

Manuscript version: Author's Accepted Manuscript

The version presented in WRAP is the author's accepted manuscript and may differ from the published version or Version of Record.

Persistent WRAP URL:

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/110209>

How to cite:

Please refer to published version for the most recent bibliographic citation information. If a published version is known of, the repository item page linked to above, will contain details on accessing it.

Copyright and reuse:

The Warwick Research Archive Portal (WRAP) makes this work by researchers of the University of Warwick available open access under the following conditions.

Copyright © and all moral rights to the version of the paper presented here belong to the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. To the extent reasonable and practicable the material made available in WRAP has been checked for eligibility before being made available.

Copies of full items can be used for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge. Provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

Publisher's statement:

Please refer to the repository item page, publisher's statement section, for further information.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: wrap@warwick.ac.uk.

Personal prayer, worship attendance and spiritual wellbeing: A study among fourth, fifth and sixth class students attending Church of Ireland schools in the Republic of Ireland

Jacqui Wilkinson

University of Warwick, England, UK

Leslie J. Francis*

University of Warwick, England, UK

Ursula McKenna

University of Warwick, England, UK

Author note:

*Corresponding author:

Leslie J Francis

Warwick Religions & Education Research Unit

Centre for Education Studies

The University of Warwick

Coventry CV4 7AL United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)24 7652 2539

Fax: +44 (0)24 7657 2638

Email: leslie.francis@warwick.ac.uk

Abstract

This study examines the associations between frequency of personal prayer, frequency of worship attendance and spiritual wellbeing among 468 students attending fourth, fifth and sixth classes within 18 Church of Ireland schools located in one diocese in the Republic of Ireland. Spiritual wellbeing is measured by a modified form of the Fisher 16-item instrument *Feeling Good, Living Life* (assessing quality of relationships across four domains: self, family, nature, and God). The data demonstrate that frequency of personal prayer is a much stronger predictor than frequency of worship attendance in respect of spiritual wellbeing. This finding is consistent with the view that personal prayer is a key factor in the formation of individual spirituality.

Keywords: Anglican schools, spiritual wellbeing, psychology of religion, religious formation.

Introduction

The Church of Ireland

A national state-sponsored education system was introduced in Ireland by the Commissioners for National Education, its roots being in the Stanley letter of 1831 and its objective to ‘unite in one system children of different creeds’ (Hyland, 1989). This multi-denominational aspiration sought applications for grants from joint management groups (Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland) and looked favourably on these, but for many reasons including pressure from the main Christian churches, the state system evolved into *de facto* denominational schooling. This found legal focus in the Irish Constitution of 1937 which protected the rights of parents not to send their child to a particular type of school in Article 44.2 (Government of Ireland, 1937) and in *The Rules for National Schools* (Rule 68) which gave ‘explicit recognition to the denominational character of these schools’ (Department of Education, 1965). The schools all followed the same national curriculum, teachers were paid by the State, but the character of schools in Ireland had ‘a particular religious outlook’ (Tuohy, 2013, p. 224).

Today the Irish education system faces much pressure from an increasingly diverse and more secular society in addressing the predominantly denominational system of primary (first level) education where 95% schools are under denominational patronage; the majority (89.7%) under the patronage of the Roman Catholic church, 5.5% under the patronage of the Church of Ireland and only 2.5% under the patronage of the multidenominational Educate Together (Department of Education and Skills, 2016).

There are 177 Church of Ireland primary (first level) schools in Ireland, located in 10 dioceses, under the patronage of the diocesan bishop, and with the membership of the Boards of Management drawn from the school, comprising staff, parents, members of the local community (parish), and patron’s representatives. These schools follow the national

curriculum but have a patron-approved Religious Education programme *Follow Me* (Wilkinson, 2001-2010). Church of Ireland schools are therefore minority faith schools and as such have a clear niche within the education system.

The Primary School Curriculum states that it is ‘designed to nurture the child in all dimensions of his or her life—spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, aesthetic, social and physical’ (National Council for Curriculum Assessment, 1999, p. 6). Noting the publication of the curriculum the Church of Ireland General Synod Board of Education reported to General Synod that:

the spiritual dimension is recognised as one of the key issues in primary education and is expressed not only through the breadth of learning experiences the curriculum has to offer but through the inclusion of religious education as one of the areas of the curriculum. (General Synod of the Church of Ireland, 2000, p. 191)

It is therefore of value to educators, including, but not solely, those responsible for religious education, to reflect on how the spiritual wellbeing of children in schools is supported and nurtured. It is also of value to the Church with its lifelong approach to education through the family, the parish and the school to reflect on children’s spiritual wellbeing at the end of their primary (first level) schooling.

Spiritual wellbeing

Spirituality and spiritual wellbeing remain complex and contested constructs that have been conceptualised and operationalised in a variety of ways, as evidenced by the diversity of items included in measures like the Spiritual Wellbeing Survey (Ellison, 1983), the Spiritual Assessment Inventory (Hall & Edwards, 1996), the Spiritual History Scale (Hays, Meador, Branch, & George, 2001), the Spiritual Index of Well-being (Daaleman & Frey, 2004) and the Search Institute Inventory of Youth Spiritual Development (Centre for Spiritual Development, 2007). One fruitful approach to develop a coherent empirical research

trajectory through this diverse literature is to focus clearly on one well-established measure and to explore its application in diverse contexts. The present study adopts this approach by drawing on the conceptualisation and operationalisation of spiritual wellbeing advanced by John W Fisher (1998, 2011). Fisher's conceptualisation of spiritual wellbeing has been operationalised through several instruments, including: the Spiritual Health in Four Domains Index (SH4DI: Fisher, Francis, & Johnson, 2000), the Spiritual Health and Life-Orientation Measure (SHALOM: Fisher, 1999, 2010), and Feeling Good, Living Life (Fisher, 2004). In particular, the psychometric properties of the SHALOM have been examined and supported by studies reported by Gomez and Fisher (2003, 2005a, 2005b), and Hall, Reise and Haviland (2007).

According to Fisher, spiritual wellbeing is reflected in the quality of relationships that each person has in four domains, namely: with the self (the personal domain, assessed in terms of meaning, purpose and values); with other people (the communal domain, assessed in terms of morality, culture and religion); with the environment (the environmental domain, assessed in terms of connectedness beyond care, nurture and stewardship); and with a (personal or impersonal) Transcendent Other (the transcendental domain, assessed in relation to something or someone beyond the human and natural world).

In his foundation study, Fisher (1998) develops his understanding of these four domains of spiritual wellbeing in the following ways. The personal domain concerns the ways in which individuals relate to and evaluate their inner selves. It is concerned with meaning, purpose and values in life. In the personal domain, the human spirit creates self-awareness, relating to self-worth and identity. The communal domain concerns the quality and depth of inter-personal relationships, between self and others, relating to morality and culture. In the communal domain, the human spirit generates love, justice, hope, and faith in humanity. The environmental domain concerns not only care and nurture for the physical and

biological aspects of the world around us, but also a sense of awe and wonder. In the environmental domain, the human spirit nurtures, at least for some, the experience of unity or connectedness with the environment. The transcendental domain concerns the relationship of the self with something or someone beyond the human level, with a transcendent other, whether this be known as ultimate concern, cosmic force, transcendent reality, or God. In the transcendent domain, the human spirit nurtures a sense of trust and faith in, and a sense of adoration and worship for, the source of mystery at the heart of the universe.

Fisher's measures of spiritual wellbeing have been used in studies among adult populations to explore the associations between spiritual wellbeing and ethical decision-making (Fernando & Chaudhury, 2010), domestic violence (Vogt, 2007), personality (Becker, 2002; Fisher, Francis, & Johnson, 2002; Streukens, 2009), and psychological type (Francis, Fisher, & Annis, 2015); among college and university students to explore the association between spiritual wellbeing and other measures of subjective wellbeing (Stott, 2002), and quality of life and general wellbeing (Hall, 2005); and among school students to explore levels of spiritual wellbeing within different types of school (Fisher, 2001), the associations between spiritual wellbeing and religious activity, in ten public schools in South Africa (van Rooyen, 2007), seeking spiritual support for coping (Moodley, 2008), personal happiness (Holder, Coleman, & Wallace, 2010), strength of relationships (Fisher, 2012), and personality (Francis & Fisher, 2015).

Spiritual wellbeing in Anglican schools

Francis, Fisher, Lankshear and Eccles (2018) proposed a modification of Fisher's *Living Life* measure of spiritual wellbeing (Fisher, 2004) adapted specifically for application among 9- to 11-year-old students attending Anglican primary schools in Wales. In that study, conducted among a sample of 1,328 students drawn from year five and year six classes within 32 Church in Wales primary schools. Francis, Fisher, Lankshear and Eccles (2018) addressed

four specific research questions: to examine the psychometric properties of the modified instrument; to examine the levels of spiritual wellbeing reported by this group of young people; to examine the power of personal factors (age and sex) to predict individual differences in levels of spiritual wellbeing; and to examine the connections between spiritual wellbeing and both the frequency of personal prayer and the frequency of worship attendance. From their data they formulated the following conclusions.

The first research aim was to assess the psychometric properties of the 16-item instrument designed to measure each of the four domains of spiritual wellbeing identified by Fisher's model, namely the personal domain (relationship with self), the communal domain (relationship with others), the environmental domain (relationship with nature), and the transcendental domain (relationship with God). These 16 items possessed good face validity and good properties of internal consistency reliability ($\alpha = .87$). The new instrument was commended for further use.

The second research aim was to examine the levels of spiritual wellbeing recorded by 9- to 11-year-old students attending Church in Wales' primary schools. From a scale range of 16 (scoring one on each item) to 80 (scoring five on each item) the group of 1,378 students recorded a mean score of 63.1, with a standard deviation of 10.4. This mean score is roughly equivalent to the average student rating each item four on the five-point scale. Overall the level of spiritual wellbeing recorded on the *Living Life* measure among these students is good.

The third research aim was to examine the power of two personal factors (age and sex) to predict individual differences in levels of spiritual wellbeing among these students. Within this sample, girls recorded a significantly higher score of spiritual health than boys. This sex difference is consistent with the sex differences reported in other studies (see Francis & Fisher, 2015). Within this sample, year six students (10- to 11-years of age) recorded a

significantly lower score of spiritual health than year five students (9- to 10-years of age).

This age difference is consistent with the age difference reported in other school-based studies (see Francis & Fisher, 2015).

The fourth research aim was to examine the connections between spiritual wellbeing and both the frequency of personal prayer and the frequency of worship attendance. Bivariate correlations demonstrated that both prayer and worship attendance were significantly correlated with spiritual wellbeing, although the correlation with prayer was the stronger of the two. Multiple regression analysis demonstrated that, after personal prayer was taken into account, worship attendance contributed no further predictive power to the model. While cumulatively sex, age, and frequency of church attendance accounted for 6% of the variance in spiritual wellbeing, frequency of personal prayer accounted for an *additional* 13% of the variance. On the basis of this finding Francis, Fisher, Lankshear, and Eccles (2018) conclude that the role of personal prayer in promoting spiritual wellbeing may be the most crucial practical outcome from the research for those concerned with promoting spiritual wellbeing within Anglican schools. On these grounds, they argue, personal prayer may be considered an important aspect within the educational agenda of Anglican schools.

Research aims

Against this background, the aim of the present study is to replicate the research reported by Francis, Fisher, Lankshear, and Eccles (2018) within a sample of Anglican (Church of Ireland) first-level schools within the Republic of Ireland. There are two main purposes for undertaking this replication study. The first aim concerns the scientific importance of the role of personal prayer for promoting spiritual wellbeing within Anglican schools. This finding needs to be tested within other independent studies. The second aim concerns locating the level of spiritual wellbeing enjoyed by students attending Church of Ireland first-level schools within the Republic of Ireland alongside the evidence gathered

from the earlier study in Wales. In order to meet these two research aims, the present study has four clear research objectives: to test the modified measure of spiritual wellbeing among students within the Republic of Ireland; to assess the level of spiritual wellbeing recorded on the instrument by students in the Republic of Ireland alongside the level reported in the original study by students in Wales; to assess the power of personal factors (sex and age) to predict individual differences in levels of spiritual wellbeing among students in the Republic of Ireland; to examine the connections between spiritual wellbeing and both the frequency of personal prayer or the frequency of worship attendance among students in the Republic of Ireland.

Method

Procedure

A total of 18 Church of Ireland first-level schools within the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross within the Republic of Ireland accepted the invitation to participate in the project by administering a questionnaire among all their fourth, fifth and sixth class students (9- to 12-year-olds). Students were assured of confidentiality and anonymity and given the option not to participate in returning the questionnaire at the end of the session (see Wilkinson, 2017).

Participants

A total of 468 students participated in the survey: 231 boys and 237 girls; 170 from fourth class; 160 from fifth class; and 138 from sixth class.

Instruments

Worship attendance was operationalised by the question, ‘Do you go to a place of worship (e.g. a church or mosque)?’, rated on a five-point scale: weekly (5), at least once a month (4), sometimes (3), once or twice a year (2), and never (1).

Personal prayer was operationalised by the question, ‘Do you pray when you are on your own?’, rated on a five-point scale: daily (5), at least once a week (4), sometimes (3), once or twice a year (2), and never (1).

Spiritual wellbeing was assessed by a modified form of the Fisher instrument *Feeling Good, Living Life* (Fisher, 2004). This instrument comprises four sets of four items each designed to measure ideals and lived experiences across the four domains (personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental). The ideals are identified by the question, ‘Do the following make you feel good?’ The lived experiences are identified by the question, ‘How often do you do these things?’. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale: agree strongly (5), agree (4), not certain (3), disagree (2), and disagree strongly (1).

Analysis

The present analyses are conducted on the lived experience component of the modified *Feeling Good, Living Life* measure. The data were analysed by the SPSS statistical package, employing the frequency, reliability, factor, and correlation routines.

Results

The first steps in data analysis concerned examining the response to the two questions concerning frequency of worship attendance and frequency of personal prayer. In terms of worship attendance, 19% attended weekly, 14% attended at least once a month, 27% attended less than monthly but more than twice a year, 17% attended once or twice a year, and 22% never attended. In terms of personal prayer, 21% prayed daily, 12% prayed at least once a week, 37% prayed less than weekly but more than once or twice a year, 10% prayed once or twice a year, and 21% never prayed.

- insert table 1 about here -

The second step in data analysis concerned examining the scale properties of the Living Life Index of Spiritual Wellbeing. Table 1 presents three core statistics concerning

this instrument: the factor loadings on the first factor proposed by principal component analysis, the correlations between the individual items and the sum of the other 15 items, and the item endorsement in terms of the sum of the agree and agree strongly responses. The factor loadings demonstrate that all 16 items loaded on the principle factor with weightings in excess of .3. This principal factor accounted for 32.8% of the variance. The item rest-of-scale correlations all reached at least .3, with an alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951) of .85. These statistics confirm the unidimensionality and homogeneity of the instrument. From a scale range of 16 to 80, the group of 468 students recorded a mean score of 63.7, with a standard deviation of 9.1.

The item endorsements demonstrate a good range of discrimination among the individual items. In terms of the personal domain of spiritual wellbeing (relationship with self), 77% of the students often feel that people like them, 78% say people often tell them they have done well, 92% often enjoy life, and 95% often laugh and smile. In terms of the communal domain of spiritual wellbeing (relationships and family), 89% say they often spend time with their family, 93% often feel their family loves them, 93% often feel love for their family, and 91% often feel that they really belong to a family. In terms of the environmental domain of spiritual wellbeing (relationships with nature), 49% often watch a sunset or sunrise, 55% often go for a walk in a park, 55% often spend time in a garden, and 65% often look at the stars and the moon. In terms of the transcendental domain (relationship with God), 48% often talk with God, 51% often spend time thinking about God, 62% often feel that God is their friend, and 65% often feel that God cares for them.

- insert table 2 about here -

The third step in data analysis examines the bivariate relationship between spiritual wellbeing and two personal factors (sex and age) and two religious factors (frequency of worship attendance and frequency of personal prayer). Table 2 presents the Pearson

correlation coefficients. These data demonstrate that, compared with boys, girls record significantly higher frequency of personal prayer, and significantly higher levels of spiritual wellbeing, although there was no significant correlation between sex and worship attendance. There was no significant correlation between age and spiritual wellbeing, frequency of worship attendance, or frequency of personal prayer. Frequency of worship attendance and frequency of personal prayer are significantly correlated ($r = .43, p < .001$). Spiritual wellbeing is significantly correlated with both frequency of church attendance and frequency of personal prayer; the correlation is stronger with personal prayer ($r = .34, p < .001$) than with worship attendance ($r = .20, p < .001$).

- insert table 3 about here -

The fourth step in data analysis employs regression analysis to examine the effect of frequency of personal prayer on spiritual wellbeing after controlling for the effects of sex, age, and frequency of church attendance. In the hierarchical model, employing spiritual wellbeing as the dependent variable, the three independent variables were entered in the fixed order of sex, age, frequency of worship attendance, and frequency of personal prayer. These data are presented in table 3. The increase in r^2 demonstrate that significant additional variance has been explained by adding frequency of personal prayer to the model, after the other predictor variables have been taken into account. The beta weights demonstrate that frequency of personal prayer is the most powerful among the present set of predictor variables in predicting individual differences in spiritual wellbeing.

Conclusion

This paper set out to replicate, to build on and extend the study reported by Francis, Fisher, Lankshear, and Eccles (2018) conducted among 9- to 11-year-old students attending Anglican schools within Wales. This replication of the original work, conducted among

students attending Anglican schools within the Republic of Ireland, makes four original contributions to knowledge.

The first objective of the present study was to test the psychometric properties of the modified form of the Fisher *Living Life* index as adapted by Francis, Fisher, Lankshear, and Eccles (2018) for application among students attending Anglican schools. The data supported the psychometric properties of this instrument and commended it for further application.

The second objective of the present study was to reflect on the level of spiritual wellbeing recorded on the modified Fisher instrument by students in the Republic of Ireland, compared with the students in Wales reported by Francis, Fisher, Lankshear, and Eccles (2018). The original study in Wales reported a mean score of 63.1 with a standard deviation of 10.4. The new study in the Republic of Ireland reported a mean scale score of 63.7 with a standard deviation of 9.1. The two samples of students are very close in these average levels of spiritual wellbeing.

The third objective of the present study was to assess the power of personal factors (sex and age) to predict individual difference in levels of spiritual wellbeing among students in the Republic of Ireland. As in Wales these data demonstrate that a higher level of spiritual wellbeing was reported by girls than by boys. Unlike Wales there was no deterioration in levels of spiritual wellbeing according to age among students within the Republic of Ireland. This important difference between the two communities deserves further investigation.

The fourth objective of the present study was to examine the connections between spiritual wellbeing and both the frequency of personal prayer and the frequency of worship attendance. The data from both samples demonstrate the same pattern. Bivariate correlations demonstrated that both prayer and worship attendance were significantly correlated with spiritual wellbeing, although the correlation with prayer was the stronger of the two. Multiple

regression analysis demonstrated that after personal prayer was taken into account, worship attendance contributed no further predictive power to the model.

This latter finding provides the key insight from the two studies (conducted in Wales and in the Republic of Ireland) of practical relevance for those concerned with assessing and with promoting spiritual wellbeing among 9- to 12-year-old students attending Anglican schools. In order to promote spiritual wellbeing personal prayer may be considered an important aspect within the educational agenda of Anglican schools. Within the Anglican church school context, it is possible to provide resources, to introduce teaching about prayer in religious education lessons, and to encourage opportunities for prayer throughout the day, including school assemblies and collective worship.

The serious limitation with the present study concerns the focus on just one of the Anglican Dioceses within the Republic of Ireland (The Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross). Further studies are now needed to extend this research into other dioceses.

References

- Becker, P. L. (2002). *Spirituality in Australian organizations employee attitudes and impact on wellbeing*. D Psychol. Dissertation, Swinburne University of technology, Victoria, Australia.
- Center for Spiritual Development (2007). *Spirituality measures*. Retrieved 29 August, 2008, from: <http://www.spiritualdevelopmentcenter.org/CMS/FrontEnd/pop>
- Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika*, 16, 297-334. doi.org/10.1007/BF02310555
- Daaleman, T. P., & Frey, B. B. (2004). The Spirituality Index of Well-Being: A new instrument for health-related quality of life research. *Annals of Family Medicine*, 2, 499-503. doi.org/10.1370/afm.89
- Department of Education. (1965). *Rules for National Schools*. Dublin: Stationary Office.
- Department of Education and Skills. (2016). Data on individual schools. Retrieved from <http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Statistics/Data-on-Individual-Schools/>
- Ellison, C. (1983). Spiritual well-being: conceptualization and measurement, *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 11, 330-340.
- Fernando, M., & Chowdhury, R. M. (2010). The relationship between spiritual well-being and ethical orientations in decision making: An empirical study with business executives in Australia. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 95, 211-225. doi.org/10.1007/s10551-009-0355-y
- Fisher, J. W. (1998). *Spiritual health: its nature, and place in the school curriculum*. Unpublished PhD dissertation, The University of Melbourne. Available from: <https://minerva-access.unimelb.edu.au/handle/11343/39206>
- Fisher, J. W. (1999). Developing a Spiritual Health And Life-Orientation Measure for

- secondary school students. In J. Ryan, V. Wittwer & P. Baird (Eds.), *Research with a regional/rural focus: Proceedings of the University of Ballarat inaugural annual research conference, 15 October, 1999* (pp.57-63). Ballarat: University of Ballarat, Research and Graduate Studies Office.
- Fisher, J. W. (2001). Comparing levels of spiritual well-being in State, Catholic and Independent schools in Victoria, Australia. *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, 22, 99-105. doi.org/10.1080/1361760120039284
- Fisher, J. W. (2004). Feeling good, living life: A spiritual health measure for young children. *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, 25, 307-315. doi.org/10.1080/1361767042000306121
- Fisher, J. W. (2010). Development and application of a spiritual well-being questionnaire called SHALOM. *Religions*, 1, 105-121. doi.org/10.3390/rel1010105
- Fisher, J. (2011). The Four Domains Model: Connecting spirituality, health and well-being. *Religions*, 2, 17-28. doi.org/10.3390/rel2010017
- Fisher, J. W. (2012). Connectedness: At the heart of resiliency and spiritual well-being. In C. A. Stark & D. C. Bonner (Eds.), *Handbook on spirituality: Belief systems, societal impact and roles in coping* (pp. 265-277). New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc.
- Fisher, J. W., Francis, L. J., & Johnson, P. (2000). Assessing spiritual health via four domains of spiritual wellbeing: the SH4DI. *Pastoral Psychology*, 49, 133-145. doi.org/10.1023/A:1004609227002
- Fisher, J. W., Francis, L. J., & Johnson, P. (2002). The personal and social correlates of spiritual well-being among primary school teachers. *Pastoral Psychology*, 51, 3-11. doi.org/10.1023/A:1019738223072

- Francis, L. J., & Fisher, J. W. (2015). Locating spiritual wellbeing: A study among secondary school students in the empirical science of religious education. *Religious Education Journal of Australia*, 31(2), 30-37.
- Francis, L. J., Fisher, J. W., & Annis, J. (2015). Spiritual wellbeing and psychological type: A study among visitors to a medieval cathedral in Wales. *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*, 18, 675-692. doi.org/10.1080/13674676.2014.964002
- Francis, L. J., Fisher, J. W., Lankshear, D., & Eccles, E. (2018). Modelling the effect of worship attendance and personal prayer on spiritual wellbeing among 9- to 11-year-old students attending Anglican church schools in Wales. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*,
- General Synod of the Church of Ireland. (2000). *Reports*. Dublin: Dublin University Press.
- Gomez, R., & Fisher, J. W. (2003). Domains of spiritual well-being and development and validation of the Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 35, 1975-1991. doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(03)00045-X
- Gomez, R., & Fisher, J. W. (2005a). Item response theory analysis of the spiritual well-being questionnaire. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 38, 1107-1121. doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2004.07.009
- Gomez, R., & Fisher, J.W. (2005b). The Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire: Testing for model applicability, measurement and structural equivalencies and latent mean differences across gender. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 39, 1383-1393. doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2005.03.023
- Government of Ireland. (1937). *Bunreacht na hÉireann*. Dublin: The Stationary Office.
- Hall, T. W., & Edwards, K. J. (1996). The initial development and factor analysis of the Spiritual Assessment Inventory. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 24, 233-246.
- Hall, H. J. (2005). *How the domains of spiritual wellbeing predict current quality of*

- life and general wellbeing*. Postgraduate Diploma of Psychology Research Report, University of Ballarat.
- Hall, T. W., Reise, S. P., & Haviland, M. G. (2007). An item response theory analysis of the Spiritual Assessment Inventory. *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 17, 157-178. doi.org/10.1080/10508610701244197
- Hays, J. C., Meador, K. G., Branch, P. S., & George, L. K. (2001). The Spiritual History Scale in Four Dimensions (SHS-4): Validity and reliability. *The Gerontologist*, 41, 239-249. doi.org/10.1093/geront/41.2.239
- Holder, M. D., Coleman, B., & Wallace, J. M. (2010). Spirituality, religiousness, and happiness in children aged 8-12 years. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 11, 131-150. doi.org/10.1007/s10902-008-9126-1
- Hyland, A. (1989). The multi-denominational experience in the national schools system in Ireland. *Irish Educational Studies* 8, 89-114. doi.org/10.1080/0332331890080109
- Moodley, T. (2008). *The relationship between coping and spiritual well-being during adolescence*. PhD dissertation, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa.
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (1999). *Primary school curriculum*. Dublin: Stationary Office.
- Stott, A. (2002). *The relationship of spiritual well-being to other measures of subjective well-being*. Post-grad. Dip Psych. dissertation, Department of Psychology, University of Ballarat, Australia.
- Streukens, J. P. (2009). *Alcoholism: Spirituality and personality dynamics*. PhD dissertation, University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada.
- Tuohy, D. (2013). *Denominational education and politics: Ireland in a European context*. Dublin: Veritas.

- Van Rooyen, B. M. (2007). *Spiritual well-being in a group of South African adolescents*. PhD dissertation, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein.
- Vogt, T. (2007). *The impact of an Interim Protection Order (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998) on the victims of domestic violence*. D Pyschol. Dissertation, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- Wilkinson, J. (Ed). (2001-2010). *Follow Me*. Dublin: Church of Ireland Board of Education.
- Wilkinson, J. (2017). Pupil attitudes toward Christianity: A study amongst fourth to sixth class pupils. *Search: A Church of Ireland Journal*, 40, 207-216.

Table 1

Scale properties of the Living Life Index of Spiritual Wellbeing

	<i>f</i>	<i>r</i>	Yes %
<i>Relationship with self</i>			
I often feel that people like me	.51	.41	77
People often tell me that I have done well	.50	.39	78
I often enjoy life	.62	.50	92
I often laugh and smile	.53	.41	95
<i>Relationship with family</i>			
I often spend time with my family	.64	.51	89
I often feel that my family love me	.67	.52	93
I often feel love for my family	.70	.55	93
I often feel that I really belong to a family	.67	.51	91
<i>Relationship with nature</i>			
I often watch a sunrise or sunset	.41	.39	49
I often go for a walk in the park	.41	.40	55
I often spend time in a garden	.43	.38	55
I often look at the stars and the moon	.35	.34	65
<i>Relationship with God</i>			
I often talk with God	.65	.61	48
I often spend time thinking about God	.62	.58	51
I often feel that God is my friend	.62	.57	62
I often feel that God cares for me	.66	.59	65

Table 2

Correlations

	sex	age	attendance	prayer
Spiritual wellbeing	.15***	-.06	.20***	.34***
Prayer	.10*	-.03	.43***	
Attendance	.01	-.01		
Age	-.08			

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

Table 3

Regression on spiritual wellbeing

	r^2	Change			Beta	t	$p <$
		r^2	F	$p <$			
Sex	.02	.02	10.7	.001	.12	2.6	.01
Age	.03	.00	1.2	NS	-.04	-1.0	NS
Attendance	.06	.04	18.6	.001	.06	1.3	NS
Prayer	.14	.07	38.9	.001	.31	6.2	.001