

Illuminating Theology With Psychological Science

Psychological Literature



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Psychological Literature

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Overview

- Types of papers in psychology
- Sections of papers and red flags
- Where to find papers
- Red flags in psychological literature
- Discussion of papers in breakout groups

Papers Fall into One of Two Categories

Primary Literature

Original Empirical Articles

Case Studies

Conference Proceedings/Abstracts

Editorial or Letters to the Editor

Secondary Literature

Narrative/Traditional Review

Systematic Reviews

Meta-Analysis

Book Reviews

Subramanyam (2013)

Reviews vs. Meta-Analyses

Narrative/Traditional Review

- Describe current literature on a topic
- No specific research question
- No articulated methodology

Systematic Reviews

- Identifies a research question
- Articulates & follows reproducible methodology to identify articles based on criteria

Meta-Analysis

- Statistically combines the results of two or more studies
- Articulates & follows reproducible methodology

Rother (2007)

Original Paper | [Published: 25 August 2018](#)

Internal Diversity Among “Spiritual But Not Religious” Adolescents in the United States: A Person-Centered Examination Using Latent Class Analysis

[Yunping Tong](#) ✉ & [Fenggang Yang](#)

[Review of Religious Research](#) **60**, 435–453 (2018) | [Cite this article](#)

741 Accesses | **9** Citations | **3** Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

Abstract

Americans who self-identify as spiritual but not religious (SBNR) have increased in recent years. Existing studies of American religion often assume the SBNR as a homogeneous group. Recently some scholars suggest they are not all the same. Instead, SBNR people may differ in the pattern of religious practice, attitude, and affection. This study examines the heterogeneity of the SBNR using a person-centered approach of latent class analysis. We first identified four distinct types of SBNR adolescents in the Wave 2 data of the National Survey of Youth and Religion. Then, we explored how subgroups changed their religious identity over time by tracking them in Wave 3 data.

Sections of a paper

- Introduction
- Method
- Results
- Discussion



Major Red Flags

- Weak rationale for conducting the study
- Variables being studied are not well-defined
- Study did not replicate
- Procedure for collecting data was inappropriate for the research question
- Analyses used to determine results were flawed or inappropriate for the research question
- Mismatch between the results and the interpretation

The Introduction Contains a Literature Review and the Research Question/Hypothesis

- What was the “big question” of the study? What were the specific research questions of this study?
- What was previously known about this question? How does answering the research question add something new to what was already known?

Locke et al. (2009)



Introduction

- Variables being studied are not well-defined
- Rationale for conducting the study is weak

The Method Provides the Exact Procedures Used in the Study

- Who was studied? What was the experimental design?
- In order, what were the major steps in performing the study? (Visuals or flowcharts are often helpful)
- What kind of data were recorded and used for analysis?

Locke et al. (2009)



Method

- N and major characteristics
 - Inclusion/exclusion criteria
- Interactions between researcher & participants
- Setting
- How was the data collected?
- Procedure was inappropriate for the research question

The Results Present the Statistical Analyses and Findings

- What kinds of data analyses were used?
- What were the results?
- What do the data collected say about the specific research question, but also the “big” question?

Locke et al. (2009)

The Discussion Explains the Results in the Context of Prior Literature

- What does the author conclude? Based on the results presented, what is said about the specific research question and the “big” question of the study?
- What cautions does the author raise about interpreting the study?
- Were there any flaws in the study? How could the research design be improved?

Locke et al. (2009)



Results & Discussion

- Analyses used to determine results were flawed or inappropriate for the research question
- Mismatch between the results and the interpretation

Where Do You Find Papers?

- Make friends with a science librarian!
- Databases:
 - PsycINFO
 - Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection
 - PubMed

Check the References of Helpful Papers!

References

Arnett, Jeffrey Jensen, and Lene Arnett Jensen. 2002. A congregation of one: Individualized religious beliefs among emerging adults. *Journal of Adolescent Research* 17(5): 451–467.

[Article](#) [Google Scholar](#)

Ammerman, Nancy T. 2013a. *Sacred stories, spiritual tribes: Finding religion in everyday life*. New York: Oxford University Press.

[Book](#) [Google Scholar](#)

Ammerman, Nancy T. 2013b. Spiritual but not religious? Beyond binary choices in the study of religion. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 52(2): 258–278.

[Article](#) [Google Scholar](#)

If a paper is particularly helpful, see what other, newer papers have cited that paper

[HTML] Internal diversity among “spiritual but not religious” adolescents in the United States: A person-centered examination using Latent Class Analysis

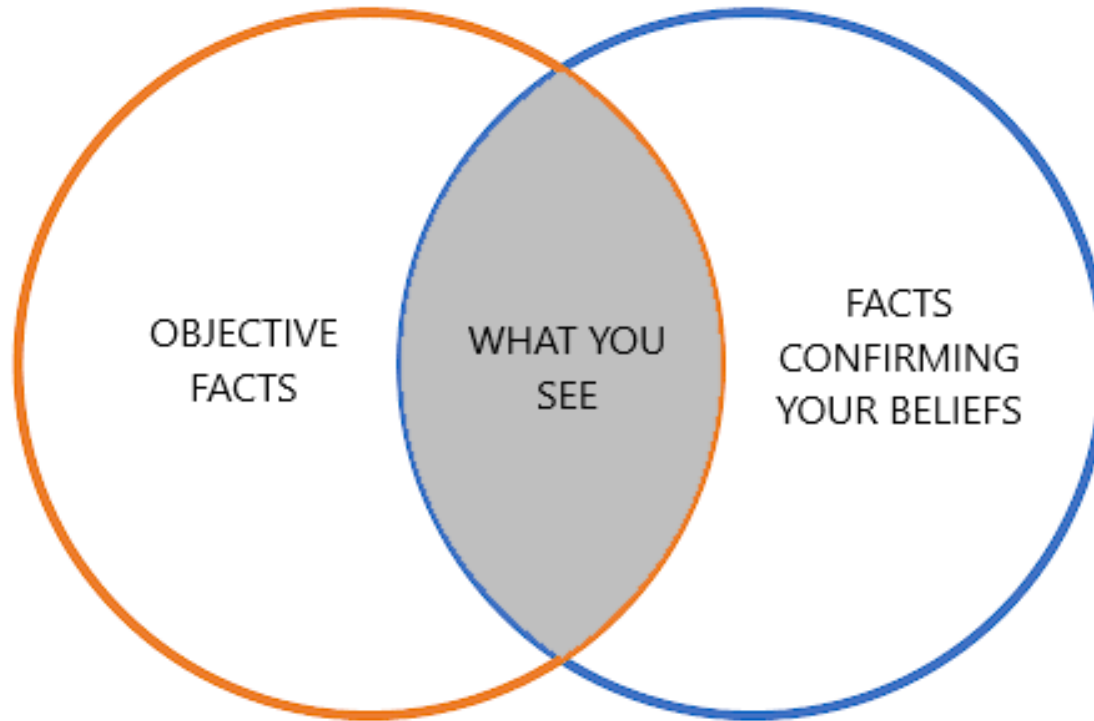
[Y Tong](#), [F Yang](#) - *Review of Religious Research*, 2018 - Springer

Americans who self-identify as spiritual but not religious (SBNR) have increased in recent years. Existing studies of American religion often assume the SBNR as a homogeneous group. Recently some scholars suggest they are not all the same. Instead, SBNR people may differ in the pattern of religious practice, attitude, and affection. This study examines the heterogeneity of the SBNR using a person-centered approach of latent class analysis. We first identified four distinct types of SBNR adolescents in the Wave 2 data of the National ...

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A closing reminder

Be aware of confirmation bias!





References

Locke, L. F., Silverman, S. J., & Spirduso, W. W. (2009). *Reading and understanding research*. Sage Publications.

Rother, E. T. (2007). Systematic literature review X narrative review. *Acta paulista de enfermagem*, 20, v-vi.

Subramanyam R. (2013). Art of reading a journal article: Methodically and effectively. *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology*, 17(1), 65–70. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0973-029X.110733>



Discussion of literature

- Participants can be sent to breakout rooms based on their topics of interest.