

SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING IN A GROUP OF SOUTH AFRICAN ADOLESCENTS

BRENDA MARY VAN ROOYEN

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Promotor: Dr RBI Beukes

Co-promoter: Prof KGF Esterhuyse

STATEMENT

I, Brenda Mary van Rooyen, declare that the thesis submitted by me for the Philosophiae Doctor (Child Psychology) degree at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and has not previously been submitted by me at another university/faculty. I furthermore cede copyright of the thesis in favour of the University of the Free State.

Signed

Date

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I dedicate this to my sister, Debbie, who died on 12 July 2007, and who found her support in her spirituality.

READER'S ORIENTATION: CLARIFYING INFORMATION FOR EXAMINERS

In accordance with the regulations of the University of the Free State, this thesis is presented in article format. The research requirement for the PhD (Child Psychology) is three publishable articles. Consequently the articles presented should be viewed as independent, yet related. For the purposes of examination, and to prevent tedious repetition, discussion of research participants, procedure and measuring instruments has been limited to Article III and must be read to apply to the three other quantitative research articles (Articles IV to VI). However, there may still be perception of some overlap and repetition.

Articles I and II are presented as a background postmodern reading and positioning of the constructs “spirituality” and “spiritual well-being” and are not for examination purposes. Articles III, IV and V are for examination purposes while Article VI presents additional information emerging from analysis of the data.

The thesis thus consists of the following:

Article I (pp. 5-35)	Multiple truths: (de)constructing tales of spirituality
Article II (pp. 36-561)	Narrating spiritual well-being in relationship to positive psychology and religion
Article III (pp. 62-98)	Spiritual well-being in relationship to age and gender in a group of South African adolescents
Article IV (pp. 99-134)	Religious denomination, family religiosity and spiritual well-being in a group of South African adolescents
Article V (pp. 135-166)	Spiritual orientation and spiritual well-being in a group of South African adolescents
Article VI (pp. 167-200)	Spirituality and spiritual well-being in a group of South African adolescents
Addenda A and B (pp. 202-204)	

ARTICLE I

MULTIPLE TRUTHS: (DE)CONSTRUCTING TALES OF SPIRITUALITY

Is psychology the “religion” of humanist secularization? This is one question emerging from a postmodern (de)constructive reading of tales of spirituality offered in this paper. This reading seeks neither to clarify nor to assert but offers a narrative of the (his)story of the construct and the discourses within which it could be located. It foregrounds postmodern, poststructuralist contested meaning, narrating a “spirituality” located in contradictory forms and shapes in the sacred and secular, the religious and the psy-complex tales. This is narrated as possibly indicative of an ongoing struggle between these Foucaultian power knowledges. Spirituality and religion are intertwined signifiers and the construct privileged seems to position the speaker in a context: those committed to or immersed in a theological/religious culture privilege the religious and centre God while those immersed in or committed to a positivist/psychological culture privilege more secular constructions of spirituality, decentring God and religion.

Giving meaning to the word “spirituality” and distinguishing it (or not) from religiosity is fodder for writers in the field of psychology of religion and spirituality who debate and do not reach consensus about what these words may signify (Du Toit, 2006; Fabricatore, Handal, Rubio & Gilner, 2004; Kelly, 1995; Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Siefert, 2002; Singleton, Mason & Webber, 2004; Smith & McSherry, 2004; Spilka, Hood, Hunsberger & Gorsuch, 2003; Zinnbauer, Pargament & Scott, 1999). This is no surprise considering that even scholars of religion have not agreed upon definitions of religion (Brown, 1987; Spilka et al., 2003), with some concluding that no precise definition is possible (Clouser, 2005).

Positions range from a spirituality narrated as synonymous with religion to a spirituality constructed as applying to believers and non-believers, creating the possibility for (a)theistic spirituality, spirituality without a God. Kanya (2000) is among those suggesting that religion and spirituality are not interchangeable terms. Others stress that religion and spirituality are related but are not synonymous (Adams, Bezner, Drabbs, Zambarano & Steinhardt, 2000; Hay & Socha, 2005). Du Toit (2006) suggests that any experience that touches the individual is labelled “spiritual” in the predictability of modern institutionalized life. This he signifies “secular spirituality” (p. 1252), distinguishing it from religion.

Some stress the importance of clear definitions and operationalizations of such definitions if valid scales measuring spirituality are to be developed (Newberg & Lee, 2005). Emmons and Paloutzian (2003), for example, argue that minimum consensus regarding the core constructs and their measurement is needed if the psychology of religion and spirituality is to progress as a scientific discipline. Wendel (2003) echoes Du Toit, describing ever-expanding definitions of spirituality that "... can include everything from attending daily mass to watching football" (p. 167) which, although understandable, introduces ambiguity and hinders methodological development.

Others suggest that lack of consensus is related to the stage of development of this field of study (Fisher, 1999). For example, Hill et al. (2000) argue that, considering our limited understandings of both religion and spirituality, it may be premature to expect single or comprehensive definitions. Others opt out of the fray (Bosacki, 2002; Spilka et al., 2003) accepting ambiguity and stressing the need to read researchers' constructions of terminology.

Constructing purpose

This (de)constructive reading of tales of spirituality seeks neither to clarify nor to assert. Instead it offers one possible postmodern reading of the (his)story of the construct and the discourses within which it could be located.

The writer has been prompted to (de)construct the signifier "spirituality" following research conducted with Gomez and Fisher's (2003) Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (SWBQ). This research prompted a number of questions. Why did these researchers choose the signifier "spiritual" and not "religious"? Postmodernism suggests that language constructs realities or ~~truths~~ which marginalize some knowledges and privilege others (Lather, 1991; O'Connell, 1998). Power produces knowledges or "discourses of truth" (Foucault, 1976, p. 97) with such knowledges generating and maintaining power. Questions emerge regarding within which power knowledges the signifier "spirituality" is located, and whether this signifier marginalizes, undoes and/or contains the signifier "religious".

Recent research suggests that growing numbers of people in Britain, Europe and Australia are claiming to be not religious, yet stating that they are spiritual (Hay & Socha, 2005). Yet many American writers (Hill et al., 2000; Pargament, 1997, 1999) describe persons within their culture as both religious and spiritual. How are these respondents constructing the religious and the spiritual differently? And why?

Read through a postmodern lens, shared understandings are socially constructed rather than foundational or pre-existing within language. Meaning is a product of historically located interchange (Gergen, 1985) and is imposed on language (Cooper, 1989). Human systems, write Anderson and Goolishian (1988), are “language-generating, and simultaneously, meaning-generating systems” with “... meaning and understanding ... socially and intersubjectively constructed” (p. 372). Such meaning is not fixed but is fragile, negotiated and disputed (Anderson & Goolishian, 1988) as is seen in the field of the psychology of religion and spirituality where negotiation of the meaning of “religion” and “spirituality” is heated. Thus meaning is not located within these words.

Returning to the purpose of the writers, White and Epston (1990) are among those constructing the importance of critical or reflective practice. When signifiers such as “spirituality” or “spiritual well-being” are used, they stress the need to reflect on the ideological context and history of such signifiers. They cite the Foucaultian concept of all being “... caught up in a net or web of power/knowledge” (p. 22). Hoshmand (1998), too, stresses that science is not value free. Thus reflective postmodern practice suggests that it is ethical to (de)construct the constructs utilized in research.

Constructing stance

Submitting to what Lyotard (1996) would signify as the language games of academia, the writer/reader will self-objectify in this article by utilizing the third person. In so doing, she removes the subjective “I”, replacing it with a depersonalized authority, thus engaging in a practice challenged by poststructuralist writers who stress that “I” is central as “our accounts of the world are constructions made from the language, meanings and ideas historically available to us, the ‘I’” (Beavis & Gough, 2000, p. 76).

Constructing “method”: (de)construction

The signifier “method” is one which could be read as emerging from the positivist, purposive procedure for pursuing knowledge. It is therefore one which does not fit with the postmodern reading encompassed in the signifier “(de)construction”, which Derrida (1988) explicitly narrates as “not a method” but “an event” which “takes place” (p. 4).

(De)construction is not easy to (re)present with efforts to do so exemplifying “the slipperiness of language” (Leggo, 1996). Within this text, it is written as (de)construction: both a deconstruction and interrogation of a discourse, and a construction of the reader/writer. Kvale

(1992) narrates (de)construction as “a hybrid between ‘destruction’ and ‘construction’ ... an effort to construct by destruction” (p. 13).

Derrida (1992), who challenges the idea of “destruction”, describes it as both a structuralist and an anti-structuralist gesture: attention is paid to structures as they are “undone, decomposed, desedimented” (Derrida, 1988, p. 2). There is a reading of texts, marking their relation to other texts, contexts and subtexts (Silverman, 1989). (De)construction troubles texts by focusing on self-contradiction (Appignanesi & Garratt, 1999; Cooper, 1989; Kvale, 1992). Within this reading, there is a location of the signifier “spirituality” historically and within a multiplicity of narratives and discourses: thus an untying – a move from identity to difference (McComiskey, 1995), “the manifold and equivocal” (Løvlie, 1992, p. 119).

Within the literature, those who practise (de)construction through reading of discourse signify it as Foucaultian discourse analysis (Burman, 1996; Burman & Parker, 1993; Mason, 1998; Parker, 1996). This is not a structuralist unearthing of pre-existing discourses. It is rather a narrating or construction. As Parker (1994) writes: “...discourses are not really there hidden away waiting discovery; they are indeed produced ...” (p. 104). Thus this is not a ~~truth~~ story but it is a story produced by the writers which may be more or less useful, a story about how a discourse works and what it may include and exclude (Beavis & Gough, 2000).

(De)construction is located in a postmodern, poststructuralist matrix of which Lather (1991) writes: “Poststructuralism demands radical reflection on our interpretive frames as we enter the Foucaultian shift from paradigm to discourse. Here, we shift ... to a focus on the productivity of language in the construction of the objects of investigation” (p. 13). Foucault (1976) noted that as discourses construct the objects they discuss, they produce a variety of subjectivities both inhabiting and delineating frameworks of meaning (Burman, 1994). Eade (2004) suggests these subjectivities, describing understandings of spirituality emerging from own narratives of what is significant.

(De)constructing “spiritual”

Constructing (his)story

In 2005 the Psychology of Religion division of the American Psychological Association voted on whether or not to include spirituality within its name. Some argued that by including both spirituality and religion, this division would recognize those whose spiritual path is not within organized religion. Debate centred on whether or not spirituality is qualitatively different from religion or whether religion includes spirituality. Those with the latter opinion viewed the change

as a response to a social fad. Fifty-seven percent of votes supported changing the name, short of the 2/3 majority needed and thus, in the American System, the APA division remains the Psychology of Religion (Nielsen, 2000).

What is the constructed history of these signifiers? Hill et al. (2000) point out that the word “religion” emerged from the Latin *religio* meaning bond between humanity and a power greater than the human. Spirituality comes from *spiritus* meaning breath or life (Mattis, Ahluwalia, Cowie & Kirkland-Harris, 2006). Singleton et al. (2004) begin the narrative with the early Greek philosophers who saw all living things as possessing *pneuma*/the breath of life/spirit and as having a *psyche*/soul. In humans the soul showed itself as *nous*/mind which transcended the material to grasp a reality of ideas and to be self-aware. Thus there was spirit and soul/mind with spirituality linked to rationality. The story moves to ancient Israel where humans are seen as having *pneuma* but God creates and transcends the material world. Then Paul, in the New Testament, coins the term *pneumatikos* (a person animated by the in-dwelling spirit of God) as opposed to *psychikos* (a person existing on a natural level). Thus writers such as Hill et al. (2000), associate *psyche* with psychological and *pneuma* with spiritual, stating that scholars have long sought to differentiate the two.

During the Enlightenment spirituality was identified with aesthetic sensitivity. Fisher, Francis and Johnson (2002), Hill et al. (2000) and Singleton et al. (2004) describe a progression in the construction of spirituality since that time. Classic definitions focused on a religious way of life and on spirituality as religion. Current definitions are wider, no longer linked to institutional religion, and integrate all aspects of human life and experience. This has led to a search for commonalities and differences between constructions of religion and spirituality.

Constructing commonality and difference

Spirituality and religion are distinctly human characteristics argue Lerner, Alberts, Anderson and Dowling (2006), with commitment to ideas or institutions that transcend the self distinguishing us from other species. Thus, as does Kelly (1995), they argue for transcendence as common to both constructs. In the field of psychological research, Hill et al. (2000) create a list of characteristics shared by religion and spirituality. Both develop across the lifespan; are social-psychological phenomena; and are related to cognition, affect and emotion, and personality. Both have important relationships with mental health and have positive social functions. Both can have pathological/negative or healthy/positive expressions. Both are multi-dimensional.

Others emphasize difference (Mohr, 2006) with the relationship between spirituality and religion constructed as one between two separate domains (Benson, Roehlkepartain & Rude, 2003). Spirituality is constructed as the personal/private and religion as the institutional/public (Dowling, Gestsdottir, Anderson, Von Eye, Almerigi & Lerner, 2004; Hart, 2006; Hill et al., 2000; Huitt & Robbins, 2003; Mohr, 2006; Templeton & Eccles, 2006). Those writers narrating difference note that spirituality without religion is possible (Fisher, 2000; Pridmore, 2002). In research, Idler et al. (2003) stress the importance of distinguishing between religiousness and spirituality because, although many may regard them as indistinguishable, others may have had spiritual or transcendental experiences not constructed as traditionally religious.

Most narratives, however, assume some overlap and some difference (Burke et al., 1999; De Souza, Cartwright & McGilp, 2004; King & Benson, 2006; Polanski, 2002) with a continuing theme of distinguishing between spirituality as the subjective/personal/individual experience of the transcendental and religion as institutional/doctrinaire experience of the transcendental. Polanski (2002), for example, writes that a distinction is often made between spirituality as “a subjective, personal experience of the transcendental nature of the universe and religion as the institutional and religious expression of spirituality ... spirituality is perceived as a universal experience and as being less encumbered by the doctrines associated with specific religions” (p. 127).

This narrative of distinguishing between spirituality and religion has been contested by several writers (Benson et al., 2003; Hill & Pargament, 2003; Hill et al., 2000; Kelly, 1995; Pargament, 1999; Pargament, 1997; Zinnbauer et al., 1997; Zinnbauer, Pargament & Scott, 1999). Many of these writers argue that most people describe themselves as both spiritual and religious (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003). Zinnbauer et al. (1999) describe polarization of organized/substantive/negative religion versus personal/functional/positive spirituality as leaving us with “a static, frozen religion and a spirituality without a core” (p. 904).

Pargament (1997, 1999) rues the dichotomy of religion as narrowband/institutional/extrinsic/bad and the spiritual as broadband/individual/intrinsic/good. He argues that there is danger in individual/institutional polarization which loses sight of the individual's social context and the institution's individual mission. Both religion and spirituality can be expressed socially or individually. He describes the distinction as a reinvention of the intrinsic/extrinsic polarity - a distinction explicitly stated by Van Dierendonck and Mohan (2006) who suggest similarities between spirituality and Allport-Ross's construct of an intrinsic religious orientation in that it is more “an internal attitude focused on unification with the sacred” (p. 228).

Religion, they suggest, may be used more for utilitarian, external motives. Pargament (1999) challenges the utility of such distinctions, arguing that most people both live and use their religion. Hill and Pargament (2003) also caution that such polarization may lead to needless duplication of concepts and measures.

Constructing discourses of spirituality

As Parker (1994) writes, discourses are not hidden in texts, awaiting discovery. They are produced or constructed by the reader/writer through reading or analysis. What does the word “discourse” signify? Parker cites Foucault’s construction of discourses as language practices that “systematically form the objects of which we speak” (p. 94). Within this narrative, the “object” is spirituality.

Sacred discourses: Discourses privileging religion

One possibility for describing the relation between spirituality and religion is constructing one as the subdomain of the other (Benson et al., 2003; Fontana, 2003; Pargament, 1997, 1999; Zinnbauer et al., 1999; Zinnbauer et al., 1997) thus privileging the encompassing domain. Discourses privileging religion could be read as also privileging the sacred, even though they may present a surface narrative of secularity.

Three criteria for religion are narrated by Fontana (2003): a belief in the spiritual; spiritual practices and adherence to a code of ethical conduct stemming from spiritual teachings. He notes, however, that there are people who may meet only one of these criteria. If they meet the first, they are spiritual; the second, spiritual/religious, and the third, religious. Thus there is an overlap in that his definition of religion incorporates a belief in the spiritual. But, implicitly, there is a statement that religion is spirituality and more, with spirituality encompassed within a broader construct, religion.

Contesting arguments that the field of study should be renamed the social scientific study of religion and spirituality, Zinnbauer et al. (1997) argue for a broadband use of the signifier “religion”. They link the signifier “spirituality” to possibly fleeting cultural changes, associated with secularism and disillusionment with religious institutions, and suggest the field of scientific study should not be linked to these. The signifier “religion” provides continuity with a long tradition of study, is succinct and avoids the polarization of spiritual as good and religion as bad, they argue.

Pargament (1997) explicitly constructs religion as a broadband construct, defined as “a process, a search for significance in ways related to the sacred” (p. 32) with spirituality being “the central function of religion – the search for the sacred” (p. 39). Thus religion encompasses spirituality which is, however, its sacred core.

Sacred = God?

This begs the question, what is sacred? Hill et al. (2000) describe the sacred as culturally constructed and about the divine, rather than the important. The important or strongly believed is ideological as opposed to spiritual. Pargament and Mahoney (2002) narrate the sacred as either malevolent or benign, that which is revered or respected and set beyond the ordinary. However, they then move into ambivalence, stressing that “God is central to any understanding of spirituality. Spirituality involves more, however, than God. It has to do with the sacred, and the sacred can be found on earth as well as in heaven” (p. 649).

So if God is central to any understanding of spirituality, is a search for the sacred that does not centre God not spirituality? Such a narrative could be read as marginalizing the Native American focus on the connectedness of all things, respect, harmony and balance (Lopez et al. 2002) as it marginalizes Buddhism. It could be read as secularizing spirituality on the surface, while a deeper discourse or subtext centres theism and traditional religious practice, context and discourse, narrated as giving the concept of spirituality “shape, meaning and location” (Smith & McSherry, 2004). Without the religious associations there are multiple spiritualities, “individually determined and dislocated, resulting in a dilution of the term and, possibly, a loss of spiritual identity” (p. 310). The centring of a God concept in a construction of spirituality cannot be escaped, this discourse suggests.

Religion = all

Privileging religious belief as underlying *all theory*, philosopher of religion Roy Clouser (2005) moves away from the necessity of a God concept in religion to present the intriguing argument that the divine or religious is “whatever is unconditionally non-dependently real” (p. 19). He suggests that “all beliefs in anything as unconditionally non-dependent are in fact religious” (p. 35) whether they are in the field of theology, science or philosophy. Thus all theories are regulated by a divinity belief: either directly when there is an explicit claim about the nature of reality; or indirectly when there is an implicit view of the nature of reality. Clouser moves on to debate why such beliefs should be called “religious” and not, for example, “metaphysical” (or in

this case, “spiritual”). He argues that ultimate reality beliefs emerge from religion and to rename them would be “an arbitrary piece of imperialism” (p. 40).

Sacred = ?

There is one discourse which could be read as falling within the sacred discourses, yet rejecting organizational teaching and practice and the narrative of spirituality as encompassed by religion. This is the phenomenological discourse of mystic transcendence, or a direct knowing of the divine. Such a discourse narrates surrender to a non-intellectual experience of the divine or transcendent. There is a direct “knowing” of “truth” rather than an acceptance of traditional religious truths, writes Gray (2006), who describes the mystic conception of spirituality as broader than religion.

Underhill (1911), a seminal mystic writer, describes a quest for a desirable state satisfying the craving for absolute truth, a communication between the spirit of man and the absolute while Smith (1981) narrates the human soul transcending reason and directly experiencing or uniting with the divine. Savramis (1979) constructs a desire for ecstasy and unity with the transrational, a quest for the metaphysical. This construction is also evident in the psychology of mind, neo-cognitive or health realization texts (such as those of Kelley, 2004). He writes of a move from thought/cognition/analytical thinking to alignment with universal intelligence/God/spirit/the divine.

Thus this transcendence seems to differ from a self-transcendence which could be interpreted as arising in relationship with others and self (Barker, 1979; Broadbent, 2004) or from reflectiveness (Brewer, 1979) or self-awareness (Emmons, 2000a, 2000b) – all of which fall within the secular psy-complex knowledges. It also seems to deviate from religious discourses which prescribe practice and perception of the divine.

Secular discourses: Discourses privileging the spiritual

Constructing spirituality as a quality beyond religious affiliation, Engebretson (2004), Hayes and Cowie (2005), Mattis and Jagers (2001), Moberg (1984), Slater, Hall and Edwards (2000), Temane and Wissing (2006), Van Dierendonck and Mohan (2006), among others, construct spirituality as the broader, more inclusive term. The point is made that no religion is possible without spirituality while spirituality without religion is conceivable (Speck, Higginson & Addington-Hall, 2004).

Moberg (1984) defines the spiritual as relating to “inner resources ... the ultimate concern, the basic value around which all other values are focused, the central philosophy of life – whether religious, anti-religious or nonreligious – which guides a person’s conduct, the supernatural and non-material dimensions of human nature” (p. 351). Engebretson (2004) too narrates spirituality as inclusive of religion and the sacred with the experience of the sacred Other expressed and named in a multiplicity of ways including through communal ritual or through the stories of religious traditions.

Several sub-discourses can be read within discourses privileging the signifier “spirituality”, many of them located within the psychological power knowledges.

Social constructionist discourses

Spirituality, from a postmodern perspective, can be constructed as a social construction. Mohr (2006) describes spirituality as not just created or constructed by individuals, but also as shaped by cultural beliefs and values and wider social circumstance. In a similar vein, Hay and Nye (1998) cite arguments that spirituality is “an abstraction conjured up by language”, (p. 25), with religious experience growing out of culture and involving developing competence in a religious language. Thus, there is no pre-existing or foundational construct “spirituality”. There is only the socially constructed languaging of an “object” called spirituality or religion.

Psy-complex discourses

Foucault, who introduced the construct of power/knowledges which “discipline” by organizing, structuring and categorizing and through surveillance, narrates all sciences which have the prefix psy- or psycho- as “the psy-complex ... arguing that they are all fundamentally concerned with the supervision, monitoring and regulation of individual functioning” (Burr & Butt, 2000, p. 192). The discourses below, many of which are interrelated, could be read as located within the psy-complex.

Spirituality = neurobiology

Discourses of evolutionary neuropsychology either privilege the spiritual over the religious, describing the latter as one instance of the former, or negate both. Thus within such a discourse two narratives could be read - one which is purely materialistic, and the other which constructs a secular or religious spirituality.

Such narratives describe religion/spirituality as a product of our uniquely human biological nature which has been selected in the process of evolution because it has survival value (Hay, 2000; Hay & Socha, 2005; Newberg & Newberg, 2006; Seybold, 2005). Spiritual awareness is a human universal, giving us strength in the struggle to survive and helping us cope with reality as it is (Hay & Socha, 2005). Spirituality may promote survival by meeting needs for meaning, needs for control or needs for relationship and attachment (Spilka et al., 2003). A spiritual function is genetically transmitted, originates from parts of our brain and protects us from the overwhelming anxiety we would otherwise experience confronting pain and death (Alper, 2001).

Those reading the evolutionary neuropsychology texts through the materialist lens suggest that the links between neural activity (such as temporal lobe epilepsy) and spiritual experience prove there is no God, just a neurologically induced experience (Alper, 2001). Those reading the same texts through a spiritual lens (Hay, 2000; Hay & Socha, 2005; Seybold, 2005) suggest that the spiritual dimension is an essential and distinguishing biological human trait prompting humans to seek meaning and purpose in their lives (De Souza, Cartwright & McGilp, 2004) and associated with the preservation of the species and its psychological and social well-being (Hay & Socha, 2005). They argue that neuroscience's observation of areas of activity is useful, but does not provide evidence of the existence or not of God. To suggest that God is located in the brain, argues Seybold (2005), is as futile as arguing that there is a "sailing spot" in the brain when parts of the brain light up during a sailing cruise.

Within the neurobiological discourse the focus tends to be on a biologically predisposed, universal, spiritual awareness which is not particular to religious people but is more inclusive. Thus spirituality is seen as a broader category with practices of institutional religion being one way to express it.

Spirituality = behaviour

Within many narratives of spirituality, particularly when it is realized as religion, are narratives of spirituality as behavioural patterns (Hill et al., 2000), practices, activities (Dowling et al., 2004; Mohr, 2006; Spilka et al., 2003) and rituals (Engebretson, 2004). Such narratives could be located within a modernist behavioural discourse. Located within such a discourse is research exploring how people actively behave in ways that lead to spiritual conversion. Such research suggests that people learn to "act like converts by performing particular role-prescribed behaviours expected of people who have been converted" (Spilka et al., 2003, p. 355).

Spirituality = emotion

Some narratives focus on religion and spirituality as either generating intense emotion (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003) or as a path of detaching from intense emotion and suffering (Tsering, 2006). Charismatic movements stress the importance of intense positive affect, write Emmons and Paloutzian, (2003) who cite Jonathan Edwards (1746) describing “love, gratitude and thankful joy displayed toward God” (p. 384) as among the signs of an authentic spiritual experience. This contrasts with contemplative traditions, such as Buddhist meditation, which focus on detached observation and consequent stilling or regulation of emotion (Tsering, 2006).

Whether there is a distinction between religious emotion and ordinary emotion is debated, with some arguments that religious emotion is ordinary emotion experienced within a context evoking a higher power. This has led others to challenge constructions of spiritual experience as emotion, arguing that this reduces spirituality to mere neurological arousal (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003; Spilka et al., 2003).

Spirituality = cognition

Embedded in the modernist cognitive-behavioural discourse are narratives constructing spirituality as cognition – beliefs, values, goals, purpose or meaning-making - which can be measured. One instance of this is Schachter’s two-factor theory (Spilka et al., 2003) stating that religious (or any other emotional) experience involves physiological arousal and a cognitive framework identifying the meaning of that arousal. Thus no experience can be religious until it is identified and interpreted as such.

That spirituality is a belief system making sense of self and the universe and constructing meaning, purpose, goals and ultimate concerns is another cognitive psychological narrative (Adams et al., 2000; Bosacki, 2002; Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003; Temane & Wissing, 2006). Such beliefs are knowable, measurable, universal and focused on the nature of reality (Niederman, 1999). Weber and Cummings (2003) describe this as the existential component of spirituality while Temane and Wissing (2006) narrate it as present in every culture and geographical community. Scannell, Allen and Burton (2002) describe a sense of meaning as a spiritual dimension, tracing the association between meaning and well-being to humanistic and existential discourses which equate attaining meaning with mental health and lack of meaning with mental illness.

But this raises the question, what is meaning? Baumeister and Vohs (2002) describe connection as the essence of meaning, stressing that it is a non-physical reality with multiple levels. Meaning, they write, is a stable conception imposed on an ever-changing life and thus a tool to impose stability on life. Meaning satisfies the needs for purpose, values, a sense of efficacy and a basis for self-worth.

Spirituality = intelligence

A more recent construction, related to cognitive psychological discourses, is that of spirituality as intelligence (Emmons, 2000a, 2000b). This generates the signifier “spiritual IQ” which is constructed as facilitating problem-solving and goal-attainment in every-day life, meaning-making, contextualization of life and action, (Hyde, 2004). Associating this with the neurobiological discourse, Fontana (2003) narrates the view that the “God Spot” in the brain may give a sense of meaning, purpose and context; helping “... us to make choices between life paths, to place our actions and our lives in a wider, richer and more meaningful context” (p. 81).

Spirituality = connection

A relational construction of spirituality – with its focus on multidimensional connection, communion or relationship – underlies Gomez and Fisher’s SWBQ (2003). Such a story fits with ecosystemic (Becvar & Becvar, 1996), contextualizing or ecological discourses such as those of Bronfenbrenner (Reimer & Furrow, 2001). Hodge (2001) describes the focus of communion or relationship as varying depending on the spiritual tradition. Some texts may privilege a relationship with a supreme being (for example, Allah in Islam, God in Christianity and Judaism). Others may privilege a relationship with Creation (certain Native American traditions, Wicca). Communion with a transcendent aspect of self is privileged in certain New Age teachings while some Buddhist traditions may focus on relationship to a sacred text.

There are also narratives incorporating all the above dimensions, constructing a relationship with the transcendent as a subdomain of a larger spiritual or relational consciousness which also involves harmonious connectedness or relationship with self, others or community and the world or environment (Bosacki, 2002; De Souza et al., 2004; Elton-Chalcraft, 2002; Fisher, 1999, 2000, 2001; Hay, 2000; Hay & Nye, 1998; Hay & Socha, 2005; Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Niederman, 1999; Ozorak, 2003; Reimer & Furrow, 2001). Narratives of a relational spirituality challenge Western individualistic discourses and “privatized visions of the spiritual life” (Hay, 2000, p. 39). They resonate with a Marxist perspective of spirituality as expressing the longing for

connection (Tacey, 2002) and “a just and undivided community” (Hay & Nye, 1998, p. 21) rather than religion which alienates the spiritual dimension (Brien, 2002). These narratives also fit with the eco-spirituality of Caine (2003) who privileges the connection or relationship with nature in a pantheistic construction of God as nature, nature as God and humankind as part of nature. Rather than a dualistic monism, in which there is contemplation and worship of a divinity by his/her creation, everything becomes an expression of the divine (Fontana, 2003).

The I-Thou relationship narrated by philosopher, Martin Buber could be read as a precursor to these stories. Buber makes of relationship a sacred or self-transcendent dimension (Hayes & Cowie, 2005) when it involves participation of the whole being, exclusiveness, directness, presentness, transcendence of time and space, exemption from the world of causality, the emergence of love from the I-Thou communion, genuine response and responsibility and knowledge of self in relation to another (Pfuetze, 1954). “Every particular Thou is a glimpse through to the eternal Thou” (Buber, cited by Pfuetze, 1954, p. 156). Such a relationship may be with others, nature or intelligible forms such as ideas or art.

As do Hay and Nye (1998), Buber linked this I-Thou relationship to biology and early attachment relationships: “The pre-natal life of a child is one of natural combination, of constant bodily inter-action with the mother. As the child grows, the desire for connection is gradually translated into spiritual terms as the yearning to meet the universal Thou” (Pfuetze, 1954, p. 159).

The psychodynamic attachment discourse could thus be read as also underlying the spirituality as connectedness discourse. This narrative suggests that without good enough attachment, there can be no formation of faith or trust which is the foundation of spirituality and connectedness (Ratcliff, 1992; Smith & McSherry, 2004; Yust, 2003). Furthermore, early relationship forms the internal working model of self, others, the world and relationship (Cicirelli, 2004; De Roos, 2006; Dickie, Eshleman, Merasco, Shepard, Van der Wilt & Johnson, 1997; Giesbrecht, 1994; McDonald, Beck, Allison & Nosworthy, 2005) which is the foundation of future relationships with self, others, the world and the divine.

Discourses within context

Moving back to the purpose of this article, the intent was to narrate the history and location of the signifier “spirituality”; (de)constructing discourses constructing it. What these tales of spirituality voice is a foregrounding of postmodern, poststructuralist contested meaning: “spirituality” is located in contradictory forms and shapes in the religious and psy-complex power knowledges and in religious, mystic, psychodynamic, cognitive behavioural, behavioural and neurobiological

discourses. Nowhere is it more evident that meaning is not contained within the word but socially constructed in language around the word.

Interrelated narratives contextualize the often emotive fray. The first is that contested meanings may be related to the relative newness of the psychology of religion field with constructs constantly evolving (King & Boyatzis, 2004). However, this appears to be a simplistic explanation, neglecting the struggle between power knowledges underlying the contested definitions.

Another suggests that the fray may be related to the lens through which the constructs “spirituality” and “religion” are viewed, to the contexts or cultures constructing the term. From this perspective, there will always be multiple definitions of spirituality, leading writers such as Roux (2006) to argue for definitions of spirituality in a social context. For as Lopez et al. (2002) illustrate, different cultures construct life understanding, meaning and purpose in different ways and construct different sacred practices which are used in a variety of ways. Spirituality may mean different things to different people, depending on their paradigm (Eaude, 2004), and even within an individual, spirituality may be in a state of flux (Smith & McSherry, 2004). This may fit with Elton-Chalcraft’s (2002) analogy of spirituality as a hologram: “...just as there are limitless hologram images so too are there infinite possible spiritualities” (p. 314). Again, however, this does not take account of the power-struggle regarding the privileging of signifiers suggested by the APA debate in which there was rejection of inclusion of the signifier “spirituality” into the phrase “psychology of religion ~~(and spirituality)~~”.

The third explanation of the fray may be related to an age-old struggle between secular and sacred Foucaultian power knowledges. Such a story narrates a modernist move from the sacred to the secular/humanist associated with a rational, modernist, Enlightenment privileging of science over the sacred (Hill et al., 2000; Tacey, 2002). From a postmodern or late-modern perspective, the move from the sacred to the secular can be storied as a time in which “metanarratives appear to be undergoing a process of eclipse ... the ‘big stories’, including religious stories about our place in the universe have lost plausibility” (Hay, 2000, p. 45). There are no longer monolithic truth stories. Bourdieu (1979) described the postmodern man as a “symbolic migrant” or “plural man” (p. 19) with allegiance to no single, overarching collectivity or metanarrative. Yet because we are biologically programmed or have this evolutionarily selected predisposition to seek religious experience (Alper, 2001), the metanarrative lives on under the surface (Hay, 2000). So we rename it spirituality or relational consciousness.

Fitting with a narrative of the move from the sacred to the secular, Benson et al. (2003) ask whether spirituality is “little more than a politically correct term for religiousness” (p. 208). They choose the term “spiritual development” over “religious development” because the former is more inclusive, less divisive and scientists may be more open to exploring spirituality than religiosity. Those who refuse to define or investigate spirituality without a theistic understanding of God or a transcendent power are “theologically based” and grounded in “Western Judeo-Christian perspectives” write Benson et al. (p. 210).

Internationally, policy documents reflect a trend to differentiate religion and spirituality. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) has two sets of articles treating them as separate concerns (Scott, 2003). British educational policy has explicitly stated that spiritual is not synonymous with religious and has stressed that all areas of the curriculum can contribute to spiritual development (De Souza et al., 2004), with schools in England and Wales legally obliged to promote the spiritual development of learners (Pridmore, 2002). This has led to debates between those who advocate a secular spirituality and those who advocate a religious spirituality. The former focus on constructs such as wonder and self-identity and self-transcendence and own narratives rather than on grand religious narratives, writes Pridmore. The latter argues for spirituality to be taught within a religious framework with its knowledges, contents and traditions.

Could it be that religion in the educational context is marginalized by secular humanism (Fisher, 1999), by Marxist, feminist, psychoanalytic or postmodern liberation thought which oppresses the spiritual (Tacey, 2002)? How sacrosanct secularization may be is suggested by Bruce (2004) who has designed a programme to support the development of spiritual well-being in adolescent girls. She writes that school counsellors may experience apprehension and suspicion if they address the spiritual and advises an “essential strategy”: intentional differentiation between spirituality and religion to reassure all stakeholders.

Who privileges what and why

Spirituality and religion are intertwined signifiers. Which construct is privileged seems to position the speaker in a context; the one more secular, the other more sacred. Both contexts in turn marginalize. Constructions of difficulty in definition seem inextricably linked to a fight for territory, a battle to become the arbiter of “power knowledges”, and will continue.

Thus the territorial protection suggested by Pargament’s (1999) argument for a retaining of the term “psychology of religion”: he suggests that unless it is clearly acknowledged that this

field's focus is the sacred, it will lose what makes it unique – its indentifying characteristic. If psychology secularizes the psychology of religion by including a spirituality which embraces believers and non-believers, secular “power-knowledges” triumph. Religious “power-knowledges” become marginalized. From Pargament's perspective, if the sacred is not retained, the special transcendent nature is “flattened out ... absorbed into a night in which all cats are gray” (1999, accessed on-line). Barnes (1999) and Singleton et al. (2004) advance a similar argument in their critique of a relational narrative or spirituality. If all relationships are spiritual, argues Barnes, nothing remains distinctively spiritual and how can a spiritual education be discriminated from a general education?

Du Toit (2006), however, moves from the either-or of sacred versus secular. He narrates the postmodern context as one in which “both the church and the world have expanded their realms to accommodate changing cultural factors and social contexts” (p. 1258).

Positioning psychology in this narrative

Within this narrative, the psy-complex could be read as privileging the signifier “spiritual”. This text narrates many interrelated discourses constructing the spiritual in psychological terms: as neurobiology, behaviour, emotion, cognition, intelligence and connection. Hayes and Cowie (2005) describe the signifier “spirituality” as a mediator in “the interface between psychology and religion” (p. 28) with psychologists choosing to focus on spiritual rather than religious experience.

Could it be that psychology is (self)-appointed handmaiden to secularization? Or is it the new “religion” of secularization? Those committed to or immersed in a theological/religious culture privilege the religious and centre God while those immersed in or committed to a positivist/psychological culture privilege more secular constructions of spirituality, decentring God and religion. As Fay Weldon (1999) writes:

Once there was religion, then there was science, then there was Marxism: now we have therapy, which, in its wider political and social context outside the consulting room, I shall call Therapism Psychoanalysts are the new popes: psychotherapists the new priests and counsellors, the lay workers of this dangerous religion of Therapism. (pp. 287-289)

She narrates the privileging of Therapism as suiting government as “... it is cheaper than change, and stops people rioting in the streets. The energy of thought is turned inwards, not outwards; too many are busy coming to terms with their true selves to have time left over for judgemental thoughts about society” (p. 288).

Positioning selves in this narrative

Yet again returning to the purpose of this narrative – the ideological and historical location of the signifier “spirituality” – the picture is no clearer but is richer and more textured than before.

Instead of monologue, there is polyphony. Instead of a universe, a multiverse (Becvar & Becvar, 1996). No truths have been established, but truths have been troubled. Postmodernism does not offer neat summaries and conclusions or recommendations for further research. It does, however, offer alternative readings, this one suggesting that the signifier “spirituality” emerges from secularization with the psy-complex privileging this signifier and thus locating itself within the web of power. Yet as it does so, the secular is challenged by the sacred in true Derridean fashion. Attempts to desacralize the sacred seem to end up centring it. The sacred/secular binary is undone, revealing the dependence of each term on the other for its meaning (Haywood & Mac An Ghail, 1997).

Thus in choosing to do research with Gomez and Fisher’s SWBQ (2003) and in choosing to use the signifier “spirituality”, the writer has positioned herself, or been positioned by language (Cobb, 1994). She is read to align with secularization as well as with a psy-complex power-knowledge body with all the ethical issues that implies. For this is a body constructed by Foucault as concerned with the disciplinary functions of supervising, monitoring and regulating individual functioning (Burr & Butt, 2000). Is the effort to measure the “spiritual” and “spiritual well-being” not part of this endeavour, one may ask.

So where to from here? With a multiplicity of socially constructed truths or a multi-dimensional holographic “truth”, postmodern readers of any texts can only explore the socially constructed lens through which they read the socially constructed narratives of spirituality. Ethically, within each context it may also be important to explore whether or not the narrative of spirituality constructed, operationalized and measured is useful and fitting within context. For if there is no foundational truth, the criteria for choice of a pathway in (re)search becomes pragmatism: usefulness or fit within context (Cruikshank, 2001; Good & Velody, 1998).

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ARTICLE II

NARRATING SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING IN RELATIONSHIP TO POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION

Constructed as new and located in the discourse of positive psychology, “spiritual well-being” is a signifier with (his)story of which one possible reading is foregrounded in this postmodern (de)constructive narrative. The construction of “spiritual + well-being” could be narrated as a secularization of the religious by positivist, psy-complex knowledges with spiritual well-being reconstructed as a measurable outcome. Or it could be narrated as a “spiritualization” of the psy-complex by religious knowledges with measurable well-being becoming dependent on pursuit of the postmodern, multiply-storied spiritual/religious. As the psy-complex has followed medicine from a focus on pathology to a focus on holistic wellness, it has found itself in the realm of the religious which it has simultaneously centred and marginalized. And as the psy-complex has moved from measuring illness to measuring wellness, it could be narrated as having constructed new categories of non well-being or ill-being.

Spiritual well-being: a seemingly simple phrase which raises a multiplicity of questions. Where does this construct fit within the field of psychology? And which discourses could be narrated as constructing this object? Why spiritual and not religious well-being? Why well-being and not health? How does spiritual well-being relate to psychological well-being? How does spiritual well-being relate to religion? Why measure it? What are the implications of measuring it?

The writer’s purpose is that of constructing a narrative positioning the signifier “spiritual well-being” in relationship to psychology and religion. This quest emerged from quantitative research conducted with Gomez and Fisher’s (2003) Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (SWBQ) (Articles III to VI), a questionnaire based on a construction of spiritual well-being as the affirmation of life in relationship with God, self, community and environment. Thus a particular construct of spiritual well-being was forwarded, a construct embedded in an ideological, historical matrix.

The writer’s “method” could be read as a postmodern (de)construction of the signifier “spiritual well-being”: although Derrida (1988) explicitly narrates (de)construction as “not a method” but “an event” which “takes place” (p. 4). (De)construction is not easy to (re)present with efforts to do so exemplifying “the slipperiness of language” (Leggo, 1996). Within this text, it is written as (de)construction: both deconstruction and interrogation of text, and a construction

of the reader/writer. Kvale (1992) narrates (de)construction as “a hybrid between ‘destruction’ and ‘construction’ ... an effort to construct by destruction” (p. 13). There is a reading of texts, marking their relation to other texts, contexts and subtexts (Silverman, 1989).

(De)construction is located in a postmodern, poststructuralist matrix of which Lather (1991) writes: “Poststructuralism demands radical reflection on our interpretive frames as we enter the Foucaultian shift from paradigm to discourse. Here, we shift ... to a focus on the productivity of language in the construction of the objects of investigation” (p. 13).

Reflective postmodern practice suggests that it is ethical to critically reflect on constructs utilized in research. White and Epston (1990) stress that we are “... all caught up in a net or web of power/knowledge” (p. 22). Thus, they argue, it is important to identify the ideological context within which practice is situated and to explore ideological history. Only in so doing can one identify effects, dangers, and limitations of these ideas and associated practices.

Submitting to the language games (Lyotard, 1996) of academia, the writers/readers will self-objectify, utilizing the third person voice. This is a stance contrary to postmodern practice as it is one in which the “I” or “we” hides behind signifiers such as “the researchers, writers, readers”. It removes the subjective “I/we”, with all its vulnerability and self-positioning, and replaces it with depersonalized authority. Challenging this practice, poststructuralist writers stress that “I” is central as “our accounts of the world are constructions made from the language, meanings and ideas historically available to us, the ‘I’” (Beavis & Gough, 2000, p. 76).

Narrating position in time

The phrase “spiritual well-being” is constructed as new by Fisher, Francis and Johnson (2002) who describe as recent the linking of spirituality to health in the term “spiritual well-being” which they credit the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging (NICA) with coining in 1975. Payne (1990) locates the signifier four years earlier, at the 1971 White House Conference on Aging. She describes “historical accident and public policy” avoiding “church-and-state issues” leading to development of the concepts “spirituality” and “spiritual well-being” with Moberg’s paper for this conference providing the initiative to further develop the concepts. Heintzman and Mannell (2003) locate the roots of spiritual well-being in the quality of life movement of the 1960s and 1970s which suggested the significance of spirituality to wellness. They describe developments in the health and wellness counselling literature from the 1980s onwards constructing spiritual health and wellness as a significant component of a holistic health perspective.

This has been challenged in the writings of the very Moberg cited above (1984) who gives the construct “spiritual well-being” a longer life-span. Moberg argues that enhancing spiritual well-being has always been the central concern of world religions such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Calicchia and Graham (2006) echo Moberg, describing a long history of exploring the relationship between spirituality and well-being with Francis Galton, in 1872, writing a paper on ‘Statistical inquiries into the efficacy of prayer’. Those who call this an emerging field, they write, may be perpetuating “a misnomer and an injustice to those pioneers in this field ... spirituality has been studied in the fields of counselling and theology, which has been overlooked by mainstream psychology” (p. 310).

This suggests that in psychology constructions of spiritual well-being may be relatively new, but in other (marginalized?) knowledge bodies this is a construct with a rich history. The reason for the newness of the phrase in psychology’s lexicon may be related to the consensus narrative that religion/spirituality has been neglected as an area of research in this field (Le Roux, 1998; Smith, 2003; Van Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006). Reasons cited include the construction of religion as pathology emerging from Freudian psychoanalytic theory (Josephson, 1994). The founder of rational emotive therapy, Albert Ellis, epitomizes such a position, stating in 1960 that “... both religion and neurosis ... are actually the same thing ... both stem from the same fundamental source. That source may be called faith unfounded on fact; human gullibility; lack of scientific thinking; an unquestioning and unchallenging attitude toward life; or a refusal to accept and live with reality when it happens to be inevitably grim” (as cited in Rosmarin, 2003b, p. 11). Another is scientific scepticism for that which is mystical and not observable and measurable (Miller & Thoresen, 2003; Smith, 2003). A third is the argument that science is either incapable of studying spirituality or should not study spirituality or that which is sacred (Miller & Thoresen, 2003).

As psychology has ventured into the terrain of religion and spirituality, positivist concerns regarding conceptualization and operationalization of constructs such as religion, spirituality and spiritual well-being have been voiced. And psychology’s rights within the field have been queried. As Doherty (2003) writes of studies in the psychology of religion and spirituality: “After a century of ignoring or pathologizing religion, we cannot simply parachute with our existing gear into this foreign territory, give it our preferred name ‘spirituality’, and then colonize it with our language and customs” (p. 183).

Historically psychology has ignored the spiritual, aligning itself with the medical field and adopting a medical model in the positivist scientific tradition. Strawbridge (1999) describes

medicalization of psychology as a “thrust to power”: psychology’s power increased by “association with more powerful allies” (p. 297). Associated with medicalization is the illness/health discourse, for the Western medical model has traditionally been about diagnosis of illness and treatment of symptoms, in contrast to Eastern systems such as yoga and Ayurvedic medicine which, instead, have focused on holistic, health-promoting practices (Chopra, 2001). To this end, in Western medicine (and psychology) there have been (and are) observation and measurement of disease processes in human and animal subjects, implementation of interventions (pharmacological or surgical) and observation and measurement of the response to these interventions in controlled contexts in which provision is made, with control groups, to rule out other possible explanations of the response.

This has generated a “science of mental illness” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 13) which measures and categorizes mental disorder in reliable and valid ways, generates theories of causality and offers pharmacological and psychological treatment. Strawbridge (1999) describes the dark side of medicalization in psychology and psychiatry including “‘scientific’ versions of racism” (p. 296), misogynistic location of illness within women rather than in the socio-political context, and disempowerment of people with disabilities focusing on individual impairment rather than on disabling environments. Constructions of homosexuality as disorder/abnormality/illness (Greenberg, 1997) are another such instance.

Another component of the positivist medical model is reductionism: a separation of the physical, psychological and spiritual, emerging from a need to focus on that which is empirically observable and measurable. However, within Western medicine, a time came when not only a curative model was adopted – focusing on health as absence of illness or symptomatology – but a new holistic health model (Hamilton & Jackson, 1998), moving towards promotion of wellness and prevention. As early as 1948 the World Health Organization defined health as “A state of complete physical, social and mental well-being, and not merely absence of disease or infirmity” (Breeze & Lock, 2001, p. 6). Wissing and Van der Lingen (2003) locate the coining of the term “wellness” in 1961, citing medical doctor, Halbert Dunn, who defined wellness as “an integrated method of functioning which is oriented toward maximizing the potential of which the individual is capable” (workshop). By 1999 the National Wellness Association in America had constructed wellness as “an active process of becoming aware of and making choices toward a more successful existence” (Wissing & Van der Lingen, 2003, workshop). Wissing and Van der Lingen, summing up core concepts of wellness, describe it as a continuing, life-long process,

embracing all spheres of life, demanding self-responsibility and individual criteria for wellness and culminating in maximization of potential.

In psychology and counselling, Brooks and Matthews (2000) construct a history of a wellness orientation in the American counselling field marked by a 1992 publication of the *Journal of Counseling and Development* advocating a wellness and developmental approach to counselling rather than a medical illness-oriented approach. Two wellness models were presented in this issue: Witmer and Sweeney's model (1992) constructing spirituality as the hub of a wheel of wellness; and Chandler, Holden and Kolander's model (1992) constructing five components (social, physical, emotional, intellectual and occupational) with spiritual health being a component within each of these interrelated dimensions. Without spiritual health each dimension is incomplete (Brooks & Matthews, 2000; Heintzman & Mannell, 2003). Spirituality is thus a vital component of holistic health (Hamilton & Jackson, 1998).

The coming of age of positive psychology was marked by the millennial issue of the *American Psychologist* (2000) featuring 15 articles on subjects such as happiness, excellence and optimal human functioning. Positive psychology is constructed in opposition to pathologizing psychology (Demir & Urberg, 2004) which narrates well-being as little more than the absence of pathology, "as if falling short of diagnostic criteria should be the goal for which we all should aim" (Steen, Kachorek & Peterson, 2003, p. 5). Wissing (2000) uses the signifier "psychofortology", or the scientific study of psychological strengths, as opposed to the signifier "positive psychology". She makes a distinction between "health" as absence of illness and "wellness" as the upper end of holistic well-being.

Instead of a disease model, proponents of positive psychology advocate a focus on human strengths. Human strength is constructed as "the bedrock of the human condition ... strength-congruent activity comprises the psychological good life" (Steen et al., 2003, p. 6). Projects such as the Values in Action Classification of Strengths, a classification scheme for strengths, have been constructed to stand next to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Disorders. Positive psychology is "as focused on strength as weakness, as interested in building the best things in life as repairing the worst, and as concerned with fulfilling the lives of healthy people as healing the wounds of the distressed" (Steen et al., 2003, p. 6). It focuses on the scientific study of optimal human functioning (Lopez et al., 2002) as opposed to the study of psychopathology.

Yet, as with the narration of newness in the construction spiritual well-being, so positive psychology or psychofortology is erroneously constructed as "a fledgling field" (Steen, Kachorek & Peterson, 2003), having emerged in the new millennium (Ai & Park, 2005). As Strümpfer

(2005) narrates, it stands “on the shoulders of the giants” of ancient and modern times including traditional Indian Buddhist, Yoga, Chinese, Greek and Roman traditions of healing focusing on the increasing strengths and resilience. More recently it rests of the shoulders of early and later psychiatrists and psychologists who focused on fortigenic processes or concepts including William James, Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Carl Rogers, Victor Frankl, Erik Erikson and Abraham Maslow, who was the first to use the term “positive psychology”.

Narrating position in text

Positioning “spirituality”

The signifier “spirituality” could be constructed as associated with the colonization of religion by psychology (Doherty, 2003; Weldon, 1999) and by an associated process of secularization of the sacred, a narrative read in an associated article (Article I). Whether or not it is synonymous with religion, and whether spirituality encompasses religion or vice versa, could be read as a struggle between secularized psy-complex and sacralized religious Foucaultian “power knowledges” (Article I).

Thus it is a signifier with contested and deferred meaning, with constructions of spirituality varying from self-transcendence (Benson, Roehlkepartain & Rude, 2003) to mystical transcendental experience (Gray, 2006) to a search for the sacred (Engebretson, 2004; Pargament, 1999). Psychological discourses have variously constructed it as neurobiology (Hay & Socha, 2005), cognition (Niederman, 1999), intelligence (Emmons, 2000a & b), meaning-making (Bosacki, 2002), emotion (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003) or behaviour (Spilka, Hood, Hunsberger & Gorsuch, 2003). It has further been storied as and/or vital or animating energy (Fisher, 2000), and/or relationship with self, others, the environment and God (Fisher, 2000; Hay & Nye, 1998), or a combination of all of the above. All that can be agreed on is that there is no agreement, with Scott (2006) writing: “The spirit(ual) in its complexity and elusiveness is a reminder of the partiality and temporariness of knowledge and life” (p. 96).

Positioning well-being

The signifier “well-being” could be read as associated with discourses focusing on health (Antonovsky’s *salutogenesis*), strengths (Strümpfer’s *fortigenesis*), wellness (Wissing & Van der Lingen, 2003) and the scientific study and construction of knowledges about such health and strengths (Wissing & Van Eeden’s *fortology*) (as cited in Strümpfer, 2006). Within the psy-complex, signifiers associated with this decentring of pathology and centring of health/strength

include *positive psychology* (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) or *psychofortology* (Wissing, 2000).

Constructions of well-being within the discourses of positive psychology tend to stress holism, embracing the affective, physical, cognitive, spiritual, self and social (Adams, Bezner, Drabbs, Zambarano & Steinhardt, 2000; Fisher, 2000; Roothman, Kirsten & Wissing, 2003; Wissing & Van der Lingen, 2003). For example, Adams et al. (2000) present a wellness model which is multidimensional, constructing wellness as a balance among physical, social, spiritual, emotional, intellectual and psychological dimensions. Admitting that constructs such as spiritual and psychological wellness are subjective, they describe spiritual wellness as meaning/purpose in life, fitting with conceptualizations of existential well-being (Ellison, 1983). Psychological wellness is narrated as optimism or the expectation of positive outcomes (Adams et al., 2000).

Some construct two types of well-being (Martin, Kirkcaldy & Siefen, 2003; Van Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006): hedonic well-being or a focus on achieving pleasure and avoiding suffering (Van Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006); and eudaimonic well-being which is about meaning, self-realization (Martin et al., 2003) and aiming to be the best we can be (Van Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006). An alternative way of formulating it is contrasting the pleasant life with the good life (Wissing & Van der Lingen, 2003). The latter, privileged by its association with “the best” and goodness in contrast to a merely pleasure-seeking hedonism, is constructed as more congruent with the construct of spiritual well-being.

Van Dierendonck and Mohan (2006) propose that spiritual well-being is a component of eudaimonic well-being and that it should be focused on as an inner resource including “... an individualized awareness of one’s inner self and a sense of being part of a deeper spiritual dimension” (p. 234). As such a resource, it gives significance, a feeling of strength in times of trouble, an experience of secondary control, a sense of trust in a positive outcome and a different vantage point.

Could it be that religious discourses associating spirituality with undergoing suffering to be the best we can be underlie the link between eudaimonic well-being and spiritual well-being? Rosmarin (2003a), for example, describes the link in Judaism between a spiritual life, sorrow and anguish. Religious discourses, such as Puritanism, could also be seen to marginalize pleasure/hedonic well-being. An example of such a discourse is the assumption of Pienaar, Beukes and Esterhuyse (2006) that anti-hedonism (as measured by the conservatism scale) is associated with the development of a strong moral value system. They find both religious fundamentalism and anti-hedonism to be associated with psychological well-being (Pienaar et al.,

2006). To the contrary, Temane and Wissing (2006) found a link between hedonic well-being and spirituality. They hypothesize that this link is associated with the existential component of spiritual well-being (as measured in Ellison's Spiritual Well-Being Scale) and with the expression of spirituality in activities that give pleasure such as art or music.

Positioning spiritual well-being

The signifier "spiritual well-being" could be located in the discourses of positive psychology, with Ai and Park (2005) describing the positive psychology movement and recognition of the role of spirituality and religion in well-being as "interrelated, cutting-edge trends in mental health research" (p. 243). Hodge (2001) implicitly links spirituality and positive psychology with the assertion that accompanying acceptance of the fortology discourse, which narrates personal and environmental strengths as pivotal in the helping process, is an increasing interest in assessing spirituality.

Moberg (1984) stresses that spiritual well-being is a multidimensional construct and a lifelong process which overlaps with religiosity but may also be pursued in a wide range of other contexts. It is not synonymous with religiosity, even though it overlaps with it. Because of the multiplicity of contexts in which spiritual well-being can be constructed and pursued, contestation of its meaning is to be expected. What one group may view as indicating spiritual well-being, another may associate with spiritual illness (Moberg, 1984; Duke & Brown, 1979). Moberg questions whether one needs to develop diverse operationalizations of spiritual well-being or whether research will reveal core central indicators acceptable to all central ideologies.

Moberg conceptualized spirituality as comprising two components, namely the vertical (sense of well-being in relationship to God) and the horizontal (sense of life purpose and life satisfaction with no reference to the religious). This is the construct on which Ellison (1983) based the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS) which has a religious well-being subscale (the vertical component) and an existential well-being subscale (the horizontal component). This leads to definitions such as those of Kanya (2000) who defines spiritual well-being as a satisfying relationship with a higher being (vertical component) and a sense of meaning in life (horizontal component).

Fisher et al. (2000) narrated spiritual well-being as relational and associated with self-awareness and the quality of relationships in one or more of four domains: personal, communal, environmental and transcendental. Fisher introduces the principle of "progressive synergism" (Fisher, 1999) with domains both building on one another as well as building one another up. The

following example is given: "... the meaning, purpose and values developed through *self-awareness*, are precursors to, yet enhanced by, the development of morality and culture through *in-depth interpersonal relationships*. Similarly *connectedness with nature* should build on, and build up, self-awareness and in-depth personal relationships, with faith embracing the other three relationships and being fostered by them" (p. 46).

Spiritual health seems cumulative, a dynamic state of being enhanced by the development of all four domains. However, many give priority to one domain over the others. This generates different spiritual health perspectives or, what Fisher et al. (2000) call "ideal types" (pp. 135-136): personalists whose belief is that spiritual well-being is generated from within themselves; communalists whose belief is that deep interpersonal relationships generate spiritual well-being; environmentalists whose relationship with the environment generates spiritual well-being; religionists who embrace the transcendental as spiritual well-being; existentialists whose spiritual well-being lies in all fields but the transcendental; and globalists whose spiritual well-being is generated by relationships in all domains.

This is the narrative upon which Fisher et al. (2000) base their measure of spiritual health, the Spiritual Health in Four Domains Index (SH4DI) and the subsequent Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (SWBQ) adapted from the SH4DI and validated by Gomez and Fisher (2003, 2005a, 2005b). Fisher et al. (2002) privilege spiritual health, describing it as "a fundamental dimension of people's overall health and well-being, permeating and integrating all the other dimensions of health" (p. 4).

Narrating relationship between spiritual/religious and well-being

Exline (2002) suggests that a "probable subtext" (p. 245) in psychology of religion's focus on religion and health/well-being is evaluation and even demonstration of the value (or lack thereof) of religion. This may not be a concern within religion itself which, rather than focusing on this utilitarian notion, focuses on "ultimate truth and meaning" or the next life, rather than health and well-being in this one. She argues that the psychology of religion does not need to find pragmatic or utilitarian value in religion to justify the study thereof, stating that "...religion is a vital part of psychological and social life for many individuals. Is this not, in itself, sufficient justification for studying religion?" (p. 246).

From this perspective, the construction of "spiritual + well-being" could be narrated as a secularization of the religious/spiritual by positivist, psy-complex, medical model knowledges. In so doing the "goals" or "concerns" of spirituality are reconstructed as measurable and outcomes

based: spirituality pursued to enhance well-being or as central in the therapeutic/helping process (Hodge, 2001) rather than pursued for its own sake. Spirituality, from this perspective, is narrated as a “tool”, “buffer” (Temane & Wissing, 2006, p. 584) or means to a secular end, leading to conclusions such as “the salutary nature of spirituality in psychological well-being is supported by a considerable corpus of research” (p. 592).

From another perspective, the construction of “spiritual + well-being” could be narrated as a “spiritualization” of the psy-complex by religious knowledges. Secular measurable, operationalized well-being becomes dependent on pursuit of the postmodern, multiply-storied spiritual/religious.

Narrating relationship between spiritual well-being and psychological well-being

The question becomes how one distinguishes between spiritual well-being and psychological well-being. Fisher’s spiritual well-being – particularly for those who are personalists, communalists, environmentalists or existentialists – could be seen as well-being in the realms of thoughts, feelings and behaviours about the self, the social and the environmental. Thus it could be argued that personal, communal and environmental well-being are elements of psychological well-being, omitting the sacred/transcendent which discourses of commonality between spirituality and religion identify as a core construct (Pargament, 1999; Zinnbauer et al., 1997; Zinnbauer, Pargament & Scott, 1999). Can one have spiritual well-being in any domain without inclusion of the sacred, transcendental, divine? Wendel (2003), for example, describes ever-expanding definitions of spirituality that “... can include everything from attending daily mass to watching football” (p. 167) which, although understandable, introduces ambiguity.

So how is the leap made from the relational to the spiritual? Fisher stresses that it is the quality of the relationship, which echoes the writings of philosopher Martin Buber to whom, however, he never refers. Buber described an I-Thou relationship characterized by participation of the whole being, exclusiveness, directness, presentness, transcendence of time and space, exemption from the world of causality, the emergence of love from the I-Thou communion, genuine response and responsibility and knowledge of self in relation to another (Pfuetze, 1954). He suggested this relationship could be with others, nature and intelligible forms. Thus the self-transcendent quality of relationships in these realms makes of them the sacred.

Blaikie and Kelsen (1979) distinguish between material well-being (meeting basic needs) and existential well-being (a sense of purpose, meaning, identity and belonging). They construct spiritual well-being as a type of existential well-being incorporating references to the

transcendental, sacred or supernatural. Thus without the transcendent there cannot be spiritual well-being. Fisher et al. (2002) also seem to struggle with this, and resolve the issue by constructing a model in which “the relationship with a Transcendent Other would ideally embrace each of the other three domains ... building them up and at the same time building upon them for an integrated sense of spiritual well-being” (p. 4).

Schematically, Fisher (1999) presents the communal as embracing of the personal; the environmental as embracing of the personal and communal; and the transcendental as embracing of all other domains. Thus, as much as Fisher attempts to generate spiritual well-being without religion, he privileges religion and the transcendental by making it the overarching domain in his construction of spiritual well-being: “the relationship of a person with God ... embracing the relationships in the other three domains” (p. 47). Not only does this statement privilege the spiritual, it also privileges the theistic belief systems in which there is a construction of a God.

Does there have to be such a privileging in a definition of spirituality or spiritual well-being? Can one have spirituality or spiritual well-being without a God or divine Other? Fisher’s theory says yes, but yet can be read as privileging a spiritual well-being in which there is a God. Similarly, Ellison (1983) clearly stresses the need for inclusion of transcendence which he defines as “the sense of well-being we experience when we find purposes to commit ourselves to which involve ultimate meaning for life” (p. 330). His questionnaire distinguishes between existential well-being and religious well-being, nevertheless incorporating both within the broader category of spiritual well-being. This suggests a discourse in which spirituality is the broader, more inclusive construct, but one which does include religion, and in Ellison’s questionnaire, theistic Christian religion, as research has found. The SWBS has been found to be biased in favour of Christian faith traditions (Scott, Agresti & Fitchett, 1998).

The above stress the centrality of the transcendent in constructions of spiritual well-being. Yet, contrary to Fisher’s privileging of the transcendent, there could be an argument from psychodynamic psychological narratives that, without attachment or relationship, spirituality has no foundations. In such texts, early relationship is narrated as laying the foundation for the development of faith, trust and positive representations of and relationships with self, others, the world and God. Such theory argues that faith and trust emerge from an attachment relationship in which one’s needs are met with consistency and care (Ratcliff, 1992; Smith & McSherry, 2004; Yust, 2003). In line with such arguments, Hay (2000) suggests that the biologically predisposed relational consciousness of a child, of which he cites examples such as the newborn communicating with the caregiver, is the spirituality of childhood. Through a psychological lens,

without successful attachment the foundations of faith cannot be laid and thus spiritual well-being cannot develop. Attachment theory thus could be an argument for an association between the relational and the spiritual with spiritual well-being and spiritual health built on early relationship.

However, from a theological perspective, a relationship with the spiritual can be constructed as possibly “healing of” attachment or enhancing of relationships with the personal, communal and environmental, as Fisher writes (1999). Ellison (1983) describes an integrated relationship between physical, psychological and spiritual well-being but stresses that the spiritual can allow people to move beyond physical suffering towards spiritual and emotional health. Granqvist and Dickie (2006) describe attachment of an abused child to a loving God concept.

Narrating relationship between positive psychology and religion

Lewis and Cruise (2006) narrate the study of human strengths and virtues as traditionally the territory of the psychology of religion. However, in the last 25 years researchers in positive psychology have “supplemented and reinvigorated” the field. Joseph, Linley and Maltby (2006) in the editorial of a special 2006 issue of the *Mental Health, Religion and Culture* coin the phrase “positive psychology of religion and spirituality” (p. 209). Although they do not explain this construct, they move on to discuss research exploring the relationship between spirituality/religion and well-being.

Parallels are also drawn between psychology (particularly positive psychology) and religion, with Joseph et al. (2006) describing the disciplines as similar in that both answer life questions. Positive psychology’s research into positive states and dispositions foregrounds this similarity. Watts, Dutton and Gulliford (2006) concur, narrating topics now preoccupying positive psychology as having historically been central to religious beliefs and practices. In moving into this research area, they describe the need for positive psychology to take account of what religion offers and to engage in respectful, mutual dialogue with theology (Watts et al., 2006).

Their use of language, however, suggests a privileging of positive psychology and marginalization of theology. This seems related to psychology’s reification of positivism and a claim to greater efficacy. They construct positive psychology as “bringing new rigour to the investigation of topics such as forgiveness” and developing “new and potentially more effective ways of helping people to enact spiritual practices in secular contexts” (Watts et al., 2006, p. 277). Privileging of psychology over theology is overt in their statement that positive psychology could be seen as replacing and improving “centuries of rather imprecise, ineffective religious concern with human spiritual qualities” (p. 277).

Thus a discourse within positive psychology could be read which marginalizes the sacred, religious and intuitive while privileging the secular, psychological and positivist. Ironically, however, there are those who place the roots of positive psychology or the topic of psychological strength in “ancient philosophy and religious writings” (Lopez, Snyder & Rasmussen, 2003, p. 4).

Narrating relationship between positive psychology, spiritual well-being and spiritual ill-being

Although the health/wellness/well-being approach of positive psychology arose in opposition to the traditional pathogenic paradigm - working from a salutogenic or fortogenic paradigm which focuses on strengths (Wissing, 2000) - its emphasis on categorization and scientific measurement could be argued to construct new categories of pathology. Discussing the power of labels and measurement, Snyder et al. (2003) describe them as facilitating communication and understanding. Negative outcomes include self-fulfilling prophecies and the generation of prejudicial “isms” and limiting discourses. However, by measuring and labelling human strengths, they assert, they are giving them salience, suggesting “to the named person, and to those in the surrounding environment, that there is merit in this identified characteristic” (p. 28). There is also scope to identify “the best of the best” (p. 28) who can be given extra stimulation and nurturance.

Within the wellness literature, the relationship between health/wellness/ease and illness/disease is variously constructed. Wissing and Van der Lingen (2003) cite three approaches. The first, apparent in the work of Antonovsky, is narrating a continuum from illness to optimal wellness. Another is constructing health/illness and well-being as two different facets of human functioning: the former on a continuum from illness to health, and the latter on a continuum from normal to optimal well-being (Wissing & Van der Lingen, 2003). A reading of this construction suggests that well-being is abnormally superior – it is not normal – with no abnormal inferiority. Thus a normal/abnormal, well-being/? binary emerges. A third construction is that of Adams et al. (2000) with well-being storied as balance among dimensions (physical, social, spiritual, self, ecological, psychological) and imbalance resulting in illness. Thus, there is both an imbalance/balance and wellness/illness continuum created.

Binary opposition, a structuralist construct of writers such as Levi Strauss, suggests a structural determination of meaning with opposites rationally emerging from and dependent upon one another (Culler, 1983; Leach, 2006). Thus optimism is dependent on a construction of pessimism and vice versa, good on a construction of bad and vice versa. Elliot (1998), arguing

from a structuralist perspective, notes that the semantic structure of the phrase spiritual health or wellness implies the possibility of spiritual disease or illness. Poststructuralists such as Derrida (1988, 1992) not only deconstruct or overturn such binary oppositions, but also point to the hierarchical privileging or domination of one by the other (Cooper, 1989; Culler, 1983). Thus one of such a socially constructed pair is given higher status. But this is undone because it is dependent upon the marginalized other, which therefore is, in some sense, centred (Haywood & Mac An Ghail, 1997; Hedges, 1997; 1998). Within this binary, the wellness/well-being/health is privileged with “the other” marginalized and unsaid at times (as in the normal to well-being continuum).

The question therefore becomes, with the new positive psychology prioritizing of scientifically classifying strengths and elements of well-being, does the field not construct and centre new categories of weakness and ill-being? If we are to begin classifying and measuring optimism, it is likely that we are also constructing measures of non-optimism/pessimism. If we begin classifying and measuring spiritual well-being or dimensions of spiritual well-being, we are possibly constructing new categories of spiritual non-well-being/ill-being. Edwards (2006) attempts to counter such an argument with the assertion that “well-being is best considered as an independent dimension, distinct from illness” (p. 358). But what then is measured lack of well-being? To use a Derridean argument, apparently opposing terms mutually define and inhabit one another (Cooper, 1989) or contaminate one another (Armstrong & Paynter, 2004).

Temane and Wissing (2006) construct such a mutually defining opposition when they state that “Spiritually *well* individuals express themselves through trust, honesty, integrity, altruism and service” (p. 583, my emphasis). “Spiritual distress” emerges when life is not given meaning. Thus a wellness/distress binary emerges.

Narrating pot-holes

This narrative is a construction of a matrix within which the construct “spiritual well-being” could be located. As with any postmodern text, the goal is not to story broad conclusions or recommendations as there are no foundational truths (Clough & Barton, 1998; Skrtic, 1995), only lenses and readings. This reading suggests that although the construct “spiritual well-being” has been historically located as “new” in psychology texts, it has a long history in other knowledges. It further suggests that within the psychology “power knowledge” (Foucault, 1976) body, “spiritual well-being” has been situated within the positive psychology domain.

In many ways this location and construction could be read as disrupting itself. Although positive psychology texts align themselves with the religious, there is an ongoing privileging of the scientific/positivist with a marginalizing of the imprecise/theological. Constructions of spiritual well-being, particularly that of Fisher (1999) which is the focus of this reading, could also be narrated as self-disrupting. In texts secularizing the construct, there is a repeated return to a privileging of the sacred or transcendental.

From a postmodern perspective, ethically it may be useful to explore whether or not any narrative of spiritual well-being constructed, operationalized and measured is useful or whether it generates new categories of lack, deficit or ill-being. Questions may need to include: “Why is this being measured?” “Who or what may it marginalize by constructing ill-being?” “Who or what may it privilege by constructing well-being?” Strawbridge (1999) describes as “worrying” (p. 297) a tendency for expansion of the medical model in psychology: a tendency which could be associated with “imperialist extensions” of the field and increased construction of client lack and dependency. Now not only illness, but also lack of health or well-being is constructed and diagnosed!

From a Foucaultian perspective, this could be constructed as part of the psy-complex disciplinary process. Foucault constructed the signifier “psy-complex” for all sciences which have the prefix psy- or psycho - and described these sciences as “... fundamentally concerned with the supervision, monitoring and regulation of individual functioning” (Burr & Butt, 2000, p. 192). Thus Foucault reads the psy-complex as disciplinary, constructing norms by which people both are judged and judge themselves (White & Epston, 1990).

Related to the above it may also be useful to explore the socio-cultural context of narratives of spiritual well-being and their related measures. Reference groups generate criteria or notions of “legitimate or healthy religion” (Garrett, 1979, p. 73) or of spiritual well-being. Thus, the construct “healthy religion” or “spiritual well-being” is “a negotiated formula whose legitimacy is confirmed for individual actors by some coalition of reference groups operative within the boundaries of their religious institution” (p. 75). Constructions of spiritual well-being are “always in the process of becoming ... What does remain constant ... are the social processes by which a negotiated formula achieves formal status as the accepted definition” Garrett argues (p. 85).

Fallding (1979), too, stresses the need for criteria of spiritual well-being that are “trans-faith and trans-cultural” (p. 23) with Duke and Brown (1979) stressing that what may serve as a social indicator of spiritual well-being for one group may be inappropriate for another. An

example of this is provided by Rosmarin (2003a) who describes Jewish religious thought as suggesting that the presence of suffering may indicate high levels of spiritual well-being, conflicting with items in Ellison's SWBS (1983). In the Jewish faith, trust in God is related to spiritual well-being.

Finally, an awareness of the broader context of contested meaning and terminology – of a possible ongoing power struggle between secular and sacred “power knowledges” and of one's positioning of self within this struggle through languaging of research and practice – may be useful. We may believe ourselves to master language but, without critical reflection on signifiers and the socio-cultural matrix from which they emerge (White & Epston, 1990), language could rather be said to master us (Løvlie, 1992). And perhaps it does anyway with Derrida narrating us as “...written only as we write” (Cooper, 1989, p. 494).

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ARTICLE III

SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING IN RELATIONSHIP TO AGE AND GENDER IN A GROUP OF SOUTH AFRICAN ADOLESCENTS

Spirituality in children is a research area neglected in the South African context, despite international data suggesting that spirituality is an important facet of human being and development. Utilizing Gomez and Fisher's Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire, this research explores the relationship between age, gender and spiritual well-being in a sample of 1183 South African adolescents. The relationship between age, gender and spiritual salience and practices (attendance at church/spiritual activities and frequency of prayer) is also explored. Statistical results confirm gender differences in spiritual well-being, with the female respondents reporting higher levels of communal spiritual well-being. Findings also confirmed age differences in spiritual well-being, with younger adolescents reporting higher levels of spiritual health than older adolescents. These findings are congruent with international research and theory. However, higher levels of difference in spiritual salience and practice, which were anticipated, were not found for age and gender.

Spirituality and religion¹ are important to American adolescents (King & Boyatzis, 2004; Lippman & Keith, 2006; Santrock, 2005), with research suggesting that 95% of 13- to 18-year old Americans believe in a God or universal spirit, almost three-quarters saying they pray and about one-half indicating that they had attended religious services within the preceding week (Santrock, 2005). In other countries – Canada, Britain, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries – there appears to be a decline in religious belief and church attendance, although young people still question the meaning and purpose of life and often identify with religious groups (Spilka, Hood, Hunsberger & Gorsuch, 2003). No such statistics appear to be available for the South African population.

Adolescence may be a particularly important time to study religious and spiritual development as it is a life stage encompassing a striving for identity, meaning and purpose,

¹ The signifier “spiritual and religious” or “religious and spiritual” is used because the writer concurs with authors such as Burke et al. (1999) who recognize both an overlap and a distinction between the spiritual and the religious. Religion is associated more with formalized, institutionalized beliefs and practice while spirituality is associated more with the individual experience and may, or may not, be associated with the institutional. Thus one can have spirituality without religion with Mohr (2006) pointing out that atheists and agnostics can have a rich spiritual life.

relationship and connection (King & Boyatzis, 2004). Yet a literature search by Benson, Roehlkepartain and Rude (2003) indicates that less than 1% of articles on children and adolescents address spirituality or spiritual development. These authors rue the lack of published studies in this area.

Despite the centrality of spirituality in the lives of people, consensus is that religion and spirituality have been neglected as areas of research in psychology (Le Roux, 1998; Smith, 2003; Van Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006). This may be associated with the construction of religion as pathology/neurosis emerging from Freudian psychoanalytic theory (Josephson, 1994) or with behaviourism and concurrent scientific scepticism for that which is mystical and not observable and measurable (Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Nielsen, 2000; Smith, 2003).

Yet avoidance of the spiritual and religious by psychology and other sciences has been challenged (Ai & Park, 2005; Jurkovic & Walker, 2006; Smith, 2003). As early as 1979 Moberg argued for multi-disciplinary, multi-paradigmatic research into spiritual well-being, suggesting that such research would not only contribute to the knowledge, theory and policy in the respective disciplines, but could also improve quality of life by attending to the needs of individuals as a whole. Twenty-seven years later, Jurkovic and Walker (2006) argue that psychology needs to take a less one-dimensional and more multi-faceted view: moving away from the illness model and its related focus on diagnosis and treatment, to a focus on protective factors such as connectedness and spirituality. "A psychology that fails to recognize that religiousness and spirituality (in the context of life meaning) are very important aspects of human existence risks losing its human relevance and becoming a somewhat emotionally bankrupt discipline" (Jurkovic & Walker, 2006, p. 40).

Although most international papers call for more research, there does appear to have been an international revival in multi-disciplinary research; among other fields in the sociology of religion (Moberg, 1979a, 1979b, 1984), the psychology of religion (Pargament, 1997, 1999) and religion in the medical field (Epperly, 2000; Speck, Higginson & Addington-Hall, 2004). And this includes research into the spirituality and spiritual development of children and adolescents (Roehlkepartain, Benson, King & Wagener, 2006).

In South Africa, however, there appears to have been a lag in such research with a dearth of statistics regarding religiosity and few published articles exploring religion, spirituality and their impact on well-being. It therefore appears that such research is necessary within our context. Furthermore, the place of religion and spirituality in both the educational and therapeutic contexts is contested. Historically in South African schools, the religious education curriculum promoted

Christian values and did not provoke discussion about spirituality or reflections on learners' spirituality and religion. Even after the first democratic elections in 1994, the concept of spirituality was excluded from the curriculum, apart from one Grade 11 outcome in Life Orientation (Roux, 2006).

This does not fit with international trends. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) identified spiritual development as “a category of human development and health” and “as worthy of rights protection” (Scott, 2003, pp. 117-118). Schools in England and Wales are legally obliged to promote the spiritual development of learners (Pridmore, 2002). There seems agreement that spirituality, religion and spiritual development may be associated with positive outcomes and neglect thereof may be detrimental (Huitt & Robbins, 2003; Regnerus, 2003).

This paper, which explores the relationships between age, gender and spiritual well-being in a group of South African adolescents, is thus prompted by the relative neglect of research in this area in this country. Such research may inform policy, curriculum planning, pedagogy and therapeutic practice. However, all multi-disciplinary research into spirituality and religion, nationally and internationally, is dogged by ongoing concerns regarding conceptualization and operationalization of constructs. As Doherty (2003) writes of studies in the psychology of religion and spirituality: “After a century of ignoring or pathologizing religion, we cannot simply parachute with our existing gear into this foreign territory, give it our preferred name ‘spirituality’, and then colonize it with our language and customs” (p. 183).

Spirituality

Constructions of “spirituality” are beleaguered by definitional difficulty, with no agreement about what this word may mean (Fabricatore, Handal, Rubio & Gilner, 2004; Kelly, 1995; Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Singleton, Mason & Webber, 2004; Zinnbauer, Pargament & Scott, 1999).

Spirituality has been variously storied as self-transcendence (Benson et al., 2003) and/or a search for the sacred (Engelbreton, 2004; Pargament, 1999) and/or individual or collective belief systems associated with the divine or supernatural (Niederman, 1999) or transcendental experience (Gray, 2006). It has been constructed as meaning-making (Bosacki, 2002) and/or stories about self (Bosacki, 2001) and/or vital or animating energy (Fisher, 2000) and/or connectedness or relationship with self, others, the environment and/or God (Fisher, 2000; Hay & Nye, 1998) or a combination of all the above.

Little wonder that for those who are empirically minded, this has led to a call for clear definitions and operationalizations if valid scales measuring spirituality are to be developed (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003; Newberg & Lee, 2005). Wendel (2003) describes ever-expanding definitions of spirituality that "... can include everything from attending daily mass to watching football" (p. 167) which, although understandable, introduces ambiguity and hinders methodological development. Others (Fisher, 1999; Hill et al., 2000) suggest that the lack of consensus and clarity is a natural phenomenon associated with the evolution of a new area of study.

For the purposes of this paper - and fitting with the construction of spiritual well-being advanced by Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001) - spirituality is constructed as relational and multi-dimensional. It is harmonious interconnectedness to self, others, a divine Other or energy and the environment (Niederman, 1999). Such a construction, fitting with contextualizing or ecological perspectives such as those of Bronfenbrenner (Reimer & Furrow, 2001), may challenge Western individualistic discourses and "privatized visions of the spiritual life" (Hay, 2000, p. 39).

Philosopher, Martin Buber, who described a sacred, other-focused I-Thou relationship (Hayes & Cowie, 2005), could be narrated as a pioneer in the construction of a relational spirituality. Buber, as do Hay and Nye (1998) and Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001), suggested a multidimensional relational spirituality. He postulated that "... man's whole essential nature is fulfilled only if he lives with his whole self in all three of these relations ... our life with nature ... our life with other men ... our life with intelligible forms – Ideas, Deeds, Works of Art" (Pfuetze, 1954, p. 157).

Current constructions of spirituality as relational consciousness are offered by Bosacki (2002), De Souza, Cartwright and McGilp (2004), Elton-Chalcraft (2002), Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001), Hay (2000), Hay and Nye (1998), Hay and Socha (2005), Mattis and Jagers (2001), Ozorak (2003) and Reimer and Furrow (2001) among others. Bosacki (2002), for example, describes spirituality as connectedness to ourselves, others and the world around us. As does Fisher, she stresses that spirituality refers to both an interiority or inner reality (Fisher's personal domain) and a sense of being connected to something larger than and beyond oneself (Fisher's transcendent domain).

Dowling, Gestsdottir, Anderson, Von Eye, Almerigi and Lerner's (2004) definition of adolescent spirituality clearly delimits it as different from religiosity. The latter is defined as institutional involving a particular doctrine about the supernatural and prescribed practices.

Spirituality is altruistic and relational, comprising an orientation to do good work, participation in activities of self-interest and orientation to help people other than the self (Dowling et al., 2004).

Spiritual well-being

As spirituality is a contested term, so is spiritual well-being. Writers such as Duke and Brown (1979) and Moberg (1979a) point out that what one group views as spiritual well-being or an indicator thereof, another group may relate to spiritual illness. For example, Rosmarin (2003) points out items in Ellison's (1983) widely used Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS) which are not consistent with Judaism because conflict and unhappiness are seen as lack of spiritual well-being. The same criticism could be made from a Buddhist perspective. Moberg (1984) therefore questions whether one needs to develop diverse operationalizations of spiritual well-being or whether research will reveal core central indicators agreeable to all central ideologies.

For the purposes of this paper, the construction forwarded is that of the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging (NICA) frequently quoted in the literature (Ellison, 1983; Fisher et al., 2002; Gomez & Fisher, 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Moberg, 1984; Van Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006), stating that: "Spiritual well-being is the affirmation of life in a relationship with God, self, community and environment that nurtures and celebrates wholeness" (Fisher, Francis & Johnson, 2000, p. 134). Moberg (1979a), one of those instrumental in developing the concept (Payne, 1990), stresses that the NICA definition of spiritual well-being is "not a scientific operational definition" but it can be used "phenomenologically and rhetorically ... it is consistent with concepts of holistic well-being and definitions of good mental health" (p. 5).

Working from the NICA construction, Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001) proposed a holistic, inclusive conception of spiritual health as embracing harmonious relationships with self, others, the environment and the transcendent. He defines these relationships as four interrelated domains – the personal, communal, environmental and transcendental - which will be discussed in greater depth later in this article. Thus Fisher (1999) distinguishes between spiritual well-being as associated with a single domain, and spiritual health as the combined effect of spiritual well-being in the four domains. These domains mutually interact, with development in one area building up and on another: what he calls the principle of progressive synergism (Fisher, 1999).

Spiritual development

That development impacts on spirituality is accepted as a truism by some who argue that developmental differences – be they cognitive, socio-emotional, experiential and/or contextual –

impact on how spirituality is conceptualized and lived (Oman & Thoresen, 2006). Both theory and research do seem to suggest that within the life phase of adolescence, there may be variations in spirituality and transitions with an associated need for support (Bruce, 2004). However, there is much debate about such development, leading Eade (2004) to describe definitions of spiritual development as “contested and elusive” (pp. 54-55).

Fowler, for example, developed a theory of faith development with stages that are roughly age-related, although many individuals may not move beyond stages associated with early or middle childhood or adolescence (Erwin, 2001; Fowler & Dell, 2006). Thus among stages that could be expected among a group of adolescents are intuitive-projective faith (usually associated with early childhood), mythic literal faith (usually associated with middle childhood) and synthetic conventional faith (usually associated with adolescence). Intuitive-projective faith is symbolic and associated with fantasy and stories of good and evil (Fowler & Dell, 2006). Mythic literal faith is concrete with literal interpretation of myths about community and meaning. God or a higher power is constructed anthropomorphically, usually as a parent figure that is just, powerful and strong (Erwin, 2001). Synthetic conventional faith is a time of living and asserting a selected world-view or ideology. There is an increased ability to think abstractly (Noffke & McFadden, 2001), but it may be difficult for the adolescent to accommodate viewpoints and personal life crises contradicting or diverging from his own ideology or world-view. It is only in the stage of individuating-reflective faith, usually reached in young adulthood, that there is re-examination and critical evaluation of existing belief systems and values.

Oser (1991) constructed stages of development of religious judgment which, like Fowler's, are roughly age-related. Again stages which may be expected among a group of adolescents (developing on their developmental level) include the first stage of religious heteronomy where God punishes or rewards at will; the second stage in which human deeds may influence God's punishments or rewards; and the third stage of absolute autonomy in which people are constructed as responsible for their own lives and in which there may be rejection of religious authority. Bridges and Moore (2002) describe adolescents taking increasing responsibility for their own well-being (rather than seeing this as mediated by a punitive or loving God). As the adolescent is able to recognize injustice and suffering and lack of answering of personal prayers, there may be questioning of the existence of God and increasing atheism.

Genia (1990) too described stages of faith development, beginning with egocentric faith and developing into dogmatic faith. In adolescence there is transformation into transitional faith

characterized by identity crisis, interpersonal perspective taking and shifts in religious thinking (Bruce, 2004).

Challenges to stage theories are presented by those arguing for the impact of culture on competencies and/or stressing transactions between individuals and their embedded contexts (Scarlett, 2006). Such approaches would argue that, depending on cultural context and transactions within systems within such contexts, what is developed and to what level it is developed may differ. Spiritual development is a complex process defying the linearity and simplification (Scott & Magnuson, 2006) and the artificially constructed sequential hierarchy (Siefert, 2002) of the stage theories.

Associated with all constructions incorporating the assumption that adult abstract thinking is required for genuine spiritual development are arguments that children, especially prior to adolescence, cannot have a genuine spiritual life (Hart, 2006). This is challenged by the “spiritual child movement” (Scarlett, 2006, p. 28) or “preparedness hypothesis” (Barrett & Richert, 2003; Richert & Barrett, 2005) arguing that children are born with a natural spirituality and underlying conceptual structures for representing God. Among such writers are Hay and Nye (1998) who challenge Fowler’s stages as too cognitive and suggest the continuous development of relational consciousness. Siefert (2002) too presents a challenge to theories of faith development which, he suggests, reflect the theorists’ bias “about what constitutes the highest level of religious, spiritual, or faith commitment” (p. 63). He highlights the contradiction between the Christian privileging of the faith of a child as pure and, in some way, superior to adult faith; and developmental theories which suggest a child’s faith is immature and, because of a child’s level of cognition, cannot possibly be seen as a genuine faith commitment. Transpersonal theorists (Armstrong, 1984; Piechowski, 2001) also argue that children may follow a journey from spirit down and thus have the capacity for spiritual experiences. Such views fit with observations of a decline in spiritual expression as the child moves into adolescence (Halstead & Waite, 2001).

Spirituality and adolescence

Although statistics suggest that spirituality is important to adolescents (King & Boyatzis, 2004; Lippman & Keith, 2006; Santrock, 2005), correlations drawn between age and spirituality suggest a general decline in religiosity during adolescence (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Halstead & Waite, 2001; Hay & Nye, 1998; Martin, Kirkcaldy & Siefen, 2003; Mosher & Handal, 1997; O’Connor, Hoge & Alexander, 2002; Rostosky, Wilcox, Wright &

Randall, 2004; Spilka et al., 2003), although, paradoxically, age 15 is also the peak age of conversion (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997).

Contradictions may be explained if adolescence is narrated as a life phase during which the development of constructs of self, other, society, and meaning and purpose is highlighted. This is the time of wrestling with existential questions such as “Who am I?” and “Why am I here?” (Smith, 2003) within socio-political and historical-cultural contexts which shape roles, behaviours, experience, and the meanings of spirituality (Verma & Maria, 2006).

Several major theorists have constructed narratives explaining the adolescent experience. Inhelder and Piaget (1977) describe adolescents as beginning to take on adult roles, a development prompted by the interaction of the maturing nervous system and the social environment. As this process unfolds, the adolescent begins thinking abstractly beyond the present, building systems and theories, analyzing his own thinking. Thus, religious crises and reflections on the problem of faith emerge: “...for any true intellectual, adolescence is the metaphysical age par excellence ...” (p. 438). Abstract thinking facilitates adolescent understanding of the role religious belief and practice can play in their lives (Dubow, Pargament, Boxer & Tarakeshwar, 1999).

Erikson (1968) constructed an “identity crises” (p. 128) within the adolescent moratorium between childhood and adulthood. Describing a “physiological revolution within” and “tangible adult tasks ahead”, Erikson (1950, p. 253) described adolescents as focused on who they are, how others see them, how self- and other perspectives of self differ, and on how to connect and integrate past, present and future self within a social context.

The move to autonomy and independent value-formation and decision-making, often associated with rebellion, is constructed as integral to adolescent identity formation. That this drive for independence is necessarily associated with alienation from family or parental beliefs and values has been challenged by recent research suggesting there can be “struggling within the context of a secure relationship” (Blakeney & Blakeney, 2006, p. 374). There need not be rejection of parental values during the development of autonomy and independence.

Elaborating on the relationship between spiritual development and identity processes, Templeton and Eccles (2006) describe everyone as having multiple personal and collective identities, each identity having cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions. Religious identity is collective, they argue, and may be assigned or chosen, chosen identity emerging if freedom of exploration is allowed to an adolescent. Spiritual identity is personal and may or may not be grounded in religious identity. Spiritual identity - related to one’s beliefs, values and behaviours

concerning the transcendent - emerges from attachment needs, teleological reasoning and supernatural beliefs.

Research suggests that religion and spirituality contribute to positive identity development (King & Benson, 2006). Religious involvement can provide an ideological context facilitating the generation of meaning, purpose and identity; a spiritual context facilitating connection to the divine; and a social context facilitating interaction with peers and role models embodying the ideology, thus facilitating personal integration (2006).

Thus there seems general agreement that as the adolescent brain matures there is an increasing capacity for abstract thought within a social context which expects adolescents to define identity, purpose, meaning and values (King & Benson, 2006; Martin et al., 2003; Teske, 2006). Within this developmental period, spirituality and religion may provide containment – a holding ideological, spiritual and social space (King & Benson, 2006; Martin et al., 2003; Teske, 2006; Verma & Maria, 2006).

Absence of this holding space leads to a sense of meaninglessness and emptiness, an absence of spiritual guidance. This may manifest in high risk behaviours, emerging both from the pain of lacking spiritual purpose and fulfilment and from the search for meaning and belonging (Kessler, 1997). As adolescents seem to be moving away from religion, spirituality becomes important (Bruce, 2004) to meet adolescents' spiritual needs including a search for meaning and purpose, a longing for silence, an urge for transcendence, a hunger for joy and delight, a creative drive and a need for rites of passage (Kessler, 1997). Streib (1999) coined the term “off-road religion” to describe adolescents' search for transcendent spiritual experiences in non-traditional ways.

Spirituality, well-being and gender

Research suggests that women are more religious than men (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; Benson, Donahue & Erickson, 1989; De Roos, Iedema & Miedema, 2004; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Francis & Kaldor, 2002; Lippman & Keith, 2006; Smith, 2003; Spilka et al., 2003) with this being “one of the most consistent findings in the sociology of religion” (Jurkovic & Walker, 2006, p. 28). This gives weight to Allport's (1950) statement that “religious interests, as we know, are less strongly developed in men than in women” (p. 45). There are also indications that there may be gender differences in children's constructions of God, religion and spirituality: boys identifying with a socialized religion identified with relationships and ritualized activity, and girls with a less structured religion and an intimate relationship with God (Hyde, 1990).

Rostosky et al. (2004), in a review of research, suggest that findings persistently indicate more participation in worship and youth activities and higher reported importance of religion by females. Beit-Hallahmi and Argyle (1997) report higher levels of religious involvement, ritual attendance, daily prayer, religious experience and religious commitment. Women also tended to have more conservative or orthodox beliefs, yet (possibly contradictorily) had higher para-religious beliefs such as beliefs in astrology or fortune-telling. Even in childhood, girls reported experiencing God's nearness and guidance more than boys (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997). Bridges and Moore (2002) agree that research suggests higher levels of religious participation and salience for females, but argue that consistent gender differences in the effects of religiosity on well-being have not been reported.

Theories about why women are more religious or spiritual than men vary from the psychological to the structural location of women in society to gender role socialization (Engebretson, 2004). Beit-Hallahmi and Argyle (1997) advance a psychological explanation, describing female personality factors such as affiliation and nurturance, dependence, risk aversion and stronger guilt feelings as leading to greater religiosity. Jurkovic and Walker (2006) report tendencies for male clergy to present with a more feminine personality profile and for both men and women with a feminine rather than masculine outlook to be more religious.

Sex-role socialization is emphasized by others (Engebretson, 2004; Hammermeister, Flint, El-Alayli, Ridnour & Peterson, 2005; Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Smith, 2003). Such theory argues that the industrial era constructed men in the public arena and women in the private arena, with the latter including feminine characteristics such as emotionality, subjectivity and thus religion and spirituality (Smith, 2003). Thus roles, traits and behaviours socially ascribed to females are more compatible with spirituality (Hammermeister et al., 2005). Religion is "for women and wimps" (Smith, 2003, accessed on-line). Because religion and spirituality are associated with the feminine, men who have been socialized to avoid the feminine and to internalize the masculine may be deprived of intrinsically oriented religiousness or spiritual well-being argue Jurkovic and Walker (2006).

Engebretson (2004) introduces the idea that the languaging of the spiritual may play a role. With religion and spirituality storied in terms of the feminine - for example, a compassionate, gentle, nurturing Christ - both men and women valuing the masculine may move away from the spiritual. Halstead and Waite (2001) concur, suggesting that there may be a need to redefine spirituality to include a "more active, perhaps more masculine, pursuit of self- fulfillment" (p. 201).

The importance of spirituality for male mental health is emphasized by Engebretson (2004) as well as Jurkovic and Walker (2006). Jurkovic and Walker describe rationality without spirituality as creating “dryness” (p. 28) and lack of meaning associated with depression and suicidality. Engebretson (2004) emphasizes the importance of religion and spirituality as a source of resilience to boys who are at high risk of suicide, legal trouble and learning problems. In her qualitative study she concluded that developmental stage, age and context influence spirituality and experiences of the sacred in boys. Interviewing males aged 15 to 17, she discovered a relational spirituality: “... the real site and starting point for spirituality was not conventionally understood spiritual or religious experience, but the experience of developing identity in and with others. Spirituality was experienced overwhelmingly in connection within the self and with others” (p. 273). She concluded that the developmental tasks of the age, the development of identity and relationships, created a sense of meaning experienced as spirituality.

Focusing on spiritual well-being, research by Hammermeister et al. (2005) suggest that females have higher measures in religious, existential and spiritual well-being as measured by Ellison’s SWBS. Similarly a South African study (Roothman, Kirsten & Wissing, 2003) found that women scored higher on religious well-being as measured by the SWBS and suggested that women may find meaning, purpose, strength and control in their lives through interpersonal relationships and faith. Exploratory factor analysis of the SWBS by Miller, Gridley, Chester, Nunn and Vickers (2001) found that gender shapes responses to the scale.

Gomez and Fisher (2005a) explored the impact of gender on the Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (SWBQ) and found few differences. Latent mean differences across gender were indicated only for communal well-being with females scoring higher. A study by Fisher, Francis and Johnson (2002) with the SWBQ found that women placed a greater emphasis on the personal domain than men.

Based on the above review of the literature, two broad research questions emerged:

- 1) does a relationship exist between age and gender on the one hand and frequency of prayer, importance of religion/spirituality² and attendance at church/spiritual activities on the other?
- 2) Are there differences in mean spiritual well-being scores for the different age and gender groups?

To answer these questions, the following research methodology was used.

² In discussion of the research questions, methods and findings, the signifier “religion/spirituality” is utilized as it was presented to respondents on the questionnaire (see Addendum A).

Research method

Participants

The total sample comprised 1283 learners from 10 public schools in Cape Town, South Africa. The schools were randomly selected with language as a criterion: three English, three Afrikaans and four dual-medium. Within the schools convenience samples were utilized. Participants were in Grades 8 to 12 with their ages ranging from 13-20 years.

Table 1: Frequency distribution of research participants according to home language

Home language	N	%
English	509	39,7
Afrikaans	511	39,8
Xhosa	32	2,5
English and Afrikaans	164	12,8
English and Xhosa	27	2,1
Afrikaans and Xhosa	5	0,4
Other	29	2,3
No response	6	0,4
Total	1283	100,0

Because of the possible role language could play as a variable in the South African context, only learners whose home languages were English, Afrikaans or both were included in the final study. The distribution of the total sample in terms of home language is indicated in Table 1. From Table 1 it is clear that 99 learners were not included in the final study as their home languages were neither Afrikaans nor English. The final research group thus comprises 1184 learners with Table 2 indicating the distribution of the two relevant biographical variables among these research participants.

Table 2: Frequency distribution of research participants according to age and gender

Biographical variable	N	%
Gender:		
Male	544	45,9
Female	639	54,0
No response	1	0,1
Age:		
13 – 14 years	360	30,4
15 – 16 years	474	40,0
17 and older	341	28,8
No response	9	0,8

Table 2 indicates that gender distribution in this study broadly corresponds with the gender distribution in the South African population, with the Census (2001) recording an average of 52,2% females as opposed to 47,8% males. As regards age, the 15-16 year-old group is

represented slightly more than the other two groups. Those participants who did not supply the necessary biographical information were excluded from further analysis.

Procedure

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the Western Cape Education Department who approved the project on condition that principals of the schools sampled randomly and learners agreed to participate. Thus further permission had to be obtained from the principals of each of the schools selected and from the learners.

The questionnaires were administered in the school setting during school hours. All measures had to be completed within a school period varying from 40 to 50 minutes. Group sizes varied from 19 to 70 at a time. The questionnaires were administered by the researchers, supported by class teachers and/or helpers depending on the group size. This created the opportunity for the researchers to monitor the process and answer questions if learners were uncertain of terminology or procedure. Questionnaires were filled in anonymously and participants were assured that all information would be treated as confidential.

Measuring instruments

Questionnaire

A questionnaire (see Addendum A) was administered to gather information regarding the biographical variables of home language, age and gender. Using Likert Scales questions were asked regarding the importance of religion/spirituality to the individual [(1) extremely important to (5) not important at all], the frequency of attendance at religious/spiritual service, [(1) at least once a week to (5) never] and frequency of prayer [(1) once or twice a day to (5) never]. This questionnaire was compiled in English and back-translated into Afrikaans by the University of Stellenbosch translation service.

Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire

The Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (SWBQ) was administered to measure spiritual well-being and spiritual health as constructed by Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001). This questionnaire is based on a holistic and inclusive construction of spiritual health as embracing spiritual well-being or harmonious relationships in four interrelated domains: (1) the personal domain, or one's intra-relationship with oneself; (2) the communal domain or one's interpersonal relationships; (3) the environmental domain or one's relationship with the natural, physical and/or biological world;

and (4) the transcendental domain or one's relationship with something or some being beyond the human level.

Based upon this construction Fisher, Francis and Johnson (2000) initially developed a questionnaire comprising 150 items called the Spiritual Health via Four Domains of Spiritual Wellbeing (SH4DI). The SH4DI was refined into the Shalom (Spiritual Health and Life Orientation Measure) comprising 20 items and exploring ideal versus real (how you feel) spiritual health. This was further refined into the SWBQ – exploring only real/present self-reported spiritual well-being and health - and validated by Gomez and Fisher (2003, 2005a, 2005b).

In the South African context, several adaptations were made. Instructions were changed so that the learners were not aware of what was being measured. Rather than foregrounding that spiritual health was being explored and explaining the construct, as did Fisher et al. (2000), instructions stated that “we want to know how you feel about yourself, others, the environment and your relationship with a spiritual or divine force/God”.

The SWBQ questionnaire was back-translated into Afrikaans by the University of Stellenbosch translation service. The translators also made suggestions regarding adaptations to several items in the English questionnaire to make it more understandable and accessible to local secondary school learners.

Two items were adapted and six items were added based upon Gomez and Fisher's finding with item response theory analysis (2005b) that the communal and environmental subscales could be further improved. The item “I feel a sense of ‘magic’ in the environment”, found to have lower levels of discrimination, was changed to “I feel a sense of ‘fascination’ in the environment”. The term “I feel awe when I see a breathtaking view” was changed to “I feel respect when I see a breathtaking view” (suggested as more appropriate to the South African adolescent teenage reader by the translation service). Three questions were added exploring the communal domain, two questions exploring the environmental domain and one exploring the personal domain. All these questions emerged from Fisher's descriptions of the domains (1999). Changed and additional items are indicated in Addendum B.

Responses for each item are indicated on a five-point scale varying from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high). Thus a high score for items in a particular domain would suggest a high level of spiritual well-being within that domain. Higher levels of spiritual well-being across domains would suggest higher levels of spiritual health (or total spiritual well-being), with spiritual health constructed as the combined effect of spiritual well-being within the four interrelated domains

(Fisher, 1999, 2000, 2001). In this study raw scores and not standardized scores were used. These scores were obtained by calculating the sum of items.

The factor structure of the adapted SWBQ was investigated with factor analysis yielding four factors corresponding with the identified domains (Moodley, unpublished). The internal consistency for the different subscales and the total score of the SWBQ was also calculated. The language in which the questions were answered was taken into consideration. The different language groups are: Afrikaans and English. In order to investigate the consistency, Cronbach α -coefficients were calculated by means of the SPSS-computer programme (SPSS Incorporated, 2001) and the results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Alfa-coefficients for spiritual well-being scales

Spiritual well-being scales	α -coefficients	
	Afrikaans	English
Environmental	0,852	0,893
Transcendental	0,840	0,941
Communal	0,753	0,808
Personal	0,721	0,782
Total score	0,888	0,878

The internal consistencies of the subscales as well as of the total score are acceptable for both language groups.

Research hypotheses

Based on the objectives of the study, the following three research hypotheses were formulated for this group of South African adolescents:

- 1) A significant relationship exists between gender on the one hand and frequency of prayer, importance of religion/spirituality and attendance at church/spiritual activities on the other.
- 2) A significant relationship exists between age on the one hand and frequency of prayer, importance of religion/spirituality and attendance at church/spiritual activities on the other.
- 3) Significant differences in mean scores exist in terms of spiritual well-being scales for the two gender and three age groups of adolescents.

Statistical procedures

To explore hypotheses 1 and 2, the chi-square (χ^2) test for homogeneity (Howell, 2007) was selected, as all the variables are measured nominally. The SAS computer programme (SAS Institute, 2003) was utilized.

For research hypothesis 3, two independent variables were being considered, namely gender and age, with the former having two categories (male and female) and the latter, three (see Table 2). Different statistical techniques were thus utilized. Where just two categories were being considered (gender), the *t*-test for two independent groups was applied. Given that the sizes of the groups differed, it was decided to make use of the pooled variance estimate. According to Howell (2007), this procedure is preferable when sample sizes differ. Where three categories were being considered (age), a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed. When a significant result (*F*-value) was detected, the analysis was extended to include a one-way variance analysis of each of the independent variables. To determine statistically significant differences among average values of the three categories, the Scheffé procedure was utilized.

To determine the meaningfulness of statistically significant results generated, the practical significance of the results was examined by calculating effect sizes (Steyn, 1999). As different statistical procedures were implemented, the method of calculating effect size differed. In the case of the chi-square (χ^2) test the effect size is denoted by *w* with 0,1 indicating a small effect, 0,3 indicating a medium effect and 0,5 indicating a large effect size. The effect sizes of the differences between the two sets of averages were calculated by means of determining Cohen's *d*. This procedure expresses the difference between the two means in terms of the size of the standard deviation. In this case 0,20 signifies a small effect, 0,50 signifies a medium and 0,80 signifies a large effect size. In the case of analysis of variance, effect size is denoted by *f* with 0,1 indicating a small effect, 0,25 indicating a medium effect and 0,4 indicating a large effect size. Only statistically significant results with an effect size above small were considered meaningful. The 1%-level of significance was utilized in this study.

Results and discussion

In discussion of the results, research hypotheses 1 and 2 will be addressed after which the third hypothesis will be explored.

Table 4 summarizes the results of chi-square (χ^2) analysis of the relationship of gender to frequency of prayer, importance of religiosity/spirituality and church/spiritual group attendance. Frequency and percentages are denoted in each instance.

Table 4: χ^2 -results: gender and frequency of prayer, importance of religion/spirituality and church/spiritual group attendance

Frequency of prayer	Male		Female	
	F	%	F	%
Once or twice a day	172	31,7	232	36,3
Regularly	134	24,7	187	29,3
Sometimes	143	26,3	147	23,0
Seldom	54	9,9	48	7,5
Never	40	7,4	25	3,9
Row total:	543	45,9	639	54,1
$X^2 = 13,826$ $p = 0,0079$ ($w = 0,11$) $N = 4$				
Importance of religion/spirituality	Male		Female	
	F	%	F	%
Extremely	199	36,6	252	39,5
Very	202	37,1	226	35,4
Somewhat	66	12,1	115	18,0
Little	45	8,3	27	4,2
Not at all	32	5,9	18	2,8
Total	544	46,0	638	54,0
$X^2 = 21,923$ $p = 0,0002$ ($w = 0,14$) $N = 4$				
Church/spiritual activity attendance	Male		Female	
	F	%	F	%
At least once a week	330	60,8	406	63,5
At least once a month	69	12,7	75	11,7
At least once every three months	26	4,8	43	6,7
Once or twice a year	51	9,4	76	11,9
Never	67	12,3	39	6,1
Total	543	46,0	639	54,0
$X^2 = 16,918$ $p = 0,0020$ ($w = 0,12$) $N = 4$				

Chi-square analysis suggests there is a statistically significant relationship at 1%-level as regards the relationship between gender on the one hand and frequency of prayer, importance of religion/spirituality and church/spiritual activity attendance on the other. A larger proportion of male adolescents (7,4%) compared to female adolescents (3,9%) state that they never pray. A larger proportion of male adolescents (14,2%) compared to female adolescents (7,0%) state that religion/spirituality is of little or no importance. A larger proportion of male adolescents (12,3%) compared to females (6,1%) state that they never attend church/spiritual groups. However, in each of these cases the effect sizes are small and may not be practically meaningful. Nevertheless, they do fit with a long history of research suggesting that women are more religious than men (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; De Roos, Iedema & Miedema, 2004; Donahue & Benson, 1995;

Lippman & Keith, 2006; Smith, 2003; Spilka et al., 2003) and girls are generally more spiritually committed and engage in more religious activities than boys (Halstead & Waite, 2001).

Table 5 summarizes the χ^2 -results obtained from an analysis of the relationships between age and frequency of prayer, importance of religion/spirituality and church/spiritual group attendance.

Table 5: χ^2 -results: age and frequency of prayer, importance of religion/spirituality and church/spiritual group attendance

Frequency of prayer	13-14 years		15-16 years		17 and older	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Once or twice a day	127	35,4	159	33,5	117	34,3
Regularly	107	29,8	120	25,3	92	27,0
Sometimes	90	25,1	124	26,2	71	20,8
Seldom	18	5,0	46	9,7	38	11,1
Never	17	4,7	25	5,3	23	6,8
Row total:	359	30,6	474	40,4	341	29,0
$X^2 = 14,067$ $p = 0,0800$ $N = 8$						
Importance of religion/spirituality	13-14 years		15-16 years		17 and older	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Extremely	154	42,8	168	35,5	126	37,0
Very	127	35,3	175	36,9	121	35,6
Somewhat	45	12,5	82	17,3	54	15,9
Little	22	6,1	31	6,5	19	5,6
Not at all	12	3,3	18	3,8	20	5,9
Total	360	30,6	474	40,4	340	29,0
$X^2 = 9,698$ $p = 0,2869$ $N = 8$						
Church/spiritual activity attendance	13-14 years		15-16 years		17 and older	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
At least once a week	258	71,6	289	61,1	182	53,4
At least once a month	31	8,6	59	12,5	53	15,5
At least once every three months	15	4,2	27	5,7	27	7,9
Once or twice a year	32	8,9	53	11,2	42	12,3
Never	24	6,7	45	9,5	37	10,9
Total	360	30,7	473	40,3	341	29,0
$X^2 = 26,373$ $p = 0,0009$ ($w = 0,15$) $N = 8$						

Chi-square analysis indicates a significant relationship between age and church/spiritual group attendance at 1%-level. A larger proportion (71,6%) of younger adolescents (13-14 years) attended church at least once a week as compared to the 17 years and older group (53,4%). However, the effect size ($w = 0,15$) is small and thus possibly not practically meaningful, although it does fit with prior research (Martin et al., 2003) suggesting that younger adolescents attend church more than older adolescents.

The relationships between age and importance of religion/spirituality and age and frequency of prayer were found to be not significant at 1%-level following χ^2 analysis.

The *t*-test for independent groups was utilized to explore possible gender-related variance in the spiritual well-being domains as well as spiritual health (or total spiritual well-being) with the results displayed in Table 6.

Table 6: Comparison of gender on the spiritual well-being scale

Variable	Male			Female			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>D</i>
	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>s</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>			
Environmental	532	17,03	4,19	634	17,44	4,15	-1,66	0,0974	
Transcendental	531	18,72	5,41	631	19,83	4,53	-3,73*	0,0002	-0,22
Communal	539	18,08	3,29	633	19,25	3,11	-6,28*	0,0001	-0,36
Personal	533	19,81	3,25	634	20,01	3,22	-1,05	0,2948	
Total score	512	73,65	11,76	622	76,45	11,16	-4,20*	0,0001	-0,25

* $p \leq 0,01$

Table 6 indicates significant relationships (at 1%-level) between the averages of the two genders in two domains (transcendental and communal) as well as for total spiritual well-being or spiritual health. In each instance female learners had a higher average than males. Calculation of effect sizes suggests that only differences in the communal domain may be of moderately practical value: thus girls reporting higher levels of communal well-being or harmonious interpersonal relationships than boys.

This finding fits with theory suggesting that, incorporated in more traditional feminine roles, is a caring for others (Bosacki, 2001) and research suggesting that girls tend to build, nurture and sustain relationships more easily (Eaude, 2004). As Kujawa-Holbrook (2001) writes: “It has become almost common knowledge that girls and women are primarily motivated to maintain relationships because their sense of self is centred around their relationships with others...” (p. 302).

This common knowledge underlies arguments such as that of Eaude (2004) that women may express and live their spirituality differently from men: that their spirituality may be based more on relationship. In a similar vein, Kujawa-Holbrook (2001) notes that spirituality is both individual and communal, but in girls the communal aspect is more pronounced and spirituality is primarily about relationship, not only to God but to other people.

Arguing for further research in the field of gender and spiritual development, Eaude (2004) notes that “[s]ignificant gender differences seem to be evident in such basic matters as attitude and relationships, faith and worship or values and identity. If these are what spiritual development is about, further consideration of the role of gender seems worthwhile” (p. 62). He also argues for contextualization rather than individualization of spiritual development. If, he

debates, spiritual development is considered from a gendered perspective, then it is vital to take account of social and cultural context rather than considering it an individual, context-free process.

Finally statistical investigation was initiated into possible age-related significant variances for the three age groups in the spiritual well-being domains as well as in spiritual health. To this end a one-way MANOVA was implemented. A F -value (according to the Hotelling-Lawley Trace) of 4,09 ($v = 8$; 1597,7) was obtained which is significant at the 1%-level ($p = 0,0001$). One-way analysis of variation was performed to determine in which of the four domains there were significant differences in averages for the three groups. Not only does this procedure give an indication of the domain in which there are significant differences, but it also indicates in which groups these differences are measured. These results and the calculated effect sizes (f) appear in Table 7.

Table 7: Averages, standard deviations and F-values of the one-way analysis of age-related variance

Variable	13-14 years		15-16 years		17 and older		F	p	f
	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s			
Environmental	17,87	3,75	17,05	4,32	16,87	4,35	5,47*	0,0043	0,10
Transcendental	20,23	4,66	19,13	4,99	18,61	5,17	9,10*	0,0001	0,13
Communal	19,06	3,33	18,74	3,21	18,32	3,17	4,77*	0,0087	0,09
Personal	20,56	3,09	19,80	3,20	19,38	3,35	11,12*	0,0001	0,14
Total score	77,69	10,94	74,72	11,04	73,20	11,40	14,38*	0,0001	0,16

* $p \leq 0,01$

It is clear from Table 7 that the averages of the three age groups significantly differ (at 1%-level) in all the spiritual well-being domains as well as in spiritual health (total spiritual well-being). The effect sizes (f) suggest that only the spiritual health measure is moderately meaningful with a small to medium effect size. Administration of the Scheffé-test suggests that young adolescents (13-14 years) - as compared to the other two groups (15-16 years and older) have a significantly higher score on total spiritual well-being/spiritual health.

This finding fits with prior research suggesting a decline in spiritual experience in adolescents (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Hay & Nye, 1998; Mosher & Handal, 1997; Rostosky et al., 2004; Spilka et al., 2003). Beit-Hallahmi and Argyle report a high disposition to religion between ages 3 to 12, to continuing high levels of religious belief between ages 12 and 14, to a decline of about 25% in religiosity, reaching a peak at about age 16. Hay and Nye describe a decline between the ages of 8 and 15, while Spilka et al. report

decreasing religiosity between 10 and 18 years. Paradoxically, however, age 15 is also the peak age of conversion.

Explanations vary as to why this is so. Spilka et al. (2003) suggest that middle adolescence is a period of religious and spiritual readjustment. Others suggest declining religiosity may be associated with developmental social, cognitive and emotional changes. In early adolescence, religious practice is more influenced by parental behaviour and attitudes and adolescents engage in activities with their parents in accordance with religious practice and ideology (Mosher & Handal, 1997; Rostosky et al., 2004). In later adolescence there is a striving for autonomy, individuation and own identity and thus, possibly, a reduced religious participation and the development of own, private spiritual ideology (Mosher & Handal, 1997; Rostosky et al., 2004). A reduction in magical thinking in adolescence and, with this, a leaving behind of the associated capacity for religious experience was noted by Thun (Fontana, 2003).

Beit-Hallahmi and Argyle (1997) make sense of declining religiosity and the paradoxical increase in conversion by relating both to the life task of identity formation which involves both religious doubts and questioning and associated polarization: some moving toward religion and others moving away. In a similar vein, Allport (1950) describes adolescence as a time of transformation in religious attitudes with reaction against parent and educator teaching, this occurring earlier in girls than in boys. Rebellion may take the form of moving to a different religious group or church, denying religion or side-stepping religion and developing a hedonistic lifestyle. There may be conversion which may vary in intensity from a clear-cut crisis, to an emotional awakening with less upheaval, to a gradual experience.

Taking a different stance, Hay and Nye (1998) argue that decreasing spirituality in adolescence may be associated with social constructions of individualism and secularism. Spirituality is constructed as private or an embarrassment. Scheindlin (2003) argues that this decline may be associated with a social context in which the focus is on management and control, through embarrassment, of intense emotion. Spiritual experience, as one such emotion, is thus dampened.

The disengagement from religion common among adolescents and young adults may be temporary (Spilka et al., 2003) with some evidence (not always consistent) of a return to religion. Fisher, Francis and Johnson (2002) suggest that spiritual well-being “reflects human growth and maturity” (p. 10), thus linking increasing spiritual well-being to increasing maturity (measured as increased age). They suggest that this is supported by their finding that older respondents had higher scores in the communal, environmental and transcendental domains of the spiritual well-

being scale, resulting in higher scores on the global measure of spiritual health. Age was therefore a significant predictor in three of the four domains.

Summary

Returning to the hypotheses formulated, statistically significant relationships between gender and frequency of prayer, importance of religion/spirituality and attendance at church/spiritual activities were found, but with small effect sizes. Given international research findings, one would have expected to find more statistically meaningful evidence of female respondents rating religion and spirituality as more important, praying more frequently and participating more in organizational activities than their male peers (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; De Roos, Iedema & Miedema, 2004; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Lippman & Keith, 2006; Rostosky et al., 2004; Smith, 2003; Spilka et al., 2003).

This research did find higher levels (of a small to medium effect size) of communal spiritual well-being among the female respondents, suggesting gender differences in spiritual well-being as measured by the SWBQ. This fits with research suggesting that females are more relationally oriented than males (Bosacki, 2001; Eade, 2004; Kujawa-Holbrook, 2001) and is congruent with previous findings by Gomez & Fisher (2005a) with the SWBQ.

It also found higher levels (of a small to medium effect size) of total spiritual well-being (spiritual health) among younger adolescents, suggesting age differences in spiritual well-being as measured by the SWBQ. This may be associated with previous findings of decreasing religiosity in older as compared to younger adolescents (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Hay & Nye, 1998; Mosher & Handal, 1997; Rostosky et al., 2004; Spilka et al., 2003). This study did find a relationship of small effect size between age and frequency of church/spiritual activity attendance, with younger adolescents attending church more often. However, no statistically significant relationships were found between age, on the one hand, and frequency of prayer and importance of religion/spirituality on the other which one would have anticipated if there was decreasing spirituality with increasing age. It is therefore possible, as suggested by Mosher and Handal (1997) and Rostosky et al. (2004) that although there may be declining formalized religious participation in adolescence, this may not necessarily be associated with declining spirituality, particularly if the latter is constructed as not necessarily associated with the institutional.

Limitations and recommendations

Moberg (1979b) describes a limitation in any study of spirituality and spiritual well-being as the contested meaning of these constructs: "... questions which are both conceptual and theoretical pertain to the problem of whether spiritual well-being is a dichotomous (either-or) phenomenon or continuous variable, whether it is a condition or an on-going process, whether it is basically qualitative or quantitative, whether it is a strictly 'religious' or 'secular humanistic' concept, and whether it can be objectively identified or is only an interiorized, subjective phenomenon" (p. 304). His concerns are echoed by writers such as Gray (2006) and Kanya (2000).

Researchers interested in these constructs resemble the fable of the blind men exploring an elephant, write Standard, Sandhu and Painter (2000). Each describes a piece from a limited perspective, yet each description contributes to the multi-faceted whole. King and Boyatzis (2004) point to the importance, therefore, of researchers describing the working definitions of spirituality and spiritual well-being on which their research is based, which this paper has attempted to do.

Considering contested meanings, Hodge (2001) questions whether quantitative instruments are appropriate within this field as they rest on an assumption of shared constructions while qualitative methods create space for exploration of possibly different constructions. This becomes particularly important in a multicultural context such as South Africa. A strong recommendation would therefore be that qualitative research be pursued exploring the constructions of spirituality and spiritual well-being of the two genders and the different age groups and cultural groups.

As an alternative Moberg (1979b) suggests constructing scales within particular ideological frames of reference. Again this is a possibility in the South African context. The SWBQ has been constructed and applied in the Australian and British contexts and therefore may not fit the multicultural South African context or may alternatively fit in some and not in others. Even considering its use in this research, only two language groups were tapped in a country with 11 official languages. A recommendation is therefore for translation of the SWBQ into the other South African languages, a task bedevilled by the differences between spoken and written dialects, to test its reliability and validity within these groups and possibly then to adapt items.

As regards measurement of attendance at religious/spiritual activities and the importance of religion/spirituality, Bridges and Moore (2002) point out that these are the most frequently assessed aspects of religiosity/spirituality. "Such single-item measures may make religion and spirituality appear to be an 'all or none' construct" (p. 26).

A final methodological challenge includes the reliance on self-report of the SWBQ which is thus not only limited by the respondent's recall and insight into his or her own attitudes and behaviours (Standard et al., 2000), but is also limited by social desirability (Hill & Pargament, 2003; Jurkovic & Walker, 2006; Slater, Hall & Edwards, 2000), particularly considering that this research took place in the school context. Related to this, Slater et al. (2000) query the possibility of illusory spiritual health, linking this to earlier research on mental health scales which found two subgroups, one genuinely healthy and the other distressed but maintaining an illusion of mental health. "It is conceivable that these same two subgroups exist among those who 'look good' on spirituality and religiousness scales", Slater et al. (p. 6) argue. It may, therefore, be useful to design measures to be completed (in the case of children and adolescents) by teachers, parents or peers.

Particular to the South African context, research in this area is new and needs to be supported or challenged by further studies embracing different language groups in different areas of South Africa and utilizing alternative questionnaires (such as Ellison's Spiritual Well-Being Scale) and alternative research methodologies (such as quantitative studies).

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ARTICLE IV

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION, FAMILY SPIRITUALITY AND SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING IN A GROUP OF SOUTH AFRICAN ADOLESCENTS

International research suggests that family spirituality plays a vital role in the spiritual development of children. This paper explores the relationship between child-reported dimensions of family spirituality and child spiritual well-being, as measured by Gomez and Fisher's Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire, in a sample of 1183 adolescents within the South African context. The relationship between adolescent, maternal and paternal religious denomination and spiritual well-being is mapped and the impact of disagreement between adolescent and parental denomination on spiritual well-being is examined. The relationship between adolescent spiritual salience and practices, family spiritual salience and practices and spiritual well-being is perused. Findings suggest that in this sample of South African adolescents, the majority of learners share not only the religious denomination of their families, but also their valuing of spirituality and their spiritual practices. When adolescents perceive their families to highly value religion and/or spirituality, they have higher levels of personal and transcendental spiritual well-being as well as global spiritual health. When there is not correspondence between adolescent and parental religious denomination, adolescents report lower levels of personal and transcendental spiritual well-being, suggesting lower well-being in their relationship with self and with a divine Other.

Family is the primary context in which spiritual development is nurtured (Bridges & Moore, 2002; Verma & Maria, 2006), the “most potent influence - for better or for worse – on children’s spiritual and religious development” (Boyatzis, Dollahite & Marks, 2006, p. 305). Religion in America is a “family affair”, with 95% of married couples and parents reporting a religious affiliation and 90% of parents desiring a religious training for their children (Boyatzis et al., 2006). This research – exploring the relationships between religious denomination, family spirituality and spiritual well-being in a group of South African adolescents – is prompted both by the significance of family in the spiritual development of children and by the neglect of these areas of study in this country.

Defining constructs: spirituality and spiritual well-being

Before reading the literature, clarification of the construction of the signifiers “spirituality” and “spiritual well-being” in this research is necessary. Within the field of the psychology of religion and spirituality³, all that is agreed on is that there is not agreement about what the words “spirituality” (Fabricatore, Handal, Rubio & Gilner, 2004; Kelly, 1995; Mattis & Jagers, 2001) or “spiritual well-being” (Moberg, 1979) signify. It is thus important for any researcher to foreground how they are constructed and operationalized.

For the purposes of this paper, and fitting with the construction of spiritual well-being advanced by Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001), spirituality is constructed as relational, “multidimensional interconnectedness ... a harmonious interconnectedness with self, with others, a higher power, and environment” (Niederman, 1999, accessed on-line). Such a construction fits with contextualizing or ecological perspectives such as those of Bronfenbrenner (Reimer & Furrow, 2001) and rests on the foundation of philosopher Martin Buber’s work. Buber first described as sacred or self-transcendent an “I-Thou” relationship, characterized by a present, focused, direct, exclusive, genuine engagement with another. Such a relationship may be with nature, others or ideas (Buber, in Pfuete, 1954). Extending on this, current constructions of spirituality as relational consciousness are offered by, among others, Bosacki (2002), Elton-Chalcraft (2002), Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001), Hay (2000), Hay and Nye (1998), Hay and Socha (2005), De Souza et al. (2004) as well as Reimer and Furrow (2001).

A relational construction of spirituality underlies the construction of spiritual well-being on which Gomez and Fisher’s Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (SWBQ) (2003) is based: “Spiritual well-being is the affirmation of life in a relationship with God, self, community and environment that nurtures and celebrates wholeness” (Fisher et al., 2000, p. 133). Working from this construction, Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001) proposed a holistic, inclusive conception of spiritual health as embracing harmonious relationships with self, others, the environment and the transcendent. He defines these relationships as four interrelated domains: (1) the personal, one’s intra-relationship with oneself; (2) the communal, interpersonal relationships between self and others; (3) the environmental, one’s relationship with the natural, physical and/or biological

³ The signifier “spiritual and religious” or “religious and spiritual” is used because the writer concurs with authors such as Burke et al. (1999) who recognize both an overlap and a distinction between the spiritual and the religious. Religion is associated more with formalized, institutionalized beliefs and practice while spirituality is associated more with the individual experience and may, or may not, be associated with the institutional. Thus one can have spirituality without religion with Mohr (2006) pointing out that atheists and agnostics can have a rich spiritual life.

world; and (4) the transcendental, one's relationship with something or some being beyond the human level.

Fisher (1999) constructs spiritual well-being as associated with a *single domain* while he constructs spiritual health as the combined effect of spiritual well-being in the four domains. These domains mutually interact, with development in one area building up and on another: what he calls the principle of progressive synergism.

Family and child spiritual development

As early as 1950, Gordon Allport, a seminal writer in the psychology of religion and spirituality, stressed the impact of childhood upbringing on the religious and spiritual development of the child. That family is the central agent of socialization in developing spirituality and that there is a link between parental and child/adolescent spirituality seems apparent (Benson, Donahue, & Erickson, 1989; Boyatzis et al., 2006; Bridges & Moore, 2002; Hyde, 1990; Martin, White & Perlman, 2003; Mattis & Jagers, 2001; McDonald, Beck, Allison & Nosworthy, 2005; Regnerus, 2003; Spilka, Hood, Hunsberger & Gorsuch, 2003; Templeton & Eccles, 2006; Verma & Maria, 2006).

Research has since supported this notion (Regnerus, 2003) with, for example, McDonald et al. (2005) finding that spirituality in the home, including higher levels of religious activity, was associated with a more intimate and dependent relationship on God. Bridges and Moore (2002) summarize research suggesting that "... religious activity in the home, *in conjunction with loving and supportive relationships* with parents who provided clear messages regarding religious beliefs and practices, promoted high levels of religiousness on the part of adolescents" (p. 25, my emphasis). The quality of relationship between parent and child may thus be an important factor (Spilka et al., 2003): the more positive and securely attached the adolescent is to the parents, the more likely they are to adopt their parents' religion (Templeton & Eccles, 2006).

Citing a relational construction of spirituality, Boyatzis et al. (2006) describe every relational human event, particularly intergenerational family relationships, as spiritual even though such events may not be associated with formalized religion. They construct a generative spirituality, a "... transcendent connection with the next generation that flows from and encourages convictions of abiding care for that generation" (Boyatzis et al., 2006, p. 304). Such generative spirituality involves shared spiritual beliefs, practices and community. Research suggests that there is a correspondence between parents' and children's spirituality, often more with behaviour than belief (Boyatzis et al., 2006). There is evidence that children's religious and

spiritual beliefs may be more related to their perceptions of their parents' religion and spirituality than to the parents' self-reported views.

Within the family, it appears that mothers probably have more impact on children's religious development than fathers (Boyatzis et al., 2006; De Roos, Iedema & Miedema, 2004; Spilka et al., 2003) with children's denominational affiliation in interfaith families being more similar to the mother's than to the father's. Mattis and Jagers (2001) cite research suggesting that maternal religious socialization is critical with a mother's religious affiliation predicting the adult religious affiliation of African Americans.

This may be related to women's greater spirituality and involvement in private and public religious and spiritual practices (Boyatzis et al., 2006; De Roos et al., 2004). De Roos et al. argue that the maternal influence occurs through social learning processes – the child's direct and indirect learning of the maternal God concept, religious beliefs and practices – and through child-rearing practices which are often related to the maternal religious belief system. For example, a belief in people as inherently immoral is associated with more authoritarian child-rearing, while a belief in people as inherently moral is associated with more permissive child-rearing. It may also be related to mothers talking about emotions more, with most children rating mothers higher than fathers as confidantes. With religion and spirituality falling into the personal realm, children are thus more likely to speak to mothers about such issues, with mothers therefore “cognitive anchors ... for the child's spiritual views” (Boyatzis et al., 2006, p. 302).

Nevertheless fathers' spirituality is also important, being linked to greater commitment to and involvement with children (Boyatzis et al., 2006; Oman & Thoresen, 2006). Fathers who were warmer and more communicative tended to have adolescents who shared their religious views, a study of Jewish families found (Boyatzis et al., 2006). Mattis and Jagers (2001), too, cite research suggesting that paternal spirituality is related to positive outcomes for youth.

Mechanisms of influence

The question becomes, how do parents influence children's spiritual development? There are various models of religious or spiritual influence in family.

Within the field of psychology, a body of psychodynamic literature (De Roos, 2006; Randour & Bondanza, 1987; Ratcliff, 1992; Smith & McSherry, 2004; Yust, 2003) suggests the importance of attachment. Early relationship is narrated as laying the foundation for the development of faith, trust and positive representations of and relationships with self, others, the world and God. Such theory argues that faith and trust emerge from an attachment relationship in

which one's needs are met with consistency and care (Ratcliff, 1992; Smith & McSherry, 2004; Yust, 2003). Spiritual well-being and spiritual health are thus built on good-enough early relationships.

Furthermore, the development of a God concept is related in the literature to development of attachment (De Roos, 2006; Giesbrecht, 1994; McDonald et al., 2005) with empirical findings suggesting that internal representations of self, parent(s) and God are related (Giesbrecht, 1994). Internal working models of self, the world and others regulate the child's perceptions and behaviour across contexts and relationships, including the spiritual context and their relationship with God (De Roos, 2006). Images of God are rooted in images of the paternal and maternal caregivers, state McDonald et al. (2005) who argue that a relationship with God serves similar functions to other attachment relationships. Perceptions of parents are most related to the God concept. When parents are perceived as nurturing and powerful, so is God, while a negative image of parents is associated with a negative image of God (Dickie, Eshleman, Merasco, Shepard, Van der Wilt & Johnson, 1997). A secure maternal attachment has been found to be significantly and positively related to a loving God concept (Giesbrecht, 1994). Whether the God concept is masculine or feminine relates to the gender of the preferred primary caregiver (Noffke & McFadden, 2001).

God is also constructed as an attachment figure (Cicirelli, 2004; Hill & Pargament, 2003), a safe haven and a secure base, with separation generating anxiety and thus seeking for proximity (Sim & Loh, 2003). As children age and gain distance from their parents, they simultaneously move closer to God, meeting the lifelong need for attachment (Eshleman, Dickie, Merasco, Shepard & Johnson, 1999).

Another body of psychological literature is more cognitive-behavioural, focusing on social learning: behaviours learned in family and other contexts. Some construct parent as guide and child as learner. This fits with religious capital theory (Martin, White & Perlman, 2003), arguing that family is the primary socialization agent with childhood accumulation of religious capital through household participation. This accumulation is facilitated by stable homes in which child socialization is the parental focus. Socialization practices may include "spiritual modelling and spiritual observational learning" (Boyatzis et al., 2006, p. 299) with verbal communication of beliefs, disciplinary tactics such as rewards and punishments and parental modelling of practices such as prayer or charity. For example, Lee, Rice and Gillespie (1997) explore the impact of family worship on adolescents and find active learning – modelling and active youth engagement in home worship – is associated with positive youth outcomes. There are also Vygotskian models

of parental scaffolding of culturally meaningful practice. Giving the child a more active role are transactional models of reciprocal parent-child interaction and, moving to the other end of the spectrum are theories of children as “spiritual savants” who guide their parents (Boyatzis et al., 2006).

Spiritual teaching, modelling and observational learning are described by Mattis and Jagers (2001). They construct family as the primary context in which a spiritual life is cultivated. This is the context in which children both observe and practise the relational values that these writers construct as integral to religion and spirituality. A higher level of spiritual orientation is found in preadolescents who perceive their families to be spiritual and attend church more, while youth who construct their families as “communal, spiritual and affective” (Mattis & Jagers, 2001, p. 528) have higher levels of empathy and perspective-taking and engage in fewer aggressive acts. This, they hypothesize, may be because spiritually-oriented parents may teach their children positive character qualities and social skills (such as reading and responding to cues effectively).

Other theories of family and spiritual socialization include Himmelfarb’s channelling hypothesis (Martin, White & Perlman, 2003) suggesting the channelling of children/adolescents into groups or experiences (such as schools or churches) which are congruent with and reinforce the family belief system. Mattis and Jagers (2001) imply such a perspective, describing the family as embedded in a social support network sharing values, beliefs and commitments and providing “the contexts, the tools, and the opportunities needed to actualize and reinforce religiously and spiritually consistent values and behaviours” (p. 528). Garrett (1979) describes a process of religious socialization in which spiritual nurturance is entrusted to the religious community of the parents. Such socialization generates internalization of commitment, practices and teachings: youth cannot remember when they were not part of the church community and when the beliefs were not part of their world view.

Combining both theories, it can be said that influence is both direct and indirect (through church, teachers and peers). There is not only parental modelling and direct teaching of religious and spiritual practices and beliefs, there is also parental management of children’s lives, exposing them to social networks congruent with parental religious and spiritual views, argue Bridges and Moore (2002). Bjarnason (1998) concurs: “Parental rule setting may involve the requirement of going to church and other religious activities ... generating a feeling of social reality as an exterior, constraining reality. Similarly, caring and supportive parents may generate the perception of God as caring and supportive ... and at the same time induce an emotional attachment to society through the parents”. (p. 746)

In a similar vein, Templeton and Eccles (2006), writing about collective and personal spiritual identity, describe parents and family membership as playing a crucial role in the development of identity. Children, they suggest, categorize themselves based on categories available in their social worlds, such as the religion of their parents. When children are included in parental religious activity, or when parents stress the importance of religion, children may accept a religious identity and the associated beliefs, values and practices without question. It thus becomes an assigned, rather than a chosen identity: a collective rather than a personal spiritual identity. Whether influence is direct or indirect, however, social learning theory seems to explain the socialization process (Spilka et al., 2003).

Another theory, that of cultural broadening (Martin, White & Perlman, 2003; O'Connor, Hoge & Alexander, 2002), focuses on diversion from family belief, arguing that in a pluralistic society in which children move into different contexts and are exposed to different views, there is the likelihood of them developing more liberal and less traditional beliefs unless these beliefs are maintained by local communities. Thus cognitive broadening, through educational and other exposure, is seen to decrease religious commitment.

As Verma and Maria (2006) stress, the family is rapidly changing with the following trends identified by the Study Group on Adolescence in the 21st century: a threat to links between family and community; a global trend toward smaller families; greater income disparities between families; some instrumental family functions given over to institutions; greater parental investment in particularly middle-class children with more monitoring and “oversupervision”; reduced authoritarian parenting; and an increasing generation gap particularly around technology and popular culture. These changes, they write, have significant implications for spiritual development.

Parental spirituality and child well-being

Parental spirituality also seems to impact on child and adolescent well-being with research suggesting that, particularly in the years before adolescence, “parental religiosity and spirituality may have a more powerful impact on child well-being than does the child’s own self-reported religiosity” (Bridges & Moore, 2002, p. 15). Mechanisms include social support, promotion of pro-social and healthy behaviour and the direct and indirect influences on parenting behaviour. This influence begins pre-natally with spirituality impacting on maternal health behaviours and stress and thus on foetal health (Oman & Thoresen, 2006). Post-natally, attachment and parenting may be influenced by the availability of social capital and support, by religious and spiritual

coping strategies, by the impact of religion and spirituality on parental mental health and by religious effects on the marital relationship and on parenting stance (for example, denominational influences on how authoritarian parenting should be and whether or not corporal punishment should be used) (Boyatzis et al., 2006; Bridges & Moore, 2002; Oman & Thoresen, 2006).

Lerner, Alberts, Anderson and Dowling (2006) cite weak to moderate associations between positive youth behaviours and parental involvement in religion. Boyatzis et al. (2006) concur, describing parental spirituality as positively associated with desirable child outcomes and inversely associated with negative outcomes. Parental spirituality protects adolescents and is connected to higher levels of parental warmth and closer parent-child relationships (Boyatzis et al., 2006). Adolescents in families who engage in religious activities tend to have stronger family relationships, with religion found to increase adolescents' commitment to their families (Crawford, Wright & Masten, 2006). Spirituality tends to be related to marital satisfaction and stability. It may serve a protective function in the family during times of stress. Thus spirituality contributes to maintaining intact families which are a possible protective factor for at-risk youth (Crawford, Wright & Masten).

However, parental religiosity and spirituality can also be toxic and have a negative influence on children's well-being when it is used to justify harsh punishment or when parents form a coalition with God as a disciplinary tactic, threatening God's punishment if children are disobedient. Religion and spirituality can also be used to promote values such as racism and bigotry (Boyatzis et al., 2006). Spirituality and religion may be a source of positive or negative coping within a family (Mahoney, Pendleton & Ihrke, 2006).

Spirituality, well-being and religious denomination

As noted above, research suggests that religious denomination of the adolescent may be associated with family spirituality. Religious denomination is associated with the formation of the collective identity of adolescents (Templeton & Eccles, 2006). Initially this collective identity may be assigned as, for example, "A young child growing up in an actively practicing Catholic family is likely to develop a Catholic identity without any reflection or conscious commitment" (Templeton & Eccles, 2006, p. 253). However, in adolescence, such a collective identity may become chosen if the adolescent explores alternate belief systems and chooses not to change denomination. This collective religious identity often, but not necessarily, coexists with a personal spiritual identity.

Within religious denominations, Roehlkepartain and Patel (2006) describe congregations as “complex, dynamic ecologies conducive to spiritual development” (p. 324). Barnes, Plotnikoff, Fox and Pendleton (2000) stress the importance of religious traditions in providing structures for moral development and socialization, framing the child’s understanding of the world and relationships and linking this to the sacred.

Religious denomination also determines external constructions of the child’s identity, determining when and how children are constructed as members of the religious community (through practices such as baptism) and when and how they are constructed as adults, for example, bar and bat mitzvahs or confirmation or turban ceremonies (Mattis, Ahluwalia, Cowie & Kirkland-Harris, 2006). Not only external constructions of self and constructions of own identity but also the construction of the identity of God are shaped by religious denomination. Denominational differences have been found in God concepts, possibly related to different doctrine and practices (Hyde, 1990; Noffke & McFadden, 2001). Describing the diversity of religion, Boyer (2001) writes that it “... is not just the fact that some people are called or call themselves Buddhist and others Baptist. It goes deeper, in how people conceive of supernatural agents and what they think these agents are like or what they can do, in the morality that is derived from religious beliefs, in the rituals performed ...” (p. 7).

The relationship between religious denomination and well-being has been explored by some researchers with contradictory results: some studies finding variances related to religious denomination in the relationship between health and spirituality; others finding no such variance (Martin, Kirkcaldy & Siefen, 2003). Martin et al.’s study found that there were denominational differences in church attendance in their sample of 988 German adolescents, with Muslims being the most regular churchgoers. Regular church-going is associated with positive health outcomes (Barnes et al., 2000; Benson, Rude & Roehlkepartain, 2003; Bridges & Moore, 2002; Callaghan, 2005; Demir & Urberg, 2004; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Idler et al., 2003; King & Benson, 2006; Larson & Larson, 2003; Martin et al., 2003; Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Mohr, 2006; Oman & Thoresen, 2006; Regnerus, 2003; Santrock, 2005). Beit-Hallahmi and Argyle (1997) describe as “striking” (p. 187) the differences in life expectancy between denominations with Seventh Day Adventists, Mormons, Orthodox Jews and the Amish having the greatest longevity. These denominations also have the strictest rules regarding drinking, smoking, sex, diet and exercise.

Roehlkepartain and Patel (2006) cite research suggesting variability in religious involvement across denominations with Latter-Day Saint youth being highly involved (72%) compared to Catholic youth (24%), Jewish youth (27%) and mainline and conservative

Protestants (55% and 56% respectively). Those most involved in religion were less likely to engage in risky behaviours, felt their lives had meaning and purpose, felt cared for by others as well as had more positive relationships with families and non-parental adults. Thus, their levels of well-being seemed higher.

Spirituality, well-being and adolescence

That religion and spirituality are important to adolescents is suggested by American research finding that 95% of 13- to 18-year olds believe in a God or universal spirit with almost three-quarters saying they pray and about one-half indicating that they had attended religious services within the preceding week (Lippman & Keith, 2006; Santrock, 2005).

That religion and spirituality are good for adolescents is indicated by research (Barnes et al., 2000; Benson et al., 2003; Bridges & Moore, 2002; Callaghan, 2005; Demir & Urberg, 2004; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Idler et al., 2003; King & Benson, 2006; Larson & Larson, 2003; Martin et al., 2003; Mattis & Jager, 2001; Mohr, 2006; Oman & Thoresen, 2006; Pienaar, Beukes & Esterhuyse, 2006; Regnerus, 2003; Santrock, 2005; Spilka et al., 2003). These studies suggest that positive health outcomes – social, emotional, behavioural and physical – are associated with greater religious and spiritual involvement. Spirituality is important for psychological well-being and associated health outcomes (Temane & Wissing, 2006). Thus, write Benson et al. (2003) “[s]piritual development appears to be a potentially powerful resource for positive human development in the first two decades of life” (p. 210).

Adolescence is generally constructed as a life phase during which the development of constructs of self and identity (Erikson, 1950, 1968), other, society and meaning and purpose is highlighted (Bruce, 2004; King & Benson, 2006; Martin et al., 2003; Smith, 2003; Teske, 2006). This development is prompted by the reciprocal interaction of the maturing nervous system and the social environment (Inhelder & Piaget, 1977) and is associated with a move to autonomy (Blakeney & Blakeney, 2006).

Research (King & Benson, 2006; Verma & Maria, 2006) suggests that religion and spirituality contribute to positive resolution of this life stage and of identity development with religious involvement providing “a rich ideological context in which identity can take shape ... in which a young person can generate a sense of meaning, order, and place in the world that is crucial to identity formation” (King & Benson, 2006, p. 386). As a spiritual context, religion offers a space to explore questions and develop own awareness of the ultimate meaning of life, crucial to resolution of the identity crises. As a social context, religion provides the opportunity to

interact with peers and role-models in the embodiment of ideology, which facilitates personal integration. Identity becomes not just words but communal action and a sense of belonging to a faith community. Without religion and spirituality, teenagers experience a sense of meaninglessness and isolation contributing to high risk behaviours (Kessler, 1997).

From the reading of the literature, the following research questions emerged in the South African context:

- 1) Is there a relationship between family spirituality (measured as adolescent-rated frequency of family attendance at church/spiritual activities, and importance of religion/spirituality⁴ to the family) and adolescent spirituality (measured as frequency of attendance at church/spiritual activities and importance of religion/spirituality to the adolescent)?
- 2) Is there a relationship between the importance of religion/spirituality to the family and their attendance at church/spiritual activities?
- 3) Is there a relationship between family spirituality and adolescent spiritual well-being?
- 4) Is there a relationship between adolescent religious denomination, and paternal and maternal religious denomination?
- 5) Is there a relationship between adolescent, paternal and maternal religious denomination on the one hand, and frequency of prayer on the other?
- 6) Do differences between the adolescent's and parents' religious denominations impact on adolescent spiritual well-being?
- 7) Is there a relationship between adolescent, maternal and paternal religious denomination on the one hand and adolescent spiritual well-being on the other?

The research methodology below was applied to explore these questions.

Research method

For a full discussion of participants, procedure and measuring instruments, refer to Article I. However, for the purposes of this article, it is important to highlight that, in addition to the biographical variables of home language, age and gender, questions about own, paternal and maternal religious denomination were also asked (see Appendix A).

⁴ In discussion of the research questions, methods and findings, the signifier “religion/spirituality” is utilized as it was presented to respondents on the questionnaire (see Addendum A).

Furthermore, in addition to using Likert Scales to explore the importance of religion/spirituality to the individual and frequency of attendance at church/spiritual activities, Likert Scales were constructed to explore how the adolescent rated the importance of religion/spirituality to their family [(1) extremely important to (5) not important at all] and their frequency of attendance at church/spiritual activities, [(1) at least once a week to (5) never].

Research hypotheses

Based on of the objectives of the study, the following research hypotheses were formulated for this group of South African adolescents:

- 1) A significant relationship exists between religious denomination (adolescent, mother, father) and frequency of prayer
- 2) A significant relationship exists between the importance of religion/spirituality for adolescent and a) importance of religion/spirituality for family and b) attendance at church/spiritual activities by family
- 3) A significant relationship exists between the importance of religion/spirituality for family and attendance at church/spiritual activities by a) family and b) the adolescent
- 4) Significant differences in mean scores exist in terms of spiritual well-being scales for the different denominations of a) adolescent, b) mother and c) father
- 5) There will be significant differences in adolescent spiritual well-being related to whether or not their religious denomination differs from or is the same as that of their parents
- 6) Significant differences in mean scores exist in terms of spiritual well-being scales for the different groups regarding a) importance of religion/spirituality and b) attendance at church/spiritual activities by family members

Statistical procedures

The chi-square test for homogeneity was used to investigate hypotheses 1 to 3 as all the variables are nominal. To test hypotheses 4 and 6 multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed. When a significant result (F -value) was detected, the analysis was extended to include a one-way variance analysis of each of the independent variables. To determine statistically significant differences among average values of the categories, the Scheffé procedure was utilized. To determine the meaningfulness of statistically significant results generated, the practical significance of the results was examined by calculating effect sizes (Steyn, 1999).

For research hypothesis 5, two independent variables were considered, agreement/disagreement with parental religious denomination and spiritual well-being. The former had two categories (agreement between adolescent and parental religious denomination and disagreement between adolescent and parental religious denomination), while the latter had five (personal, communal, environmental, transcendental and total). The *t*-test for two independent groups was thus applied.

As different statistical procedures were implemented, the method of calculating effect size differed. In the case of the chi-square (χ^2) test the effect size is denoted by *w* with 0,1 indicating a small effect, 0,3 indicating a medium effect and 0,5 indicating a large effect size. In the case of the *t*-test, the effect sizes of the differences between the two sets of averages were calculated by means of determining Cohen's *d*. This procedure expresses the difference between the two means in terms of the size of the standard deviation. In this case 0,20 signifies a small effect, 0,50 signifies a medium and 0,80 signifies a large effect size. In the case of analysis of variance, effect size is denoted by *f* with 0,1 indicating a small effect, 0,25 indicating a medium effect and 0,4 indicating a large effect size. Only statistically significant results with an effect size above small were considered meaningful. The 1%-level of significance was utilized in this study.

Results and discussion

Before considering the hypotheses above, the distribution of the full research sample in terms of adolescent, maternal and paternal religious denomination was summarized. The initial impression was one of a strong correlation between the religious denomination of adolescents and that of their parents. Thus the chi-square test was utilized to calculate this relationship. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequency distribution of the full research sample according to religious denomination

Religious denomination	Adolescent		Mother		Father	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Protestant	780	65,9	811	68,5	768	64,9
Catholic	110	9,3	118	10,0	118	10,0
Jewish	13	1,1	14	1,2	12	1,0
Hindu	11	0,9	14	1,2	14	1,2
Muslim	173	14,6	169	14,3	172	14,5
Buddhist	0	0,0	4	0,3	3	0,2
African traditional	2	0,2	3	0,2	1	0,1
Other	92	7,8	49	4,1	91	7,7
No indication	3	0,2	2	0,2	5	0,4
Total	1184	100,0	1184	100,0	1184	100,0

A strong relationship between adolescent denomination and maternal denomination ($\chi^2 = 727,103$; $p = 0,0001$; $w = 1,26$) and paternal denomination ($\chi^2 = 602,424$; $p = 0,0001$; $w = 1,15$)

was found. The majority of learners indicated that both they and their parents were Protestant with approximately 10% reporting that they and their parents were Catholic and approximately 14,5% indicating they and their parents were Muslim. Within this sample, there were too few respondents in the other denominational groups and thus the decision was made to exclude all but the three largest groups (Protestant, Catholic and Muslim) in the statistical analyses.

Bearing in mind the high correlation between adolescent and parental denomination and the need to establish a more even distribution among the three groups, 180 adolescents were randomly selected from the Protestant group. This newly assembled sample (N = 463) was used for all analyses in which religious denomination was a variable. However, when religious denomination was not a variable, the total group (N = 1184) was used. The distribution within the religious denomination group is denoted in Table 2.

Table 2: Frequency distribution within the selected religious denomination sample

Religious denomination	Adolescent		Mother		Father	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Protestant	180	38,9	195	42,9	187	42,2
Catholic	110	23,8	95	20,9	89	20,1
Muslim	173	37,3	164	36,0	165	37,2
No indication	0	0,0	1	0,2	2	0,5
Total	463	100,0	455	100,0	443	100,0

In isolated cases, the denominations of the parents did not fall into one of the three denominations of the adolescents, thus differences in the totals of the parents and the adolescents.

The first relationship explored was that between frequency of prayer and adolescent, maternal and paternal religious denomination. The results of the χ^2 -test are displayed in Table 3 (p. 114). The relationship between adolescent religious denomination and frequency of prayer was significant at 1%-level (χ^2 -value = 23,436). The corresponding effect size was small to medium and thus possibly not of practical significance. The largest difference in proportions was between Catholics and Protestants on the one hand and Muslims on the other. A larger proportion of Muslims (50, 9%) reported praying once or twice a day as compared to Protestants (36,1%) and Catholics (30,0%).

The relationship between maternal religious denomination and adolescent frequency of prayer was also significant at 1%-level (χ^2 -value = 24,916), but again the effect size was small to medium and thus possibly not practically significant. The same proportional differences were noted as above. A larger proportion of adolescents with Muslim mothers (52,4%) reported praying once or twice day.

The relationship between paternal religious denomination and adolescent frequency of prayer was also significant at 1%-level (χ^2 -value = 31,661), but this time the corresponding effect size was medium and the finding is thus of moderate practical value. Again, a larger proportion of adolescents with Muslim fathers (54,6%) reported praying once or twice a day, compared to those with Protestant (33,7%) and Catholic (30,3%) fathers.

Table 3: χ^2 -results exploring the relationship between frequency of prayer and adolescent, maternal and paternal religious denomination

Frequency of prayer	Adolescent religious denomination					
	Protestant		Catholic		Muslim	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Once or twice a day	65	36,1	33	30,0	88	50,9
Regularly	49	27,2	27	24,6	44	25,4
Sometimes	50	27,8	32	29,1	26	15,0
Seldom	15	8,3	15	13,6	11	6,4
Never	1	0,6	3	2,7	4	2,3
Total	180	38,9	110	23,7	173	37,4
$\chi^2 = 23,436$ $p = 0,0028$ ($w = 0,22$) $v = 8$						
Frequency of prayer	Maternal religious denomination					
	Protestant		Catholic		Muslim	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Once or twice a day	69	35,4	29	30,5	86	52,4
Regularly	51	26,2	25	26,3	41	25,0
Sometimes	55	28,2	27	28,4	23	14,0
Seldom	19	9,7	10	10,6	11	6,7
Never	1	0,5	4	4,2	3	1,8
Total	195	43,0	95	20,9	164	36,1
$\chi^2 = 24,916$ $p = 0,0016$ ($w = 0,23$) $v = 8$						
Frequency of prayer	Paternal religious denomination					
	Protestant		Catholic		Muslim	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Once or twice a day	63	33,7	27	30,3	90	54,6
Regularly	58	31,0	20	22,5	38	23,0
Sometimes	50	26,7	27	30,3	22	13,3
Seldom	15	8,0	12	13,5	11	6,7
Never	1	0,5	3	3,4	4	2,4
Total	187	42,4	89	20,2	165	37,4
$\chi^2 = 31,661$ $p = 0,0001$ ($w = 0,27$) $v = 8$						

This finding suggests that frequency of prayer may correlate with the teachings of religious denominations, with Muslim beliefs and practices requiring prayer to Allah five times a day. Prior research (Martin et al., 2003) also found Muslim adolescents to attend church more frequently than their Catholic and Protestant counterparts. They associated this with denominational strictness, or the demand from some religions for more active participation.

The relationship between the importance of religion/spirituality for adolescents and a) the importance of religion/spirituality for family and b) the family attendance at church/spiritual activities was explored with chi-square analysis. The results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: χ^2 -results - importance of religion/spirituality for adolescent and a) importance of religion/spirituality for family and b) church/spiritual activity attendance by family

Family: Importance of religion/spirituality	Adolescent: Importance of religion/spirituality									
	Extremely		Very		Somewhat		Little		Not at all	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Extremely	357	79,3	133	31,1	23	12,7	5	6,9	4	8,0
Very	76	16,9	251	58,8	63	34,8	8	11,1	5	10,0
Somewhat	14	3,1	32	7,5	73	40,3	30	41,7	8	16,0
Little	3	0,7	11	2,6	18	10,0	26	36,1	19	38,0
Not at all	0	0,0	0	0,0	4	2,2	3	4,2	14	28,0
Total:	450	38,1	427	36,2	181	15,3	72	6,1	50	4,2
$\chi^2 = 964,874$ $p = 0,0001$ ($w = 0,90$) $v = 16$										
Family: Attendance at church/spiritual activities	Adolescent: Importance of religion/spirituality									
	Extremely		Very		Somewhat		Little		Not at all	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
At least once a week	365	80,9	287	67,1	73	40,3	14	19,4	12	24,0
At least once a month	39	8,6	61	14,3	26	14,4	7	9,7	2	4,0
At least once every three months	21	4,7	24	5,6	16	8,8	4	5,6	0	0,0
Once or twice a year	17	3,8	37	8,6	34	18,8	19	26,4	7	14,0
Never	9	2,0	19	4,4	32	17,7	28	38,9	29	58,0
Total:	451	38,2	428	36,2	181	15,3	72	6,1	50	4,2
$\chi^2 = 373,604$ $p = 0,0001$ ($w = 0,56$) $v = 16$										

A strong relationship – significant at 1%-level – was found between the importance of religion/spirituality to adolescents and the perceived importance of religion/spirituality to their families. The calculated χ^2 -value of 964,874 yielded a large effect size of 0,90 suggesting that this relationship is of practical value. It becomes clear that if an adolescent perceives religion/spirituality to be important, they report that their families also perceive it as important. Of adolescents who reported that religion/spirituality was extremely important to them, 79,3% indicated that their families also perceived religion/spirituality as extremely important. Only 3 (0,7%) of the 450 adolescents described religion/spirituality as extremely important to them while reporting that their families saw religion/spirituality as having little importance. Of 50 adolescents describing religion/spirituality as not at all important, 33 (66,0%) indicated that their families too saw religion/spirituality as having little or no importance.

Spilka et al. (2003) argue that a perception of the importance of religion to parents is one of three factors predicting adolescent religiousness. This supports a correspondence theory (Boyatzis et al., 2006) that children's beliefs are similar to those of their parents. It also fits with social learning theory suggesting that when parents stress the importance of religion and

spirituality, children are more likely to take on parental religious identity: beliefs, values and practices (Spilka et al., 2003; Templeton & Eccles, 2006). Thus if parents perceive religion and spirituality as important, children learn a valuing of religion and spirituality through a process of “spiritual modelling and spiritual observational learning” (Boyatzis et al., 2006, p. 298).

Table 6 also examined the relationship between the importance of religion/spirituality to adolescents and attendance at church/spiritual activities by family and found this to be significant at 1%-level. The calculated χ^2 -value of 373,604 yielded a large effect size of 0,56 suggesting this finding is of practical significance. Of adolescents reporting that religion/spirituality is extremely or very important to them, 80,9% and 67,1% respectively indicated that their families attend church/spiritual activities at least once a week. In strong contrast 19,4% and 24,0% of adolescents who reported that religion/spirituality is respectively of little or no importance to them, indicated that their families attended such activities at least once a week. Only 2,0% of adolescents who described religion/spirituality as extremely important indicated that their families never attended church/spiritual activities, while 58% of adolescents who reported that religion/spirituality is not at all important to them reported that their families never attend such activities. This finding could be read to fit with channeling theories of religious socialization (Martin, White & Perlman, 2003): parents, through church attendance, channeling their children into groups or experiences reinforcing religious values, beliefs and practices. It may also fit with theory and research (Spilka et al., 2003) suggesting that behaviour precedes belief: that converts first engage in prescribed practices before developing congruent perceptions.

Thus, it could be hypothesized that when families attend church frequently they both directly convey a message about the importance of religion and spirituality (social learning) and integrate family members into a religious/spiritual community valuing religion and spirituality and communicating such a message (channeling and social learning within the church context). Such communities also prescribe practices which then become internalized as perceptions of the importance of religion and spirituality. Hyde (1990) cites research suggesting that parental church attendance correlates most strongly to child spiritual growth and development.

Whether there is a relationship between the perceived importance of religion/spirituality to the family and a) the attendance at church/spiritual activities by family and b) attendance at church/spiritual activities by adolescents was also explored with the results of the χ^2 -test displayed in Table 5.

Table 5: χ^2 -results - importance of religion/spirituality to family and a) attendance at church/spiritual activities by family and b) attendance at church/spiritual activities by adolescent

Family: Attendance at church/spiritual activities	Family: Importance of religion/spirituality									
	Extremely		Very		Somewhat		Little		Not at all	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
At least once a week	455	87,2	250	62,0	38	24,2	5	6,5	0	0,0
At least once a month	40	7,7	68	16,9	25	15,9	3	3,9	0	0,0
At least once every three months	11	2,1	31	7,7	17	10,8	6	7,8	0	0,0
Once or twice a year	10	1,9	38	9,4	48	30,6	18	23,4	0	0,0
Never	6	1,1	16	4,0	29	18,5	45	58,4	21	100,0
Total:	522	44,2	403	34,2	157	13,3	77	6,5	21	1,8
$\chi^2 = 729,117$ $p = 0,0001$ ($w = 0,79$) $v = 16$										
Adolescent: Attendance at church/spiritual activities	Family: Importance of religion/spirituality									
	Extremely		Very		Somewhat		Little		Not at all	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
At least once a week	425	81,4	256	63,5	42	26,7	10	13,0	0	0,0
At least once a month	49	9,4	62	15,4	26	16,6	6	7,8	1	4,8
At least once every three months	19	3,6	30	7,4	17	10,8	4	5,2	0	0,0
Once or twice a year	19	3,6	37	9,2	46	29,3	20	26,0	5	23,8
Never	10	2,0	18	4,5	26	16,6	37	48,0	15	71,4
Total:	522	44,2	403	34,2	157	13,3	77	6,5	21	1,8
$\chi^2 = 496,950$ $p = 0,0001$ ($w = 0,65$) $v = 16$										

Significance at 1%-level was found for the relationship between the adolescent-rated importance of religion/spirituality to the family and the family's attendance at church/spiritual activities. The calculated χ^2 -value of 729,117 yields a large effect size of 0,79 suggesting this finding is of practical significance. When adolescents reported that religion/spirituality was very important to their families, they also reported regular attendance at church/spiritual activities. Thus 87,2% of adolescents describing religion/spirituality as extremely important to their families, also indicated that their families attended church/spiritual activities at least once a week. Only 6 (1,1%) of 522 adolescents describing religion/spirituality as very important to their families indicated that these families never attend church/spiritual activities. Of 21 reporting that religion/spirituality is not at all important to their families, (100,0%) noted that their families never attend church/spiritual activities.

This suggests that, within this South African sample, there was congruence between family values and practices, as observed and reported by the adolescents. It also indicates that the majority of families were seen as expressing their spirituality both privately (in a valuing of religion/spirituality) and publicly (in organizational activity attendance), suggestive of indiscriminate pro-religiosity (Allport & Ross, 1967; Milevsky & Levitt, 2004). This was found to be the dominant spiritual orientation of this adolescent sample with 65% reporting practising an indiscriminate spirituality (see Article V). This could be read to indicate that adolescent and family spiritual orientation may also coincide. Very few adolescents (1,1%) reported a

discrepancy between a high family private valuing of religion/spirituality and a low family public expression thereof, more consistent with an intrinsic/personal/private orientation, with only 8,5% of the adolescent sample reporting a private spiritual orientation in related research (see Article V).

A significant relationship at 1%-level was also found between the perceived importance of religion/spirituality to the family and the adolescents' attendance at church/spiritual activities. The calculated χ^2 -value of 496,950 generated a large effect size of 0,65 suggesting this finding is of practical significance. Those adolescents who perceived religion/spirituality as extremely (81,4%) or very (63,5%) important to their families reported attending church/spiritual activities at least once a week. Only 13,0% of adolescents who reported their families as perceiving religion/spirituality as a little important, and 0% of those who reported their families as having no interest in religion/spirituality, were involved in such activities on a weekly basis. Just 2,0% of adolescents who perceived religion/spirituality as extremely important to their families reported never attending church/spiritual activities, while 71,4% of adolescents who described religion/spirituality as not at all important to their families reported never attending such activities.

This may suggest that when parents transmit a valuing of religion and spirituality to their families and children, it impacts not only on the children's value system, but also on their behaviours. Children participate in practices congruent with their perception of their family's value system. Thus, if they perceive their families to consider religion/spirituality important, they attend institutional activities such as services at mosques, synagogues or churches. If they perceive their families to not consider religion/spirituality important, they do not attend such activities. This may fit with Templeton and Eccles's (2006) observation that when parents stress the importance of religion, children may accept a religious identity – both beliefs and practices (such as church/spiritual activity attendance) – without question.

By means of one-way MANOVA analysis, this research explored whether there are differences in the average spiritual well-being scores of the adolescents (in the four domains and the total spiritual health score) related to adolescent, maternal or paternal denominational differences (Protestant, Catholic and Muslim). The results are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6: Manova F-values to determine the effect of adolescent, maternal and paternal denomination on spiritual well-being

Group	<i>F</i> -value+	<i>v</i>	<i>P</i>
Adolescent	3,54*	8; 624,8	0,0005
Mother	2,69*	8; 611,9	0,0065
Father	3,23*	8; 596,2	0,0013

* $p \leq 0,01$

+ Hotelling-Lawley-test magnitude

In all three groups F -values (according to the Hotelling-Lawley Trace) that were significant at 1%-level were obtained. To determine in which of the four spiritual well-being domains, as well as for the total spiritual health score, significant differences in averages for the denominations of the three groups emerged, one way analysis of variance was performed and the results, as well as the effect sizes (f), are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Averages, standard deviations and F -values of one way analysis of variance for three groups, testing for denominational differences in adolescent SWB

Group	Variable	Protestant		Catholic		Muslim		F	p	f
		\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s			
Adolescent	Environmental	17,39	4,20	16,94	4,24	16,70	3,93	1,21	0,2990	-
	Transcendental	20,56	3,57	18,53	4,63	20,42	3,82	9,97*	0,0001	0,21
	Communal	18,56	3,31	18,72	3,08	18,42	3,37	0,36	0,6950	-
	Personal	20,05	3,14	19,45	3,54	19,56	3,68	1,97	0,1411	-
	Total score (spiritual health)	76,85	10,14	73,68	10,15	75,13	11,15	3,14	0,0443	-
Mother	Environmental	17,32	4,10	16,96	4,39	16,69	3,98	0,99	0,3741	-
	Transcendental	20,40	3,74	18,73	4,57	20,47	3,80	6,63*	0,0015	0,17
	Communal	18,56	3,23	18,76	3,15	18,39	3,39	0,37	0,6890	-
	Personal	20,11	3,13	19,33	3,92	19,62	3,50	2,59	0,0762	-
	Total score (spiritual health)	76,66	9,97	73,75	10,73	75,24	10,97	2,46	0,0865	-
Father	Environmental	17,46	4,01	16,83	4,25	16,70	3,93	1,64	0,1946	-
	Transcendental	20,32	3,66	18,76	4,76	20,59	3,72	6,46*	0,0017	0,17
	Communal	18,49	3,21	18,85	3,25	18,52	3,43	0,27	0,7646	-
	Personal	19,99	3,07	20,08	3,06	19,64	3,59	0,97	0,3789	-
	Total score (spiritual health)	76,55	10,22	74,53	9,66	75,46	11,12	1,19	0,3042	-

* $p \leq 0,01$

Clear differences in averages, significant at 1%-level, for the three denominations in all three groups (adolescents, mothers and fathers) are evident in the transcendental spiritual well-being domain. However, only the effect size (f) of the adolescent result is of medium effect size and will be discussed further as it has moderate practical value. The Scheffé-test was used to determine in which of the three denominational groups there was a significant difference in averages in the transcendental domain. This *post hoc t-test* indicates that the average transcendental well-being score of Catholic adolescents is significantly lower than that of the other two groups (Protestant and Muslim). Findings thus suggest that, within this sample, the Catholic respondents were less focused on their relationship with the transcendental/divine.

Related research with this sample (Article V) also found that learners reporting a Catholic denomination had higher levels of indiscriminate non-spirituality (neither valuing religion/spirituality nor attending church/spiritual activities frequently) and higher levels of public spirituality (attending church/spiritual activities frequently while not valuing religion/spirituality

highly). This research was conducted in South African public schools in which religion and spirituality are largely excluded from the curriculum (Roux, 2006). It is therefore likely that such findings may differ for Catholic learners in Catholic private schools, and for their parents who invest in sending them to such schools. It could also be hypothesized that such learners integrate a collective or assigned spiritual identity – being born Catholic or into a Catholic family– but have not yet developed a personal or chosen spiritual identity and thus an own relationship with a divine Other or energy (Templeton & Eccles, 2006).

A *t*-test for two independent groups was implemented to explore possible variations in spiritual well-being related to agreement or lack of agreement between parent and child religious denomination. One of the assumptions underlying the *t* test for two independent samples is the assumption of homogeneity of variance. Because the size of the two groups varied considerably (agreed = 936; disagreed = 176) it was possible that there was not homogeneity of variance and, to take account of possible variance, the Welch-Satterthwaite approximation (Howell, 2007) was applied. The results of the *t*-test are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8: Comparison of averages of agreement and disagreement of denomination categories on the spiritual well-being scale.

Variable	Denomination of adolescent and parents						<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>D</i>
	Agree			Disagree					
	N	\bar{X}	s	N	\bar{X}	s			
Environmental	936	17,28	4,05	177	17,41	4,47	-0,38	0,7019	-
Transcendental	936	20,03	4,31	174	17,75	5,88	4,87*	0,0001+	0,46
Communal	943	18,90	3,22	177	18,83	3,22	-0,49	0,6271	-
Personal	937	20,35	3,09	176	19,17	3,50	3,81*	0,0001	0,37
Total score (spiritual health)	908	76,16	10,71	173	73,09	11,47	3,42*	0,0007	0,27

* $p \leq 0,01$ + = Welch-Satterthwaite approximation

Significant differences, at 1%-level, between the two groups were evident in two of the spiritual well-being domains - transcendental and personal – as well as in total spiritual health. Corresponding effect sizes in the transcendental spiritual well-being domain are medium and in the personal spiritual well-being domain are small to medium indicating some practical value. In both domains, adolescents who have the same religious denomination as their parents have higher average scores than adolescents whose religious denomination does not correspond to that of their parents. Thus learners whose religious denomination corresponds to that of their parents report a more positive relationship with self and with the transcendental.

This could be theoretically related to the attachment literature underlying the comment by Bridges and Moore (2002) that both religious activity in the home and “loving and supportive relationships” (p. 25) promoted religious commitment and involvement in adolescents. Windham,

Hooper and Hudson (2005) describe a possible synergy between religious, spiritual and family factors involving the protective effect of secure attachment. Yust (2003) emphasizes that secure attachment is foundational to faith formation, as does Ratcliff (1992). Furthermore, the development of internal representations of and relationships with self, others, the world and God are related to development of attachment (De Roos, 2006; Giesbrecht, 1994; McDonald et al., 2005). Thus, it could be hypothesized that if there is not secure parent-child attachment this may generate less positive representations of and relationships with self and the transcendental and may lead to a rejection of parental religious denomination.

Differences in adolescent spiritual well-being related to variances in the importance of religion/spirituality to the family and the attendance at church/spiritual activities by the family was also explored by means of one-way MANOVA analysis. During analysis, it was decided to merge two categories in the importance of religion/spirituality (of little importance and not important at all) as the number of respondents in the “not at all important” category (20) was very small and thus this category could not be used meaningfully in a multiple analysis of variance.

Table 9: Manova F-values to determine the effect of importance of religion/spirituality to the family and church/spiritual activity attendance of the family on the spiritual well-being of adolescents

Independent variables	F-value+	v	p
Importance	15,49*	12; 1955.7	0,0001
Attendance	3,32*	16; 2234	0,0001

* $p \leq 0,01$ + Hotelling-Lawley-test magnitude

F-values significant at 1%-level (according to the Hotelling-Lawley Trace) were found for both independent variables (importance and attendance). To determine in which of the four domains and the total spiritual health score of the SWBQ significant differences in the averages of the two independent variables emerge, a one way analysis of variance and a Scheffé-test was implemented. The results for the four importance groups (extremely; very; somewhat and little/not at all) of the family, as well as the effect sizes (f), are displayed in Table 10.

Table 10: Averages, standard deviations and F-values of one way analysis of variance testing for effects of the importance of religion/spirituality to the family on adolescent SWB

Variable	Extremely (n=516)		Very (n=400)		Somewhat (n=157)		Little/Not at all (n=97)		F	p	F
	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s			
Environmental	17,48	4,13	17,50	3,92	16,35	4,48	16,52	4,59	4,17*	0,0060	0,11
Transcendental	21,44	3,46	19,58	3,87	16,24	5,07	11,96	6,18	176,26*	0,0001	0,69
Communal	18,81	3,23	18,75	3,18	18,66	3,26	18,06	3,67	1,81	0,0441	-
Personal	20,46	3,10	19,93	3,14	18,85	3,39	18,60	3,37	16,34*	0,0001	0,21
Total score (spiritual health)	78,24	10,49	75,81	10,09	70,11	10,93	65,09	11,54	55,76*	0,0001	0,39

* $p \leq 0,01$

Table 10 indicates significant differences (at 1%-level) in three of the adolescent spiritual well-being domains as well as total spiritual health related to the importance of religion/spirituality in the family groups. The corresponding *f*-values suggest that only the results for spiritual health (large effect size), the transcendental spiritual well-being domain (large effect size) and the personal spiritual well-being domain (medium effect size) are of moderate to high practical significance and will be discussed further. In the environmental spiritual well-being domain the effect size was small and thus this will not be discussed further.

The variables with medium to large effect sizes were further analyzed by means of the Scheffé-test to identify significant differences in attendance group averages in the domains. The *post hoc t-test* identified significant differences between all four importance of religion/spirituality to the family groups in the transcendental spiritual well-being domain as well as the spiritual health total. Table 10 indicates that, when compared to the other three groups, adolescents who described religion/spirituality as extremely important to their families had the highest average score in both the transcendental spiritual well-being domain as well as in total spiritual health. Those who described religion/spirituality as “a little” or “not at all” important to their families had the lowest average scores in both the transcendental spiritual well-being domain as well as in total spiritual health.

In the personal spiritual well-being domain, significant differences emerged between the averages of adolescents who rated religion/spirituality as extremely important to their families, and the groups who described religion/spirituality either as somewhat important on the one hand and of little or no importance on the other. The former group had higher average scores in the personal spiritual well-being domain compared to both the latter groups. A similar tendency emerged comparing adolescents who rated religion/spirituality as very important to their families, to those who described religion/spirituality either as somewhat important on the one hand and of little or no importance on the other. Again the former group had higher averages than both the latter groups in the personal spiritual well-being domain.

These findings therefore suggest that in families where adolescents perceive religion/spirituality to be important, the adolescents report higher levels of personal and transcendental spiritual well-being as well as higher levels of global spiritual health. They thus report more positive relationships with self and a transcendental Other, with combined relationships in all four domains generating higher levels of measured spiritual health. This fits with findings above that if families are perceived to value religion/spirituality, the adolescents

also reported a higher valuing of religion/spirituality, more frequent church attendance and more frequent family church attendance.

It is also congruent with Bridges and Moore's (2002) observation that child well-being may be more influenced by parental religiosity and spirituality than by self-reported spirituality as parents with high levels of religiosity and spirituality may have more social support and may be guided by teachings promoting prosocial and healthy behaviours and parenting. Thus parents valuing spirituality not only transmit this valuing of religion/spirituality and of a relationship with a transcendent Other - the perceived family valuing of religion/spirituality and family frequency of church attendance - but also create a context furthering general child well-being and positive relationships with self, others and the world.

One way analysis of variance in adolescent spiritual well-being for the five family attendance at church/spiritual activities categories (once a week, once a month, once every three months, once or twice a year or never), together with the corresponding effect sizes (f), is displayed in Table 11.

Table 11: Averages, standard deviations and F-values of one way analysis of variance testing for the effects of family church/spiritual activity attendance on adolescent SWB

Variable	At least once a week		At least once a month		Once every 3 months		Once or twice a year		Never		F	p	F
	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s			
Environmental	17,26	4,09	17,61	3,68	17,74	4,40	17,10	4,76	16,63	4,45	1,28	0,2764	-
Transcendental	20,74	3,80	19,38	4,31	18,81	4,84	16,34	5,60	13,37	6,02	7,24*	0,0001	0,14
Communal	18,73	3,14	18,79	3,05	18,63	3,71	18,50	3,58	18,69	3,61	0,87	0,4801	-
Personal	20,26	3,00	20,01	3,30	19,35	3,45	18,86	3,74	18,95	3,57	1,11	0,3507	-
Total score	77,02	10,33	75,74	10,13	74,63	12,22	70,82	12,01	67,59	12,45	1,02	0,3962	-

* $p \leq 0,01$

Significant differences (at 1%-level) in averages of the five attendance groups were found in the transcendental spiritual well-being domain. However, only a small effect size ($f = 0,14$) was calculated and thus this finding will not be discussed further.

Summary

This research suggests that in this sample of South African adolescents, the majority of learners shared not only the religious denomination of their families, but also their valuing of spirituality and their spiritual practices. This supports a correspondence rather than an independence theory: that the spirituality of adolescents corresponds with that of their families and parents, rather than being independent of parental and family spirituality. Findings of parent-adolescent or family-adolescent agreement also support theory suggesting that, rather than being a time of rebellion and

opposition, adolescence is a time of “reasonably stable development and socialization” (Spilka et al., 2003, p. 112) in which there is similarity between parental and child values and attitudes. When there is not correspondence between their religious denomination and that of their parents, this research found adolescents had lower levels of personal and transcendental spiritual well-being, suggesting lower well-being in their relationship with self and with a divine Other or energy.

For most learners, if they perceived their families to value religion/spirituality highly, they valued religion/spirituality highly and attended church/spiritual activities regularly. If their families attended church/spiritual activities regularly, they attended church/spiritual activities regularly and highly valued religion/spirituality. Both learners (see Article V) and their families in this sample seemed to practise an indiscriminate spirituality, both valuing religion/spirituality and attending organizational events. Very few (1,1% of families and 8,5% of adolescents) reported a more intrinsic/private orientation characterized by valuing religion/spirituality privately but not engaging in public/organizational expression of their spirituality.

It was also found that if adolescents perceive their families to have a high valuing of religion/spirituality, they report higher levels of personal and transcendental spiritual well-being as well as global spiritual health.

Again, as in related research (Article V) a difference was found between Catholic learners on the one hand and Protestant and Muslim learners on the other. In this study the Catholic learners were found to have lower levels of transcendental spiritual well-being which may be related to the context within which the study was conducted and/or to these learners having adopted an assigned rather than a chosen Catholic identity.

Implications and recommendations

As in any research in this field, a shortcoming remains the lack of agreement regarding constructs such as spirituality and spiritual well-being, and consequently disparities in conceptualization and operationalization. In this study a specific relational construction of both has been advanced, and this is the foundation on which these findings rest.

Within the South African context, in which studies in the psychology of religion and spirituality are limited and in which little research has been done – both broadly and within this relational spirituality paradigm – it therefore becomes important to explore the construct and the operationalization of relational spirituality and spiritual well-being more broadly with different language groups and with a variety of research approaches. It may also be useful to implement

research distinguishing between religion and spirituality, rather than placing them into one category (religion/spirituality) as this project did. For example, one simple adjustment may be asking respondents their valuing of religion and, in a separate item, asking them their valuing of spirituality.

Furthermore, this research has just touched the top of the iceberg of potential research areas to explore. It has explored the adolescents' rating (and thus perceptions) of family valuing of religion/spirituality and organizational activity attendance. It will be important to broaden this focus by moving into the family system and getting parental self-report of spiritual salience and practices and relating this to adolescent spiritual well-being. It may, for example, be valuable to compare paternal and maternal self-report within the South African context and see whether there are variations and how this relates to adolescent spiritual well-being. It may also be useful to step into South African families and do both qualitative research exploring adolescent, sibling and parental constructions of spirituality and spiritual well-being and agreement or lack thereof and quantitative research with the SWBQ.

Attachment is yet another important area, and it may be worthwhile to explore the relationship between measures of attachment and religious denomination of parents and child: does this or does this not impact on agreement or lack of agreement? It may also be useful to explore the relationship between measures of attachment and spiritual well-being. Both such studies may contribute to an understanding of why there are lower levels of personal and transcendental spiritual well-being (as measured by the SWBQ) in adolescents whose religious denomination differs from that of their parents.

From a Catholic perspective, it may be of value to explore if the finding of lower transcendental well-being would be generalized to Catholic adolescents in other contexts (such as private schools) and, if so, why?

This research, in the South African context, is a first step into a field brimming with possibilities and offering findings which are important to consider, not only in a religious/spiritual context but also within sociological, educational and psychological theory and practice. For as Windham et al. (2005) write in relation to school violence:

... spiritual, religious, and family factors can play a potentially protective role in the lives of adolescents ... awareness of these protective elements ... can provide important resources for counsellors who want to enrich the developmental path of young people and help prevent any more tragic incidents of school violence. (p. 214)

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ARTICLE V

SPIRITUAL ORIENTATION AND SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING IN A GROUP OF SOUTH AFRICAN ADOLESCENTS

Historically, a distinction has been made in the psychology of religion and spirituality⁵ between two spiritual orientations: the private or intrinsic, and the public or extrinsic. International research suggests a relationship between the intrinsic orientation and higher levels of well-being. This paper explores the relationship between spiritual orientation and spiritual well-being, as measured by Gomez and Fisher's Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire, in a group of 1183 South African adolescents. Milevksy and Levitt's four-fold measure yields four spiritual orientations – private, public, indiscriminately spiritual and indiscriminately non-spiritual. Findings suggest that the majority of adolescents in this South African sample report an indiscriminately spiritual orientation which is associated with higher levels of transcendental spiritual well-being, personal spiritual well-being and overall spiritual health, and with greater frequency of prayer. Those who are purely privately oriented pray more frequently and have higher levels of transcendental spiritual well-being, personal spiritual well-being and overall spiritual health than those who are purely publicly oriented. Adolescents who report own and parent denomination as Catholic indicated more public spirituality and more indiscriminate non-spirituality than the Muslim and Protestant groups.

Within the psychology of religion and spirituality, two spiritual orientations or ways of practising spirituality have been constructed: the private, personal or intrinsic and the public, organizational, institutional or extrinsic. As early as 1936 William James narrated a difference between private religion as “the very direct and intimate experience of divinity” and public religion as “doctrines, various practices or rituals, and standards of behaviour” (as cited in Hart, 2006, p. 164).

International research suggests that there may be variations in psychological and spiritual well-being associated with whether spirituality is expressed privately or publicly (Duke & Johnson, 1984; Kass, Friedman, Leserman, Zuttermeister & Benson, 1999; King & Benson, 2006;

⁵ The signifier “spiritual and religious” or “religious and spiritual” is used because the writer concurs with authors such as Burke et al. (1999) who recognize both an overlap and a distinction between the spiritual and the religious. Religion is associated more with formalized, institutionalized beliefs and practice while spirituality is associated more with the individual experience and may, or may not, be associated with the institutional. Thus one can have spirituality without religion with Mohr (2006) pointing out that atheists and agnostics can have a rich spiritual life.

Oman & Thoresen, 2006; Park, Meyers & Czar, 1998; Spilka, Hood, Hunsberger & Gorsuch, 2003; Wong-McDonald & Gorsuch, 2004).

This research – exploring the relationships between four constructions of spiritual orientation (private, public, indiscriminate spirituality and indiscriminate non-spirituality) and spiritual well-being in a group of South African adolescents – primarily explores ways of experiencing, expressing or deploying spirituality. The Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (SWBQ) of Gomez and Fisher (2003, 2005a, 2005b) is utilized to measure spiritual well-being (constructed as relationship in four domains: personal, communal, environmental and transcendental) and total spiritual health. Tsang and McCullough (2003) would label the constructs of interest in this study as Level 2 or operational levels of organization as opposed to level one dispositional constructs.

However, before moving into a reading of relevant literature, the constructs “spirituality” and “spiritual well-being”, as narrated in this research, need to be clarified.

Defining spirituality and spiritual well-being

The first obstacle any research in this field encounters is giving meaning to the word “spirituality” (Fabricatore, Handal, Rubio & Gilner, 2004; Kelly, 1995; Mattis & Jagers, 2001). As Siefert (2002) writes: “Any contemporary discussion about the psychology of religion and spirituality is immediately immersed in the current fray about terminology” (p. 61). Constructions of the word “spirituality” are contested, multidimensional and varied.

Some use the terms spirituality and religion synonymously (Kelly, 1995; Hathaway, Scott & Garver, 2004) while others suggest both commonality and difference (Adams, Bezner, Drabbs, Zambarano & Steinhardt, 2000; Burke et al., 1999; De Souza, Cartwright & McGilp, 2004; Hay & Socha, 2005; Polanski, 2002). Some stress difference, constructing religion as institutional (Dowling, Gestsdottir, Anderson, Von Eye, Almerigi & Lerner, 2004; Hill et al., 2000; Huitt & Robbins, 2003; Mohr, 2006) and spiritual as innate, subjective and personal (Fisher, 2000). There can be spirituality without religion, they argue, but there cannot be religion without spirituality. This engenders another debate centring on whether religion incorporates spirituality (Pargament, 1999, 1997) or whether spirituality incorporates religion (Engebretson, 2004; Hayes & Cowie, 2005; Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Slater, Hall & Edwards, 2000; Temane & Wissing, 2006; Van Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006).

Some argue strongly against an emphasis on difference (Benson, Roehlkepartain & Rude, 2003; Hill et al., 2000; Kelly, 1995; Pargament, 1997, 1999; Wendel, 2003; Zinnbauer, Pargament

& Scott, 1999; Zinnbauer et al., 1997). Pargament (1999) rues the dichotomy of religion as narrowband/institutional/bad and the spiritual as broadband/individual/good. He argues that there is danger in individual/institutional polarization which loses sight of “the individual mission of the institution and the social context of the individual” (accessed on the internet) – both religion and spirituality can be expressed socially or individually (Pargament, 1997).

As the debates above suggest, for those seeking clear definitions and operationalizations, the lack of consensus is a scientific disability hampering effective research (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003; Newberg & Lee, 2005). For others, it is an expected part of the evolution of this area of study (Fisher, 1999; Hill et al., 2000).

For the purposes of this paper, and fitting with the construction of spiritual well-being advanced by Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001), spirituality is constructed as multidimensional and relational: as connectedness with self, others, a higher power, and the environment (Niederman, 1999). Such a construction fits with contextualizing or ecological perspectives such as those of Bronfenbrenner (Reimer & Furrow, 2001) and challenges Western individualistic discourses and narratives of spirituality as internal and private (Hay, 2000).

Relational spirituality can be read in the work of philosopher, Martin Buber, who described an I-Thou relationship characterized by participation of the whole being, exclusiveness, directness, presentness, transcendence of time and space, exemption from the world of causality, the emergence of love from the I-Thou communion, genuine response and responsibility and knowledge of self in relation to another. “Every particular Thou is a glimpse through to the eternal Thou” (Buber cited by Pfuetze, 1954, p. 156).

Dowling et al. (2004) define relational adolescent spirituality which they describe as “seeing life and living in new and better ways, taking something to be transcendent or of great value, and defining self and relation to others in ways that move beyond the petty or material concerns to a genuine concern for others” (p. 7). In so doing, they distinguish between adolescent religiosity and spirituality. The former is defined as institutional involving a particular doctrine about the supernatural and prescribed practices. Spirituality is defined as a contribution to the social world comprising an orientation to do good work, participation in activities of self-interest and orientation to help people other than the self.

Bosacki (2002), De Souza et al. (2004), Elton-Chalcraft (2002), Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001), Hay (2000), Hay and Nye (1998), Hay and Socha (2005), Mattis and Jagers (2001), Ozorak (2003) and Reimer and Furrow (2001) are among other writers offering current constructions of spirituality as relational consciousness. Epitomizing these writers’ narratives, Elton-Chalcraft

(2002) argues that in spirituality there needs to be awareness of four relational dimensions: inner, social and moral, environmental and transcendental which fits with Hay and Nye's (1998) "I-Others, I-Self, I-World and I-God relationships" (p. 114).

Spiritual well-being

Lack of agreement about meaning extends to the construct spiritual well-being with Duke and Brown (1979) and Moberg (1984) both suggesting that what one group may view as spiritual well-being may not be acceptable to another group. Moberg therefore questions whether one needs to develop diverse operationalizations of spiritual well-being or whether research will reveal core central indicators agreeable to all central ideologies.

Within this research, the construction privileged is that of the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging (1975), frequently quoted in the literature (Ellison, 1983; Fisher, Francis & Johnson, 2000, 2002; Gomez & Fisher, 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Moberg, 1984; Van Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006): "Spiritual well-being is the affirmation of life in a relationship with God, self, community and environment that nurtures and celebrates wholeness". Working from the NICA construction, Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001) proposed a holistic, inclusive conception of spiritual health as embracing harmonious relationships with self, others, the environment and the transcendent. He defines these relationships as four interrelated domains: (1) the personal, one's intra-relationship with oneself; (2) the communal, interpersonal relationships between self and others; (3) the environmental, one's relationship with the natural, physical and/or biological world; and (4) the transcendental, one's relationship with something or some being beyond the human level.

Fisher (1999) constructs spiritual well-being as associated with a *single domain* while he constructs spiritual health as the combined effect of spiritual well-being in the four domains. These domains mutually interact, with development in one area building up and on another: what he calls the principle of progressive synergism. Such development is generated by knowledge (providing a foundation) and inspiration (providing motivation). Thus, for each domain, Fisher constructs knowledge aspects, inspirational aspects and expressions of well-being.

Constructions of spiritual orientation

As noted in the introduction, two spiritual orientations have been historically constructed: the private and the public. Readings of these will be explored in greater depth.

Private spiritual practices are described by Idler et al. (2003) as taking place in the home or daily life, alone or with family. Among such practices may be prayer, meditation or reading of spiritual texts. The frequency of such practices may be, Idler et al. suggest, "... piety or devoutness or the penetration of religious rituals or messages into everyday life" (pp. 341-342). They may also be associated with health with, for example, some research suggesting that prayer and meditation practices such as the repetition of sacred phrases may produce a relaxation response (Idler et al., 2003). Pargament (1997) uses the signifier "personal religious expressions" (p. 282) and includes within such a construction measures such as frequency of prayer, salience of religion, religious faith and religious beliefs. Benson (1979) describes internal or inward religious experiences.

Public religious practices are described by Idler et al. (2003) as associated with involvement with formal public religious institutions - be they churches, synagogues, temples, mosques or ashrams – and access to the spiritual, emotional and social resources of such institutions. Pargament (1997) uses the signifier "organizational religious expressions" (p. 282), constructing this as participation in worship or other organizational congregational activities. Benson (1979) describes external experiences which are the behavioural dimension of rituals or institutional membership. The frequency of such practices may be associated with physical health indicators, behavioural conformity to beliefs leading to healthier lifestyle choices and increased frequency of heightened states of consciousness. There may be increased access to "spiritual, emotional, or instrumental social support" and constant reinforcement of beliefs which generate perceptions of "control, understanding and comfort in times of crisis" (Idler et al., 2003, p. 341).

What are described as private and public spiritual practices by Idler et al. (2003) are constructed as intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity by Milevsky and Levitt (2004). Using two questions – the importance of religion to the individual and the frequency of attendance at church services – on a Likert Scale, Milevsky and Levitt construct four categories: pure intrinsic religiosity (high scores on importance and low scores on attendance), pure extrinsic religiosity (high scores on attendance and low scores on importance), indiscriminately religious (high scores on both importance and attendance) and indiscriminately non-religious (low scores on both intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity). Thus the intrinsically spiritual adolescent, as constructed by Milevsky and Levitt, privately values religion but does not engage in public practices. The extrinsically spiritual adolescent does not value religion but participates in organizational activities. Milevsky and Levitt describe choosing to utilize this fourfold measure for two reasons: the elimination of possible obscurity of curvilinear relationships emerging from the simple use of

the intrinsic/extrinsic model; and the elimination of inconsistencies in the association between religion and well-being.

In this research Milevsky and Levitt's fourfold classification has been used and correlated with the SWBQ. However, in naming Milevsky and Levitt's categories, the researchers have chosen to use the signifier "private" rather than "intrinsic" and "public" rather than "extrinsic" for two reasons. The first is that the signifiers intrinsic/extrinsic are associated with constructs not measured in those two statements. First narrated by Allport and Ross (1967) who developed a scale to measure intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity, they involve more than just the importance of religion and institutional service attendance.

Allport and Ross (1967) describe the intrinsically motivated as living their spirituality and valuing it for its own sake. Their "master motive" (p. 434) is found in religion. Genia (1993) describes intrinsically religious people as those who are genuinely committed to their faith while Musgrave and McFarlane (2004) define intrinsically motivated faith as internalized, as "... part of the biological system of that individual" (Milevsky & Levitt, 2004, p. 308). Gorsuch (cited in Gorsuch & Walker, 2006) developed motivation scales measuring an intrinsic motivation as spirituality for the sake of spirituality.

The extrinsically motivated use religion and spirituality for their own ends. Their religion is "instrumental and utilitarian" (Allport & Ross, 1967, p. 434), meeting, for example, social, status, security or solace needs. Allport and Ross clearly link both the extrinsic orientation and the indiscriminately pro-religious orientation to prejudice, which meets the same needs. Genia (1993) describes the extrinsically religious as self-serving while Milevsky and Levitt (2004) define them as involved for external reasons such as social desirability. Gorsuch and Walker (2006) distinguish between two types of extrinsic motivation: the extrinsic social motivation being to build interpersonal relationships through the spiritual; and the extrinsic personal motivation in which spirituality meets some personal need. Hood (cited in Brown 1987) described the extrinsic as part of life as opposed to the intrinsic being the meaning of life.

A third orientation, quest or on-going existential searching and questioning with openness to complexity and change, has also been narrated. However it is less often used in studies exploring the relationship between spiritual orientation and well-being because of its relatively recent formulation (Maltby, Lewis & Day et al., 1999).

From the above, it can be seen that any measure of "intrinsic" needs to explore not only importance but also commitment (which may be demonstrated through private or public practices), while any measure of "extrinsic" needs to explore not only social involvement (such as

attendance) but also the motivation for such involvement and attached attitudes such as prejudice. Thus the researcher's decision to rather use the signifiers "private" and "public" for what has been measured in this research.

A second reason for using the signifiers private/public rather than intrinsic/extrinsic is avoidance of the emotive polarization attached to the latter terminology. For example, there are those, such as Savramis (1979) who undo the dichotomy by arguing that although there can be a personal, subjective experience of religion, no religion can be private because it manifests in social conduct objectifying the faith experience. Pargament (1997) and Slater et al. (2000) challenge the necessary dichotomy and polarization of extrinsic/negative/self-serving and intrinsic/positive/self-subordinating to a higher commitment. The extrinsic orientation is not necessarily about the selfish pursuit of goals at the expense of others, they state. It may rather be about looking to religion and spirituality to support one in satisfying personal and social needs (Pargament, 1997). This may explain why studies have found that people can score highly on both scales. Allport and Ross (1967) describe such people as "provokingly inconsistent ... indiscriminately pro-religious" (p. 437), undifferentiated thinkers who uncritically believe that all religion is good. Pargament (1997) argues against Allport and Ross's critical view of those who are indiscriminately pro-religious, arguing that "many people do not need to choose between themselves and God ... for some, there is room for both God and self at the centre of religious experience" (p. 66).

To the contrary, Slater et al. (2000) continue the polarization discourse, describing a postmodern evolution in which the extrinsic dimension has become irrelevant, with people no longer using religion for social status. Postmodern individuals pursue an intensely personal spirituality. This argument can be challenged on two grounds. Firstly, it reduces the extrinsic orientation to only social status, neglecting other needs it may meet. Secondly, it does not take account of psychological, developmental and contextual factors: proposing some generic postmodern personality. For example, from a developmental perspective, adolescence is an intensely other-oriented life phase, with peers playing a vital role in adolescents' lives (Santrock, 2005). Thus adolescent spirituality may be strongly associated with social and relational interactions and needs, as Engebretson (2004) found in her study with teenage boys.

Spiritual orientation and well-being

Research suggests that the intrinsic orientation is associated with higher levels of well-being in many domains. Reviews of research (Park, Meyers & Czar, 1998; Wong-McDonald & Gorsuch,

2004) note that intrinsically oriented individuals accept life challenges, have better personality functioning, are less anxious and more self-controlled. The intrinsic orientation is more associated with positive mental and physical health outcomes (Gartner, Larson & Allen, 1991) and with positive methods of religious coping (Hill & Pargament, 2003). Oman and Thoresen (2006) cite research with 15000 American adolescents suggesting that private and not public religiosity (prayer but not attending services) was associated with fewer suicide attempts and less suicidal ideation.

Intrinsic religiosity has been associated with identity achievement (King & Benson, 2006; Spilka et al., 2003) and religious well-being (Wong-McDonald & Gorsuch, 2004). Maltby et al. (1999) found positive correlations between personal measures of religiosity (intrinsic orientation and personal prayer) and psychological well-being, while public measures (extrinsic orientation and church attendance) were sometimes associated with lower psychological well-being. The quest orientation was not related to psychological well-being (Maltby et al., 1999). Davis, Kerr and Kurpius (2003) found that greater spiritual well-being and an intrinsic religious orientation predicted lower trait anxiety in at-risk male adolescents. Greater public religious involvement and intrinsic religious motivation has been associated with fewer symptoms of depression and faster recovery from depressive episodes (Smith, McCullough & Poll, 2003).

Kass et al. (1999) found intrinsic religiosity to be associated with positive psychological attitudes protecting individuals from stress-related illness factors. Intrinsic religiosity may be associated with religious or spiritual experiences which may generate the relaxation response (Kass). Practices associated with this relaxation response include prayer and meditation (Idler et al., 2003). A rare exception to the association between the intrinsic orientation and well-being is that of Duke and Johnson (1984) who found spiritual well-being to be more closely related to public religious expression than private prayer.

Spirituality, well-being and adolescence

Adolescence is a time of wrestling with existential questions such as “Who am I?”, “Where do I belong?”, “What is the meaning of life?”, “Why am I here?” (Bruce, 2004; King & Benson, 2006; Martin, Kirkcaldy & Siefen, 2003; Smith, 2003; Teske, 2006). It is a time of neurological maturation and an increasing cognitive capacity for abstract thought (Inhelder & Piaget, 1977). Hormones lead to physical changes and emotional experiences (Santrock, 2005). Erikson’s identity crisis (1950, 1968) unfolds in an environment which demands more of the adolescent and in which the adolescent turns increasingly to peers (Santrock, 2005). There is a move to

autonomy not necessarily associated with alienation from family beliefs (Blakeney & Blakeney, 2006).

In this challenging developmental stage, research suggests that religion and spirituality contribute to positive identity development, providing an ideological framework and a containing spiritual and social context (King & Benson, 2006). Verma and Maria (2006) argue that “[r]eligion and spirituality provide contour to the experience of youth ... Adolescents find in religion the boundaries and pathways of expression as they participate more actively in their expanding contexts of interaction and experience. Spirituality takes on for them meanings emerging from the sociopolitical conditions and the historical-cultural contexts within which they live, influencing both their social role as well as their individual behaviors” (p. 129).

There seems some debate about the presence of religion and spirituality in the lives of today’s adolescents. Research suggests that religion and spirituality remain important to adolescents (Lippman & Keith, 2006; Santrock, 2005). Yet other writers (Bruce, 2004; Kessler, 1997) rue the loss of religion and spirituality’s power of presence in the lives of adolescents, suggesting that this trend is contributing to feelings of meaninglessness and isolation, associated with high risk behaviours.

That religion and spirituality may be a protective factor during adolescence is indicated by research (Barnes, Plotnikoff, Fox & Pendleton, 2000; Benson et al., 2003; Bridges & Moore, 2002; Callaghan, 2005; Demir & Urberg, 2004; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Idler et al., 2003; King & Benson, 2006; Larson & Larson, 2003; Martin et al., 2003; Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Mohr, 2006; Oman & Thoresen, 2006; Pienaar, Beukes & Esterhuyse, 2006; Regnerus, 2003; Santrock, 2005; Spilka et al., 2003). Such studies suggest that greater religious and spiritual involvement is associated with positive social, emotional, behavioural and physical outcomes (Regnerus, 2003). Spirituality is important for psychological well-being and associated health outcomes (Temane & Wissing, 2006) and is a resource for positive human development (Benson et al., 2003).

As regards spiritual orientation and adolescent well-being, Milevsky and Levitt (2004), working with a sample of preadolescents and adolescents, found no significant difference in well-being between intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity, leading them to conclude that the extrinsic orientation is as beneficial as the intrinsic orientation during this developmental stage (Milevsky & Levitt, 2004). They also found females to be more intrinsically oriented than males in their sample.

Emerging from a reading of the literature are the following research questions:

- 1) Does a relationship exist between age and gender on the one hand and spiritual orientation on the other in this South African sample?
- 2) Does a relationship exist between religious denomination of these adolescents, their mothers and fathers on the one hand and spiritual orientation on the other?
- 3) Is there a relationship between frequency of prayer and spiritual orientation?
- 4) Are there differences in mean spiritual well-being scores for the different spiritual orientation groups?

To explore these questions, the following research methodology was applied.

Research method

For a full discussion of participants, procedure and measuring instruments, refer to Article I. However, for the purposes of this article, it is important to highlight that, in addition to the biographical variables of home language, age and gender, questions about own, paternal and maternal religious denomination were also asked (see questionnaire, Appendix A).

Furthermore, dimensions of religiosity as measured by Milevsky and Levitt (2004) in line with previous research by Wright, Frost and Wisecarver (1993) were other variables explored (see Appendix A). Using a Likert Scale, two questions were asked: the importance of religion/spirituality⁶ to the individual [(1) extremely important to (5) not important at all] and their frequency of attendance at church/spiritual activities, [(1) at least once a week to (5) never]. As did Milevsky and Levitt (2004), the researcher then constructed four categories: private spirituality (high levels of importance [1 or 2] and low levels of attendance [3 to 5]), public spirituality (high levels of attendance [1 or 2] and low levels of importance [3 to 5]), indiscriminate spirituality (high levels of importance and attendance [1 or 2 for both]), indiscriminate non-spirituality (low levels of importance and attendance [3 to 5 for both]). Likert Scales were also constructed to explore the frequency of prayer [(1) once or twice a day to (5) never] (see questionnaire, Addendum A).

Research hypotheses

Based on of the objectives of the study, the following research hypotheses were formulated for this group of South African adolescents:

⁶ In discussion of the research method and findings, the signifier “religion/spirituality” is utilized as it was presented to respondents on the questionnaire (see Addendum A).

- 1) A significant relationship exists between gender and spiritual orientation
- 2) A significant relationship exists between age and spiritual orientation
- 3) A significant relationship exists between religious denomination of the adolescent, his/her mother and his/her father on the one hand and spiritual orientation on the other
- 4) A significant relationship exists between frequency of prayer and spiritual orientation
- 5) Significant differences in mean scores exist in terms of spiritual well-being scales for the different spiritual orientation groups of adolescents

Statistical procedures

The chi-square test for homogeneity was used to investigate hypotheses 1 to 4 as all the variables are nominal. To test hypothesis 5 a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed. When a significant result (F -value) was detected, the analysis was extended to include a one-way variance analysis of each of the independent variables. To determine statistically significant differences among average values of the categories, the Scheffé procedure was utilized.

To determine the meaningfulness of statistically significant results generated, the practical significance of the results was examined by calculating effect sizes (Steyn, 1999). As different statistical procedures were implemented, the method of calculating effect size differed. In the case of the chi-square (χ^2) test the effect size is denoted by w with $0,1$ indicating a small effect, $0,3$ indicating a medium effect and $0,5$ indicating a large effect size. In the case of analysis of variance, effect size is denoted by f with $0,1$ indicating a small effect, $0,25$ indicating a medium effect and $0,4$ indicating a large effect size. Only statistically significant results with an effect size above small were considered meaningful. The 1%-level of significance was utilized in this study.

Results and discussion

Table 1 summarizes the results of chi-square (χ^2) analysis of the relationship of gender to spiritual orientation. Column percentages are also indicated.

Table 1: χ^2 -results: gender and spiritual orientation

Spiritual orientation	Male		Female	
	F	%	F	%
Private	46	8,5	65	10,2
Public	45	8,3	68	10,7
Indiscriminate spirituality	354	65,2	413	64,7
Indiscriminate non-spirituality	98	18,0	92	14,4
Row total:	543	46,0	638	54,0
$\chi^2 = 5,053$ $p = 0,1680$ $v = 3$				

Chi-square analysis suggests that, at 1% significance level, there is not a statistically significant relationship between gender and spiritual orientation. However, Table 4 indicates that 767 (65%) of the 1181 respondents report practising indiscriminate spirituality. Thus most of the respondents reported both valuing religion/spirituality highly and attending church/spiritual activities regularly. This fits with arguments challenging polarization of intrinsic/extrinsic and public/private (Pargament, 1997, 1999; Savramis, 1979; Zinnbauer et al., 1997; Zinnbauer et al., 1999), suggesting that within this group of South African adolescents the norm is both-and rather than either-or. Only 18,7% expressed a private spirituality (highly valuing religion/spirituality but rarely or never attending organizational events) while only 19% reported a public spirituality (attending institutional events frequently but not valuing religion/spirituality highly).

Table 2 summarizes the χ^2 -results obtained from an analysis of the relationships between age and spiritual orientation.

Table 2: χ^2 -results: age and spiritual orientation

Spiritual orientation	13-14 years		15-16 years		17 and older	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Private	24	6,7	41	8,7	46	13,5
Public	32	8,9	47	9,9	34	10,0
Indiscriminate spirituality	257	71,4	301	63,6	201	59,1
Indiscriminate non-spirituality	47	13,1	84	17,8	59	17,4
Row total:	360	30,7	473	40,3	340	29,0
$\chi^2 = 16,927$ $p = 0,0096$ ($w = 0,12$) $v = 6$						

A significant difference between age and spiritual orientation at 1%-level is suggested by chi-square analysis. A larger proportion (13,5%) of older adolescents (17 years up) reported a private spiritual orientation as compared to the 13-14 year olds (6,7%). However, the effect size ($w = 0,12$) is small and thus possibly not practically meaningful.

In order to explore the relationship between various variables and religious denomination, the distribution of the full sample was explored. It was found that there was a strong relationship between adolescent and parental denominations and that there were too few respondents in some denominational groups for meaningful analysis. The decision was thus made to exclude all but the three largest groups (Protestant, Catholic and Muslim). To establish a more even distribution among the three groups, 180 adolescents were randomly selected from the very large Protestant group. Thus a newly assembled sample ($N = 463$) was used for all analyses in which religious denomination was a variable (see Article IV for a detailed discussion of this procedure).

Table 3 summarizes χ^2 analysis of the relationships between the religious denominations of adolescent, mother and father on the one hand, and spiritual orientation on the other.

Table 3: χ^2 -results: adolescent, maternal, paternal religious denomination and spiritual orientation

Spiritual orientation	Adolescent religious denomination					
	Protestant		Catholic		Muslim	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Private	15	8,3	13	11,8	20	11,5
Public	16	8,9	20	18,2	10	5,8
Indiscriminately spiritual	131	72,8	54	49,1	134	77,5
Indiscriminately non-spiritual	18	10,0	23	20,9	9	5,2
Total	180	38,9	110	23,7	173	37,4
$\chi^2 = 35,945$ $p = 0,0001$ ($w = 0,28$) $v = 6$						
Spiritual orientation	Maternal religious denomination					
	Protestant		Catholic		Muslim	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Private	17	8,7	11	11,6	19	11,6
Public	19	9,7	18	18,9	9	5,5
Indiscriminately spiritual	139	71,3	49	51,6	127	77,4
Indiscriminately non-spiritual	20	10,3	17	17,9	9	5,5
Total	195	43,0	95	20,9	164	36,1
$\chi^2 = 26,808$ $p = 0,0002$ ($w = 0,24$) $v = 6$						
Spiritual orientation	Paternal religious denomination					
	Protestant		Catholic		Muslim	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Private	18	9,6	10	11,2	19	11,5
Public	14	7,5	18	20,2	7	4,2
Indiscriminately spiritual	134	71,7	45	50,6	131	79,4
Indiscriminately non-spiritual	21	11,2	16	18,0	8	4,8
Total	187	42,4	89	20,2	165	37,4
$\chi^2 = 34,728$ $p = 0,0001$ ($w = 0,28$) $v = 6$						

The relationship between the adolescent's religious denomination and spiritual orientation yielded a chi-square value of 35,945, significant at 1%-level. The corresponding w -value (0,28) suggests a medium effect size which indicates that the results are practically significant. As compared to the Protestants (72,8%) and Muslims (77,5%), a smaller proportion of Catholics (49,1%) report an indiscriminately spiritual orientation. A larger proportion of Catholics (20,9%) are indiscriminately non-spiritual when compared to the Protestants (10 0%) and the Muslims (5,2%). Similarly, a larger proportion of Catholics (18,2%) report more public spirituality than do Protestants (8,9%) and Muslims (5,8%). There were no large proportional differences between the Protestant and Muslim respondents as regards spiritual orientation.

The relationship of maternal religious denomination to adolescent spiritual orientation yielded a chi-square value of 26,808, significant at 1%-level. The corresponding w -value of 0,24

suggests a small to medium effect size suggesting that the findings are of practical value. When compared to adolescents whose mothers are Protestant (71,3%) and Muslim (77,4%), a smaller proportion of adolescents whose mothers are Catholic (51,6%) report an indiscriminate spiritual orientation. A larger proportion of adolescents whose mothers are Catholics (17,9%) also reported indiscriminate non-spirituality as compared to adolescents with Protestant (10,3%) and Muslim (5,5%) mothers. Compared to adolescents with Protestant (9,7%) and Muslim (5,5%) mothers, adolescents with Catholic mothers (18,9%) report more public spirituality.

The relationship of paternal religious denomination to adolescent spiritual orientation yielded a chi-square value of 34,728, significant at 1%-level. The corresponding *w*-value of 0, 28 suggests a medium effect size suggesting that the findings are of moderate practical value. As in the case of maternal spiritual orientation, when compared to adolescents whose fathers are Protestant (71,7%) and Muslim (79,4%), a smaller proportion of adolescents whose fathers are Catholic (50,6%) report an indiscriminate spiritual orientation. To the contrary, a larger proportion of adolescents whose fathers are Catholics (18,0%) reported indiscriminate non-spirituality as compared to adolescents with Protestant (11,2%) and Muslim (4,8%) fathers. Compared to adolescents with Protestant (7,5%) and Muslim (4,2%) fathers, adolescents with Catholic fathers (20,2%) report more public spirituality.

Within this South African sample, there thus does appear to be a relationship between adolescent spiritual orientation and religious denomination of the adolescent, her mother and her father. Catholicism was associated with more indiscriminate non-spirituality (neither valuing religion/spirituality nor attending church/spiritual activities) and more public spirituality (higher institutional involvement and lower valuing of religion/spirituality) than either the Protestant or Muslim groups. That the public spiritual orientation is higher within the Catholic group is congruent with Ebaugh, Richman and Chafetz's research (cited in Pargament, 1997) finding that Catholic Charismatics sought social support as a religious coping mechanism. It also fits with Greeley's research (in Spilka et al., 2003) documenting an increasing church attendance but decreasing commitment to orthodox beliefs among Catholics. This fits with the parallel drawn between extrinsic religiosity and comfort-seeking (Brown, 1987). As Spilka et al. argue people attend religious institutions for many reasons.

That indiscriminate non-spirituality is higher in the Catholic group in this study, may also be hypothesized to fit with the observation that affiliation with a religious group is not necessarily associated with being religious or spiritual (Spilka et al., 2003). Templeton and Eccles (2006) distinguish between collective religious identity and personal religious identity. The former is

associated with being a member of, for example, a Catholic community. The latter involves individual commitment to and internalization of beliefs and practices. But just the act of affiliating with a group - taking on a collective religious identity - says something important about how people both see themselves and are seen by others, argues Pargament (1997). In a similar vein, Brown (1987) describes religious identity as having a symbolic function.

This research was also conducted in South African public schools in which religion and spirituality are largely excluded from the curriculum (Roux, 2006). It is therefore likely that such findings may differ for Catholic learners in Catholic private schools, and for their parents who invest in sending them to such schools.

The results of a chi-square analysis of the relationship between spiritual orientation and frequency of prayer are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: χ^2 -results for spiritual orientation and frequency of prayer

Frequency of prayer	Spiritual orientation							
	Private		Public		Indiscriminate spirituality		Indiscriminate non-spirituality	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Once or twice a day	32	28,5	29	25,7	329	42,9	15	7,9
Regularly	30	26,8	19	16,8	246	32,1	26	13,7
Sometimes	38	33,9	41	36,3	172	22,5	37	19,5
Seldom	6	5,4	18	15,9	18	2,4	60	31,6
Never	6	5,4	6	5,3	1	0,1	52	27,4
Total:	112	9,5	113	9,5	766	64,9	190	16,1
$\chi^2 = 461,164$ $p = 0,0001$ ($w = 0,62$) $v = 12$								

A significant relationship (at 1%-level) between spiritual orientation and frequency of prayer was found by chi-square analysis. The large effect size ($w = 0,62$) suggests that this finding is of practical value and is thus meaningful. One significant difference is that between the private and the public groups: if the categories praying once or twice a day and praying regularly are combined, 55,3% of the private group report praying at a higher frequency as compared to 42,5% of the public group. Only 10,8% of the private group reported praying seldom or never, as compared to 21,2% of the public group. This fits with categorization of frequency of prayer as more a personal spiritual expression than a public or organizational spiritual expression (Idler et al., 2003; Pargament, 1997).

Most obvious are the proportionate differences between the indiscriminately spiritual and indiscriminately non-spiritual groups. Only 3,5% of the indiscriminately spiritual adolescents reported seldom or never praying, compared to 59,0% of the indiscriminately non-spiritual group.

A large proportion of the indiscriminately spiritual group (75,0%) pray once or twice a day or regularly, while only 21,6% of indiscriminately non-spiritual adolescents do so. Again this supports the finding above that, in this group of South African adolescents, mixed private/personal/intrinsic and public/organizational/extrinsic expressions of spirituality are the norm with those considering religion/spirituality important and attending church/spiritual activities also frequently praying. It also fits with previous research finding a strong correlation between church attendance and prayer in a group of British teenagers (Francis & Evans, 1996), suggesting that indiscriminate combination of private and public expressions of spirituality is not unexpected among adolescents.

Exploration of whether there were significant differences in the spiritual well-being domains as well as the total score (spiritual health, as conceptualized by Fisher) for the four different spiritual orientation groups was carried out with one-way MANOVA analysis. An F -value (according to the Hotelling-Lawley Trace) of 83,48 ($v = 12; 1966,2$) was obtained at a 1%-significance level ($p = 0,0001$). One-way variance analysis was carried out to determine in which of the four spiritual well-being domains, as well as the total spiritual health, significant differences in the averages of the four spiritual orientation groups emerged. These results and the calculated effect sizes (f) appear in Table 5.

Table 5: Averages, standard deviations and F-values emerging from one-way variance analysis exploring differences in spiritual orientation

Variable	Private		Public		Indiscriminate spirituality		Indiscriminately non-spirituality		F	p	f
	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	S			
Environmental	17,27	4,04	16,19	4,75	17,66	3,87	16,26	4,74	8,09*	0,0001	0,15
Transcendental	19,79	4,15	15,99	4,09	21,44	2,94	12,58	5,35	320,44*	0,0001	0,92
Communal	18,73	3,40	17,93	3,44	18,92	2,09	18,26	3,59	5,05*	0,0018	0,12
Personal	19,69	3,37	18,74	3,32	20,44	2,99	18,63	3,51	22,68*	0,0001	0,25
Total score	75,74	9,52	68,86	10,34	78,51	9,62	65,72	11,65	97,01*	0,0001	0,51

* $p \leq 0,01$

Table 5 indicates that there were significant differences in averages (at 1% significance level) for all four of the spiritual orientation groups in all four of the spiritual well-being domains as well as in the total spiritual health score. The corresponding f -values indicate a large effect size for the total spiritual health score ($f = 0,51$) as well as for the transcendental spiritual well-being domain ($f = 0,92$) and a medium effect size for the personal spiritual well-being domain ($f = 0,25$). This suggests that these results have average to high practical value and thus are meaningful. The other domains' effect sizes were small and thus will not be discussed further.

Variables with medium to large effect size were further analyzed with the Scheffé-test to identify averages within the defined group. Within the transcendental spiritual well-being domain, there were significant differences between all four spiritual orientation groups as determined by the *post hoc t-test*. Compared to the other three groups, the indiscriminately spiritual group had the highest average score on the transcendental scale while the indiscriminately non-spiritual group had the lowest average score. A high score on the transcendental well-being scale suggests a strong relationship with a construct of the divine which, for the indiscriminately spiritual group is expressed both in a high valuing of religion and spirituality and in participation in religious/spiritual activities. Religion can be private and public, sacred and secular, without being muddled, argues Pargament (1997) creating space to “spiritualize humanity and humanize God” (p. 66). In this South African sample, both-and is associated with higher levels of transcendental spiritual well-being than all the other groups.

A significant difference in the average scores of the public and private spiritual orientation groups also emerged: the latter achieved a higher average score in the transcendental spiritual well-being domain than the publicly oriented group. This differs from Milevsky and Levitt’s (2004) finding of no significant differences in well-being between intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity in a group of preadolescents and adolescents. However, it does fit with the construction of private spirituality as being a valuing of spirituality for spirituality (a relationship with the divine), with public spirituality being more a valuing of religion and spirituality for its meeting of other needs (Allport & Ross, 1967; Gorsuch & Walker, 2006; Milevsky & Levitt, 2004).

Within the personal spiritual well-being domain, the *post hoc t-test* suggested significant differences between the indiscriminately non-spiritual group and a) the private and b) the indiscriminately spiritual group. The indiscriminately non-spiritual group had a significantly lower average score in this domain than the other two groups (private and indiscriminately spiritual). A significant difference in the average scores of the public and indiscriminately spiritual groups also emerged: the latter achieved a higher average score in the personal spiritual well-being domain than the publicly oriented group. Again this fits with the constructions: the public group attends church but does not highly value spirituality, and thus is more focused on the social/organizational/institutional aspects of religion. In the focusing on the external, it could be hypothesized that there may generally be less focus on the internal, and thus lower scores in a measure of intrapersonal relationship. This may fit with research suggesting the extrinsic (public) orientation has less adaptive religious coping (Pargament, 1997) and psychological well-being (Davis et al., 2003; Kass et al., 1999; King & Benson, 2006; Maltby et al., 1999; Oman &

Thoresen, 2006; Park et al., 1998; Spilka et al., 2003; Wong-McDonald & Gorsuch, 2004) – possible indicators of a more harmonious relationship with self.

As regards spiritual health (the total score), the *post hoc t-test* suggests significant differences between the indiscriminately spiritual group and the a) public and b) the indiscriminately non-spiritual group. The indiscriminately spiritual group had a significantly higher average on spiritual health than the other two groups (public and indiscriminately non-spiritual). There were also significant differences between the private and a) the public and b) the indiscriminately non-spiritual groups. The private group had a significantly higher average score on spiritual health than the other two groups (public and indiscriminately non-spiritual). That the private group had higher measures of spiritual health than the public group fits with previous research suggesting that intrinsic religiosity as compared to extrinsic religiosity is associated with more adaptive functioning (Davis et al., 2003; Kass et al., 1999; King & Benson, 2006; Maltby et al., 1999; Oman & Thoresen, 2006; Park et al., 1998; Spilka et al., 2003; Wong-McDonald & Gorsuch, 2004).

That the indiscriminately spiritual group also has high measured levels of spiritual health (spiritual well-being across domains) compared to the public and indiscriminately non-spiritual groups fits with Milevsky and Levitt's (2004) finding that learners with high indiscriminate religiosity had more positive scores on some measures of psychological adjustment than those who were indiscriminately non-religious. In a similar vein, Pargament (1997) presented modest evidence of positive adjustment in negative situations for personal expressions of belief, organizational expressions of belief and for mixed personal and organizational expressions of belief.

No significant differences in average scores in the spiritual health total were found between a) the private and indiscriminately spiritual groups and b) the public and indiscriminately non-spiritual groups.

Summary

In this sample of South African adolescents, the majority reported an indiscriminate spiritual orientation – both valuing religion/spirituality highly and attending church/spiritual activities – with this indiscriminate spirituality being associated with higher levels of transcendental spiritual well-being, personal spiritual well-being and overall spiritual health. Indiscriminate spirituality was also associated with a greater frequency of prayer. This finding fits with the argument forwarded by writers such as Pargament (1997) and Zinnbauer et al. (1999) who challenge

polarization of private/public, intrinsic/extrinsic, arguing that many both value religion and spirituality for its own sake and use it to support their personal and social needs. It contradicts arguments such as that advanced by Slater et al. (2000) who suggest that in the postmodern world there is a move from religion as a social support to a more private, personal spirituality.

This study does support findings, however, that those who are purely privately oriented (valuing spirituality for its own sake while not participating in church/spiritual activities) do have higher levels of transcendental spiritual well-being, personal spiritual well-being and overall spiritual health than those who are purely publicly oriented (participating in church/spiritual activities while not valuing spirituality highly). The private group also prays more frequently than the public group, suggesting that this is a more personal expression of spirituality.

Differences in spiritual orientation associated with adolescent, maternal and paternal religious denomination were also found, suggesting that those affiliated with the Catholic faith reported more public spirituality and more indiscriminate non-spirituality. The former may be associated with seeking social support while the latter may be associated with the taking on of a collective religious identity in this developmental stage, without an internalization of beliefs and practices transforming this into a personal spiritual identity. It may also be related to the public school context within which the research was conducted.

No significant differences in spiritual orientation were found for gender, contradicting Milevsky and Levitt's finding (2004) of more intrinsic responses for female adolescents. Also contrary to Milevsky and Levitt (2004), who found no orientation-age relationship, older adolescents were found to have a more private orientation, although this finding was of a small effect size.

Limitations and recommendations

As in any study in the psychology of religion and spirituality, lack of consensus regarding constructs such as spiritual well-being, spirituality and various types of religiosity becomes a limitation (Gray, 2006; Kanya, 2000; Moberg, 1979). The question becomes, can findings emerging from the two different constructions, and different measurements of the constructions be compared? For example, Allport and Ross (1967) associate extrinsic religiosity and prejudice. Others, such as Milevsky and Levitt (2004) construct it simply as an organizational or public expression of religiosity. In citing literature or making associations, is one comparing like with like? Or are these completely different constructs?

Leading from this, a possible limitation in this study lies in the measures of spiritual orientation deployed. Only two items were used in line with Milevsky and Levitt's (2004) study. This could be seen as insufficient and simplistic in its exclusion of, for example, constructs such as meaningfulness and prejudice. It may be useful to do additional research validating and utilizing Allport Ross's scale – either as it is or with adjustments recommended by Maltby et al. (1999) - with a South African population. It may also be useful to incorporate measures of Quest, such as the Quest Scale, also with modifications suggested by Maltby et al.

Similarly, many previous international studies of spiritual well-being are based on Ellison's Spiritual Well-Being Scale (1983). Can findings based on this construction of spiritual well-being and questionnaire be compared to findings based on Gomez and Fisher's (2003) SWBQ? It may be useful to do research correlating these questionnaires with a South African population.

As regards prayer, the only dimension measured here is frequency, with prior research (Poloma & Pendleton, 1989) indicating that prayer is in fact multi-dimensional with four types identified: meditative, petitionary, ritualistic and colloquial. In related research Hood, Morris and Watson (1989) found differences in prayer among different spiritual orientations. This is yet another area of possible research in the South African context.

A fascinating area emerging from the differences in spiritual orientation found in religious denominations may be an exploration of the collective religious identity of adolescents as compared to their personal spiritual identity. But again, as Templeton and Eccles (2006) indicate, this in itself will require a better understanding of spiritual identity and what this encompasses.

It may also be useful to explore differences in spiritual orientation between Catholic learners in the public school environment as opposed to learners in Catholic private schools (where religion is part of the curriculum). Prior research by Fisher (2001) in the Australian context suggests that teachers in Catholic schools are invested in passing on the teachings of the church, while the Catholic learners sampled in this research are in South African public schools where religion and even spirituality are largely excluded from the curriculum (Roux, 2006).

That the majority of learners in this sample practise indiscriminate spirituality – and thus both value religion/spirituality and attend church/spiritual activities frequently – suggests that spirituality is an important dimension to consider in psychological, social, educational and family contexts. It therefore points to the value and relevance of more research into this area, and in the psychology of religion and spirituality generally, in the South African context.

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ARTICLE VI

SPIRITUAL SALIENCE, PRACTICES AND SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING IN A GROUP OF SOUTH AFRICAN ADOLESCENTS

Spirituality and religion are increasingly being associated with higher levels of well-being in international research literature. This study, with a sample of 1183 South African adolescents, explores the relationship between the valuing of religion/spirituality⁷, spiritual practices such as prayer and church/spiritual activity attendance and spiritual well-being as measured by Gomez and Fisher's Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire. Findings suggest that, in this sample, there is congruence between spiritual salience and practices with a higher valuing of religion/spirituality associated with more frequent prayer and church/spiritual activity attendance. A high valuing of religion/spirituality, more frequent church/spiritual activity attendance and more frequent prayer are all related to higher levels of transcendental spiritual well-being or a self-reported significant and harmonious relationship with a divine Other or energy. Spiritual salience and more frequent prayer are also related to higher levels of personal spiritual well-being and to higher levels of global spiritual health.

Internationally, empirical evidence on well-being and its relationship to religion and spirituality⁸ is increasing (Joseph, Linley & Maltby, 2006; Lewis & Cruise, 2006; Van Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006). Physicians are beginning to recognize the health-enhancing and healing roles of spiritual practices (Epperly, 2000). And the emergence of positive psychology, promoting the study of human strengths and virtues, has focused attention on whether religion and spirituality are related to positive emotional and psychological states (Joseph et al., 2006).

In South Africa there appears to have been neglect of psychological research in the fields of religion and spirituality, possibly associated with the construction of religion as pathology/neurosis (Le Roux, 1998) emerging from Freudian psychoanalytic theory or with behaviourism and concurrent scientific scepticism for that which is mystical and not observable

⁷ In discussion of the research questions, methods and findings, the signifier "religion/spirituality" is utilized as it was presented to respondents on the questionnaire (see Addendum A).

⁸ In all other cases, the signifier "spiritual and religious" or "religious and spiritual" is used because the writer concurs with authors such as Burke et al. (1999) who recognize both an overlap and a distinction between the spiritual and the religious. Religion is associated more with formalized, institutionalized beliefs and practice while spirituality is associated more with the individual experience and may, or may not, be associated with the institutional. Thus one can have spirituality without religion with Mohr (2006) pointing out that atheists and agnostics can have a rich spiritual life.

and measurable (Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Nielsen, 2000; Smith, 2003). American research indicates a contrast between the general population's valuing of religion and psychologists' valuing of religion (Hathaway, Scott & Garver, 2004) which may also apply in South Africa, given the paucity of psychological research in this area. That there is a dearth of statistics regarding religiosity and spirituality and few published articles exploring religion or spirituality and its impact on well-being suggests that such research is necessary within our context.

This research explores the relationships between spiritual well-being as measured by Gomez and Fisher's Spiritual Well-being Questionnaire (SWBQ) (2003) and three spirituality factors - the significance or importance attached to religion/spirituality, attendance at church/spiritual activities and prayer – in a group of South African adolescents. Personal prayer as a private expression and church/spiritual activity attendance as a public expression are separate but related aspects of spirituality (Maltby, Lewis & Day, 1999).

Constructing spirituality and spiritual well-being

Any research in the psychology of religion and spirituality field becomes embroiled in conceptual and operational fuzziness. "Religion and spirituality: Unfuzzifying the fuzzy" is the title of an article by Zinnbauer et al. (1997) which attempts to clarify constructs within the field of the psychology of religion. However, this is more easily said than done, with fuzziness and disagreement about terminology continuing to characterize debate (Fabricatore, Handal, Rubio & Gilner, 2004; Kelly, 1995; Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Singleton, Mason & Webber, 2004; Smith & McSherry, 2004).

Constructions of spirituality are multidimensional and varied. Spirituality has been storied as self-transcendence (Benson, Roehlkepartain & Rude, 2003) and/or a search for the sacred (Engebretson, 2004; Pargament, 1999) and/or individual or collective belief systems associated with the divine or supernatural (Niederman, 1999) or transcendental experience (Gray, 2006). It has been constructed as meaning-making (Bosacki, 2002) and/or vital or animating energy (Fisher, 2000) and/or relationship with self, others, the environment and God (Fisher, 2000; Hay & Nye, 1998) or a combination of all the above.

Narrating adolescent spirituality, Dowling, Gestsdottir, Anderson, Von Eye, Almerigi and Lerner (2004) define it as "seeing life and living in new and better ways, taking something to be transcendent or of great value, and defining self and relation to others in ways that move beyond the petty or material concerns to a genuine concern for others" (p. 7). In so doing, they distinguish between adolescent religiosity and spirituality. The former is institutional, involving a particular

doctrine about the supernatural and prescribed practices. Spirituality is a contribution to the social world comprising an orientation to do good work, participation in activities of self-interest and orientation to help people other than the self (Dowling et al., 2004).

Such polarization of religion and spirituality is rued by writers such as Benson et al. (2003), Hill et al. (2000), Kelly (1995), Pargament (1997, 1999), Zinnbauer, Pargament & Scott (1999), Zinnbauer et al. (1997), and others. For example, Zinnbauer et al. (1999) describe polarization of organized/substantive/negative religion versus personal/functional/positive spirituality as leaving us with “a static, frozen religion and a spirituality without a core” (p. 904). Related to this, debate rages around whether religion is a construct incorporating spirituality (Pargament, 1997, 1999) or whether spirituality is a construct incorporating religion. Engebretson (2004), Hayes and Cowie (2005), Mattis and Jagers (2001), Slater, Hall and Edwards (2000), Temane and Wissing (2006), Van Dierendonck and Mohan (2006), among others, construct spirituality as the broader, more inclusive term with the point being made that no religion is possible without spirituality while a spirituality without religion is conceivable (Speck, Higginson & Addington-Hall, 2004).

Conceptual fuzziness has led to a call for clear definitions and operationalizations if valid scales measuring spirituality are to be developed (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003; Newberg & Lee, 2005).

For the purposes of this paper, and fitting with the construction of spiritual well-being advanced by Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001) and upon which Gomez and Fisher’s SWBQ is based, spirituality is constructed as relational. Current constructions of spirituality as relational consciousness are offered by Bosacki (2001, 2002), De Souza, Cartwright and McGilp (2004), Elton-Chalcraft (2002), Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001), Hay (2000), Hay and Nye (1998), Hay and Socha (2005), as well as Reimer and Furrow (2001). Bosacki (2002) describes spirituality as connectedness to self, others and the world. As does Fisher, she stresses that spirituality refers to both an interiority or inner reality (Fisher’s personal domain) and a sense of being connected to something large beyond self (Fisher’s transcendent domain). Elton-Chalcraft (2002) argues that in spirituality there needs to be awareness of four relational dimensions: inner, social and moral, and environmental and transcendental, which fits with Hay and Nye’s (1998) “I-Others, I-Self, I-World and I-God relationships” (p. 114).

Mattis and Jagers (2001) argue that religion and spirituality are relational and that “believing in God places one in relationship with, and immediately invites reflections on one’s connections and obligations to, this Other” (p. 520). They further construct religion and

spirituality as playing complex roles in social relationships across multiple levels of human ecology (individual, familial, communal, etc). Ozorak (2003) describes an understanding of God as “inescapably relational” (p. 255) and stresses the impact of culture, gender and faith on religious narratives and relational schemas.

Philosopher, Martin Buber could be read as a pioneer in the construction of a relational spirituality with his “I-Thou” relationship making of relationship a sacred or self-transcendent dimension. Pfuetze (1954) describes characteristics of I-Thou relationships outlined by Buber as participation of the whole being, exclusiveness, directness, presentness, transcendence of time and space, exemption from the world of causality, the emergence of love from the I-Thou communion, genuine response and responsibility and knowledge of self in relation to another.

As spirituality is a contested term, so is spiritual well-being. Moberg (1984) stresses that spiritual well-being is a multidimensional construct and a lifelong process which overlaps with religiosity but may also be pursued in a wide range of other contexts. Because of the multiplicity of contexts in which spiritual well-being can be constructed and pursued, contesting of its meaning is to be expected. As Moberg points out “what one group views as indicative of a high level of spiritual well-being, another may interpret as symptomatic of spiritual illness” (p. 359). Duke and Brown (1979) concur, stressing that what is an indicator of spiritual well-being for one group may be inappropriate for another.

A frequently cited construction of spiritual well-being (Duke & Johnson, 1984; Ellison, 1983; Van Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006) is that of Moberg who conceptualized spirituality as comprising two components, namely the vertical (sense of well-being in relationship to God) and the horizontal (sense of life purpose and life satisfaction with no reference to the religious). This is the construct upon which Ellison (1983) based the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS) which has a religious well-being subscale (the vertical component) and an existential well-being subscale (the horizontal component). This leads to definitions such as those of Kamyra (2000) who defines spiritual well-being as “satisfaction with one’s relationship with a higher being, and one’s sense of meaning and purpose in life” (p. 232). Blaikie and Kelsen (1979), taking a slightly different tack, distinguish between material well-being (meeting basic needs) and existential well-being (a sense of purpose, meaning, identity and belonging). They construct spiritual well-being as a type of existential well-being incorporating references to the transcendental, sacred or supernatural.

For the purposes of this paper, the construction forwarded is that of the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging (1975), frequently quoted in the literature (Ellison, 1983; Fisher, Francis &

Johnson, 2000, 2002; Gomez & Fisher, 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Moberg, 1984; Van Dierendonck & Mohan, 2006): “Spiritual well-being is the affirmation of life in a relationship with God, self, community and environment that nurtures and celebrates wholeness” (Fisher et al., 2000, p. 134). Working from the NICA construction, Fisher (1999, 2000, 2001) proposed a holistic, inclusive conception of spiritual health as embracing harmonious relationships with self, others, the environment and the transcendent. He defines these relationships as four interrelated domains: (1) the personal, one’s intra-relationship with oneself; (2) the communal, interpersonal relationships between self and others; (3) the environmental, one’s relationship with the natural, physical and/or biological world; and (4) the transcendental, one’s relationship with something or some being beyond the human level.

Fisher (1999) constructs spiritual well-being as associated with a *single domain* while he constructs spiritual health as the combined effect of spiritual well-being in the four domains. These domains mutually interact, with development in one area building up and on another: what he calls the principle of progressive synergism (Fisher). Such development is generated by knowledge (providing a foundation) and inspiration (providing motivation). Thus, for each domain, Fisher constructs knowledge aspects, inspirational aspects and expressions of well-being.

Based upon this construction Fisher, Francis and Johnson (2000) initially developed a questionnaire comprising 150 items called the Spiritual Health via Four Domains of Spiritual Well-being (SH4DI) as an overall index of spiritual health and distinguishing between six different spiritual health perspectives (or what they also call ideal types) generated by the relative priority given to each domain. Personalists embrace the personal domain as spiritual well-being, scoring higher than average scores on the personal subscale but lower scores on the other three subscales. Communalists embrace the communal domain as spiritual well-being, scoring higher than average scores on the communal subscale but lower scores on the other three subscales. Environmentalists embrace the environmental domain as spiritual well-being, scoring higher than average scores on the environmental subscale but lower scores on the other three subscales. Religionists embrace the transcendental domain as spiritual well-being, scoring higher than average scores on the transcendental subscale but lower scores on the other three subscales. Existentialists embrace the first three domains, scoring higher than average scores on the personal, communal and environmental subscales but lower scores on the transcendental subscale. Globalists embrace all four domains, scoring higher than average scores in every subscale. As Fisher et al. (2000) write: “As well as providing an overall index of spiritual health, the Spiritual

Health in Four Domains Index (SH4DI) enables the spiritual profile of individuals to be profiled in greater depth” (p. 143).

This was refined into the Shalom (Spiritual Health and Life Orientation Measure) comprising 20 items and exploring ideal versus real (how you feel) spiritual health. This was further refined into the SWBQ, exploring only real/present self-reported spiritual well-being and health, which was validated by Gomez and Fisher (2003, 2005a, 2005b).

The question becomes, why develop yet another measure of spiritual well-being? Fisher et al. (2000) critique existing measures of spiritual health as not being inclusive and thus not having a balance of the four domains, the majority omitting the environmental domain. For example, they critique the Spiritual Orientation Inventory which deliberately omits the transcendent. They also critique Ellison’s SWBS, one of the most utilized measures of existential and religious well-being, as limiting itself to theocentric religions. The SWBS has been found to be biased in favour of Christian faith traditions (Scott, Agresti & Fitchett, 1998). A broader construction of spiritual well-being could be said to provide value in that it is inclusive of a multiplicity of spiritual practices.

Fisher et al. (2002) further distinguish between their and Ellison’s constructions of spiritual well-being, arguing that they do not contrast a vertical relationship with God and a horizontal relationship with others and environment. Instead they propose “the relationship with a Transcendent Other would ideally embrace each of the other three domains ... building them up and at the same time building upon them for an integrated sense of spiritual well-being” (p. 4). Schematically, Fisher (1999) presents the communal as embracing of the personal; the environmental as embracing of the personal and communal; and the transcendental as embracing of all other domains.

Spirituality, well-being and the adolescent

That religion and spirituality may be a protective factor during the complex developmental stage of adolescence (Pienaar, Beukes & Esterhuyse, 2006) is indicated by several studies (Barnes, Plotnikoff, Fox & Pendleton, 2000; Benson, Donahue & Erickson, 1989; Benson et al., 2003; Bridges & Moore, 2002; Callaghan, 2005; Demir & Urberg, 2004; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Gartner, Larson & Allen, 1991; Hill & Pargament, 2003; Idler et al., 2003; King & Benson, 2006; Larson & Larson, 2003; Martin, Kirkcaldy & Siefen, 2003; Mattis & Jager, 2001; Mohr, 2006; Oman & Thoresen, 2006; Regnerus, 2003; Santrock, 2005; Scarlett, 2006; Spilka, Hood,

Hunsberger & Gorsuch, 2003). This research associates religious involvement with physical and mental health.

Identity formation, and the associated move to autonomy, is the primary developmental task of the adolescent (Erikson, 1950; 1968). In the foreground are existential questions such as “Who am I?” and “Why am I here?” (Smith, 2003) with the development of the ability to think abstractly (Inhelder & Piaget, 1977) facilitating the process. This is a time of “idealistic crisis” (Inhelder & Piaget, 1977, p. 440) – of contemplating moral, social and political issues (Bruce, 2004) - during which the focus on peer interaction helps the adolescent to decentre and test theories, thus resolving the crisis. And during this time, religion and spirituality can become a meaningful part of the identity development process (Windham, Hooper & Hudson, 2005), providing ideological and social containment (King & Benson, 2006). “Adolescents find in religion the boundaries and pathways of expression as they participate more actively in their expanding contexts of interaction and experience. Spirituality takes on for them meanings emerging from the sociopolitical conditions and the historical-cultural contexts within which they live, influencing both their social role as well as their individual behaviours,” write Verma and Maria (2006, p. 129)

Spirituality is also important for broader psychological well-being and associated health outcomes (Fabricatore et al., 2004; Miller & Thoresen, 2003; Temane & Wissing, 2006) with Regnerus (2003) associating more extensive religious involvement with positive outcomes in adolescents. Among such outcomes are overall well-being, positive life attitudes, satisfaction, hope for the future, altruism, service and positive identity formation (Benson et al., 2003). Research has linked religious/spiritual functioning with a sense of meaning in life (Hathaway, Scott & Garver, 2004; Windham, Hooper & Hudson, 2005).

Access to internal and external resources that facilitate coping with stress (Calicchia & Graham, 2006), thriving, and a sense of assistance in coping with illness, trauma and abuse (Barnes et al., 2000) are other positive outcomes. Shaw, Joseph and Linley (2005) report that religious practice in adolescents is moderately associated with post-traumatic growth. Reduced risk of suicide, lower scores on Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) (Larson & Larson, 2003; Martin et al., 2003), reduced psychological distress (Mosher & Handal, 1997), higher self-esteem, improved emotional health, psychosocial maturity, attachment to society, resilience (Regnerus, 2003) and desirable educational outcomes (Regnerus, 2003; Steward & Jo, 1998) have also been found.

Demir and Urberg (2004) found adolescents who attend church frequently are happier and less depressed than those who attend church less frequently, as did Wright, Frost and Wisecarver (1993), who also found a positive relationship between lower BDI scores and adolescents viewing religion as providing meaning in their lives. Pearce, Little and Perez (2003) found more frequent church attendance, higher self-ranking as religious and positive interpersonal religious experiences to be linked to lower levels of depressive symptoms among adolescents. In adult samples, church membership, and frequency of church attendance positively and significantly predicted perceptions of well-being (Mookherjee, 2001).

Religious and spiritual salience was associated with empowerment and attendance with involvement in recovery-promoting activities in those with serious mental illness (Yangarber-Hicks, 2004). Greater public religious involvement and intrinsic religious motivation have been associated with fewer symptoms of depression and faster recovery from depressive episodes (Smith, McCullough & Poll, 2003). Meta-analysis of 147 investigations suggests a robust, reliable, moderate negative relationship - applying across age, gender and ethnic groups - between depression and religion (Smith, McCullough & Poll).

Religious involvement has also been associated with reduced high-risk behaviours in adolescents, including sexual promiscuity, delinquency and substance-abuse (Barnes et al., 2000; Benson et al., 1989; Blakeney & Blakeney, 2006; Bridges & Moore, 2002; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Fehring, Cheever, German & Philpot, 1998; Larson and Larson, 2003; Martin et al., 2003; Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Regnerus, 2003; Rostosky, Wilcox, Wright & Randall, 2004; Windham et al., 2005; Winter, Karvonen & Rose, 2002) and increased health-promoting behaviours such as eating healthily, exercising regularly and sleeping enough (Barnes et al., 2000; Larson & Larson, 2003; Martin et al., 2003; Regnerus, 2003). Research suggests that both church attendance and religious commitment (importance of religion) are associated with reduced sexual activity (Fehring et al., 1998). Adolescents with higher scores on spirituality or religion measures are less likely to engage in aggressive or antisocial acts, with a sense of meaninglessness and hopelessness emerging in the writings of boys who have committed violent acts (Windham et al., 2005).

However, not all research supports the association between religion, spirituality and well-being: there is research with either mixed or unfavourable outcomes (Exline, 2002). Gartner, Larson and Allen (1991) note evidence of many of the positive relationships noted above. However, their review of the literature suggests ambiguity in studies associating religion with anxiety, psychosis, prejudice, self-esteem, sexual disorder and intelligence/education. They note that religion is associated with psychopathology in areas such as authoritarianism, dogmatism,

dependence, temporal lobe epilepsy and self-actualization. These researchers conclude that disorders related to under-control are associated with low levels of religiosity. Disorders associated with over-control are related to high levels of religiosity. Gartner, Larson and Allen (1991) also note that behavioural measures of actual religious behaviour (such as church attendance or prayer) are more powerfully associated with mental health than attitudinal measures. Spiritual orientation or motivation also plays a role with the intrinsic orientation being more related to positive outcomes.

Among studies challenging the spirituality-health link is that of Martin et al. (2003) who found no discernible differences between adolescents who were regular churchgoers and those who were not as regards reported anxiety or suicidal ideation. "Indeed, those adolescents who attended church most frequently scored significantly higher in terms of negative affect" (p. 467). This may, they hypothesize, be related to family structures in which there is rigid religiosity associated with regular church attendance, adherence to religious practices and authoritarian parenting which may increase anxiety and psychological distress.

Pearce et al. (2003) found negative interpersonal religious experiences (perceptions of congregational criticism or demand) to be associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms among adolescents. They suggest that adolescent psychological well-being is related more to their social experience in religious environments than to church attendance per se. However, they also note that a teenager who is depressed may engage in negative information processing about self, others and the world, including their religious context. Thus depression may negatively colour perceptions (Smith, McCullough & Poll, 2003). Relating to Pearce et al.'s findings, Fiori, Brown, Cortina and Antonucci (2006) argue that whether religion and spirituality have positive or negative outcomes may be related to attributions or interpretations, including the ways in which people construct God or their locus of control.

Barnes et al., (2000) point to possible negative outcomes associated with guilt-inducing religious traditions, religious prejudice such as homophobia, religious beliefs supporting harsh discipline and cults. However, as Exline (2002) argues, "some negative emotions stemming from religious beliefs could have adaptive value" (p. 246). She notes the value of guilt in the repair of interpersonal relationships or regulation of behaviour.

Idler et al. (2003) describe methodological flaws in studies associating religion with health. "Inconsistency is a characteristic of findings in this field, in the sense that different dimensions of religiousness show protective effects in different populations" (p. 329).

Spirituality as a protective factor

Many theories have been advanced to explain the evidence associating spirituality and well-being. Spirituality and religion may be a source of coping with stress and of strength (Larson & Larson, 2003; Pargament, 1997; Smith et al., 2003). Religiously involved people may have ways of appraising life events that reduce their perceived stressfulness and thus enhance coping (Pargament, 1997). Windham et al. (2005) suggest that secure attachment with God may compensate for earlier insecure attachment and thus facilitate other attachment relationships. Van Dierendonck and Mohan (2006) suggest religion and spirituality may provide a sense of meaning, hope and control offered by God or the supernatural during experiences of reduced personal control. This may provide a psychological and possibly spiritual “boost”.

The theory that religion is a socializing influence is advanced by Regnerus (2003) and Rostosky et al. (2004) with Rostosky et al. suggesting that this may play a role on multiple ecological levels: individual, familial, extra-familial and on a macro-level. Social control (Rostosky et al., 2004) social/organizational connections, moral order, and learned competencies (Regnerus, 2003) are among the possible mechanisms of religious socialization. In this vein, Van Dierendonck and Mohan (2006) describe religion as prescribing positive social norms and tenets for a healthy lifestyle. Blakeney and Blakeney (2006) describe religion and spirituality as “... creating a sanctuary where moral values are maintained and transmitted” (p. 371). Martin et al. (2003) argue that the association may be related to the psychosocial resources that religion offers. Smith et al. (2003) theorize that warm, caring parental bonds may both create resilience and be a positive factor in developing children’s religious interests.

Four broad possible pathways from religiousness/spirituality to health are suggested by Idler et al. (2003): a behavioural pathway with religious or spiritual teachings promoting a healthier lifestyle; a social pathway involving expansion of social support; a psychological pathway related to enhancement of coping skills; and a physiological pathway with public and private rituals such as prayer provoking a relaxation response. King and Benson (2006), suggesting interaction between the social, behavioural and psychological, theorize that religious contexts develop internal and external resources, offering “...the kind of asset-building resources – such as intergenerational relationships, prosocial norms, and adult role-models – known to facilitate positive development” (p. 388).

Spirituality, well-being and prayer

Prayer is the most practised form of spirituality, performing both problem- and emotion-focused functions (Spilka et al., 2003). And as early as 1872 Francis Galton was exploring its efficacy (cited in Calicchia & Graham, 2006).

Prayer has been constructed in many ways. Mohr (2006) describes it as communication or conversation with a power constructed as divine. It is an attempt to experience the divine directly, writes Pargament (1997) while Scarlett (2006) narrates it as an imaginative act requiring momentary loss of self-consciousness and a focus on feeling the imagined as the real: without prayer, God is not realized.

Idler et al. (2003) describe prayer as among private religious practices, or behaviours practised alone or with family in the home or everyday life. Four different kinds of prayer were identified in research by Poloma and Pendleton (1989): colloquial prayer or the conversations described by Mohr above, meditative or contemplative prayer, petitionary prayer and ritualistic or set prayers. Spilka, Hood, Hunsberger and Gorsuch (2003) suggest that other stable types of prayer constructed include confessional, thanksgiving, intercessory, self-improvement and habitual prayers. And the more people pray, the more types of prayer they use (Spilka et al., 2003).

Prayer is a common practice among children (Oman & Thoresen, 2006) progressing from vague understanding and verbal formulae (ages 5-7), to concrete activity and personal verbal requests (ages 7-9), to more abstract and less egocentric conversations with God (ages 10-12) (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; Spilka et al., 2003). Evidence suggests that prayer in childhood is associated with well-being and the greater the frequency of prayer, the better (Maltby, Lewis & Day, 1999).

Maltby et al. (1999) describe the frequency of personal religious practices such as prayer as playing a more important role in psychological well-being than a general orientation to religion and spirituality. They found increased prayer frequency related to increased depression, higher self-esteem and lower anxiety and relate this to use of religious acts to deal with life stressors. Similarly, Poloma and Pendleton's research found increased frequency of prayer did not necessarily predict increased quality of life: it was positively related to religious satisfaction but negatively related to happiness, which may be associated with an increased turning to prayer when one is unhappy, they theorized (Poloma & Pendleton, 1989). Poloma and Pendleton stress that what is done during prayer - whether it is ritual, requesting, conversation or contemplation - seems related to quality of life. Meditative prayer seems to be associated with existential well-

being (a sense of meaning and purpose in life) and religious satisfaction while only ritual prayer seems associated with negative affect. Colloquial prayer seems associated with happiness.

In a similar vein, Spilka et al. (2003), summarizing research in the area, suggest that different types of prayer emerge from different contexts and needs and have different outcomes. For example, petitionary prayer emerges in situations where there is a perception of threat or frustration, where contemplative prayer seems more related to self-integration. As do Poloma and Pendleton (1989), Spilka et al. associate contemplative and meditational prayer with positive psychological outcomes such as reduced anger and anxiety and increased relaxation.

Francis and Evans (1996) found a significant positive relationship between the frequency of personal prayer and the perceived purpose in life of both churchgoing and non-churchgoing UK teenagers between the ages of 12 and 15. They postulate that this may positively contribute to adolescent development. Importance of prayer has been related to a reduction in sexual activity in adolescents (Fehring et al., 1998). Oman and Thoresen (2006) cite evidence showing that frequency of prayer is associated with improved health behaviours among adolescents.

Contemplative meditation, constructed as a form of contemplative prayer, has been linked to physical health benefits in adolescents (Oman & Thoresen, 2006). Repeating sacred phrases, as in prayer, can effectively stimulate the relaxation response, write Idler et al. (2003). Mohr (2006) describes prayer as a powerful form of coping that supports individuals mentally and physically while Spilka et al. (2003) describe it as psychologically and physiologically beneficial. Prayer effects positive changes in human health (Epperly, 2000). In adult populations prayer has positively correlated with positive affect as an indicator of emotional well-being (Francis & Kaldor, 2002).

Based on a reading of the literature above, the following research questions arose:

- 1) Is there a relationship between importance of religion/spirituality on the one hand and attendance at church/spiritual activities and frequency of prayer on the other?
- 2) Are there differences in mean spiritual well-being scores for the different importance of religion/spirituality, attendance at church/spiritual activities and frequency of prayer groups?

The research methods elaborated on below were used to explore these questions.

Research method

For a full discussion of participants, procedure and measuring instruments, refer to Article I. However, for the purposes of this article, it is important to highlight that, in addition to using

Likert Scales to explore the importance of religion/spirituality to the individual and frequency of attendance at church/spiritual activities, Likert Scales were constructed to explore the frequency of prayer [(1) once or twice a day to (5) never] (see questionnaire, Addendum A).

Research hypotheses

Based on of the objectives of the study, the following research hypotheses were formulated for this group of South African adolescents:

- 1) A significant relationship exists between the importance of religion/spirituality and attendance at church/spiritual activities
- 2) A significant relationship exists between the importance of religion/spirituality and frequency of prayer for adolescents
- 3) Significant differences in mean scores exist in terms of spiritual well-being scales for the importance of religion/spirituality groups of adolescents
- 4) Significant differences in mean scores exist in terms of spiritual well-being scales for the different attendance at church/spiritual activities groups of adolescents
- 5) Significant differences in mean scores exist in terms of spiritual well-being scales for the different frequency of prayer groups of adolescents

Statistical procedures

The chi-square test for homogeneity was used to investigate hypotheses 1 and 2 as all the variables are nominal. To test hypotheses 3 to 5 a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed. When a significant result (F -value) was detected, the analysis was extended to include a one-way variance analysis of each of the independent variables. To determine statistically significant differences among average values of the categories, the Scheffé procedure was utilized.

To determine the meaningfulness of statistically significant results generated, the practical significance of the results was examined by calculating effect sizes (Steyn, 1999). As different statistical procedures were implemented, the method of calculating effect size differed. In the case of the chi-square (χ^2) test the effect size is denoted by w with $0,1$ indicating a small effect, $0,3$ indicating a medium effect and $0,5$ indicating a large effect size. In the case of analysis of variance, effect size is denoted by f with $0,1$ indicating a small effect, $0,25$ indicating a medium effect and $0,4$ indicating a large effect size. Only statistically significant results with an effect size above small were considered meaningful. The 1%-level of significance was utilized in this study.

Results and discussion

The relationship between the importance of religion/spirituality and the attendance at church/spiritual activities was explored and χ^2 -results are displayed below.

Table 1: χ^2 -results - importance of religion/spirituality and attendance at church/spiritual activities

Attendance at church/spiritual activities	Importance of religion/spirituality									
	Extremely		Very		Somewhat		Little		Not at all	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
At least once a week	367	81,2	297	69,6	58	32,0	8	11,2	6	12,0
At least once a month	43	9,5	60	14,1	35	19,3	4	5,5	2	4,0
At least once every three months	22	4,9	20	4,7	22	12,2	4	5,5	1	2,0
Once or twice a year	11	2,4	36	8,4	43	23,8	28	38,9	9	18,0
Never	9	2,0	14	3,3	23	12,7	28	38,9	32	64,0
Total:	452	38,3	427	36,1	181	15,3	72	6,1	50	4,2
$\chi^2 = 537,649$ $p = 0,0001$ (w = 0,67) v = 16										

A significant relationship (at 1%-level) between importance of religion/spirituality and attendance at church/spiritual activities was found by chi-square analysis. The large effect size (w = 0,67) suggests that this finding is of practical value and is thus meaningful. Most prominent is the proportionate differences between those who view religion/spirituality as extremely important and those who view it as not at all important. Among those who view religion/spirituality as extremely important, 81,2% attend church/spiritual activities at least once a week while only 12,0% of the group who view religion/spirituality as not at all important do so. Sixty-four percent of those who view religion/spirituality as not at all important never attend church/spiritual activities while only 2,0% of those who view religion/spirituality as extremely important never attend church/spiritual activities.

This fits with related research among this sample (Article V) finding that the majority of these adolescents reported an indiscriminate religiosity (as constructed by Milevsky and Levitt, 2004): both intrinsically/privately valuing religion/spirituality and extrinsically/publicly becoming involved in religious/spiritual institutional events. Very few (2,0%) reported a purely private valuing of spirituality without involvement in the organizational component thereof. It may also suggest a correspondence between reported values and behaviour in this sample: Pearce, Little and Perez (2003) describe religiousness as the correspondence between commitment, attitudes and behaviours. Pargament (1997) cites research suggesting that commitment-behaviour consistency or religious integration is associated with higher levels of personal control, self-esteem, trust in others and coping. But how does this consistency develop? Spilka et al. (2003)

cite theory and research with converts suggesting that behaviour precedes belief: participation in organizational or institutional practices results in congruent perceptions. However, this is challenged by intellectual or mystical narratives of conversion which suggest belief precedes behaviour (Spilka et al., 2003).

Table 2 summarizes the outcome of chi-square analysis of the relationship between importance of religion/spirituality and frequency of prayer among adolescents.

Table 2: χ^2 -results - importance of religion/spirituality and frequency of prayer

Frequency of prayer	Importance of religion/spirituality									
	Extremely		Very		Somewhat		Little		Not at all	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Once or twice a day	218	48,2	143	33,5	39	21,6	5	6,9	0	0,0
Regularly	144	31,9	132	30,9	36	19,9	9	12,5	0	0,0
Sometimes	79	17,5	132	30,9	55	30,4	17	23,6	6	12,0
Seldom	9	2,0	15	3,5	43	23,7	25	34,7	10	20,0
Never	2	0,4	5	1,2	8	4,4	16	22,2	34	68,0
Total:	452	38,2	427	36,1	181	15,3	72	6,1	50	4,2
$\chi^2 = 694,008$ $p = 0,0001$ ($w = 0,77$) $v = 16$										

A significant relationship (at 1%-level) between importance of religion/spirituality and frequency of prayer was found by chi-square analysis. The large effect size ($w = 0,77$) suggests that this finding is of practical value and is thus meaningful. Most prominent is the proportionate differences between those who view religion/spirituality as extremely important and those who view it as not at all important. Among those who view religion/spirituality as extremely important, 48,2% report praying once or twice a day while 0,0% of the group who view religion/spirituality as not at all important do so. Sixty-eight percent of those who view religion/spirituality as not at all important never pray while only 0,4% of those who view religion/spirituality as extremely important never pray. When the categories are combined (extremely and very important; little and not at all) the differences become even more apparent. For example, 90,2% of those indicating that religion/spirituality is of little or no importance never pray, while only 1,6% of those who rate religion/spirituality as extremely or very important never pray.

Again, as noted above, this suggests a correspondence between commitment and behaviour in this sample of adolescents. In this case, however, it is a private or personal practice (Spilka et al., 2003; Pargament, 1997) corresponding with a personal valuing of religion and spirituality.

To examine whether the importance of religion/spirituality and attendance at church/spiritual activities would be related to significant differences in average scores in the spiritual well-being domains and total spiritual health, one-way MANOVA analysis was implemented. During analysis, it was decided to merge two categories in the importance of religion/spirituality (of little importance and not important at all) as the number of respondents in the not at all important category (20) was very small and thus this category could not be used meaningfully in a multiple analysis of variance.

Table 3: Manova F-values to explore the effect of importance of religion/spirituality and church/spiritual activity attendance on adolescent spiritual well-being

Independent variables	F-value+	N	P
Importance	61,16*	12; 1959,2	0,0001
Attendance	4,37*	16; 2238	0,0001

* $p \leq 0,01$ + Hotelling-Lawley-test magnitude

F-values significant at 1%-level (according to the Hotelling-Lawley Trace) were found for both independent variables (importance and attendance). To determine in which of the four domains and the total spiritual health score of the SWBQ significant differences in the averages of the two independent variables emerge, a one-way analysis of variance and a Scheffé-test was implemented. The results for the four importance groups (extremely; very; somewhat and little/not at all) as well as the effect sizes (f), are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4: Averages, standard deviations and F-values of one way analysis of variance testing for importance of religion/spirituality in adolescent SWB

Variable	Extremely (n=448)		Very (n=423)		Somewhat (n=181)		Little/Not at all (n=121)		F	p	f
	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	S			
Environmental	17,90	3,90	17,31	3,86	16,49	4,57	15,87	4,97	9,92*	0,0001	0,16
Transcendental	22,40	2,60	19,99	3,24	16,19	3,88	10,35	4,92	482,63*	0,0001	1,13
Communal	19,16	3,24	18,63	2,98	18,36	3,07	17,79	4,13	8,12*	0,0001	0,15
Personal	20,84	2,98	19,83	3,04	18,66	3,40	18,69	3,50	30,18*	0,0001	0,29
Total score (spiritual health)	80,48	9,73	75,74	8,94	69,69	9,94	62,72	11,86	127,34*	0,0001	0,58

* $p \leq 0,01$

Differences in the averages of the four importance groups – significant at 1%-level – are evident in all the spiritual well-being domains as well as the spiritual health total. However, corresponding f -values indicate that only results in the transcendental spiritual well-being domain (large effect size), personal spiritual well-being domain (medium effect size) and total spiritual health score (large effect size) are of moderate to high practical significance and thus will be

discussed further. The *f*-values in the communal and environmental spiritual well-being domains suggest small effect sizes and thus will not be elaborated on.

Variables with medium to large effect sizes were further analysed by means of the Scheffé-test with the *post hoc t-test* indicating significant differences between all four of the importance of religion/spirituality groups in both the transcendental spiritual well-being domain and the total spiritual health score. Compared to the other three groups, adolescents who describe religion/spirituality as extremely important to them have the highest average scores in the transcendental spiritual well-being domain as well as in total spiritual health, while those who rated religion/spirituality as a little or not at all important had the lowest average score in both. In the personal spiritual well-being domain, although there were not significant differences in group averages between the somewhat important and little/not at all important groups, the extremely important group's average score in the personal spiritual well-being domain (20,84) differed significantly from the very (19,83), somewhat (18,66) and little/not at all (18,69) groups' averages. Adolescents who rated religion/spirituality extremely important had the highest average scores in the personal spiritual well-being domain.

This finding therefore suggests that when there is a higher valuing of religion/spirituality, the adolescent reports a more significant relationship with a divine Other or energy, a more significant relationship with self and higher levels of global spiritual health (suggesting more positive relationships in all domains). This both fits with and extends a large body of research associating spiritual involvement with well-being in various domains: emotional, social, behavioural and physical (Barnes, Plotnikoff, Fox & Pendleton, 2000; Benson et al., 2003; Bridges & Moore, 2002; Callaghan, 2005; Demir & Urberg, 2004; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Idler et al., 2003; King & Benson, 2006; Larson & Larson, 2003; Martin, Kirkcaldy & Siefen, 2003; Mattis & Jager, 2001; Mohr, 2006; Oman & Thoresen, 2006; Pienaar, Beukes & Esterhuysen, 2006; Regnerus, 2003; Santrock, 2005; Spilka et al., 2003; Wright, Frost & Wisecarver, 1992).

Higher levels of measured personal spiritual well-being may correlate with aforementioned findings of greater psychological well-being and personal adjustment in those who value religion and spirituality (a more positive relationship with self). Meaning in life, a dimension of personal spiritual well-being in the SWBQ, is linked both to well-being (Scannell, Allen & Burton, 2002) and to a belief in God (Weber & Cummings, 2003). Higher levels of global spiritual health in those who value religion/spirituality suggest more positive relationships, not only with self but with others, the environment and the divine. This may fit, for example, with

studies cited by Spilka et al. (2003) finding that adolescents who say religion is important are more involved in volunteer work and groups and thus may have more harmonious relationships with others, the community and the environment. Donahue and Benson (1995) also found a positive relationship between religiousness and prosocial attitudes and behaviour.

One-way analysis of variance exploring the effects of church attendance (five groups: once a week, once a month once every three months, once or twice a year or never) on the spiritual well-being domains and spiritual health – as well as the corresponding effect sizes (f) – are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5: Averages, standard deviations and F-values of one way analysis of variance testing for the effects of attendance at church/spiritual activities on adolescent SWB

Variable	At least once a week		At least once a month		Once every 3 months		Once or twice a year		Never		F	p	f
	\bar{X}	S	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	s	\bar{X}	S			
Environmental	17,55	4,02	17,09	4,02	16,86	4,02	16,35	4,52	16,79	4,82	0,45	0,7757	-
Transcendental	21,00	3,49	19,33	3,93	18,48	4,12	15,98	5,60	12,19	6,26	12,95*	0,0001	0,21
Communal	18,87	3,16	18,40	3,11	18,93	3,10	18,43	3,23	18,11	4,07	0,52	0,7195	-
Personal	20,34	3,02	19,61	3,34	19,20	3,06	18,98	3,69	18,97	3,54	1,07	0,3715	-
Total score (spiritual health)	11,76	10,08	74,47	10,72	73,59	10,33	69,90	11,09	66,00	12,91	1,68	0,1512	-

* $p \leq 0,01$

In only one of the spiritual well-being domains – the transcendental – were differences in averages for the five attendance groups found that were significant at 1%-level. The f -value of 0,21 suggests a medium effect size and the finding will therefore be discussed further. The Scheffé-procedure was utilized, and suggested that the only non-significant differences in group averages were between the once a month and once every three months attendance groups. There were significant differences in the average transcendental spiritual well-being domain scores between the once a month and once or twice a year groups, and between the once a month and the never group, with those attending church more regularly having higher levels of transcendental spiritual well-being. There were also significant differences between the once or twice a year group and the never group in the average transcendental spiritual well-being domain scores. The Scheffe-test also indicated that the group reporting attending church/spiritual activities once a week had a higher average score in the transcendental spiritual well-being domain than the other groups.

This finding suggests that the public practice of church attendance is related to a reported significant relationship with a divine Other or energy. Cook (2000) found one of the benefits of church involvement to be a relationship with a powerful, loving Other. This challenges

constructions of public/extrinsic practices as being more related to social, status and related needs and less related to spirituality (Allport & Ross, 1967; Genia, 1993; Gorsuch & Walker, 2006; Milevsky & Levitt, 2004). It suggests that in this sample of adolescents the public practice – even though it may be assumed to also be related to social or affiliation needs – also appears to generate a reported harmonious relationship with the divine.

This finding also fits with a long history of research linking church attendance to various facets of well-being: happiness, positive self-concept, life satisfaction, a sense of life being worthwhile (Petersen & Roy, 1985). It extends such research by suggesting a significant relationship between behaviour (church attendance) and subjectively reported transcendent well-being (a significant relationship with the divine). The direction of this relationship is, however, contested (Spilka et al., 2003). Does the practice generate the relationship? Or does the relationship generate the practice? Or do they reciprocally develop one another?

Exploration of whether there were significant differences in the spiritual well-being domains as well as the total score (spiritual health, as conceptualized by Fisher) for the five different frequency of prayer groups was carried out with one-way MANOVA analysis. An *F*-value (according to the Hotelling-Lawley Trace) of 81,02 ($v = 16; 2244$) was obtained at a 1% significance level ($p = 0,0001$).

One-way variance analysis was carried out to determine in which of the four spiritual well-being domains, as well as the total spiritual health, significant differences in the averages of the five frequency of prayer groups emerged. These results, and the calculated effect sizes (*f*), appear in Table 6.

Table 6: Averages, standard deviations and F-values emerging from one-way variance analysis exploring differences in frequency of prayer

Variable	1 or 2 a day		Regularly		Sometimes		Seldom		Never		<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>f</i>
	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>	\bar{X}	<i>s</i>	\bar{X}	<i>s</i>	\bar{X}	<i>s</i>	\bar{X}	<i>s</i>			
Environmental	17,75	4,09	17,83	3,97	16,53	3,77	16,25	4,78	16,11	5,25	7,17*	0,0001	0,16
Transcendental	21,61	3,16	20,91	3,19	18,79	3,86	14,05	4,51	7,54	3,74	289,6*	0,0001	1,01
Communal	19,10	3,12	19,17	2,99	18,13	3,21	17,95	3,32	17,70	4,45	9,20*	0,0001	0,18
Personal	20,39	3,19	20,24	3,00	19,72	3,16	18,20	3,65	19,05	3,19	11,86*	0,0001	0,20
Total score (spiritual health)	78,86	9,98	78,19	9,77	73,23	9,67	66,44	10,79	60,27	11,09	76,80*	0,0001	0,52

* $p \leq 0,01$

Table 6 indicates that there were significant differences in averages (at 1% significance level) for all five of the frequency of prayer groups in all four of the spiritual well-being domains as well as in the total spiritual health score. The related *f*-values indicate a large effect size for the

total spiritual health score ($f = 0,52$) as well as for the transcendental spiritual well-being domain ($f = 1,01$) and a medium effect size for the personal spiritual well-being domain ($f = 0,20$). This suggests that these results have average to high practical value and thus are meaningful. The other domains' effect sizes were small and thus will not be discussed further.

Variables with medium to large effect size were further analyzed with the Scheffé-test to identify averages within the defined group. Within the transcendental spiritual well-being domain, there the *post hoc t-test* indicated no significant difference between the averages of the groups that pray once or twice a day and those that pray regularly. However, there were significant differences between the averages of all the other groups. Table 6 denotes that, compared to the other groups, those who never pray have the lowest average score in the transcendental well-being domain, while those who pray once or twice a day have the highest average score in this domain. This fits with prior research linking meditative or contemplative prayer with religious satisfaction (Poloma & Pendleton, 1989) and a feeling of unity or mystical awareness (Hood, Morris & Watson, 1989). Thus those whose prayer involves contemplation of or meditation on the divine report a closer relationship with the divine and thus higher levels of transcendental spiritual well-being.

Within the personal spiritual well-being domain, the *post hoc t-test* suggested significant differences between those who pray once or twice a day and a) those who seldom pray and b) those who never pray. Those who pray once or twice a day have a significantly higher average score in the personal spiritual well-being domain than the other two groups (seldom or never). There was also a significant difference in this domain between the average of those who seldom pray and a) those who regularly pray and b) those who sometimes pray. Those who seldom pray had a significantly lower average score in the personal spiritual well-being domain than the other two groups (regularly and sometimes). Again, this fits with prior research linking meditative or contemplative prayer with existential well-being (a sense of meaning and purpose in life) (Poloma & Pendleton, 1989) and with positive psychological and personal adjustment outcomes (Spilka et al., 2003). In meditative or contemplative prayer, time is spent not only contemplating the divine, but also with oneself (who one is and where one is going). There is a quieting of the mind (the relaxation response) and a reflective stance consistent with higher levels of personal/existential spiritual well-being.

As regards spiritual health (the total score), the *post hoc t-test* again found no significant difference between the averages of the groups that pray once or twice a day and those that pray regularly. However, there were significant differences between the averages of all the other

groups. Table 6 denotes that, compared to the other groups, those who never pray have the lowest average score in total spiritual health, while those who pray once or twice a day have the highest average score. This research thus suggests that more frequent prayer is associated with higher levels of well-being in every domain (personal, communal, environmental and transcendental) – thus the higher global spiritual health score. This fits with a research tradition suggesting that prayer is associated with higher levels of subjective well-being (Spilka et al., 2003): one's experiences of self, others and context which would be related to one's relationship with self, others and the world.

Summary

Findings in this South African sample of adolescents confirm that adolescents who highly value religion/spirituality also report both praying and attending church/spiritual activities more frequently. Thus there is congruence between their commitment, and their practices – both personal (prayer) and public (church/spiritual activity attendance) – associated with positive psychological outcomes (Pargament, 1997). Whether belief precedes practice or practice precedes belief is arguable (Spilka et al., 2003), but this research supports evidence of a correspondence between belief and practice.

This research also suggests that a high valuing of religion/spirituality, more frequent church/spiritual activity attendance and more frequent prayer are all related to higher levels of transcendental spiritual well-being or a self-reported significant and harmonious relationship with a divine Other or energy. Thus commitment to spirituality and public and private practices associated with spirituality seems to generate a closer relationship with the divine and thus higher levels of transcendental spiritual well-being.

Similarly this research suggests that a higher valuing of religion/spirituality and more frequent prayer are related to higher levels of personal spiritual well-being and to higher levels of global spiritual health. Thus commitment and private practice, more consistent with an intrinsic religious orientation (Allport & Ross, 1967; Milevsky & Levitt, 2004; Pargament, 1997), seem related to a closer relationship with self and to more developed relationships in all domains (personal, communal, environmental and transcendental) generating higher levels of spiritual health.

Limitations and recommendations

As noted above, it is of interest that the intrinsic/private - the valuing of religion/spirituality and the practice of prayer – are more related to personal spiritual well-being and total spiritual health than the extrinsic/public (church attendance) in this study. Again this lends weight to a body of evidence suggesting that the intrinsic as opposed to the extrinsic is related to more positive well-being outcomes. However, this needs to be further explored by generating studies in the South African context validating and utilizing measures such as Allport and Ross's scale or employing qualitative methodologies.

A limitation of this study is that prayer was measured as an undifferentiated dimension with theory and research suggesting that there are different types of prayer related to different experiences and subjective outcomes (Spilka et al., 2003). It would therefore be useful to engage in research more deeply exploring the different types of prayer and relating these to spiritual well-being as measured by the SWBQ among adolescents.

Within this study single item measures (prayer frequency, attendance frequency and salience) were used as indicators of spirituality, with a five-point Likert scale. Salience and attendance are among the most frequently assessed aspects, write Bridges and Moore (2002), but there is criticism of such single-item measures as making spirituality appear to be an all or nothing construct and as limiting the ability to distinguish between degrees of spirituality.

As with any study in this field, an inherent limitation is the previously noted lack of consensus regarding constructs such as spirituality and spiritual well-being. Particularly within the South African context, in which research in this field has been neglected, the construction and operationalization of such signifiers need to be further explored in a variety of contexts, across language groups and with a variety of research methodologies.

Smith, McCullough and Poll (2003) point to the neglect of psychological, sociological and biological theory in empirical studies exploring the relationship between religiosity and depression. This same lack of theoretical, explanatory frameworks is evident in the spiritual well-being literature and, as Smith et al. (2003) suggest, can be related to the newness of the research area. Prior to a theoretical focus, there is exploration of whether a phenomenon such as spiritual well-being exists at all.

This is relatively uncharted territory in our country which, with its multicultural, multi-religious, multi-linguistic matrix, presents unique challenges and exciting opportunities to researchers in the field of the psychology of religion and spirituality.

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ADDENDUM A

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY IS TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU FEEL AND THINK AND HOW YOU ACT IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF YOUR LIFE

- ✓ **THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH.**
- ✓ **THE INFORMATION YOU SHARE WILL BE TREATED WITH THE STRICTEST CONFIDENTIALITY. THIS INFORMATION WILL BE USED FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY.**
- ✓ **TO ENSURE THAT YOU REMAIN ANONYMOUS, PLEASE DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE.**
- ✓ **PLEASE GIVE HONEST ANSWERS AND MAKE SURE YOU READ EACH INSTRUCTION CAREFULLY.**
- ✓ **PLEASE COMPLETE ALL ITEMS ON THE QUESTIONNAIRES.**

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QUESTIONNAIRE: STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Please circle the number that applies to you and/or your family members.
Please circle ONE number only.

1. Grade:

Grade 8	1
Grade 9	2
Grade 10	3
Grade 11	4
Grade 12	5

2. Home language:

English	1
Afrikaans	2
Xhosa	3
English and Afrikaans	4
English and Xhosa	5
Afrikaans and Xhosa	6
Other	7

3. If other, please specify:

4. Age in years:

5. Sex:

Male	1
Female	2

6. What is your religious denomination?

Protestant	1
Catholic	2
Jewish	3
Hindu	4
Muslim	5
Buddhist	6
African traditional	7
Other	8

7. If other, please specify _____

8. What is/was the religious denomination of your mother/
stepmother/female guardian?

Protestant	1
Catholic	2
Jewish	3
Hindu	4
Muslim	5
Buddhist	6
African traditional	7
Other	8

9. If other, please specify _____

10. What is/was the religious denomination of your father/
stepfather/male guardian?

Protestant	1
Catholic	2
Jewish	3
Hindu	4
Muslim	5
Buddhist	6
African traditional	7
Other	8

11. If other, please specify _____

12. How important is religion/spirituality to you?

Extremely important	1
Very important	2
Somewhat important	3
A little important	4
Not important at all	5

13. How important is religion/spirituality to your family members?

Extremely important	1
Very important	2
Somewhat important	3
A little important	4
Not important at all	5

14. How regularly do you attend church services or religious/spiritual groups or Sunday School or youth activities?

At least once a week	1
At least once a month	2
At least once every three months	3
Once or twice a year	4
Never	5

15. How regularly do your family members attend church services or religious/spiritual groups or Sunday School or youth activities?

At least once a week	1
At least once a month	2
At least once every three months	3
Once or twice a year	4
Never	5

16. How regularly do **you** pray?

Once or twice a day	1
Regularly	2
Sometimes	3
Seldom	4
Never	5

ADDENDUM B

Original SWBQ	SWBQ adapted for South African adolescents
Spirituality can be described as that which lies at the heart of a person being human. Spiritual health can be seen as a measure of how good you feel about yourself and how well you relate to those aspects of the world around you which are important to you.	We want to know how you feel about yourself, others, the environment and your relationship with a spiritual or divine force/God
I feel	I feel
1. a love of other people	a love for other people
2. a personal relationship with the Divine/God	a personal relationship with the Supreme Being/God (a divine force)
3. forgiveness towards others	
4. connection with nature	a connection between myself and nature
5. a sense of identity	I have an understanding of my identity (I know who I am)
I feel	I feel
6. worship of the Creator	a reverence for the Creator (a divine force)
7. awe at a breath-taking view	respect when I see a breathtaking view
8. trust between individuals	confidence in others
9. self-awareness	I have insight into myself as a person
10. oneness with nature	one with nature
I feel	I feel
11. oneness with God	one with God (a divine force)
12. harmony with the environment	in harmony with the environment
13. peace with God	at peace with God
14. joy in life	
15. prayer life	that prayer enriches my life
I feel	I feel
16. inner peace	
17. respect for others	
18. meaning in life	
19. kindness towards other people	goodwill towards other people
20. a sense of 'magic' in the environment	a sense of 'fascination' in the environment
	I feel
	a connection between myself and others
	a sense of amazement in nature
	I live in harmony with others
	in harmony with nature
	inner strength
	I have confidence in people