. This must be seen as being a very real criticism of Goldman's work.

Francis (1979a) added further criticism by asserting that the way in which Goldman had thought about *religious thinking* should be more appropriately be redefined as *thinking about religion* which in turn was different to *thinking in religious language* or *thinking religiously*. More than merely being a language game, Francis' criticism stems from the fact that Goldman had asserted his position in a way that undermined his own venture, rather than arguing his position in a way that would enable him to further his aims.

In addition to questioning the theoretical scaffolding around Goldman's data, some have also chosen to interrogate his methodology. Slee (1986) examined the two processes involved in the data analysis that Goldman employed. She discovered that both the content analysis and the scalogram analysis were flawed. She concluded that the analysis could not substantiate Goldman's theories. More recently, Smith (1998) has attempted to reconceptualise what it was that Goldman

had measured. She concluded that there is less coherence within the age groups than one would generally expect within a strict developmental framework. It was suggested that rather than measuring developmental stages, Goldman may have identified thinking styles.

The examples cited here are not reported as exhaustive. Rather, they serve to illustrate that theoretically and empirically Goldman's work may be considered to be unsound.

While the initial enthusiasm which met Goldman's work dissipated, the instability in religious education remained. It was this new anomie within religious education that allowed a major paradigm shift to be initiated by Ninian Smart.

Smart

Smart was the second of two academics who were able to alter radically religious education in England and Wales during a period of legislative inaction within the field of religious education. He also provides an effective demonstration of the way in which religious education can evolve independently of any legal impetus to change. During the period of uncertainty in religious education that followed from Goldman, Smart introduced a new agenda which was able to fill the gap left by the rapid disassembly of traditional religious education.

The 'new' religious education and secular religious studies

In order to understand the 'new' approach to religious education, it is necessary to understand the development of the new academic field of religious studies. The first secular university department of religious studies to have been established in either England or Wales was that of the University of Lancaster. This department was established under the chairmanship of Ninian Smart. Smart

(1998) documents the various influences that led him first to advise on the composition of a department of religious studies, and secondly to lead and develop that department.

Prior to his appointment at Lancaster, Smart was the HG Wood Professor of Theology at the University of Birmingham. It was during this tenure that he was prompted to respond to an article which appeared in *Universities Quarterly*. The article dealt with the possibility of establishing departments of theology in the new universities. The response that Smart made to this article attracted the interest of those people responsible for the overseeing of the development of the new university of Lancaster (Smart, 1998).

Smart was approached and his advice was sought with reference to a department concerned with religion. The only certainty within the minds of those who were responsible for this consultation was that they did not want a department of theology. The new department was to be a complete break from the past, at least as far as the British academic scene was concerned. The academic pursuit of religion in the curriculum was transformed from being exclusively concerned with Christian theology, to one concerned also with religious studies.

The initial work within the department of religious studies at Lancaster was influenced by three key assumptions. First, Christian theology may only be pursued legitimately within a secular university if it is not the sole concern. For reasons of legitimacy departments must pay attention to 'other' religions. Second, sociology and phenomenology of religion were important features in acquiring an understanding of religion. However, they had at this point been vastly underdeveloped within Britain. Third, biblical studies were to be a necessary element within religious studies, although Smart considered that biblical studies were so well catered for in British

higher education that they would only occupy a minority slot on the timetable within the Lancaster department. As a result of these three key assumptions, Smart saw the three core elements of religious studies as being: theological and philosophical thought; descriptive studies; and biblical studies (Smart, 1967).

Although Lancaster was the first major department of religious studies within England and Wales, we see from Smart's early ideas that religious studies has developed with a different agenda to that which was originally cited. For example, the assertion that biblical studies is an essential aspect of religious studies would draw criticism from religionists who currently practice within English or Welsh secular universities. Obviously biblical studies may be pursued by religionists although they may not be seen as being a core element of the subject field. It is by no means certain that all religionists must be well versed in biblical studies.

Despite not developing according to the plan that Smart had initially announced, there can be little doubt that the influence of religious studies has developed substantially. It now extends beyond the tertiary sector of education. One Smart's initial aims was to 'work out the relation between Lancaster Religious Studies and the requirements of religious education in schools'.

Schools Council

It became apparent that there were others who were equally keen that Smart should be able to establish connections between the new secular religious studies and religious education in schools. The Schools Council initiated two important and influential projects concerned with religious education. Ninian Smart was invited to direct each of them. This appointment was clearly designed to inspire change in religious education.

The Schools Council Religious Education in Secondary Schools Project was initiated in 1969. The project ran until 1973 and firmly located the new approach to religious education in state secondary schools. The most influential publication of the project was the influential *Working Paper 36: Religious education in secondary schools*.¹ In writing the Schools Council material Smart was enabled to introduce his revolutionary ideas into the state education system.

Smart (1971) summarised the three main approaches which were exemplified in religious education at that time. Three main approaches were identified. First, the 'confessional' or dogmatic approach was explored. This view was considered to be based on the premise that the aim of religious education 'cultic indoctrination ... often linked with the view that any other kind of religious education is valueless'. In this context smart was not intending the term 'valueless' to refer to impartiality. He was rather intending that it should mean 'without value'.

Second, the anti-dogmatic approach is examined. This approach was described by Smart eliminating the subjective elements from religious education and conceptualising it as a purely academic exercise.

The third approach was termed the 'phenomenological' approach which was considered to be undogmatic. Smart drew attention to this approach as being based on the premise that religious education should promote understanding. The working paper goes on to cite the 'pioneering work' which was then being carried out in the University of Lancaster. This approach is described

¹This document will be referenced as Smart (1971). It appeared as being corporately written, but was actually written by Smart. It is safe to consider that this document reflects his professional opinions.

as being 'the educational approach' which was to be the focus of the working paper.

The focus on the educational merits of religious education led Smart to consider the educational needs of all children within Britain. Children from ethnic minorities were considered in relation to their educational needs. However, in terms of religious education, it was asserted that the increasing presence of ethnic minority communities within Britain was not relevant to setting a new agenda. Rather, it was argued that the inclusion of 'other' religions in syllabi of religious education had already been justified on educational grounds. The increasing number of ethnic minority pupils was considered to reinforce an existing agenda rather than initiate a new one.

Smart (1971) suggested seven 'probable lines of development'. Of these, two were specifically relevant to initiating changes in religious education. It was suggested that 'Children will be introduced to some of the living religions of the world at an earlier stage than hitherto'. Clearly the move toward world religions in education was given legitimacy as a future goal within religious education

In addition to suggesting that non-Christian religions should develop as foci within religious education, there was also a clear indication regarding the way in which the role and identity of religious education should proceed. It was suggested that 'a much clearer distinction will be drawn between the role of the school in religious education and the role of the church, home, synagogue, or mosque'. Schools were to be concerned with 'educational' religious education. The home, or the religious community was to be concerned with religious nurture or faith education.

These two points taken together serve to set an agenda for the way in which religious education was to develop. Schools began to see their roles as being to teach about religion, rather than nurturing in religion. In addition to this, the religion that was to be taught was to be more than merely Christianity. This paper had been the prelude to the phenomenological world religions approach to religious education.

While *Working Paper 36* set the agenda for religious education, other publications were being generated by the project. These were prepared in order to resource this new approach to religious education. The *Journeys into Religion* materials were produced by the project team in order that the new series of aims and objectives could be understood by teachers and by SACREs. The *Journeys into Religion* material relied on Smart's six dimensional framework (Smart, 1971) which was greatly influential in setting an agenda for the academic study of religion, and to the teaching and resourcing of religious education. Smart (1968) emphasised the dimensions of religion in terms of how they could be employed in a pedagogical framework. The *Journeys into Religion* material was based on the assumption that 'religions in fact have six dimensions'. This was a position with which Smart would eventually disagree (Smart, 1989).

In addition to allowing teachers to understand the new agenda, these materials also assisted teachers to understand the new subject matter, which was, to many of them, entirely new. These materials continued in production until the late 1970s, long after the Schools Council Religious Education in Secondary Schools Project had concluded. This new approach to religious education in the 1970s was heavily sponsored by the Schools Council throughout the 1970s.

This project came to an end in 1973. It had been enormously influential. The Schools Council

quickly initiated the Schools Council Religious Education in Primary Schools Project which ran until 1979. Again, under the directorship of Smart, the 'new' religious studies approach to religious education was supported and encouraged, this time in the primary school sector. The success of the *Journeys into Religion* materials of the secondary school project had succeeded in transmitting a new agenda to religious education in the secondary school. This was to be emulated in the *Discovering an Approach* series which was produced by the primary schools project. This project extended the influence of secular religious studies based religious education down to the primary school level.

Shap Working Party on World Religions in Education

Running simultaneously with his commitment to the Schools Council projects, Smart was also active in the Shap Working Party for World Religions in Education, of which he had been a founder member. Since 1972 the Shap group have produced their calendar of religious festivals and numerous other resources which have assisted the teaching of world religions. This group has been influential in religious education and has come to be accepted by SACREs and teachers as providing competent and innovative material to enhance teaching about world religions.

Through the 1970s, Smart succeeded in plotting a new course for religious education. While Goldman (1964, 1965) had apparently shown flaws in religious education, Smart had given a new direction to the subject which had appeared to have none. One of the remarkable things about the way in which these developments took place, was that during the 1960s and 1970s there was no significant change in legislative terms to the status of religious education. This may seem to be something of an unusual position. It will be recalled from chapter 1, that legal changes to the status of religious education did not always lead to changes at the classroom level. Whereas some

of the biggest changes that have ever taken place within British religious education have done so without any kind of legal requirement to do so.

Recent developments in religious education

Since the work of Goldman and of Smart, numerous other research and development projects have taken place in British religious education. These are introduced and summarised by Grimmitt (2000). When Smart led the Schools Council Religious Education in Secondary Schools Project, he noted that there were, generally speaking, three core pedagogies of religious education which could be identified in contemporary philosophy and pedagogy (as outlined above). In his collection of case studies pertaining to research and development of good pedagogical practice in religious education, Grimmitt (2000) explores recent initiatives by also investigating the different pedagogical initiatives in religious education. He identified eight pedagogies which had been developed over the preceding 40 years. Each will be introduced in turn before being explored more thoroughly.

The first was the Liberal Christian approach. This was shown to be exemplified in terms of Theological experiential and implicit pedagogies. This approach was exemplified through the work of Loukes (1965), Goldman (1965), and Hull (1984b).

The second approach was the phenomenological, undogmatic approach. This approach was exemplified through the work of Smart (1971) and The Chichester Project (Brown, 2000). This approach was outlined above, and is clearly shown to be the approach favoured by the Schools Council religious education project.

The third approach was the integrative experiential and phenomenological approach. This approach was rooted in the pioneering work of the Schools Council. It is of key interest that while it is presented as a separate approach to the phenomenological approach to religious education, much of this approach is phenomenological and thus represents a direct continuation of Smart's influence in religious education. Indeed, The Schools Council Primary Religious Education project is cited as being an example of this work alongside material produced by Grimmitt (1973) and Holm (1975). The Religious Experience and Education project is cited as being an example of this approach as developed within a structured project (Hay, 2000).

The fourth approach was the human development: learning about, learning from approach. This approach is exemplified by a number of long running structured projects including the Religion in the Service of The Child Primary RE Project (Hull, 2000), and the Westhill Project (Rudge, 2000).

The fifth approach was the ethnographic interpretive multifaith approach. This is exemplified in the work of the Warwick RE Project which is ongoing (Jackson, 1997). As its name suggests there is a clear multifaith emphasis to this project. The ethnographic model has been employed within this project to explore young people of different religions.

The sixth approach considered is the revelation centred approach of the Stapleford RE Project. This project has run through the 1990s and remains ongoing. The Cracking RE material (Cooling, 2000) has been the highest profile output from this initiative.

The seventh approach is the spiritual and religious literacy centred critical realist model. This is shown to be exemplified by the work of Wright (1993) and the Spiritual Education Project (Wright,

2000).

The final approach identified is the constructivist approach to the learning and teaching of religious education. This approach is exemplified in a structured initiative which is ongoing. The Children and Worldviews Project (Erricker and Erricker, 2000) is concerned with allowing children to develop their own worldviews through setting their own agenda for religious education. The spontaneous discussion of matters which are selected by children is seen as giving a glimpse into what they consider to be important.

The neo-confessional approach, which was cited as a dominant position in religious education (Smart, 1971) at the outset of the Schools Council Religious Education in Secondary Schools project, did not appear on Grimmer's (2000) list. This approach within the teaching of religion had by this point become largely irrelevant.

Liberal Christian approach

The Liberal Christian perspective which was exemplified by Goldman's work remained the pedagogical approach to the study of religion closest to what had been characterised as the confessional approaches. This model derived obviously from earlier confessional practice. However, through the early 1970s the model began to change substantially in terms of rationale. Hull (1984c) (originally 1975) began to redefine theological understanding of experiential religious education. He asserted that it was possible to engage in experiential approaches on an educational rather than a confessional context. In addition to doing this he saw new movements in experiential religious education as being relevant to the teaching about Christianity in a religious education context. This redefinition offered a place to liberal Christian experientialism within the

contemporary context of secular religious education. This approach continued to develop to some extent alongside the phenomenological approach.

The interaction between attempts to reconcile experientialism with phenomenological perspectives in the study of religion brought about a series of projects which came to represent new pedagogies, rather than simply representing an isolated approach (Hay, 2000).

The phenomenological, undogmatic approach

The second approach concerned the phenomenological approach to religious education. Certain curricular initiatives have continued in emphasising the phenomenological approach to religious education which was so clearly begun with the work of Smart and of the Shap Working Party.

Whereas the Schools Council and Shap materials had been intended to rectify a shortage of teaching resources in the 'world religions' it became clear that the new phenomenological approach to the teaching of religion meant that many of the existing teaching materials concerning Christianity were no longer appropriate. The Chichester Project which was initiated in 1977 (Brown, 2000) arose out of a dialogue with the Shap Working Party, during which it emerged that there was a need to generate materials in order to facilitate the phenomenological teaching of Christianity as a world religion.

Brown (2000) suggests that while the project had a set of aims and a clear objective, it also had a fluid team and an open policy toward accepting contributions of its members. Therefore, it may be argued that while the Chichester Project has had, and continues to have a coherent structure, it has nonetheless experienced many different emphases throughout its development. Certain

complex situations were rejected from the project material because they were considered to be beyond the understanding of the pupils of the age group concerned. As the project draws to a close, it is felt that the Chichester Project contributed to an earlier (phenomenological) revolution in religious education rather than initiating a new one of its own (Brown, 2000).

The integrative experiential and phenomenological approach

The third approach introduced above concerned the integrative experiential and phenomenological method. The phenomenological influence is clear on Hay (2000) who led the Religious Experience and Education Project in the University of Nottingham. He cited Smart's dimensional framework (See Smart, 1989) which established that the core dimension in understanding religion was the experiential dimension.

Religious experience is considered by Hay to be a phenomenon which impacts on a majority of people within the United Kingdom, whether or not they affiliate with any particular religious group. The perspective taken by the project is one which allows students to enter into an empathy with religious believers and experience them as struggling with mystery. It is asserted neither to rely on, nor to prohibit pupils' acceptance of any religious position.

Experiences of pupils are seen to be a potentially valuable starting point in religious education. Pupils were to explore religious metaphor and religious language. This would be seen to make objective any subjective and hitherto inexpressible phenomena. Pupils who are not encouraged to explore whatever common threads there are in the sacred phenomena may not succeed in gaining the ability to do so. In this extent, it may be suggested that the experiential approach risks accusations of religious nurture. Hay (2000), however, argues that 'an approach to religious

education which avoids practical life is rather like a scientific education which prohibits students from entering a laboratory for fear that they should be coerced into becoming scientists'. Clearly the notion of empathic development which was espoused by Smart (1971) is one of the central issues within the religious experience approach. This approach hinged on and resourced one key dimension of religious education.

The human development and learning approach

The next approach introduced above was the human development approach which was concerned with learning from and learning about religion. The Westhill Project was cited by Grimmer (2000) as being an example of this approach. The Westhill Project developed without a clear pedagogical rationale. Rather than taking a rationale and developing from it, the team examined available resources and approaches which led them to deduce rather than project a pedagogical agenda.

It was decided from the outset that the project understood religious education as being concerned with pupils' development. The subject aimed to help pupils to develop their own potential rather than simply absorb information about religions. On this account pupils will learn from religions about themselves. This pedagogy requires material to be pitched at the needs of the child. The child-centred approach sees itself reaching some kind of maturity within the ideology of this project. Goldman's (1965) assertions relating to child-centred requirements may be seen as being the early pre-cursors to the approach emphasised within Westhill material. Rudge (2000) chose to see the project as being 'another contribution to the debate about religious education in the state sector, rather than as a definitive and final solution'. Clearly the Westhill Project will be considered as a part of a process rather than as a catalyst in creating a new outlook for religious education.

A second, and more structurally refined, example of the human development model is the religion in the service of the child approach (Hull, 2000). This approach was explored through the Religious Education in the Early Years Project. This project ran between 1984 and 1989. In 1989 the Religion in the Service of the Child Project was initiated. This project ran until 1991. The early emphasis on religious education in the early years led back to the concerns raised by Goldman (1965) and the main alternative, the phenomenological approach which had been, according to Hull (2000), 'brilliantly promoted by Ninian Smart'.

This project was at the outset rooted in a research base which investigated pedagogical methodologies employed by teachers of young children engaged in other subjects. Informed discussion then took place as to what could be applied to religious education from this research. Following extensive classroom piloting there was sufficient confidence in the new approach to suggest that 'the purpose of religious education was to make a contribution to the human and educational development of the child'. This was an attempt to sharpen the focus of religious education which had previously been seen as simply informing the child about religion.

The Religion in the Service of the Child Project was concerned with developing this conclusion into an initiative which could impact on classroom practice. A teacher training process and a series of publications emerged from the project in a bid to link the child development model to a pedagogical strategy. Thus, the Birmingham model may be considered to represent a coherent fruition of the initiatives upon which it was built. Perhaps this project represents the most securely structured method of introducing world religions to the curriculum exhibited to date.

The ethnographic interpretive multifaith approach

The fifth approach identified by Grimmitt (2000) was the ethnographic approach. The Warwick RE Project exemplified this approach. It was initiated to undertake research into methodological concerns with regard to the academic study of religion, and concerns about the nature of religious identity in both groups and individuals. These concerns were investigated in terms of their implications for teaching religion. An approach to religious education is developing from this strand of work and experimental curricular resources are features of the project (Jackson, 2000).

Since its inception in 1994 the project had four specific aims. The first aim was to investigate the nature of religious transmission within certain religious traditions in Great Britain. Second, the project aimed to develop resources for the continuing professional development of teachers. Third, a theoretical framework was to be developed which would allow ethnographic data to be employed in religious education. Finally, the project was to employ the new framework in the development of materials to be used by pupils and teachers. From the very start the project was designed to have a firm research base which was to impact directly on teachers' classroom practices.

Jackson (1997) established the limitations of the project. It was emphasised that the project was not supposed to represent a complete system, but rather it was to be considered to be a creative dialogue in religious education. This dialogue continues to stimulate a wealth of research in this tradition (Jackson, 2000).

The revelation centred approach

The sixth approach identified by Grimmitt (2000) related to Trinitarian Christian realism in religious education. This was considered to be exemplified in the work of the Stapleford RE

Project. This project was designed to resource the teaching of Christianity in a way that allowed it to remain accessible to children at different stages of their development. The central emphasis is on allowing children to learn theological concepts. The direct influence on this project is found in the work of Goldman (1964) and of Smart (1971) who were between them credited by Cooling (2000) with creating the situation whereby schools were afraid to teach Christianity in a convinced enthusiastic manner, and instead often resorted to descriptive teaching about world religions.

The two key points to the process developed within the Stapleford Centre focused on the religious education teacher. First, it is asserted that teachers must have a clear understanding of their subject matter. Second, they should plan effectively to make the material current to the pupils' own experiences. The learning activities developed by the teacher help pupils first to learn a concept and then to reapply creatively the concept in order to assist their own developing understanding. Cooling (2000) considers that this approach resonates with two of the examples provided above (Hull, 2000; Jackson, 2000).

Within the specific focus of The Stapleford Project it may be seen that this approach has had a major impact. However, when it is considered that the project is concerned with teaching Christian theological concepts to children, it is clear that such a major impact in such a narrow area is not indicative of a major impact on religious education. This is by no means a criticism of the project. Perhaps it sets an agenda for the planning of future projects. A narrow focus can achieve more success than some of the more broadly focused projects have seen.

The spiritual and religious literacy centred critical realist approach

The seventh approach introduced by Grimmitt (2000) was that concerned with the promotion of

spiritual and religious literacy. This approach was exemplified by the Spiritual Education Project (Wright, 2000). This project was unusual in terms of its dissimilarity from the other projects mentioned above.

Wright suggests that the project is concerned with the conceptualisation of spiritual education rather than with empirical research into classroom practice. The emphasis on spiritual education can be seen to narrow the focus of the project to one specific element of religious education, while simultaneously expanding the focus across all subjects in the curriculum. The review of the project's impact to date (Wright, 2000) is rather modest in placing the emphasis firmly in a reconceptualisation of liberal approaches to spiritual (and religious) education. They are cited as being, just as 'confessional' as an earlier model of religious instruction which they had purged on the basis of the liberal educational agenda.

Wright (2000) argues that a critical understanding of spirituality is needed in order that integrity may be maintained. Citing earlier findings (Wright, 1998), it is suggested that 'education will inevitably nurture children into a particular world view. The question is not whether this will happen, but how: consequently the primary task of spiritual education is to ensure that the spiritual tradition in which children are nurtured is appropriate and that the process of nurture is effective.'

The position advanced in response to this assertion is that spiritual education, and religious education should be developed in order to nurture a critical position. Rather than teaching from the hypothetical position of neutrality, the pretence to which is no longer possible, it is suggested that religious education is taught in a position whereby preconceptions are accepted as being a part of the nature of pedagogy. Furthermore, such presuppositions should be understood by teachers

and pupils. The realisation that acquired information is based on presuppositions will lead to the natural inclination to be somewhat self-critical. The self-critical stance within religious and spiritual education is the key to advancing beyond the liberal agenda.

The impact of this project has, to date, been more academic than practical. This is an observation rather than a criticism. The project engaged complex conceptual material and the results of this engagement were, quite properly, conceptual refinements launched into the academic arena.

At a practical level this project has led to requests for inset from teachers wanting to implement some of the recommendations into professional practice. Further practical implications concern research which has developed out of the project and is still being pursued (Wright, 2000).

The constructivist approach

The final approach to religious education outlined by Grimmitt (2000) was the constructivist approach. This model was considered to be exemplified by the Children and Worldviews Project. This project was initiated in 1993 and continues to date. The project was an attempt to refocus religious education on the aptitudes and experiences of pupils and move away from the content-led religious education which was and remains dominant. It was acknowledged that developments in phenomenological and world-religions based religious education were welcome improvements in religious education but remained adrift from the perspective of pupils (Erricker and Erricker, 2000).

The way in which the project attempted to refocus the agenda on children was seen as being necessary in order to redress the balance which had emerged as a result of the content centred

religious education. Listening to children was seen as being crucial to this enterprise. In addition to listening, there was also a clear need to talk to children on their agenda, ensuring that a mutual learning process can occur. The project developed in order to learn about what was important to children through conversation.

This position confronts the dominant position in religious education which has focused on the phenomenology of religion in the classroom. The subject orientation inherent in the phenomenological approach was seen as being of limited value. Thus, the project argued for a major reconceptualisation of pedagogical principles. This new pedagogy should aim to remodel religious education in an inclusivist way. The ability to promote a sense of 'truth' through the sincere narrative of the individual is considered, within the project, to be preferable to the alternative which may be considered in terms of presenting a unified view of the masses, from which the idea of sincerity and reality may be lost (Erricker and Erricker, 2000).

Diversity in religious education

The approaches outlined by Grimmitt (2000) do not offer an exhaustive presentation. He has selected certain approaches which outline current movements in religious education. What he has demonstrated is that throughout different initiatives which have been developed since the 1970s many owe their initiation to the radical work carried out into the nature of children's understanding of religion by Goldman (1964) and to the radical work carried out into the nature and remit of religious education by Smart (1971).

Furthermore, Grimmitt (2000) has shown that there have been various calls for conceptual redefinition or pedagogical refinement within religious education. Some of these calls to advance

the subject have been in conflict with others. There have been numerous forces pulling religious education in different directions. As a result of this, the radical changes required to make some of these approaches fully effective have not yet taken place. The paradigm shift which led to the abandonment of confessional religious education at the expense of the then 'new' phenomenological world religions approach to religious education (Smart, 1971) has not been superceded. Various models have arisen but none has resulted in major change in religious education.

Conclusion

It has been shown through the course of this chapter that an unmistakable trend has emerged within religious education since the pioneering work of Goldman to make religious education appropriate to children. The trend has been to move religious education away from confessional Christian based religious instruction, and move it toward the secularised study of religions. It rests uneasily in the academic context of uncertainty, set apart from other school subjects by numerous competing perceptions. It is regulated by legislation which, in some cases does not seem effective. Pivotal changes have taken place which have been inspired by academic, rather than legislative change. Whereas it was shown in chapter one of the current dissertation that legislative changes sometimes failed to initiate changes in religious education, it has been shown in the current chapter that the secularising changes in religious education have been brought about independently of a legal impetus to do so.

Chapter 3

Sticking points in pupil reaction to religious education:

A rationale for the current investigation

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Introduction

It has been shown in chapters 1 and 2 of the current dissertation that religious education has changed substantially since it was introduced as a compulsory element within the school curriculum. The legal framework surrounding religious education has been shown in chapter 1 to have developed in order to regulate the changes in religious education. However, it has not always been the case that legal changes would inspire changes within religious education. Chapter 2 introduced the range of changes in content and aims of religious education which have been brought about independently of legal impetus.

It is against this backdrop, of change in religious education where the current chapter commences. Despite the radical changes in religious education there is one feature that has remained remarkably consistent. Young people have consistently displayed a less favourable response to religious education than they have to a range of other subjects. This element of consistency against a backdrop of change in the subject is explored through the course of the current chapter. The literature exploring pupils' response to religious education is introduced and discussed in order to focus a research agenda for the empirical component of the current study. By evaluating existing research into the attitudes of young people toward religious education it is possible to frame a research agenda based on the investigation of variables known to predict the responses of young people toward religious education.

An empirical rationale

This part of the chapter shows that although the nature of religious involvement in education has changed radically since the passage of the 1870 Elementary Education Act, it has managed to remain remarkably stable in one aspect. Notably the response that it engenders among young

people. Religious education has been shown to provoke generally negative responses from those pupils who are exposed to it. Although religious education is the subject that has been compulsory since 1944, pupils generally do not appreciate religious education in schools.

The research that has contributed to this developing picture of pupil response to religion in the curriculum will be summarised in this chapter. It is suggested that the existing research in this field serves the purpose of mapping the concerns that the current investigation needs to address. The literature in this chapter shows that although, religious education is not popular with pupils, it is more popular with specific sub-populations of pupils than others. Specific factors are shown to act on the perceptions of young people in terms of their response to religion in the curriculum. These are sex and gender, personality, and religiosity.

The existing research, which has been carried out into the reactions of pupils toward religious education can be broadly located within the two distinct traditions of educational research. While the current study is quantitative, it may be useful to contextualise the current research in all relevant studies, and not exclude qualitative findings from this process of wider contextualisation. Although the first published enquiry into the popularity of religious education as a school subject was of a quantitative nature, it aids clarity in a review to consider the quantitative research and the qualitative research as distinct from one another. The qualitative research will be summarised first. This summary will be followed by a presentation the quantitative research into pupils response to religion in the curriculum.

Qualitative research

The pioneer of qualitative research into religious education was Harold Loukes, who was

responsible for three major studies which generated information on the attitude of pupils toward religious education. *Teenage Religion* (1961) was based on data that had been gathered by a research process that had been split into two parts. The methodology is presented by Francis (2000). Loukes (1961) arranged for discussions held by 14 year old pupils, in the presence of their teachers during ordinary lessons on religious topics, to be tape recorded. He saw this method as being a legitimate way to allow young people to express their opinions in an authentic and spontaneous way. Six schools were used in this part of the research.

Analysis of the tape recorded conversations allowed Loukes to identify certain typical pupil responses. These responses were then presented to 502 pupils from 14 schools, including the original six that had taken part in the first part of the research. The areas given specific coverage in the second part of the research were: the bible, whether God made the world, Jesus Christ, God, lessons on the bible, is Christianity worth dying for, is it boring to be good, is there a heaven, is it fair of God to allow suffering, is prayer any use, going to church, what sort of scripture lessons would you like, and religion in everyday life.

For the purpose of the current review, attention will only be given to lessons on the bible and what sort of scripture lessons you would like. One of the problems faced by educational research which requires a high level of interpretation of the data is that ambiguity can easily emerge. Loukes (1961) presented numerous accounts from children who claimed that religious instruction was boring, unintelligible and repetitive. These comments were not seen by Loukes as being hostile toward religious instruction. The comments that Loukes was able to identify as being hostile to the subject questioned the potential usefulness of religious instruction in future employment. These comments, both favourable and unfavourable may be seen to be a rather damning

indictment of religious instruction as perceived by pupils.

Loukes (1965) reviews his earlier work and reminds readers that, 'They [the pupils] were confused, it will be remembered, rather than hostile, ambivalent rather than rejecting. The subject matter was interesting and important: the manner and method were "totally boring".' A brief consideration of the references given in Loukes (1965) suggests that indeed, he is describing the book outlined above. How then, has he managed to conclude that the pupils were not hostile to religious education? There is no simple answer to this question. Indeed, it may become a kind of rhetorical question that serves a purpose in the current study to caution against the simplistic interpretation of qualitative data.

Loukes' next major work which examined the response of pupils to religion in the curriculum was *Teenage Morality* (1973). The findings of the earlier research re-emerged within this study, although this time they were seen to convey a different meaning. Loukes (1973) concluded that 67% of the boys in the sample were against religious education, as opposed to 33% who were for religious education. However, only 43% of the girls were against religious education, as opposed to 57% who were considered to be for religious education.

These important qualitative studies point to trends that have consistently emerged within the quantitative tradition. Namely, that religious education is not a popular subject, and that it is less popular among males than it is among females. Having introduced the broad concepts through qualitative research, these will now be more fully investigated through a presentation of quantitative data.

Quantitative research

Francis and Lewis (1996) and Francis (1996) summarised research into attitude toward religious education. They identified various methods that had been employed in this research. Four distinct methods have been used in order to assess the response of pupils toward religion in the curriculum. Whether terminology related to scripture, religious instruction, or religious education, a relatively stable picture emerges as to the response that religion in the curriculum elicits among young people. The data generated through the application of each of the methods will now be presented. Each of these methods is subject to its own particular strengths and limitations.

First, some studies have simply asked pupils to rank school subjects in order of preference. Lewis (1913) employed this method. Francis and Lewis (1996) report that scripture was ascribed the lowest position in the child's ranking of school subjects. However, this is not the case. Lewis (1913) actually found that scripture was ranked 12 out of 14 subjects. Shakespeare (1936) discovered that scripture occupied an unspecified low position. Houslop and Weeks (1948) found that religious education was placed 17 out of 20 subjects by their sample of boys. Williams and Finch (1968) reported that religious education was ranked 13 out of 14 by boys and 11 out of 14 by girls in terms of usefulness, and was ranked 13 out of 14 by both boys and girls in terms of interest. Keys and Ormerod (1976) found that religious education was ranked 15 out of 15 subjects by boys, and 10 out of 15 subjects by girls. Harvey (1984) generated data that generally support earlier findings. In the study boys ranked religious education 16 out of 18 subjects, and the girls ranked religious education 17 out of 18 subjects. Although Harvey (1984) lends support to the notion that religious education is not a popular subject, his data fail to bear out the theory that females have a generally more positive predisposition toward religious education than males.

Caution must be exercised with regard to the possible over interpretation of the data generated by these studies which ask pupils simply to list their favourite subjects in a rank order. For example, Williams and Finch (1968), Keys and Ormerod (1976), and Harvey (1984) all produced data that might point toward a sex difference in response toward religion in the curriculum. However, as the method relies upon a ranking procedure without an absolute metric, then it is not possible to say with any degree of certainty that any sex difference actually exists. It may be the case, no matter how unlikely, that the boys in the above samples, although they generally rank religious education below other subjects, may objectively rate religious education more favourably than the girls in the sample. However, there is no reason to suspect that this is the case, and the above studies may be taken tentatively as suggesting that religion in the curriculum is not rated highly, and in particular that it generally receives less support from boys than it does from girls.

Second, some studies asked pupils to identify subject preference from among paired comparisons. Ormerod (1975) found that religious education was ranked 17 out of 17 subjects by boys, and was ranked 15 out of 16 subjects by girls. Again, support is lent to the tentatively expressed conclusions above, that religious content in the curriculum is not popular and it is less popular among males than it is among females.

Third, pupils have been asked to record all the questions that they would like to ask in each subject. Rallison (1939, 1943) based his studies on the assumption that the popularity of a subject is linked to the frequency of spontaneous question asking on the part of the pupils. He based this assumption on the *Board of Education Handbook of Suggestions* which suggests that 'the questions that spontaneously arise in their minds [the minds of the pupils]... should be the starting point for the teaching'. It is not the responsibility of pupils to design the curriculum, but their

eagerness to learn more than is being taught may act to reflect subject popularity. As we shall see later in this dissertation, it is precisely the group of students who wish to learn about religion beyond the compulsory minimum level who are important to this piece of research. Rallison (1943) concluded that both sexes had a slight interest in religion.

Fourth, Francis (1987b) deployed a series of semantic differential grids. Seven bipolar adjectival pairs were selected, and applied seven times within the questionnaires following seven distinct concepts. Namely, games, English, maths, history, school, music and religious education. He found that religious education was the least popular of the seven areas studied. It was allocated lowest position by 5 of the 8 age groups participating in the study. There was a general inverse relationship between attitude toward religious education and age. This finding, that attitude toward religious education tends to become less positive as age increases, raises specific questions for the current study. The current study focuses on A-level students of religion. This group is typically the oldest age group within the school system. The question central to the current project becomes more sharply focused when it is considered that the motivations are being investigated of the age group who theoretically may have developed the least positive attitude toward religious education, of any group of pupils or students who are exposed to religious education.

The method employed by Francis and Kay (1995), Francis and Lewis (1996), and Francis (2001) has been to present respondents with a single Likert type item with five response options ranging from agree strongly, through not certain to disagree strongly, and ask them to indicate their level of agreement with the statement 'religious education should be taught in schools'.

Francis and Kay (1995) found in their Survey of over 13,000 year 9 and 10 pupils, that 33% of

the respondents agreed that religious education ought to be taught in schools, 36% were not certain, and 31% disagreed with the suggestion that religious education ought to be taught in schools. Francis and Lewis (1996) found, in their survey of 16,411 year 9 and 10 pupils, that 35.6% of the respondents felt that religious education should have a place in the school curriculum. Sixty-four percent of the respondents remained uncommitted to this view. Francis (2001) found in his survey of 33,982 young people between the ages of 13 and 15 that 38% of young people felt that religious education should have a place in the school curriculum, 34% were uncertain, and 28% felt that religious education should not be taught in schools.

This empirical background demonstrates clearly that scripture, religious instruction, religious education, indeed religious subject matter generally in the curriculum, is not popular with pupils. Having illustrated this fact with over eight decades of empirical research, it is now no longer appropriate simply to say that religion in education is not popular with pupils. In order to remain useful to educators, researchers now must give more substantial answers to more sharply focused questions. The above studies were concerned with the evaluation of school subjects. Although the following pieces of research are also concerned with attitude toward various areas of the curriculum, they go further than simply establishing the popularity of subjects, they establish correlates with attitude toward religious education. Some of these correlational studies will now be examined in order that they might set a research agenda for the current project.

Sex and gender

Although sex and gender are different, they are related. Studies that have established relevant findings about the impact that sex and gender have on attitude toward religious education will now be considered.

Dale and Jones (1964) compared the responses of boys and girls to scripture as a subject. They discovered that girls held a more positive attitude than boys. Marratt (1965) surveyed a sample of 2,276 sixth-form students and found that girls had a more positive attitude toward religious instruction than boys, he saw this relationship as being 'as one would expect'.

Cox, (1967) in his major study of *Sixth Form Religion* asked the question 'Do you agree with the provision that all children should have religious instruction in school?' It is reported that he found 77% of girls to be in favour of mandatory religious instruction, while only 58% of boys supported this requirement. The study was repeated in 1970. Wright and Cox (1971) reported that by 1970, only 46% of the girls supported compulsory religious education, compared with 29% of boys who supported this.

Since Cox's original study, there have been some replications, and some of Cox's questions have been carried in later studies. One series of these replication studies has been carried out in sixth-forms of Protestant voluntary schools in Northern Ireland. John Greer (1972) carried out the first in this series of studies in 1968. He found that 63 % of girls and 47% of boys supported the legal requirement for religious instruction in schools. The second in this series of studies was carried out ten years later in 1978 (Greer, 1980). He found that the situation had remained very similar to the way it had been in his first investigation. Again, after another ten-year interval, the study was repeated (Greer, 1989). It was reported that in 1988 there had been a significant increase in attitude toward religious education. 69.8 % of the girls supported the place of religious education in the curriculum, and 54.6% of the boys supported the place of religious education.

A 1998 study has been carried out by other scholars who have taken on the challenge of

continuing this research which was initiated by Greer. Data have been obtained, although the results of the 1998 study are not yet available.

Lewis (1974) investigated a sample of 320 fourth year secondary school pupils in Wales. He found first, that the girls had a more positive attitude toward religious education than boys, and second, that religiosity also influenced attitude toward religious education.

Archer and Macrae (1991) asked 11-12 year old children to rate school subjects on a seven point continuum ranging from masculine to feminine. Religious education was rated as being a feminine subject along with typing and home economics. It is interesting to note that there was no difference between the way in which boys rated the subject and the way in which the girls rated it. Both perceived the subject to be feminine. However, the label of feminine seems to mean different things to the different sexes. Girls considered that the masculine subjects were difficult as opposed to easy and complicated as opposed to simple. Boys considered feminine subjects to be boring as opposed to interesting and about people as opposed to things. Although both groups see religious education as being feminine, both groups mean something different by this. The notion that religious education as a feminine subject is about people is explored in more detail later on in the current dissertation.

A final point ought to be made about the way in which Archer and Macrae (1991) conceptualised their study. Femininity and masculinity were seen as being opposing descriptors on a single continuum. Alternative theories of gender have been offered, including Bem (1981) who has suggested that it may be more satisfactory to consider masculinity and femininity as being orthogonal to each another. Methodological and theoretical issues in the study of gender will be

investigated later in the current dissertation.

Francis and Kay (1995) found in their survey of over 13,000 year 9 and 10 pupils, that girls have a more favourable attitude toward religious education than boys. Of the girls, 38% think that religious education should be taught in schools compared with 27 % of boys.

Francis and Lewis (1996) found, in their survey of 16,411 year 9 and 10 pupils, that girls have a more favourable attitude toward religious education than boys. Of the girls, 39.9% think that religious education should be taught in schools compared with 31.4 % of boys. This difference achieves significance beyond the .001 level of probability.

Lewis and Francis (1996) Found in their survey of 12,557 adolescents between the ages of 13 and 15 years, that females reported a significantly more positive attitude toward religious education than males. The significance was achieved beyond the .001 level of probability.

Francis (2001) found in his survey of 33,982 young people between the ages of 13 and 15 that 33% of the males support the place of religious education in school, compared with 42% of the females ($\chi^2=308.5$, $p<.001$).

Existing research has demonstrated that sex is a significant predictor of the attitude of young people toward religion in the curriculum. Consequently, there is a good theoretical rationale to investigate sex in the current study, with a view to establishing the impact that it may have on motivation to study religion in a post-compulsory environment. A profile of the respondents is presented in chapter 6 of the current dissertation, including a sex profile of the respondents. The

impact of sex on a range of variables will be examined in chapters 7 through 10 of the dissertation.

Personality

Francis and Montgomery (1993) administered the short form of the Junior Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, together with a semantic differential scale of attitude toward religious education. Attitude toward religious education was found to be unrelated to extraversion, significantly negatively correlated to neuroticism and psychoticism and positively correlated to lie scale scores.

Lewis and Francis (1996) administered the Short Form of the Junior Eysenck Personality Questionnaire along with a Likert item to assess attitude toward religious education to a sample of 12,557 adolescents between the ages of 13 and 15 years. They found that attitude toward religious education was positively associated with tender-mindedness (ie inversely linked to psychoticism scores), neuroticism and lie scale scores. They found no relationship between attitude toward religious education and extraversion.

Although alternative theories of personality have been developed, including the 16 factor model (Cattell, Eber and Tatsuoka, 1970), The five factor model (Costa and McCrae, 1985) and the Jungian theory of psychological type (Jung, 1923), it is the Eysenckian model that offers the most to the current study.

Existing research has demonstrated that personality is a significant predictor in the attitude of young people toward religion in the curriculum. Consequently, there is a good theoretical rationale to investigate personality in the current study, with a view to establishing the impact that it may have on motivation to study religion in a post-compulsory environment. A profile of the

respondents is presented in chapter 6 of the current dissertation, including a personality profile of the respondents. The impact of personality on a range of variables will be examined in chapters 7 through 10 of the dissertation.

Religiosity

Francis and Kay (1995) found in their survey of over 13,000 year 9 and 10 pupils, that 61% of weekly churchgoers agreed that religious education should be taught in schools as compared with 40% of occasional churchgoers, and 22% of those who never attend church. They also demonstrated that belief in the existence of God impacted upon attitude toward religious education. Thirty-nine percent of theists agreed that religious education should be taught in schools compared with 21% of agnostics and only 12% of atheists.

When investigating the impact that religiosity had on attitude toward religious education, Francis and Lewis (1996) demonstrated two points which clearly impact on the current study. First, it was shown that religiosity is a clear predictor of attitudes toward religious education. Second, it was demonstrated that religiosity cannot be considered to be an unidimensional phenomenon. It was shown that different aspects of religiosity have different effects on attitude toward religious education. Private religious behaviour was assessed through frequency of personal prayer, while public religious behaviour was assessed through frequency of church attendance. Religious identity was examined through denominational affiliation.

Francis and Lewis (1996) demonstrated that frequency of personal prayer correlates positively with attitude toward religious education. This positive correlation achieved a level of significance of .001. It was also shown that frequency of church attendance correlates positively with attitude

toward religious education. Again, this positive correlation achieved a level of significance of .001. When denominational affiliation was coded on a dichotomous scale which discerned between those who claim a denominational affiliation, and those who claim no denominational affiliation, it was shown that religious affiliation was significantly linked to attitude toward religious education. Once more, this positive correlation achieved a level of significance of .001.

Francis (2001) found in his survey of 33,982 young people between the ages of 13 and 15 that 63% of young people who attend church weekly agree that religious education should be taught in schools compared with 44% who attend sometimes, and 25% who never attend church ($\chi^2=2631.1$, $p<.001$).

There is a bewildering array of theoretical and empirical approaches to the study of religiosity. Existing research has demonstrated that religiosity is a significant predictor in the attitude of young people toward religion in the curriculum. Consequently, there is a good theoretical rationale to investigate religiosity in the current study, with a view to establishing the impact that it may have on motivation to study religion in a post-compulsory environment. A profile of the respondents is presented in chapter 6 of the current dissertation, including a religious profile of the respondents. The impact of religiosity on a range of variables will be examined in chapters 7 through 10 of the dissertation.

Conclusion

Chapters 1 and 2 of the current dissertation demonstrated that religious education has changed significantly since it was introduced to schools in England and Wales. This chapter has shown that although the subject has been prone to change over the years, the response of pupils to religion

in the curriculum has not changed. It has been remarkably stable. Thus the research agenda is shaped.

Religious education is not a popular subject, yet some people choose to study religion beyond a compulsory requirement. Certain characteristics have been shown to act on attitude toward religious education. These characteristics will be examined among the A-level students who are studying beyond a compulsory requirement. The current research is informed by theoretical and empirical evidence and will identify what it is that causes some young people to be atypical with regard to their attitude toward religious education.

Having identified an area of ambiguity in the research literature, and having framed a research agenda, it is now necessary to develop a suitable research method.

Chapter 4

Understanding pupil reactions to religious education

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Introduction

This chapter serves to provide a link between what is currently known about the response of young people to religion in the curriculum, and the empirical component of this dissertation. Chapter 3 of the current dissertation demonstrated that three variables have been found to impact on attitude toward religious education. While attitude toward religious education is not the core subject of the current investigation, it is the focus within existing research that provides the most robust context for the current study.

The three variables which have been shown to impact on attitude to religious education are sex (Dale and Jones, 1964; Marratt, 1965; Cox, 1967; Wright and Cox, 1971; Greer, 1972; Greer, 1980; Greer, 1989; Lewis, 1974; Francis and Kay, 1995; Francis and Lewis, 1996; Lewis and Francis, 1996; Francis, 2001), personality (Francis and Montgomery, 1993; Lewis and Francis, 1996), and religiosity (Francis and Kay, 1995; Francis and Lewis, 1996; Francis, 2001). The review of existing research demands that these areas are considered in the current investigation.

This chapter introduces both theory, and established practice in the investigation of sex, gender, personality and religiosity. The evaluation of established theory and practice allows the chapter to conclude by stating how the key predictor variables are to be operationalised within the current research.

Sex and gender

Professional consensus asserts that sex and gender are two related, yet distinct concepts. Sex is a simple descriptor based on biological criteria. The descriptors 'male' and 'female' are appropriate in describing sex. It was demonstrated in chapter 3 of the current dissertation that sex

impacts on attitude toward religious education (Dale and Jones, 1964; Cox, 1967; Wright and Cox, 1971; Greer, 1972; 1980; 1989; Lewis, 1974; Francis and Kay, 1995; Francis and Lewis, 1996; Lewis and Francis, 1996; Francis, 2001). Females display a more positive attitude toward religious education than males. Theoretically, it would be expected that females are more likely than males to expose themselves to religious education beyond compulsory requirements.

Whereas a simple description was adequate in order to establish what is understood by sex, it is not possible to explain gender in such a simple way. No professional consensus exists with regard to a conceptual framework within which to locate gender. Although the descriptors 'masculine' and 'feminine' are generally employed in gender taxonomies, agreement is not forthcoming with regard to the way in which masculinity and femininity relate to each other.

With the emergence and continued development of empirical psychology through the early part of the twentieth century, an investigation of gender differences became the focus of much research. It is asserted (Ashmore, 1990) that until the mid 1930s the main aim of gender research was to establish the exact nature of the relationship between biological sex and intelligence. By the 1936 this agenda gave way to a different line of enquiry.

The major development in the 1930s was the introduction of masculinity-femininity as bipolar descriptors on a single continuum which was considered to be a general personality trait. High scorers on masculinity were, therefore, considered to be low scorers on femininity. The two descriptors were mutually exclusive to each other. From the 1930s onwards an appreciation of sex differences led to the investigation of masculinity-femininity in various personality inventories, either explicitly or implicitly. Explicit examples are provided in such tests as the Minnesota

Multiphasic Personality Inventory (Hathaway and McKinley, 1967), the California Psychological Inventory (Gough, 1964) and the Comrey Personality Scales (Comrey, 1970). Implicit examples are provided through the adoption of separate normative data for male and female respondents, as exemplified in such tests as the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1975). Until the early 1970s professional consensus supported the notion that males and females were psychologically different to each other. Different aspects of masculinity-femininity could be measured, by different tests.

The next step major development in the measurement of gender was based on the assertion that masculinity and femininity may be orthogonal to, rather than opposed to one another. Whereas previous research was based on the assumption that masculinity and femininity were opposing ends on a single continuum, new theory suggested that masculinity and femininity were conceptually distinct. Each could be considered independently of the other.

Among the most influential exponents of this approach to gender was Bem (1974), who reacted creatively to an apparent weakness in psychometric approaches to individuation. Bem (1981) suggested that as so much of the psychology of individuation was developed on the basis of low correlations, it was necessary to explain consistencies when they arose, rather than explain inconsistencies which ought to be regarded as normal.

Bem extended this assertion to the field of gender orientation. Satisfied with the apparent need to explain consistency rather than inconsistency, she had to explore how these concepts related to gender. She (Bem, 1981) asserted that:

[T]wo idealised groups of individuals [are brought] into focus: those sex-typed individuals who restrict their behaviour to conform to cultural definitions of sex-appropriate behavior and those androgynous individuals who do not. Thus we can view the situational adaptability ("inconsistency") of the androgynous group as the unmarked norm (the given baseline), and regard the sex-stereotyped consistency of the sex-typed group as marked or problematic and as the phenomenon to be explained.

Bem based her notion of sex roles on a series of descriptors which were rated to be either masculine or feminine. The extent to which individuals reported themselves as displaying the characteristics associated with either masculinity, femininity, or, masculinity and femininity, generated scores on these scales. The different items were rated in such a way as to show that idealised gender items reflected stereotypical differences between the sexes which could be measured within the sexes, for example, typically female traits could be displayed by males and by females.

High scores on the masculinity scale did not necessarily lead to a low score on the femininity scale. Individuals could be described as masculine (high scoring on the masculinity scale, and low scoring on the femininity scale), feminine (high scoring on the femininity scale, and low scoring on the masculinity scale), androgynous (scoring highly on both masculinity and femininity), or non-differentiating (scoring low on both masculinity and femininity).

In addition to the gender measures which were developed specifically to measure gender, either in their own right, or as components of wider ranging personality measures, attempts have been made to examine gender by investigating the typical profile males and females record on indices which do not profess to measure gender. This kind of work has been carried out with regard to such tools as the Eysenckian family of indices (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1975).

Literature exploring the relationship between Eysenckian personality profile and attitude toward religious education is of value for two key reasons. First, it is intrinsically valuable to contextualise the current study. Second, it may help to build a profile of the impact that psychological gender has on attitude toward religious education. It must be remembered, however, that personality profiles, in this context should be seen as nothing more than a proxy for appropriate gender measures.

No existing research has examined the relationship between gender and attitude toward religious education. However, it has been established that religious education is considered to be a feminine subject by both males and females (Archer and Macrae, 1991). Despite the fact that this study does not establish a clear link between gender and attitude toward religious education, it has served to contextualise further religious education as being generally feminine. The current study aims to advance awareness of perceptions of religious studies by investigating the sex of the respondents and profiling sex differences across the range of dependent variables. The data gathered within the current study will serve as a baseline for future research in terms of exploring sex differences in religious studies.

Personality

Personality has been shown to impact on attitude toward religious education (Francis and Montgomery, 1993; Lewis and Francis, 1996). While personality is one of the key foci within social psychology, it remains an illusive construct. The emergence of a scientific paradigm within personality research has brought about several competing models which each attempt to account for the aspects of personality which are consistent with theoretical assertions and empirical data. According to the various dominant schools of thought, there are either three (Eysenck and

Eysenck, 1975), four (Keirsey and Bates, 1978; Myers and McCaulley, 1985), five (Costa and McCrae, 1985) or perhaps sixteen (Cattell, 1970) key components of personality. Each of these models meets various criteria which have achieved some level of professional agreement (and criteria which have not), yet, clearly, they each generate an apparently incompatible model.

The three dimensional model of personality (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1975) has been developed incrementally by Eysenck. The first instrument developed by Eysenck to measure personality was the Maudsley Medical Questionnaire (MMQ) (Eysenck, 1952). This instrument measured only one dimension of personality, neuroticism. The questionnaire contained only 40 items. It was originally produced in German, and later translated into English.

The second instrument developed by Eysenck to measure personality was the Maudsley Personality Inventory (MPI) (Eysenck, 1959). This instrument measured both neuroticism and extraversion. While neuroticism and extraversion were conceptually independent of each other, they were consistently found to be significantly associated when measured with the MPI. Clearly the instrument was not measuring appropriately in accordance with its theoretical basis (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1964).

The third instrument developed by Eysenck to measure personality was the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1964). This instrument, like the MPI measured neuroticism and extraversion. The concepts underpinning neuroticism and extraversion remained consistent between the MPI and the EPI. The EPI operationalised these constructs as being empirically independent of each other. Two parallel versions of the EPI were produced with the aim of making the test viable as part of an experimental process. As well as scales measuring

neuroticism and extraversion, the EPI included a lie scale. This scale was designed to investigate the 'desirability response set'. More recently, lie scale scores have been interpreted in a number of different ways, and may be seen to provide information about an aspect of individual differences, rather than simply acting as a methodological device to identify potentially invalid responses.

The fourth instrument developed by Eysenck to measure personality was the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1975). This instrument, like the EPI, measured neuroticism and extraversion. However, it also included a new dimension. The EPQ included a scale to measure psychoticism. The number of dimensions has remained consistent since this point within the Eysenckian framework, although, individual components of each of the three dimensions have been investigated within the Eysenck Personality Profiler (EPP) (Eysenck and Wilson, 1975).

The first dimension to be investigated by Eysenck was neuroticism. High scorers on the neuroticism scale are typically described as being moody, frequently depressed, likely to sleep badly, likely to suffer from psychosomatic disorders, and overly emotional. The low scorer on the neuroticism scale is considered to be someone who responds mildly to emotional stimuli, is usually calm, even tempered, controlled and unworried. Neuroticism is described in terms of emotional stability. This avoids problems associated with inappropriate understanding of the potentially pejorative label of neurotic (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1964).

The next dimension to be investigated by Eysenck was extraversion. High scorers on the extraversion scale are characterised as being sociable, liking parties, having many friends, needing

people to talk to, acts on the spur of the moment, is generally impulsive, is carefree and generally easy-going. The low scorer on the extraversion scale is considered to be quiet and retiring, fond of books rather than people, reserved and distant except with close friends. Introverts plan ahead and mistrust impulse. They seldom behave in an aggressive manner, and do not lose their temper easily. The terms extraversion and introversion are generally seen as being acceptable in describing scores on this scale, as they are not considered to hold negative connotations (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1975).

The third dimension to be investigated by Eysenck was psychoticism. High scorers on the psychoticism scale are characterised as being solitary, not caring for people, is often troublesome, not fitting in anywhere, may be inhumane and cruel, lacking empathy and altogether insensitive. High scorers on psychoticism may be hostile to others, and aggressive even to loved ones, like to embarrass and upset people. Low scorers on the psychoticism scale are characterised as displaying an absence of these behaviours. Psychoticism is described in terms of tough-mindedness. High psychoticism scorers are considered to be tough-minded and low scorers are considered to be tender-minded. This avoids problems associated with inappropriate understanding of the potentially pejorative label of psychotic (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1991).

These conceptualisations of extraversion and psychoticism were modified by Eysenck and Eysenck (1985). Extraversion was initially composed of traits concerning sociability and impulsivity. However, the impulsivity items were largely removed from the extraversion scale and relocated as a component of psychoticism. The empirically based redefinition which was brought about following extensive factor analysis led to confusion when the conceptual definitions offered within the test manuals failed to acknowledge the changes in the components comprising these two

dimensions of personality.

While it has been shown that there is no clear consensus as to what personality is, or even with regard to basic components, such as how many fundamental components of personality exist, there is a clear consensus as to the importance of personality as a predictor across a range of areas. It has been shown that personality when conceptualised within the Eysenckian framework, impacts on attitude toward religious education. The current study aims to advance existing findings in this area by exploring the impact of Eysenckian personality alongside the dependent variables, thus generating an extensive profile of the way in which Eysenckian personality dimensions impact on a range of issues within religious studies. Chapter 5 of the current dissertation establishes the credentials of each of the scales in the EPQR-A as deployed among the current sample.

Religiosity

Religiosity has been shown to impact of attitude toward religious education (Francis and Kay, 1995; Francis and Lewis, 1996; Francis, 2001). In measuring religiosity it is necessary to examine trends in religions. Aspects of commitment may be seen to be common to all of the religions likely to be experienced in a research context. An examination of different markers of religiosity which are commonly employed within the British research context reveals five main aspects of religiosity which are accessible in a quantitative research context, and which have currency across the main traditions represented within the context of the United Kingdom. The five aspects which will be discussed in turn are belief, public practice, private practice, attitude, and self-assigned religious affiliation.

Belief

Belief in the existence of a deity, or of deities is an essential aspect for many religions represented in Britain. However, it should not be considered that this aspect of religiosity is a universal feature which is relevant to all religions. To certain Buddhists the concept of God, or of gods is not a part of the religious frame of reference. The rejection of belief in God, on the part of people who see no place for gods within their religion, cannot be seen as being indicative of low levels of religiosity. Within the British context belief in the existence of God may be seen as remaining, by and large, a suitable index of religiosity, although this caveat must be considered in relation to data gathered. Belief in the existence of God can be assessed in terms of a bipolar scale, anchored by 'yes' and 'no', or a third dimension, which would allow the creation of continuous data, labelled 'don't know' may be added. The current study will employ belief in God as an independent variable against which certain attitudes and practices concerned with religious education can be measured. The data generated by this item is continuous and investigated on a 3 point scale: no, don't know, yes.

Public practice: attendance at a place of worship

One of the aspects of public religiosity which is most commonly employed is frequency of attendance at a place of worship. Within the British context this has frequently been assessed in terms of frequency of church attendance. Church attendance within the current study will be investigated via the deployment of a pre-coded question allowing five response categories ranging from 'at least once a week' through 'at least once a month', 'sometimes', and 'once or twice a year', to 'never'. The question concerns frequency of attendance at a place of worship. The following commentaries will refer to frequency of church attendance. This is a stylistic device which is intended to abbreviate commentary.

Private practice: frequency of prayer

Frequency of prayer within the current study will be investigated via the deployment of a pre-coded question allowing five response categories ranging from 'daily' through 'at least once a week', 'sometimes', and 'once or twice a year', to 'never'. The question concerns only frequency of prayer. No attempt is made to investigate the nature of the prayer in which the respondents engage, only frequency.

Attitude

Whereas the aspects of religious affiliation so far considered have been simply phenomena to be investigated by basic single item measures, attitude toward religion is a more sophisticated construct which requires a more complex measurement. A strand of research into the attitude of young people toward Christianity has emerged through the 1980s and 1990s. Around 100 published studies have employed the same measure of attitude toward Christianity.

The Francis Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity, adult (Francis and Stubbs, 1987; Francis, Lewis, Philipchalk, Brown and Lester, 1995) and junior (Francis, 1989a) versions have been deployed in numerous studies which establish their psychometric credentials, and in a number of studies that establish their correlates. Form ASC4B, is a 24 item Likert type scale concerned with affective responses to a series of referents which are all concerned with Christianity. The themes investigated within the scale are God, Jesus, bible, prayer, and church.

While there is only a very limited history of deploying the Francis Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity alongside a measure of attitude toward religious education (Francis and Carter, 1980), its inclusion in the current research can be justified for four reasons. First, the scale of attitude

toward Christianity has been shown to be a reliable and valid measure of religiosity (Kay and Francis, 1996). As the current study requires a competent measure of religiosity, then it may be considered appropriate to deploy the scale within the current research. Second, it has been shown that religiosity impacts on attitude toward religious education. However, it has not been conclusively established that this particular measure of religiosity impacts on attitude toward religious education. Employing the scale in the current context will add to what is understood about attitude toward religious education, and what is understood about attitude toward Christianity. Third, the scale of attitude toward Christianity has been shown to impact on a range of attitudes and behaviours. For this reason the interaction between attitude toward Christianity and any of the other variables under investigation in the current study is of interest in completing the picture which is emerging of correlates of attitude toward Christianity. Fourth, the scale of attitude toward Christianity has been deployed alongside the other independent variables employed in the current study. In order to appreciate what the data reveal in the context of the current study, it is essential to consider known interactions between the variables in order that they can be controlled for.

Sex differences in scores on the Francis Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity have been established through numerous studies, including Francis and Stubbs, (1987); Francis, (1999); Francis and Hermans, (2000); Francis and Gibson, (2001). The Eysenckian personality profile of high scorers on the scale of attitude toward Christianity has been firmly located in empirical research and summarised by Kay and Francis (1996). Greater detail of the known interactions between the predictor variables is presented later in the current chapter.

The current study employs the adult version of the scale. It is a 24 item Likert type scale. It is

an unidimensional scale, measuring only attitude toward Christianity. Attitude toward religion is defined as being a:

relatively permanent and enduring evaluative predisposition to a positive or negative response of an affective nature which is based upon or reflects to some extent evaluative concepts or beliefs learned about the characteristics of a referent or group of referents which come within a definition of the religious. (Francis, 1978)

With reference to the current topic, a definition of the religious will be taken to be Christianity. As with the original item pool, the scale contains items concerned with, God, Jesus, the bible, prayer, and church services. As illustrated, the statements are Likert type statements, with five possible points of response. These items range from, agree strongly, through agree, not certain, disagree, and disagree strongly. The respondent has to respond to each of the 24 statements by circling one of the five responses in order to indicate their level of agreement.

The scale of attitude toward Christianity has been used in studies carried out on many different samples, including: 8-11 year olds (Robbins, Francis and Gibbs 1995), 9-11 year olds (Francis, 1992a), 10-11 year olds (Francis, Pearson and Lankshear, 1990), 11 year olds (Francis, Lankshear, and Pearson, 1989), 11-12 and 15-16 year olds (Francis and Gibson, 1993), 11-15 year olds (Francis, Gibson and Fulljames, 1990), 11-15 year olds in Scotland (Francis, Gibson and Lankshear, 1991), 11-16 year old girls (Montgomery and Francis, 1996), 11-16 year old pupils in non-denominational schools in Scotland (Gibson, 1989a) 11-16 year old pupils in catholic schools in Scotland (Gibson and Francis, 1989; Francis and Gibson, 2001), 13-18 year old school pupils (Joseph and Diduca, 2001) 14-15 year olds (Gibson, Francis and Pearson, 1990), 14-16 year old pupils from Protestant and Catholic grammar schools in Northern Ireland (Francis and Greer, 1999a, 1999b, 2001), 15 year olds (Francis and Pearson, 1985a), 16-19 year old females (Francis

and Wilcox, 1996a), 8-16 year olds (Francis, 1988), 12-18 year olds (Francis, 1987b), A-level religious studies students (Wilcox and Francis, 1997), adult churchgoers (Francis, 1991), adults (Francis and Stubbs, 1987; Francis, 1992d, 1993a) adolescents, young adults, and adults in later life (Francis, Jones and Wilcox, 2000), Anglican clergy and laity (Lewis, Maltby and Burkinshaw, 2000), British undergraduate university students (Adamson, Shevlin, Lloyd and Lewis, 2000) churchgoers (Francis and Orchard, 1999), college students in the United Kingdom (Francis, 1993b; Robbins and Francis, 1996), college students in the United Kingdom, United States, Australia and Canada (Francis, Lewis, Brown, Philipchalk, and Lester 1995; Francis, Lewis, Philipchalk, Brown and Lester, 1995), committed adult Christians (Carter, Kay and Francis, 1996), denominational school pupils (Francis, 1986a), English school children (Francis, Pearson and Kay, 1983a), English 15-16 year olds (Francis, Pearson, Carter and Kay, 1981a), female A-level students (Francis, Astley, Fearn and Wilcox, 1999), female drug misusers (Francis and Bennett, 1992), individuals ranging in age from late teens to late seventies (Francis and Robbins, 2000), Kenyan secondary school pupils (Fulljames and Francis, 1987, 1988), low ability children in residential schools (Francis, Pearson and Stubbs, 1985), music students (Bourke and Francis, 2000), Nigerian secondary school pupils (Francis and McCarron, 1989), Protestant secondary school pupils in Northern Ireland (Francis and Greer, 1990a), religious studies students (Fearn, Francis, and Wilcox, 2001), Roman Catholic school pupils (Francis, 1986b), Roman Catholic female pupils aged 11-16 from a single sex catholic school (Francis and Montgomery, 1992), Roman Catholic school pupils aged 12-18 years (Francis, 1987c), Roman Catholic secondary school pupils in Northern Ireland (Francis and Greer, 1990b; Greer and Francis, 1991), Roman Catholic secondary school pupils in England (Francis, 1984), Roman Catholic secondary school pupils in Scotland (Rhymer and Francis, 1985), school children (Francis, 1979b), secondary school pupils (Francis, 1989b, 1989c), secondary school pupils in Northern Ireland (Greer and Francis,

1992), secondary school pupils in England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland (Francis, Greer and Gibson, 1991), secondary pupils in Germany (Francis and Kwiran, 1999a, 1999b), student churchgoers (Jones and Francis, 1999), students in Catholic high schools in Canada (Schluderman, Schluderman and Huynh, 2000), undergraduates (Francis, 1999), United Kingdom adults (Lewis and Maltby, 2000) and United States adults (Lewis and Maltby, 1995a, 1995b).

The scale of attitude toward Christianity has been widely used in order to assess the significance of religiosity as a predictor of a range of social attitudes and behaviours, including, altruism (Eckert and Lester, 1997), attitude toward religious education (Francis and Carter, 1980), conservatism (Lewis and Maltby, 2000), empathic development (Francis and Pearson, 1987), happiness (Robbins and Francis, 1996; Francis and Lester, 1997; Lewis, Lanigan, Joseph and deFockert, 1997; Francis and Robbins, 2000; Francis, Jones and Wilcox, 2000; Lewis, Maltby and Burkinshaw, 2000), interest in science (Francis Gibson and Fulljames, 1990; Gibson, 1989b), intrinsic, extrinsic and quest religiosity (Francis and Orchard, 1999), life satisfaction (Lewis, Joseph and Noble, 1996; Lewis, 1998), obsessionality (Lewis and Maltby, 1994, 1995c; Maltby, 1997), preoedipal fixation (Lewis and Maltby 1992), prosocial values (Schluderman, Schluderman and Huynh, 2000), schizotypal traits (Diduca and Joseph, 1997; Joseph and Diduca, 2001), self-esteem (Jones and Francis, 1996), social desirability (Gillings and Joseph, 1996), subject preference in the secondary school (Kay 1981) and suicidal ideation (Lester and Francis, 1993).

The scale has also been used in order to explore the significance of various factors upon religiosity, including, age (Francis, 1987b, 1989a), Anglican schools (Francis, 1987a), creationism (Fulljames and Francis, 1988; Francis and Greer, 2001), denominational differences (Maltby, 1995; Francis and Greer, 1999; Francis and Gibson, 2001), differing church aided school systems (Boyle and

Francis, 1986), Eysenckian extraversion scores (Francis and Pearson, 1985, Francis, Pearson, Carter and Kay, 1981b; Francis, Pearson and Kay, 1983b), Eysenckian lie scale scores (Francis, Pearson and Kay, 1983c, 1988; Pearson and Francis, 1989), Eysenckian neuroticism scale scores (Francis, 1992e; Francis and Pearson, 1991; Francis, Pearson, Carter and Kay, 1981a; Francis, Pearson and Kay, 1983a), Eysenckian psychoticism scale scores (Francis, 1992c; Francis and Pearson, 1985a; Kay, 1981b), gender orientation (Francis and Wilcox, 1996b), generational shift (Francis, 1989c, 1992b), parental marital happiness (Kay, 1981c), parental influence (Francis and Gibson, 1993), personality (Francis, 1985, 1991, 1993b; Francis and Montgomery, 1992; Francis and Pearson, 1988a, 1988b; Francis, Pearson and Kay, 1982; Francis, Pearson and Stubbs, 1985; Francis, Lankshear and Pearson, 1989; Carter, Kay and Francis, 1996; Francis, Lewis, Brown, Philipchalk, Lester, 1995; Lewis and Maltby, 1995b; Maltby, 1997; Francis, 1999; Francis and Kwaran, 1999a; Bourke and Francis, 2000), Protestant Sunday schools (Francis, Gibson and Lankshear, 1991), psychological type (Jones and Francis, 1999; Fearn, Francis and Wilcox, 2001), religious experience (Greer and Francis, 1992; Francis and Greer, 1999), Roman Catholic secondary school (Francis, 1986b), school influence (Francis, 1979b), scientism (Francis and Greer, 2001), social class (Francis, Pearson and Lankshear, 1990; Gibson, Francis and Pearson, 1990) and social science in terms of the scholarly distance hypothesis (Francis, Astley, Fearn and Wilcox, 1999).

The scale of attitude toward Christianity has also featured in many studies which establish its psychometric credentials, and examine the different ways in which the test may be administered. These studies refer to the reliability and validity of the scale (see for example Francis, 1988, 1992a, 1992d, 1993a; Francis, Greer and Gibson, 1991; Francis, Lewis, Philipchalk, Brown and Lester, 1995; Francis and Stubbs, 1987; Adamson, Shevlin, Lloyd and Lewis, 2000; Maltby, 2001). The

impact of the test administrator on attitude toward religion score has been examined (Francis, 1979c), as has the impact of anonymity of responses (Francis, 1981).

An emerging strand of research has begun to adapt the scale for use in contexts other than those for which the scale was originally designed. Translations of the Francis Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity have currently been published in Arabic (Munayer, 2000), Dutch (Francis and Hermans, 2000), German (Francis and Kwiran, 1999b), Swedish (Eek, 2001), and Welsh (Evans and Francis, 1996). Translation of the scale into various other languages is presently being undertaken. In addition to translating the scale for use in different languages, it has also been adapted for use in different cultural contexts. Dorman (1999), for example, has adapted the scale to be of practical use within Australian Catholic high schools.

Reliability

Francis (1987c) studied a sample of pupils aged between 12-18 years in which he discovered that the scale of attitude functioned with reliability ranging between 0.93 and 0.96 within this age range. Francis (1989c) studied a sample of school children in years 5-11 in which he discovered that the scale functioned with a reliability of 0.96 to 0.97. These two examples demonstrate that the scale of attitude is capable of functioning with a satisfactory level of internal reliability within a British context among these age groups.

Self-assigned religious affiliation

While religious affiliation has been shown to be a socially significant predictor across a range of areas, it has been shown to be a poor predictor of other aspects of religious activity. Indeed, one of the main reasons for it being selected as being the most appropriate method of investigating

religiosity within the national census was that it was considered to be a social variable in its own right, rather than a poor proxy for personal religious commitment. Consequently it was decided that religiosity, within the current research would be measured in terms of personal aspects of religious commitment rather than mere affiliation. While religious affiliation data was considered to be the best data available in a mandatory public survey, the current research can obtain more rich religious data in order to advance knowledge relating to religiosity and attitudes concerned with religious education. Consequently, the impact of religious affiliation as a predictor variable will not be examined in the current dissertation.

Conclusion

The stated aim at the outset of this chapter is to provide a link between existing research and the original empirical component of this dissertation. The literature previously considered in chapter 3 of the current dissertation was revisited in order to identify those predictor variables which have been shown to warrant further investigation in the current study.

These variables, namely sex, personality and religiosity have been briefly introduced. A methodology for operationalising these phenomena as predictors among the current respondents was then framed. The following chapter introduces psychometric criteria by which the methodology devised within the current chapter can be evaluated. The properties of the predictor variables will be explored in chapter 6 of this dissertation.

Chapter 5

Methodological considerations

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Psychometric issues

The current investigation is designed and operationalised through the scientific paradigm of social research. Science requires a clear and theoretically informed empirical investigation. A review of the existing literature concerning the subject of the current investigation has shaped a research agenda. It remains to establish a research methodology by which those areas identified in chapter 3 of the current dissertation (sex, personality and religiosity) can be investigated among A-level religious studies students. Chapter 3 of the current dissertation demonstrated that most of the research pertinent to the current investigation has been carried out within the quantitative tradition of empirical research. In order to build most effectively on these foundations, it was decided that the quantitative approach was the one that was most suitable to be employed in the current study.

When designing the questionnaire for the present research, it was necessary to consider the impact that various aspects of questionnaire design may have on the data gathered during the research programme. Careful questionnaire design is necessary in order to ensure that a suitable response rate is generated, and to ensure that any resulting data are both reliable and valid. Response rate, reliability and validity may be seen as being the most important aspects of social scientific research. Each will now be considered.

Response rate

In conducting quantitative research it is essential to obtain data from the sample under investigation. This may appear to be an obvious point, although many research reports give inadequate consideration to the way in which data are obtained in relation to response rates. Rather, response rates are often seen as abstractions which are the foci of separate methodological studies. These methodological studies are of value only if they are engaged within social scientific

research.

Although the concept of a response rate is widely acknowledged within the social sciences, it is worth noting that confusion exists in relation to what is actually meant by the term 'response rate'. It is noted (Kviz, 1977; Platek and Gray, 1986) that different researchers are in the habit of using different definitions of response rate, and different formulae for calculating response rate. Kviz (1977) suggests that this variance may be brought about at least in part by researchers attempting to artificially enhance their response rates. The specific definitions used in this dissertation will be presented alongside the calculation of the response rate in chapter 6 of the current dissertation.

As suggested by Kviz (1977), a high response rate is seen as being desirable. A high response rate is seen as being synonymous with data quality. Ray and Still (1987) have argued against this position. They suggest that it might be detrimental to attempt to maximise response rates. In their argument they are referring to practices which actually lead to higher response rates, rather than the practice of calculating response rates in misleading ways which was cited above (Kviz, 1977).

It is suggested that, by employing techniques which are aimed at increasing the response rate, in addition to gathering an enhanced quantity of data, researchers are actually reducing the quality of the data. Ray and Still (1987) sent a postal questionnaire to a sample of 400 Australians. Their initial response rate was 25%. They sent a second mailing and questionnaire to the non-respondents from the first administration of the questionnaire. This second mailing almost doubled the response rate, which then stood at 47%. However, the serious effects of acquiescent response set were enhanced by the second mailing. Therefore, the meaningfulness of the results was damaged by the second mailing. Ray and Still (1987) conclude that response rate maximisation

techniques are unnecessary and detrimental to high quality research.

It has been suggested that a high response rate is desirable (Kviz, 1977). It has also been suggested that maximising a response rate might be a mistake. Clearly these are issues that ought to be addressed in the design of the current research. A 'balancing act' will be attempted, in which the research design attempts to maximise response rate while avoiding coercing unwilling acquiescent respondents to provide data. The design of the questionnaire and the distribution method of the questionnaire are of key importance to getting this balance correct.

Kviz (1977) suggests that "The fact that some individuals do not respond to the survey must be attributed to a failure on the part of the researcher in designing and executing the survey. Placing the blame for nonresponse upon the nonrespondents is not justifiable". This comment is helpful in focussing the agenda of the researcher in the direction of careful design. However, the implication behind this quotation is that it is possible through careful design to eliminate non-response. It is implied that, if the researcher neglects to eliminate non-response then he or she has in some way failed and must bear some blame.

There are three key responses that ought to be made to this kind of suggestion. First, if there is no possibility of respondents freely choosing to decline to participate in research, then the ethics underpinning social science would be in serious doubt. Potential respondents must have the right freely to decline to take part in research. Second, as illustrated through the work of Ray and Still (1987) response rate maximising techniques are by no means assured to enhance a piece of research. Kviz's assumption that failure and blame ought to be part of a research paradigm which tolerates a less than 100% response rate must be questioned. Third, Kviz (1977) is outlining an

abstract position which does not map onto the objective reality of social research. Any discipline requires a philosophical underpinning, although if that underpinning fails to take account of reality than it ought to be revised.

The current research is based on the assumption that a 100% response rate is ideally aimed toward. It is also noted that due to practical limitations it is not possible to achieve this response rate. In practical terms the research will be operationalised in such a way as to maximise the number of willing respondents. Techniques will now be explored in order to establish a high level of cooperation without resorting to intrusive techniques which increase the acquiescent response set as discussed earlier.

Preliminary letter

The questionnaire used within the current project is to be distributed to A-level religious studies students. In order to minimise the costs of distributing the questionnaires to the sample, it was decided to send out questionnaires to the teachers of A-level religious studies and request them to administer the questionnaires to their students. The first point of contact was therefore between the researcher and religious studies teachers.

It has been demonstrated that a preliminary letter, alerting the potential respondent to the imminent arrival of questionnaires, significantly enhances response rate (Heaton, 1965). Although the teachers themselves are not the potential respondents, their cooperation is essential to the current project. The sending of preliminary letters was not deemed to be intrusive. It was decided that within the current study, a preliminary letter ought to be sent in order to enlist the cooperation of teachers prior to the sending of the questionnaires.

Personalisation and anonymity

Two opposing theories are postulated regarding the relationship between personalisation, anonymity and response rate. One theory suggests that potential respondents are more likely to respond favourably to a personal request to them. If the researcher has taken the time to address them personally, then they may be willing to cooperate with a piece of research. A second theory suggests that if potential respondents are addressed in anonymous terms, then they are more likely to feel that their privacy and confidentiality are being respected. If the researcher has taken the trouble to ensure that naming of potential respondents is not necessary, then they may be more willing to cooperate with a piece of research. In addition to these two opposing theories, it has also been suggested that no significant differences in response rate are attributable to personalisation or anonymity.

The first theory is supported by research carried out by Carpenter (1974), Dillman and Frey (1974), Green and Kvidahl (1989), but fails to find support in research carried out by Worthen and Valcarce (1985), and Hawes, Crittenden and Crittenden (1987). The second theory found no support in research carried out by McDaniel and Rao (1981). In view of the studies that fail to support the two main opposing theories, it may be assumed that the third suggestion, that no significant differences in response rate emerge from different levels of personalisation or anonymity. This is the position that is accepted within the current study and will be reflected in the research design section of this chapter.

Layout

Questionnaire layout has frequently been investigated in terms of its impact on response rate. The key features of questionnaire design which are pertinent to the current investigation are

questionnaire length and questionnaire pre-coding. Both of these features have been investigated in terms of their impact upon response rate.

Questionnaire length

It is theorised that increasing questionnaire length will reduce response rate. This theory is supported by research cited by Adams and Gale (1982). There are many studies that support this conclusion. They will not be considered individually. However, the implication of their finding will be presented. Again some kind of 'balancing act' is required. If questionnaire length can be seen to vary inversely with response rate, then it is apparent that questionnaires should be reduced in length in order to increase response rate. However, the purpose of achieving a high response rate is to obtain a useful set of data. Presumably if questionnaire length is reduced in order to enhance response rate, then one is losing out on one facet of a useful data set in order to achieve another. It is by no means acceptable within the current research to sacrifice the content of the questionnaire in order to persuade potential respondents to fill in the instrument. However, it is equally unacceptable to indulge all of the areas that might impinge upon the central question within the current research, that might then lead to potential respondents refusing to cooperate in the current research.

Through recognising the limitations of the current research in terms of questionnaire length, and projected response rate, it is necessary to focus on certain themes which were demonstrated in chapter 3 to impinge upon attitude toward religious education. These areas will form the basis of the questionnaire which will be rather more brief than a comparable instrument which that had been designed without due consideration of the professional literature. Through taking this kind of care with the construction of the questionnaire it is hoped that the areas relevant to the current

study can be investigated without having a detrimental impact on the response rate.

Questionnaire pre-coding

The question of whether pre-coding impacts upon response rates has not been seriously engaged within the social scientific community. Stevens (1974) suggests that response rates are not affected by questionnaire pre-coding. This, when coupled with the observation that pre-coding questionnaires has numerous advantages, leads to the conclusion that the questionnaire to be used in the current study will be pre-coded.

Validity

Like many terms within psychology, there is no single definition of validity. The meaning of validity may vary depending on the context in which it is used. Face validity, for example, is different to construct validity. Different methodological considerations will affect the type of validity that one might want to consider.

Face validity

Face validity is an essential consideration when designing a research instrument. Face validity refers to whether or not questions appear to be obtaining the information that they purport to be obtaining. An example is provided by Kline (1993), who suggests that:

if we are trying to select pilots from highly trained personnel, face valid tests of tracking ability or rapid reaction time will ensure full motivation because the subjects believe them to be valid indicators of flying skill. If, however, a test required them to make animal noises or add up numbers while distracted by jokes many would refuse thinking them to be absurd even if they were valid. (Kline 1993, p. 16)

In terms of the current study it is essential to achieve a high level of face validity in order to enhance respondent cooperation. Not only should the questions in the questionnaire appear to measure what they do actually measure, but the areas under investigation must be seen to be relevant to the research. For example, if it was theorised that social class was a variable that might usefully be investigated within the current study, then one may wish to obtain information from students relating to the occupations of their parents. While parental occupation might be transparent enough, as a marker of social class, to achieve face validity, the need to explore social class in a study that claims to be about religious education may seem to be a little less clear. It may be the case that a variable itself, rather than a device to measure a variable, can fail to achieve face validity.

It is essential therefore to construct a questionnaire that measures variables that may be seen by the respondents to map clearly onto the main crux of the current investigation, which is their decision to study religion at A-level. In addition to measuring face valid variables, it is essential to ensure that these face valid variables are investigated through face valid methods.

Construct validity

Having established that face validity relates to the process of obtaining certain information through means that appear to obtain that information, we may now look at construct validity. Rather than concerning the appearance of, and the perceptions that might be generated by the process of obtaining data, construct validity relates to what data are actually generated by certain questions or scales. Construct validity is established when a question or device is demonstrated to generate the data that the researcher is attempting to generate. Essentially the question at the heart of construct validity is this: does an instrument measure what it purports to measure?

To illustrate this point we may take the example of religiosity. A questionnaire might contain a scale of attitude toward religion. It might also contain questions about religious belief or religious behaviour. It may be expected that these separate measures all relate to the same concept. This concept is namely religiosity. We may therefore expect that these separate markers will relate to one another. A positive attitude toward religion should reasonably be expected to concur with other markers of religiosity. It should also serve as an effective predictor of religious behaviour. Thus, construct validity can be seen to comprise elements of other kinds of validity such as concurrent validity and predictive validity.

It will be essential in the current research to ensure that the scales and questions carried within the questionnaire do indeed measure what they are designed to measure. It is therefore necessary to ensure that a clear conceptual framework underpins the empirical investigation.

Reliability

Having demonstrated that different forms of validity necessarily impact on the research methodology of the current piece of research, we may now consider reliability, and the relationship that it has to validity. Kline (1993) suggests that reliability is necessary but not sufficient for validity. Therefore, despite having understood how to enhance validity it is not possible to produce instruments which have validity, unless they also have reliability. However, it cannot be assumed that a reliable instrument will have validity. These two concepts are related but quite distinct.

Although reliability has more than one specific meaning, it may be generally described as the quality of a test that is almost synonymous with consistency. We may see measurement

instruments in the social sciences as being of a similar nature to measurement instruments in the natural sciences. Thus one would expect a reliable thermometer to consistently read 0°C when it is placed in an ambient temperature at which pure water freezes at sea level. So one can expect a reliable attitude scale to generate a similar score when applied on more than one occasion with the same controls.

Test-retest reliability

The specific type of reliability exemplified above is called test-retest reliability. This type of reliability is established through applying the same instrument to the same set of respondents under the same conditions on more than one occasion. An instrument that displays a high level of test-retest reliability will produce data on the first application which is then demonstrated to correlate highly with the data generated on subsequent applications. It is generally accepted within psychometrics that a period of at least three months should elapse between applications (Kline, 1993).

If the period between applications falls below three months then the possibility is introduced that a high correlation between the first application and subsequent applications is a product of respondents simply remembering what answers they had given on the first occasion. Obviously, the three month period does not eliminate this possibility, but it does minimise the likelihood of memory distorting test-retest reliability. It has been suggested by Kline (1993) that the very act of leaving a three month period between applications of a test might introduce a new problem in certain research situations. There are certain groups of respondents who may be legitimately expected to change, often substantially, over a three month period. This problem might present itself most clearly among a sample of children. As children are by their very nature in a period of

growth and development then one might expect that they will change constantly until they reach maturity.

A practical problem concerning test-retest reliability within the current piece of research is concerned with financial constraints. It is most efficient within the current project to use measures that have been established as being reliable among a population that is representative of the current sample. Wherever possible in the current research, established measures will be used. If it is not possible to use established measures, then it will become necessary to establish reliability through a single application of any given instrument.

Split-half reliability

Split-half reliability can be measured through a single application of a test. As its name suggests, split-half reliability is measured through examining the correlation between one half of a test and another. For example if a 48 item test was being used, then the items may be separated into two groups. The data generated by items 1-24 would then be correlated with the data generated by items 25-48. A high correlation between the two halves of any test is a good indicator of internal consistency. This means that if we see a high correlation between one half of a test and the other half of the same test, then we would have confidence that one half of the test is measuring the same phenomenon as the other half of the test.

Coefficient alpha

Developments in both statistics and information technology have enabled social scientists to establish a more precise level of internal reliability than was possible through simply examining split-half reliability. Coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1951) is a statistic representing internal

reliability of a test, much the same as split-half reliability. However, split-half reliability is an arbitrary measure. Researchers can calculate split-half reliability by subjectively selecting half of the items in the test and contrasting them with the other half. Coefficient alpha is calculated by systematically and simultaneously taking every possible split-half reliability within a given test and correlating all of the possible split-half reliabilities with one another.

Theoretically, it appears that internal reliability of a test is best established in terms of coefficient alpha. In the current study the internal reliability of scales is calculated in terms of coefficient alpha, as it is the most suitable tool for that purpose, although it is suggested by Kline (1993) that in practice, coefficients alpha usually map closely onto reliability coefficients derived from split-half reliability tests. It is suggested that where differences do occur, they are normally only present at the third decimal place.

It is a well, though not universally, accepted view within psychometrics that a high level of internal reliability in a test is desirable. Many of the tests used in the current research have developers who pride themselves on the high levels of internal reliability that their test generates. However it is suggested that if high alpha coefficients are recorded, then what is actually being demonstrated is a lack of variety in the item pool, rather than a good level of internal reliability. The rationale being that, for example, if an inventory contains 24 items, then it ought to contain 24 separate items that relate to the dimension under investigation. If a high alpha is consistently recorded, then effectively what is shown is a cluster of items that are all very similar to each other. If the same question was asked 24 times then that would effectively be a 24 item index that would no doubt generate a high level of internal reliability, although it would clearly not be suitable to employ such an index in a piece of serious research.

This view that a high alpha value may be seen as a liability has been voiced within social psychology, although it is by no means the dominant interpretation of coefficient alpha within the discipline. Within the current research high levels of internal reliability will be reported as being indicative of successful and reliable psychometric practice.

Questions have recently been raised as to the true value of coefficient alpha as a measure of reliability. Shevlin, Miles, Davies and Walker (2000) carried out a series of Monte Carlo simulations in order to assess the performance of coefficient alpha as an index of internal reliability. They concluded that alpha is influenced by factors other than internal reliability. However, it was also demonstrated that most of the variance that occurred in the alpha value was genuinely attributable to reliability. The inference to draw from this piece of research is that although coefficient alpha is the most suitable index on which we might investigate internal reliability, it is not a perfect measurement. As consensus suggests that it is the best device to use, then it will be used within the current study.

Drawing conclusions

Although the current study is offered as a scientific enquiry into A-level students of religion, it must be acknowledged that the current investigation is, nevertheless, a kind of scientific endeavour which is radically different to an enquiry in the natural sciences. In order to understand A-level students' attitudes, beliefs and practices in relation to religious studies, observation, rather than experimentation is the key to the scientific enquiry in the context of the current study.

Observations, in the form of self-report data, lend themselves to statistical analysis. However, without experimental manipulation of independent variables it is possible only to arrive at

conclusions via a different method.

Relationships between observed phenomena are crucial to the current study. That is, relationships within the data that the participants supply. Having obtained data pertaining to the independent variable and the dependent variable it is necessary to establish whether the independent variable acts as a predictor on the dependent variable.

A null hypothesis is formulated, that is to say, it is initially asserted that the independent variable is unrelated to the dependent variable. The higher the correlation between the two variables, the greater the chance becomes of the null hypothesis being falsified.

It is not possible to arrive at a certain and logically compelling conclusion as to the nature of the relationship between two variables. Rather, the conclusions about the relationships between two variables are based upon inferences and probabilities. The ways in which these probabilities may be employed in order to arrive at various conclusions may introduce one of two (or both) kinds of errors into conclusions about relationships.

If an assertion is made about the absence of a relationship between two variables (null hypothesis) then in order to be scientifically meaningful, this hypothesis must be capable of falsification. In other words, there must be a possible situation which would serve as a basis for the null hypothesis being abandoned. It has been asserted that this basis can only ever be a probable basis, rather than an absolute basis. It is therefore necessary to consider the probability threshold at which it can be asserted with appropriate confidence that two variables are related to one another.

In selecting a level of probability, below which the null hypothesis will not be rejected and above which the null hypothesis will be rejected, it is important to realise that an arbitrary decision is being made. Such a decision has implications for the conclusions that will be generated through the data analysis. If the probability threshold is set too low, then a type 1 error will occur. The null hypothesis will be rejected without proper confidence. A relationship will be asserted to exist between two variables where no relationship in fact exists, beyond that which can be attributed to chance alone. If the probability threshold is set too high, then a type 2 error will occur. The null hypothesis will not be rejected even when there may be grounds for properly rejecting it. A relationship will not be asserted to exist between two variables, where in fact a relationship exists beyond that which can be attributed to chance alone.

Having raised the question as to what it means theoretically to assert that a relationship is present between two variables, it is now important to consider the practical mechanisms of making such a decision in the current dissertation. There are various implications resulting from the decision to select a level of probability. Various conventions exist within the social sciences. Whereas, in some cases it may be appropriate to set the probability level at $p < .05$, in other cases it would be more appropriate to set the probability level at $p < .001$. There is no single level of probability which is appropriate across all research contexts.

Due to the original and exploratory nature of the current study it may be stated that a type 2 error would be the kind of error which ought to be avoided at all costs. The purpose of exploratory research is to identify relationships in an area in which they have not previously been investigated. If probability is set too high, then this may obscure relationships and the purpose of the current investigation may be undermined. An awareness of type two errors does not guarantee that

conclusions drawn from the current research will be of value and work toward meeting the aims in the current research. The findings presented will themselves undermine the current research if it is not clear that reported relationships exist beyond those which may be attributable to chance alone.

The exploratory nature of the current study suggests that $p < .05$ may be an appropriate level of probability within the context of the current research. However, in view of the large number of relationships under investigation through the course of the dissertation, $p < .05$ may be seen to be too lax, and may be seen to invite type 1 errors. In response to this caveat, it may seem appropriate to set probability at a more stringent level. However, establishing probability as $p < .01$ or $p < .001$ will increase the level of confidence that may be placed in findings, but by the same level will increase the chance of overlooking relationships that do actually exist.

What is proposed throughout this dissertation is that a probability threshold of .01 will be employed. Relationships which are likely to occur by chance less than one time in a hundred are deemed to be significant. Relationships which are likely to occur more frequently than one time in a hundred, are deemed to be not significant.

Chapter 6

Describing the survey

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Introduction

This chapter establishes exactly how the question at the heart of this dissertation can be answered. Chapters 1 and 2 demonstrated that religious education has changed radically since it was first introduced to British schools. Chapter 3 demonstrated that, regardless of how religious education has changed over time, one factor remains constant. Pupils generally have a less positive attitude toward religious education than they do toward other subjects in the curriculum. The question that now needs to be addressed is, why do pupils choose to study a subject which is so unpopular when they no longer have to?

This study aims to establish why sixth-form (year 12 and year 13) students choose to study religion at A-level. Technically for many of these students it is not accurate to say that they are studying religion in a post-compulsory environment, as sixth-form students in schools are required to receive religious education. However, such students are certainly not legally required to study religion at A-level.

The starting points for operationalising the current empirical investigation lie in the literature reviewed in chapters 3, 4 and 5. Having established the research agenda in chapter 3, and developed the theory in chapter 4, it was possible to establish what was to be investigated in the current research. Chapter 5 introduced methodological concerns which serve to impose stringent standards on the research. Having established the information requirements and the methodological requirements, it is possible to explore the design of the research. First, the questionnaire design process is presented. Following this a description of the research process is provided.

Questionnaire design

This section describes the development and design of the questionnaire. The instrument employed is presented in this dissertation, as appendix 1.

All of the areas which were identified in chapter 3 of the current dissertation as being directly relevant to the current research will now be considered in terms of how they may be investigated via a questionnaire. The areas concerned are: personality, sex, religiosity, perceived legitimacy of aims in religious education, and although there is no empirical precedent for it, a section specifically on student motivation in choosing to study religion at A-level. Although the empirical rationale is lacking for this final area, it is apparent that there is a clear theoretical justification within the current research.

The brief outline of certain psychometric principles given above can be seen as being the measure against which certain psychological indices may be evaluated. The indices which were employed in the questionnaire in the current piece of research were evaluated in terms of their psychometric performance, and in terms of the way in which they could generate data that would enhance existing findings.

Chapter 4 included information on the three constructs which will be employed throughout the remainder of the dissertation as independent variables. These are, sex, personality and religiosity. Each of these constructs has been shown in chapter 3 to impact on attitude toward religious education. The purpose of the current investigation is, therefore, to investigate the impact that these areas have on specific sub-components of what might be considered to be attitude toward religious education: namely, motivation to study religion, interests in specific components of

religious studies and theology, perceptions of the aims of religious education, and support for pedagogical methods in religious education.

Independent variables

Sex

This is one of the few variables examined in the current research that might be investigated without much controversy or consideration. It is reasonable to assume that a vast majority of the sample can be accounted for as being either male or female. Therefore a simple closed question may be asked. The only potential areas of controversy in this assessment, aside from transsexuals, concern the questions relating to the relative predictive values of sex and gender as independent variables in this kind of analysis. However, this question is designed only to investigate sex. Gender is not specifically investigated by this index.

Personality

Chapter 4 introduced the theoretical debate concerning personality evaluation. This debate led to the selection of a modified form of the EPQR-A for the current research. The EPQR-A was modified in a manner consistent with previous research in personality (Ghorbani, Watson, Ghramaleki, Morris and Hood, 2000). The modified form of the EPQR-A is as acceptable as the original EPQR-A (Francis, Brown and Philipchalk, 1992) when evaluated in terms of the criteria presented by Smith, McCarthy and Anderson (2000).

The modified EPQR-A is a 24 item index measuring four aspects of personality. These are, psychoticism, neuroticism, extraversion and the lie scale. The 24 items are closed questions with the dichotomous response categories 'yes' and 'no'.

Religiosity

Unlike the other variables considered in this section, religiosity requires more than a single measure. Items were included in the questionnaire to investigate religious belief, public religious practice, private religious practice, religious affiliation and attitude toward religion.

Religious belief was examined in terms of belief in God. This is by no means a universally accepted marker of religiosity, however it is useful in the British context. The question was formatted as a closed question, allowing for three responses, 'yes' 'don't know' and 'no'. It is important to note that the data generated will illustrate only broad beliefs. It is not possible with such a simple question to investigate beliefs about the kind of entity that God might be.

Public religious practice was examined in terms of frequency of attendance at a place of worship. Although this is by no means a universally accepted marker of religiosity, it is useful in the British context. The question was formatted as a closed question, allowing for five responses ranging from 'never', through, 'once or twice a year', 'sometimes', and 'at least once a month', to 'at least once a week'.

Private religious practice was examined in terms of frequency of personal prayer. Although is by no means a universally accepted marker of religiosity, it is useful in the British context. The question was formatted as a closed question allowing for five responses ranging from 'never' through, 'once or twice a year', 'sometimes', 'at least once a week', and 'daily'.

Religious affiliation was examined via a pre-coded list accompanied by tick-boxes. The six 'principal religions represented in Great Britain' (SCAA, 1994a) are included, and the Christian

category is sub-divided to include the principal denominations represented in Great Britain. A section to specify other religious groups was also available. The design of this question represents an attempt to generate data that is easily coded, while not excluding any minority religious groups from meaningful response. Obviously it is not possible to have a pre-coded response category for every religious group represented in Great Britain, as this information is not available, and the groups are too numerous to list even if they were all known. These data help to generate the profile of the respondents, and will be used later in this chapter, although religious affiliation will not be used as an independent variable through the empirical chapters of this dissertation.

Religious attitude was examined via the Francis Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity. Although this is by no means a universally accepted marker of religiosity, it is useful in the British context. The current study employs the adult version of the scale. It is a 24 item Likert type scale. It is an unidimensional scale, measuring only attitude toward Christianity. There are five response categories for each of the 24 items ranging from 'agree strongly', through 'agree', 'not certain', and 'disagree' to 'disagree strongly'.

Dependant variables

These variables constitute the main focus of the dissertation. They rightly occupy the central role in this investigation. The participants were investigated in terms of their response to these dimensions. These dimensions were investigated in terms of the way that they were impacted by the variables listed in the previous section of this chapter.

Motivation to study religion

The items employed in the current study were developed through the course of two pilot studies.

First, focused interviews with A-level religious studies students, together with content analysis of 320 A-level religious studies students' responses to the open-ended question 'I decided to study religion at A-level because...' identified five main reasons for studying to subject (Francis, Fearn, Astley, and Wilcox, 1999). Second, these main reasons were explored through 33 Likert type statements ranging from 'agree strongly', through 'agree', 'not certain', and 'disagree' to 'disagree strongly' (Fearn, 1999). The data generated by these items is considered in chapter 7 of the current dissertation.

Interests in religious studies

The items employed in this part of study were extracted from a literature search of university prospectuses, websites and departmental handbooks. Every department of theology and/or religious studies, which has some sort of membership of the Association of University Departments of Theology and Religious Studies, was examined. A list of courses offered by these universities was generated. Each of these distinct areas of study was seen as a specific element in which participants could express an interest. Interest in each of these areas was expressed in terms of responses on a scale of 1 through 5.

Perceptions of the aims of religious education

The *Dimensions of Religious Education* as hypothesised by Astley will be used in this part of the research. These are short indices which investigate 11 aims through 44 items. The most directly recognisable influences on this inventory are the SCAA Model Syllabuses (School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 1994a, 1994b). Various aims were specified as being relevant for religious education.

Support for teaching methods in religious education

The way in which religious studies is taught is likely to impact on the reaction of students to it as a subject. The participants' response to different teaching methods was measured with 23 items. These items were generated from a literature review of professional resources in religious education. The usefulness of various methods was investigated on a 5 point scale.

Instrument

The various indices and individual items employed within the current research were presented in an A5 sized questionnaire booklet of 16 pages.

Understanding the sample

Response rate

Three examination associations that offer religious studies at A-level were contacted. Each association agreed to provide a list of all of the centres that had at any point entered candidates for their A-level religious studies examination. All of the schools and colleges named on the lists provided were contacted in order to take part in this research project. Initial enquiries revealed that 417 of these schools were suitable and potentially valuable to the current study. Of these schools 417 were approached formally and invited to take part in the current research. The schools were in the main located in England and Wales.

Of those invited to take part in the research, 140 agreed to take part. 1,830 questionnaires were sent to 140 different schools. Completed questionnaires were returned by 1,103 respondents. Thus the response rate, when calculated as the percentage of those questionnaires returned which had initially been sent, was, 60.3%.

Teachers in 79 of the schools chose to identify their school when returning the questionnaires. Thus, it is known that at least 56.4% of the schools involved in the research returned their completed questionnaires. However, a number of teachers chose not to identify their schools when returning the questionnaires. It may be the case that making provision for the anonymous return of the questionnaires was a device which enhanced the response rate. It clearly appealed to a certain proportion of the teachers whose help was sought in the current project. The likely benefits of personalisation and potential for anonymity within research materials were outlined earlier in the current chapter. Clearly an advantage of enhanced response rate needs to be balanced against the apparent disadvantage of not being able to document how many schools eventually returned completed questionnaires.

Sex

Of the sample 79.3% are female and 20.7% are male. There are substantially more females than males in the current sample. This is consistent with what is known about A-level religious studies students. It was shown in Chapter 3 that females hold generally more positive attitudes than males toward religious education. It is reasonable to assume that this accounts for such a sex imbalance.

Age

Twenty percent of the respondents were aged 16 years, 50% were aged 17 years, 29% were aged 18 years, and 2% were aged 19 years or over. This age profile is normal for this group of people. A-level qualifications are the traditional post-16 qualifications in England and Wales. Universities have, by and large, made entry to degree courses conditional upon certain A-level grades being achieved. The current changes that are being made to post-16 qualifications mean that A-levels are not the only set of qualifications that are represented in the post-16 educational environment

currently. They are still regarded as being the most traditionally academic of current post-16 qualifications. Regardless of the current changes in education it is certainly normal for the age profile of A-level students to be as described above. Due to the relatively small range of ages in the current sample, the age of the respondents is not a variable that is explored in any further depth in the current dissertation.

Religiosity

Of the sample 53% believe in the existence of God. A further 35% are agnostic. Only 12% reject a belief in God. The majority of the sample are Christians (62%). Thirty-two percent of the respondents assigned themselves no religious affiliation. Six percent of the respondents identified themselves as being members of non-Christian religious groups. Most of the respondents who identified themselves as being Christians were either Anglicans or Roman Catholics. Thirty-three percent of the respondents identified themselves as Anglicans and 14% identified themselves as being Roman Catholics.

In terms of their religious profile, the current sample of students seem in some ways to be representative of the wider United Kingdom population. However, in other ways the current sample are not typical of the religious profile of the United Kingdom as a whole. In terms of religious affiliation the current sample reflect a similar profile to the wider population. However, in terms of intensity of religious belief the current sample of religious studies students are more religious than the wider population. It was shown in Chapter 3 that religiosity is a predictor of positive attitudes toward religious education. It is reasonable to assume that this accounts for the higher levels of religiosity among the current sample.

The brief outlines presented above indicate that the current sample are indeed representative of the wider population, of which they comprise a specific subset. However, the current sample are distinct from the wider population. The differences between the current sample and the wider population, are differences that can be accounted for in terms of what is currently known about the distinctive features of the sub-population which is comprised of A-level religious studies students.

These data confirm that the current sample is similar to the wider population to the extent that a level of confidence in the current database may be generated. The sample is clearly representative. However, in key areas the current sample demonstrate that they differ from the wider population to the extent that they are a suitable group among which to assess the distinctiveness of A-level religious studies students in terms of their motivations and general profiles in various key areas.

Data analysis

The data were analysed with the SPSS software package. The frequency, reliability, Pearson correlation and multiple regression subroutines were employed. The properties of each scale are presented at relevant points in this dissertation.

Understanding the independent variables

The aim of this section is to establish the psychometric properties of the instruments employed in the research. This is a brief, yet essential, task which will facilitate discussion based around these instruments to take place in the following chapters.

It is the psychometric instruments themselves which are under investigation in the current chapter,

and not the participants of the research. The reliability of each of the scales will be presented alongside the corrected item-rest-of-test correlation. This will illustrate how the scales are functioning, and how the component items within each of the scales are functioning. This latter aim is complemented by the presentation of data which relate to the level of endorsement expressed for each item. When considered in conjunction with the corrected item-total correlation these data allow for the clear identification of specific items that do not function well in enhancing the credentials of the various scales in question.

With regard to dichotomous scales, item endorsement relates to the valid percentage of respondents who agreed with the item. Endorsement of the Likert type items is calculated on the basis of combining scores rated either 4 or 5, 'agree' or 'agree strongly', clearly both of these responses represent endorsement of items in question. The performance of the adapted EPQR-A will be considered, this will be followed by a consideration of form ASC4B

Personality

Adapted EPQR-A

Reliability

Table 6.1 Item-rest-of-test correlations and scale reliability psychoticism scale.

Item	r
Would being in debt worry you?	.2690
Would you take drugs that may have strange or dangerous effects?	.3701
Do you prefer to go your own way rather than act by the rules?	.4699
Do you think marriage is old fashioned and should be done away with?	.1237
Does it worry you if you know there are mistakes in your work?	.2385
Is it better to follow society's rules than go your own way?	.3961
Alpha	.5763

When administered to the current sample, the P scale of the EPQR-A achieved an alpha of .5763. During development, the six item P scale achieved an alpha of .5187 (Francis, Brown and Philipchalk, 1992). It may be asserted with some degree of confidence that the P scale, as deployed among the current sample has produced reliable data.

Table 6.2 Item-rest-of-test correlations and scale reliability extraversion scale.

Item	r
Are you a talkative person?	.5979
Are you rather lively?	.5905
Can you easily get life into a rather dull party?	.3695
Do you tend to keep in the background on social occasions?	.5748
Are you mostly quiet when you are with other people?	.5881
Do other people think of you as being very lively?	.5989
Alpha	.7929

When administered to the current sample, the E scale of the EPQR-A achieved an alpha of .7929. During development, the six item E scale achieved an alpha of .8238 (Francis, Brown and Philipchalk, 1992). The current level of internal reliability is satisfactory when evaluated in terms of the psychometric requisites of scales as established in chapter 5 of the current dissertation. It may be asserted with some degree of confidence that the E scale, as deployed among the current sample has produced reliable data.

When administered to the current sample, the N scale of the EPQR-A achieved an alpha of .6770. During development, the six item N scale achieved an alpha of .7659 (Francis, Brown and Philipchalk, 1992). The current level of internal reliability is satisfactory when evaluated in terms of the psychometric requisites of scales as established in chapter 5 of the current dissertation.

Table 6.3 Item-rest-of-test correlations and scale reliability neuroticism scale.

Item	r
Does your mood often go up and down?	.3677
Do you often feel 'fed up'?	.3799
Would you call yourself a nervous person?	.4408
Are you a worrier?	.4592
Do you suffer from nerves?	.4356
Do you often feel lonely?	.3560
Alpha	.6770

It may be asserted with some degree of confidence that the N scale, as deployed among the current sample has produced reliable data.

Table 6.4 Item-rest-of-test correlations and scale reliability lie scale

Lie	r
Were you ever greedy by helping yourself to more than your fair share of anything?	.3461
Have you ever blamed someone for doing something you knew was really your fault?	.3423
Have you ever taken anything (even a pin or a button) that belonged to someone else?	.3537
Have you ever cheated at a game?	.4102
Have you ever taken advantage of someone?	.4018
Do you always practice what you preach?	.2079
Alpha	.6097

When administered to the current sample, the L scale of the EPQR-A achieved an alpha of .6097. During development, the six item L scale achieved an alpha of .6257 (Francis, Brown and Philipchalk, 1992). The current level of internal reliability is satisfactory when evaluated in terms of the psychometric requisites of scales as established in chapter 5 of the current dissertation. It may be asserted with some degree of confidence that the L scale, as deployed among the current sample has produced reliable data.

Having presented the reliability data for the four personality scales, it remains to investigate the levels of item endorsement achieved by the items within each scale.

Item endorsement

Table 6.5 Level of item endorsement for items within the psychoticism scale.

Item	%
Would being in debt worry you?	13
Would you take drugs that may have strange or dangerous effects?	24
Do you prefer to go your own way rather than act by the rules?	56
Do you think marriage is old fashioned and should be done away with?	9
Does it worry you if you know there are mistakes in your work?	30
Is it better to follow society's rules than go your own way?	61

It is shown in Tables 6.5 that the items within the P scale of the EPQR-A are generally able to discriminate between respondents appropriately. However, One item 'Do you think marriage is old fashioned and should be done away with?' is endorsed by only 9% of the respondents. This indicates that this item may not be functioning well among the current sample. This note of caution becomes more sharply focussed when read alongside the item-rest-of-test data presented in table 6.1. These data may single this out as being a weak item as deployed among the current sample.

Table 6.6 Level of item endorsement for items within the extraversion scale.

Item	%
Are you a talkative person?	78
Are you rather lively?	83
Can you easily get life into a rather dull party?	46
Do you tend to keep in the background on social occasions?	73
Are you mostly quiet when you are with other people?	78
Do other people think of you as being very lively?	72

It is shown in Tables 6.6 that the items within the E scale of the EPQR-A are generally able to discriminate between respondents appropriately. There are no items that are endorsed by less than 10%, or more than 90% of the respondents.

Table 6.7 Level of item endorsement for items within the neuroticism scale.

Item	%
Does your mood often go up and down?	78
Do you often feel 'fed up'?	74
Would you call yourself a nervous person?	39
Are you a worrier?	68
Do you suffer from nerves?	42
Do you often feel lonely?	40

It is shown in Tables 6.5 that the items within the N scale of the EPQR-A are generally able to discriminate between respondents appropriately. There are no items that are endorsed by less than 10%, or more than 90% of the respondents.

Table 6.8 Level of item endorsement for items within the lie scale.

Item	%
Were you ever greedy by helping yourself to more than your fair share of anything?	31
Have you ever blamed someone for doing something you knew was really your fault?	28
Have you ever taken anything (even a pin or a button) that belonged to someone else?	22
Have you ever cheated at a game?	22
Have you ever taken advantage of someone?	43
Do you always practice what you preach?	26

It is shown in Tables 6.5 that the items within the P scale of the EPQR-A are generally able to discriminate between respondents appropriately. There are no items that are endorsed by less than 10%, or more than 90% of the respondents.

Religiosity

Scale of Attitude toward Christianity

Reliability

When administered to the current sample, the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity (ASC4B) achieved an alpha of .9671. During development, the 24 item scale achieved an alpha of .9683 (Francis and Stubbs, 1987). The current level of internal reliability is clearly satisfactory when evaluated in terms of the psychometric requisites of scales as established in chapter 5 of the current dissertation. It may be asserted with some degree of confidence that data generated via an application of this scale among the current sample has produced reliable data.

As the alpha for the current scale is so high, it is appropriate to consider a warning issued by Kline (1993), who suggested that 'if all the items are highly consistent they must be highly correlated and the test will be necessarily narrow and specific and thus not valid.' This charge, if it is true must be seen to impair the usefulness of the scale of attitude toward Christianity.

However, it seems as if Kline (1993) was conflating necessity and possibility. A more pragmatic view would allow that if all items are highly correlated then the test *may* be narrow and specific although that is by no means certain. As established in chapter 4 of the current dissertation, The Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity is built around five distinct concepts, namely God, Jesus, bible prayer and church. The criticism outlined by Kline (1993) seems, therefore, not to be seriously detrimental to the current scale.

Table 6.9 Scale properties of form ASC4B

Item	r
I find it boring to listen to the bible*	.4796
I know that Jesus helps me	.8176
Saying prayers helps me a lot	.8483
The church is very important to me	.7747
I think going to church is a waste of my time*	.6324
I want to love Jesus	.8030
I think church services are boring*	.3853
I think people who pray are stupid*	.3385
Gods helps me to lead a better life	.8637
I like to learn about God very much	.6455
God means a lot to me	.8859
I believe that God helps people	.7650
Prayer helps me a lot	.8557
I know that Jesus is very close to me	.8585
I think praying is a good thing	.7186
I think the bible is out of date*	.4469
I believe that God listens to prayers	.8246
Jesus doesn't mean anything to me*	.7273
God is very real to me	.8294
I think saying prayers does no good*	.6680
The idea of God means much to me	.8137
I believe Jesus still helps people	.7705
I know that God helps me	.8792
I find it hard to believe in God*	.7357
alpha	.9671

* These items were reverse coded in order to calculate reliability.

Item Endorsement

The data provided above (table 6.9) may be further explored when considered alongside data pertaining to item endorsement. In the following table an item is considered to be endorsed by the

participant if the participant either 'agreed' or 'agreed strongly' with the item.

Table 6.10 Item endorsement for components in the Scale of attitude toward Christianity.

Item	%
I find it boring to listen to the bible	26.2
I know that Jesus helps me	24.9
Saying prayers helps me a lot	31.6
The church is very important to me	23.1
I think going to church is a waste of my time	19.7
I want to love Jesus	27.7
I think church services are boring	37.5
I think people who pray are stupid	2.6
Gods helps me to lead a better life	32.3
I like to learn about God very much	49.4
God means a lot to me	39.0
I believe that God helps people	56.2
Prayer helps me a lot	32.5
I know that Jesus is very close to me	23.5
I think praying is a good thing	58.1
I think the bible is out of date	21.0
I believe that God listens to prayers	40.6
Jesus doesn't mean anything to me	20.3
God is very real to me	37.4
I think saying prayers does no good	10.8
The idea of God means much to me	43.7
I believe Jesus still helps people	38.0
I know that God helps me	34.3
I find it hard to believe in God	37.7

This is a presentation of raw data and negatively scored items have not been reverse coded for the purpose of this table.

Table 6.10 confirms, what may already be suspected about items which generate a high level of internal reliability, that the vast majority of the items within the scale are readily able to discriminate between subjects. The weakest item in this regard is 'I think people who pray are stupid'. This is an item with which only 2.6% of the current participants felt that they could agree. Clearly this must be seen to call into question the ability to discriminate between individuals who display differences in terms of their mean scale of attitude toward Christianity score. Table 6.9 confirms that it is also this item which generates the lowest item-rest-of-test correlation score. This is the least satisfactory item in the scale. However, due to the high level of religious literacy of the participants who comprise the current sample, it is not surprising that they do not support items which reflect a prejudiced opinion.

This brief consideration, although important to understand how the scales function, should not be seen overwhelmingly as a distraction from what has already been established. The scale functions with a high level of internal reliability and one weak item does not in any way invalidate the scale.

Conclusion

It has been demonstrated that the scales employed within the current research all function appropriately when applied among the current participants. The evaluation criteria as established in chapter 5 of the current dissertation have generally been met by the scales which are evaluated through the course of the current chapter. Data pertaining to sex, personality, and attitude toward Christianity are reported in chapters 7-10 of the current dissertation in terms of the impact that they each have on the dependent variables in question.

Chapter 7

Motivation of A-level students for studying religion

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Introduction

In assessing the motivation of students for choosing to study religion at A-level, an obvious approach is to examine the students' perceptions of their own motivations. To that end, this chapter examines the responses generated by the application of a series of Likert type motivational statements concerned with reasons for choosing to study religion at A-level. The possible responses range from disagree strongly, through disagree, not certain, and agree, to agree strongly. Initially a response profile is generated. Frequencies are presented for each statement. Participants who either agree or agree strongly with each statement are shown to agree. Participants who either disagree or disagree strongly are shown to disagree.

Following this initial response profile, consideration is given to the antecedents of different motivations across a range of areas. Attention is focussed specifically on the impact of sex, religiosity and personality.

The items are examined in seven distinct clusters. These clusters are concerned with related motivations, although it is not appropriate to consider these clusters to be scales, designed to evaluate specific themes. The items were not designed to act as component parts of scales. The analyses presented through the course of this chapter will focus on the individual items. These categories reflect motivations based on the 'religious studies approach to the discipline', motivations based on the influence of other people, 'confessional' motivations, motivations based around future intentions, pragmatic motivations, personal motivations and subject specific motivations.

Item endorsement

This part of the chapter outlines the level of support that each of the motivational statements received when deployed among the current participants. The different items have been grouped together to reflect broadly similar categories in terms of motivation. The descriptions of the levels of item-endorsement will now be presented for each of the seven clusters of items.

Item endorsement and motivations based on the 'religious studies approach'

Table 7.1.1 Item endorsement for items reflecting the 'religious studies' approach.

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
I am interested in studying religion	87	8	5
I want to learn more about other people's religious beliefs	77	12	11
I want to be able to make informed decisions about religious issues	70	18	12
I recognise that religions are important enough to be studied carefully	68	20	13
I want to be able to understand atheists	39	28	33

Table 7.1.1 shows the level of item endorsement for those items which are considered to reflect broadly the 'religious studies' approach to the study of religion. It is clear that this group of items was relatively well endorsed by the respondents. Four of the five items received support from a majority of the respondents. None of the items received dissent from a majority of the respondents. The item which is least well endorsed within this group is also the item which sits least well theoretically with the other items in the group.

The data show that 87% of the respondents cited interest as being one of the reasons for their decision to study religion at A-level. By itself, this information is of little practical value to religious educators. As interest in the subject is rejected by only 5% of the respondents, it is clearly a major motivating factor. However, this level of endorsement is also a potential problem.

The item does not effectively discriminate between different respondents. Interest in religious studies is so important that it cannot be overlooked, yet, its near universal appeal means that this item reveals little about the nature of the respondents who endorse this item. For these reasons this item is effectively complemented by chapter 8, which contains an in-depth analysis of the different levels of interest shown by students across a range of subjects in the field of religious studies.

Item endorsement and motivations based on other people

Table 7.1.2 Item endorsement for items reflecting motivations based upon other people

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
A member of the RE staff suggested that I ought to take it	36	16	48
Others who have studied it have recommended it to me	43	18	39
I was advised to do so by a careers officer	11	11	78
My friends decided that they were going to	5	6	90
My parents wanted me to study religion	5	9	86
I was advised to by my priest/pastor/vicar	3	4	93

Table 7.1.2 contains data which relate to the influence of other people in motivating A-level students to study religion at A-level. Over a third of the participants acknowledge that their decision to study religion at A-level was based on advice received from subject teachers. In view of the minority status of the subject, this finding is encouraging for two reasons. First, it demonstrates that teachers are willing to make such suggestions, rather than remain passive in relation to recruitment issues. Second, it shows that students are willing to listen to and act on such advice. Caution should be exercised with regard to this finding, as it is not possible within the confines of the current research to identify the proportion of students who were advised to study religion at A-level by a teacher, yet who chose not to do so.

The item within this cluster which received the most support related to the recommendation of others who had studied religion at A-level. Forty-three percent of the participants claimed that they had been motivated to study religion by other people who had studied the subject. This is interesting for a variety of reasons. First, students generally have a negative attitude toward religious studies, yet it would appear that those with experience of the subject are willing to recommend it to other people. It may be the case that some of the prejudice relating to religious studies can be overcome by experience of the subject, or by direct the recommendation of people with direct evidence of the subject.

The role of the careers service in shaping the intentions of students should not be underestimated. Only 11% of the participants reported that they had been advised to study religion at A-level by a careers officer. Clearly, careers officers offer advice in response to the interests and strengths of the students. Further analysis of this item will help to identify the kind of student most likely to receive such advice from the careers service.

The influence of the peer group was shown to be of relatively little importance in the decisions of many of the participants. As many as 90% disagreed with the suggestion that their decision to study religion at A-level was motivated by the fact that their friends had decided to do so. Religious studies is not a subject that benefits from peer-group relations in recruitment terms. It seems that in disregarding peer pressure religious studies students show a reasonable level of maturity in their decision to study religion at A-level.

Only 5% of the respondents agreed that their parents wanted them to study religion at A-level. This figure raises questions and allows a certain amount of speculation. It is clear that parents are

not being pro-active in their support for their sons or daughters choosing to study religion at A-level. However, what is not known is how these parents perceive the subject. Religious studies has, as shown in chapter 1 of the current dissertation, changed radically over the past few decades. The perceptions of parents may not reflect the reality of the situation. Further research may be needed into the way in which the subject is perceived generally, rather than simply among those who have been exposed recently to religious studies and religious education.

The item which received the least support from the respondents was concerned with advice from a minister of religion. The secularisation of religious studies seems to have been perceived in relation to this item. Clergy may see it as none of their business to offer educational advice to any of the members of their church. Even when offering such advice does seem appropriate, it may be the case that religious studies, as currently conceptualised, seems to many ministers of religion to be irrelevant to religious development.

Item endorsement and 'confessional' motivations

Table 7.1.3 Item endorsement for items reflecting the 'confessional' approach

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
I wish to develop a positive attitude toward religion	50	26	24
I want to learn more about God	48	26	26
I want to develop my own religious beliefs	31	19	50
I want to be helped with the intellectual challenges to my faith	29	26	45
I feel that it will be spiritually beneficial for me	25	24	51
I am looking to adopt a set of beliefs to guide me	12	23	66

Despite the official move away from confessional aims in religious studies, it remains the case that a certain segment of the student population is attracted to the subject by a series of motivations

that are broadly confessional. Half of the participants agreed that they were motivated to study religion at A-level in order to develop a positive attitude toward religion. This may not be a confessional outcome in the traditional sense of the word, but neither is it an educational outcome in the traditional sense of the word. If a positive attitude toward religion is considered to be an aspect of religiosity, then it may be argued that this is an outcome which is traditionally confessional. However, even if it is not accepted that a positive attitude toward religion is an aspect of religiosity, then it remains that the outcome requires, at least, an affective shift. Such a shift is not presupposed in the study of religion at A-level.

Nearly a half of the participants indicated that the desire to learn more about God was a motivating factor in their decision to study religion at A-level. This statement clearly presupposes a belief in the existence of God. Religious studies as it is currently conceived does not presuppose belief in the existence of God. Clearly this situation seems to raise questions about the identity of the subject, while it ought to be open to those without a belief in God, it is also seen by nearly a half of the participants as a method of learning about God. With two seemingly incompatible statements about the nature of religious studies, there is a danger that the two competing ideas relating to the subject will serve to weaken any semblance of identity that the subject currently has. It may be the case that some kind of demarcation needs to take place in order that the two competing identities are allowed to thrive independently of each other.

Nearly a third of the respondents agreed that they were motivated to study religion at A-level because they want to develop their own religious beliefs. Clearly, personal religious development is supported again by a number of the participants. Once more, this represents an area of ambiguity in terms of the way that the subject is conceptualised. Religious studies as a secular

subject ought to be concerned with developing an understanding of religion, rather than developing religious beliefs. However, it may be the case that some of the participants are asserting that their faith will be deepened through acquiring a greater understanding of their religion, or perhaps even of other religions. The objective academic study of religion may, in this sense, lead to a greater understanding and appreciation of religion. In turn this may lead to the development of religious beliefs.

Almost a third of the participants agreed that they were motivated to study religion at A-level as they wanted to be helped with the intellectual challenges to their faith. Clearly an academic discipline which focuses on religious subject matter has the potential to help students to develop their academic understanding of their religion. This suggests that secular and confessional motivations may not mutually exclude each other. The secular academic approach may be an effective complement to certain confessional aims.

A quarter of the respondents agreed that they had been motivated to study religion because they felt that it would be spiritually beneficial for them. There is a variety of different ways in which the respondents may define spiritual benefits. It may be that spirituality is seen as a part of religiosity. The view that studying religion at A-level could bring about spiritual benefits would then be seen as being a confessional religious motivation to study religion. However, it may be the case that the spirituality is seen by the respondents as being unrelated to religiosity, at least in the traditional sense. The perceived spiritual benefits of studying religion at A-level can be seen as being either a traditional confessional aim, or a secular self-improvement aim. Regardless of how spirituality is defined, this motivation has an emphasis on self-development, which is separate from the traditional development associated with academic study.

Just over a tenth of the participants agreed that they were motivated to study religion at A-level because they were looking for a set of beliefs to guide them. This is the item within this cluster which gained the least amount of support from the respondents. It may be suggested that many of the participants already had a set of beliefs to guide them, indeed it has been shown that they show generally higher levels of religiosity than would be expected. Students who already have a set of religious beliefs, are those who are less likely to require a new set. This motivation may be important to those who endorse it, although they are relatively few in number.

The data provided in table 7.1.3 suggest two potentially conflicting findings. First, it may be argued that a subgroup exists within the sample who see A-level religious studies as being a means of developing their knowledge of God and their religious beliefs. Second, it is shown that a subgroup exists within the sample who see A-level religious studies as being a means of providing a firm intellectually based evaluation of particular religious traditions. In the following sections of the current chapter a profile will emerge of the respondents who support a faith based view of religious studies. This profile will allow a discussion as to the likely advantages and disadvantages of the emergence of two distinct kinds of religious studies, faith based and secular.

Item endorsement and motivations based on future intentions

Table 7.1.4 Item endorsement for items reflecting future intentions

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
I think that it will be useful for the kind of job that I am looking for	33	29	38
I want to study religion at degree level	19	25	56
I intend to seek ordination	4	14	82

Table 7.1.4 presents data relating to the series of motivations concerned with future intentions. Some of the participants decided to study religion at A-level because they saw it as a means of

gaining something to which they aspire in the future. Only a third of the participants (33%) agree with the assertion that they think A-level religious studies will be useful for the kind of job that they are looking for.

Religious studies is clearly not a vocational A-level, but it ought to be a cause for concern that so few people who have chosen to study religion at A-level believe that it will be useful in an occupational setting. There are clear marketing implications in this discovery. Students, and potential students need to be made aware of the skills which are promoted by A-level religious studies, and need to be made aware of the value placed upon such skills in the workplace.

Only one fifth (19%) agreed that they decided to study religion at A-level as a route into a degree course in the area of religion. This is of interest for two reasons. First, it shows that there is a subsection of the current sample who may be profiled in order to discover something of the future of the subject in terms of undergraduate programmes. Those who have shown a willingness to study religion in a post-compulsory setting are the focus of this study, but, it is possible to learn more from a profile of the group who see further study of religion as a part of their motivation. Second, it may show that many A-level students are unaware that generally, A-level religious studies is not necessarily a pre-requisite for entry onto a degree course in the area of religion. But, this is not necessarily the case, and as such, this comment should be interpreted cautiously.

Only one twenty-fifth (4%) of the participants agreed that they decided to study religion at A-level as they intend to seek ordination. A-level religious studies may be seen as the most appropriate A-level for anyone considering a religious vocation. It is difficult to see, however, how the subject as it is currently conceived can be of any special relevance to such individuals.

A clear marketing strategy across the discipline is needed. It is essential that students' ideas relating to the relevance of religious studies in the job-market, are challenged. Students in further education need to be made aware of opportunities in higher education. It may be the case that for many people, religious studies is of no use in the job market, and only useful as a stepping-stone into a higher education course in religion.

Item endorsement and pragmatic motivations

Table 7.1.5 Item endorsement for items reflecting pragmatic motivation

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
I needed to take a third A-level	16	10	73
I really do not know why I decided to study religion	14	21	65
It was the only subject that I could fit into my timetable	7	7	86
I do not feel as if I had a choice in the matter	4	5	91

Not all of the participants felt that they had chosen freely to study religion at A-level. Around one sixth of the respondents (16%) agreed that they chose to study religion because they needed to take a third A-level. Traditionally, in United Kingdom universities offers of places are based on grades acquired in three subjects. Some students who would otherwise be studying only two A-levels have clearly resorted to religious studies as a way of boosting the numbers.

Around one seventh of the participants (14%) claim to not know why they decided to study religion at A-level. This group are interesting as they are not able to reveal anything about their overt motivations. A thorough profile of this group will allow certain features to be identified which may reveal more about those students who do not know why they chose to study religion at A-level.

Around one participant in fourteen (7%) claimed that religious studies was the only subject that they could fit into their timetable. This response may be related to the first in the cluster. The pressure to take on a third subject may be frustrated by the specific timetable quirks in particular schools and colleges. Certain subject options may bring about other subject compulsions.

Item endorsement and personal motivations

Table 7.1.6 Item endorsement for items reflecting personal motivations

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
I like the RE staff at my school/college	64	20	16
I wish to justify my negative attitude toward religion	17	20	64
I feel that I ought to study religion/theology	14	21	65

Table 7.1.6 presents the data concerned with various personal motivations to study religion at A-level. Nearly two thirds (63%) of the respondents suggested that they were motivated to study religion at A-level as they like the religious studies staff in the school or college. This is clearly different to liking the subject itself.

Religious studies is seen by just under a fifth (17%) of the participants as being related to personal belief, but not in the same way that the different confessional items were. There is a group of students who see religious studies as being a subject which can help them to understand and articulate their dissatisfaction with various expressions of religiosity. This may not be considered to be confessional in the sense of the earlier items, as it is not assumed that an affective change is the desired outcome.

One respondent in seven (14%) agreed that they decided to study religion at A-level because they felt that they ought to. While this motive tells us very little in isolation, further analysis will

provide a profile of the kind of people who choose to study religion at A-level due to feeling that they ought to. Although the lack of definition in the item might be considered to be a problem, it is the profile of the respondents which is of specific value.

Item endorsement and subject specific motivations

Table 7.1.7 Item endorsement for items reflecting subject specific motivations

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
It was a subject that I was good at, at GCSE level	68	8	24
I thought that it was going to be a challenging option	57	24	20
It complements the other subjects that I am doing	52	19	29
I thought that it was going to be an easy option	12	12	76

Table 7.1.7 presents the data concerned with subject specific motivations for studying religion at A-level. Previous success in religious studies is shown to be an important motivation for students deciding to study religion at A-level. Over two-thirds (68%) of the respondents agreed that they had decided to study religion at A-level because it was a subject that they were good at, at GCSE level. The respondents provided no data relating to GCSE religious studies. The perception of success at that level cannot be verified and must be seen as being a subjective measure. Rather than examining success in religious studies at GCSE level, this item examines perceived success at GCSE level. The numbers of students choosing to study religion at GCSE level, either as a full course, or as a short course is increasing with the vast expansion of the short course options. There is a clear potential for expansion in A-level religious studies if more young people perceive that they have had some success at GCSE level. This is an ideal opportunity, yet it carries with it a warning. Recruitment into the subject will only benefit if students perceive success. The short course must, therefore, receive the resources that it needs to be taught well. Students must be convinced of the value of succeeding at the short course, and be enabled to succeed. In this way

they will be able to perceive success, which may have a positive impact on A-level recruitment.

Over half (57%) of the students chose to study religion at A-level because they thought that it would be a challenging option. This supports the assertion that religious studies is currently considered to have the academic rigour that was seen to be lacking in the past. This is further supported by the data which suggest that only one tenth (12%) of the participants thought that the subject was going to be an easy option.

Over a half of the participants (52%) agreed that they were motivated to study religion as it was seen to complement their other subjects. Data were not collected relating to the other subjects which were followed by the participants. This finding will be used alongside the independent variables established in chapter 5 of the dissertation, rather than against a list of subjects studied. This will allow the respondents to be profiled, and not the subject itself.

Sex and motivation to study religion at A-level

Chapter 3 established sex as a significant predictor of attitude toward religious studies. The purpose of the following analyses is to explore specifically the impact of sex on students' motivations in religious studies. This task is essential in understanding the motivation of A-level students for studying religion. It is known that females outnumber males in terms of candidature for A-level religious studies. What is not known is whether males and females are motivated to pursue the subject in a fundamentally different way to one another.

Sex and motivations based on the 'religious studies approach'

Table 7.2.1 sex difference in response to items contained in cluster 1: items reflecting the 'religious studies' approach

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
I am interested in studying religion	4.69	0.94	4.47	1.16	2.53	NS
I want to learn more about other people's religious beliefs	4.43	1.23	3.88	1.59	4.75	.001
I want to be able to make informed decisions about religious issues	4.18	1.39	4.09	1.40	0.87	NS
I recognise that religions are important enough to be studied carefully	4.15	1.37	3.88	1.55	2.32	NS
I want to be able to understand atheists	3.11	1.70	3.19	1.68	-0.65	NS

Table 7.2.1 presents data concerned with sex differences in the cluster of motivations concerned with the 'religious studies' approach to the discipline. The first item of interest within the table relates to sex differences and motivation based on an interest in religious studies. The absence of a significant association here is of interest. Females have been shown in chapter 3 to be more supportive of religious education, yet this does not translate into motivation based on a higher level of interest. This information will be complemented by data provided in chapter 8 of the current dissertation which focuses on levels of interest in different areas of the field.

The second point of interest to emerge in this cluster relates to motivation based on the desire to learn more about the religious beliefs of other people. It is shown that females are more likely than males to want to learn about the religious beliefs of other people ($t=4.75$, $p<.001$). This finding is important as it focuses a sex difference in one of the main areas of relevance to the current investigation. The current emphasis on the study of religions, rather than the nurture of religion, implies the study of religious beliefs of others, rather than an emphasis on the religion of the self. Females are shown as being more likely to have accepted this as being a motivating factor in their

decision to study religion at A-level, whereas males display a lower level of support for this item.

The current model of religious studies at A-level may be less able to recruit males.

Sex and motivations based on other people

Table 7.2.2 sex difference in response to items contained in cluster 2: items reflecting motivations based upon other people

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
A member of the RE staff suggested that I ought to take it	2.77	1.83	2.69	1.79	0.59	NS
Others who have studied it have recommended it to me	3.12	1.82	2.86	1.78	1.89	NS
I was advised to do so by a careers officer	1.67	1.33	1.54	1.22	1.28	NS
My friends decided that they were going to	1.29	0.94	1.39	1.03	-1.38	NS
My parents wanted me to study religion	1.37	1.00	1.39	0.99	-0.21	NS
I was advised to by my priest/pastor/vicar	1.19	0.75	1.24	0.81	-0.93	NS

Table 7.2.2 presents data concerned with sex differences in the cluster of items concerned with motivations based on the influence of other people. It is shown that no significant sex differences emerge in relation to motivations to study religion at A-level based on other people.

Sex and 'confessional' motivations

Table 7.2.3 sex difference in response to items contained in cluster 3: items reflecting the 'confessional' approach

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
I wish to develop a positive attitude toward religion	3.59	1.61	3.29	1.70	2.41	NS
I want to learn more about God	3.45	1.65	3.41	1.74	0.29	NS
I want to develop my own religious beliefs	2.60	1.75	2.62	1.77	-0.16	NS
I want to be helped with the intellectual challenges to my faith	2.74	1.67	2.74	1.76	0.62	NS
I feel that it will be spiritually beneficial for me	2.44	1.65	2.66	1.71	-1.72	NS
I am looking to adopt a set of beliefs to guide me	1.85	1.33	2.17	1.56	-2.67	.01

Table 7.2.3 presents data concerned with sex differences in the cluster of motivations reflecting the 'confessional' approach to the subject. It is shown that only one significant sex difference emerges within this cluster of items. Males are significantly more likely than females to choose to study religion at A-level because they are looking for a set of beliefs to guide them ($t=2.67$, $p<.01$). This shows that males are likely to enter into the study of religion with the assumption that the subject will enable them to focus and develop their own religious beliefs.

Sex and motivations based on future intentions

Table 7.2.4 sex difference in response to items contained in cluster 4: items reflecting future intentions

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
I think that it will be useful for the kind of job that I am looking for	2.97	1.70	2.70	1.63	2.01	NS
I want to study religion at degree level	2.26	1.57	2.34	1.57	-0.66	NS
I intend to seek ordination	1.43	1.01	1.51	1.06	-1.09	NS

Table 7.2.4 presents data concerned with sex differences in the cluster of motivations reflecting the future intentions. It is shown that females and males are not significantly different to each other in terms of their responses to these items.

Sex and pragmatic motivations

Table 7.2.5 sex difference in response to items contained in cluster 5: items reflecting pragmatic motivations

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
I needed to take a third A-level	1.80	1.48	2.10	1.64	-2.36	NS
I really do not know why I decided to study religion	1.82	1.42	1.91	1.50	-0.83	NS
It was the only subject that I could fit into my timetable	1.41	1.10	1.42	1.08	-0.11	NS
I do not feel as if I had a choice in the matter	1.25	0.86	1.40	1.09	-1.90	NS

Table 7.2.5 presents data concerned with sex differences in the cluster of motivations reflecting pragmatic reasons to study religion at A-level. Despite the fact that males are under-represented in A-level religious studies classes, it may be seen as a positive point that they are no more likely than females to have chosen to study religion at A-level for pragmatic reasons.

Sex and personal motivations

Table 7.2.6 sex difference in response to items contained in cluster 6: items reflecting personal motivations

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
I like the RE staff at my school/college	3.97	1.50	3.83	1.56	1.17	NS
I wish to justify my negative attitude toward religion	2.00	1.50	2.26	1.60	-2.23	NS
I feel that I ought to study religion/ theology	1.90	1.41	2.23	1.53	-2.85	.01

Table 7.2.6 presents data concerned with sex differences in the cluster of motivations reflecting personal reasons to study religion at A-level. Males are more likely than females to study religion at A-level because they feel that they ought to ($t=2.85$, $p<.01$). Whereas males in general seem to have little sense of duty toward studying religion, it seems that of those who do make the choice to pursue the subject, there is a clear sense in which they show more commitment than the females.

Sex and subject specific motivations

Table 7.2.7 sex difference in response to items contained in cluster 7: items reflecting subject specific motivations

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
It was a subject that I was good at, at GCSE level	3.96	1.68	3.53	1.80	3.12	.01
I thought that it was going to be a challenging option	3.75	1.58	3.68	1.63	0.55	NS
It complements the other subjects that I am doing	3.48	1.75	3.42	1.73	0.48	NS
I thought that it was going to be an easy option	1.62	1.27	2.12	1.67	-4.07	.001

Table 7.2.7 presents data concerned with sex differences in the cluster of motivations reflecting subject specific reasons for choosing to study religion at A-level. The findings generated by two of these items are quite remarkable. Whereas the females are significantly more likely than the males to consider that they were good at religious studies at GCSE level ($t=3.12$, $p<.01$), the males are significantly more likely to consider that they thought religious studies was going to be easy at A-level ($t=4.07$, $p<.001$). While the females have demonstrated to their own satisfaction that they have achieved success in religious studies, the males, without the confidence of this track record, feel that the A-level is going to be an easy option.

Personality and motivation to study religion at A-level

Chapter 3 established personality as a significant predictor of attitude toward religious studies. The purpose of the following analyses is to explore specifically the impact of personality on students' motivations in religious studies. This task is essential in understanding the motivation of A-level students for studying religion.

Personality and motivations based on the 'religious studies approach'

Table 7.3.1 Correlations personality the items contained within cluster 1: items reflecting the 'religious studies' approach

Item	P	E	N	L
I am interested in studying religion	-.0965 .01	-.0378 NS	-.0202 NS	.0477 NS
I want to learn more about other people's religious beliefs	-.0475 NS	.0431 NS	-.0008 NS	.0211 NS
I want to be able to make informed decisions about religious issues	.0166 NS	.0555 NS	-.0033 NS	.0034 NS
I recognise that religions are important enough to be studied carefully	-.0651 NS	.0087 NS	.0396 NS	.0431 NS
I want to be able to understand atheists	-.0610 NS	.0279 NS	.0144 NS	.0418 NS

Table 7.3.1 presents data concerned with the relationship between personality and the first cluster

of motivations, those concerned with the 'religious studies approach' to the discipline. Only one of the items within this cluster is shown to be significantly related to personality. The item representing interest in the subject was shown to be negatively associated with psychoticism ($r = -.0965$, $p < .01$). Psychoticism therefore is inversely related to interest in the subject. This finding is of particular relevance to chapter 10 of the current dissertation and will receive further consideration there. None of the remaining items were found to be significantly associated with scores on the personality scales.

Personality and motivations based on other people

Table 7.3.2 Correlations between personality and the items contained within cluster 2: items reflecting motivations based upon other people

Item	P	E	N	L
A member of the RE staff suggested that I ought to take it	-.0513 NS	.1464 .001	.0208 NS	-.0109 NS
Others who have studied it have recommended it to me	-.0633 NS	.1281 .001	.0722 NS	-.0463 NS
I was advised to do so by a careers officer	-.0926 .01	.0045 NS	.0592 NS	.0213 NS
My friends decided that they were going to	.0664 NS	.0194 NS	.0409 NS	-.0204 NS
My parents wanted me to study religion	-.0307 NS	-.0055 NS	.0942 .01	.0073 NS
I was advised to by my priest/pastor/ vicar	.0556 NS	.0590 NS	.0655 NS	-.0247 NS

Table 7.3.2 presents data concerned with the relationship between personality and the second cluster of motivations, those concerned with the influence of other people in their decision to study religion. It is shown that the recommendations of RE staff and of other people who have studied the subject are more likely to influence individuals scoring highly on extraversion ($r = .1464$, $p < .001$; $r = .1281$, $p < .001$). It may be the case that individuals scoring highly on extraversion are more likely to discuss their educational intentions with others, than those who are low scorers on the extraversion scale. Neither of the other aspects of personality impact on these two items.

Personality was shown to impact on the way in which careers officers advised students with regard to the study of religion, or, the extent to which the students followed such advice when it was offered. It would appear that high scorers on psychoticism are less likely to choose to study religion because they were advised to do so by a careers officer ($r=-.0926$, $p<.01$). This finding is consistent with the view that those who score high on psychoticism are less likely to take much notice of what other people think.

Personality is shown to be independent of the decision to study religion because of friendships. None of the personality dimensions were shown to impact on responses to this item. This pattern was repeated with reference to the item concerned with advice received from clergy.

The decision to study religion at A-level in response to parental desire was shown to be related to neuroticism scores ($r=.0942$, $p<.01$). It may be the case that high scorers on the neuroticism scale are the least likely to risk making the kind of mistake which may follow from ignoring parental advice.

Personality and 'confessional' motivations

Table 7.3.3 presents data concerned with the relationship between personality and the third cluster of motivations, those concerned with confessional motives. It is shown that the desire to develop a positive attitude toward religion is negatively associated with psychoticism ($r=-.1032$, $p<.001$), and positively associated with neuroticism ($r=.0950$, $p<.01$). This item is not shown to be significantly associated with extraversion or lie scale scores.

Table 7.3.3 Correlations between personality and the items contained within cluster 3: items reflecting the 'confessional' approach

Item	P	E	N	L
I wish to develop a positive attitude toward religion	-.1032 .001	.0380 NS	.0950 .01	.0177 NS
I want to learn more about God	-.1370 .001	.0463 NS	.0892 .01	-.0088 NS
I want to develop my own religious beliefs	-.0859 .01	.0351 NS	.0109 NS	.0439 NS
I want to be helped with the intellectual challenges to my faith	-.0534 NS	.0379 NS	.0075 NS	-.0191 NS
I feel that it will be spiritually beneficial for me	-.0600 NS	.0526 NS	.0295 NS	.0315 NS
I am looking to adopt a set of beliefs to guide me	.0015 NS	-.0140 NS	.1102 .001	.0328 NS

This pattern of relationships remains consistent with regard to the second item in this cluster. The desire to learn more about God was shown to be negatively associated with psychoticism ($r = -.1370$, $p < .001$), and positively associated with neuroticism ($r = .0892$, $p < .01$). Motivation based on the desire to learn more about God is shown to be unrelated to either extraversion or lie scale scores.

Further to this, psychoticism is negatively associated with the desire to develop own religious beliefs ($r = -.0859$, $p < .01$), and neuroticism is positively associated with motivation based on the search for a set of guiding beliefs ($r = .1102$, $p < .001$). Each of the remaining items is shown to be unrelated to personality. This pattern suggests two theoretically viable conclusions. The negative association between psychoticism and religiosity is well charted. The inverse relationship between psychoticism scores and items conceptually related to confessional motivations to study religion is consistent with existing research.

Much debate has surrounded the link between religiosity and neuroticism. It has been suggested

that religiosity may be associated with higher, or with lower levels of neuroticism. Some of the confessional motivations to study religion at A-level are shown to be significantly associated with neuroticism. The desire to learn more about God, develop a positive attitude toward religion, and to adopt a set of beliefs, are all associated with neuroticism. It may be that more can be learned about the relationship between neuroticism and religiosity, by examining those who want to develop a set of beliefs, rather than those who actually hold them.

Personality and motivations based on future intentions

Table 7.3.4 Correlations between personality and the items contained within cluster 4: items reflecting future intentions

Item	P	E	N	L
I think that it will be useful for the kind of job that I am looking for	-.0803 NS	.0493 NS	.0006 NS	.0137 NS
I want to study religion at degree level	-.0271 NS	-.0033 NS	.0386 NS	-.0262 NS
I intend to seek ordination	-.0031 NS	.0714 NS	.0349 NS	-.0455 NS

Table 7.3.4 shows the relationship between personality and items contained within the fourth cluster, items reflecting future intentions. It is shown that personality is unrelated to motivation to study religion at A-level based on future educational and vocational intentions.

Personality and pragmatic motivations

Table 7.3.5 Correlations between personality and the items contained within cluster 5: items reflecting pragmatic motivations

Item	P	E	N	L
I needed to take a third A-level	.1225 .001	-.0253 NS	.0371 NS	-.0095 NS
I really do not know why I decided to study religion	.1057 .001	.0027 NS	-.0161 NS	.0191 NS
It was the only subject that I could fit into my timetable	.0823 .01	.0103 NS	-.0126 NS	.0084 NS
I do not feel as if I had a choice in the matter	.1012 .001	.0056 NS	.0351 NS	-.0137 NS

Table 7.3.5 shows the relationship between personality and the fifth cluster, items concerned with pragmatic motivations for studying religion at A-level. These motivations represent, to some extent the absence of a choice in studying religion at A-level. These motivations, therefore, may be seen to be supported by the students who do not feel that religious studies was a subject that they would have freely chosen to study.

The first item in this cluster reflects the need to take a third A-level. This item is significantly associated with psychoticism scores ($r=.1225$, $p<.001$) and unrelated to extraversion, neuroticism, or lie scale scores.

The second item in this cluster is concerned with those participants who agree that they do not know why they decided to study religion at A-level. This item is positively associated with psychoticism scores ($r=.1057$, $p<.001$) and unrelated to extraversion, neuroticism, or lie scale scores.

The third item allowed respondents to indicate that religious studies was the only subject that they could fit into their timetables. This item was positively associated with psychoticism ($r=.0823$, $p<.01$) and unrelated to extraversion, neuroticism, or lie scale scores.

The final item reflected the extent to which the respondents felt that they had a choice in their decision to study religion at A-level. This item was positively associated with psychoticism ($r=.1012$, $p<.001$) and unrelated to extraversion, neuroticism, or lie scale scores.

Through each of the items, it is shown that psychoticism is the aspect of personality which is

associated with pragmatic reasons to study religion at A-level. This is consistent with existing theory which sees psychoticism as underlying attitude toward religious education. Furthermore, this also reflects the tendency of high scorers on the psychoticism scale as being consistent with pragmatic tough-minded attitudes.

Personality and personal motivations

Table 7.3.6 Correlations between personality and the items contained within cluster 6: items reflecting personal motivations

Item	P	E	N	L
I like the RE staff at my school/college	-.0587 NS	.1001 .01	.0621 NS	.0311 NS
I wish to justify my negative attitude toward religion	.1713 .001	.0447 NS	-.0229 NS	-.0072 NS
I feel that I ought to study religion/theology	-.0003 NS	-.0082 NS	.0933 .01	.0091 NS

Table 7.3.6 shows the relationship between personality and the sixth cluster, items concerned with personal motivations for studying religion at A-level. This cluster may be seen to contain items which are theoretically diffuse. The first item relates to a personal liking of the religious education staff within the school or college. This motivation is theoretically associated with sociability. It is shown to be significantly associated with extraversion ($r=.1001$, $p<.01$) and unrelated to either psychoticism, neuroticism and lie scale scores.

The second item is concerned with the justification of a negative attitude toward religion. Existing research has shown psychoticism to be the dimension of personality fundamental to individual differences in religiosity. It is shown that the current data support this consensus. Agreement with the second item is shown to be positively associated with psychoticism, ($r=.1713$, $p<.001$), and unrelated to neuroticism, extraversion, or lie scale scores.

The final item concerns the feeling that one ought to study religion or theology. This item is positively associated with neuroticism ($r=.0933$, $p<.01$) and unrelated to psychoticism, extraversion, or lie scale scores.

Personality and subject specific motivations

Table 7.3.7 Correlations between personality and the items contained within cluster 7: items reflecting subject specific motivations

Item	P	E	N	L
It was a subject that I was good at, at GCSE level	-.1019 .001	.0127 NS	-.0161 NS	-.0045 NS
I thought that it was going to be a challenging option	-.0123 NS	.0590 NS	-.0058 NS	-.0201 NS
It complements the other subjects that I am doing	.0034 NS	-.0349 NS	.0156 NS	-.0056 NS
I thought that it was going to be an easy option	.1311 .001	-.0159 NS	.0207 NS	-.0906 .01

Table 7.3.7 shows the relationship between personality and the seventh cluster, items concerned with subject specific motivations for studying religion at A-level. This cluster of items may be seen to contain items which explore theoretically diffuse items. The first item within this cluster is concerned with perceived success at GCSE level in religious studies. It is shown that this item is negatively associated with psychoticism ($r=-.1019$, $p<.001$) and unrelated to extraversion, neuroticism, or lie scale scores.

The second item in this cluster is concerned with students' perceptions of religious studies as a challenging option. It is shown that such perceptions are unrelated to personality. The third item is concerned with A-level religious studies as effectively complementing the other subjects followed by the student, this item was also shown to be unrelated to personality.

The final item in this cluster is concerned with the perception of A-level religious studies as being

an easy option. This item was shown to be positively associated with psychoticism ($r=.1311$, $p<.001$) and negatively associated with lie scale scores ($r=-.0906$, $p<.01$). This item was shown to be unrelated to either neuroticism or extraversion. It is interesting to note that high scorers on psychoticism are significantly less likely than others to agree that they have no established record of success in religious studies (good religious studies at GCSE level), yet they also agree that they thought that the A-level was going to be an easy option. The inverse relationship between lie scale scores and the perception of religious studies as being an easy option suggests that there may be a tendency for the more acquiescent respondents to report consistently with the notion that religious studies enjoys the same academic rigour as other subjects.

Religiosity and motivation to study religion at A-level

Chapter 3 established religiosity as a significant predictor of attitude toward religious education. The purpose of the following analyses is to explore specifically the impact of religiosity on students' motivations for studying religion at A-level. It is known that religiosity impacts on attitude toward religious education. This is the case if religiosity is examined in terms of belief in the existence of God (Francis and Kay, 1995), frequency of church attendance (Francis and Kay, 1995; Francis and Lewis, 1996, and Francis, 2001), religious affiliation (Francis and Lewis, 1996), or frequency of personal prayer (Francis and Lewis, 1996). What is not known is whether religious students are motivated to study the subject in different ways to non-religious students. It is also not known whether different expressions of religiosity impact motivations in different ways. The following analyses explore the notions that religiosity impacts on students' motivations in the study of religion, and that different aspects of religiosity impact motivations differently.

Religiosity and motivations based on the 'religious studies approach'

Table 7.4.1 Correlations between four markers of religiosity and the items contained within cluster 1: items reflecting the 'religious studies' approach

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
I am interested in studying religion	.1919 .001	.0915 .01	.1261 .001	.1293 .001
I want to learn more about other people's religious beliefs	.0155 NS	-.0598 NS	-.0392 NS	-.0265 NS
I want to be able to make informed decisions about religious issues	.0516 NS	.0429 NS	.0298 NS	-.0189 NS
I recognise that religions are important enough to be studied carefully	.2122 .001	.1044 .001	.1107 .001	.1107 .001
I want to be able to understand atheists	.1256 .001	.1094 .001	.0830 .01	.0797 NS

Table 7.4.1 presents data concerned with the relationship between religiosity and the first cluster of motivations, those concerned with the 'religious studies approach' to the discipline. Interest in studying religion is shown to be positively associated with each of the four markers of religiosity. Scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.1919$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.1261$, $p<.001$), intensity of belief in the existence of God ($r=.1293$, $p<.001$) and Church attendance ($r=.0915$, $p<.01$) are shown to be significant predictors of interest in studying religion.

Whereas a clear link has been established between religiosity and interest in studying religion, no relationship is shown between religiosity and the desire to learn more about the religious beliefs of other people. Attention is focused on the relationship between religiosity and different areas of interest within the discipline in chapter 8 of the current dissertation.

The data show that no relationship is established between religiosity and the desire to make informed decisions about religious issues. None of the four dimensions of religiosity was shown to be associated with this item. It may be the case that religious young people feel that they have

sufficient religious literacy to make informed decisions about religious issues and people based on their own experiences of religiosity.

Religiosity, across each of the four dimensions, is shown to be associated with the perception of religions as being important enough to be studied carefully. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.2122$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.1044$, $p<.001$), prayer ($r=.1107$, $p<.001$) and extent of belief in the existence of God ($r=.1107$, $p<.001$) are all significant at the .001 level. Clearly religious people consider religion to be a serious matter, and for this reason, they are interested in studying religion at A-level.

The final item in this cluster relates to the desire to understand atheists. It is shown that this item is positively associated with three of the four dimensions of religiosity, although interestingly, not belief. This item was significantly associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.1256$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.1094$, $p<.01$) and frequency of prayer ($r=.0830$, $p<.001$).

Religiosity and motivations based on other people

Table 7.4.2 presents data concerned with the relationship between religiosity and the second cluster of motivations, those concerned with the influence of other people. It is shown that certain aspects of religiosity are inversely related to motivations based on recommendation of members of the RE staff. Both scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity and belief in the existence of God were found to be unrelated to assent to this item, whereas frequency of church attendance ($r=-.0818$, $p<.01$) and prayer ($r=-.0800$, $p<.01$) are negatively associated with motivation to study religion based on the recommendation of teachers.

Table 7.4.2 Correlations between four markers of religiosity and the items contained within cluster 2: items reflecting motivations based upon other people

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
A member of the RE staff suggested that I ought to take it	-.0427 NS	-.0818 .01	-.0800 .01	-.0629 NS
Others who have studied it have recommended it to me	.0901 .01	.0481 NS	.0383 NS	.0933 .01
I was advised to do so by a careers officer	.0221 NS	-.0156 NS	.0158 NS	.0238 NS
My friends decided that they were going to	-.0029 NS	-.0316 NS	-.0148 NS	-.0076 NS
My parents wanted me to study religion	.1116 .001	.0852 .01	.0626 NS	.0975 .01
I was advised to by my priest/pastor/ vicar	.1040 .001	.0646 NS	.0799 NS	.0580 NS

It may be the case that practising religious students, study religion for their own reasons rather than on the recommendation of their teachers.

The second item in this cluster is concerned with motivations based on the recommendation of others who had studied the subject. It is shown that two of the dimensions of religiosity were shown to be associated with this item. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.0901$, $p<.01$) and belief in the existence of God ($r=.0933$, $p<.01$) are associated with scores on this item. People who hold religious beliefs and positive affective dispositions toward religions are likely to decide to study religion at A-level due to the influence of others who have studied the subject.

The influence of religiosity is not shown to be related to the motivation to study religion based on the advice of careers officers. Whereas this item was shown to be associated with personality, it is shown to be independent of religiosity. It is also shown that the influence of friends in choosing to study religion at A-level was not significantly associated with any of the four markers of

religiosity.

The fifth item in this cluster relates to the influence of parents in the decision to study religion at A-level. It is shown that the decision to study religion based on parental desire is linked to three of the four aspects of religiosity. Agreement with this item was positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.1116$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.0852$, $p<.01$) and belief in the existence of God ($r=.0975$, $p<.01$). The relationship between this item and frequency of prayer fails to achieve significance at the .01 level.

The final item in this cluster relates to advice received from a minister of religion. It is shown that advice received from a priest, pastor or vicar is significantly related to only one of the four aspects of religiosity. This item is positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.1040$, $p<.001$), and fails to achieve significance with either frequency of church attendance, frequency of prayer, or belief in the existence of God.

Religiosity and 'confessional' motivations

Table 7.4.3 Correlations between four markers of religiosity and the items contained within cluster 3: items reflecting the 'confessional' approach

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
I wish to develop a positive attitude toward religion	.1710 .001	.0654 NS	.1064 .001	.1208 .001
I want to learn more about God	.4708 .001	.2614 .001	.3345 .001	.3407 .001
I want to develop my own religious beliefs	.4484 .001	.2814 .001	.3793 .001	.3685 .001
I want to be helped with the intellectual challenges to my faith	.4500 .001	.3335 .001	.4051 .001	.3764 .001
I feel that it will be spiritually beneficial for me	.3392 .001	.2083 .001	.2599 .001	.2224 .001
I am looking to adopt a set of beliefs to guide me	.2052 .001	.1224 .001	.1557 .001	.2014 .001

Table 7.4.3 presents data concerned with the relationship between religiosity and the third cluster of motivations, those concerned with the 'confessional' approach to religious education. This area is, theoretically, one of the most important areas in this investigation. One of the aims established at the outset of this dissertation was to establish whether there was a subset of religious students who chose to study religion at A-level in order to experience an A-level which allows them to develop religiously. These 'confessional' aims are not a part of the current professional understanding of religious education. The following analyses explore the extent to which this aspect of the current professional understanding maps onto the current understanding of the students who choose to study religion at A-level.

The desire to develop a more positive attitude toward religion is shown to be positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.1720$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.1064$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.1208$, $p<.001$). This item is not shown to be significantly associated with frequency of church attendance. It is interesting to note that a high score on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity is associated with the desire to develop a positive attitude toward religion. This may serve as an example of religious young people seeing religious studies as an opportunity to become more religious.

The second item in this cluster is concerned with the desire to learn more about God. This item presupposes the existence of God, and ought therefore to be associated with religiosity. It is shown that each of the four markers of religiosity are positively associated with this item at the .001 level. The desire to learn more about God is shown to be positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.4708$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.2614$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.3345$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God

($r=.3407$, $p<.001$). Religiosity is clearly associated with the desire to learn more about God.

The third item in this cluster is concerned with the desire to develop beliefs held. The desire of students to develop their own religious beliefs is associated with each of the four aspects of religiosity. This item is positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.4484$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.2814$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.3793$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.3685$, $p<.001$). Religiosity is clearly associated with the students' desire to learn more about their own beliefs.

The fourth item in this cluster is concerned with the desire to be helped with intellectual challenges to faith. The desire among students to be helped with the intellectual challenges to their faith is positively associated with each of the four aspects of religiosity. This item is positively associated with scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity ($r=.4500$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.3335$, $p<.001$), prayer ($r=.4051$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.3764$, $p<.001$).

The fifth item in this cluster concerns the potential for religious studies to be spiritually beneficial. Agreement with the suggestion that religious studies is likely to be of spiritual benefit is shown to be associated with each of the four markers of religiosity. This item is shown to be positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.3392$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.2083$, $p<.001$), prayer ($r=.2599$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.2224$, $p<.001$).

The final item in this cluster relates to the desire of students to adopt a set of beliefs to guide them.

Agreement with the suggestion that students chose to study religion because they were looking for a set of beliefs to guide them was shown to be positively associated with each of the four aspects of religiosity. This item is shown to be positively associated with scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity ($r=.2052$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.1224$, $p<.001$), prayer ($r=.1557$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.2014$, $p<.001$).

It has been established through each of the items in this cluster that the students who are motivated to study religion for confessional reasons are those students who are themselves more religious. Each of the markers of religiosity is shown to be associated with confessional motivations to study the subject. The hypothesis that there exists a sub-section in the A-level student cohort who are religious, and who desire a confessionally based A-level is supported by these data.

Religiosity and motivations based on future intentions

Table 7.4.4 Correlations between four markers of religiosity and the items contained within cluster 4: items reflecting future intentions

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
I think that it will be useful for the kind of job that I am looking for	.0880 .01	.0594 NS	.0401 NS	.0649 NS
I want to study religion at degree level	.1372 .001	.0877 .01	.1096 .001	.0996 .001
I intend to seek ordination	.1209 .001	.0343 NS	.0735 NS	.1037 .001

Table 7.4.4 presents data concerned with the relationship between religiosity and the fourth cluster of motivations, those concerned with future intentions. The first item concerns student perceptions as to whether they think that A-level religious studies will be useful for the kind of job that they would like. This item is shown to be related to only one of the four aspects of religiosity. Only scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are shown to be positively associated with the perception that A-level religious studies will be useful for the kind of job which will be

sought ($r=.0880$, $p<.01$).

The second item in this cluster concerns the intention to study religion at degree level. The intention to study religion at degree level is shown to be significantly associated with each of the four markers of religiosity. This item is positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.1372$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.0877$, $p<.01$), prayer ($r=.1096$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.0996$, $p<.001$).

The final item in this cluster is concerned with the future intention to seek ordination. It is shown that this item is associated with only two of the four markers of religiosity, scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity ($r=.1209$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.1037$, $p<.001$). This motivation is, by its nature, likely to attract only those young people who are religiously committed.

Among this cluster, the item of most interest for educators, is the item concerned with the intention to study religion at degree level. It is shown that the current sample are more religious than the population norms. It is also shown that within this specific population, the desire to study religion at degree level is significantly associated with each of the four aspects of religiosity. Clearly the religious profile of the likely customer base is something which course providers in the university sector ought to consider carefully.

Religiosity and pragmatic motivations

Table 7.4.5 presents data concerned with the relationship between religiosity and the fifth cluster of motivations, those concerned with pragmatic reasons for studying religion at A-level. The first

item in this cluster relates to the need to take a third A-level.

Table 7.4.5 Correlations between four markers of religiosity and the items contained within cluster 5: items reflecting pragmatic motivations

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
I needed to take a third A-level	-.0655 NS	-.0899 .01	-.0619 NS	-.0223 NS
I really do not know why I decided to study religion	-.1371 .001	-.1028 .001	-.1067 .001	-.0781 NS
It was the only subject that I could fit into my timetable	-.0265 NS	-.0783 NS	-.0388 NS	.0039 NS
I do not feel as if I had a choice in the matter	-.0032 NS	.0057 NS	-.0004 NS	.0073 NS

It is shown that only one aspect of religiosity is significantly related to this item. Frequency of church attendance is shown to be negatively associated with motivation based on the need to take a third A-level ($r = -.0899$, $p < .01$). Young church attenders are likely to feel that they have reasons, other than the need to take a third A-level, to study religion at A-level.

The second item in this cluster examines the notion that some of the candidates may not actually know why they decided to study religion at A-level. It is shown that this item is negatively associated with three of the four markers of religiosity. Students' inability to identify a motivation for choosing to study religion at A-level is shown to be negatively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r = -.1371$, $p < .001$), frequency of church attendance ($r = -.1028$, $p < .001$) and prayer ($r = -.1067$, $p < .001$). Religious students are more likely than their irreligious colleagues know why it is that they are studying religion.

Neither of the remaining two items in this cluster were shown to be significantly associated with any of the four aspects of religiosity. It is shown that there is a tendency for the religious students to make a choice to study religion at A-level for a reason that they themselves understand.

Religiosity and personal motivations

Table 7.4.6 Correlations between four markers of religiosity and the items contained within cluster 6: items reflecting personal motivations

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
I like the RE staff at my school/college	.0810 .01	-.0075 NS	.0035 NS	.0455 NS
I wish to justify my negative attitude toward religion	-.3639 .001	-.2877 .001	-.2828 .001	-.3124 .001
I feel that I ought to study religion/theology	.1384 .001	.1179 .001	.1332 .001	.1250 .001

Table 7.4.6 presents data concerned with the relationship between religiosity and the sixth cluster of motivations, those concerned with personal reasons for studying religion at A-level. The first item in this cluster concerns the students' liking of the teachers of religious education in their school/college. Only one of the aspects of religiosity was shown to be significantly associated with this item. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are significantly associated with the motivation to study religion at A-level based upon a liking of the teachers responsible for the subject ($r=.0810$, $p<.01$).

The second item in this cluster investigates the extent to which students decided to study religion in order to justify a negative attitude. Theoretically, it ought to be students who score low on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity, who rate this item most highly. It is shown that each of the four aspects of religiosity are negatively associated with this item. The desire to justify a negative attitude toward religion is negatively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=-.3639$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=-.2877$, $p<.001$), prayer ($r=-.2828$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=-.3124$, $p<.001$). These data are of interest for two reasons. First, it contributes to the validity of the measures of religiosity through generating significant negative relationships with an item which is specifically anti-religious.

Second, it contributes an understanding to the way in which religious students are likely to be hostile to an approach to religious studies which they consider to be hostile to their faith.

The final item in this cluster is concerned with the feeling that one ought to study religion. This item is shown to be positively associated with each of the four aspects of religiosity. Motivations based on the students' feelings that they ought to study religion/theology were shown to be positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.1384$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.1179$, $p<.001$), prayer ($r=.1332$, $p<.001$) and belief in the existence of God ($r=.1250$, $p<.001$). It is clear that there are a number of young religious people who, for some reason, feel that they ought to study religion.

Religiosity and subject specific motivations

Table 7.4.7 Correlations between four markers of religiosity and the items contained within cluster 7: items reflecting subject specific motivations

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
It was a subject that I was good at, at GCSE level	.0528 NS	.0496 NS	.0182 NS	.0473 NS
I thought that it was going to be a challenging option	.0940 .01	.1007 .001	.0410 NS	.0427 NS
It complements the other subjects that I am doing	-.0125 NS	-.0189 NS	-.0052 NS	.0122 NS
I thought that it was going to be an easy option	-.0509 NS	-.0235 NS	-.0243 NS	-.0056 NS

Table 7.4.7 presents data concerned with the relationship between religiosity and the seventh cluster of motivations, those concerned with subject specific reasons for studying religion at A-level. The first item concerns perceived success at GCSE level. It is shown that this item is independent of religiosity. Religious students within the sample are neither more, nor less likely to decide to study religion at A-level because they feel that they were good at the subject at GCSE level.

The second item in this cluster is concerned with the perception of religious studies as a challenging option. This item is positively associated with two of the four aspects of religiosity. Motivation to study religion based on expectations of a challenging subject were positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.0940$, $p<.01$), and frequency of church attendance ($r=.1007$, $p<.001$). This suggests that young churchgoers are likely to study religion at A-level because they expect it to be a challenging subject.

The third item in this cluster relates to religious studies effectively complementing other subjects studied. It is shown that this item is unrelated to each of the four aspects of religiosity. Religious students are neither more, nor less likely to choose to study religion at A-level because they see it as an effective complement to the other subjects that they intended to choose.

The final item in this cluster is concerned with the perception of religious studies as an easy option. It is shown that this item is unrelated to each of the four aspects of religiosity. Religious students are neither more, nor less likely to decide to study religion at A-level because they thought that it would be an easy option. Religious studies as a subject is not seen by religious students as being a subject which affords them any particular advantage.

Conclusions

Various conclusions may be drawn from the data presented in this chapter. It is shown that the battery of items employed to investigate student motivations functions in a way which generates variety of response. The items discriminate between different respondents. The variety of responses is able to demonstrate why different sub-groups within the sample chose to study religion at A-level. Sex, personality and religiosity are all shown to impact on motivation to study

religion at A-level. Certain key findings presented earlier in the chapter will be presented in order to sharpen this assertion, and to trace further conclusions.

Religious studies approach

This approach to the subject was shown to be popular among the respondents, but also related to certain characteristics of some of the respondents. This approach was exemplified by such items as 'I am interested in studying religion': 87% of the respondents agreed with this item. This high level of support raised two questions. What were the characteristics of those who agreed with this assertion and, in which aspects of religion were the respondents interested? The first question was pursued within the current chapter, while the second question was deferred to chapter 8.

Interest in the study of religion was shown to be unrelated to sex. Females amongst the current sample are no more interested in studying religion than males. This finding is inconsistent with the findings of earlier research, and will be examined in greater detail in chapter 8 of the current dissertation.

Interest in the study of religion was shown to be negatively associated with psychoticism ($r = -.0965$, $p < .01$). This finding extends theoretical work (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1974) in Eysenckian personality, which sees religiosity as being a tender-minded social attribute, and empirical work (Francis and Pearson, 1985a; Francis, 1992c), which sees psychoticism as being fundamental to individual differences in religiosity, by demonstrating that the personality profile of interest in the study of religion is similar to that of religiosity. It may be the case that in terms of psychometric profile the decision to study religion at A-level is similar to that of an expression of religiosity.

Interest in the study of religion was shown to be positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.1919$, $p<.01$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.0915$, $p<.01$), frequency of prayer ($r=.1261$, $p<.001$) and extent of belief in the existence of God ($r=.1293$, $p<.001$). Religiosity has been shown to impact on attitude toward religious education (Francis and Lewis, 1996), the data presented in this chapter extend this finding more generally to interest in studying religion.

The religious studies approach is also examined through the item 'I want to learn more about other people's religious beliefs'. This item is supported by 77% of the respondents. Once more this item receives more support among females than among males ($t=4.75$, $p<.001$). This item remains unrelated to personality and each of the aspects of religiosity. This finding builds on the gender profile of religious education which was developed by Archer and Macrae (1991). They found that religious education was considered to be feminine, and that feminine subjects were perceived to be about people. Religious studies, it seems, is a subject which may be about other people, and this aspect of the subject is of more interest to females than to males.

The 'religious studies approach' is an approach that interests a majority of A-level students, and appeals more to females. This is important as most of the sample are female. This finding may illuminate why so few males are choosing to study religion at A-level.

The influence of other people

Of all the items in this cluster none was endorsed by more than a half of all the respondents. Among the items within this cluster, the influence of religious studies teachers was investigated. It was shown that there was no significant relationship between either sex or religiosity and

motivation based on advice to study religion at A-level from religious studies teachers. The sex imbalance among A-level religious studies candidates is not brought about by teachers.

Confessional outcomes

Despite the official status of religious studies, there are some students who are motivated to study religion by confessional perceptions. Forty-eight percent of the respondents want to learn more about God. Support for this item was shown to be unrelated to sex. This is contrary to the expectation that females would show greater levels of support for this item due to their increased levels of religiosity (Beit -Hallahmi and Argyle, 1997). The males among the current sample thus display certain characteristics expected of females. They may be seen as being atypical of males in the general population.

Endorsement of this item was shown to be negatively associated with psychoticism ($r = -.1370$, $p < .001$), and positively associated with neuroticism ($r = .0950$, $p < .01$). The negative association with psychoticism is consistent with what is known theoretically and empirically about the relationship between psychoticism and religiosity. Interest in learning more about God may be seen as bearing a similar profile to that of religiosity, at least as far as psychoticism is concerned. The significant association between this item and neuroticism is empirically and theoretically unusual.

Future intentions

It was shown that only a minority (33%) of the respondents considered that A-level religious studies would be useful for the kind of job that they want. Students need to be made aware of the value of religious studies. Support for this item was shown to be unrelated to sex or personality.

Support for this item was shown to be associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.0880$, $p<.01$). Students with a more positive attitude toward religion, also see greater future value in religious studies.

Pragmatic motivations

It was shown that pragmatic motivations to study religion at A-level were supported by a small minority of the students, with item endorsement ranging between 4% and 16%. Only 4% of the respondents asserted that they did not choose freely to study religion at A-level. This item was negatively associated with frequency of church attendance ($r=-.0899$, $p<.01$). Each of the items was unrelated to personality. These findings begin to illustrate a profile of negative attitude toward religion. The absence of a significant association between these items and psychoticism and sex is surprising. This profile of a negative attitude toward religiosity being expressed through religious studies was sharpened further in the section investigating personal motivations.

Personal motivations

There exist certain factors which are personal to the students. Certain students see religious studies as equipping them to justify a negative attitude toward religion. This item was endorsed by only 17% of the respondents, was positively associated with psychoticism ($r=.1713$, $p<.001$) and negatively associated with religiosity (scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity, $r=-.3639$, $p<.001$; frequency of church attendance, $r=-.2877$, $p<.001$; frequency of prayer, $r=-.2828$, $p<.001$, and extent of belief in the existence of God, $r=-.3124$, $p<.001$). This profile is consistent with rejection of religion, and negative attitude toward religious education. Whereas the current sample are more religious than the wider population, those individuals who are not religious may have substantially different motivations and expectations to those who are religious. Once more

the absence of a sex difference with regard to this item is surprising.

Subject specific motivations

Perceived success at GCSE is a motivation to study religion at A-level for 68% of the respondents. Clearly the expansion of GCSE religious studies, and the development of GCSE short courses in religious education represent opportunities for more pupils to gain an experience of religious subjects in the context of public examinations. If the increase in opportunity leads to an increase in the number of pupils who consider themselves successful at GCSE level, then this may motivate more students to study religion at A-level. Females are more likely to feel that they were successful at GCSE than males ($t=3.12$, $p<.01$). This perception was shown to be negatively associated with psychoticism ($r=-.1019$, $p<.001$) and unrelated to religiosity.

Chapter 8

Levels of interest in religious studies

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Introduction

Chapter 7 of the current dissertation presented data which demonstrated that 87% of the participants chose to study religion because they were interested in studying religion. This item, functioning alone provides little insight into the interests of the respondents. The current chapter explores, in greater depth, the levels of interest recorded by the respondents in different areas of the subject field.

The chapter opens with an exploration of the scales employed in order to investigate levels of interest across different areas of the subject field. The reliabilities of the different scales are examined. This is followed by an investigation of the levels of item endorsement generated across the sample of respondents.

Having shown that the scales function reliably, and having explored the levels of item endorsement across a range of subjects, the chapter proceeds to investigate the impact that sex exerts on students' interests in religious studies. Initially the impact of sex differences on the various scales is examined. Following this, the impact of sex differences on the various items within the scales is investigated.

Following the investigation of the impact of sex on levels of interest in different areas of religious studies, attention is focused on the impact of personality. The impact of personality on levels of interest in different areas of religious studies is explored. First, attention focuses on the impact of personality on the different scales, following which, attention focuses on the component items within the scales.

The impact of religiosity on levels of interest in different areas of the curriculum is the feature of the next part of the chapter. Each of the four markers of religiosity are explored in terms of their impact on the different scales which represent interests in different areas within the subject field. Following this, the different component parts of the scales are investigated in terms of their relationship to religiosity.

Having explored the impact that sex, personality and religiosity have on levels of interest in different areas of the subject field, it is appropriate to examine the relative impact of each of these independent variables. A series of multiple regression tests is presented in order to establish the relative importance of each of these predictors. The items are examined first in terms of their coherence as scale components, and then in terms of the levels of item endorsement.

From a basic understanding that 87% of the respondents are interested in studying religion, this chapter enhances this conclusion. The current chapter has effectively profiled the different levels of interest that different respondents have in different areas of the subject field.

Scale reliabilities

Before employing the current scales in order to investigate the areas central to this dissertation, it is necessary to show that the scales are functioning adequately and to produce a general profile of responses. The reliabilities of the scales are the key indicators as to whether or not the scales are functioning correctly. Following this presentation of data relating to reliability is an exploration of item endorsement.

Table 8.1.1 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 1: interest in studying Buddhism

Item	r
Buddhism	.8321
Buddhist scriptures	.7182
Buddhist beliefs	.8334
Buddhist history	.7588
Buddhist ethics	.7666
Buddhist art and culture	.7103
alpha	.9190

Table 8.1.2 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 2: interest in studying Christianity

Item	r
Christianity as a world faith	.6881
Christian scriptures	.7133
Christian beliefs	.7517
Christian history	.6950
Christian ethics	.6215
Christian art and culture	.5069
alpha	.8651

Table 8.1.3 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 3: interest in studying Hinduism

Item	r
Hinduism	.8043
Hindu scriptures	.7585
Hindu beliefs	.8151
Hindu history	.7738
Hindu ethics	.7352
Hindu art and culture	.6912
alpha	.9150

Table 8.1.4 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 4: interest in studying Jainism

Item	r
Jainism	.7934
Jain scriptures	.7549
Jain beliefs	.8172
Jain history	.7980
Jain ethics	.7332
Jain art and culture	.7364
alpha	.9185

Table 8.1.5 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 5: interest in studying Judaism

Item	r
Judaism	.7480
Jewish scriptures	.7191
Jewish beliefs	.8123
Jewish history	.7597
Jewish ethics	.7097
Jewish art and culture	.6532
alpha	.9023

Table 8.1.6 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 6: interest in studying Islam

Item	r
Islam	.8022
Islamic scriptures	.7630
Islamic beliefs	.8354
Islamic history	.7802
Islamic ethics	.7604
Islamic art and culture	.6761
alpha	.9184

Table 8.1.7 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 7: interest in studying Sikhism

Item	r
Sikhism	.7913
Sikh scriptures	.7476
Sikh beliefs	.8258
Sikh history	.7718
Sikh ethics	.7353
Sikh art and culture	.6773
alpha	.9125

Table 8.1.8 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 8: interest in studying perspectives in the study of religion.

Item	r
Anthropology of religion	.5257
Philosophy of religion	.6279
Psychology of religion	.7397
Sociology of religion	.7160
alpha	.8231

Table 8.1.9 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 9: interest in studying languages in religious studies.

Item	r
Greek	.7470
Hebrew	.7777
Latin	.7626
Arabic	.7835
Sanskrit	.7813
Pali	.7146
alpha	.9142

Table 8.1.10 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 10: interest in studying world religions.

Item	r
Buddhism	.5858
Christianity as a world faith	.2086
Hinduism	.7517
Jainism	.6248
Judaism	.6220
Islam	.6205
Sikhism	.7586
alpha	.8378

Table 8.1.11 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 11: interest in studying religious scriptures

Item	r
Buddhist scriptures	.6117
Christian scriptures	.3255
Hindu scriptures	.7489
Jain scriptures	.6839
Jewish scriptures	.6499
Islamic scriptures	.6536
Sikh scriptures	.7555
alpha	.8562

Table 8.1.12 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 12: interest in studying religious beliefs

Item	r
Buddhist beliefs	.6207
Christian beliefs	.2815
Hindu beliefs	.7972
Jain beliefs	.7436
Jewish beliefs	.6847
Islamic beliefs	.7072
Sikh beliefs	.8064
alpha	.8773

Table 8.1.13 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 13: interest in studying religious history

Item	r
Buddhist history	.6824
Christian history	.3900
Hindu history	.8118
Jain history	.7395
Jewish history	.6730
Islamic history	.7110
Sikh history	.8008
alpha	.8871

Table 8.1.14 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 14: interest in studying religious ethics

Item	r
Buddhist ethics	.6946
Christian ethics	.4410
Hindu ethics	.8348
Jain ethics	.8122
Jewish ethics	.7353
Islamic ethics	.7140
Sikh ethics	.8407
alpha	.9078

Table 8.1.15 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 15: interest in studying religious art and culture.

Item	r
Buddhist art and culture	.7562
Christian art and culture	.5842
Hindu art and culture	.8560
Jain art and culture	.8086
Jewish art and culture	.7853
Islamic art and culture	.7869
Sikh art and culture	.8374
alpha	.9280

Tables 8.1.1 - 8.1.15 show that all of the scales function in a reliable manner. Without exception, each scale generates a level of internal reliability in excess of .80. This is well above the .70 level suggested as a threshold by Kline (1993). It may be argued that these scales are not theoretically underpinned in terms of the leading dimensional analyses of religions (Smart, 1989). However, the levels of reliability generated by each of the scales show that each of the scales is empirically sound. Having demonstrated that the scales are homogenous measures it is now appropriate to investigate the components of each of the scales.

Item endorsement

Tables 8.2.1 - 8.2.15 show the levels of item endorsement for the items contained within each of the 15 scales. Through analysing the response to each of the items within the scales is possible to show clearly the level of interest that the participants have in each of the areas under investigation.

Item endorsement and interest in Buddhism

Table 8.2.1 item endorsement for scale 1: interested in studying Buddhism

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Buddhism	39	21	39
Buddhist scriptures	22	21	57
Buddhist beliefs	45	23	32
Buddhist history	29	20	50
Buddhist ethics	43	21	36
Buddhist art and culture	30	20	50

Table 8.2.1 shows the level of support given to various aspects of Buddhism. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 22% and 45%. Buddhist scriptures were given the least support, and Buddhist beliefs were given the most support. Over a third (39%) of the

respondents agreed that they were interested in studying Buddhism.

Item endorsement and interest in Christianity

Table 8.2.2 item endorsement for scale 2: interested in studying Christianity

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Christianity as a world faith	50	27	24
Christian scriptures	38	26	36
Christian beliefs	59	23	18
Christian history	45	24	31
Christian ethics	59	22	19
Christian art and culture	36	26	38

Table 8.2.2 shows the level of support given to various areas of Christianity. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 36% and 59%. Christian art and culture were given least support, and Christian ethics was given most support. A half of the respondents (50%) agreed that they were interested in studying Christianity as a world faith.

Item endorsement and interest in Hinduism

Table 8.2.3 item endorsement for scale 3: interested in studying Hinduism

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Hinduism	24	26	50
Hindu scriptures	13	22	65
Hindu beliefs	30	27	43
Hindu history	18	24	58
Hindu ethics	33	22	45
Hindu art and culture	23	21	56

Table 8.2.3 shows the level of support given to various areas of Hinduism. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 13% and 33%. Hindu scriptures were given least support and Hindu ethics was given the most support. Just under a quarter (24%) of the

participants agreed that they were interested in studying Hinduism.

Item endorsement and interest in Jainism

Table 8.2.4 item endorsement for scale 4: interested in studying Jainism

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Jainism	12	23	65
Jain scriptures	8	19	73
Jain beliefs	19	24	56
Jain history	13	20	67
Jain ethics	24	21	55
Jain art and culture	16	20	64

Table 8.2.4 shows the level of support given to various areas of Jainism. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 8% and 25%. Jain scriptures were given the least support and Jain ethics was given the most support. Just over one-eighth (12%) of the participants agreed that they had were interested in studying Jainism.

Item endorsement and interest in Judaism

Table 8.2.5 item endorsement for scale 5: interested in studying Judaism

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Judaism	29	26	46
Jewish scriptures	20	24	56
Jewish beliefs	35	28	37
Jewish history	28	25	48
Jewish ethics	38	22	39
Jewish art and culture	23	23	54

Table 8.2.5 shows the level of support given to various areas of Judaism. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 20% and 38%. Jewish scriptures were given least support, and Jewish ethics was given the most support. Nearly one-third (29%) of the participants

agreed that they were interested in studying Judaism.

Item endorsement and interest in Islam

Table 8.2.6 item endorsement for scale 6: interested in studying Islam

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Islam	31	25	44
Islamic scriptures	17	21	63
Islamic beliefs	31	26	43
Islamic history	21	23	56
Islamic ethics	33	21	46
Islamic art and culture	22	21	57

Table 8.2.6 shows the level of support given to various areas of Islam. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 17% and 33%. Islamic scriptures were given the least support, and Islamic ethics was given the most support. Just under one-third (31%) of the respondents agreed that they were interested in studying Islam.

Item endorsement and interest in Sikhism

Table 8.2.7 item endorsement for scale 7: interested in studying Sikhism

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Sikhism	18	26	57
Sikh scriptures	9	19	72
Sikh beliefs	22	25	53
Sikh history	14	22	65
Sikh ethics	23	21	56
Sikh art and culture	18	19	63

Table 8.2.7 shows the level of support given to various areas of Sikhism. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 9% and 23%. Sikh scriptures were given the least support, Sikh ethics were given the most support. Just under one-fifth of the participants (18%)

agreed that they were interested in studying Sikhism.

Item endorsement and interest in perspectives in the study of religion

Table 8.2.8 item endorsement for scale 8: interested in studying perspectives in the study of religion.

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Anthropology of religion	40	27	33
Philosophy of religion	70	18	13
Psychology of religion	70	16	15
Sociology of religion	62	21	17

Table 8.2.8 shows the level of support given to various perspectives in the study of religion. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 40% and 70%. Psychology of religion and philosophy of religion received the most support, while anthropology received the least support.

Item endorsement and interest in languages in the study of religion

Table 8.2.9 item endorsement for scale 9: interested in studying languages in religious studies.

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Greek	22	20	59
Hebrew	18	21	62
Latin	17	21	62
Arabic	14	18	68
Sanskrit	12	19	69
Pali	7	20	73

Table 8.2.9 shows the level of support given to various languages in the study of religion. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 7% and 22%. Pali was given the least support and Greek was given the most support.

Item endorsement and interest in world religions**Table 8.2.10 item endorsement for scale 10: interested in studying world religions.**

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Buddhism	39	21	39
Christianity as a world faith	50	27	24
Hinduism	24	26	50
Jainism	12	23	65
Judaism	29	26	46
Islam	31	25	44
Sikhism	18	26	57

Table 8.2.10 shows the level of support given to various world religions. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 50% and 12%. Jainism was given the least support, and Christianity was given the most support.

Item endorsement and interest in religious scriptures**Table 8.2.11 item endorsement for scale 11: interested in studying religious scriptures**

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Buddhist scriptures	22	21	57
Christian scriptures	38	26	36
Hindu scriptures	13	22	65
Jain scriptures	8	19	73
Jewish scriptures	20	24	56
Islamic scriptures	17	21	63
Sikh scriptures	9	19	72

Table 8.2.11 shows the level of support given to the scriptures of various religions. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 8% and 38%. Jain scriptures received the least support and Christian scriptures received the most support.

Item endorsement and interest in religious beliefs

Table 8.2.12 item endorsement for scale 12: interested in studying religious beliefs

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Buddhist beliefs	45	23	32
Christian beliefs	59	23	18
Hindu beliefs	30	27	43
Jain beliefs	19	24	56
Jewish beliefs	35	28	37
Islamic beliefs	31	26	43
Sikh beliefs	22	25	53

Table 8.2.12 shows the level of support given to the beliefs of various religions. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 19% and 59%. Jain beliefs were given the least amount of support and Christian beliefs were given the highest level of support.

Item endorsement and interest in religious history

Table 8.2.13 item endorsement for scale 13: interested in studying religious history

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Buddhist history	29	20	50
Christian history	45	24	31
Hindu history	18	24	58
Jain history	13	20	67
Jewish history	28	25	48
Islamic history	21	23	56
Sikh history	14	22	65

Table 8.2.13 shows the level of support given to the history of various religions. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 13% and 45%. Jain history was given the lowest level of support, and Christian history was given the highest level of support.

Item endorsement and interest in religious ethics**Table 8.2.14 item endorsement for scale 14: interested in studying religious ethics**

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Buddhist ethics	43	21	36
Christian ethics	59	22	19
Hindu ethics	33	22	45
Jain ethics	24	21	55
Jewish ethics	38	22	40
Islamic ethics	33	21	46
Sikh ethics	23	21	56

Table 8.2.14 shows the level of support given to the ethical principals of various religions. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 23% and 59%. Sikh ethics was given the least support and Christian ethics was given the highest amount of support.

Item endorsement and interest in religious art and culture**Table 8.2.15 item endorsement for scale 15: interested in studying religious art and culture.**

Item	% agree	% not certain	% disagree
Buddhist art and culture	30	20	50
Christian art and culture	36	26	38
Hindu art and culture	23	21	56
Jain art and culture	16	20	64
Jewish art and culture	23	23	54
Islamic art and culture	22	21	57
Sikh art and culture	18	19	63

Table 8.2.15 shows the level of support given to the art and culture of various religions. It is shown that the support given to these items ranges between 16% and 36%. Jain art and culture received the least support and Christian art and culture received the most support.

Sex and interest in studying religion at A-level

Table 8.3 Sex difference in response to aims of religious education.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
scale 1: interest in studying Buddhism	17.08	7.02	15.96	7.51	2.02	NS
scale 2: interest in studying Christianity	20.05	5.83	19.06	6.60	1.99	NS
scale 3: interest in studying Hinduism	15.48	6.51	13.50	6.61	3.95	.001
scale 4: interest in studying Jainism	14.22	7.76	12.49	7.74	2.90	.01
scale 5: interest in studying Judaism	16.59	6.41	14.32	6.51	4.6	.001
scale 6: interest in studying Islam	15.79	6.69	13.95	6.96	3.56	.001
scale 7: interest in studying Sikhism	14.10	6.20	11.93	6.05	4.57	.001
scale 8: interest in studying perspectives in the study of religion	14.99	4.09	14.17	4.13	2.61	.01
scale 9: interest in studying languages in religious studies	13.25	6.44	12.10	6.43	2.31	NS
scale 10: interest in studying world religions	19.55	6.58	17.12	6.10	4.87	.001
scale 11: interest in studying religious scriptures	16.46	6.55	15.49	6.27	1.95	NS
scale 12: interest in studying religious beliefs	20.74	7.18	18.22	6.83	4.63	.001
scale 13: interest in studying religious history	17.80	7.16	16.44	6.87	2.47	NS
scale 14: interest in studying religious ethics	20.72	7.85	18.31	7.77	4.00	.001
scale 15: interest in studying religious art and culture	17.87	7.90	15.66	7.92	3.64	.001

Table 8.3 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in religious studies. It is shown that ten of the 15 different scales are significantly related to sex. Where significant differences were shown to be present, females recorded a higher level of interest than males. While it has been established that females generally display a more positive attitude toward religion in the curriculum (Francis and Lewis, 1996), the data presented in table 8.3 show that females are significantly more likely than males to be interested in different aspects of religion in the curriculum. This is consistent with the work of Archer and Macrae (1991), who deployed a semantic differential device which showed that boys identified religious education as being feminine as opposed to

masculine and identified feminine subjects as being boring. The data presented in tables 8.3.1 to 8.3.15 explore further sex differences in levels of interest in different areas of religious studies.

Sex and interest in Buddhism

Table 8.3.1 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 1: interest in Buddhism

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Buddhism	3.00	1.44	2.81	1.45	1.72	NS
Buddhist scriptures	2.40	1.29	2.30	1.32	1.00	NS
Buddhist beliefs	3.20	1.41	2.98	1.43	2.00	NS
Buddhist history	2.64	1.39	2.44	1.39	1.85	NS
Buddhist ethics	3.09	1.44	2.89	1.48	1.83	NS
Buddhist art and culture	2.68	1.41	2.46	1.50	2.00	NS

Table 8.3.1 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in Buddhism. It is shown that none the items generate significant sex differences. Females are no more likely than males to display higher levels of interest in different aspects of Buddhism.

Sex and interest in Christianity

Table 8.3.2 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 2: interest in Christianity

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Christianity as a world faith	3.44	1.22	3.21	1.28	2.39	NS
Christian scriptures	3.05	1.32	2.95	1.38	1.03	NS
Christian beliefs	3.66	1.22	3.48	1.29	1.88	NS
Christian history	2.22	1.34	3.12	1.33	-0.93	NS
Christian ethics	3.68	1.25	3.52	1.34	1.67	NS
Christian art and culture	2.98	1.32	2.72	1.41	2.41	NS

Table 8.3.2 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in Christianity. It is shown

that none the items generate significant sex differences. Females are no more likely than males to display higher levels of interest in different aspects of Christianity.

The absence of sex differences between males and females in their levels of interest in aspects of Christianity is of considerable interest. It may be the case that the absence of a sex difference is brought about by a general high level of support by males and females. Those individuals who choose to study religion at A-level may be seen to have an atypical level of interest in Christianity.

Sex and interest in Hinduism

Table 8.3.3 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 3: interest in Hinduism

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Hinduism	2.66	1.28	2.23	1.22	4.39	.001
Hindu scriptures	2.19	1.15	2.01	1.18	2.02	NS
Hindu beliefs	2.84	1.34	2.40	1.30	4.25	.001
Hindu history	2.37	1.26	2.12	1.22	2.69	.01
Hindu ethics	2.85	1.40	2.42	1.35	4.11	.001
Hindu art and culture	2.48	1.36	2.19	1.37	2.74	.01

Table 8.3.3 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in Hinduism. It is shown that sex differences are present across all but one of the aspects of Hinduism under investigation. Five of these six differences achieve significance beyond .01. Only interest in Hindu scriptures fails to achieve significance at this level. Females are significantly more likely than males to register an interest in these aspects of Hinduism.

Sex and interest in Jainism

Table 8.3.4 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in Jainism. It is shown that five of the six areas under investigation achieve significance at beyond .01.

Table 8.3.4 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 4: interest in Jainism

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Jainism	2.14	1.21	1.82	1.06	3.87	.001
Jain scriptures	1.93	1.07	1.70	0.95	2.84	.01
Jain beliefs	2.42	1.29	1.98	1.19	4.79	.001
Jain history	2.08	1.19	1.91	1.14	1.88	NS
Jain ethics	2.49	1.38	2.17	1.30	3.08	.01
Jain art and culture	2.20	1.26	1.92	1.23	3.00	.01

Only one item is shown to function independently of sex. Interest in Jain history is no more pronounced among females than among males.

Sex and interest in Judaism

Table 8.3.5 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 5: interest in Judaism

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Judaism	2.82	1.27	2.31	1.22	5.27	.001
Jewish scriptures	2.41	1.24	2.27	1.21	1.52	NS
Jewish beliefs	3.01	1.31	2.54	1.27	4.64	.001
Jewish history	2.69	1.34	2.40	1.33	2.81	.01
Jewish ethics	3.04	1.38	2.55	1.38	4.64	.001
Jewish art and culture	2.54	1.30	2.19	1.32	3.55	.001

Table 8.3.5 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in Judaism. It is shown that five of the six items under investigation are shown to be significant beyond the .01 level. Only interest in Jewish scriptures was shown to be unrelated to sex. The absence of sex differences in response to Jewish scriptures may be due to the commonality between Jewish and Christian scriptures. The shared heritage between Judaism and Christianity may be the cause of a generally high level of interest in Jewish scriptures.

Sex and interest in Islam

Table 8.3.6 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 6: interest in Islam.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Islam	2.83	1.31	2.48	1.30	3.46	.001
Islamic scriptures	2.26	1.22	2.14	1.15	1.27	NS
Islamic beliefs	2.86	1.34	2.47	1.42	3.76	.001
Islamic history	2.46	1.29	2.24	1.34	2.18	NS
Islamic ethics	2.82	1.43	2.38	1.42	4.01	.001
Islamic art and culture	2.48	1.34	2.14	1.34	3.34	.001

Table 8.3.6 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in Islam. It is shown that

four of the six items examined generate sex differences which are significant at the .001 level.

Interest in Islamic scripture, and interest in Islamic history are not significantly related to sex.

Across each of the areas where significant differences do emerge, each generates a higher level of interest among females than males.

Sex and interest in Sikhism

Table 8.3.7 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 7: interest in Sikhism.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Sikhism	2.44	1.21	2.03	1.13	4.48	.001
Sikh scriptures	2.01	1.09	1.78	0.98	2.81	.01
Sikh beliefs	2.55	1.30	2.13	1.23	4.27	.001
Sikh history	2.19	1.17	1.95	1.14	2.67	.01
Sikh ethics	2.50	1.35	2.07	1.27	4.29	.001
Sikh art and culture	2.31	1.29	1.94	1.21	3.89	.001

Table 8.3.7 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in Sikhism. It is demonstrated that each of the 6 aspects of Sikhism generates sex differences which are significant beyond the .01 level. Females display significantly higher levels of interest in each of the aspects

of Sikhism.

Sex and interest in perspectives in the study of religion

Table 8.3.8 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 8: interest in studying perspectives in religious studies

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Anthropology of religion	3.13	1.37	2.92	1.41	1.99	NS
Philosophy of religion	3.98	1.19	3.97	1.16	0.12	NS
Psychology of religion	3.95	1.20	3.72	1.25	2.43	NS
Sociology of religion	3.80	1.26	3.52	1.27	2.95	.01

Table 8.3.8 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in different perspectives in the study of religion. Interest in sociology of religion was shown to be predicted by sex. Females are more likely than males to register an interest in this perspective.

Sex and interest in language in religious studies

Table 8.3.9 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 9: interested in studying languages in religious studies

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Greek	2.42	1.35	2.14	1.31	2.73	.01
Hebrew	2.31	1.28	2.07	1.25	2.40	NS
Latin	2.24	1.26	2.11	1.25	1.35	NS
Arabic	2.14	1.21	1.90	1.15	2.56	NS
Sanskrit	2.02	1.17	1.86	1.14	1.77	NS
Pali	1.88	1.04	1.76	1.06	1.36	NS

Table 8.3.9 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in different languages associated with world religions. It is shown that only one of the languages under investigation is significantly impacted by sex. Females are significantly more likely than males to register an interest in studying Greek.

Sex and interest in world religions

Table 8.3.10 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 10: interest in studying world religions

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Buddhism	3.00	1.44	2.81	1.45	1.72	NS
Christianity as a world faith	3.44	1.22	3.21	1.28	2.39	NS
Hinduism	2.66	1.28	2.23	1.22	4.39	.001
Jainism	2.14	1.21	1.82	1.06	3.87	.001
Judaism	2.82	1.27	2.31	1.22	5.27	.001
Islam	2.83	1.31	2.48	1.30	3.46	.001
Sikhism	2.44	1.21	2.03	1.13	4.48	.001

Table 8.3.10 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in different world religions. The findings are of particular interest. It is clear that females are generally more interested in learning about different religions than males. The difference between males and females in relation to levels of interest in Christianity is less pronounced than that which is generated by other religions. This may be once more due to generally high levels of support across the board for Christianity. Buddhism is of particular interest. The profile which Buddhism has been building is shown to be different from that of any other religion. Buddhism may be something of an anomaly in the current study.

Sex and interest in religious scriptures

Table 8.3.11 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in religious scriptures. It is shown that only two of the items generate a significant sex difference. The scriptures of Jainism, and Sikhism are shown to be of significantly more interest to females than males.

Table 8.3.11 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 11: interest in studying religious scriptures

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Buddhist scriptures	2.40	1.29	2.30	1.32	1.00	NS
Christian scriptures	3.05	1.32	2.95	1.38	1.03	NS
Hindu scriptures	2.19	1.15	2.01	1.18	2.02	NS
Jain scriptures	1.93	1.07	1.70	0.95	2.84	.01
Jewish scriptures	2.41	1.24	2.27	1.21	1.52	NS
Islamic scriptures	2.26	1.22	2.14	1.15	1.27	NS
Sikh scriptures	2.01	1.09	1.78	0.98	2.81	.01

Sex and interest in religious beliefs

Table 8.3.12 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 12: interest in studying religious beliefs

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Buddhist beliefs	3.20	1.41	2.98	1.43	2.00	NS
Christian beliefs	3.66	1.22	3.48	1.29	1.88	NS
Hindu beliefs	2.84	1.34	2.40	1.30	4.25	.001
Jain beliefs	2.42	1.29	1.98	1.19	4.79	.001
Jewish beliefs	3.01	1.31	2.54	1.27	4.64	.001
Islamic beliefs	2.86	1.34	2.47	1.42	3.76	.001
Sikh beliefs	2.55	1.30	2.13	1.23	4.27	.001

Table 8.3.12 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in religious beliefs. The pattern emerging throughout these analyses is shown to be present with regard to religious beliefs. Once more it is shown that females are more interested in a range of religious beliefs than their male colleagues. However, no sex difference was shown to be present with regard to interest in Buddhist or Christian beliefs.

Sex and interest in religious history

Table 8.3.13 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 13: interest in studying religious history.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Buddhist history	2.64	1.39	2.44	1.39	1.85	NS
Christian history	2.22	1.34	3.12	1.33	0.93	NS
Hindu history	2.37	1.26	2.12	1.22	2.69	.01
Jain history	2.08	1.19	1.91	1.14	1.88	NS
Jewish history	2.69	1.34	2.40	1.33	2.81	.01
Islamic history	2.46	1.29	2.24	1.34	2.18	NS
Sikh history	2.19	1.17	1.95	1.14	2.67	.01

Table 8.3.13 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in religious history. A mixed picture emerges with reference to sex differences in religious history. Once more no sex differences are present with reference to Buddhism or Christianity. Sex differences are also absent with regard to Jainism and Islam. Where sex differences are present, they demonstrate that women hold higher levels of interest than men.

Sex and interest in religious ethics

Table 8.3.14 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 14: interest in studying religious ethics.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Buddhist ethics	3.09	1.44	2.89	1.48	1.83	NS
Christian ethics	3.68	1.25	3.52	1.34	1.67	NS
Hindu ethics	2.85	1.40	2.42	1.35	4.11	.001
Jain ethics	2.49	1.38	2.17	1.30	3.08	.01
Jewish ethics	3.04	1.38	2.55	1.38	4.64	.001
Islamic ethics	2.82	1.43	2.38	1.42	4.01	.001
Sikh ethics	2.50	1.35	2.07	1.27	4.29	.001

Table 8.3.14 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in religious ethics. The data

presented relating to interest in religious ethics, lend further support to the emerging pattern of sex differences. Where differences are present, they show that women hold higher levels of interest than men. No significant differences emerge with regard to Christian ethics, or Buddhist ethics.

Sex and interest in religious art and culture

Table 8.3.15 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 15: interest in studying religious art and culture

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Buddhist art and culture	2.68	1.41	2.46	1.50	2.00	NS
Christian art and culture	2.98	1.32	2.72	1.41	2.41	NS
Hindu art and culture	2.48	1.36	2.19	1.37	2.74	.01
Jain art and culture	2.20	1.26	1.92	1.23	3.00	.01
Jewish art and culture	2.54	1.30	2.19	1.32	3.55	.001
Islamic art and culture	2.48	1.34	2.14	1.34	3.34	.001
Sikh art and culture	2.31	1.29	1.94	1.21	3.89	.001

Table 8.3.15 presents data concerned with sex differences and interest in religious art and culture. The data presented relating to interest in religious art and culture, lend further support to the emerging pattern of sex differences. Where differences are present, they show that women hold higher levels of interest than men. No significant differences emerge with regard to Christian art and culture, or Buddhist art and culture.

Summary

Throughout this section it has been shown that females are generally more interested in religious studies than males. Christianity, in its various aspects, generates less significant sex differences than other areas. This, coupled with the fact that the various aspects of Christianity generate

among the highest mean levels of support, suggests that the relative lack of sex differences is brought about by a high level of support across the board.

Buddhism also generated fewer sex differences than most of the other religions under investigation. However, it received less support than Christianity. It seems as though there is something peculiar to Buddhism that causes people to become interested in it, which is different to the ways in which they become interested in other religions.

Personality and interest in religious studies

It was shown in chapter 7 of the current dissertation that personality was a significant predictor of interest in studying religion. Psychoticism was the only aspect of personality to be significantly associated with interest in religious studies ($r = -.0965$, $p < .01$). Neither extraversion, neuroticism, nor lie scale scores were shown to impact on interest in religious studies. It is therefore of theoretical interest to investigate the impact of personality on the levels of interest of the participants across various areas of religious studies.

Table 8.4 shows the relationship between the levels of interest, reported by the respondents, in various areas of religious studies and personality. It is shown that interest in Buddhism is positively associated with psychoticism ($r = .1273$, $p < .001$). Interest in Buddhism is unrelated to extraversion, neuroticism, and lie scale scores. This pattern of relationships is of particular interest because psychoticism is generally found to relate inversely with interest in religious studies (see chapter 7 of the current dissertation).

Interest in Christianity is shown to be negatively associated with psychoticism ($r = -.1981$, $p < .001$).

Interest in Christianity is unrelated to extraversion, neuroticism, and lie scale scores. This pattern is consistent with the pattern of interest in religious studies as established in chapter 7 of the current dissertation. In terms of personality, interest in religious studies is seen in similar terms to interest in Christianity.

Table 8.4 The relationship between levels of interest in different areas of religious studies and personality

Scale	P	E	N	L
scale 1: interest in studying Buddhism	.1273 .001	.0390 NS	.0325 NS	-.0359 NS
scale 2: interest in studying Christianity	-.1981 .001	.0369 NS	.0164 NS	.0292 NS
scale 3: interest in studying Hinduism	.0183 NS	.0159 NS	.0378 NS	-.0246 NS
scale 4: interest in studying Jainism	.0705 NS	.0114 NS	.0472 NS	-.0253 NS
scale 5: interest in studying Judaism	-.1033 .001	.0141 NS	-.0133 NS	.0326 NS
scale 6: interest in studying Islam	-.0196 NS	.0529 NS	.0298 NS	-.0399 NS
scale 7: interest in studying Sikhism	.0015 NS	.0318 NS	.0080 NS	.0004 NS
scale 8: interest in studying perspectives in the study of religion	-.0068 NS	.0487 NS	.0445 NS	-.0654 NS
scale 9: interest in studying languages in religious studies	-.0110 NS	-.0131 NS	-.0420 NS	-.0058 NS
scale 10: interest in studying world religions	-.0528 NS	.0278 NS	.0305 NS	.0119 NS
scale 11: interest in studying religious scriptures	-.0086 NS	-.0007 NS	.0244 NS	-.0182 NS
scale 12: interest in studying religious beliefs	-.0219 NS	.0467 NS	.0234 NS	-.0147 NS
scale 13: interest in studying religious history	-.0522 NS	.0092 NS	.0236 NS	.0099 NS
scale 14: interest in studying religious ethics	.0580 NS	.0415 NS	-.0086 NS	-.0535 NS
scale 15: interest in studying religious art and culture	.0219 NS	.0552 NS	.0451 NS	.0069 NS

Interest in Hinduism, Jainism, Islam, Sikhism, perspectives in the study of religion, languages in religious studies, world religions, religious scriptures, religious beliefs, religious history, religious

ethics and religious art and culture are all shown to be unrelated to each of the dimensions of personality. Neither psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores impact on levels of interest in any of these areas of religious studies.

Interest in Judaism is shown to be negatively associated with psychoticism ($r = -.1033$, $p < .001$).

The pattern generated by the investigation of the effect of personality on interest in Judaism is similar to that investigating the relationship between interest in Christianity and psychoticism.

Personality and interest in Buddhism

Table 8.4.1 correlation matrix scale 1: interest in Buddhism with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Buddhism	.1092 .001	.0218 NS	.0285 NS	-.0231 NS
Buddhist scriptures	.1165 .001	.0263 NS	.0253 NS	-.0337 NS
Buddhist beliefs	.1032 .001	.0243 NS	.0258 NS	-.0461 NS
Buddhist history	.0644 NS	.0351 NS	.0394 NS	.0077 NS
Buddhist ethics	.1431 .001	.0292 NS	-.0040 NS	-.0517 NS
Buddhist art and culture	.1147 .001	.0517 NS	.0495 NS	-.0077 NS

Table 8.4.1 shows the relationship between interest in Buddhism and personality. It is shown that six of the seven items within this scale are significantly associated with psychoticism at the $p < .001$ level. Only one item remains unrelated to psychoticism. Interest in studying Buddhist history remains unrelated to psychoticism. Neither extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in different aspects of Buddhism.

Personality and interest in Christianity

Table 8.4.2 correlation matrix scale 2: interest in Christianity with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Christianity as a world faith	-.1760 .001	.0211 NS	.0403 NS	.0274 NS
Christian scriptures	-.1705 .001	-.0177 NS	-.0082 NS	.0383 NS
Christian beliefs	-.2155 .001	.0502 NS	.0175 NS	.0158 NS
Christian history	-.2077 .001	.0121 NS	.0305 NS	.0249 NS
Christian ethics	-.0902 .01	.0501 NS	-.0340 NS	-.0084 NS
Christian art and culture	-.0726 NS	.0395 NS	.0356 NS	.0469 NS

Table 8.4.2 shows the relationship between levels of interest in Christianity and personality. It is shown that five of the six items are negatively associated with scores on the psychoticism scale. Only one of the items remains unrelated to scores on the psychoticism scale. Interest in studying Christian art and culture is shown to be unrelated to psychoticism. Neither extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in different aspects of Christianity.

Personality and interest in Hinduism

Table 8.4.3 correlation matrix scale 3: interest in Hinduism with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Hinduism	-.0436 NS	-.0060 NS	.0307 NS	.0255 NS
Hindu scriptures	.0386 NS	-.0104 NS	.0332 NS	-.0218 NS
Hindu beliefs	.0228 NS	.0108 NS	.0496 NS	-.0156 NS
Hindu history	-.0149 NS	-.0044 NS	.0419 NS	-.0042 NS
Hindu ethics	.0657 NS	.0292 NS	-.0030 NS	-.0621 NS
Hindu art and culture	.0223 NS	.0421 NS	.0551 NS	-.0157 NS

Table 8.4.3 shows the relationship between personality and interest in Hinduism. It is shown that neither psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in any aspects of Hinduism. Interest in studying Hinduism is therefore unrelated to personality.

Personality and interest in Jainism

Table 8.4.4 correlation matrix scale 4: Interest in Jainism with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Jainism	.0167 NS	-.0153 NS	.0425 NS	-.0274 NS
Jain scriptures	.0522 NS	-.0140 NS	.0269 NS	-.0285 NS
Jain beliefs	.0543 NS	.0289 NS	.0152 NS	-.0265 NS
Jain history	.0339 NS	-.0104 NS	.0352 NS	-.0177 NS
Jain ethics	.1283 .001	.0290 NS	-.0035 NS	-.0713 NS
Jain art and culture	.0596 NS	.0228 NS	.0479 NS	-.0024 NS

Table 8.4.4 shows the relationship between personality and interest in Jainism. It is shown that interest in Jain ethics is significantly associated with psychoticism ($r=.1283$, $p<.001$). All other aspects of Jainism are shown to be unrelated to psychoticism. Neither extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in different aspects of Jainism.

Personality and interest in Judaism

Table 8.4.5 shows the relationship between interest in Judaism and personality. It is shown that three of the six items are significantly negatively associated with psychoticism. Interest in Jewish scriptures, Jewish ethics and Jewish art and culture are shown to be independent of psychoticism.

Table 8.4.5 correlation matrix scale 5: interest in Judaism with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Judaism	-.1516 .001	.0096 NS	.0008 NS	.0523 NS
Jewish scriptures	-.0727 NS	-.0109 NS	-.0012 NS	.0067 NS
Jewish beliefs	-.0947 .01	.0044 NS	-.0180 NS	.0442 NS
Jewish history	-.1101 .001	-.0030 NS	-.0305 NS	.0397 NS
Jewish ethics	-.0240 NS	.0108 NS	-.0241 NS	.0035 NS
Jewish art and culture	-.0343 NS	.0434 NS	.0189 NS	.0335 NS

Neither extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in different aspects of Judaism. The pattern that emerges with regard to interest in Judaism is similar to that which emerges with regard to Christianity.

Personality and interest in Islam

Table 8.4.6 correlation matrix scale 6: Interest in Islam with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Islam	-.0564 NS	.0407 NS	.0189 NS	-.0079 NS
Islamic scriptures	-.0031 NS	.0161 NS	.0402 NS	-.0405 NS
Islamic beliefs	-.0168 NS	.0611 NS	.0136 NS	-.0260 NS
Islamic history	-.0239 NS	.1079 NS	.0459 NS	-.0156 NS
Islamic ethics	.0263 NS	.0549 NS	.0236 NS	-.0638 NS
Islamic art and culture	-.0139 NS	.0579 NS	.0366 NS	-.0171 NS

Table 8.4.6 shows the relationship between personality and interest in Islam. It is shown that neither psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with

interest in any aspects of Islam. Interest in studying Islam is, therefore, unrelated to personality.

Personality and interest in Sikhism

Table 8.4.7 correlation matrix scale 7: Interest in Sikhism with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Sikhism	-.0266 NS	.0335 NS	.0078 NS	.0177 NS
Sikh scriptures	-.0022 NS	-.0037 NS	.0182 NS	-.0113 NS
Sikh beliefs	.0183 NS	.0310 NS	.0175 NS	-.0084 NS
Sikh history	-.0234 NS	-.0154 NS	.0093 NS	.0358 NS
Sikh ethics	.0459 NS	.0412 NS	-.0059 NS	-.0220 NS
Sikh art and culture	.0390 NS	.0436 NS	.0250 NS	.0123 NS

Table 8.4.7 shows the relationship between personality and interest in Sikhism. It is shown that neither psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in any aspects of Sikhism. Interest in studying Sikhism is, therefore, unrelated to personality.

Personality and interest in perspectives in religious studies

Table 8.4.8 correlation matrix scale 8: interest in perspectives in religious studies with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Anthropology of religion	-.0084 NS	.0472 NS	.0390 NS	-.0688 NS
Philosophy of religion	.0120 NS	.0150 NS	-.0118 NS	-.0243 NS
Psychology of religion	.0098 NS	.0329 NS	.0453 NS	-.0716 NS
Sociology of religion	-.0329 NS	.0339 NS	.0824 .01	-.0533 NS

Table 8.4.8 shows the relationship between personality and interest in studying various

perspectives in the study of religion. Neither psychoticism, extraversion nor lie scale scores are shown to impact on interest in the different perspectives in the study of religion. Neuroticism is shown to be positively associated with interest in sociology of religion ($r=.0824$, $p<.01$), and unrelated to any of the other perspectives in the study of religion.

Personality and interest in religious languages

Table 8.4.9 correlation matrix scale 9: interest in languages in religious studies with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Greek	-.0007 NS	.0120 NS	.0471 NS	.0084 NS
Hebrew	-.0601 NS	-.0163 NS	.0225 NS	.0418 NS
Latin	-.0177 NS	-.0238 NS	.0450 NS	-.0081 NS
Arabic	.0063 NS	-.0027 NS	.0382 NS	-.0107 NS
Sanskrit	.0356 NS	-.0143 NS	.0643 NS	.0251 NS
Pali	.0354 NS	-.0163 NS	.0594 NS	-.0129 NS

Table 8.4.9 shows the relationship between personality and interest in languages in religious studies. It is shown that neither psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in any of these languages. Interest in studying languages in religious studies is, therefore, unrelated to personality.

Personality and interest in world religions

Table 8.4.10 shows the relationship between personality and interest in studying various world religions. Psychoticism is shown to be negatively associated with interest in studying Christianity ($r=-.1760$, $p<.001$), and Judaism ($r=-.1516$, $p<.001$), and positively associated with an interest in studying Buddhism ($r=.1092$, $p<.001$).

Table 8.4.10 correlation matrix scale 10: interest in world religions with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Buddhism	.1092 .001	.0218 NS	.0285 NS	-.0231 NS
Christianity as a world faith	-.1760 .001	.0211 NS	.0403 NS	.0274 NS
Hinduism	-.0436 NS	-.0060 NS	.0307 NS	.0255 NS
Jainism	.0167 NS	-.0153 NS	.0425 NS	-.0274 NS
Judaism	-.1516 .001	.0096 NS	.0008 NS	.0523 NS
Islam	-.0564 NS	.0407 NS	.0189 NS	-.0079 NS
Sikhism	-.0266 NS	.0335 NS	.0078 NS	.0177 NS

Psychoticism is shown to be unrelated to interest in Hinduism, Jainism, Islam and Sikhism. Neither extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in studying any of the world religions under investigation.

Personality and interest in religious scriptures

Table 8.4.11 correlation matrix scale 11: interest in religious scriptures with personality

Item	P	E	N	L
Buddhist scriptures	.1165 .001	.0263 NS	.0253 NS	-.0337 NS
Christian scriptures	-.1705 .001	-.0177 NS	-.0082 NS	.0383 NS
Hindu scriptures	.0386 NS	-.0104 NS	.0332 NS	-.0218 NS
Jain scriptures	.0522 NS	-.0140 NS	.0269 NS	-.0285 NS
Jewish scriptures	-.0727 NS	-.0109 NS	-.0012 NS	.0067 NS
Islamic scriptures	-.0031 NS	.0161 NS	.0402 NS	-.0405 NS
Sikh scriptures	-.0022 NS	-.0037 NS	.0182 NS	-.0113 NS

Table 8.4.11 shows the relationship between personality and interest in studying the scriptures of various religions. It is shown that psychoticism is positively associated with interest in Buddhist scriptures ($r=.1165$, $p<.001$), and negatively associated with interest in Christian scriptures ($r=-.1705$, $p<.001$). Psychoticism is shown to be unrelated to interest in the scriptures of Hinduism, Jainism, Judaism, Islam, or Sikhism. Neither extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in studying the scriptures of any of the world religions under investigation.

Personality and interest in religious beliefs

Table 8.4.12 correlation matrix scale 12: interest in religious beliefs with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Buddhist beliefs	.1032 .001	.0243 NS	.0258 NS	-.0461 NS
Christian beliefs	-.2155 .001	.0502 NS	.0175 NS	.0158 NS
Hindu beliefs	.0228 NS	.0108 NS	.0496 NS	-.0156 NS
Jain beliefs	.0543 NS	.0289 NS	.0152 NS	-.0265 NS
Jewish beliefs	-.0947 .01	.0044 NS	-.0180 NS	.0442 NS
Islamic beliefs	-.0168 NS	.0611 NS	.0136 NS	-.0260 NS
Sikh beliefs	.0183 NS	.0310 NS	.0175 NS	-.0084 NS

Table 8.4.12 shows the relationship between personality and interest in studying the beliefs of various religions. It is shown that psychoticism is positively associated with interest in Buddhist beliefs ($r=.1032$, $p<.001$), and negatively associated with interest in Christian beliefs ($r=-.2155$, $p<.001$) and Jewish beliefs ($r=-.0947$, $p<.01$). Psychoticism is shown to be unrelated to interest in the beliefs of Hinduism, Jainism, Islam, or Sikhism. Neither extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in studying the beliefs of any of the world

religions under investigation.

Personality and interest in history of religions

Table 8.4.13 correlation matrix scale 13: interest in religious history with personality

Item	P	E	N	L
Buddhist history	.0644 NS	.0351 NS	.0394 NS	.0077 NS
Christian history	-.2077 .001	.0121 NS	.0305 NS	.0249 NS
Hindu history	-.0149 NS	-.0044 NS	.0419 NS	-.0042 NS
Jain history	.0339 NS	-.0104 NS	.0352 NS	-.0177 NS
Jewish history	-.1101 .001	-.0030 NS	-.0305 NS	.0397 NS
Islamic history	-.0239 NS	.1079 NS	.0459 NS	-.0156 NS
Sikh history	-.0234 NS	-.0154 NS	.0093 NS	.0358 NS

Table 8.4.13 shows the relationship between personality and interest in studying the history of various religions. It is shown that psychoticism is negatively associated with interest in Christian history ($r = -.2077$, $p < .001$) and Jewish history ($r = -.1101$, $p < .001$). Psychoticism is shown to be unrelated to interest in the history of Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Islam, or Sikhism. Neither extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in studying the history of any of the world religions under investigation.

Personality and interest in religious ethics

Table 8.4.14 shows the relationship between personality and interest in studying the ethics of various religions. It is shown that psychoticism is positively associated with interest in Buddhist ethics ($r = .1431$, $p < .001$) and Jain ethics ($r = .1283$, $p < .001$), and negatively associated with interest in Christian ethics ($r = -.0902$, $p < .01$).

Table 8.4.14 correlation matrix scale 14: interest in religious ethics with personality

Item	P	E	N	L
Buddhist ethics	.1431 .001	.0292 NS	-.0040 NS	-.0517 NS
Christian ethics	-.0902 .01	.0501 NS	-.0340 NS	-.0084 NS
Hindu ethics	.0657 NS	.0292 NS	-.0030 NS	-.0621 NS
Jain ethics	.1283 .001	.0290 NS	-.0035 NS	-.0713 NS
Jewish ethics	-.0240 NS	.0108 NS	-.0241 NS	.0035 NS
Islamic ethics	.0263 NS	.0549 NS	.0236 NS	-.0638 NS
Sikh ethics	.0459 NS	.0412 NS	-.0059 NS	-.0220 NS

Psychoticism is shown to be unrelated to interest in the ethics of Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, or Sikhism. Neither extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in studying the ethics of any of the world religions under investigation.

Personality and interest in religious art and culture

Table 8.4.15 correlation matrix scale 15: interest in religious art and culture with personality

Item	P	E	N	L
Buddhist art and culture	.1147 .001	.0517 NS	.0495 NS	-.0077 NS
Christian art and culture	-.0726 NS	.0395 NS	.0356 NS	.0469 NS
Hindu art and culture	.0223 NS	.0421 NS	.0551 NS	-.0157 NS
Jain art and culture	.0596 NS	.0228 NS	.0479 NS	-.0024 NS
Jewish art and culture	-.0343 NS	.0434 NS	.0189 NS	.0335 NS
Islamic art and culture	-.0139 NS	.0579 NS	.0366 NS	-.0171 NS
Sikh art and culture	.0390 NS	.0436 NS	.0250 NS	.0123 NS

Table 8.4.15 shows the relationship between personality and interest in studying the art and culture of various religions. It is shown that psychoticism is positively associated with interest in Buddhist art and culture ($r=.1147$, $p<.001$). Psychoticism is shown to be unrelated to interest in the art and culture of Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, or Sikhism. Neither extraversion, neuroticism nor lie scale scores are significantly associated with interest in studying the art and culture of any of the world religions under investigation.

Summary

It has been shown that psychoticism is the dimension of personality which exerts greatest influence on the level of interest in various areas of religious studies. Psychoticism was shown to be positively associated with interest in Buddhism as expressed through the scale ($r=.1273$, $p<.001$) and the range of different components of the scale (Buddhism $r=.1092$, $p<.001$; Buddhist scriptures $r=.1165$, $p<.001$; Buddhist beliefs $r=.1032$, $p<.001$; Buddhist ethics $r=.1431$, $p<.001$; Buddhist art and culture $r=.1147$, $p<.001$). Only interest in Buddhist history was shown to be unrelated to psychoticism scores. This is of particular interest as it adds weight to the suggestion that Buddhism is in some way peculiar in religious studies. The way in which people are influenced to become interested in Buddhism seems to be different to the way in which they are influenced to become interested in other religions.

Psychoticism was shown to be negatively associated with interest in Christianity as expressed through the scale ($r=-.1981$, $p<.001$) and the range of different components of the scale (Christianity as a world faith $r=-.1760$, $p<.001$; Christian scriptures $r=-.1705$, $p<.001$; Christian beliefs $r=-.2155$, $p<.001$; Christian history $r=-.2077$, $p<.001$; Christian ethics $r=-.0902$, $p<.01$). Only interest in Christian art and culture was shown to be unrelated to psychoticism scores.

Psychoticism was shown to be negatively associated with interest in Judaism as expressed through the scale ($r = -.1033$, $p < .001$) and the range of different components of the scale (Judaism $r = -.1516$, $p < .001$; Jewish beliefs $r = -.0947$, $p < .01$; Jewish history $r = -.1101$, $p < .001$). Interest in Jewish scriptures, Jewish ethics and Jewish art and culture were shown to be unrelated to psychoticism scores.

Psychoticism showed no relationship to the scales concerned with Hinduism, Jainism, Islam or Sikhism. Neither extraversion, neuroticism, nor lie scale scores were shown to be significantly related to the scales concerned with interest in Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Jainism, Judaism, Islam or Sikhism.

Personality was shown to exert no significant effect on the level of interest in the study of themes and perspectives in the study of religion. The only patterns to emerge are shown to represent an interaction between personality and different religions. Personality is shown to have no influence on the level of interest in the different elements of religion.

Religiosity and interest in religious studies

It was shown in chapter 7 of the current dissertation that religiosity was a significant predictor of interest in studying religion. Scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity were significantly associated with interest in religious studies ($r = .1919$, $p < .001$), as was frequency of church attendance ($r = .0915$, $p < .01$), frequency of prayer ($r = .1261$, $p < .001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r = .1293$, $p < .001$). It is therefore of theoretical interest to investigate the impact of religiosity on the levels of interest of the participants across various areas of religious studies.

Table 8.5: The relationship between levels of interest in different areas of religious studies and religiosity.

Scale	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
scale 1: interest in studying Buddhism	-.1427 .001	-.1362 .001	-.0943 .01	-.0947 .01
scale 2: interest in studying Christianity	.4696 .001	.3410 .001	.3770 .001	.3308 .001
scale 3: interest in studying Hinduism	-.0165 NS	-.0250 NS	.0020 NS	-.0169 NS
scale 4: interest in studying Jainism	-.0484 NS	-.0673 NS	-.0428 NS	-.0573 NS
scale 5: interest in studying Judaism	.1819 .001	.1074 .001	.1590 .001	.1397 .001
scale 6: interest in studying Islam	.0308 NS	-.0640 NS	.0394 NS	.0640 NS
scale 7: interest in studying Sikhism	-.0171 NS	-.0394 NS	.0021 NS	-.0077 NS
scale 8: interest in studying perspectives in the study of religion	.0293 NS	-.0124 NS	.0234 NS	-.0015 NS
scale 9: interest in studying languages in religious studies	.0716 NS	.0350 NS	.0823 .01	.0273 NS
scale 10: interest in studying world religions	.0553 NS	.0027 NS	.0559 NS	.0482 NS
scale 11: interest in studying religious scriptures	.1288 .001	.0781 NS	.1096 .001	.0887 .01
scale 12: interest in studying religious beliefs	.0905 .01	.0296 NS	.0876 .01	.0776 NS
scale 13: interest in studying religious history	.0865 .01	.0108 NS	.0895 .01	.0786 .01
scale 14: interest in studying religious ethics	.0295 NS	-.0015 NS	.0341 NS	-.0035 NS
scale 15: interest in studying religious art and culture	-.0076 NS	-.0387 NS	.0013 NS	.0173 NS

Table 8.5 shows the relationship between the levels of interest in various areas of religious studies and religiosity. It is shown that interest in Buddhism was negatively associated with each of the markers of religiosity, including scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r = -.1427$, $p < .001$), frequency of church attendance ($r = -.1362$, $p < .001$), frequency of prayer ($r = -.0943$, $p < .01$), and belief in the existence of God ($r = -.0947$, $p < .01$).

Interest in studying Christianity was positively associated with each of the markers of religiosity, including scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.4696$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.3410$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.3770$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.3308$, $p<.001$). This pattern was repeated with regard to the relationship between religiosity and interest in Judaism. Interest in studying Judaism was positively associated with each of the markers of religiosity, including scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.1819$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.1074$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.1590$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.1397$, $p<.001$).

Interest in studying Hinduism, Jainism, Islam and Sikhism was shown to be independent of all measures of religiosity.

The relationships between religiosity and various methodological approaches to the study of religion, and between religiosity and the components of the various religions is not so clear cut. It is shown that interest in perspectives in the study of religion is not significantly associated with any of the markers of religiosity. Interest in the study of languages in religious studies is shown to be related to the frequency of prayer ($r=.0823$, $p<.01$), but unrelated to score on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity, frequency of church attendance, or belief in the existence of God.

Interest in studying world religions was shown to be unrelated to any of the four markers of religiosity. Interest in studying religious ethics, and religious art and culture was also shown to be unrelated to each of the markers of religiosity.

Interest in studying religious scriptures and religious history was shown to be related to scores on

the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity, frequency of prayer, and belief in the existence of God, although each of these was found to be unrelated to frequency of church attendance. Interest in studying religious scriptures was positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.1288$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.1096$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God, ($r=.0887$, $p<.01$). Interest in studying religious history was positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.0865$, $p<.01$), frequency of prayer ($r=.0895$, $p<.01$), and belief in the existence of God, ($r=.0786$, $p<.01$).

The relationship between religiosity and interest in studying religious beliefs was of particular interest. It is shown to be positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.0905$, $p<.01$) and frequency of personal prayer ($r=.0876$, $p<.01$), although interest in religious beliefs is shown to be unrelated to belief in God. Those students who hold religious beliefs seem no more interested in studying religious beliefs than students who have no religious beliefs.

Religiosity and interest in Buddhism

Table 8.5.1 correlation matrix scale 1: interest in Buddhism with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Buddhism	-.1450 .001	-.1469 .001	-.1124 .001	-.1087 .001
Buddhist scriptures	-.0573 NS	-.0551 NS	-.0402 NS	-.0329 NS
Buddhist beliefs	-.1151 .001	-.1146 .001	-.0755 NS	-.0729 NS
Buddhist history	-.1016 .001	-.1091 .001	-.0571 NS	-.0440 NS
Buddhist ethics	-.1220 .001	-.1074 .001	-.0744 NS	-.1096 .001
Buddhist art and culture	-.1632 .001	-.1246 .001	-.1068 .001	-.0941 .01

Table 8.5.1 shows the relationship between interest in Buddhism and religiosity. It is shown that

scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are negatively associated with 5 of the 6 aspects of Buddhism. Each of these relationships is significant at the .001 level. Only interest in Buddhist scriptures remains unrelated to scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity. It is shown that frequency of church attendance is negatively associated with 5 of the 6 aspects of Buddhism. Each of these relationships is significant at the .001 level. Only interest in Buddhist scriptures remains unrelated to church attendance. Frequency of prayer is shown to be negatively associated with only 2 of the 6 items. Both of these relationships are significant at the .001 level. Interest in Buddhist scriptures, beliefs, history and ethics remains independent of frequency of prayer. Belief in the existence of God is shown to be negatively associated with 3 of the 6 aspects of Buddhism. Interest in Buddhist scriptures, beliefs and history remains unrelated to belief in the existence of God.

It is shown that different aspects of religiosity impact differently on the level of interest in different components of Buddhism. Only interest in studying Buddhist scriptures remains independent of each of the aspects of religiosity.

Religiosity and interest in Christianity

Table 8.5.2 shows the relationship between interest in Christianity and religiosity. It is shown that scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are significantly associated with each of the six aspects of Christianity. Each of these relationships achieves significance at the .001 level. It is shown that frequency of church attendance is significantly associated with each of the six aspects of Christianity.

Table 8.5.2 correlation matrix scale 2: interest in Christianity with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Christianity as a world faith	.4146 .001	.3006 .001	.3170 .001	.2794 .001
Christian scriptures	.4627 .001	.3780 .001	.3685 .001	.3118 .001
Christian beliefs	.4164 .001	.2965 .001	.3171 .001	.2915 .001
Christian history	.3612 .001	.2396 .001	.2291 .001	.2614 .001
Christian ethics	.2961 .001	.2221 .001	.2318 .001	.1912 .001
Christian art and culture	.2468 .001	.1567 .001	.2244 .001	.2053 .001

Each of these relationships achieves significance at the .001 level. It is shown that frequency of prayer is significantly associated with each of the six aspects of Christianity. Each of these relationships achieves significance at the .001 level. It is shown that belief in the existence of God is significantly associated with each of the six aspects of Christianity. Each of these relationships achieves significance at the .001 level. Every aspect of Christianity is significantly related to each aspect of religiosity. It would appear that religious students have a higher level of interest in Christianity than non-religious students.

Religiosity and interest in Hinduism

Table 8.5.3 shows the relationship between interest in Hinduism and religiosity. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are shown to be unrelated to any of the six aspects of Hinduism. Frequencies of church attendance and prayer, and belief in the existence of God are shown to be unrelated to each of the six aspects of Hinduism. Interest in studying Hinduism is shown to be unrelated religiosity.

Table 8.5.3 correlation matrix scale 3: interest in Hinduism with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Hinduism	-.0225 NS	-.0157 NS	.0012 NS	-.0197 NS
Hindu scriptures	-.0038 NS	-.0073 NS	.0101 NS	-.0150 NS
Hindu beliefs	-.0158 NS	-.0218 NS	.0001 NS	-.0033 NS
Hindu history	.0155 NS	-.0150 NS	.0273 NS	.0256 NS
Hindu ethics	-.0087 NS	-.0102 NS	-.0107 NS	-.0314 NS
Hindu art and culture	-.0550 NS	-.0493 NS	-.0333 NS	-.0354 NS

Religiosity and interest in Jainism

Table 8.5.4 correlation matrix scale 4: Interest in Jainism with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Jainism	-.0532 NS	-.0451 NS	-.0167 NS	-.0520 NS
Jain scriptures	-.0163 NS	-.0337 NS	-.0208 NS	-.0206 NS
Jain beliefs	-.0032 NS	-.0343 NS	-.0009 NS	-.0072 NS
Jain history	-.0390 NS	-.0532 NS	-.0201 NS	-.0275 NS
Jain ethics	-.0509 NS	-.0372 NS	-.0384 NS	-.0771 NS
Jain art and culture	-.0748 NS	-.0768 NS	-.0654 NS	-.0542 NS

Table 8.5.4 shows the relationship between interest in Jainism and religiosity. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are shown to be unrelated to any of the six aspects of Jainism, as are frequencies of church attendance and prayer, and belief in the existence of God. Interest in studying Jainism is shown to be unrelated religiosity.

Religiosity and interest in Judaism

Table 8.5.5 correlation matrix scale 5: interest in Judaism with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Judaism	.1549 .001	.0889 .01	.1414 .001	.1323 .001
Jewish scriptures	.2102 .001	.1495 .001	.1705 .001	.1680 .001
Jewish beliefs	.1803 .001	.1056 .001	.1477 .001	.1355 .001
Jewish history	.1681 .001	.1047 .001	.1616 .001	.1276 .001
Jewish ethics	.0971 .01	.0750 NS	.0975 .01	.0439 NS
Jewish art and culture	.0926 .01	.0270 NS	.0666 NS	.0957 NS

Table 8.5.5 shows the relationship between interest in Judaism and religiosity. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are shown to be significantly associated with each of the six aspects of Judaism. Frequency of church attendance and belief in the existence of God are significantly associated with interest in the same four of the six component parts of Judaism. Neither Jewish ethics, nor Jewish art and culture are significantly associated with frequency of church attendance or belief in the existence of God. Frequency of prayer is shown to be significantly associated with five of the six aspects of Judaism. Only interest in Jewish art and culture was shown to be unrelated to frequency of prayer. Religiosity clearly influences interest in a range of aspects of Judaism.

Religiosity and interest in Islam

Table 8.5.6 shows the relationship between interest in Islam and religiosity. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are shown to be unrelated to each of the six dimensions of Islam. Frequency prayer is also shown to be unrelated to each of the six dimensions of Islam.

Table 8.5.6 correlation matrix scale 6: Interest in Islam with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Islam	.0189 NS	-.0586 NS	.0177 NS	.0609 NS
Islamic scriptures	.0690 NS	-.0208 NS	.0656 NS	.0756 NS
Islamic beliefs	.0553 NS	-.0236 NS	.0637 NS	.0837 .01
Islamic history	.0531 NS	-.0452 NS	.0576 NS	.0629 NS
Islamic ethics	-.0139 NS	-.0958 .01	.0111 NS	.0131 NS
Islamic art and culture	-.0165 NS	-.0717 NS	.0005 NS	.0376 NS

Frequency of church attendance is negatively associated with interest in Islamic scriptures ($r = -.0958$, $p < .01$). Belief in the existence of God is shown to be positively associated with interest in studying Islamic beliefs ($r = .0837$, $p < .01$).

Religiosity and interest in Sikhism

Table 8.5.7 correlation matrix scale 7: Interest in Sikhism with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Sikhism	-.0095 NS	-.0229 NS	.0007 NS	.0113 NS
Sikh scriptures	.0169 NS	.0090 NS	.0189 NS	.0160 NS
Sikh beliefs	.0096 NS	-.0020 NS	.0391 NS	.0142 NS
Sikh history	-.004 NS	-.0314 NS	.0211 NS	.0009 NS
Sikh ethics	-.0234 NS	-.0352 NS	-.0106 NS	-.0302 NS
Sikh art and culture	-.0505 NS	-.0658 NS	-.0483 NS	-.0365 NS

Table 8.5.7 shows the relationship between interest in Sikhism and religiosity. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are shown to be unrelated to any of the six aspects of Sikhism.

Frequencies of church attendance and prayer, and belief in the existence of God are shown to be unrelated to each of the six aspects of Sikhism. Interest in studying Sikhism is shown to be unrelated religiosity.

Religiosity and interest in perspectives in religious studies

Table 8.5.8 correlation matrix scale 8: interest in perspectives in religious studies with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Anthropology of religion	.0741 NS	.0136 NS	.0490 NS	.0395 NS
Philosophy of religion	.0427 NS	.0404 NS	.0201 NS	.0017 NS
Psychology of religion	.0058 NS	-.0215 NS	.0067 NS	-.0157 NS
Sociology of religion	.0097 NS	-.0353 NS	.0216 NS	.0174 NS

Table 8.5.8 shows the relationship between interest in perspectives in the study of religion and religiosity. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are shown to be unrelated to any of the four perspectives. Frequencies of church attendance and prayer, and belief in the existence of God are shown to be unrelated to each of the four perspectives. Interest in studying perspectives in the study of religion is shown to be unrelated religiosity.

Religiosity and interest in religious languages

Table 8.5.9 shows the relationship between interest in languages in religious studies and religiosity. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are positively associated with interest in studying Hebrew ($r=.1522$, $p<.001$) and Latin ($r=.1145$, $p<.001$). These languages are theoretically linked to the study of Christianity. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are not related to interest in studying languages, such as Arabic, Pali and Sanskrit, which are more commonly associated with the study of non-Christian religions.

Table 8.5.9 correlation matrix scale 9: interest in languages in religious studies with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Greek	.0751 NS	.0574 NS	.0966 .01	.0310 NS
Hebrew	.1522 .001	.1104 .001	.1609 .001	.0800 .01
Latin	.1145 .001	.0671 NS	.0956 .01	.0470 NS
Arabic	.0487 NS	-.0142 NS	.0748 NS	.0319 NS
Sanskrit	-.0032 NS	-.0066 NS	.0045 NS	-.0403 NS
Pali	-.0062 NS	-.0166 NS	-.0072 NS	-.0269 NS

Frequency of church attendance is shown to be positively associated with interest in studying Hebrew ($r=.1104$, $p<.001$). Frequency of church attendance is shown to be unrelated to interest in any of the other languages.

Frequency of prayer is significantly associated with interest in studying Greek ($r=.0966$, $p<.01$), Hebrew, ($r=.1609$, $p<.001$) and Latin ($r=.0956$, $p<.01$). Frequency of prayer is unrelated to interest in the three languages which are not generally associated with Christianity.

Belief in the existence of God is significantly associated with an interest in studying Hebrew ($r=.0800$, $p<.01$). The relationships between religiosity and interest in languages in religious studies do not form a coherent pattern. Generally, the languages associated with Christianity are related to religiosity, whereas those associated with non-Christian religions are not shown to be related to religiosity. Interest in Hebrew is shown to be positively associated with each of the markers of religiosity.

Religiosity and interest in world religions

Table 8.5.10 correlation matrix scale 10: interest in world religions with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Buddhism	-.1450 .001	-.1469 .001	-.1124 .001	-.1087 .001
Christianity as a world faith	.4146 .001	.3006 .001	.3170 .001	.2794 .001
Hinduism	-.0225 NS	-.0157 NS	.0012 NS	-.0197 NS
Jainism	-.0532 NS	-.0451 NS	-.0167 NS	-.0520 NS
Judaism	.1549 .001	.0889 .01	.1414 .001	.1323 .001
Islam	.0189 NS	-.0586 NS	.0177 NS	.0609 NS
Sikhism	-.0095 NS	-.0229 NS	.0007 NS	.0113 NS

Table 8.5.10 shows the relationship between interest in studying different world religions and religiosity. It is shown that interest in Buddhism is negatively associated with each of the aspects of religiosity. It is interesting to note that interest in Buddhism was shown, earlier in the current chapter, to be positively associated with psychoticism. Given that psychoticism and religiosity are generally shown to be inversely related, the significant positive relationship between psychoticism interest in Buddhism, and negative relationship between religiosity and interest in Buddhism are of particular interest. These, presumably, interrelated relationships will be unpicked within the multiple regression tables later in the current chapter.

Interest in the study of Christianity is shown to be positively associated with each of the four markers of religiosity, as is interest in the study of Judaism. The Judeo-Christian tradition is shown to generate similar levels of interest among students of similar religious profiles. It may be the case that the Jewish heritage inherent within Christianity is important enough to religious students to be of particular interest.

Interest in studying neither Hinduism, Jainism, Islam, nor Sikhism is related to any of the four aspects of religiosity. It is not clear why interest in Buddhism should generate such strong negative reactions from among the religious sub-population, when Hinduism, for example fails to excite the same levels of disinterest. It may be the case that the respondents consider Buddhism to be a somewhat anachronistic atheist worldview outside of their ordinary experience of expressions of religiosity.

Religiosity and interest in religious scriptures

Table 8.5.11 correlation matrix scale 11: interest in religious scriptures with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Buddhist scriptures	-.0573 NS	-.0551 NS	-.0402 NS	-.0329 NS
Christian scriptures	.4627 .001	.3780 .001	.3685 .001	.3118 .001
Hindu scriptures	-.0038 NS	-.0073 NS	.0101 NS	-.0150 NS
Jain scriptures	-.0163 NS	-.0337 NS	-.0208 NS	-.0206 NS
Jewish scriptures	.2102 .001	.1495 .001	.1705 .001	.1680 .001
Islamic scriptures	.0690 NS	-.0208 NS	.0656 NS	.0756 NS
Sikh scriptures	.0169 NS	.0090 NS	.0189 NS	.0160 NS

Table 8.5.11 shows the relationship between interest in studying religious scriptures and religiosity. Interest in studying the scriptures of Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Islam and Sikhism, is shown to be unrelated to the four different aspects of religiosity. Interest in studying the scriptures of Judaism and Christianity is shown to be significantly associated with each of the four markers of religiosity. Each of these correlations achieves significance at the .001 level. A similarity in the pattern in these relationships concerning the Jewish and the Christian scriptures would be

expected, as the two traditions have some of their scriptures in common. Each of the aspects of religiosity is shown to predict the level of interest in religious scriptures in similar ways to one another.

Religiosity and interest in religious beliefs

Table 8.5.12 correlation matrix scale 12: interest in religious beliefs with religiosity

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Buddhist beliefs	-.1151 .001	-.1146 .001	-.0755 NS	-.0729 NS
Christian beliefs	.4164 .001	.2965 .001	.3171 .001	.2915 .001
Hindu beliefs	-.0158 NS	-.0218 NS	.0001 NS	-.0033 NS
Jain beliefs	-.0032 NS	-.0343 NS	-.0009 NS	-.0072 NS
Jewish beliefs	.1803 .001	.1056 .001	.1477 .001	.1355 .001
Islamic beliefs	.0553 NS	-.0236 NS	.0637 NS	.0837 .01
Sikh beliefs	.0096 NS	-.0020 NS	.0391 NS	.0142 NS

Table 8.5.12 shows the relationship between interest in studying religious beliefs and religiosity. The relationships which emerge between religiosity and interest in studying religious beliefs are shown to be more complex than the relations presented in table 8.5.11. Here it is shown that the different aspects of religiosity impact on levels of interest differently to one another.

It is shown that interest in studying Buddhist beliefs is negatively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r = -.1151$, $p < .001$), and frequency of church attendance ($r = -.1146$, $p < .001$). Interest in studying Buddhist beliefs remains unrelated to frequency of prayer and belief in the existence of God.

Interest in studying Christian beliefs and Jewish beliefs is significantly associated with each of the four aspects of religiosity. Again, there may be enough commonality between these two religions to explain why the patterns of interest in their beliefs are so similar in regard to the way in which they are impacted by religiosity. One further feature emerges as being of interest here. Belief in the existence of God is shown to be significantly associated with interest in Islamic beliefs. It may be the case that belief in the existence of God acts to generate interest in the beliefs of each of the monotheistic traditions. Young people may be trying to understand the nature of God, and the nature of the relationships which members of different faiths have with God. Each of the four markers of religiosity are shown to be unrelated to interest in studying Jainism, Hinduism, and Sikhism.

Religiosity and interest in religious history

Table 8.5.13 correlation matrix scale 13: interest in religious history with religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Buddhist history	-.1016 .001	-.1091 .001	-.0571 NS	-.0440 NS
Christian history	.3612 .001	.2396 .001	.2291 .001	.2614 .001
Hindu history	.0155 NS	-.0150 NS	.0273 NS	.0256 NS
Jain history	-.0390 NS	-.0532 NS	-.0201 NS	-.0275 NS
Jewish history	.1681 .001	.1047 .001	.1616 .001	.1276 .001
Islamic history	.0531 NS	-.0452 NS	.0576 NS	.0629 NS
Sikh history	-.004 NS	-.0314 NS	.0211 NS	.0009 NS

Table 8.5.13 shows the relationship between interest in religious history and religiosity. It is shown that interest in studying Buddhist history is negatively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r = -.1016$, $p < .001$), and frequency of church attendance ($r =$

.1091, $p < .001$). Interest in studying Buddhist history remains unrelated to frequency of prayer and belief in the existence of God.

Interest in Christian history and Jewish history are shown to be positively associated with each of the four aspects of religiosity. Each of these correlations achieves significance at the .001 level. Interest in Jain, Hindu, Islamic, and Sikh history has been shown to be unrelated to each of the four aspects of religiosity.

Religiosity and interest in religious ethics

Table 8.5.14 correlation matrix scale 14: interest in religious ethics with religiosity

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Buddhist ethics	-.1220 .001	-.1074 .001	-.0744 NS	-.1096 .001
Christian ethics	.2961 .001	.2221 .001	.2318 .001	.1912 .001
Hindu ethics	-.0087 NS	-.0102 NS	-.0107 NS	-.0314 NS
Jain ethics	-.0509 NS	-.0372 NS	-.0384 NS	-.0771 NS
Jewish ethics	.0971 .01	.0750 NS	.0975 .01	.0439 NS
Islamic ethics	-.0139 NS	-.0958 .01	.0111 NS	.0131 NS
Sikh ethics	-.0234 NS	-.0352 NS	-.0106 NS	-.0302 NS

Table 8.5.14 shows the relationship between interest in religious ethics and religiosity. It is shown that interest in Buddhist ethics is negatively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r = -.1220$, $p < .001$), with frequency of Church attendance ($r = -.1074$, $p < .001$), and with belief in the existence of God ($r = -.1096$, $p < .001$). Interest in Buddhist ethics was shown to be unrelated to frequency of prayer.

Each of the four aspects of religiosity was shown to be positively associated with interest in Christian ethics. Each of these correlations achieves significance at the .001 level. Interest in studying Jewish ethics was shown to be positively associated with scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity ($r=.0971$, $p<.01$), and with frequency of prayer ($r=.0975$, $p<.01$). However, interest in studying Jewish ethics was shown to be unrelated to frequency of church attendance, or belief in the existence of God. This is of particular interest, as it is inconsistent with the emerging pattern which has generally shown that interest in components of Judaism is predicted in the same way as interest in components of Christianity by religiosity.

Religiosity and interest in religious art and culture

Table 8.5.15 correlation matrix scale 15: interest in religious art and culture with religiosity

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Buddhist art and culture	-.1632 .001	-.1246 .001	-.1068 .001	-.0941 .01
Christian art and culture	.2468 .001	.1567 .001	.2244 .001	.2053 .001
Hindu art and culture	-.0550 NS	-.0493 NS	-.0333 NS	-.0354 NS
Jain art and culture	-.0748 NS	-.0768 NS	-.0654 NS	-.0542 NS
Jewish art and culture	.0926 .01	.0270 NS	.0666 NS	.0957 NS
Islamic art and culture	-.0165 NS	-.0717 NS	.0005 NS	.0376 NS
Sikh art and culture	-.0505 NS	-.0658 NS	-.0483 NS	-.0365 NS

Table 8.5.15 shows the relationship between interest in religious art and culture and religiosity. It is shown that interest in Buddhist art and culture was negatively associated with each of the four aspects of religiosity. Interest in Christian art and culture is shown to be positively associated with each of the four aspects of religiosity. Interest in Jewish art and culture was shown to be significantly associated with scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity ($r=.0926$, $p<.01$).

Summary

The relationship between religiosity and interest in different areas of religious studies has been demonstrated to be of interest. It has been shown that different aspects of religiosity act differently in the way that they affect students' interests in religious studies. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity, frequency of church attendance, frequency of prayer, and extent of belief in God are all markers of religiosity, but they are different. They each play a different role in predicting individual differences in levels of interest in religious studies. Scores on the scale of interest in Buddhism was negatively associated with each of the markers of religiosity, including scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r = -.1427$, $p < .001$), frequency of church attendance ($r = -.1362$, $p < .001$), frequency of prayer ($r = -.0943$, $p < .01$), and belief in the existence of God ($r = -.0947$, $p < .01$). This pattern was supported by an analysis of the component parts of this scale.

Scores on the scale of interest in Christianity were positively associated with each of the markers of religiosity, including scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r = .4696$, $p < .001$), frequency of church attendance ($r = .3410$, $p < .001$), frequency of prayer ($r = .3770$, $p < .001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r = .3308$, $p < .001$). This pattern was repeated with regard to the relationship between religiosity and scores on the scale of interest in Judaism. Interest in studying Judaism was positively associated with each of the markers of religiosity, including scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r = .1819$, $p < .001$), frequency of church attendance ($r = .1074$, $p < .001$), frequency of prayer ($r = .1590$, $p < .001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r = .1397$, $p < .001$).

The basic finding of this section is that measures of religiosity are positively associated with

interest in the Christianity and Judaism. Interest in Buddhism is shown to be negatively associated with religiosity. Once more, interest in Buddhism is shown to be of interest because it fails to be related to independent variables in a manner consistent with theory. It seems that Buddhism may be a religion that interests males as much as it interests females, a religion which is not boring to the tough-minded student, and a religion which in which the irreligious are interested. Due to the complex interactions between each of these variables, it is essential to carry out a series of multiple-regression tests in order to tease out the levels of influence that each of these variables has on levels of interest in the different areas of religious studies.

Further analysis

Table 8.6.1 multiple regression significance test: interest in Buddhism

Predictor variable	increase						
	r ²	r ²	F	p<	β	t	p<
Sex	.0025	.0025	2.2	NS	.0793	2.3	NS
Extraversion	.0028	.0003	0.3	NS	.0070	0.2	NS
Neuroticism	.0040	.0013	1.2	NS	.0463	1.3	NS
Psychoticism	.0278	.0237	22.0	.001	.1312	3.6	.001
Lie	.0278	.0000	0.0	NS	.0013	0.0	NS
Attitude score	.0377	.0059	9.3	.01	-.0953	-1.5	NS
Attendance	.0434	.0057	5.4	NS	-.1140	-2.4	NS
Prayer freq	.0444	.0009	0.9	NS	.0399	0.7	NS
Belief in God	.0453	.0010	0.9	NS	.0482	0.9	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex, psychoticism scores, attitude toward Christianity, frequency of church attendance and prayer and extent of belief in the existence of God all impact on the level of interest that students display in Buddhism. However, data presented in table 8.6.1 demonstrate that when the impact of all of the variables is considered together, psychoticism is the key variable which predicts interest in Buddhism and the apparent influence of sex and religiosity simply reflect the basic

influence of this fundamental dimension of personality. A positive association between psychoticism and interest in Buddhism is of worthy of comment, as psychoticism was shown earlier in the dissertation to be negatively associated with interest in religious studies.

Table 8.6.2 multiple regression significance test: interest in Christianity

Predictor variable	increase						
	r^2	r^2	F	p<	β	t	p<
Sex	.0043	.0043	3.9	NS	.0219	0.7	NS
Extraversion	.0045	.0002	0.2	NS	.0351	1.1	NS
Neuroticism	.0055	.0010	0.9	NS	.0407	1.3	NS
Psychoticism	.0438	.0383	36.1	.01	-.0695	-2.1	NS
Lie	.0441	.0003	0.3	NS	-.0112	-0.4	NS
Attitude score	.2299	.1858	217.2	.001	.4161	7.4	.001
Attendance	.2324	.0025	2.9	NS	.0616	1.5	NS
Prayer freq	.2325	.0001	0.1	NS	.0236	0.5	NS
Belief in God	.2329	.0004	0.5	NS	-.0325	-0.7	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex, psychoticism scores, attitude toward Christianity, frequency of church attendance and prayer and extent of belief in the existence of God all impact on the level of interest that students display in Christianity. However, data presented in table 8.6.2 demonstrate that when all of the variables are considered together, scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are shown to be the key variable in predicting levels of interest in Christianity. The absence of a sex difference in levels of interest in Christianity is important. It seems that where a sex difference would be expected here, it is not present. Both males and females within the current sample display similar levels of interest in Christianity.

Table 8.6.3 multiple regression significance test: interest in Hinduism

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0111	.0111	10.2	.001	.1202	3.5	.001
Extraversion	.0111	.0000	0.0	NS	-.0105	-0.3	NS
Neuroticism	.0121	.0010	0.9	NS	.0306	0.9	NS
Psychoticism	.0149	.0028	2.6	NS	.0443	1.2	NS
Lie	.0157	.0007	0.7	NS	-.0307	-0.9	NS
Attitude score	.0159	.0002	0.2	NS	.0228	0.4	NS
Attendance	.0179	.0020	1.9	NS	-.0656	-1.4	NS
Prayer freq	.0180	.0001	0.1	NS	.0181	0.3	NS
Belief in God	.0180	.0000	0.0	NS	-.0092	-0.2	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex and impact on the level of interest that students display in Hinduism. Table 8.6.3 shows that when all of the variables are considered together, sex remains the key variable in predicting levels of interest in Hinduism. Females are significantly more likely to be interested in studying Hinduism than males.

Table 8.6.4 multiple regression significance test: interest in Jainism

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0071	.0071	6.5	.01	.1098	3.2	.01
Extraversion	.0072	.0001	0.1	NS	-.0182	-0.5	NS
Neuroticism	.0087	.0015	1.4	NS	.0453	1.3	NS
Psychoticism	.0184	.0097	8.9	.01	.0925	2.5	NS
Lie	.0185	.0001	0.1	NS	-.0170	-0.5	NS
Attitude score	.0187	.0002	0.1	NS	.1029	1.6	NS
Attendance	.0249	.0062	5.8	NS	-.1018	-2.2	NS
Prayer freq	.0252	.0002	0.2	NS	-.0132	-0.2	NS
Belief in God	.0262	.0011	0.9	NS	-.0513	-1.0	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex and impact on the level of interest that students display in Jainism. Table 8.6.4 shows that when all of the variables are considered together, sex remains the key variable in predicting levels of interest in Jainism. Females are more likely to be interested in studying Jainism than males.

Table 8.6.5 multiple regression significance test: interest in Judaism

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0161	.0161	14.9	.001	.1113	3.2	.001
Extraversion	.0164	.0002	0.2	NS	-.0147	-0.4	NS
Neuroticism	.0164	.0001	.01	NS	-.0083	-0.2	NS
Psychoticism	.0223	.0058	5.4	NS	-.0309	-0.8	NS
Lie	.0223	.0000	0.0	NS	-.0015	-0.0	NS
Attitude score	.0458	.0235	22.2	.001	.1654	2.6	.01
Attendance	.0466	.0008	0.7	NS	-.0453	-1.0	NS
Prayer freq	.0468	.0003	0.3	NS	.0268	0.5	NS
Belief in God	.0469	.0000	0.0	NS	.0059	0.1	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex, psychoticism scores, attitude toward Christianity, frequency of church attendance and prayer and extent of belief in the existence of God all impact on the level of interest that students display in Judaism. However, table 8.6.5 shows that when all of the variables are considered together, sex is the key variable which predicts interest in Judaism, the impact of psychoticism has been negated, and scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity represent the key aspect of religiosity to impact on interest in Judaism.

Table 8.6.6 multiple regression significance test: interest in Islam

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0100	.0100	9.2	.01	.0905	2.6	.01
Extraversion	.0117	.0017	1.5	NS	.0344	0.1	NS
Neuroticism	.0124	.0007	0.6	NS	.0144	0.4	NS
Psychoticism	.0125	.0001	0.1	NS	-.0072	-0.2	NS
Lie	.0145	.0020	1.9	NS	-.0500	-1.5	NS
Attitude score	.0153	.0008	0.7	NS	.0882	1.4	NS
Attendance	.0345	.0182	17.9	.001	-.1954	-4.2	.001
Prayer freq	.0351	.0006	0.6	NS	.0223	0.4	NS
Belief in God	.0374	.0022	2.1	NS	.0740	1.4	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex and extent of belief in the existence of God impact on the level of interest that students display in Islam. However, data presented in table 8.6.6 demonstrate that when all of the variables are considered together, sex, and frequency of attendance at a place of worship are the key variables which impact on interest in Islam. Females display higher levels of interest in Islam than males. Whereas the bivariate analysis demonstrated that scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity impacted on interest in Islam, it is shown that after these scores are considered, a negative association between frequency of church attendance and interest in Islam emerges.

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex impact on the level of interest that students display in Sikhism. Table 8.6.7 demonstrates

Table 8.6.7 multiple regression significance test: interest in Sikhism

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0142	.0142	13.0	.001	.1251	3.6	.001
Extraversion	.0143	.0001	0.1	NS	.0057	0.2	NS
Neuroticism	.0144	.0001	.01	NS	.0099	0.3	NS
Psychoticism	.0158	.0014	1.2	NS	.0327	0.9	NS
Lie	.0158	.0000	0.0	NS	-.0063	-0.2	NS
Attitude score	.0160	.0002	0.2	NS	.0240	0.4	NS
Attendance	.0192	.0033	3.0	NS	-.0810	-1.7	NS
Prayer freq	.0193	.0001	0.1	NS	.0140	0.2	NS
Belief in God	.0193	.0000	0.0	NS	.0064	0.1	NS

that when all of the variables are considered together, sex remains the key variable in predicting levels of interest in Sikhism.

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex impact on the level of interest that students display in perspectives in the study of religion. However, table 8.6.8 shows that when all of the variables are considered together the impact of sex is negated. Interest in perspectives in the study of religion remains unrelated to any of the independent variables under investigation.

Table 8.6.8 multiple regression significance test: interest in perspectives in the study of religion.

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0043	.0043	3.9	NS	.0696	2.0	NS
Extraversion	.0056	.0013	1.2	NS	.0350	1.0	NS
Neuroticism	.0086	.0030	2.7	NS	.0457	1.3	NS
Psychoticism	.0087	.0001	0.1	NS	.0078	0.2	NS
Lie	.0142	.0055	5.0	NS	-.0798	-2.3	NS
Attitude score	.0164	.0022	2.0	NS	.1161	1.8	NS
Attendance	.0190	.0026	2.4	NS	-.0696	-1.5	NS
Prayer freq	.0190	.0000	0.0	NS	.0051	0.1	NS
Belief in God	.0195	.0005	0.4	NS	-.0332	-0.6	NS

Table 8.6.9 multiple regression significance test: interest in languages in religious studies.

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0018	.0018	1.7	NS	.0480	1.4	NS
Extraversion	.0024	.0006	0.5	NS	-.0199	-0.6	NS
Neuroticism	.0046	.0021	1.9	NS	.0528	1.5	NS
Psychoticism	.0046	.0000	0.0	NS	.0294	0.8	NS
Lie	.0046	.0000	0.0	NS	-.0044	-0.1	NS
Attitude score	.0123	.0077	7.0	.01	.1433	2.2	NS
Attendance	.0135	.0012	1.1	NS	-.0600	-1.3	NS
Prayer freq	.0139	.0004	0.4	NS	.0560	0.9	NS
Belief in God	.0163	.0024	2.2	NS	-.0764	-1.5	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex and frequency of prayer impact on the level of interest that students display in languages in religious studies. However, table 8.6.9 shows that when all of the variables are considered

together the impact of sex and prayer frequency is negated. Interest in languages in the study of religion remains unrelated to any of the independent variables under investigation.

Table 8.6.10 multiple regression significance test: interest in world religions.

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0199	.0199	18.3	.001	.1307	3.8	.001
Extraversion	.0199	.0000	0.0	NS	.0070	0.2	NS
Neuroticism	.0217	.0018	1.7	NS	.0380	1.1	NS
Psychoticism	.0227	.0010	1.0	NS	-.0225	-0.6	NS
Lie	.0228	.0001	0.1	NS	-.0131	-0.4	NS
Attitude score	.0250	.0022	2.1	NS	.0969	1.5	NS
Attendance	.0289	.0039	3.6	NS	-.0906	-1.9	NS
Prayer freq	.0291	.0002	0.2	NS	.0258	0.4	NS
Belief in God	.0291	.0000	0.0	NS	-.0099	-0.2	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex impact on the level of interest that students display in world religions. Table 8.6.10 shows that when all of the variables are considered together, sex remains the key variable in predicting interest in world religions. Females are more likely to be interested in world religions than males.

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in attitude toward Christianity, frequency of prayer and extent of belief in the existence of God all impact on the level of interest that students display in religious scriptures. However, table 8.6.11 shows that when all of the variables are considered together, scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity represent the key variable which impacts on interest in religious scriptures. When these scores have been taken into account, no further predictive value is achieved by any other

aspect of religiosity.

Table 8.6.11 multiple regression significance test: interest in religious scriptures

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0037	.0037	3.3	NS	.0654	1.9	NS
Extraversion	.0041	.0004	0.4	NS	-.0211	-0.6	NS
Neuroticism	.0046	.0005	0.4	NS	.0295	0.8	NS
Psychoticism	.0046	.0000	0.0	NS	.0381	1.0	NS
Lie	.0047	.0002	0.1	NS	-.0125	-0.4	NS
Attitude score	.0224	.0177	16.3	.001	.1760	1.8	.01
Attendance	.0228	.0005	0.4	NS	-.0273	-0.6	NS
Prayer freq	.0229	.0000	0.0	NS	-.0049	-0.1	NS
Belief in God	.0230	.0002	0.1	NS	-.0198	-0.4	NS

Table 8.6.12 multiple regression significance test: interest in religious beliefs

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0164	.0164	15.1	.001	.1308	3.8	.001
Extraversion	.0170	.0005	0.5	NS	.0196	0.6	NS
Neuroticism	.0182	.0012	1.1	NS	.0379	1.1	NS
Psychoticism	.0186	.0004	0.4	NS	.0460	1.2	NS
Lie	.0194	.0008	0.7	NS	-.0298	-0.9	NS
Attitude score	.0281	.0087	8.1	.01	.1288	2.0	NS
Attendance	.0325	.0044	4.1	NS	-.0971	-2.1	NS
Prayer freq	.0328	.0003	0.3	NS	.0259	0.4	NS
Belief in God	.0330	.0001	0.1	NS	.0183	0.4	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences

in sex, attitude toward Christianity and frequency of prayer all impact on the level of interest that students display in religious beliefs. However, table 8.6.12 demonstrates that when all of the variables are considered together it is shown that only sex impacts significantly on the level of interest that students have in religious beliefs.

Table 8.6.13 multiple regression significance test: interest in religious history

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0044	.0044	4.0	NS	.0544	1.6	NS
Extraversion	.0044	.0000	0.0	NS	.0001	0.0	NS
Neuroticism	.0047	.0003	0.3	NS	.0164	0.5	NS
Psychoticism	.0057	.0010	0.9	NS	-.0034	-0.1	NS
Lie	.0057	.0000	0.0	NS	.0035	0.1	NS
Attitude score	.0131	.0074	6.8	.01	.1247	1.9	NS
Attendance	.0217	.0086	7.9	.01	-.1369	-2.9	.01
Prayer freq	.0225	.0008	0.8	NS	.0408	0.7	NS
Belief in God	.0230	.0005	0.4	NS	.0338	0.7	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex, Attitude Toward Christianity and frequency of prayer and extent of belief in the existence of God impact on the level of interest that students display in religious history. However, table 8.6.13 shows that when the impact of all of the variables is considered together, frequency of attendance is the key variable which significantly predicts levels of interest in religious history. Frequency of attendance at a place of worship is negatively associated with interest in religious history.

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences

in sex impact on the level of interest that students display in religious ethics. Table 8.6.14 shows that when all of the variables are considered together, sex remains the key variable in predicting levels of interest in religious ethics. Females are significantly more likely to be interested in studying religious ethics than males.

Table 8.6.14 multiple regression significance test: interest in religious ethics

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0127	.0127	11.6	.001	.1406	4.1	.001
Extraversion	.0132	.0005	0.4	NS	-.0007	-0.0	NS
Neuroticism	.0132	.0000	0.0	NS	.0037	0.1	NS
Psychoticism	.0207	.0075	6.9	.01	.0862	2.3	NS
Lie	.0244	.0037	3.4	NS	-.0665	-1.9	NS
Attitude score	.0260	.0016	1.5	NS	.1140	1.7	NS
Attendance	.0292	.0032	2.9	NS	-.0834	-1.8	NS
Prayer freq	.0293	.0001	0.1	NS	.0323	0.6	NS
Belief in God	.0306	.0013	1.2	NS	-.0565	-1.1	NS

Table 8.6.15 multiple regression significance test: interest in religious art and culture

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0086	.0086	7.9	.01	.0930	2.7	.01
Extraversion	.0090	.0004	0.3	NS	.0228	0.7	NS
Neuroticism	.0106	.0016	1.5	NS	.0468	1.3	NS
Psychoticism	.0122	.0016	1.5	NS	.0492	1.3	NS
Lie	.0124	.0001	0.1	NS	.0124	0.4	NS
Attitude score	.0124	.0000	0.0	NS	.0126	0.2	NS
Attendance	.0162	.0038	3.5	NS	-.0851	-1.8	NS
Prayer freq	.0163	.0001	0.1	NS	-.0011	-0.0	NS
Belief in God	.0182	.0018	1.7	NS	.0670	1.3	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex impact on the level of interest that students display in religious art and culture. Table 8.6.14 shows that this remains the case when all of the variables are considered together. Females are significantly more likely to be interested in studying religious art and culture than males.

Conclusions

The first conclusion to emerge from the data relates to the psychometric credentials of the scales used to investigate the dependent variables throughout this chapter. Without exception, each scale generates a level of internal reliability in excess of .80. This is well above the .70 level suggested as a threshold by Kline (1993). Although these scales are not theoretically underpinned in terms of the leading dimensional analyses of religions (Smart, 1989), the levels of reliability generated by each of the scales show that each of the scales is empirically sound.

It has been demonstrated that different aspects of religious studies each generate different levels of support among students. Students are not indiscriminate in the interest that they display in religious studies. Interest in Christianity is generally higher than interest in other areas of the subject field.

It has been shown that females are generally more interested in religious studies than males. Christianity, in its various aspects, generates less significant sex differences than other areas. This, coupled with the fact that the various aspects of Christianity generate among the highest mean levels of support, suggests that the relative lack of sex differences is brought about by a high level of support across the board.

Buddhism also generated fewer sex differences than most of the other religions under investigation. However, it received less support than Christianity. It seems as though there is something peculiar to Buddhism that causes people to become interested in it, which is different to the ways in which they become interested in other religions.

It has been shown that psychoticism is the dimension of personality which exerts greatest influence on the level of interest in various areas of religious studies. Psychoticism was shown to be positively associated with interest in Buddhism as expressed through the scale ($r=.1273$, $p<.001$) and the range of different components of the scale (Buddhism $r=.1092$, $p<.001$; Buddhist scriptures $r=.1165$, $p<.001$; Buddhist beliefs $r=.1032$, $p<.001$; Buddhist ethics $r=.1431$, $p<.001$; Buddhist art and culture $r=.1147$, $p<.001$). This is of particular interest as it adds weight to the suggestion that Buddhism is in some way peculiar in religious studies. The way in which people are influenced to become interested in Buddhism seems to be different to the way in which they are influenced to become interested in other religions.

Psychoticism was shown to be negatively associated with interest in Christianity as expressed through the scale ($r=-.1981$, $p<.001$) and the range of different components of the scale (Christianity as a world faith $r=-.1760$, $p<.001$; Christian scriptures $r=-.1705$, $p<.001$; Christian beliefs $r=-.2155$, $p<.001$; Christian history $r=-.2077$, $p<.001$; Christian ethics $r=-.0902$, $p<.01$).

Psychoticism was shown to be negatively associated with interest in Judaism as expressed through the scale ($r=-.1033$, $p<.001$) and the range of different components of the scale (Judaism $r=-.1516$, $p<.001$; Jewish beliefs $r=-.0947$, $p<.01$; Jewish history $r=-.1101$, $p<.001$). Interest in Jewish scriptures, Jewish ethics and Jewish art and culture was shown to be unrelated to psychoticism

scores.

Psychoticism showed no relationship to the scales concerned with Hinduism, Jainism, Islam or Sikhism. Neither extraversion, neuroticism, nor lie scale scores were shown to be significantly related to the scales concerned with interest in Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Jainism, Judaism, Islam or Sikhism.

Personality was shown to exert no significant effect on the level of interest in the study of themes and perspectives in the study of religion. The only patterns to emerge are shown to represent an interaction between personality and different religions. Personality is shown to have no influence on the level of interest in the different elements of religion.

The relationship between religiosity and interest in different areas of religious studies has been demonstrated to be of interest. It has been shown that different aspects of religiosity act differently in the way that they affect students' interests in religious studies. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity, frequency of church attendance, frequency of prayer, and extent of belief in God are all markers of religiosity, but they are different. They each play a different role in predicting individual differences in levels of interest in religious studies. Scores on the scale of interest in Buddhism was negatively associated with each of the markers of religiosity, including scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r = -.1427$, $p < .001$), frequency of church attendance ($r = -.1362$, $p < .001$), frequency of prayer ($r = -.0943$, $p < .01$), and belief in the existence of God ($r = -.0947$, $p < .01$). This pattern was supported by an analysis of the component parts of this scale.

Scores on the scale of interest in Christianity were positively associated with each of the markers of religiosity, including scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.4696$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.3410$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.3770$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.3308$, $p<.001$). This pattern was repeated with regard to the relationship between religiosity and scores on the scale of interest in Judaism. Interest in studying Judaism was positively associated with each of the markers of religiosity, including scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.1819$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.1074$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.1590$, $p<.001$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.1397$, $p<.001$).

The basic finding of this section is that measures of religiosity are positively associated with interest in the Christianity and Judaism. Interest in Buddhism is shown to be negatively associated with religiosity. Once more, interest in Buddhism is shown to be of interest because it fails to be related to independent variables in a manner consistent with theory. It seems that Buddhism may be a religion that interests males as much as it interests females, a religion which is not boring to the tough-minded student, and a religion which in which the irreligious are interested.

The multiple regression analyses have demonstrated that when all of the variables are considered together in terms of their impact on the dependent variables, a more simple picture emerges with regard to students interests in religious studies.

It has been established that when all of the variables are considered together sex is the only variable to impact on Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, world religions, religious beliefs, religious ethics and religious art and culture. Psychoticism is the only variable to impact on interest in Buddhism.

Scores on The Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity is the only variable to impact on interest in Christianity and religious scriptures. Frequency of church attendance has been shown to be related to interest in religious history.

Sex was shown to be a significant predictor of interest in Judaism. After sex was taken into account scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity continued to impact significantly on interest in Judaism. Sex was shown to be a significant predictor of interest in Islam. After sex was taken into account frequency of church attendance was shown to negatively impact significantly on interest in Islam.

No factors are shown to impact on interest in perspectives in the study of religion and languages in religious studies.

Chapter 9

Student Perceptions of Religious Studies

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Introduction

Existing research has shown that the way in which religious studies is perceived by students predicts to some extent their motivation for choosing to study religion in a post-compulsory context. In addition to having predictive power in terms motivation to study religion, student perceptions are also themselves predicted to some extent by sex, personality and religiosity.

The first presentation in this chapter is a brief overview of student perceptions of religious studies. The scales outlined in chapter 6 of the current dissertation were completed by the participants. Data pertaining to the reliabilities of these scales are presented. Following this, levels of item endorsement are shown. Through the investigation of reliability and item endorsement it is shown that the scales function adequately among the current sample.

Having established that the scales are functioning correctly it becomes possible to investigate the impact of sex, personality and religiosity on student perceptions of religious studies. The links between sex and personality are well charted (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1975, 1991), as are the links between personality and religiosity (Kay and Francis, 1996) and between sex and religiosity (Francis, 1997). It is, therefore, necessary to exercise great care in unpicking the web of interrelated ideas and concepts which may mask the impact that sex, personality and religiosity each have individually and cumulatively on student perceptions of religious studies.

Scale Reliabilities

Before employing the current scales in order to investigate the areas central to this dissertation, it is necessary to show that the scales are functioning adequately and to produce a general profile of responses. The reliabilities of the scales are the key indicators as to whether or not the scales

are functioning correctly. Following this presentation of data relating to reliability is an exploration of item endorsement.

Table 9.1.1 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 1: understand religions.

Item	r
Understand the nature of religious beliefs	.6033
Understand the nature of religious worship	.6641
Understand the nature of religious communities	.6334
Understand the history of the religions	.3761
alpha	.7602

Table 9.1.2 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 2: understanding the influence of religious beliefs.

Item	r
Understand how the lives of individuals may be influenced by their religion	.4883
Understand the influence of religious values on people	.5946
Understand the influence of religious traditions in history	.4926
Understand the influence of religion in politics	.4423
alpha	.7078

Table 9.1.3 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 3: understand religious references in culture.

Item	r
Understand religious references in painting	.5952
Understand the references to religion in the study of history	.4440
Understand religious references in drama	.7188
Understand religious references in fiction	.6714
alpha	.7941

Table 9.1.4 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 4: impersonal evaluation of religion.

Item	r
Evaluate religious and moral traditions historically	.4349
Evaluate religious traditions on moral criteria	.6080
Evaluate the social and psychological effects of religion	.5488
Evaluate the reasonableness of religious and moral claims	.5356
alpha	.7376

Table 9.1.5 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 5: personal evaluation of religion.

Item	r
Evaluate their own beliefs	.7402
Evaluate their own moral values	.7708
Develop a self-critical stance with regard to their own worldview	.6428
Become more reflective about what they believe	.6617
alpha	.8582

Table 9.1.6 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 6: learning from religions about self

Item	r
Apply religious insights to their own beliefs and values	.6364
Discover how religions relate to the fundamental questions of life	.5961
Reflect on what might be learned from religions in the light of their own situations	.6917
recognise the centrality of values for themselves and for the religions	.6172
alpha	.8141

Table 9.1.7 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 7: personal quest.

Item	r
Engage in their own quest for a faith to live by	.4750
Express their own religious and moral beliefs	.5877
Reflect on ultimate questions	.5172
reflect on the meaning and purpose of life	.5323
alpha	.7319

Table 9.1.8 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 8: develop implicitly religious attitudes.

Item	r
Develop the belief that life has some purpose	.5613
Feel awe and wonder in the face of greatness and mystery	.6214
Develop a respect for all living things	.5523
Develop a sense of their own frailty and dependance	.6323
alpha	.7848

Table 9.1.9 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 9: develop tolerance

Item	r
Recognise that people have a right to be different	.6555
Be positive about living in a society of diverse religions	.7512
Be more tolerant of other religions and worldviews	.7920
Respect other people's right to hold beliefs different from their own	.7623
alpha	.8785

Table 9.1.10 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 10: confessional religious education outcomes

Item	r
Pray and worship	.8253
Develop religious emotions	.8003
Develop a relationship with God	.8653
Develop religious beliefs	.8368
alpha	.9278

Table 9.1.11 item-rest-of-test correlations and alpha reliability for scale 11: spiritual and moral development

Item	r
Learn the difference between right and wrong	.6385
Develop spiritually	.5490
Develop morally	.7337
Develop their knowledge of right and wrong	.7534
alpha	.8349

Each of these scales functions with an alpha coefficient exceeding .7. Thus, each meets the target established in chapter 5 of the current dissertation, which is based on the assertion made by Kline (1993). Several of the scales function with alpha coefficients in excess of .8 or .9. This is desirable and suggests that the construction of these scales has successfully identified the theoretical elements which work effectively together.

Item endorsement

This presentation of levels of item endorsement will contribute to understanding the way in which the scales function. This kind of profile will avoid the problem of not having no common metric which would allow a relative comparison of mean scores between the different scales.

Table 9.2.1 item endorsement for scale 1:understand religions.

Item	%
Understand the nature of religious beliefs	93
Understand the nature of religious worship	85
Understand the nature of religious communities	82
Understand the history of the religions	74

Table 9.2.2 item endorsement for scale 2:understanding the influence of religion.

Item	%
Understand how the lives of individuals may be influenced by their religion	90
Understand the influence of religious values on people	88
Understand the influence of religious traditions in history	72
Understand the influence of religion in politics	46

Table 9.2.3 item endorsement for scale 3:understand religious references in culture.

Item	%
Understand religious references in painting	20
Understand the references to religion in the study of history	51
Understand religious references in drama	24
Understand religious references in fiction	30

Table 9.2.4 item endorsement for scale 4:impersonal evaluation of religion.

Item	%
Evaluate religious and moral traditions historically	60
Evaluate religious traditions on moral criteria	70
Evaluate the social and psychological effects of religion	77
Evaluate the reasonableness of religious and moral claims	79

Table 9.2.5 item endorsement for scale 5: personal evaluation of religion.

Item	%
Evaluate their own beliefs	75
Evaluate their own moral values	75
Develop a self-critical stance with regard to their own worldview	65
Become more reflective about what they believe	76

Table 9.2.6 item endorsement for scale 6: learning from religions about self.

Item	%
Apply religious insights to their own beliefs and values	70
Discover how religions relate to the fundamental questions of life	78
Reflect on what might be learned from religions in the light of their own situations	66
Recognise the centrality of values for themselves and for the religions	60

Table 9.2.7 item endorsement for scale 7: personal quest.

Item	%
Engage in their own quest for a faith to live by	36
Express their own religious and moral beliefs	63
Reflect on ultimate questions	72
reflect on the meaning and purpose of life	74

Table 9.2.8 item endorsement for scale 8: develop implicitly religious attitudes.

Item	%
Develop the belief that life has some purpose	56
Feel awe and wonder in the face of greatness and mystery	35
Develop a respect for all living things	56
Develop a sense of their own frailty and dependance	37

Table 9.2.9 item endorsement for scale 9: develop tolerance.

Item	%
Recognise that people have a right to be different	86
Be positive about living in a society of diverse religions	82
Be more tolerant of other religions and worldviews	87
Respect other people's right to hold beliefs different from their own	89

Table 9.2.10 item endorsement for scale 10: confessional religious education outcomes.

Item	%
Pray and worship	19
Develop religious emotions	19
Develop a relationship with God	21
Develop religious beliefs	26

Table 9.2.11 item endorsement for scale 11: spiritual and moral development.

Item	%
Learn the difference between right and wrong	53
Develop spiritually	35
Develop morally	59
Develop their knowledge of right and wrong	59

The data relating to the item endorsement for the items in each of these scales demonstrate that the majority of the items discriminate adequately between respondents. Certain items are supported by over 90% of the respondents. While this may be seen as being inadequate, it must be remembered that the current group of respondents are a specific population who, it is reasonable to assume, differ from a general population in terms of their outlook with reference to religious studies.

The combination of high levels of internal reliability with generally appropriate levels of item endorsement leads to the conclusion that these scales are functioning as expected. Having now established the credentials of the scales of perceived legitimacy of aims in religious education, it is now possible to explore student perceptions in the context of the current dissertation.

Sex and perceptions of A-level religious studies

Chapter 3 established sex as a significant predictor of attitude toward religious studies. The

purpose of the following analyses is to explore specifically the impact of sex on students' perceptions of legitimacy in aims in religious studies. This task is essential in understanding the motivation of A-level students for studying religion. It is known that females outnumber males in terms of candidature for A-level religious studies. What is not known is whether males and females perceive the subject in a fundamentally different way to one another.

Table 9.3 Sex difference in response to aims of religious studies.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
scale 1: understand religions	16.55	2.14	15.93	2.52	3.67	.001
scale 2: understanding the influence of religious beliefs	15.80	2.27	15.74	2.62	0.33	NS
scale 3: understand religious references in culture	11.86	2.97	12.01	3.32	-0.64	NS
scale 4: impersonal evaluation of religion	15.48	2.42	15.26	2.80	1.14	NS
scale 5: personal evaluation of religion	15.70	3.18	15.98	3.26	-1.12	NS
scale 6: learning from religions about self	15.28	2.76	15.40	2.93	-0.54	NS
scale 7: personal quest	14.48	2.92	14.75	3.10	-1.19	NS
scale 8: develop implicitly religious attitudes	13.16	3.39	13.05	3.61	0.42	NS
scale 9: develop tolerance	17.37	2.70	16.44	3.20	4.28	.001
scale 10: confessional religious education outcomes	10.21	4.18	10.17	4.39	0.12	NS
scale 11: spiritual and moral development	13.50	3.55	13.76	3.53	0.93	NS

The following analyses explore the notion that sex impacts on students' perceptions of religious studies. Table 9.3 shows the level of sex differences in mean scores achieved on the scales of aims of religious education. It is shown that of the eleven scales eight were found to function independently of sex. Scale 1, understand religions, elicited more support from females than males. This difference achieved significance at the .001 level. The only other scale which prompted significantly different responses was scale 9, develop tolerance. Again, females score

more highly than males, the difference achieves significance at the .001 level.

Of these differences, some are consistent with existing theory and evidence. For example one would expect females to consider that developing tolerance is a legitimate aim in religious studies, whereas this is not the case for males. Archer and Macrae (1991) demonstrated that females see religious education to be concerned with people. This reflects an empathetic and tolerant outlook. However, it was also found that males considered religious education to be about things rather than people. Males do not consider that empathetic development is the concern of religious education. This is supported by the current data presented in table 9.3.

In the absence of other suitable theories or evidence, it is necessary to consider in further detail the scales. This is done by presenting t-test data concerned with the individual items contained within each of the scales. Tables 9.3.1-9.3.11 present a more thorough evaluation of the impact that sex has on perceptions of religious studies.

Sex differences in support for items concerned with understanding religions

Table 9.3.1 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 1: understand religions.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Understand the nature of religious beliefs	4.38	0.63	4.34	0.72	0.78	NS
Understand the nature of religious worship	4.15	0.69	3.97	0.84	3.19	.001
Understand the nature of religious communities	4.11	0.68	3.85	0.84	4.15	.001
Understand the history of the religions	3.92	0.80	3.77	0.88	2.35	NS

The item concerned with religious beliefs did not generate significantly different levels of support among males and females, whereas the items concerned with communities and religious practices

received a higher level of support among females than it did among males. Both of these relationships achieved significance at the .001 level.

Sex differences in support for items concerned with understanding the influence of religious beliefs

Table 9.3.2 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 2: understanding the influence of religious beliefs.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Understand how the lives of individuals may be influenced by their religion	4.32	0.69	4.15	0.76	3.13	.01
Understand the influence of religious values on people	4.25	0.72	4.20	0.74	0.77	NS
Understand the influence of religious traditions in history	3.88	0.76	3.77	0.91	1.64	NS
Understand the influence of religion in politics	3.33	0.96	3.53	1.03	-2.69	.01

Two of these items achieve significant relationships with sex. Females are significantly more likely than males to support the idea that religious education ought to explain how the lives of individuals may be influenced by their religion ($t=3.13$, $p<.01$). Males are significantly more likely than females to support the view that religious education ought to explain the influence of religion in politics ($t=2.69$, $p<.01$).

Sex differences in support for items concerned with understanding religious references in culture

Table 9.3.3 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 3: understand religious references in culture.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Understand religious references in painting	2.69	0.96	2.75	1.10	-0.81	NS
Understand the references to religion in the study of history	3.41	0.93	3.37	1.00	0.59	NS
Understand religious references in drama	2.82	0.96	2.87	1.05	-0.76	NS
Understand religious references in fiction	2.94	0.95	3.05	1.06	-1.46	NS

There are no significant sex differences in terms of items contained within this scale. Males and females share similar perceptions of the role of religious education in aiding students to understand religious references in culture.

Sex differences in support for items concerned with impersonal evaluation of religion

Table 9.3.4 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 4: impersonal evaluation of religion

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Evaluate religious and moral traditions historically	3.64	0.86	3.48	0.93	2.40	NS
Evaluate religious traditions on moral criteria	3.85	0.80	3.76	0.87	1.37	NS
Evaluate the social and psychological effects of religion	4.00	0.82	4.04	0.85	-0.65	NS
Evaluate the reasonableness of religious and moral claims	3.99	0.80	3.99	0.86	0.00	NS

There are no significant sex differences in terms of items contained within this scale. Males and females share similar perceptions of the role of religious education in helping students to evaluate religions impersonally.

Sex differences in support for items concerned with personal evaluation of religion

Table 9.3.5 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 5: personal evaluation of religion

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Evaluate their own beliefs	3.95	0.96	3.98	0.97	-0.36	NS
Evaluate their own moral values	3.96	0.96	4.02	0.98	-0.81	NS
Develop a self-critical stance with regard to their own worldview	3.78	0.99	3.95	0.94	-2.26	NS
Become more reflective about what they believe	3.99	0.89	4.02	0.95	-0.53	NS

No significant sex differences emerged with regard to the items within this scale. Both males and females shared common perceptions of the importance of religious education for their own

personal evaluation of religion.

Sex differences in support for items concerned with learning from religion about self

Table 9.3.6 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 6: learning from religions about self

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Apply religious insights to their own beliefs and values	3.80	0.97	3.91	0.93	-1.42	NS
Discover how religions relate to the fundamental questions of life	4.00	0.81	4.04	0.92	-0.61	NS
Reflect on what might be learned from religions in the light of their own situations	3.78	0.86	3.77	0.86	0.22	NS
Recognise the centrality of values for themselves and for the religions	3.69	0.81	3.67	0.91	0.29	NS

No significant sex differences emerge with regard to the items in this scale. This suggests that both males and females share common perceptions as to the role of religious education in helping students to learn about themselves from religions.

Sex differences in support for items concerned with personal religious quest

Table 9.3.7 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 7: personal quest

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Engage in their own quest for a faith to live by	3.07	1.12	3.09	1.14	-0.23	NS
Express their own religious and moral beliefs	3.62	1.04	3.58	1.11	0.52	NS
Reflect on ultimate questions	3.87	0.85	4.06	0.91	-2.88	.01
reflect on the meaning and purpose of life	3.91	0.92	4.02	0.95	-1.53	NS

While it is shown that males and females share generally common perceptions of the role of religious education in shaping and enabling the personal religious quest of students, one of the items generates a significantly different response among males and females. Males are significantly more likely than females to agree that religious education should help them to reflect on ultimate

questions ($t=2.88$, $p<.01$).

Sex differences in support for items concerned with the development of implicitly religious attitudes

Table 9.3.8 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 8: develop implicitly religious attitudes.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Develop the belief that life has some purpose	3.55	1.08	3.39	1.12	1.73	NS
Feel awe and wonder in the face of greatness and mystery	2.99	1.13	3.16	1.20	-1.87	NS
Develop a respect for all living things	3.53	1.03	3.48	1.13	0.70	NS
Develop a sense of their own frailty and dependance	3.09	1.08	3.04	1.14	0.67	NS

No significant sex differences emerge with regard to the items in this scale. This suggests that both males and females share common perceptions as to the role of religious education in helping students to develop implicitly religious attitudes.

Sex differences in support for items concerned with the desire to develop tolerance

Table 9.3.9 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 9: develop tolerance.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Recognise that people have a right to be different	4.33	0.8	4.11	1.00	3.35	.001
Be positive about living in a society of diverse religions	4.24	0.82	3.99	0.94	3.89	.001
Be more tolerant of other religions and worldviews	4.35	0.80	4.10	0.89	3.93	.001
Respect other people's right to hold beliefs different from their own	4.43	0.75	4.25	0.87	3.10	.01

Whereas a convincing picture has emerged of similar perceptions of religious education as a means of personal development, there is clear disparity in perceptions of males and females in terms of items concerned with others as opposed to the self. Females were significantly more likely to

support each item concerned with developing tolerance toward others. Given the significance of the items within this scale it is unsurprising that the mean scale score is significantly related to sex ($t=4.15$, $p<.001$).

Sex differences in support for items concerned with 'confessional' aims

Table 9.3.10 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 10: confessional religious education outcomes.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Pray and worship	2.44	1.15	2.33	1.24	1.27	NS
Develop religious emotions	2.55	1.08	2.58	1.16	-0.34	NS
Develop a relationship with God	2.53	1.16	2.57	1.25	-0.47	NS
Develop religious beliefs	2.68	1.19	2.69	1.25	-0.16	NS

No significant sex differences emerge with regard to the items in this scale. This suggests that both males and females share common perceptions as to the role of religious education in meeting confessional aims.

Sex differences in support for items concerned with spiritual and moral development

Table 9.3.11 sex difference in response to items contained in scale 11: spiritual and moral development.

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Learn the difference between right and wrong	3.43	1.14	3.45	1.20	-0.22	NS
Develop spiritually	3.02	1.09	3.17	1.09	-1.72	NS
Develop morally	3.51	1.03	3.63	1.03	-1.51	NS
Develop their knowledge of right and wrong	3.54	1.05	3.51	1.12	0.35	NS

No significant sex differences emerge with regard to the items in this scale. This suggests that both males and females share common perceptions as to the role of religious education in helping students to develop spiritually and morally.

The impact of sex on perceptions of aims in religious education

From the information presented in tables 9.3.1 to 9.3.11 it is possible to see two significant trends emerging. First, males and females share similar perceptions across a wide range of items which are conceptually linked to religious education. Notably, the items concerned with personal development and religious growth are perceived similarly among males and females. Second, there is a series of significant differences between perceptions of males and females with regard to issues concerned with other people, communities and religions. Males have a more egocentric outlook than females on what religious education should achieve. In terms of those aspects of syllabuses of religious education which deal with religious beliefs other than those of the students, then this finding is of importance. This is especially so when one considers the trends within religious education toward world faiths. As more syllabuses embrace the movement toward different religions more males may become disillusioned with religious education. They may see religious education as straying outside of its legitimate boundaries. Differences between males and females in levels of uptake of religious studies at A-level reflect the fact that religious education is perceived differently among males and females. The data presented above provide new insight into the nature of this difference in perception.

Personality and perceptions of A-level religious studies

Chapter 3 established personality as a significant predictor of attitude toward religious education. The purpose of the following analyses is to explore specifically the impact of personality on students' perceptions of legitimacy of aims in religious education. This task is essential in understanding the motivation of A-level students for studying religion. It is already known, for example, that psychoticism scores are negatively associated with pupil support for religious education, whereas lie scale scores and neuroticism scores are positively associated with attitude

toward religious education (Lewis and Francis, 1996). What is not known is whether personality impacts significantly on the way in which the subject is perceived by students. The following analyses explore the notion that personality impacts on students' perceptions of religious education.

Initially consideration is given to the relationship between personality and the scales. This is followed by a more detailed investigation of the relationship between personality and items within the scales.

Table 9.4 The relationship between perceptions of religious education and personality

Scale	P	E	N	L
scale 1: understand religions	-.0641 NS	.0489 NS	.0095 NS	.0085 NS
scale 2: understanding the influence of religious beliefs	.0005 NS	-.0008 NS	.0402 NS	-.0002 NS
scale 3: understand religious references in culture	.0262 NS	-.0321 NS	.0821 .01	.0190 NS
scale 4: impersonal evaluation of religion	-.0305 NS	.0191 NS	.0357 NS	-.0009 NS
scale 5: personal evaluation of religion	.0082 NS	.0649 NS	.0069 NS	-.0311 NS
scale 6: learning from religions about self	-.0294 NS	.0670 NS	.0172 NS	-.0055 NS
scale 7: personal quest	.0266 NS	.0840 .01	-.0362 NS	.0059 NS
scale 8: develop implicitly religious attitudes	-.0329 NS	.0357 NS	.0039 NS	.0549 NS
scale 9: develop tolerance	-.0998 .01	.0321 NS	-.0102 NS	.0663 NS
scale 10: confessional religious education outcomes	-.0443 NS	.0148 NS	.0319 NS	.0310 NS
scale 11: spiritual and moral development	-.0506 NS	.0491 NS	-.0037 NS	.0521 NS

The data presented in table 9.4 explore the interactions between personality and perceived

legitimacy of aims in religious education. It is shown that certain aspects of personality impact on the way in which A-level students perceive some different aims of religious studies. Of the eleven disparate aims explored in this section, only three are shown to be related to personality.

Extraversion was shown to be positively associated with the view that religious studies ought to help students to engage in a personal religious quest. Those students who score highly on extraversion are somewhat more likely than their introverted colleagues to see religious studies as being a subject which should aim to assist in bringing about personal religious development.

Neuroticism was shown to be positively associated with the view that religious studies ought to help students to understand religious references in culture. Students who score highly on neuroticism may be more likely than their more stable colleagues to feel that they are not able to fully understand their culture without rigorous instruction in religion.

Psychoticism was shown to be negatively associated with the view that religious studies should help students to become more tolerant. These findings give empirical support to a specific part of the theoretical composition of psychoticism. Eysenck and Eysenck (1985) defined psychoticism in terms of its composite traits. Individuals who score highly on psychoticism were defined as being 'egocentric' and 'lacking empathy'. Clearly, psychotics can be seen to be less predisposed to desire to become more tolerant of those with whom they have little empathy. Interest in the self, at the expense of interest in the generalised other is a phenomenon germane to egocentricity. Clearly students with high levels of psychoticism are behaving in the current context in accordance with the theory underpinning Eysenckian personality.

Lie scale scores were shown to be unrelated to each of the scales. This finding is unusual. It would be expected from what is known about the lie scale, that this would generate significant positive correlations with those scales that reflect 'socially desirable' outcomes (Kay and Francis, 1996). Further consideration of the items within the scale will investigate the correlates of lie scale scores.

Students with different personality profiles perceive religious studies in different ways to one another. It has been shown in chapter 3 of the current dissertation that previous research has identified personality as a factor likely to impact the response of pupils toward religious education. It has also been shown in chapter 7 of the current dissertation that personality impacts on the motivation of A-level students to study religion. Personality has now been shown to impact directly on the way in which students perceive religious studies. The data presented above have explored the nature of these differences in perception. Having presented the relationships between personality and the scales as they are currently employed, it is possible and desirable to explore the relationship between personality and the components of the scales.

Personality and support for items concerned with understanding religion

Table 9.4.1 correlation matrix scale 1: understand religions with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Understand the nature of religious beliefs	.0007 NS	.0312 NS	-.0518 NS	.0108 NS
Understand the nature of religious worship	-.0210 NS	.0066 NS	.0040 NS	-.0189 NS
Understand the nature of religious communities	-.0515 NS	.0731 NS	-.0346 NS	.0466 NS
Understand the history of the religions	-.0818 .01	.0281 NS	.0648 NS	-.0091 NS

The perception that religious studies ought to help students to understand religions is unrelated to extraversion, neuroticism or lie scale scores. Only one item achieves significant relationship

with psychoticism. Table 9.4.1 shows that it is difficult to identify a pattern in the relationships between personality and items within this scale. Respondents scoring highly on the P scale are significantly less likely than low scorers to consider that religious education should help them to understand the history of the religions.

Personality and support for items concerned with understanding the influence of religious beliefs

Table 9.4.2 correlation matrix scale 2: understanding the influence of religious beliefs with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Understand how the lives of individuals may be influenced by their religion	-.0361 NS	.0409 NS	-.0170 NS	.0280 NS
Understand the influence of religious values on people	-.0486 NS	.0147 NS	.0106 NS	.0176 NS
Understand the influence of religious traditions in history	-.0763 NS	-.0348 NS	.0833 .01	.0530 NS
Understand the influence of religion in politics	.0933 .01	.0068 NS	.0069 NS	-.0496 NS

Table 9.4 indicated that the current scale was unrelated to personality. The data provided in table 9.4.2 suggest that the way in which students perceive whether religious studies should help students to understand the influence of religions is independent of personality. The relationship between psychoticism and the items within this scale is a matter of interest. One of these relationships reflects a positive association with psychoticism. This finding may be a cause for concern, as it may suggest that the components within the current scale do not cohere effectively. However, as shown in table 9.1.2 above, the scale functions reliably ($\alpha=.7078$). The discovery that different parts of the scale are behaving differently to one another, while cohering in terms of internal reliability may be seen to be advantageous. Such a scale meets the stringent criteria of internal reliability cited by the likes of Francis, Brown and Philipchalk (1992), while avoiding the charge that the items fail to measure a range of aspects which conceptually belong in the scale

(Kline, 1993).

One item relating to the influence of religions in history is shown to be positively associated with neuroticism. Students scoring highly on the N scale may see religious education as being legitimately focused on the past rather than the present.

Personality and support for items concerned with understanding religious references in culture

Table 9.4.3 correlation matrix scale 3: understand religious references in culture with personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Understand religious references in painting	.0364 NS	-.0246 NS	.0495 NS	.0051 NS
Understand the references to religion in the study of history	-.0650 NS	-.0551 NS	.1228 .001	.0067 NS
Understand religious references in drama	.0682 NS	.0155 NS	.0347 NS	.0267 NS
Understand religious references in fiction	.0505 NS	-.0369 NS	.0397 NS	.0175 NS

Table 9.4 demonstrated that neuroticism was the only dimension of personality to impact upon the current scale ($r=.0821$, $p<.01$). Student perceptions as to whether religious studies ought to help students to understand religious references in culture are found to be independent of psychoticism, extraversion and lie scale scores. Table 9.4.3 shows the relationship between personality and the items within the scale designed to investigate student perceptions as to whether religious studies ought to help students to understand religious references in culture.

It is shown that, while the scale achieves a significant association with neuroticism scores, only one of its components generates a significant association with neuroticism. It is interesting to note that, as in the case of table 9.4.2 there is a positive association between neuroticism and the perception that religious education ought to focus on the interaction between religion and history.

Personality and support for items concerned with impersonal evaluation of religion

Table 9.4.4 correlation matrix scale 4: impersonal evaluation of religion and personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Evaluate religious and moral traditions historically	-.0391 NS	-.0001 NS	.0451 NS	.0215 NS
Evaluate religious traditions on moral criteria	-.0569 NS	.0285 NS	.0347 NS	.0061 NS
Evaluate the social and psychological effects of religion	-.0547 NS	.0345 NS	.0320 NS	-.0261 NS
Evaluate the reasonableness of religious and moral claims	-.0360 NS	.0030 NS	-.0220 NS	-.0186 NS

Table 9.4 demonstrated that the current scale was independent of personality. Table 9.4.4 shows that the perception that religious studies ought to help students to evaluate religion in an impersonal manner was found to be unrelated to personality. None of the items in the scale was significantly related to personality.

Personality and support for items concerned with personal evaluation of religion

Table 9.4.5 correlation matrix scale 5: personal evaluation of religion and personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Evaluate their own beliefs	-.0148 NS	.0654 NS	-.0280 NS	-.0044 NS
Evaluate their own moral values	-.0195 NS	.0593 NS	.0141 NS	-.0295 NS
Develop a self-critical stance with regard to their own worldview	.0555 NS	.0579 NS	.0186 NS	.0703 NS
Become more reflective about what they believe	-.0040 NS	.0108 NS	.0047 NS	.0032 NS

Table 9.4 demonstrated that the current scale functions independently of personality. Table 9.4.5 shows once more that each of the component parts of the scale are unrelated to personality.

Personality and support for items concerned with learning from religion about self

Table 9.4.6 correlation matrix scale 6: learning from religions about self and personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Apply religious insights to their own beliefs and values	-.0418 NS	-.0041 NS	.0336 NS	.0077 NS
Discover how religions relate to the fundamental questions of life	-.0529 NS	.0319 NS	.0132 NS	.0233 NS
Reflect on what might be learned from religions in the light of their own situations	-.0049 NS	.1038 .001	-.0171 NS	-.0371 NS
Recognise the centrality of values for themselves and for the religions	.0064 NS	.0842 .01	.0162 NS	-.0050 NS

Table 9.4 demonstrated that the perception that religious studies ought to help students to learn from religions about themselves is unrelated to personality. Table 9.4.6 shows that two of the items within the scale were found to be significantly associated with extraversion. These relationships may have been obscured if the relationship between personality and the scale were considered without examining the items that make up that scale. Respondents scoring high on the E scale may consider that religious education should help them to learn from religion about their own situations and values.

Personality and support for items concerned with personal religious quest

Table 9.4.7 correlation matrix scale 7: personal quest and personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Engage in their own quest for a faith to live by	.0006 NS	.0533 NS	.0428 NS	-.0007 NS
Express their own religious and moral beliefs	-.0304 NS	.0961 .01	-.0414 NS	.0363 NS
Reflect on ultimate questions	.0989 .01	.0613 NS	-.0642 NS	-.0430 NS
Reflect on the meaning and purpose of life	.0301 NS	.0236 NS	-.0610 NS	.0169 NS

Table 9.4 demonstrated that the perception that religious studies ought to help students in their own religious quest is significantly related to extraversion ($r=.0840$, $p<.01$). The scale itself is

unrelated to psychoticism, neuroticism and lie scale scores. Table 9.4.7 shows that only one of the component items within this scale is related to extraversion.

The item, 'reflect on ultimate questions' is of particular interest. Whereas high scorers on the P scale are generally found to reject religion, and most aims in religious education, they are more ready to support this item than their more tender-minded colleagues. This raises an important question about the nature of spirituality or religiosity among high P scorers.

Personality and support for items concerned with developing implicitly religious attitudes

Table 9.4.8 correlation matrix scale 8: develop implicitly religious attitudes and personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Develop the belief that life has some purpose	-.0562 NS	.0810 NS	-.0349 NS	.0309 NS
Feel awe and wonder in the face of greatness and mystery	.0210 NS	.0076 NS	.0218 NS	.0257 NS
Develop a respect for all living things	-.0539 NS	.0002 NS	-.0099 NS	.0916 .01
Develop a sense of their own frailty and dependance	-.0106 NS	.0260 NS	.0340 NS	.0193 NS

Table 9.4 indicates that this scale is unrelated to each dimension of personality. Theory and existing empirical evidence require that the components of the scale are further scrutinised. Implicitly religious attitudes are generally found to be negatively associated with psychoticism. It is noteworthy that the current scale fails to record such a negative association. Table 9.4.8 shows that all of the items fail to achieve a significant negative association with psychoticism.

The failure of these items to generate significant negative associations with P scores raises two possibilities. First, it may be the case that the scale is not measuring perceptions of implicitly religious attitudes. Second, it may be the case that implicit religiosity is not predicted by

psychoticism scores in the same way that conventional religiosity is. There may be some aspects of spirituality that do not alienate tough-minded individuals in the same way that traditional religiosities have been shown to. The absence of a significant negative association between these measures is as informative as the presence of a significant relationship would have been.

The second feature of interest to emerge within the current scale is the relationship between the lie scale and the perception that religious education should help students to develop respect for all living things. This finding is consistent with the view that lie scale scores reflect social desirability.

Personality and support for items concerned with developing tolerance

Table 9.4.9 correlation matrix scale 9: develop tolerance and personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Recognise that people have a right to be different	-.0858 .01	.0012 NS	-.0430 NS	.0764 NS
Be positive about living in a society of diverse religions	-.0632 NS	.0259 NS	.0292 NS	.0374 NS
Be more tolerant of other religions and worldviews	-.0909 .01	.0342 NS	.0095 NS	.0424 NS
Respect other people's right to hold beliefs different from their own	-.0750 NS	.0407 NS	-.0428 NS	.0399 NS

Table 9.4 shows that while the scale itself is unrelated to neuroticism, extraversion and lie scale scores, the perception that religious studies ought to help students in their own religious quest is significantly negatively associated with psychoticism scores ($r = -.0998$, $p < .01$). Table 9.4.9 shows that while a consideration of the components within the scale provides a clear indication, this relationship becomes apparent when the scale, rather than the components, is considered.

Personality and support for items concerned with 'confessional' outcomes

Table 9.4.10 shows that the perception that religious studies ought to help students to achieve confessional religious education aims was found to be unrelated to personality. None of the items in the scale was significantly related to any aspect of personality.

Table 9.4.10 correlation matrix scale 10: confessional religious education outcomes and personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Pray and worship	-.0347 NS	.0119 NS	.0279 NS	.0323 NS
Develop religious emotions	-.0294 NS	.0236 NS	.0557 NS	-.0066 NS
Develop a relationship with God	-.0318 NS	.0235 NS	.0242 NS	.0395 NS
Develop religious beliefs	-.0554 NS	-.0111 NS	.0084 NS	.0471 NS

Once more, the absence of a significant relationship between psychoticism and the components of this scale is of theoretical interest. Christian development is theoretically negatively associated with psychoticism.

Personality and support for items concerned with spiritual and moral development

Table 9.4.11 correlation matrix scale 11: spiritual and moral development and personality.

Item	P	E	N	L
Learn the difference between right and wrong	-.0634 NS	-.0049 NS	-.0037 NS	.1114 .001
Develop spiritually	.0361 NS	.0586 NS	.0265 NS	.0076 NS
Develop morally	-.0832 .01	.0647 NS	-.0363 NS	.0240 NS
Develop their knowledge of right and wrong	-.0541 NS	.0392 NS	-.0008 NS	.0204 NS

Table 9.4 demonstrated that the perception that religious studies ought to help students to develop spiritually and morally is found to be unrelated to personality Table 9.4.11 shows that psychoticism is negatively associated with one of the items in this scale, and lie scale scores are associated with

one item. This finding is consistent with the view that lie scale scores reflect social desirability. Clearly, an awareness of right and wrongs is a characteristic that is encouraged in our society.

Religiosity and perceptions of A-level religious studies

Chapter 3 established religiosity as a significant predictor of attitude toward religious education. The purpose of the following analyses is to explore specifically the impact of religiosity on students' perceptions of legitimacy of aims in religious education. This task is essential in understanding the motivation of A-level students for studying religion. It is known that religiosity impacts on attitude toward religious education. This is the case if religiosity is examined in terms of belief in the existence of God (Francis and Kay, 1995), frequency of church attendance (Francis and Kay, 1995; Francis and Lewis, 1996 and Francis, 2001), religious affiliation (Francis and Lewis, 1996), or frequency of personal prayer (Francis and Lewis, 1996). What is not known is whether religious students perceive the subject in a fundamentally different way to non-religious students. It is also not known whether different features of religiosity impact perceptions in different ways. The following analyses explore the view that religiosity affects students' perceptions of religious studies, and that different aspects of religiosity impact perceptions differently.

Table 9.5 shows the relationship between different aspects of religiosity and perceptions of religious education. Not only is it shown that religiosity impacts on perceptions of religious studies, but also, it is shown that different aspects of religiosity impact on these different perceptions differently.

Of the eleven different scales, only four were found to be unrelated to religiosity. The perceptions

that religious studies should help students to understand the influence of religious beliefs, understand religious references in culture, evaluate religion impersonally, and become more tolerant were shown to be independent of each of the aspects of religiosity under investigation.

Table 9.5 The relationship between perceptions of religious education and religiosity

Scale	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
scale 1: understand religions	.1671 .001	.0598 NS	.1007 .001	.0801 .01
scale 2: understanding the influence of religious beliefs	.0222 NS	-.0524 NS	-.0331 NS	-.0444 NS
scale 3: understand religious references in culture	.0287 NS	.0027 NS	.0170 NS	.0011 NS
scale 4: impersonal evaluation of religion	.0757 NS	.0543 NS	.0298 NS	.0327 NS
scale 5: personal evaluation of religion	.1072 .001	.0520 NS	.0153 NS	.0516 NS
scale 6: learning from religions about self	.1821 .001	.0885 .01	.0866 .01	.1282 .001
scale 7: personal quest	.2080 .001	.1262 .001	.1399 .001	.1599 .001
scale 8: develop implicitly religious attitudes	.2402 .001	.1006 .001	.1868 .001	.1935 .001
scale 9: develop tolerance	.0437 NS	-.0062 NS	.0355 NS	.0276 NS
scale 10: confessional religious education outcomes	.3585 .001	.1875 .001	.2975 .001	.2857 .001
scale 11: spiritual and moral development	.1730 .001	.0496 NS	.1062 .001	.0987 .01

The scale of attitude toward Christianity score contributed most predictive power across the range perceptions of religious studies. Seven of the eleven scales were significantly associated with attitude scores. Six of the scales were associated with frequency of prayer and the same six were associated with belief in the existence of God. Four of the scales were positively associated with frequency of church attendance.

Four of the scales are significantly related to each of the four markers of religiosity. It is shown that the perception that religious studies should help students to learn from religion about themselves is more commonly held among religious students as defined across each of the four domains of religiosity. This is also true of the perceptions that religious studies should help students to engage in their own personal religious quest, develop implicitly religious attitudes, and achieve confessional religious education outcomes.

Two of the scales are significantly related to three of the four markers of religiosity. The perceptions that religious studies should help students to understand religions and experience spiritual and moral development were related to attitude scores, belief in the existence of God and frequency of personal prayer.

One of the scales is significantly related to only one of the four markers of religiosity. The perception that, religious studies should help students to evaluate religions in terms of personal criteria was related to attitude scores.

Religiosity and support for items concerned with understanding religions

Table 9.5.1 correlation matrix scale 1: understand religions and religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
Understand the nature of religious beliefs	.1119 .001	.0580 NS	.0596 NS	.0740 NS
Understand the nature of religious worship	.1571 .001	.0849 .01	.0719 NS	.0738 NS
Understand the nature of religious communities	.1095 .001	.0380 NS	.0934 .01	.0456 NS
Understand the history of the religions	.0990 .01	.0022 NS	.614 NS	.0453 NS

Table 9.5.1 shows that the relationship between religiosity and the perception that religious studies

should help pupils to understand religion is clearly related to religiosity. Different aspects of religiosity are differently related to different components of the scale. Attitude predicts significantly across each of the components, Belief, across two of the component areas, and public practice across only one area. It is interesting to note that religious practice as part of a community is unrelated to the perception that religious studies should help students to understand religious communities. In the same way, Belief in God remains unrelated to the perception that religious studies should help students to understand the nature of religious beliefs. It may be the case that religious participation equips students with the kind of knowledge that they then do not wish to acquire through academic study.

Religiosity and support for items concerned with understanding religious beliefs

Table 9.5.2 correlation matrix scale 2: understanding the influence of religious beliefs and religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
Understand how the lives of individuals may be influenced by their religion	.0531 NS	-.0152 NS	.0109 NS	-.0025 NS
Understand the influence of religious values on people	.0527 NS	-.0033 NS	.0117 NS	-.0041 NS
Understand the influence of religious traditions in history	.0433 NS	-.0017 NS	.0134 NS	-.0065 NS
Understand the influence of religion in politics	-.0508 NS	-.0785 NS	-.0877 .01	-.0735 NS

Table 9.5.2 shows that although there is no relationship between the scale and any aspect of religiosity, it is clear that religiosity is related to one of the items in the scale. Religious belief is negatively related the perception that religious studies should help students to understand the influence of religion in politics. It may be suggested that religious students see religions as intrinsically valuable, worthy of study in their own right, rather than in terms of the impact that they might have on other phenomena.

Religiosity and support for items concerned with religious references in culture

Table 9.5.3 shows that the finding reported in table 9.5 with regard to the relationship between the scale and religiosity, also holds true for the items within the scale.

Table 9.5.3 scale 3: understand religious references in culture and religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
Understand religious references in painting	-.0174 NS	-.0093 NS	.0039 NS	-.0169 NS
Understand the references to religion in the study of history	.0387 NS	-.0307 NS	-.0077 NS	.0148 NS
Understand religious references in drama	.0173 NS	.0103 NS	.0305 NS	-.0025 NS
Understand religious references in fiction	.0383 NS	.0254 NS	.0132 NS	-.0017 NS

All aspects of religiosity remain unrelated to all components of this scale.

Religiosity and support for items concerned with impersonal evaluation of religion

Table 9.5.4 scale 4: impersonal evaluation of religion and religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
Evaluate religious and moral traditions historically	.0594 NS	.0031 NS	.0364 NS	.0082 NS
Evaluate religious traditions on moral criteria	.0759 NS	.0852 .01	.0378 NS	.0377 NS
Evaluate the social and psychological effects of religion	.0066 NS	-.0077 NS	-.0142 NS	-.0094 NS
Evaluate the reasonableness of religious and moral claims	.0654 NS	.0717 NS	.0150 NS	.0514 NS

Table 9.5.4 shows that although no significant relationship was established between frequency of church attendance and the perception that religious studies ought to help students to evaluate religion in an impersonal way, one of the items in the scale did achieve a significant relationship. One of the items concerned with morality was significantly associated with church attendance.

Religiosity and support for items concerned with personal evaluation of religion

Table 9.5.5 contributes little to understanding the relationship between religiosity and the perception that religious studies ought to help students to evaluate religions on personal criteria. However, it is shown that one of the items is functioning differently to the other items in the scale.

Table 9.5.5 scale 5: personal evaluation of religion and religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
Evaluate their own beliefs	.0774 NS	.0533 NS	.0163 NS	.0458 NS
Evaluate their own moral values	.0811 .01	.0340 NS	.0105 NS	.0443 NS
Develop a self-critical stance with regard to their own worldview	.0461 NS	.0095 NS	-.0336 NS	.0000 NS
Become more reflective about what they believe	.1271 .001	.0599 NS	.0541 NS	.0671 NS

The notion that religious studies ought to develop a self-critical stance with regard to their own worldview failed to achieve a significant relationship with attitude, it was shown to be almost perfectly unrelated to church attendance and prayer, and was found to have a non-significant relationship to belief in the existence of God. Table 9.1.5 demonstrated that this item generated the lowest item-rest-of-test correlation within the scale. It may be suggested that the assertion that students ought to be 'self-critical' has negative implications. Perhaps an item concerned with 'judging' one's worldview would be more suitable than an item concerned with 'developing a self-critical stance' toward one's worldview. Future refinements of these scales should consider this point.

Religiosity and support for items concerned with learning from religion about self**Table 9.5.6 correlation matrix scale 6: learning from religions about self and religiosity**

Item	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
Apply religious insights to their own beliefs and values	.1327 .001	.0534 NS	.0712 NS	.1033 .001
Discover how religions relate to the fundamental questions of life	.1326 .001	.0696 NS	.0454 NS	.1014 .001
Reflect on what might be learned from religions in the light of their own situations	.1669 .001	.0748 NS	.1017 .001	.1264 .001
Recognise the centrality of values for themselves and for the religions	.0326 .001	.0666 NS	.0562 NS	.0686 NS

Tables 9.5.6 through 9.5.8 and 9.5.10 show that those aspects of religious studies which are concerned with personal religious development are positively associated with religiosity. This is intuitively reasonable and may be seen to lend construct validity to the scales concerned with perceptions of religious studies.

Religiosity and support for items concerned with personal religious quest**Table 9.5.7 correlation matrix scale 7: personal quest and religiosity**

Item	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
Engage in their own quest for a faith to live by	.2044 .001	.1376 .001	.1533 .001	.1368 .001
Express their own religious and moral beliefs	.1778 .001	.0951 .01	.1155 .001	.1360 .001
Reflect on ultimate questions	.0757 NS	.0458 NS	.0159 NS	.0666 NS
Reflect on the meaning and purpose of life	.0967 .01	.0547 NS	.0774 NS	.0926 .01

Within these tables, almost all of the items within the scales are associated with each of the four aspects of religiosity. Although the different aspects of religiosity are related, they are different. Teachers are not necessarily aware of the religiosity of their pupils, particularly when this religiosity does not translate into publicly observable phenomena. The clear links between religiosity and areas of religious growth and development have implications for the ways in which

subsections of the sample perceive the subject.

Religiosity and support for items concerned with developing implicitly religious attitudes

Table 9.5.8 scale 8: develop implicitly religious attitudes and religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
Develop the belief that life has some purpose	.2111 .001	.1198 .001	.1613 .001	.1900 .001
Feel awe and wonder in the face of greatness and mystery	.2059 .001	.0896 .01	.1699 .001	.1674 .001
Develop a respect for all living things	.1590 .001	.0273 NS	.1228 .001	.1106 .001
Develop a sense of their own frailty and dependance	.1482 .001	.0652 NS	.1064 .001	.1146 .001

The assertion that religious studies is a secular subject which is open to people of any religious background, or of none may be true. However, it may be the case that religious pupils are disadvantaged by this 'secular' subject, as their perceptions are in conflict with the official thinking underpinning religious studies, it may be that a significant proportion of students are quite simply missing the point in terms of their approach to the subject and its prescribed learning outcomes.

Religiosity and support for items concerned with developing tolerance

Table 9.5.9 scale 9: develop tolerance and religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
Recognise that people have a right to be different	.0624 NS	.0137 NS	.0540 NS	.0473 NS
Be positive about living in a society of diverse religions	.0003 NS	-.0329 NS	.0192 NS	-.0064 NS
Be more tolerant of other religions and worldviews	.0463 NS	-.0007 NS	-.0018 NS	.0282 NS
Respect other people's right to hold beliefs different from their own	.0336 NS	.0159 NS	.0382 NS	.0229 NS

It was shown earlier (table 9.5) that religiosity was unrelated to the perception that religious studies should develop tolerance. Table 9.5.9 unpacks that earlier finding. None of the items is associated with any of the markers of religiosity. All items fail to generate any significant relationships, with all aspects of religiosity. It is reasonable to assume that a more thorough

evaluation of tolerance should discern between those items concerned with tolerance of others, and tolerance of the religions of others.

Religiosity and support for items concerned with 'confessional' outcomes

Table 9.5.10 scale 10:confessional religious education outcomes and religiosity.

Item	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
Pray and worship	.3125 .001	.1678 .001	.2607 .001	.2531 .001
Develop religious emotions	.2635 .001	.1358 .001	.2102 .001	.1290 .001
Develop a relationship with God	.3794 .001	.2023 .001	.3165 .001	.2970 .001
Develop religious beliefs	.3072 .001	.1536 .001	.2557 .001	.2341 .001

Table 9.5.10 gives a clear and compelling account of the perceptions of the religious section of the student community. It was shown in chapter 6 of the dissertation that A-level religious studies students were, on the whole, more religious than the population norms for this age group. When that information is coupled with the data presented in table 9.5.10 it becomes clear that there are some real implications for religious educators.

A disproportionate number of students are religiously committed, and religiously committed students tend to perceive the subject in a manner which is not currently consistent with official pronouncements in relation to religious studies. Confessional aims in religious studies have never officially been endorsed. Religious studies has generally been considered to be a secular subject. However, the data suggest that in the absence of an alternative opportunity to be educated in religion at A-level, the secular subject is embraced by those who would rather study religion than not. However, they clearly would like to study a subject which meets confessional aims, rather than one which does not.

Religiosity and support for items concerned with spiritual and moral development

Table 9.5.11 scale 11: spiritual and moral development and religiosity

Item	ATT	CHURCH	BELIEF	PRAYER
Learn the difference between right and wrong	.1291 .001	.0369 NS	.0786 NS	.0458 NS
Develop spiritually	.1746 .001	.0668 NS	.1005 .001	.1194 .001
Develop morally	.1467 .001	.0632 NS	.1005 .001	.0930 .01
Develop their knowledge of right and wrong	.0950 .01	-.0107 NS	.0576 NS	.0545 NS

Table 9.5.11 shows that in common with other areas of non-academic personal development, religiosity remains an effective predictor of perceptions as to the role of religious studies. Once again, it is shown that different aspects of religiosity work differently in predicting perceptions of religious studies. Attitude is the most significant predictor across each of the items, church attendance is the least significant predictor across all items within this scale. It may be the case that those who attend a place of worship see their spiritual and moral development as being nurtured within the faith community rather than within A-level religious studies.

Further analysis

This section examines the compound effect of the various predictor variables on the independent variable. The following analyses will serve to sharpen the findings reported earlier in the chapter.

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex and attitude toward Christianity, extent of belief in the existence of God, and frequency of prayer impact on the perception that A-level religious studies should help students to understand religions.

Table 9.6.1 multiple regression significance test Scale 1: understand religions.

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0151	.0151	13.6	.001	.1129	3.3	.001
Extraversion	.0152	.0000	0.0	NS	-.0041	-0.1	NS
Neuroticism	.0163	.0011	1.0	NS	.0410	1.2	NS
Psychoticism	.0169	.0006	0.6	NS	.0172	0.5	NS
Lie	.0169	.0000	0.0	NS	-.0000	-0.0	NS
Attitude score	.0375	.0206	18.9	.001	.3318	5.2	.001
Attendance	.0463	.0087	8.0	.01	-.0999	-2.1	NS
Prayer freq	.0505	.0042	3.9	NS	-.0961	-1.7	NS
Belief in God	.0516	.0011	1.1	NS	-.0532	-1.0	NS

Table 9.6.1 shows that when all of the variables are considered together, sex and scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are shown to each impact on student perceptions in relation to this set of aims, whereas extent of belief in the existence of God, and frequency of prayer contribute no further predictive power when scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are taken into account.

Table 9.6.2 multiple regression significance test Scale 2: understand the influence of religion.

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0005	.0005	0.4	NS	.0119	0.3	NS
Extraversion	.0008	.0003	0.3	NS	.0233	0.7	NS
Neuroticism	.0016	.0008	0.7	NS	.0367	1.0	NS
Psychoticism	.0016	.0001	0.1	NS	.0169	0.5	NS
Lie	.0046	.0030	2.6	NS	.0527	1.5	NS
Attitude score	.0049	.0003	0.3	NS	.2545	3.9	.001
Attendance	.0143	.0094	8.4	.01	-.1073	-2.3	NS
Prayer freq	.0190	.0047	4.2	NS	-.0817	-1.4	NS
Belief in God	.0267	.0076	6.9	.01	-.1373	-2.6	.01

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that none of the factors under investigation acted as a significant predictor of perceptions that A-level religious studies ought to help students to understand the influence of religion. However, Table 9.6.2 shows that when all of the predictor variables are considered together it is clear that scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity are shown to be significantly associated with this scale, which may be moderated to some degree by extent of belief in God.

Table 9.6.3 multiple regression significance test Scale 3: understand religious references in culture

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0003	.0003	0.3	NS	-.0242	-0.7	NS
Extraversion	.0018	.0014	1.3	NS	-.0141	-0.4	NS
Neuroticism	.0083	.0066	5.9	NS	.1007	2.8	.01
Psychoticism	.0085	.0002	0.1	NS	.0437	1.2	NS
Lie	.0114	.0029	2.6	NS	.0579	1.6	NS
Attitude score	.0145	.0030	2.7	NS	.1040	1.6	NS
Attendance	.0147	.0002	0.2	NS	-.0019	-0.0	NS
Prayer freq	.0160	.0013	1.2	NS	-.0625	-1.1	NS
Belief in God	.0160	.0000	0.0	NS	.0056	0.1	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that only neuroticism scores significantly impact on this set of aims. The data presented in Table 9.6.3 show that even when all of the items are considered together, this remains the case. Of all the areas under investigation, only neuroticism scores significantly impact on the current scale.

Table 9.6.4 multiple regression significance test Scale 4: impersonal evaluation of religions

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0006	.0006	0.5	NS	.0304	0.9	NS
Extraversion	.0009	.0003	0.3	NS	.0219	0.6	NS
Neuroticism	.0017	.0008	0.8	NS	.0475	1.3	NS
Psychoticism	.0045	.0027	2.4	NS	.0721	1.9	NS
Lie	.0048	.0003	0.2	NS	.0186	0.5	NS
Attitude score	.0075	.0028	2.5	NS	.1263	1.9	NS
Attendance	.0078	.0002	0.2	NS	.0426	0.9	NS
Prayer freq	.0110	.0032	2.9	NS	-.0849	-1.5	NS
Belief in God	.0118	.0008	0.7	NS	-.0447	-0.8	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that none of the independent variables under investigation have impacted on perceptions with regard to this set of aims. Table 9.6.4 shows that this remains the case when the impact of all of the items together is taken into account. None of the variables under investigation is shown to impact on the scale.

Table 9.6.5 multiple regression significance test Scale 5: personal evaluation of religions

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0022	.0022	1.9	NS	-.0444	-1.3	NS
Extraversion	.0073	.0051	4.5	NS	.0724	2.1	NS
Neuroticism	.0087	.0014	1.2	NS	.0549	1.6	NS
Psychoticism	.0116	.0029	2.6	NS	.0805	2.2	NS
Lie	.0116	.0000	0.0	NS	.0015	0.0	NS
Attitude score	.0218	.0102	9.2	.01	.2036	3.1	.01
Attendance	.0218	.0000	0.0	NS	.0093	0.2	NS
Prayer freq	.0226	.0008	0.7	NS	-.0156	-0.3	NS
Belief in God	.0289	.0063	5.7	NS	-.1250	-2.4	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that attitude toward Christianity is the only independent variable under investigation which has been shown to impact on the current scale. When all of the variables are considered together it is shown that attitude toward Christianity is the key variable which acts as a predictor on the current scale.

Table 9.6.6 multiple regression significance test Scale 6: learn from religions about oneself

Predictor variable	increase						
	r^2	r^2	F	p<	β	t	p<
Sex	.0009	.0009	0.8	NS	-.0416	-1.2	NS
Extraversion	.0034	.0025	2.2	NS	.0546	1.6	NS
Neuroticism	.0045	.0010	0.9	NS	.0603	1.7	NS
Psychoticism	.0047	.0003	0.2	NS	.0874	2.4	NS
Lie	.0073	.0025	2.3	NS	.0548	1.6	NS
Attitude score	.0451	.0399	36.8	.001	.2930	4.6	.001
Attendance	.0481	.0010	0.9	NS	-.0407	-0.8	NS
Prayer freq	.0482	.0001	0.1	NS	.0000	0.0	NS
Belief in God	.0506	.0024	2.2	NS	-.0773	-1.5	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that religiosity impacted significantly on this scale. Each of the four markers of religiosity was shown to impact significantly on the current scale. Data presented in Table 9.6.6 show that while scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity continue to have predictive efficacy when all of the variables are considered, the other markers of religiosity fail to contribute any further predictive power when that of the attitude score had been taken into account.

Table 9.6.7 multiple regression significance test Scale 7:personal quests

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0012	.0012	1.1	NS	-.0348	-1.0	NS
Extraversion	.0077	.0065	5.8	NS	.0743	2.2	NS
Neuroticism	.0079	.0002	0.2	NS	.0522	1.5	NS
Psychoticism	.0130	.0052	4.5	NS	.1571	4.3	.001
Lie	.0145	.0015	1.4	NS	.0456	1.3	NS
Attitude score	.0697	.0552	52.2	.001	.2674	4.2	.001
Attendance	.0697	.0000	0.0	NS	-.0105	-0.2	NS
Prayer freq	.0697	.0000	0.0	NS	.0075	0.1	NS
Belief in God	.0700	.0003	0.3	NS	-.0268	-0.5	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that religiosity impacted significantly on this scale. Each of the four markers of religiosity was shown to impact significantly on the current scale. In addition to this scores on the extraversion scale were shown to impact significantly on the current scale. However, data presented in table 9.6.7 show that when all of the variables are considered together it is shown that Psychoticism is the personality variable which is fundamental to scores on the current scale. Religiosity is still shown to impact on scores on the current scale, but it is only scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity which are shown to have any predictive value. When these are taken into account, the other markers of religiosity fail to impact further on this scale.

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that religiosity impacted significantly on this scale. Each of the four markers of religiosity was shown to impact significantly on the current scale.

Table 9.6.8 multiple regression significance test Scale 8: develop implicitly religious attitudes

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0000	.000	0.0	NS	-.0188	-0.6	NS
Extraversion	.0021	.0021	1.8	NS	.0470	1.4	NS
Neuroticism	.0022	.0001	0.1	NS	.0387	1.1	NS
Psychoticism	.0027	.0005	0.5	NS	.0828	2.3	NS
Lie	.0084	.0057	5.1	NS	.0834	2.5	NS
Attitude score	.0788	.0704	67.2	.001	.2769	4.4	.001
Attendance	.0836	.0048	4.6	NS	-.1062	-2.3	NS
Prayer freq	.0848	.0012	1.2	NS	.0470	0.8	NS
Belief in God	.0858	.0009	0.9	NS	.0484	1.0	NS

Data presented in Table 9.6.8 show that while scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity continue to have predictive efficacy when all of the variables are considered, the other markers of religiosity fail to contribute any further predictive power when that of the attitude score had been taken into account.

Table 9.6.9 multiple regression significance test Scale 9: develop tolerance

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0225	.0225	20.3	.001	.1387	4.0	.001
Extraversion	.0238	.0013	1.2	NS	.0385	1.1	NS
Neuroticism	.0238	.0000	0.0	NS	.0099	0.3	NS
Psychoticism	.0239	.0001	0.1	NS	.0278	0.7	NS
Lie	.0274	.0035	3.2	NS	.0603	1.7	NS
Attitude score	.0275	.0000	0.0	NS	.0450	0.7	NS
Attendance	.0319	.0044	4.0	NS	-.09156	-1.9	NS
Prayer freq	.0319	.0000	0.0	NS	.0061	0.1	NS
Belief in God	.0321	.0002	0.2	NS	.0206	0.4	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that individual differences in sex and scores on the psychoticism scale are significant predictors with regard to the current scale. However, data presented in Table 9.6.9 show that when sex differences are taken into account psychoticism scores fail to add any further predictive value to scores on the current scale.

Table 9.6.10 multiple regression significance test Scale 10: confessional aims

Predictor variable	increase						
	r^2	r^2	F	p<	β	t	p<
Sex	.0001	.0001	0.1	NS	-.0438	-1.4	NS
Extraversion	.0004	.0004	0.3	NS	.0243	0.8	NS
Neuroticism	.0019	.0014	1.3	NS	.0619	1.9	NS
Psychoticism	.0115	.0097	8.6	.01	.0415	1.2	NS
Lie	.0117	.0001	0.1	NS	.0214	0.7	NS
Attitude score	.1751	.1635	174.4	.01	.4220	7.1	.001
Attendance	.1800	.0048	5.2	NS	-.0816	-1.9	NS
Prayer freq	.1801	.0002	0.2	NS	-.0547	-1.0	NS
Belief in God	.1876	.0075	8.1	.01	.1360	2.8	.01

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that religiosity impacted significantly on this scale. Each of the four markers of religiosity was shown to impact significantly on the current scale. Data presented in Table 9.6.10 show that while scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity continue to have predictive efficacy when all of the variables are considered, the only other aspect of religiosity to contribute predictive power is extent of belief in God. Even when all of the other items are accounted for, belief in the existence of God continues to impact on the current scale.

Table 9.6.11 multiple regression significance test Scale 11: spiritual and moral development

Predictor variable	increase		F	p<	β	t	p<
	r^2	r^2					
Sex	.0004	.0004	0.3	NS	-.0467	-1.4	NS
Extraversion	.0031	.0027	2.4	NS	.0633	1.8	NS
Neuroticism	.0048	.0017	1.5	NS	.0582	1.7	NS
Psychoticism	.0061	.0013	1.1	NS	.0311	0.8	NS
Lie	.0088	.0027	2.4	NS	.0568	1.6	NS
Attitude score	.0373	.0285	26.0	.001	.2481	3.9	.001
Attendance	.0426	.0053	4.9	NS	-.0883	-1.9	NS
Prayer freq	.0430	.0004	0.3	NS	-.0397	-0.7	NS
Belief in God	.0432	.0003	0.2	NS	.0250	0.5	NS

The bivariate analyses shown earlier in the chapter have demonstrated that religiosity impacted significantly on this scale. Scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity, extent of belief in the existence of God, and frequency of prayer were each shown to impact on the current scale. Table 9.6.11 shows that when all of the variables are considered together it is shown that scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity act as a significant predictor with regard to the current scale, whereas extent of belief in the existence of God and frequency of prayer offer no further predictive power.

Conclusions

This chapter has explored the capacity to measure students' perceptions as to what religious studies should help students to achieve. It was shown that the indices employed in the current study function reliably and discriminate appropriately among respondents. The first conclusion therefore is that student perceptions can be measured.

Having demonstrated the ability to evaluate perceptions, a range of bivariate analyses was undertaken to discover the impact of each of the predictor variables on students' perceptions of religious studies. It has been shown that sex impacts significantly on the way in which students perceive the subject. Females are significantly more likely than males to perceive that religious studies should help them to develop in their understanding and appreciation of other people and religions. Males are significantly more likely than females to perceive that religious studies should help them to develop in their understanding and appreciation of their own religious beliefs and of themselves. The current emphasis in religious studies, on world religions, is therefore more likely to appeal to females than to males.

Personality has been shown to impact on the perceptions that students hold with regard to religious studies. Extraversion was shown to be associated with the view that religious studies should contribute in some way to personal development. Neuroticism was shown to be associated with the view that religious studies ought to help pupils to understand religious references in culture. Neurotics may show a concern that they are not able to understand their culture without focused study of religion.

Religiosity has been shown to impact on the perceptions that students hold with regard to religious studies. Most of the areas under investigation were influenced by religiosity. It is shown that attitude predicts across the greatest number of areas, belief and private practice share similar abilities to predict across a range of areas. Public religious practice is the least important predictor with regard to perceptions of religious studies.

In addition to bivariate analysis, multiple regression analysis was employed. These analyses

demonstrated that various differences that emerged during the bivariate analyses were not significant when all of the variables were considered together. The significance of sex as a predictor in relation to 2 of the 11 scales was established by the bivariate analyses, these findings were confirmed by the series of multiple regression analyses.

The significance of scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity as a predictor in relation to 7 of the 11 scales was established by the bivariate analyses, the series of multiple regression analyses demonstrated that when all of the variables were considered together, scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity were shown to impact significantly on 8 of the 11 scales.

The significance of frequency of church attendance as a predictor in relation to 4 of the 11 scales was established by the bivariate analyses, the series of multiple regression analyses demonstrated that when all of the variables were considered together, frequency of church attendance was shown to impact significantly on none of the 11 scales. Where frequency of church attendance had been shown to be significant in bivariate analyses, it was no longer shown to be significant when the effect of the other variables had been taken into account.

The significance of frequency of prayer as a predictor in relation to 6 of the 11 scales was established by the bivariate analyses, the series of multiple regression analyses demonstrated that when all of the variables were considered together, frequency of church attendance was shown to impact significantly on none of the 11 scales. Where frequency of prayer had been shown to be significant in bivariate analyses, it was no longer shown to be significant when the effect of the other variables had been taken into account.

The significance of belief in God as a predictor in relation to 6 of the 11 scales was established by the bivariate analyses, the series of multiple regression analyses demonstrated that when all of the variables were considered together, belief in God was shown to impact significantly on only 2 of the 11 scales. Where belief in the existence of God had been shown to be significant in bivariate analyses, its effect was limited when all of the other variables had been taken into account.

The multiple regression analyses have demonstrated that Attitude Toward Christianity is the aspect of religiosity which is the most significant single predictor of differences in perceptions relating to aims of religious studies. Although other areas of religiosity are significant predictors of perceptions, most of this variance can be accounted for by scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity.

Chapters 1 and 2 demonstrated that confessional aims in religious education have been declining steadily over the past century, to the current point where public examinations in religious studies make no assumptions about the faith of candidates. However, it is shown that specifically confessional aims find more support among religious students.

Despite the change in emphasis over recent years, there is a significant group of students who desire an academically rigorous subject which can help them to achieve confessional aims, and to discover new details of themselves from religion, progress in their own religious quest and experience spiritual and moral development.

The aims of religious studies as broadly conceived are significantly different to the way in which they are perceived among religious students. This mismatch between perceptions is of importance

as religious students may experience difficulties in the subject that their irreligious counterparts do not experience. This warning has added urgency when one considers that levels of religiosity among religious students are higher than the population norms. A-level religious studies is a subject that systematically attracts religious students and then disadvantages them with the unexpected aims.

The ways in which religious studies is perceived clearly have the potential to impact on the motivations that religious studies students have for pursuing the subject. Educators need to be aware that students and potential students share different perceptions as to the variety of ways in which the subject ought to be perceived. Religious studies may be broadly conceived as a subject field rather than a discipline. It may be that there are many legitimate pursuits within this field. The analyses presented above serve as a note of caution that different students see the subject in a myriad of different ways. The perceptions of males are by and large different to those of females. Student perceptions can be affected by phenomena as subtle as personality. Religious students differ from irreligious students. With such diversity among students it is essential for teachers to be aware that their expectations may not coincide with those of their pupils.

Chapter 10

Teaching Religion: the students' response

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Introduction

Different subjects afford different methodological opportunities to teachers, and different learning possibilities to pupils. It is apparent that certain practices within physical education would be seen to have no place in a French lesson. Equally, certain practices in a biology lesson would have little to offer the study of economics. Religious education offers a range of subject matter. Students may be required to learn a series of facts, including, for example, the sequence of the succession of the Gurus within the Sikh tradition. On the other hand, they may have to evaluate and attempt to understand certain metaphysically challenging concepts, such as the problem of evil within the Christian tradition. Clearly religious studies requires the teaching of facts and of concepts. Different methods may be more suitable for different aims. The purpose of the current chapter is to investigate the perceptions of students with regard to the efficacy of different methods within religious studies.

The chapter begins with a profile of student responses to methods often employed in religious studies. Students were asked to indicate how useful they found the different teaching methods. They responded on a five point scale ranging from 'completely useless' to 'very useful'. Response categories '1' and '2' have been combined to reflect a 'low' level of support for a particular method. Response '3' is presented as 'not certain'. Response categories '4' and '5' have been combined to reflect a 'high' level of support for a particular method.

Item endorsement

The data contained within Table 10.1 show the different levels of support which students gave to various methods which might be employed in the classroom. The levels of support relate to perceived efficacy of the various methods.

Table 10.1 Levels of item endorsement relating to different teaching methods in religious studies

Item	% high	% not certain	% low
Teacher dictating to the class	41	36	23
Teacher giving hand-outs to the class	48	35	17
Full unstructured group discussion in which everyone is expected to take part	58	25	17
Unstructured group discussion contributed to only by those who want to	40	28	32
Group discussion controlled and guided by a teacher	67	24	9
Being told to read a piece by a teacher	17	34	50
Having a piece read aloud by a teacher	19	35	46
Group discussion following from a set text	53	31	16
Group discussion controlled and guided by a student	28	32	40
Lectures given by visiting members of faith communities	52	26	22
Visits to places of worship	50	24	26
Watching documentaries	55	29	16
Watching films (non-documentary)	50	28	22
Discussing religious issues in current affairs	64	24	11
Looking at previous exam papers	79	14	7
Using Internet sources	31	35	34
Use of local clergy during discussions	23	30	47
Role play activities	22	22	56
Having point illustrated by reference to poetry or literary fiction	20	28	53
Studying religious artefacts	22	30	48
Exploring religious language	36	29	35
Using CD ROM sources	29	33	38
Lecture being delivered to the class	36	35	30

Perhaps one of the most commonly experienced teaching methods among students in religious studies takes the form of the teacher simply dictating to the class. This is a method which receives a relatively high level of support from the students, with over 40% showing a high level of support for this method. However, this leaves over a half of the pupils who are not able to claim that they

find the method to be useful.

The second method considered concerns the use of handouts. Almost a half (48%) considered that the use of handouts was useful. This suggests that students are able to learn more if they are resourced to do so at their own pace. Clearly the distribution of handouts to the class is seen as being more useful than the teacher dictating to the class.

Group discussions are opportunities for students actively to employ the knowledge that they have acquired during their studies. It is interesting to note that the four different models of group discussion that were presented to the students were given markedly different levels of support as to their relative utility. The employment of group discussion as a learning device was considered to be useful by between 28% and 67% of the students depending on what specific conditions were attached to it.

A full unstructured group discussion in which everyone was expected to participate was considered to be much more useful than an unstructured group discussion contributed to only by those who wished to contribute (58% as compared to 40%). It may be the case that an expectation placed on everybody to contribute can be seen as a compulsion to learn. Students may feel that they need to learn more effectively if they expect that they are then going to have to demonstrate the extent of their knowledge to their peers. In effect the performance anticipation may coerce students into learning. This method may be seen to have clear pedagogical benefits. However, the element of performance and possible duress may be disabling to certain sub-groups of students. Performance anxiety, and social competence are theoretically linked to personality. Students displaying particular personality characteristics may be differently advantaged by this

classroom method.

Group discussions receive different levels of support from students based upon the way in which such discussions are controlled. Group discussions controlled and guided by a teacher are seen as being of more value than those controlled and guided by one of the students (67% as compared to 28%). Clearly teachers are seen as being high quality resources by their students. While much media and political attention has recently focussed on the value and status of the teaching profession, it seems that the value of teachers is seen to be beyond dispute among A-level religious studies students. Teachers are recognised for their competence by their students.

The different ways in which print resources can be used educationally are perceived differently among the participants with regard to their pedagogical efficacy. Being told to read a piece by a teacher, is considered to be useful by only 17% of the participants. Having a piece read aloud by a teacher, is considered to be useful by 19% of the students. Clearly both of these methods which require students to absorb information in a relatively passive manner are not widely supported. This may be seen to raise questions as to the value of set texts and recommended resources which the different examination agencies generally endorse. However, the use of texts does not have to be a passive and ineffective pursuit. Over half of the participants (53%) felt that a group discussion following from a set text was of value. The opportunity for active engagement with the material presented in texts clearly enhances the perceived usefulness of such texts among the student population.

Religious studies can be an abstract subject. There are opportunities, however, to engage with social facts. Religious people and religious places are all potentially useful resources within the

study of religion. They represent, to some extent, the primary data on which the subject field is built. A wide variety of perceptions as to the potential utility of different religious people or places exists. Despite the fact that lectures are supported by only 36% of the participants, lectures given by visiting members of faith communities are seen as being useful by 52% of the respondents. Clearly there is some kind of appeal intrinsic to visiting members of faith communities, whereby their presence is seen to enhance the effect of the method of presentation. On the other hand, whereas group discussions are shown to be generally more popular than lectures, the use of local clergy during discussions is considered useful by only 23% of the participants. Clearly there is something about the clergy whereby their presence is considered to negate the effect of the method of presentation. It is interesting to note the implication that local clergy are considered in a fundamentally different way to members of faith communities. Visits to places of worship are considered to be useful by 50% of the participants. It may be that physical evidence of this nature helps students to see practical value in what they are doing in terms of their studies.

Despite the earlier demonstration that passive modes of presentation, which required no real active engagement on the part of the students, were not considered to be of particular use by the participants, passive audiovisual resources were seen as being useful by over half of the participants. Watching documentaries was seen as a useful teaching method by 55% of the respondents. Watching non-documentary films was seen as being useful by 50% of the respondents. Clearly, well produced documentaries allow students to access competent material presented in a sophisticated manner. Most teachers would not have the resources at their disposal to compete with such presentations. The employment of documentaries within lessons can therefore enhance the learning experience for the students. Non-documentary films have the potential to illustrate certain phenomena without being limited to the truth. Certain points can be

exaggerated and emphasised in terms of a plot device, which may make certain issues more transparent. Such tendencies may assist students to see certain underlying themes.

The discussion of religious issues in current affairs was endorsed as being useful by a majority of the participants (64%). Such discussions allow students to apply their understanding of religious phenomena to real situations rather than hypothetical situations. Such discussions may help students to see religious studies as being a subject with a set of clear implications for understanding society. Once more, the ability actively to engage with an element of the syllabus may be seen as being generally more useful than passively absorbing data.

Looking at previous examination papers was seen as being educationally useful by a majority of the participants (79%). This was the item which was considered by most to be useful. Clearly the implication is that the students wish to study religion in such a way as to pass their exams. This is reasonable and impacts on the way in which they will learn in the subject. Learning is defined by a majority of the participants to be goal orientated, rather than being driven by any other factor.

Despite the popularity of active learning techniques and the relative popularity of the potential within non-documentary films, there is little support for two items which are active and based in fiction. The educational potential of role-play situations is considered to be high by only a minority (22%) of the respondents. The idea that points may be illustrated by poetry or literary fiction is not well supported among the participants. Only 20% reported that they considered such practices to be of high value. The relative popularity of non-documentary films may be due more to the audio visual presentation, rather than the potential of fictional or staged situations to reinforce educational points.

The use of religious artefacts was not widely endorsed by many of the participants (22%). Educational religious artefacts may be deemed to be more appropriate to earlier religious study, rather than A-level. Once an initial appreciation and understanding of various artifacts have been achieved, then it may be suggested that they are of no further use. The growing popularity of artefacts in lower key stages may mean that as pupils are gaining familiarity at a younger age, artefacts may be considered to be of little further value at A-level.

The exploration of religious language is considered to be useful by only 36% of the respondents. Students may consider that religious language is a pure jargon issue. They may feel that the concepts and phenomena of study are the key features which define their subject. Language may be seen as a distraction from the aspects to which they ascribe a higher status. This low priority may be some cause for concern. Like all academic fields, religious studies needs to employ its own specific vocabulary in order to discuss meaningfully those phenomena which could not otherwise be discussed. Many examples exist within the field, whereby there is no English language equivalent to the terms employed in certain religions. Understanding the meaning of *dukkha* within Buddhism requires a careful exploration of religious language. It may be asserted that without understanding the *dukkha* it may not be possible to understand Buddhism.

Any evaluation of Islam requires an exploration of religious language. The belief that the *Qur'an*, is the directly revealed word of *Allah*, implies a particular set of implications upon understanding Islam. Perhaps most important, yet not necessarily obvious, is the idea that it is not possible to study the *Qur'an* in any language other than Arabic. Indeed, it may be argued that when the *Qur'an* is 'translated' into any language other than Arabic, then the resulting text would represent a translation of the meaning of the *Qur'an*, rather than being the *Qur'an* itself.

Aside from linguistic sensitivity, exploration of religious language is also essential in order to understand philosophical issues concerned with the use of language. The use of myths and allegory within various religious texts require a thorough exploration if understanding is to follow. The fact that such a low proportion of the students feel that exploring religious language may yield educational benefit may be seen to be a cause of concern. Exploration of religious language is crucial across the field, it does not represent preoccupation with jargon within the field, but a vital aspect in understanding religions.

Use of information technology within religious education is an area in which educational potential seems uncertain. The respondents seemed unsure as to the usefulness of both CD ROM sources and Internet sources. Each of these items split the respondents into three roughly equal groups, high, low, and uncertain. A replication study would be interesting in order to examine whether greater emphasis and investment on information technology within the curriculum has succeeded in bringing about a change in the perceptions of students as to the potential of information technology as a teaching resource in the study of religion.

The final item concerned with student responses toward different teaching practices related to lectures. Only 36% of the sample felt that lectures were useful. This is a teaching method which is more commonly employed in the higher education sector, rather than further education. It would be interesting to explore the interaction between students' future educational aspirations and their perceptions of lecturing as a useful educational method. It may be the case that university departments of theology and religious studies systematically teach in such ways as to either deter applicants, or to disadvantage those who do apply.

Sex and perceptions of teaching methods

Table 10.2 Levels of item endorsement relating to different teaching methods in religious studies: sex differences

item	female		male		t	p<
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Teacher dictating to the class	3.27	1.07	3.14	1.14	1.61	NS
Teacher giving hand-outs to the class	3.44	1.06	3.40	1.00	0.50	NS
Full unstructured group discussion in which everyone is expected to take part	3.69	1.18	3.69	1.13	0.03	NS
Unstructured group discussion contributed to only by those who want to	3.15	1.26	3.03	1.26	1.18	NS
Group discussion controlled and guided by a teacher	3.83	0.98	3.79	1.00	0.47	NS
Being told to read a piece by a teacher	2.52	1.05	2.53	0.99	-0.11	NS
Having a piece read aloud by a teacher	2.64	1.06	2.55	1.01	1.12	NS
Group discussion following from a set text	3.54	1.05	3.42	1.03	1.47	NS
Group discussion controlled and guided by a student	2.85	1.12	2.78	1.26	0.77	NS
Lectures given by visiting members of faith communities	3.51	1.18	3.15	1.32	3.85	.001
Visits to places of worship	3.50	1.25	3.04	1.39	4.70	.001
Watching documentaries	3.58	1.06	3.38	1.10	2.34	NS
Watching films (non-documentary)	3.47	1.17	3.32	1.29	1.62	NS
Discussing religious issues in current affairs	3.86	1.05	3.63	1.12	2.91	.01
Looking at previous exam papers	4.29	0.89	3.79	1.17	5.84	.001
Using Internet sources	2.99	1.14	2.80	1.27	1.94	NS
Use of local clergy during discussions	2.69	1.18	2.48	1.17	2.28	NS
Role play activities	2.45	1.28	2.43	1.28	0.17	NS
Having point illustrated by reference to poetry or literary fiction	2.51	1.19	2.49	1.22	0.28	NS
Studying religious artefacts	2.65	1.18	2.38	1.22	3.00	.01
Exploring religious language	3.01	1.20	2.92	1.20	0.91	NS
Using CD ROM sources	2.86	1.17	2.72	1.26	1.46	NS
Lecture being delivered to the class	3.05	1.12	3.04	1.15	0.10	NS

Having investigated the range of perceptions as to the perceived efficacy of various methods which

may be employed in religious studies, it becomes appropriate to consider the potential impact of sex differences on the perceptions of students. Due to the well-documented sex differences in attitudes toward religious education, it is legitimate to explore sex differences and their impact on perceptions of students toward the teaching of religious subject matter. In doing this, it is possible to establish whether such perceptions are relevant in explaining the current sex imbalance within A-level religious studies groups.

Data presented in table 10.2 show that with regard to perceptions of many of the different teaching methods in religious studies, there are no significant sex differences. However, where sex differences are present, they illustrate particular patterns. It is shown that females are significantly more likely than males to see value in lectures given by members of faith communities, although they are no more likely to support the value of lectures *per se*.

Females are significantly more likely to see educational value in visits to places of worship than males, as are they significantly more likely to see value in the study of religious artefacts. The implication here is that the females are more likely than the males to support the view that there is value in being able to interact with religious phenomena, whether people, places or artefacts. The females are more likely to support the view that they are likely to benefit from an encounter with religious elements within society, rather than simply learn about religions in an academic isolated and detached manner.

Females are significantly more likely than males in discussions of religious matters in current affairs. It is clear that once again the females are more likely to perceive educational benefit in being able to apply their knowledge of religion real events outside of the classroom context. The

application of religious studies to societal or cultural phenomena, is seen by females as being a useful method in religious education.

Females are significantly more likely than males to consider that looking at previous examination papers is a useful method in religious studies. If the perception that this method is useful is seen as reflecting a goal centred orientation toward the subject, then it may be suggested that females are more motivated to succeed in passing their exams than males. This may generate the perception among teachers that females are more willing to take the subject seriously. This may impact on the classroom practices of the teachers who develop such a view. In turn this may impact upon the eventual differential perceptions of males and females in religious studies. A mismatch between the goals of teachers and male students may lead to problems for those male students. Having established that males and females may define success in religious studies differently to one another it becomes possible to understand more clearly the differences in motivations and interests between males and females, which were identified in chapters 7 and 8.

No clear pattern emerges with regard to sex differences and perceived usefulness of information technology in religious studies. Females are no more likely than males to see Internet sources as being useful in religious studies; Also there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of the way in which they perceive CD ROM sources.

No significant differences emerged between males and females with regard to the perceived usefulness of role play activities within religious studies. Nor do significant differences emerge between males and females with regard to the perceived usefulness of poetry or literary fiction as illustrative material in religious studies.

No significant differences emerged between males and females with regard to the perceived usefulness of exploring of religious language. It was shown earlier that the exploration of religious language was given relatively little support among the current sample. This was seen as being a potential source of concern in terms of its likely implications for religious studies. It may be seen as a welcome conclusion that perceptions relating to religious language are not predicted by sex. There are many ways in which females seem to react more positively to religious studies. There are also many ways in which males seem to react negatively to religious studies. It seems, however, that perceptions relating to the usefulness of exploring religious language are not influenced by sex.

Personality and perceptions of teaching methods

In the opening section of the current chapter it was asserted that a number of teaching methods are theoretically more suited to certain personality types more than others. This assertion would imply that individual differences, in terms of personality, between students may impact on the perceptions that individuals have with regard to the usefulness of different teaching methods.

Table 10.3 shows that personality does indeed impact on students' perceptions of teaching methods. Teachers need to be aware that the perceived efficacy of the methods that they employ may be mediated by individual differences in personality of the students.

The perceived usefulness of teachers dictating material to the class was found to be negatively associated with psychoticism ($r = -.1026, p < .001$). The perceptions of efficacy of this method were shown to be unrelated to either extraversion, neuroticism or lie scale scores. Students scoring high on psychoticism may be disadvantaged in a setting whereby dictation of material is the preferred method of delivery by a teacher.

Table 10.3 Personality and levels of item endorsement relating to different teaching methods in religious studies

Item	P	E	N	L
Teacher dictating to the class	-.1026 .001	.0217 NS	.0413 NS	.0275 NS
Teacher giving hand-outs to the class	-.1211 .001	-.0500 NS	.0503 NS	.0547 NS
Full unstructured group discussion in which everyone is expected to take part	.0714 NS	.2652 .001	-.1141 .001	-.0747 NS
Unstructured group discussion contributed to only by those who want to	.0696 NS	.0097 NS	.0268 NS	-.0304 NS
Group discussion controlled and guided by a teacher	-.0505 NS	.1093 .001	-.0358 NS	.0814 .01
Being told to read a piece by a teacher	-.0846 .01	-.0189 NS	-.0166 NS	.0612 NS
Having a piece read aloud by a teacher	-.1068 .001	-.0241 NS	.0275 NS	.0418 NS
Group discussion following from a set text	-.0266 NS	.1223 .001	-.0388 NS	.0382 NS
Group discussion controlled and guided by a student	.0469 NS	.1676 .001	-.0849 .01	-.0329 NS
Lectures given by visiting members of faith communities	-.0237 NS	.0600 NS	-.0294 NS	-.0294 NS
Visits to places of worship	-.0833 .01	.0247 NS	.0606 NS	-.0506 NS
Watching documentaries	-.0553 NS	.0424 NS	.0229 NS	.0486 NS
Watching films (non-documentary)	.0403 NS	.0915 .01	.0127 NS	-.0320 NS
Discussing religious issues in current affairs	.0122 NS	.1609 .001	-.0433 NS	-.0007 NS
Looking at previous exam papers	-.1548 .001	-.0210 NS	-.0057 NS	.0626 NS
Using Internet sources	-.0396 NS	.0363 NS	-.0070 NS	.0010 NS
Use of local clergy during discussions	-.0755 NS	.0099 NS	.0008 NS	-.0638 NS
Role play activities	.0332 NS	.1361 .001	-.0406 NS	-.0549 NS
Having point illustrated by reference to poetry or literary fiction	.0606 NS	.0229 NS	.0233 NS	.0354 NS
Studying religious artefacts	-.0668 NS	.0290 NS	.0273 NS	.0179 NS
Exploring religious language	-.0272 NS	.0217 NS	.0058 NS	.0185 NS
Using CD ROM sources	-.0273 NS	.0199 NS	-.0042 NS	-.0123 NS
Lecture being delivered to the class	.0067 NS	.0285 NS	-.0231 NS	.0448 NS

The perceived usefulness of teachers giving handouts to the class was found to be negatively associated with psychoticism ($r = -.1211$, $p < .001$). The perceptions of efficacy of this method were shown to be unrelated to either extraversion, neuroticism or lie scale scores. Students scoring high on psychoticism may be disadvantaged in a setting whereby distribution of handouts is the preferred method of delivery by a teacher.

The perceived usefulness of full unstructured group discussion in which everyone is expected to take part was found to be positively associated with extraversion ($r = .2652$, $p < .001$). The perceptions of efficacy of this method were shown to be negatively associated with neuroticism ($r = -.1141$, $p < .001$), and unrelated to psychoticism and lie scale scores. Students scoring high on neuroticism may be disadvantaged in a setting where they are expected by a teacher to take part in a group discussion. Students scoring high on extraversion may be advantaged by the expectation that the whole group will engage in a discussion. These differences are consistent with the theory which sees social skill as being the forte of the extravert, and performance anxiety as being in the domain of the neurotic.

The perceived usefulness of unstructured group discussion contributed to only by those who want to was found to be unrelated to either psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism or lie scale scores.

The way in which group discussions are controlled and guided is perceived in terms of usefulness is predicted to some extent by personality. The perceived usefulness of group discussion controlled and guided by a teacher was positively associated with extraversion ($r = .1093$, $p < .001$) and lie scale scores ($r = .0814$, $p < .01$). The perceptions of efficacy of this method were shown to be unrelated to either psychoticism or neuroticism scores. This pattern changes with regard to the

efficacy of group discussions controlled and guided by a student, the perceived usefulness of which was found to be positively associated with extraversion ($r=.1676$, $p<.001$) and negatively associated with neuroticism ($r=-.0849$, $p<.01$). The perceived usefulness of this method is unrelated to either psychoticism or lie scale scores. This shows that extraverts find value in being able to discuss their work regardless of whether a teacher or student is controlling and guiding the discussion. On the other hand, high scorers on neuroticism are not supportive of group discussions controlled and guided by students. This may be related to the earlier finding that high scorers on neuroticism are reluctant to expose themselves to the expectation that they will contribute in a group situation. They may be concerned that in situations whereby students are expected to chair discussions, they themselves might be selected for the task.

Different approaches to the use of print resources are predicted by individual differences in personality. The perceived usefulness of either being instructed to read a piece by a teacher, or of having a piece read aloud by a teacher were both significantly negatively associated with psychoticism ($r=-.0846$, $p<.01$) and ($r=-.1068$, $p<.001$) respectively. Both methods were found to be unrelated to either extraversion, neuroticism or lie scale scores. On the other hand, print resources were deemed to be more useful to the extravert population when they were used to stimulate group discussions.

The perceived usefulness of group discussions following from a set text was positively associated with extraversion ($r=.1223$, $p<.001$). The perceptions of efficacy of this method were shown to be unrelated to either psychoticism, neuroticism or lie scale scores. High scorers on extraversion may benefit more from print resources if they are given the opportunity to discuss the material having read it.

The perceived usefulness of lecture presentations is not predicted by personality. Neither lectures being given by visiting members of faith communities, nor lectures being delivered to the class generally were found to be related to personality. The perceived usefulness of each method was found to be unrelated to psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism and lie scale scores.

The perceived usefulness of visits to places of worship was found to be negatively associated with psychoticism ($r=-0.833$, $p<.01$). The perceptions of efficacy of this method were shown to be unrelated to either extraversion, neuroticism or lie scale scores. Students scoring high on psychoticism may need to be shown the educational potential of a visit to a place of worship. They may benefit from such an event being described clearly as a visit to an educational resource, rather than a visit to a place of worship.

The perceived usefulness of watching documentaries was not predicted by personality. The perceived usefulness of this method was found to be unrelated to psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism and lie scale scores. This pattern does not extend across to the other method concerned with the use of audio-visual resources.

The perceived usefulness of watching films (non-documentary) was shown to be positively associated with extraversion ($r=.0915$, $p<.01$). The perceptions of efficacy of this method were shown to be unrelated to either psychoticism, neuroticism or lie scale scores.

The perceived usefulness of discussing religious issues in current affairs was found to be positively associated with extraversion ($r=.1609$, $p<.001$). The perceptions of efficacy of this method were shown to be unrelated to either psychoticism, neuroticism or lie scale scores. Again, extraverts

are in a position to benefit most from the opportunity to discuss religious matters with other people.

The perceived usefulness of looking at previous exam papers is shown to be predicted to some extent by personality. Perceived usefulness of this method was shown to be negatively associated with psychoticism ($r = -.1548$, $p < .001$). This method was found to be unrelated to either extraversion, neuroticism or lie scale scores.

The educational potential of information technology within religious education was not found to be predicted by personality. Both using the Internet, and using CD ROM sources were shown to be independent of scores on either psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism, or the lie scale.

The perceived usefulness of local clergy within discussions was shown to be unrelated to personality. The absence of an association with extraversion is notable. Any other method which involves any kind of discussion is favoured by extraverts, yet they do not see any potential for the use of clergy within discussions.

The perceived usefulness of role play activities was shown to be associated with personality. The perceived usefulness of this method is associated with extraversion ($r = .1361$, $p < .001$). The perceptions of efficacy of this method were shown to be unrelated to either psychoticism, neuroticism or lie scale scores. Again, extraverts are in a position to benefit most from the opportunity to learn in a way which enables learners to process information actively.

The perceived usefulness or the employment of poetry or literary fiction as illustrative material was

not differentiated in terms of personality. The perceived usefulness of this method was shown to be unrelated to scores on either psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism, or the lie scale.

The perceived usefulness of exploring religious language was shown to be unrelated to personality. The perceived usefulness of this method was shown to be unrelated to scores on either psychoticism, extraversion, neuroticism, or the lie scale. It was shown earlier in this chapter that this method was given a relatively low level of support by the respondents. The importance of religious language within religious studies was discussed. It is now shown that whereas a low level of support exists, this is not determined by individual differences in personality.

Personality has been shown to predict student perceptions of efficacy of different teaching methods which may be employed within religious studies. If certain teaching methods lend themselves most readily to religious studies, then, clear implications exist for recruitment and performance within religious studies. First, it has been shown in that psychoticism is negatively associated with many of the methods which may be employed in religious studies. This finding is worthy of further consideration. It was shown in chapter 4 of the current dissertation that psychoticism is associated with a negative attitude toward religious education. It may be that a modification of teaching practices can go some way toward limiting the negative attitude of high scorers on psychoticism to religious studies.

The data presented in table 10.3 suggest that teachers are able to enhance the learning experience of their students by employing a variety of learning techniques. Different approaches to teaching which involve group work as well as solitary work ought to be employed. Active learning methods ought to be employed, as well as those that allow for the passive acquisition of

knowledge. Print resources should be employed in addition to IT resources. By increasing the range of presentation methods, teachers will be able to avoid the risk of focussing on one particular approach which may be seen to be ineffective by students displaying particular personality characteristics.

Religiosity and perceptions of teaching methods

It was shown in chapter 3 of the current dissertation that religiosity impacts on pupils' perceptions of religious education. It is theorised that religiosity impacts on students' perceptions of religious studies. The variety of ways in which religious studies is taught is a legitimate part of this investigation. It is necessary to investigate the way in which religiosity impacts on students' perceptions of the efficacy of various teaching methods in religious studies.

The use of four different markers of religiosity will allow the identification to trends among indiscriminately pro-religious students who may support any approach to the teaching of religion. Different aspects of religiosity may impact perceptions differently to one another. The data presented in table 10.4 will allow a comparative evaluation of different aspects of religiosity and their impact on perceptions of usefulness of various teaching methods in religious studies.

Table 10.4 shows that scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity are positively associated with the perceived efficacy of the first passive method in religious education, teachers dictating to the class ($r=.0922$, $p<.01$). The perceived usefulness of this method was not related to public religious practice, private religious practice, or belief in the existence of God.

Table 10.4: Religiosity and perceptions of teaching methods

Item	ATT	CHURCH	PRAYER	BELIEF
Teacher dictating to the class	.0922 .01	.0086 NS	.0322 NS	.0547 NS
Teacher giving hand-outs to the class	.0665 NS	.0106 NS	.0418 NS	.0322 NS
Full unstructured group discussion in which everyone is expected to take part	.0819 .01	.0442 NS	.0583 NS	.0571 NS
Unstructured group discussion contributed to only by those who want to	-.0381 NS	-.0138 NS	-.0043 NS	-.0574 NS
Group discussion controlled and guided by a teacher	.1282 .001	.0598 NS	.0784 NS	.0605 NS
Being told to read a piece by a teacher	.1270 .001	.0690 NS	.0937 .01	.0418 NS
Having a piece read aloud by a teacher	.1232 .001	.0472 NS	.0617 NS	.0705 NS
Group discussion following from a set text	.1050 .001	.0249 NS	.0602 NS	.0376 NS
Group discussion controlled and guided by a student	.1206 .001	.0805 .01	.1133 .001	.0378 NS
Lectures given by visiting members of faith communities	.1542 .001	.0991 .001	.1112 .001	.0844 .01
Visits to places of worship	.1236 .001	.0606 NS	.0850 .01	.0912 .01
Watching documentaries	.0778 NS	.0227 NS	.0479 NS	.0477 NS
Watching films (non-documentary)	.0540 NS	.0270 NS	.0432 NS	.0242 NS
Discussing religious issues in current affairs	.0752 NS	.0390 NS	.0594 NS	.0023 NS
Looking at previous exam papers	.0951 .01	-.0077 NS	.0341 NS	.0758 NS
Using Internet sources	.0965 .01	.0199 NS	.0400 NS	.0433 NS
Use of local clergy during discussions	.2093 .001	.1629 .001	.1547 .001	.0997 .001
Role play activities	.1079 .001	.0663 NS	.0570 NS	.0493 NS
Having point illustrated by reference to poetry or literary fiction	.0559 NS	.0112 NS	.0088 NS	.0016 NS
Studying religious artefacts	.1044 .001	.0420 NS	.0564 NS	.0333 NS
Exploring religious language	.0762 NS	.0410 NS	.0486 NS	.0190 NS
Using CD ROM sources	.0842 .01	.050 NS	.0410 NS	.0418 NS
Lecture being delivered to the class	.0067 NS	-.0461 NS	-.0418 NS	-.0192 NS

Perceptions as to the usefulness of full unstructured group discussions in which everybody is

expected to take part were shown to be significantly associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.0819$, $p<.01$). Perceptions as to the usefulness of this method were shown to be unrelated to public religious practice, private religious practice, or belief in the existence of God. This pattern did not apply to unstructured group discussions contributed to only by those who want to. Perceptions of the usefulness were not shown to be related to religiosity, regardless of how religiosity was measured. No association was found between this method and any of the four markers of religiosity.

Group discussions were perceived differently according to how they were controlled and guided. The perceived usefulness of group discussions controlled and guided by a teacher was shown to be significantly associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.1282$, $p<.001$). Perceptions as to the efficacy of this method were not shown to be associated with either public religious practice, private religious practice or belief in the existence of God. Perceptions of group discussions controlled and guided by a student were shown to be significantly associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude towards Christianity ($r=.1206$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.0805$, $p<.01$), and frequency of prayer ($r=.1133$, $p<.001$). No significant association was shown between perceptions of this method and belief in the existence of God.

The perceived usefulness of print resources was shown to be significantly associated with religiosity. The perceived usefulness of being told to read a piece by a teacher was significantly associated scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.1270$, $p<.001$), and with frequency of prayer ($r=.0937$, $p<.01$). This method was not shown to be significantly associated with either frequency of church attendance or belief in the existence of God. This pattern changes with regard to the perceived efficacy of the teacher reading aloud. Perceptions relating to this

method are shown to be positively associated only with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.1232$, $p<.001$). Perceptions as to the efficacy of this method were not shown to be significantly associated with either frequency of church attendance, prayer, or with belief in the existence of God. Perceptions relating to the usefulness of group discussions following from set texts follow much the same pattern. They are positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.1050$, $p<.001$) and unrelated to either frequency of church attendance, prayer, or to belief in the existence of God.

Religious students are more likely to see value in methods which involve the opportunity to develop their knowledge in relation to religious people or religious communities. Lectures given by visiting members of faith communities were seen as being more useful by religious students than by non-religious students. Perceived usefulness of this method was positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.1542$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.0991$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.1112$, $p<.001$) and belief in the existence of God ($r=.0844$, $p<.01$). This pattern also extended to the use of local clergy in discussions, presumably the students considered the clergy to be members of faith communities. The relationships between perceptions of this method and religiosity were significantly associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.2093$, $p<.001$), frequency of church attendance ($r=.1629$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.1547$, $p<.001$) and belief in the existence of God ($r=.0997$, $p<.001$).

Despite the link between religiosity and the perception of efficacy in using religious people in religious studies, there is less clarity in the link between religiosity and the perceived usefulness of religious places and religious objects and religiosity. The perceived usefulness of visits to places

of worship was significantly associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.1236$, $p<.001$), frequency of prayer ($r=.0850$, $p<.01$), and belief in the existence of God ($r=.0912$, $p<.01$). There is no significant relationship between the perceived efficacy of this method and frequency of attendance at a place of worship. Presumably, those students who attend places of worship regularly will see the least educational potential in a visit to a place of worship. The use of religious artefacts demonstrates further deviation from this pattern. The perceived efficacy of this method is associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.1044$, $p<.001$), although it is not shown to be related to frequency of church attendance, prayer, or belief in the existence of God.

The perceived usefulness of discussing religious issues in current affairs was not linked to religiosity, whether measured in terms of attitude, frequency of prayer or church attendance, or belief in the existence of God.

Perceptions relating to the usefulness of looking at previous exam papers were shown to be significantly associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.0951$, $p<.01$), and unrelated to frequency of church attendance, or belief in the existence of God. Attitude, therefore, may be seen as a predictor of a goal oriented approach to religious studies. Students exhibiting stronger beliefs, or greater frequency of practice, may have goals within religious studies apart from examination success.

The perceived usefulness of information technology within religious studies is seen differently by individuals displaying different religious characteristics. The pattern of relationships applied similarly to Internet sources and CD ROM sources. Both of which were found to be significantly

associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity ($r=.0965$, $p<.01$; and $r=.0842$, $p<.01$) and unrelated to either frequency of church attendance or prayer, or to belief in the existence of God.

The perceived usefulness of role play activities within religious studies was shown to be positively associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity ($r=.1079$, $p<.001$), although was found to be unrelated to any of the markers of religious belief or practice. It may be the case that students who exhibit religious behaviour, see little value in staging religious behaviours in an educational context, while those students who hold religious beliefs may fail to see the value in role play activities which have no necessary basis in belief in the existence of God.

No significant associations were established between the perceived usefulness of exploring religious language and religiosity, or between the perceived usefulness of lectures being delivered to the class and religiosity. These findings relate to religiosity regardless of how religiosity is defined.

Conclusions

The data presented throughout this chapter show that the perceived efficacy of various teaching methods in religious studies is influenced by the sex of the students. Although no clear pattern emerges between sex and perceived usefulness of different teaching methods, the data suggest that female students may be indiscriminately positive in their perceptions across a range of issues concerned with religious studies. Females are more likely than males to choose to study religion at A-level, and they are more likely than males to consider that they are deriving benefit from a greater range of teaching methods.

The data presented throughout this chapter show that the perceived efficacy of various teaching methods in religious studies is influenced by the personality of the students. Psychoticism is shown to be negatively associated with perceived efficacy of teacher-centred teaching methods, and visits to places of worship. Psychoticism may be a barrier to success in religious studies. It acts to steer pupils away from the subject when choices become available, and it acts to reduce the efficacy of a range of teaching methods commonly employed in the subject.

Extraversion is shown to be positively associated with pedagogical methods associated with sociability. Methods which allow students to interact with each other, and methods which allow new knowledge to be actively manipulated will help extraverts to succeed. It may be the case, however, that introverts are disadvantaged by such methods.

The methods which enable extraverts to succeed are potentially damaging to students scoring highly on neuroticism. Students scoring highly on neuroticism are not likely to benefit from methods which compel them to present their ideas to a group of their peers. Scores on the lie scale are not shown to be significantly linked to perceptions of efficacy of different teaching methods. A range of methodological approaches ought to be employed in order to allow most efficient learning to take place across different groups of students.

The data presented throughout this chapter show that the perceived efficacy of various teaching methods in religious studies is influenced by the religiosity of the students. More than this, however, it has been shown that different expressions of religiosity differently influence perceptions as to the usefulness across a range of teaching methods. Of the 23 different methods investigated, 15 were found to be significantly associated with scores on the Scale of Attitude

Toward Christianity; three were found to be significantly related to frequency of church attendance; five were significantly associated with frequency of prayer; three were associated with belief in the existence of God. Only two of the methods explored were found to be significantly associated with all four measures of religiosity. Religious students were significantly more likely to value lectures given by visiting members of faith communities, and value the use of local clergy during discussions.

Religious students see religious studies as a subject which gives them an opportunity to engage with other members of faith communities. They see clergy as being valuable resources within the teaching of religion. In view of the large number of religious students who have opted into religious studies at A-level, it may be wise for teachers to explore local religious communities in a bid to obtain the use of potentially valuable resources. Over reliance on such methods may cause some alienation among non-religious students who fail to see value in their employment.

High scorers on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity seem to be, to some extent, supportive of any method which will help them to learn about religion. They seem to display a generally positive attitude toward religious studies, and toward any sub component of religious studies. The correlations between scores on the Scale of Attitude toward Christianity should be considered to be indicative of preferences, but, they should not be over interpreted in terms of their pedagogical significance. They may reflect a profile of students who enjoy many aspects of religious studies and enjoy learning about religion. Statistical significance is not necessarily the same as practical significance in this regard.

Chapter 11

Conclusion

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Introduction

This dissertation set out to generate a socio-psychological profile of subject perceptions within religious studies. It was shown that sex, personality and religiosity impact on student perceptions across a range of issues. Moreover, it has been shown that different aspects of religiosity impact differently on subject perceptions of students. This conclusion will develop by summarising the impact of the independent variables across the complete range of subject perceptions investigated.

While the empirical section of the dissertation has focused on the impact of the independent variables within discrete units, attention will now focus on what the predictive efficacy of each of the three main variables. The overall significance of sex as a predictor of subject perceptions within A-level religious studies will be presented. This will be followed by an evaluation of the impact of each of the three dimensions of personality as predictors of subject perceptions within religious studies. Having evaluated the impact of sex and personality, the impact of each of the four aspects of religiosity is presented.

This chapter closes with an affirmation that the theoretical priorities identified within the professional literature have shaped an empirically viable investigation.

The impact of sex on subject perceptions in religious studies

Sex has been shown to impact across a range of subject perceptions in religious studies. Females have been shown to be more supportive than males across a range of areas concerned with religious studies. Table 11.1.1 shows that females are likely to choose to study religion at A-level because they want to learn more about other people's religious beliefs and because they feel that they are good at the subject.

Table 11.1.1 the perceptions of females in religious studies

<i>Females are more likely than males to study religion at A-level because they:-</i>	t	p<
want to learn more about other people's religious beliefs	4.75	.001
consider that it was a subject that they was good at, at GCSE level	3.12	.01
<i>Females are more likely than males to consider that A-level religious studies should:-</i>		
help students to understand religions	3.67	.001
help students to develop tolerance	4.28	.001
<i>Females are more likely than males to be interested in studying:-</i>		
Hinduism	3.95	.001
Jainism	2.90	.01
Judaism	4.6	.001
Islam	3.56	.001
Sikhism	4.57	.001
<i>Females are more likely than males to perceive as useful:-</i>		
lectures given by visiting members of faith communities	3.85	.001
visits to places of worship	4.70	.001
discussion of religious issues in current affairs	2.91	.01
looking at previous exam papers	5.84	.001
studying religious artefacts	3.00	.01

Females see A-level religious studies as being legitimately concerned with teaching about others and developing tolerance. They are more interested in a range of religions than their male counterparts, although, interestingly, they are no more interested in Christianity or Buddhism than males.

Females are shown to relate well to teaching methods which relate religion to real features, either by visiting places of worship or engaging with current affairs. They may be seen as taking examination success seriously.

Table 11.1.2 the perceptions of males in religious studies

<i>Males are more likely than females to study religion at A-level because they:-</i>	t	p<
are looking to adopt a set of beliefs to guide them	-2.67	.01
feel that they ought to study religion/theology	-2.85	.01
thought that it was going to be an easy option	-4.07	.001

Males are shown to be studying religion for reasons concerned with themselves, rather than other people. They want to develop beliefs to guide them, and they feel that they ought to study religion. There is none of the concern for other people that the females displayed. Running parallel to this group of males who want to study religion as some form of self development, is a group who are trying to obtain an easy A-level. This pursuit of examination success may be seen to be more pragmatic than the female quest for examination success exemplified above.

The impact of personality on subject perceptions in religious studies

Subject perceptions significantly associated with P Scores

Table 11.2.1 The perceptions of high P scorers in religious studies

<i>Tough-minded students are more likely than tender-minded students to decide to study religion at A-level because:-</i>	r/p<
they needed to take a third A-level	.1225 .001
they do not know why they decided to study religion	.1057 .001
it was the only subject that they could fit into their timetable	.0823 .01
they do not feel as if they had a choice in the matter	.1012 .001
they wish to justify their negative attitude toward religion	.1713 .001
they thought that it was going to be an easy option	.1311 .001
<i>Tough-minded students are more likely than tender-minded students to be interested in studying</i>	
Buddhism	.1273 .001

Table 11.2.1 shows that psychoticism has been demonstrated to impact on subject perceptions in a manner consistent with its theoretical underpinning. High P scorers are not positive about religious studies, even though they have 'chosen' to study beyond the compulsory minimum. They perceive that they had little real choice in whether or not to study this 'easy' subject that will help them to justify their negative outlook toward religion. There is only one area where high P scores are significantly associated with a positive response to an aspect of subject matter. High P scorers are likely to be more interested in Buddhism than low P scorers.

On the other hand, low P scorers show a range of positive responses to religious studies. They are interested in the subject, and may have listened to professional advice to study religion at A-level. They perceive that it is a subject that can help them in developing in their own religion. It is a subject at which they may have experienced previous examination success.

Low P scoring students are more interested than high P scoring students in studying Judaism and Christianity. They see that the subject should help in the development of tolerance.

These students value a range of approaches concerning the teacher, whom they see as an important resource in a range of methodological contexts. They appreciate their teacher in religious studies, and are concerned to some extent with examination success. This achievement-oriented view of religious studies is based on experience of previous examination success, and scrutiny of previous examination papers, unlike the low P scoring students who are reliant on religious studies being 'easy'.

Table 11.2.2 The perceptions of low P scorers in religious studies

<i>Tender-minded students are more likely than tough-minded students to decide to study religion at A-level because:-</i>	<i>r/p<</i>
they are interested in studying religion	-.0965 .01
they were advised to do so by a careers officer	-.0926 .01
they wish to develop a positive attitude toward religion	-.1032 .001
they want to learn more about God	-.1370 .001
they want to develop their own religious beliefs	-.0859 .01
they that they were good at RS GCSE level	-.1019 .001
<i>Tender-minded students are more likely than tough-minded students to be interested in:-</i>	
Christianity	-.1981 .001
Judaism	-.1033 .001
<i>Tender-minded students are more likely than tough-minded students to consider that A-level religious studies should:-</i>	
help them develop tolerance	-.0998 .01
<i>Tender-minded students are more likely than tough-minded students to perceive as useful:-</i>	
teacher dictating to the class	-.1026 .001
teacher giving hand-outs to the class	-.1211 .001
being told to read a piece by a teacher	-.0846 .01
having a piece read aloud by a teacher	-.1068 .001
visits to places of worship	-.0833 .01
looking at previous exam papers	-.1548 .001

Subject perceptions significantly associated with E Scores

High scorers on the E scale are motivated greatly by other people. Religious studies may seem

to high E scorers as being a sociable event. Social contacts have shaped the agenda of the extravert in suggesting that religious studies is an A-level that they should pursue.

Table 11.3.1 The perceptions of high E scorers in religious studies

<i>Extraverted students are more likely than introverted students to decide to study religion at A-level because:-</i>	<i>r/p<</i>
a member of the RE staff suggested that they ought to take it	.1464 .001
others who have studied it have recommended it to them	.1281 .001
they like the RE staff at their school/college	.1001 .01
<i>Extraverted students are more likely than introverted students to consider that A-level religious studies should:-</i>	
help them in a personal quest	.0840 .01
<i>Extraverted students are more likely than introverted students to consider that they benefit from</i>	
full unstructured group discussion in which everyone is expected to take part	.2652 .001
group discussion controlled and guided by a teacher	.1093 .001
group discussion following from a set text	.1223 .001
group discussion controlled and guided by a student	.1676 .001
watching films (non-documentary)	.0915 .01
discussing religious issues in current affairs	.1609 .001
role play activities	.1361 .001

High E scorers are consider that religious studies should help them to engage on a religious quest. Rather than passively absorbing information, the high E scorer sees religious studies as being an actively engaging subject.

In the same way that extraverts are motivated to study religion by other people, they also learn

more effectively when they are able to interact with other people. High E scoring students may not be specifically pro-religious studies, rather they may be generally supportive of any learning environment that allows for collaboration and active engagement with subject matter.

Subject perceptions significantly associated with N scores

The High N scoring student is shown to be seeking greater religious understanding through academic study. They may be feeling inadequacy in terms of their own religiosity which they hope to remedy through learning. Such students may see that their religiosity needs to be supported by a clear appreciation of the academic issues surrounding their faith.

However, they are no more likely than low N scorers to see religious studies as being concerned with their religious development. They see religious studies as being something which should enable them to understand their culture. It may be that these students perceive religion and culture as being interrelated to the point that culture cannot be understood without understanding religion.

Table 11.4.1 The perceptions of high N scorers in religious studies

<i>Students scoring high on the N scale are more likely than low N scorers to study religion at A-level because:-</i>	<i>r/p<</i>
their parents wanted them to study religion	.0942 .01
they wish to develop a positive attitude toward religion	.0950 .01
they want to learn more about God	.0892 .01
they are looking to adopt a set of beliefs to guide them	.1102 .001
they feel that they ought to study religion/theology	.0933 .01
<i>Students scoring high on the N scale are more likely than low N scorers to consider that A-level religious studies should help them to :-</i>	
understand religious references in culture	.0821 .01

Table 11.4.2. The subject perceptions of low N scorers in religious studies

<i>Students scoring low on the N scale are more likely than high N scorers to perceive use in:-</i>	<i>r/p<</i>
full unstructured group discussion in which everyone is expected to take part	-.1141 .001
group discussion controlled and guided by a student	-.0849 .01

Students scoring highly on the neuroticism scale are shown to be very unappreciative of teaching methods in religious studies in which they may be exposed to social interaction. Whereas high scorers on the E scale have been shown to benefit from teaching methods that allow interaction with colleagues, high N scorers may be disadvantaged by these. Introverted and neurotic social anxieties need to be taken seriously by teachers.

Subject Perceptions significantly associated with L scores

Tables 11.5.1-2 show that only two subject perceptions were significantly associated with L scores. The findings that high scorers see teachers as being useful, and low scorers considering religious studies to be easy help to confirm that the lie scale is measuring social desirability. The students who approach questions more 'honestly' consider religious studies to be easy. Those who are concerned with presenting an 'appropriate' answer see value in group discussions controlled and guided by a teacher.

Table 11.5.1 The subject perceptions of high L scorers in religious studies

<i>Students scoring high on the L scale are more likely than low L scorers to perceive:-</i>	<i>r/p<</i>
group discussion controlled and guided by a teacher as being useful	.0814 .01

Table 11.5.2 The subject preferences of low L scorers in religious studies

<i>Students scoring low on the L scale are more likely than students scoring high on the L scale to study religion because:-</i>	<i>r/p<</i>
they thought that it was going to be an easy option	-.0906 .01

The impact of religiosity on subject perceptions in religious studies

Subject perceptions significantly associated with scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity

Table 11.6.1 The subject perceptions of high scorers on the scale of attitude toward Christianity in religious studies

High scorers on the scale of attitude toward Christianity are more likely than low scorers to study religion at A-level because:-	r/p<
they are interested in studying religion	.1919 .001
they recognise that religions are important enough to be studied carefully	.2122 .001
they want to be able to understand atheists	.1256 .001
others who have studied it have recommended it to them	.0901 .01
their parents want them to study religion	.1116 .001
they have been advised to do so by priest/pastor/ vicar	.1040 .001
because they wish to develop a positive attitude toward religion	.1710 .001
they want to learn more about God	.4708 .001
they want to develop their own religious beliefs	.4484 .001
they want to be helped with the intellectual challenges to faith	.4500 .001
they feel that it will be spiritually beneficial	.3392 .001
they are looking to adopt a set of beliefs to guide them	.2052 .001
they feel that it will be useful for the kind of job that they are looking for	.0880 .01
They wish to study religion at degree level	.1372 .001
they intent to seek ordination	.1209 .001
they like the RE staff at school/college	.0810 .01
they feel that they ought to study religion/theology	.1384 .001
they feel that it was going to be a challenging option	.0940 .01

Table 11.6.1 continued	r/p<
<i>High scorers on the scale of attitude toward Christianity are more likely than low scorers to be interested in studying:-</i>	
Christianity	.4696 .001
Judaism	.1819 .001
languages in religious studies	.0716 NS
religious scriptures	.1288 .001
religious beliefs	.0905 .01
religious history	.0865 .01
<i>High scorers on the scale of attitude toward Christianity are more likely than low scorers to feel that A-level religious studies should help them:-</i>	
to understand religions	.1671 .001
in a personal evaluation of religion	.1072 .001
to learn from religions about self	.1821 .001
in personal quest	.2080 .001
to develop implicitly religious attitudes	.2402 .001
with confessional religious education outcomes	.3585 .001
in spiritual and moral development	.1730 .001
<i>High scorers on the scale of attitude toward Christianity are more likely than low scorers to feel that:-</i>	
teachers dictating to the class is useful	.0922 .01
full unstructured group discussion in which everyone is expected to take part is useful	.0819 .01
group discussion controlled and guided by a teacher is useful	.1282 .001
being told to read a piece by a teacher is useful	.1270 .001

Table 11.6.1 continued	r/p<
having a piece read aloud by a teacher is useful	.1232 .001
group discussion following from a set text is useful	.1050 .001
group discussion controlled and guided by a student is useful	.1206 .001
lectures given by visiting members of faith communities are useful	.1542 .001
visits to places of worship are useful	.1236 .001
looking at previous exam papers is useful	.0951 .01
using Internet sources is useful	.0965 .01
the use of local clergy during discussions is useful	.2093 .001
role play activities are useful	.1079 .001
studying religious artefacts is useful	.1044 .001
using CD ROM sources is useful	.0842 .01

It is shown that high scorers on the scale of attitude toward Christianity are significantly more likely than low scorers to support a range of positive motivation in the subject. They show a higher level of interest in a range of subject areas. They support confessional and traditionally academic aims as being legitimate within religious studies. These students support a range of teaching methods which may be employed in religious studies. Scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity are the most important single predictor across a range of issues employed in the current study. Due to the broad positive associations with scores on this scale, it may be more illuminating to focus attention on those subject perceptions which are negatively associated with scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity.

Table 11.6.2 The subject perceptions of low scorers on the scale of attitude toward Christianity in religious studies

<i>Low scorers on the scale of attitude toward Christianity are more likely than high scorers to study religion at A-level because</i>	<i>r/p<</i>
they needed to take a third A-level	-.0655 NS
they do not know why they decided to study religion	-.1371 .001
they wish to justify negative attitude toward religion	-.3639 .001
<i>Low scorers on the scale of attitude toward Christianity are more likely than high scorers to be interested in studying:-</i>	
Buddhism	-.1427 .001

Low scores on the scale of attitude toward Christianity are significantly associated with various negative motivations. Low scorers are people who needed a third A-level, or perhaps they do not know why they chose to study religion at A-level. For some, it is a subject which will help them to justify their negativity. Only one 'positive' outcome of low attitude scores is demonstrated. It seems that low scorers on the scale of attitude toward Christianity are more interested than high scorers in studying Buddhism.

Subject perceptions significantly associated with frequency of church attendance

Frequency of church attendance is a broad predictor across a range of subject perceptions in religious studies. Young churchgoers are interested in studying religion in the context of a challenging subject which will be attractive to them for a range of confessional and academic reasons.

They are interested in studying Christianity and Judaism, and they see the legitimate aims of A-level religious studies as being concerned with personal religious growth. They see religious groups as being very real to them, and consider that they may be employed usefully as teaching devices within the A-level.

Table 11.7.1 the subject perceptions of regular church attenders in religious studies

Students who attend church frequently are more likely, than infrequent attenders to study religion at A-level because they:-	r/p<
are interested in studying religion	.0915 .01
recognise that religions are important enough to be studied carefully	.1044 .001
want to be able to understand atheists	.1094 .001
feel that their parents want them to study religion	.0852 .01
want to learn more about God	.2614 .001
want to develop own religious beliefs	.2814 .001
want to be helped with the intellectual challenges to faith	.3335 .001
they feel that religious studies will be spiritually beneficial	.2083 .001
are looking to adopt a set of beliefs to guide	.1224 .001
want to study religion at degree level	.0877 .01
Feel that they ought to study religion/theology	.1179 .001
thought that it was going to be a challenging option	.1007 .001
<hr/>	
Students who attend church frequently are more likely, than infrequent attenders to be interested in studying	
Christianity	.3410 .001
Judaism	.1074 .001
<hr/>	
<i>Students who attend church frequently are more likely, than infrequent attenders to feel that A-level religious studies should help them:-</i>	
learn from religions about self	.0885 .01
in personal quest	.1262 .001
develop implicitly religious attitudes	.1006 .001

Table 11.7.1 continued

r/p<

in confessional religious education outcomes

.1875
.001

Students who attend church frequently are more likely, than infrequent attenders to find:-

group discussion controlled and guided by a student is useful

.0805
.01

lectures given by visiting members of faith communities are useful

.0991
.001

use of local clergy during discussions is useful

.1629
.001

Table 11.7.1 the subject perceptions of infrequent church attenders in religious studies

Students who attend church infrequently are more likely, than frequent attenders to study religion at A-level because:-

r/p<

a member of the RE staff suggested that they ought to study religion at A-level

-.0818
.01

they needed to take a third A-level

-.0899
.01

they really do not know why they decided to study religion

-.1028
.001

they desire to justify negative attitude toward religion

-.2877
.001

Students who attend church infrequently are more likely, than frequent attenders to be interested in studying:-

Buddhism

-.1362
.001

Regular churchgoers are clear about their motivations for choosing to study religion at A-level. They reject the view that they chose to study religion at A-level due to the advice of a teacher, they also specifically reject pragmatic and negative reasons for choosing to study religion. It is of interest to note that infrequent church attenders are more interested in studying Buddhism than frequent attenders.

Subject perceptions significantly associated with frequency of prayer

Table 11.8.1 The subject perceptions of students, who pray frequently, in religious studies

<i>Students who pray frequently are more likely, than infrequently praying students to study religion at A-level because</i>	<i>r/p<</i>
they are interested in studying religion	.1261 .001
they recognise that religions are important enough to be studied carefully	.1107 .001
they want to be able to understand atheists	.0830 .01
they want to develop a positive attitude toward religion	.1064 .001
they want to learn more about God	.3345 .001
they want to develop own religious beliefs	.3793 .001
they want to be helped with the intellectual challenges to faith	.4051 .001
they feel that it will be spiritually beneficial	.2599 .001
they are looking to adopt a set of beliefs to guide	.1557 .001
they desire to study religion at degree level	.1096 .001
they feel that they ought to study religion/theology	.1332 .001
<i>Students who pray frequently are more likely, than infrequently praying students to be interested in studying:-</i>	
Christianity	.3770 .001
Judaism	.1590 .001
languages in religious studies	.0823 .01
religious scriptures	.1096 .001
religious beliefs	.0876 .01
religious history	.0895 .01

Table 11.8.1 continued	r/p<
<i>Students who pray frequently are more likely, than infrequently praying students to feel that A-level religious studies should help students to:-</i>	
understand religions	.1007 .001
help students learn from religions about self	.0866 .01
help students in personal quest	.1399 .001
help students develop implicitly religious attitudes	.1868 .001
help students in confessional religious education outcomes	.2975 .001
help students with spiritual and moral development	.1062 .001
<i>Students who pray frequently are more likely, than infrequently praying students to feel that:-</i>	
being told to read a piece by a teacher is useful	.0937 .01
group discussion controlled and guided by a student is useful	.1133 .001
lectures given by visiting members of faith communities are useful	.1112 .001
visits to places of worship are useful	.0850 .01
the use of local clergy during discussions is useful	.1547 .001

Table 11.8.1 shows that frequency of prayer is a significant predictor across a range of subject perceptions in religious studies. Frequency of prayer is positively associated with various positive motivations to study religion at A-level. Students who pray frequently consider the subject to be interesting, important and able to help in intellectual challenges that they may face in their own religious lives. These students see religious studies as being the catalyst for attitudinal and personal development. Religious studies is considered to be more than an opportunity to acquire skills and knowledge.

These students are interested in Christianity, Judaism, and a range of aspects of religion. They see religious studies as a subject which rightly addresses academic and confessional aims. These students are supportive of a range of teaching methods, both traditional, and those that involve interaction with faith communities.

Table 11.8.2 Subject perceptions, of students who pray infrequently, in religious studies

<i>Students who pray infrequently are more likely, than frequently praying students to study religion at A-level because:-</i>	<i>r/p<</i>
a member of the RE staff suggested that I ought to take religious studies	-.0800 .01
they really do not know why they decided to study religion	-.1067 .001
they wish to justify a negative attitude toward religion	-.2828 .001
<i>Students who pray infrequently are more likely, than frequently praying students to be interested in studying:-</i>	
Buddhism	-.0943 .01

Students who pray infrequently are more likely to have chosen to study religion at A-level because it was suggested to them, or in order to justify negative views of religion. It is once again of interest to note that this group of students is more likely to be interested in studying Buddhism.

Subject perceptions significantly associated with extent of belief in the existence of God

Table 11.9.1 explores the perceptions of students with a high level of belief in God. This aspect of religiosity, like the other aspects, predicts subject perceptions across a range of areas. Belief in God is associated with a range of positive motivations to study religion, both academic and confessional.

Table 11.9.1 The subject perceptions, of students who believe in God, in religious studies

<i>Students who believe in God are more likely than students who do not believe in God to choose to study religion at A-level because:-</i>	<i>r/p<</i>
they are interested in studying religion	.1293 .001
they recognise that religions are important enough to be studied carefully	.1107 .001
others who have studied it have recommended it to them	.0933 .01
their parents wanted them to study religion	.0975 .01
they want to develop a positive attitude toward religion	.1208 .001
they want to learn more about God	.3407 .001
they want to develop their own religious beliefs	.3685 .001
they want to be helped with the intellectual challenges to my faith	.3764 .001
they feel that it will be spiritually beneficial for them	.2224 .001
they are looking to adopt a set of beliefs to guide them	.2014 .001
they want to study religion at degree level	.0996 .001
they intention to seek ordination	.1037 .001
they feel that they ought to study religion/theology	.1250 .001
<i>Students who believe in God are more likely than students who do not believe in God to be interested in studying:-</i>	
Christianity	.3308 .001
Judaism	.1397 .001
religious scriptures	.0887 .01
religious history	.0786 .01

Table 11.9.1 continued	r/p<
<i>Students who believe in God are more likely than students who do not believe in God to feel that A-level religious studies ought to help them:-</i>	
to understand religions	.0801 .01
to learn from religions about self	.1282 .001
in personal quest	.1599 .001
to develop implicitly religious attitudes	.1935 .001
to achieve confessional religious education outcomes	.2857 .001
in spiritual and moral development	.0987 .01
<i>Students who believe in God are more likely than students who do not believe in God to consider that</i>	
lectures given by visiting members of faith communities are useful	.0844 .01
visits to places of worship are useful	.0912 .01
use of local clergy during discussions is useful	.0997 .001

Belief in God is positively associated with interest in studying Christianity and Judaism and certain aspects of religions. Young theists are likely to see religious studies as being a subject which ought to help students to achieve a range of confessional aims. Teaching methods which embrace members of faith groups, and places of worship are considered to be of particular use to this group.

Table 11.9.2 The subject perceptions, of students who do not believe in God, in religious studies

<i>Students who do not believe in God are more likely than students who do believe in God to choose to study religion at A-level because:-</i>	r/p<
they wish to justify their negative attitude toward religion	-.3124 .001
<i>Students who do not believe in God are more likely than students who do believe in God to be interested in studying:-</i>	
Buddhism	-.0947 .01

Table 11.9.2 explores those perceptions that are shown to be negatively associated with intensity of belief in God. It is shown that students who lack belief in God are more likely to be motivated to study religion for negative reasons. They are more likely than their theistic colleagues to be interested in studying Buddhism.

Religious Studies: what now?

This dissertation has explored key issues which may focus an agenda for future developments in religious studies, and in religious education as broadly conceived. It has been shown that rather than being one clear identifiable subject, religious education and religious studies exist with regional nuances in understanding, and with substantial variety in perceived legitimacy of aims.

This variation across the subject may be the cause of the diversity within the views and perceptions of A-level students. It is essential for teachers to realise that A-level students do approach the subject with differing perceptions. The respondents have shown that they have substantially different motivations for studying religion at A-level depending on their sex, personality and religiosity. It is important that pupils are supported in the subject and that their motivations are taken into account.

If, for example, students decide to study religion for confessional reasons which the course is unable to sustain, then this should be made clear to students at the outset. Perhaps students who have motivations that are unrealistic in terms of course delivery should be persuaded that their motivations are not legitimate, and that they may wish to reconsider their subject choices. However, it may be more satisfactory for teachers to recognise, value, and support diversity among their students. Different students are motivated differently, and that needs to be

acknowledged.

The legitimacy of aims in religious studies is considered differently among different students depending on their sex, personality and religiosity. It is important that pupils are supported in the subject and that their perceptions of legitimacy are taken into account. If, for example, students perceive A-level religious studies as being legitimately concerned with developing tolerance, then teachers should challenge this if the subject does not aim to do this. Perhaps such students should be advised that they may wish to reconsider their subject choices. However, it may be more satisfactory for teachers to recognise value and support a range of aims within their subject.

Levels of interest in different aspects of religious studies are considered differently among different students depending on their sex, personality and religiosity. Teachers must prepare their students to succeed in examinations. The interests of students may not relate closely to examination syllabi. The development of the new AS and A2 syllabi in religious studies allows for greater diversity of subject choice than the conventional A-level. Students must be aware at the outset what the subject involves. Only through effective communication can students make an informed choice to study a subject that they may find interesting. Students may have a future intention to study religion beyond A-level. They may consider that a 'boring' A-level is an acceptable means to an end. They should, however, be given enough information to make an informed choice.

The efficacy of various teaching methods is perceived differently among different students depending on their sex, personality and religiosity. It is important that pupils are supported in the subject and that their perceptions of efficacy are taken into account. If, for example, students are disadvantaged by teaching methods concerned with group working opportunities, then teachers

should deploy a variety of teaching methods which enable various learning styles. This assertion goes beyond the suggestion that variety of teaching styles is a good thing. Rather, it must be considered that certain methods, and certain clusters of methods will seriously disable certain groups of students and isolate them from the learning process.

Religious studies and religious education have developed through a range of initiatives led by 'experts'. The diverse approaches espoused within these projects have translated into a situation whereby students have a wide range of subject perceptions. The data contained within this dissertation remove the agenda from the 'experts'. The students have been empowered to make their voices heard. It is essential that we, not only, *hear* these voices, but also *listen* to them.

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Appendix 1

The questionnaire

A-level Religious Studies Attitude Survey



Dear Student,

This research is aimed at finding out what A-level religious studies students think about the subject, and what motivates them to study religion. This is not a test; there are no right or wrong answers and no trick questions. Please answer all of the questions even if they may seem similar to one another. The more questions you answer, the more clearly your views can be registered.

I hope that you will enjoy completing this questionnaire and that you will find it useful to clarify in your own mind what your aspirations are and how you prefer to learn. This questionnaire may challenge you and make you think about areas that you had not thought about previously.

Mike Fearn
Research Co-ordinator

Mike Fearn
A-level Student Survey
Pastoral Theology
Freepost (SS1198/1)
CARMARTHEN
Carmarthenshire
SA31 3ZZ

Part One asks about your personal background and A-level study. Please answer by placing a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

How old are you?

(Please write your age in the box)

What is your sex?

Male	1	
Female	2	

What year of A-level study are you in?

First	1	
Second	2	

Which religious group do you belong to?

None	1	
Anglican/CinW, CofE	2	
Methodist	3	
Pentecostal	4	
Roman Catholic	5	
Presbyterian / United Reformed	6	
Other Christian (Please Specify)	7	
Buddhist	8	
Hindu	9	
Jewish	10	
Muslim	11	
Sikh	12	
Other (Please Specify)	13	

Do you attend a place of worship?

Never	1	
Once or twice a year	2	
Sometimes	3	
At least once a month	4	
At least once a week	5	

Do you pray?

Never	1	
Once or twice a year	2	
Sometimes	3	
At least once a week	4	
Daily	5	

Do you believe in the existence of God?

Yes	3	
No	1	
Not Sure	2	

Which of these subjects are you studying at A-level/AS-level?

(You do not need to tell me about any extra GCSE's that you are taking)

Subject		A-level	AS-level
Art	1		
Biology	2		
Chemistry	3		
Economics	4		
English Language	5		
English Literature	6		
French	7		
General Studies	8		
German	9		
Geography	10		
Greek	11		
History	12		
Latin	13		
Law	14		
Maths	15		
Media Studies	16		
Music	17		
Physics	18		
Philosophy	19		
Psychology	20		
Religious Studies	21		
Russian	22		
Sociology	23		
Spanish	24		
Theatre Studies	25		
Welsh	26		
Others (please specify)	27		

Do you hold a GCSE in Religious Studies?

Yes	2	
No	1	

Have you at any time, regularly attended Sunday school, *Masjid* school, Jewish religious school etc... ?

Yes	2	
No	1	

Part Two is concerned with A-level study and your aspirations and achievements in studying religion/theology. Please read each question carefully and circle the appropriate response, 'Yes', 'No', or '?' if you don't know.

- Have you spoken to a university/college lecturer about studying religion/theology at their institution?..... Yes ? No
- In Years 12 or 13 have you been advised by a member of the careers service to study religion/theology at degree level?..... Yes ? No
- In year 11, were you advised by a member of the careers service to study religion/theology at A-level?..... Yes ? No
- Is A-level theology offered at your school/college?..... Yes ? No
- Would you have chosen A-level theology if offered in your school/college?..... Yes ? No
- Do you plan to do a degree after sixth form?..... Yes ? No
- Do you plan to do a degree in the area of religion/theology?..... Yes ? No
- Has the Government's decision to introduce tuition fees persuaded you not to study religion/theology at degree level?..... Yes ? No
- Has the Government's decision to introduce tuition fees persuaded you not to do a degree?..... Yes ? No
- If given advice by a helpful university/college lecturer about studying religion/theology at degree level, would you be more likely to study in their department. Yes ? No
- Do you think studying religion/theology at A-level will help you get a job?..... Yes ? No
- Do you think studying religion/theology at degree level will help you get a job.. Yes ? No
- Would you have liked more information from the careers service about studying religion/theology at degree level?..... Yes ? No
- Have adverts affected your decision in selecting a university/college?..... Yes ? No
- Have adverts affected your decision in selecting a degree course?..... Yes ? No
- Have prospectuses helped in your decision in selecting a university/college?..... Yes ? No
- Have prospectuses helped in your decision in selecting a degree course?..... Yes ? No
- Have Internet sources helped in your decision in selecting a university/college?.. Yes ? No
- Have Internet sources helped in your decision in selecting a degree course?..... Yes ? No

Part Three is concerned with the level of interest you have in courses of Religious Studies. Please circle the appropriate number to indicate your level of interest, '1' meaning low interest, '5' meaning high interest.

Buddhism.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christianity as a world faith.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Hinduism.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jainism.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Judaism.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Islam.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Sikhism.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Buddhist scriptures.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christian scriptures.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Hindu scriptures.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jain scriptures.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jewish scriptures.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Islamic scriptures.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Sikh scriptures.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Buddhist beliefs.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christian beliefs.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Hindu beliefs.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jain beliefs.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jewish beliefs.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Islamic beliefs.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Sikh beliefs.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Buddhist history.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christian history.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Hindu history.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jain history.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jewish history.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Islamic history.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Sikh history.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Buddhist ethics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christian ethics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Hindu ethics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jain ethics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jewish ethics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high

Islamic ethics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Sikh ethics	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Buddhist art and culture.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christian art and culture	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Hindu art and culture.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jain art and culture.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jewish art and culture.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Islamic art and culture.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Sikh art and culture.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Anthropology of religion.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Philosophy of religion.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Psychology of religion.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Sociology of religion.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Religion and gender issues.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Religion and the media.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Religion and politics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Religion and the environment.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Religion and the martial arts.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
African tribal religions.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Ancient Egyptian religion.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Ancient Roman religion.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Ancient Greek religion.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Chinese religions.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
New religious movements.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Religious cults.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
New Age movement.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Interfaith dialogue.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Perspectives on the study of religion.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Greek	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Hebrew	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Latin.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Arabic.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Sanskrit.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Pali.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Religion in the modern world.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high

Part Four is concerned with the level of interest you have in courses in Christian Theology. Please circle the appropriate number to indicate your level of interest, '1' meaning low interest, '5' meaning high interest

Apologetics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Aramaic.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Bible and Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Biblical Hebrew.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Biblical Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christ in the Christian Tradition.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christian Social Ethics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christian Worship.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christianity from Kant to Harnack.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christianity in the North Atlantic World.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Christology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Contemporary Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Dead Sea Scrolls.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Doctrine of Salvation.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Doctrine of the Trinity.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Early Christian Texts.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Eastern Asian Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Ecclesiology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Elementary Biblical Hebrew.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Environmental Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Eschatology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Feminist Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Foundations of Christian Ethics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
God and the World.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Gospels and Acts.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Hebrews and the General Epistles.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Hermeneutics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Incarnational Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Intertestamental Period.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Introduction to Early Christianity.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Issues in Modern Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Issues in New Testament Studies.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Jesus and Christology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high

Latin American Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Liberation Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Literature and Theology of the Old Testament.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Liturgical Studies: Baptism and the Eucharist in the Early Church....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Martin Luther and the German Reformation.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Matthew and the Synoptic Gospels.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Modern Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
New Testament.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
New Testament Epistles.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
New Testament Exegesis.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
New Testament Greek.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
New Testament Greek Texts: John and the Romans.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
New Testament Introduction.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Newman and his Age.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Old Testament.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Patristics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Paul: Life And Thought.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Practical Apologetics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Reading the Bible In Hebrew.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Seventeenth Century Puritanism.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
St Augustine and his Age.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Systematic Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
The Doctrine of Creation.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
The Doctrines of God and the Person of Christ.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
The English Reformation.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
The Making of Christian Theology.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
The Pentateuch.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
The Prophetic Literature.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
The Psalms.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Theological Hermeneutics.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Theological Structures.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Theology and History of the Early Church.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Theology and History of the Reformation.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Theology, Modernity and Postmodernity.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high
Trinity and Church.....	low	1	2	3	4	5	high

Part Five is concerned with how useful *you* find various teaching methods in A-level RE. Please circle the appropriate number for each method. '1' meaning completely useless, '5' meaning very useful.

Teacher dictating to the class.....	1	2	3	4	5
Teacher giving hand-outs to the class.....	1	2	3	4	5
Full unstructured group discussion in which everyone is expected take part .	1	2	3	4	5
Unstructured group discussion contributed to only by those who want to.....	1	2	3	4	5
Group discussion controlled and guided by a teacher.....	1	2	3	4	5
Being told to read a piece by a teacher.....	1	2	3	4	5
Having a piece read aloud by the teacher.....	1	2	3	4	5
Group discussion following from a set text.....	1	2	3	4	5
Group discussion controlled and guided by a student.....	1	2	3	4	5
Lectures given by visiting members of faith communities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Visits to places of worship.....	1	2	3	4	5
Watching documentaries.....	1	2	3	4	5
Watching films (non-documentary).....	1	2	3	4	5
Discussing religious issues in current affairs.....	1	2	3	4	5
Looking at previous examination papers.....	1	2	3	4	5
Using Internet sources.....	1	2	3	4	5
Use of local clergy during discussions.....	1	2	3	4	5
Role play activities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Having points illustrated by reference to poetry or literary fiction.....	1	2	3	4	5
Studying religious artifacts.....	1	2	3	4	5
Exploring religious language.....	1	2	3	4	5
Using CD ROM sources.....	1	2	3	4	5
Lecture being delivered to the class.....	1	2	3	4	5

Part Six concerns the aims of studying religion. Please read each statement carefully.

If you Agree Strongly, put a ring round	AS	A	NC	D	DS
If you Agree, put a ring round.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
If you are Not Certain, put a ring round.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
If you Disagree, put a ring round.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
If you Disagree Strongly, put a ring round.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS

A-level religious studies should help students to:-

Understand the nature of religious beliefs.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand the nature of religious worship.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand the nature of religious communities.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand the history of the religions.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand how the lives of individuals may be influenced by their religion.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand the influence of religious values on people.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand the influence of religious traditions in history.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand the influence of religion in politics.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand religious references in painting.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand the references to religion in the study of history.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand religious references in drama.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand religious references in fiction.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Evaluate religious and moral traditions historically.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Evaluate religious traditions on moral criteria.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Evaluate the social and psychological effects of religion.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Evaluate the reasonableness of religious and moral claims.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Evaluate their own beliefs.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Evaluate their own moral values.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Develop a self-critical stance with regard to their own world-view.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Become more reflective about what they believe.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Apply religious insights to their own beliefs and values.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Discover how religions relate to fundamental questions of life.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Reflect on what might be learned from religions in the light of their own situations.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Recognise the centrality of values for themselves and for the religions.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS

Engage in their own quest for a faith to live by.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Express their own religious and moral beliefs	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Reflect on ultimate questions.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Reflect on the meaning and purpose of life.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Develop the belief that life has some purpose.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Feel awe and wonder in the face of greatness and mystery.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Develop a respect for all living things.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Develop a sense of their own frailty and dependence.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Recognise that people have a right to be different.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Be positive about living in a society of diverse religions.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Be more tolerant of other religions and world-views.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Respect other people's right to hold beliefs different from their own.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Be more open to conversion to a religion.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Be more likely to have religious experiences.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Pray and worship.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Meditate.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Develop religious emotions.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Develop a relationship with God.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Develop religious beliefs.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Be more formed in their own religion.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Conform to society's values.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Acknowledge human responsibility for the environment.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Learn the difference between right and wrong.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Be more able to form relationships with other people.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Develop spiritually.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Understand personal relationships better.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Develop morally.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Develop their knowledge of right and wrong.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS

Part Seven is concerned with why you decided to study religion at A-level. Answer these questions by circling the appropriate response, as in the previous section. Please read each statement carefully.

I decided to study religion at A-level because:-

I am interested in studying religion.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I want to be helped with the intellectual challenges to my faith.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
My parents wanted me to study religion.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I was advised to do so by a careers officer.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I want to develop my own religious beliefs.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
It was a subject that I was good at, at GCSE level.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I like the RE staff at my school/college.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
It was the only subject that I could fit into my timetable.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
My friends decided that they were going to	AS	A	NC	D	DS
A member of the RE staff suggested that I ought to take it.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I feel that it will be spiritually beneficial for me.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I want to learn more about other people's religious beliefs.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I do not feel as if I had a choice in the matter.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I want to study religion at degree level.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
It complements the other subjects that I am doing.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I thought that it was going to be an easy option.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I think it will be useful for the kind of job that I am looking for.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I feel that I ought to study religion/theology.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I thought that it was going to be a challenging option.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I am looking to adopt a set of beliefs to guide me.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I intend to seek ordination.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I wish to develop a positive attitude towards religion.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I needed to take a third A-level.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I want to learn more about God.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Others who have studied it have recommended it to me.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I recognise that religions are important enough to be studied carefully.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I wish to justify my negative attitude toward religion.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I want to be able to make informed decisions about religious issues.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I want to be able to understand atheists.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I really do not know why I decided to study religion.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I wanted to take a modular option.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I was advised to by my priest/pastor/vicar	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Other reason (please specify).....					

Part Eight is concerned with attitude towards certain aspects of religion. Read each of the following sentences carefully and think, "Do I agree with it?"

I find it boring to listen to the Bible.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I know that Jesus helps me.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Saying prayers helps me a lot.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
The church is very important to me.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I think going to church is a waste of my time.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I want to love Jesus.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I think church services are boring.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I think people who pray are stupid.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
God helps me to lead a better life.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I like to learn about God very much.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
God means a lot to me.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I believe that God helps people.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Prayer helps me a lot.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I know that Jesus is very close to me.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I think praying is a good thing.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I think the Bible is out of date.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I believe that God listens to prayers.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
Jesus doesn't mean anything to me.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
God is very real to me.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I think saying prayers does no good.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
The idea of God means much to me.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I believe Jesus still helps people.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I know that God helps me.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS
I find it hard to believe in God.....	AS	A	NC	D	DS

Part Nine is concerned with a range of personal attitudes. Please answer each of the questions in this section by putting a circle around the 'YES' or the 'NO' following the question. Work quickly and try not to think for too long about the exact meaning of the question.

- Does your mood often go up and down?..... Yes No
- Are you a talkative person?..... Yes No
- Would being in debt worry you?..... Yes No
- Are you rather lively?..... Yes No
- Were you ever greedy by helping yourself to more than your share of anything?..... Yes No
- Would you take drugs that may have strange or dangerous effects?..... Yes No
- Have you ever blamed someone for doing something you knew was really your fault? Yes No
- Do you prefer to go your own way rather than act by the rules?..... Yes No
- Do you often feel 'fed-up'?..... Yes No
- Have you ever taken anything (even a pin or button) that belonged to someone else? Yes No
- Would you call yourself a nervous person?..... Yes No
- Do you think marriage is old fashioned and should be done away with?..... Yes No
- Can you easily get life into a rather dull party?..... Yes No
- Are you a worrier?..... Yes No
- Do you tend to keep in the background on social occasions?..... Yes No
- Does it worry you if you know there are mistakes in your work?..... Yes No
- Have you ever cheated at a game?..... Yes No
- Do you suffer from nerves?..... Yes No
- Have you ever taken advantage of someone?..... Yes No
- Are you mostly quiet when you are with other people?..... Yes No
- Do you often feel lonely?..... Yes No
- Is it better to follow society's rules than go your own way?..... Yes No
- Do other people think of you as being very lively?..... Yes No
- Do you always practice what you preach?..... Yes No

Part Ten is concerned with learning styles. Please read each statement carefully, and tick box 'a' or box 'b' to indicate your answer. If both 'a' and 'b' seem to apply to you, choose the one that applies more frequently.

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| I understand something better after I | a) try it out | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) think it through | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I would rather be considered | a) realistic | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) innovative | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When I think about what I did yesterday, I am most likely to get | a) a picture | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) words | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I tend to | a) understand the details of a subject, but may be fuzzy about the overall structure | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) understand the overall structure but may be fuzzy about details | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When I am learning something new it helps me to | a) talk about it | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) think about it | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If I were a teacher, I would rather teach a course | a) that deals with facts and real life situations | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) that deals with ideas and theories | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I prefer to get new information in | a) pictures, diagrams graphs and maps | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) written directions or verbal information | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Once I understand | a) all the parts, I understand the whole thing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) the whole thing, I see how the parts fit | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| In a study group working on difficult material, I am more likely to | a) jump in and contribute ideas | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) sit back and listen | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I find it easier | a) to learn facts | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) to learn concepts | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| In a book with lots of pictures and charts, I am likely to | a) look over the pictures and charts carefully | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) focus on the written text | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| In subjects that I have taken | a) I have usually got to know many of the other students | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) I have rarely got to know many of the other students | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| In reading non-fiction , I prefer | a) something that teaches me new facts or tells me how to do something | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) something that gives me new ideas to think about | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I like teachers | a) who put a lot of diagrams on the board | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) who spend a lot of time explaining | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When I'm analysing a story or novel | a) I think of the incidents and try to put them together to figure out the themes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) I just know what the themes are when I finish reading and then have to go back and find the incidents that demonstrate them | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When I start a homework problem, I am more likely to | a) start working on the solution immediately | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) try to fully understand the problem first | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I prefer the idea of | a) certainty | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) theory | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I remember best | a) what I see | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) what I hear | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| It is more important to me that a teacher | a) lay out material in clear sequential steps | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) give me an overall picture and relate the material to other subjects | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I prefer to study | a) in a study group | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) alone | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| I am more likely to be considered | a) careful about the details of my work | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) creative about how to do my work | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When I get directions to a new place I prefer | a) a map | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) written instructions | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I learn | a) at a fairly regular pace, if I study hard, I'll 'get it' | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) in fits and starts. I'll be totally confused and then suddenly it all 'clicks' | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I would rather first | a) try things out | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) think about how I'm going to do it | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When I am reading for enjoyment, I like writers to | a) clearly say what they mean | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) say things in creative, interesting ways | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When I see a diagram or sketch in class, I am most likely to remember | a) the picture | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) what the teacher said about it | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When considering a body of information, I am more likely to | a) focus on the details and miss the big picture | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) try to understand the big picture before getting into the details | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I more easily remember | a) something I have done | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) something I have thought about | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When I perform a task, I prefer to | a) master one way of doing it | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) come up with new ways of doing it | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When someone is showing me data, I prefer | a) charts and graphs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) text summarizing the results | <input type="checkbox"/> |

When writing an essay I am more likely to	a) work on (think about or write) the beginning of the essay and progress forward	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) work on (think about or write) different parts of the essay and then order them	<input type="checkbox"/>
When I have to work on a group project I first want to	a) have 'group brainstorming' where everyone contributes ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) brainstorm individually and then come together as a group to compare ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>
I consider it higher praise to call someone	a) sensible	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) imaginative	<input type="checkbox"/>
When I meet people at a party, I am more likely to remember	a) what they looked like	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) what they said about themselves	<input type="checkbox"/>
When I'm learning a new subject, I prefer to	a) stay focused on that subject learning as much about it as I can	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) try to make connections between that subject and related subjects	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am more likely to be considered	a) outgoing	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) reserved	<input type="checkbox"/>
I prefer courses that emphasize	a) concrete material (facts, data)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) abstract material (concepts, theories)	<input type="checkbox"/>
For entertainment, I would rather	a) watch television	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) read a book	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some teachers start their lectures with an outline of what they will cover. Such outlines are	a) somewhat helpful to me	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) very helpful to me	<input type="checkbox"/>
The idea of doing homework in groups with one grade for the entire group	a) appeals to me	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b) does not appeal to me	<input type="checkbox"/>

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| When I am doing long calculations | a) I tend to repeat all of my steps and check my work carefully | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) I find checking my work tiresome and have to force myself to do it | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I tend to picture places I have been | a) easily and fairly accurately | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) with difficulty and without much detail | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When solving problems in a group, I would be more likely to | a) think of the steps in the solution process | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) think of possible consequences or applications of the solution in a wide range of areas | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| When solving maths problems, I usually | a) work my way to the solution one step at a time | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | b) see the solutions but have to struggle to figure out the steps to get to them | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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Do you have any comments to make about your A-level religious studies course, or this questionnaire? Are there any other areas that this questionnaire ought to have looked at?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Please return completed questionnaires to:-

Mike Fearn
A-level Student Survey
Pastoral Theology
Freepost (SS1198/1)
CARMARTHEN
SA31 3ZZ