

**RELIGION IN THE LIFE OF THE YOUNG  
ADULT AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK:  
AN INVESTIGATION**

**Being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**In the University of Hull**

**by**

**Jane Clifford**

**B.Sc. National University of Ireland  
BST Regis College, Toronto  
M.Div. University of Toronto**

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by

**Jane Clifford**

on

## **Religion in the Life of the Young Adult at University College Cork: An Investigation**

This study attempts to investigate religion in the life of the young adult at University College Cork (UCC). It aims to ensure that pastoral ministry is based, not on guesses and assumptions, but on ascertained facts. The study is underpinned by historical, theological, psychological and sociological factors. It traces the provisions made for religion during each phase of its history as a nondenominational college.

The contention is that religion arises from the nature of human beings in their capacity to relate to the mystery of God and the need to express this through organised religion in accordance with the culture. Expectations in relation to religion are informed by the psychological understanding that religious faith is not a constant through life. Young adult students are subject to the transitions which are typical of that stage of development. Account is taken of the effect on religion of the rapid changes in Irish society in the second half of the twentieth century.

A multiple triangulation research design, consisting of a survey, depth interviews and participant observations, was used in the investigation. The survey was carried out by means of a postal questionnaire, administered to a systematic sample of students in the 18-23 year age group during the 1996/97 academic year. It examined student priorities, membership of religion, public worship, private prayer, charitable works, beliefs and moral values. The data were analysed using simple frequencies, descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, ANOVA and T-tests. Further insights were obtained by means of twenty depth interviews and by the observations of the researcher. These strands were interwoven in creating a canvas on religion in the life of the young adult at UCC. Interested parties are challenged to a new approach to religion as UCC makes its transition from a college to an institution of full university status.



# **Dedication**

**To the young adult students at UCC**

**‘I have come so that you may have life and have it to the full’  
(John 10:10)**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

UCC = University College Cork

QCC = Queen's College Cork

UCD = University College Dublin

NUI = National University of Ireland

Arts / CS = Faculties of Arts and Celtic Studies

Com = Faculty of Commerce

Eng = Faculty of Engineering

F-d S/T = Faculty of Food Science and Technology

Med = Faculty of Medicine

Sc = Faculty of Science

D. Sec. = Denominational Secondary School or College

Non-D Sec = Non-Denominational Secondary School

V.E.C.= Vocational School or College

Com.S = Community School

Comp.S = Comprehensive School

S-l S o Ir. =Second-level school outside Ireland

H /A share = House / Apartment share

U-g = Under-graduate

P-g = Post-graduate

Irish – Amer. = Irish - American

W. Rel. = World Religion other than Christianity

Ch. Den. = Christian Denomination

Ch. of Ir. = Church of Ireland

Ch. E/I = Church of England/Ireland

R. Cath. = Roman Catholic

Wes/Meth = Wesleyan / Methodist

N = The number of respondents who gave a valid answer to a question.

$\chi^2$  = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = significance level

S.D. = Standard Deviation

NSSD = No statistically significant difference

'Rest' = Main Restaurant, UCC

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**



# **INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH**

This study attempts to investigate religion in the life of the young adult at UCC. The contention is that the religion of young adults at UCC has been affected by the secularisation of modern Irish society during the second half of the twentieth century. The aim of the study is to examine the place of religion and its expression in the life of the young adult at UCC in the late 1990s. The purpose of the investigation is to ensure that pastoral ministry to young adult students at UCC and the provisions made for it are based, not on guesses and assumptions, but on ascertained facts.

## **1.2 THE SCOPE AND LIMITS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

Since religion is a universal human phenomenon, the scope of religious research is limitless. It encompasses all ages and races. It is concerned with religious expressions in the form of ritual, art, and music. This research is necessarily limited to a particular place, University College Cork and at a particular time, the academic year 1996/97. It is concerned with one group of its students – the young adults in the age group 18-23 years. Young adults in third level education have been shown by previous research to be very vulnerable to the secularisation of modern Irish society. This phenomenon suggests the need for ongoing religious research in all third level institutions throughout the country. The young adult population of approximately 7,340 students at UCC provides ample scope for its own research project. While there are features common to all third level institutions, the location and nature of UCC render it unique. The researcher, while being involved as a chaplain at UCC, has endeavoured to carry out the research in an objective fashion.

### **1.3 HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS**

The locus of the investigation is University College Cork, which under the provision of the UNIVERSITIES ACT 1997, became a university with the title ‘National University of Ireland, Cork’. The Governing Body extended the name to ‘University College Cork – National University of Ireland, Cork’ and decided that the title ‘University College Cork’ would continue to be used and that the acronym ‘UCC’ would be retained (Kelleher, 1998). ‘UCC’ will be the title used throughout this dissertation. It will also be referred to as ‘the College’.

Chapter II offers an historical perspective on religion at UCC. Founded in 1845 as Queen’s College Cork (QCC), its roots can traced to the medieval university. Its philosophy is derived from the educational reforms of eighteenth century Europe and the United States. Religious and political expediency determined that it was founded, together with its sister colleges at Belfast and Galway, as a non-denominational college on the model of London University. Yet, unlike London University, provision was made for religion by the appointment of a dean of residence for students of each Christian denomination. The task of the deans was to supervise the religious observance and the moral behaviour of the students residing in licensed boarding houses. The Catholic dean of residence was withdrawn following the condemnation of the Queen’s Colleges by the Catholic hierarchy at the Synod of Thurles in 1850. The position of Catholic dean of residence was not restored until 1905. The work of the deans of residence of other denominations was frustrated by the refusal of the College authorities to provide a room and a slot on the timetable for religious instruction. Rev. George Webster, the Church of Ireland dean of residence, found a solution by building the student residence, Berkeley Hall, which provided a venue for religious instruction. Renamed the Honan Hostel, this building and the Honan Chapel adjacent to it played an important rôle in relation to religion at the College during the twentieth century.



In 1908 Queen's College Cork became a constituent college of the National University of Ireland and was renamed University College Cork. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century successive Presidents attempted to Catholicise the College notwithstanding its non-denominational character. This process reached its climax during the presidency of Alfred O'Rahilly (1945-1953).

Thereafter, religion receded into the background as the College grappled with the demands of providing for a rapidly increasing student population. The rôle of deans of residence was changed to that of chaplains in the early 1970s. The chaplains provide a pastoral service towards the staff members and students of the College.

#### **1.4 THEOLOGICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS**

In Chapter III the theological, psychological, and sociological underpinnings for the investigation are developed. Religion is regarded as a universal phenomenon arising from the transcendent nature of human beings oriented towards the mystery of God. This human experience is given embodiment in various World Religions. In ancient times goddess worship was replaced by worship of the sky-god. Religious myth was first challenged by the logic of Greek philosophy. The religious void, created throughout the Roman Empire in attempting to live by reason alone, opened the way for the embrace of Christianity. Whereas, the classical world-view of medieval Europe saw all reality as religious, the process of secularisation of the modern era removed the influence of religious values from many sectors of society. It was thought that science, not religion, would answer all human questions and problems. Its failure to do so has given rise to the uncertainty and pluralism of the post-modern world-view. Yet there is a sense of optimism that faith and culture may be finding a new meeting point.

Psychological research has identified common patterns in intellectual, religious and emotion development. Kohlberg's Stages of moral development and Fowler's Stages of faith development provide a framework for understanding the nature of religion at different stages of life. The transitions they observe at the young adult stage have particular relevance here. Parks' 'Young Adult Stage', which describes the distinctive movements of young adult faith experiences, is described in some detail. Stage theories are used with caution, as research in this area is ongoing.

This study builds on the sociological research of religion, which has gained momentum in the second half of the twentieth century. Irish and European studies are reviewed. They reveal the very limited number of studies of religion of university students in Ireland and suggest the need for this research project.

### **1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHOD**

A multiplication triangulation research design consisting of a survey, depth interviews and participant observations was used in the investigation. Thus, quantitative and qualitative approaches were combined. The main instrument of the investigation was a survey that was carried out by means of a postal questionnaire. This was administered to a systematic sample of students in the 18-23 year age group during the 1996/97 academic year. The testimonies of students and chaplains and the observations of the researcher confirm and complement the results of the survey.

The central aim of the research was 'To examine the place of religion and its expression in the life of the young adult at UCC in the 1996/7 academic year'. The subsidiary topics supporting the investigation are as follows:

1. The place of religion among the priorities of students' lives
2. Membership of Religion
3. Public worship, particularly at UCC

4. Private Prayer
5. Christian beliefs
6. Work for charitable groups
7. Students' knowledge of chaplains and use of chaplaincy
8. Belief in God
9. Spiritual experiences
10. Meaningfulness of life
11. Moral values
12. Discussion of religion with friends
13. Desire to be better informed about religious matters

Hypotheses regarding these topics were put forward. A questionnaire containing seventy questions was designed to elicit the information required to test the hypotheses.

The questionnaire was tested in a pilot study. It was then administered to a systematic sample of 734 students drawn on the student population in the 18-23 year age group. A satisfactory return of 484 (66%) was achieved. The data were analysed using simple frequencies, descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations and chi-square, ANOVA and T-tests.

The results are presented systematically by means of tables in Chapter V and are illustrated by figures in the appendix.

## **1.6 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In Chapter VI the results are discussed in the light of the theories and researched which has been reviewed. The are supplemented and confirmed by means of selected extracts from the depth-interviews and by participant observations. The picture, which emerges, reveals the rich variety of religious practices and experiences and attitudes of the young adult students.



In Chapter VII recommendations regarding pastoral ministry at UCC and the provisions needed for it are directed to various interest groups and suggestions for further related research are put forward.

## **CHAPTER II**

# **QCC/ UCC: NON-DENOMINATIONAL – NOT IRRELIGIOUS**

# **QCC/ UCC: NON-DENOMINATIONAL – NOT IRRELIGIOUS**

## **2.1 INTRODUCTION – LINKS WITH EARLY IRISH MONASTICISM**

*“Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5).*

UCC stands on holy ground. It occupies the site of the Gill Abbey monastery founded by the Canons Regular of St. Augustine in 1137. This monastery took its name, *De Antro Sancti Barri* from the cave on the Gill Abbey Rock associated with the patron saint, St. Finbarr (O’Riain, 1994). The logo on the official crest of the College ‘Where Finbarr taught let Munster learn’ maintains the association with St. Finbarr. An association was made with the monastic centres of learning of Munster when, in 1995, the meeting rooms of *Áras na Mac Léinn* (Student Union Building), were named *An Guagán* (Guagane), *Lios Mór* (Lismore), *Sceilig* (Skellig), *Ros Cré* (Roscrea), and *Ard Pádraig* (Ardpatrick). On examining the College prospectus, however, undergraduate students find ‘that courses in religious studies or theology are not available to them’ (Corkery and Long, 1997, p. 11). Yet, according to the student handbook *Untangle the Knots*, chaplains of the main religious denominations of Ireland minister in the College. On this ground stands a university - UCC, which by its charter is non-denominational but in practice is not irreligious. It is open to students of all religions or none and makes provision for the religious practices and for the spiritual and moral formation of its students.

In the 150 years of the life of the College three phases can be distinguished where religion is concerned. In the first phase, Queen’s College Cork (1845-1908), religion was restricted on account of the non-denominational charter of the College. In the

second phase, University College Cork (1908 –1960), religion, particularly Catholicism, was promoted notwithstanding its non-denominational charter. In the third phase, (1960 -) the question of religion has receded into the background as people of all religions and none co-exist in harmony within the campus. This chapter considers the political and religious circumstances which determined its incorporation as a non-denominational college and the provisions which have been made for the support of religion throughout its history.

## **2.2 ORIGIN OF EXPECTATION REGARDING RELIGION IN A UNIVERSITY**

### **2.2.1 Medieval Universities**

In the nineteenth century, the idea that secular and religious knowledge could be separated was alien to the thinking of many people. Up to that time, it had been taken for granted that education and religion went hand in hand at all stages (McGrath, 1962, p. 70). This was particularly true of university education, which had its origin in medieval Western Christianity.

The universities ranked alongside the two great powers by which Christian society was directed, the spiritual (*sacerdotium*) and the temporal (*Imperium*). In their struggle to free themselves from undue ecclesiastical and secular control they claimed a link with the Greek, Greco-Roman, and Byzantium schools (Cobban, 1975, p. 22).

### **2.2.2 Denominational Universities after the Reformation**

Since church, state and education were closely associated in the sixteenth century, the Reformation had a divisive effect on politics and on education (Schachner, 1962, p. 299). This divisive influence of religion was to be experienced in Irish history in general and in the history of education in particular (Murphy, 1995, p. 34). After the



Reformation universities became denominational institutions and were used to promote the religion of the state (McGrath, 1962, p. 55).

The culture of Ireland was so different from that of the rest of Europe that it was without a university at the time of the Reformation. Attempts to establish a university in Ireland had failed (Moody and Beckett, 1959a, p. xlii). ‘Ireland had no White Horse Inn where academic disputations could engage the mind of scholars, for Luther’s theses do not seem to have more than scratched the surface of Irish consciousness’ (Bolster, 1982, p. xxxii).

Henry VIII introduced the religion factor to Ireland when, in 1537, the Act of Supremacy declared him the Supreme Head of the Church in Ireland (Curtis, 1986, p. 165). The Oath of Supremacy, which was the corollary of the Act, was to be taken by every person at the time of taking orders and by every person promoted to any degree of learning in any university within the land (Bolster, 1982, pp. 4-5). The religious tolerance of Elizabeth I was short-lived. The parliament of 1560 re-established Protestantism as the official religion of Ireland (Bolster, 1982, p. 56). But the Irish resisted a Church introduced by England. ‘The Pope continued to be regarded by the Irish as their spiritual father and the head of Catholic Christendom’ (Bolster, 1982, p. xxxiii). The Irish no longer sought their education in the Anglican universities of Oxford and Cambridge but at Catholic universities and seminaries on the Continent (Corish, 1995, pp. 3-4).

### **2.2.3 Trinity College / The University of Dublin**

It became clear to the government in England that a local university, in Ireland and for Ireland, should be urgently set up as a Protestant powerhouse (Robinson-Hammerstein, 1992, p. 8). Thus, the first Irish university, Trinity College Dublin, was granted its Charter by Elizabeth I on 3 March 1591 (1592 new-style) incorporating it as a

university, the University of Dublin (Luce, 1992, pp. 2–4). Its ethos tended towards the puritanical wing of Anglicanism. Among its purposes was the provision of education for the clergy of the Anglican Church (Corish, 1995, p. 4). Students matriculating at Trinity were never required to declare assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of Anglicanism. But, under the Penal Laws, passed early in the eighteenth century, Catholics could not proceed to a degree unless they were prepared to take the Anti-transubstantiation Oath. They found this repugnant. It was abolished by the Relief Act of 1793. Although its ethos remained strongly Anglican, the College was open for scholarship, as distinct from fellowship, to all Christian denominations and to Jews (Luce, 1992, pp. 60-61). It was availed of by a substantial number of Catholics, including Sir Thomas Wise and Sir Robert Kane, who were to play important roles in the establishment of the Queen's Colleges (Pettit, 1973, p. 30).

#### **2.2.4 Maynooth College - An Exception**

The education of Irish Catholic clergy was highly concentrated in France in the late eighteenth century. Fear of revolutionary ideas infiltrating Irish politics caused the Government, in June 1795, to enact a bill for the purpose of 'establishing, ... maintaining and endowing an academy for the education exclusively of persons professing the Roman Catholic religion' (Corish, 1995, p. 11). The academy was realised as St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. This Catholic institution, provided by a Protestant Government, was an exception and would not be repeated for Catholics generally.

### **2.3 NEW MODEL – LONDON UNIVERSITY**

The medieval-style denominational university did not meet the requirement of providing university education in Ireland, where Protestantism was the official religion,



but where the majority of the people were Catholics. A new model, London University, presented a possible solution.

The first half of the nineteenth century was a period of exciting educational challenge and change (Pettit, 1973, p. 2). Since the middle ages universities had trained priests, lawyers, physicians and civil servants but the rise of industrial and agrarian capitalism led to a renewed emphasis on professional education (Torstendahl, 1993, p. 138). The organisation of regional universities, meant to serve geographical areas, was a means to this end (Torstendahl, 1993, p. 113).

In England, there was a demand, by the Nonconformists, for higher education which would be wider in its educational scope and in the constitution of its student body than that offered at Oxford or Cambridge. Thomas Campbell was the leader of a council of men who met this demand by founding London University in 1828. They were inspired by the German and Scottish universities and by the University of Virginia (McGrath, 1962, pp. 49-53).

### **2.3.1 Influence of the German Universities of Berlin and Bonn**

The intellectual decline in Germany in the eighteenth century threatened its universities with extinction. However, the Humboldtian educational reforms in Prussia between 1806 and 1818 rationalised university administration, modernised and consolidated existing institutions and founded new universities in Berlin (1809) and in Bonn (1816) (Turner, 1974, p. 495). The “Humboldtian ideology” laid down by Humboldt, Fichte and Schleiermacher stressed creativity, discovery, research, and a growing organismic concept of learning (Turner, 1974, p. 496).

The word *Bildung* is central to the Humboldtian tradition. Mendlessöhn and Kant used the word *Bildung* broadly to mean, not only the intellectual, but also the moral and emotional development of the individual. The Swiss reformer, Pestalozzi, was one of

the prominent philosophers of *bildung*. The origin of *bildung*, constructed from the word *bild* meaning ‘image’, must be searched for in mysticism, where the idea that a person is made in the image of God (*imago Dei*) is fundamental. In the eighteenth century its meaning was secularised. The new meaning of *bildung* expressed a willingness to see everything as changing and developing. Humboldt was not original in his thinking on *bildung*, but it was he who transformed it into concrete institutional form in founding the University of Berlin. The Berlin-type university made the philosophy faculty central (Liedman, 1993, pp. 77-82). The university should, in the words of Humboldt, be ‘the summit where everything that happens directly in the interest of the moral culture of the nation comes together’ (Wittrock, 1993, p. 317). The remarkable aesthetic and intellectual culture of nineteenth century Germany made its universities the centre of international attention for many decades (Rothblatt and Wittrock, 1993, p. 12).

When Thomas Campbell visited Bonn in 1820 he was impressed by the tolerance that existed there between Protestants and Catholics and the liberal treatment which was accorded to the Jews. He was inspired to found, in London, a university which would be open to students of all creeds and which would provide more liberally than the older universities for scientific and professional studies (McGrath, 1962, pp. 49-50). At Bonn, the problem of teaching religion at university was solved by the provision of chairs of Catholic and Protestant theology. In this respect, the founders of London University did not follow the German model. While expressing their belief that religion constituted an essential part of education, they decided to exclude theology from its curriculum and thus avoid the difficulty of providing suitable religious instruction for a student body of mixed creeds (McGrath, 1962, p. 55). Campbell’s visit to Berlin in 1825 encouraged him to opt for the professorial rather than the tutorial system of instruction (McGrath, 1962, p. 50).



### **2.3.2 Influence of Scottish Universities**

The constitution of London University was very deeply influenced by the Scottish universities. They were characterised by a wide range of subjects, the lecture system, non-residence of students, admittance to single courses, the absence of religious tests, the dependence of the professors on fees for their support, and the democratic character of the institution (McGrath, 1962, p. 50).

### **2.3.3 American Influence**

In addition, Campbell was influenced by the high ideals expressed in the Rockfish Gap Report of 1818. This report was mainly the work of Thomas Jefferson, the founder of the first modern university in the United States, that of Virginia. According to this report the purpose of higher education was not only the provision of professional, industrial and scientific education but ‘to develop the reasoning faculties of our youth, enlarge their minds, cultivate their morals, and instil into them the precepts of virtue and order’ (McGrath, 1962, p. 51).

London University opened in 1828. It was constituted as a non-residential university, thus avoiding the difficulty which would ensue if students of different religious denominations were required to live together. Its regulation, that the boarding house keepers whom it recognised should require their boarders to be regular in their attendance at some place of public worship, was abandoned after a year (McGrath, 1962, p. 56). The exclusion of theology from its halls provoked an outcry. It was denounced as the ‘Godless College of Gower Street’ (Pettit, 1973, p. 59). The opposition of the older universities was deeply rooted in the conviction of the unity of church and state. Jonh Henry Newman expressed the view ‘that a professedly irreligious institution should not be allowed to distribute titles which had hitherto been recognised as the badge of Christian education’ (McGrath, 1962, p. 62).

London University influenced the course of education in many ways during the nineteenth century, particularly in securing public recognition for the principle of the divorce between secular and religious instruction (McGrath, 1962, p. 72). It became the 'precedent and exemplar as well as certifying agency for the new colleges' (Jones, 1988, p. 16). The new model would satisfy the longing, not just for higher, but for a different form, of education. There would be an end to restrictive religious tests, though the place of religion in education remained to be resolved (Murphy, 1995, p. 1).

## **2.4 THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES – A COMPROMISE**

The history of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland shows how the London University model was adapted for Ireland. The controversy, which surrounded the religion question, was bitter and protracted and had a detrimental impact on the development of the Colleges.

### **2.4.1 Catholic demand for a Catholic University**

The Roman Catholic middle class in Ireland was so encouraged by the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, but so disenchanted by its failure to shake ascendancy privilege, that it determinedly pursued the goal of higher education facilities (Murphy, 1995, p. 1). The Catholic ideal was to see exclusively Catholic universities established in Ireland (Keogh, 1997, p. 55). Sir Thomas Wise, one of the first eight Irish Catholics to enter the British Parliament, being returned as a liberal in the general election of 1830, advocated social changes in Ireland including a comprehensive system of national education for the whole people. In 1835, the government appointed a Select Committee on Education which in 1838 produced a master plan. The plan envisaged elementary, secondary, agricultural and professional schools, four provincial colleges and provision for 'supplementary education' (Moody and Beckett, 1959a, p. lviii). Wyse proposed that



the provincial colleges should be aggregated in a university and should be open to all denominations, on the model of London University (Moody and Beckett, 1959a, p. lxii). In 1845, the Conservative Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel was forced, by agitation for the repeal of the Act of Union (1800), to introduce a conciliatory package of government for Ireland. He increased the grant to Maynooth College in an effort to appease the Catholic clergy and proposed the establishment of provincial colleges, primarily for the Catholic laity (Pettit, 1974, p. 9). Peel had opposed the London University project but his fear of weakening the Protestant establishment in Ireland or of antagonising British public opinion compelled him to adopt the London University model for the proposed colleges as the best compromise for Ireland. Unlike London University, some provision would be made for religion in the Irish colleges. The Irish Colleges Bill was debated in parliament in May 1845 and received the Royal Assent of Queen Victoria in July of that year (Pettit, 1974, p. 11).

#### **2.4.2 Government Response – The COLLEGES (IRELAND) ACT 1845**

The COLLEGES (IRELAND) ACT, 1845 provided for non-sectarian, non-residential, low-fee, systematic lecturing institutions. Three Queen's Colleges were established, each with its own royal charter, at Belfast, Cork and Galway. Queen's College Cork was granted its charter on 30 December 1845. The charter named Sir Robert Kane as president and John Ryall as vice-president (Murphy, 1995, p. 13). The Queen's University in Ireland, which was incorporated by charter on 3 September 1850, had the three Queen's Colleges exclusively as its constituent parts. This University, located in Dublin, had powers to conduct examinations and confer degrees (Murphy, 1995, p. 19). The provisions of the COLLEGES (IRELAND) ACT, 1845 (see Appendix A) for the religious instruction and religious practice of the students are summarised as follows:



- In order to enable every student to receive religious instruction it was lawful for the President and professors to assign lecture rooms within the precincts of the College for the use of approved religious teachers and to make rules concerning the days and times of such instruction.
- A student was not to be compelled to attend any theological lecture or religious instruction other than that approved by his parents and guardians. (Male students only, were admitted to the College until 1885).
- There would be no religious tests but the College could make regulations for securing the due attendance of the students for divine worship at such church or chapel as might be approved of by their parents or guardians.
- In order to continue in the College, students were obliged to reside with parents or guardians or with the master of a licensed boarding house or in a hall of residence. The master of the licensed boarding-house was obliged to supply testimonials of character and fitness for the office and to specify the house or houses intended for the reception of students, and the provision or regulation proposed to be made for securing the students' attendance at religious instruction.
- It was made lawful for any person to make a bequest for founding and endowing halls of residence. The Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland were empowered to make loans to corporate bodies willing to found and endow any such halls.
- It was made lawful for any person to make a bequest for establishing and maintaining lectures or other forms of religious instruction for the use of such students as might be desirous of receiving the same.

### **2.4.3 Political and Ecclesiastical Opposition.**

The non-denominational nature of the Colleges gave rise to controversy in political and ecclesiastical circles. Daniel O'Connell M.P. promoted segregated education. His idea

was to have Trinity College Dublin for the Protestants, Queen's College Belfast for the Presbyterians and both Cork and Galway for Catholics (Keogh, 1997, p. 56). The Irish bishops were divided in their response to the Queen's Colleges. Archbishop Crolly of Armagh and Archbishop Murray of Dublin led those who supported the Colleges, while Archbishop MacHale of Tuam led those who opposed them. The matter was referred to Rome. Two papal rescripts, the first on 9 October 1847 and the second on 11 October 1848, declared against those bishops who supported Catholic participation in the Colleges (Moody and Beckett, 1959a, p. 47).

#### **2.4.4 President Kane Seeks Approval**

The President of Queen's College, Cork, Sir Robert Kane, still hoped to stave off opposition. His speech at the official inauguration of the College on 7 November 1849 was, on the one hand, 'a notable exposition of a philosophy of university education which was the distinctive creation of early nineteenth century thought' (Pettit, 1974, p. 13). On the other hand, he highlighted the built-in provisions for respecting and protecting religious beliefs and even for protecting religious practice, such as deanships of residence and the supervisory role of the licensed boarding-house keepers. He added that the Catholic dean would voluntarily extend instruction and supervision to students who lived at home. He also struck a supra-denominational note in referring to the monastery of St. Finbarr on the Gillabbey site in Ireland's golden age (Murphy, 1995, p. 41). During the ceremony the professors signed a declaration by which they 'promised they would have regard for the religious sensibilities of their students and avoid political controversy in accordance with Ch. VI, 9 of the statutes' (Murphy, 1995, p. 40).



### **2.4.5 Support for Queen's College Cork**

Queen's College Cork was not regarded as an alien institution but as the culmination of local effort over many years (Pettit, 1974, p. 7). The strong support for it by many sections of the citizens of Cork was shown by the large attendance of representatives of every political party and religious sect at a banquet in honour of Sir Robert Kane at the Imperial Hotel, Cork on 9 April 1850.

‘two-third of those catalogued therein are of the Roman Catholic persuasion – and not merely so by profession, but in faith and practice. .... We point specially, and earnestly to this fact, as one worth profound consideration, from some who appear to have been deluded into a belief that the Catholic laity of Ireland is unfavourable to, or, suspicious of, the new Collegiate system.’ (1850, Banquet to Sir Robert Kane, p. 59)

In addressing the banquet assembly, President Kane pointed out that the college was intended for the promotion of practical education for the upper and middle classes of society. But he saw this as a means of alleviating the poverty of the poor classes also (1850, Banquet to Sir Robert Kane, p. 18).

The Catholic bishop of Cork, Bishop Delany, supported the Queen's Colleges. He was of the opinion that they offered the best educational opportunity which could be expected at that time. He appointed Rev. William O'Connor as the Catholic dean of residence for 1849-50 (Murphy, 1997, p. 27). There was support from the Protestant Churches also. Rev Louis Perrin and Rev. William Magill became the deans of residence for the Church of England and the Presbyterian Church respectively from 1849 (Kane, 1850). Rev John Greer became the Wesleyan dean of residence from 1851 (Kane, 1852).

## **2.5 1845 – 1908 NON-DENOMINATIONAL STATUS EMPHASISED**

During the Queen's College period (1845-1908), the College authorities emphasised the non-denominational character bestowed on the College by its charter. In order to be seen



to be fair to all religions they made no concessions to any religion. They did this to a degree not required by the 1845 Act or by the charter (Hyland, 1997, p. 48).

### **2.5.1 Statutes of Punishment and Boarding-House Regulations**

The acceptance of the College depended largely on the calibre of its students. The observance of religious practices and the general conduct of the students were monitored by the deans of residence who reported annually to the President. Statutes of Punishment to be observed by the students were drawn up. According to the Statutes of Punishment of the College, expulsion or a lighter punishment could be imposed on students by the Council for habitual neglect of attendance at Divine Worship or at Religious Instruction or for misbehaviour (Kane, 1850, Appendix A) (See Appendix A2). Regulations regarding the accommodation being provided and the supervision of students by the proprietors of the licensed boarding houses were to be displayed in each boarding house (Kane, 1850, Appendix E) (See Appendix A3).

In his report of 1850, The President Robert Kane informed George William Frederick, Lord Lieutenant and General Governor of Ireland, that the deans of residence had supervised the moral conduct and religious observances of the students of their respective creeds, resident in licensed boarding houses. He also informed him that, during the last term, they had delivered special courses of religious instruction. These courses were compulsory only for students residing in licensed boarding houses but, on his recommendation, the general body of students attended also. The religious instruction was not delivered in the College but in localities in the vicinity of the College, selected as convenient for the deans and students. The President reported the satisfaction of the deans of residences at the cordial harmony, which they observed among the students of their respective classes. The good behaviour and religious observance of the students was further witnessed in the official reports of the deans of

residence, which were included in the appendix of the President's report (Kane, 1850, Appendix D). William O' Connor, the Roman Catholic dean of residence, concluded his report

'Praying to God that nothing will interfere with the good work, and that the same brotherly love which we have, during the past year, witnessed among the students of every creed, may still continue to fill their hearts, to the total exclusion of all unchristian and sectarian prejudice' (Kane, 1850, Appendix A).

President Kane had taken every precaution to ensure the acceptance of the College. His hopes for ecclesiastical approval were dashed by the death of Archbishop Crolly.

### **2.5.2 Ecclesiastical Disapproval – Synod of Thurles**

Archbishop Crolly, who had supported the Queen's Colleges, died in 1849. He was replaced in April 1850 by Paul Cullen who strongly disapproved of mixed education.

Cullen summoned the Irish prelates to a Synod at Thurles in August 1850. According to the decrees of the Synod:

No bishop was to co-operate in the administration or government of the colleges (Decree 2); the clergy were prohibited, under pain of suspension to be incurred *ipso facto*, from holding any office in them, whether as professors or deans of discipline (Decrees 3 and 4); and the laity were advised to shun the colleges as they provided grave and intrinsic dangers to faith and morals. The two papal rescripts condemning the colleges were inserted in the *Acts* of the Synod (Keogh, 1997, p. 57).

The minority group of bishops, in favour of the Colleges, sent a petition to Rome requesting the matter be given further consideration. They were disappointed when on 17 November Pope Pius IX ruled that the matter was closed (Keogh, 1997, p. 57).

### **2.5.3 Withdrawal of Catholic Deans of Residence**

The bishops of Cork and Galway were slow to withdraw their priests as deans of residence or to condemn Catholics for attending. It is evident that Fr. William O'Connor continued as dean of residence at least until 20 January 1851 when he wrote his second report to the President. He concluded that report with the words:



I am happy to be able to add, that whatever may be the speculative opinions of some wise and good men, I have not yet seen, nor have the students yet experienced, danger to either faith or morals at Queen's College, Cork (Kane, 1851, Appendix A).

In successive reports, President Kane noted that the conduct of the students of Queen's College, Cork, was extremely satisfactory. Reports from the deans for the Established and Presbyterian Churches, and for the Wesley Community, supported his claim. In his 1858-1859 report he regretted that the statutes of the Synod of Thurles deprived the Roman Catholic students of the moral and spiritual guidance and instruction of the Rev. William O' Connor. However, having made careful enquiry himself, he could state that the religious and moral conduct of those students had been highly satisfactory. Kane pointed to the steady increase in the proportion of Roman Catholics attending the College as an indication that the confidence, which the Roman Catholic upper and middle classes had placed in the educational arrangements of the College, had not decreased (Kane, 1859).

#### **2.5.4 Religious Instruction - Deans of Residence Dissatisfied**

In 1856-1857 Rev. Louis Perrin was replaced by Rev. George Webster as dean of residence for the Established Church. George Webster gave religious instruction to the students of his denomination in the Cathedral. He complained that, because of its distance from the College, the students attended at great inconvenience (Kane, 1858, Appendix L). By 1860-61, Webster was even more frustrated, not only by the refusal of the Council to give him a room in the College for religious instruction, but also by the fact that he was not given an hour on the time-table for such (Kane, 1862). In 1866 Webster remarked: 'I am long enough connected now with the College to know that even in their worldly concerns the students suffer considerably from not having had sufficient opportunities of knowing the deans of residence' (Kane, 1866, Appendix L).



The Council, in its desire to appear impartial, did not concede to Webster's wishes. In 1868 he expressed his exasperation:

Although the late charter recognised the Deans as the religious teachers, and beyond all doubt, gave the Council the power of allowing the Deans to lecture inside the walls of the College and made the habitual neglect of religious instruction, one of the most serious offences that could be charged upon a student – in short although the late charter made every provision for the religious education of the students belonging to the various denominations, the Council of the Queen's College, Cork, has steadily refused to allow the Deans of Residences any lecture rooms in the College. ... my deliberate conviction is that if some means be not adopted to bring the students under the supervision of the Deans, Queen's College, Cork will soon deserve the reproach of being called a "godless College" and I shall be forced very reluctantly to sever my name from all connection with it (Kane, 1868, Appendix K).

Webster brought the matter before the Visitors on several occasions. But the Visitors ruled that the new Charter did not oblige the Council to allow him the use of a room. As a result of that ruling no student attended his religious instruction classes. He took that to indicate that they were resolved to bring matters to an issue. He formally reported the students under his care 'for their habitual neglect of the religious instruction provided for them, and I shall hope that the Council may be able to find some remedy of this evil' (O'Sullivan, 1874, Appendix D). The Council did not offer a solution. Webster, however, found his own solution in establishing a Hall of Residence.

The Wesleyan dean of residence also voiced his annoyance that the want of a suitable place had prevented him meeting collectively the young gentlemen under his care for religious purposes (Kane, 1870, Appendix K).

### **2.5.5 Failure of Licensed Boarding Houses System – Hall Proposed**

By 1874 there were no licensed boarding houses in connection with the College, and no application for a licence was made during the Session. In his report of 1875, President O'Sullivan admitted that the Licensed Boarding House system had entirely failed at QCC as it had elsewhere. As an alternative, he desired that one or more Halls be erected

in the immediate neighbourhood of the College, in accordance with the Act of Parliament founding the Colleges (O'Sullivan, 1875).

Five years later the College had made no progress for the provision of a Hall. President O'Sullivan hoped that funds for the project would come from friends of the College generally. The Hall he envisaged would be non-denominational. It would be open to all students, each under the spiritual care of the deans of residence of their respective churches (O'Sullivan, 1881).

### **2.5.6 Berkeley Hall**

In the meantime the Rev. Dr. Webster had raised funds and proposed to erect a Hall capable of lodging 34 students, and provided with a lecture room for 100 students. This Hall, to be named Berkeley Hall (in honour of the eighteen century philosopher, George Berkeley, bishop of Cloyne 1734-52 (Murphy, 1995, p. 408)), would be under the supervision of Dr. Webster himself, as dean of residence for the Church of Ireland. Being primarily intended for students of that Church, it would necessarily be denominational, but the founders proposed to admit, should there be room, students of other religious denominations, under the protection of a conscience clause (O'Sullivan, 1881).

Berkeley Hall had a Board of Governors incorporated by a Charter of Queen Victoria (O'Sullivan, 1883). It was therefore independent of the Queen's College. Mr. W. H. Crawford furnished the rooms and the completed building was formally opened on 10 September 1884. President O'Sullivan welcomed the initiative and hoped that its success would encourage the foundation of other Halls (O'Sullivan, 1884). He was particularly anxious for the foundation of a Catholic Hall, suggesting that Catholics would thereby find a practical solution to the vexed question of Irish University education:



They might thus obtain the advantages of collegiate endowments in the shape of a library, museums, laboratories, botanic garden, &c., together with domestic life pervaded by their own religious atmosphere, with full liberty to supplement the College teaching in any subject they choose without interfering with the similar rights of other religious denominations. Let me add that there is ample room for such a Hall in close proximity to the College (O'Sullivan, 1886).

Berkeley Hall was managed successfully by the Rev. George Webster and by his son, G. Arthur Webster. It then deteriorated to such an extent that students did not stay there and it was closed in 1897. At that time the registrar, Alexander Jack, was refused permission by the Government to buy the Hall. President Sir Bertram Windle made a similar request ten years later and was also refused (Murphy, 1995, pp. 116-117). It would enter a new phase of its existence under the National University of Ireland.

## 2.6 THE ROYAL UNIVERSITY

While the deans of residence of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, Methodist and Unitarian Churches continued to supervise the religious practices of students and to give religious instruction to the students of their respective churches, the Catholic students were without the services of a dean. Having disapproved of the Queen's Colleges and withdrawn their deans of residence, the Catholic bishops established the Catholic University in Dublin in 1854 as

an effective counterpart to the Queen's Colleges, providing for the professional needs of Irish life, and concentrating on the education of the middle classes and the intelligent but poorer sections of the community (McClelland, 1973, p. 162).

They appointed John Henry Newman as its first rector. It is ironic that the aspirations of the bishops were closer to those of the founders of the Queen's Colleges than to those of Newman 'who rejected "professionalism" as a true and worthy constituent of "liberal" education' (McClelland, 1973, p. 162). The bishops found it difficult to finance this project in a country recovering from the ravages of the famine. Moreover, other demands, such as the building of churches, took priority. The bishops complained that public money was spent on the Queen's Colleges while there was no funding for the



Catholic University (Murphy, 1995, p. 21). Since Anglicanism had been disestablished in 1869, they expected equal treatment for Catholics and Protestants.

In an effort to meet the demands of the bishops the Royal University of Ireland was established. It was incorporated by charter on 27 April 1880. It allowed indirect subsidy to be given to the Catholic University by assigning fellowships to it. It allowed Catholic students to obtain degrees recognised by the State without having to attend institutions condemned by the Church (Corish, 1995, pp. 214-215). The Royal University was a purely examining body. Like the University of London, all its degrees, honours, exhibitions, prizes and scholarships were open to women on equal terms with men (Moody and Beckett, 1959a, pp. 296-297). It gave a boost to higher education in Ireland just when second level education received State support through the Intermediate Education Act of 1878.

### **2.6.1 Queen's Colleges Undermined.**

President O'Sullivan did not welcome the change: 'The effect of this on the College cannot yet be predicted, but on higher education I have no doubt it will be injurious' (O'Sullivan, 1882). The new arrangement had a damaging effect on the Queen's Colleges. In 1882 the Queen's University was dissolved depriving the Queen's Colleges of their organic university context. Their importance was also undermined by the fact that attendance at college lectures was no longer necessary to secure a degree (Murphy, 1997, p. 29). The fall in student numbers in the following years was the cause of great concern (see Appendix A5).

### **2.6.2 Admission of Women to Queen's College Cork.**

Women were admitted to QCC for the first time for the 1885-1886 session. According to the President William O'Sullivan their presence contributed to the good discipline of

the College (O'Sullivan, 1888, p. 6). Very few women attended QCC. The highest enrolment recorded was seventeen for 1906-1907. Catholic women, in particular, were discouraged by ecclesiastical pressure from attending (Murphy, 1995, pp. 129-130).

### **2.6.3 Students of Queen's College Cork, Controlled but not Subdued**

In their reports, the Presidents of Queen's College Cork showed that they were generally satisfied with the religious practice and with the discipline of the students. There were, however, serious clashes on political issues in the 1880s. Even though the students were strictly monitored, they were not subdued. Rather, they were independent-minded. They made full use of Visitation to express their grievances. They were also uninhibited in arguing issues with the president or professors (Murphy, 1995, p. 155). The women students did not accept being treated as second-class students but claimed their right to fair and equal treatment. One of the first women admitted to the College, Mary Tierney Downes, wrote several letters of complaint to the president. Women's interests were promoted by the formation, in 1902, of the Association of Women Graduates (Murphy, 1995, pp. 129-130).

### **2.6.4 Improved Relationships with the Catholic Bishops**

Although the Royal University made concessions to Catholics in relation to higher-education, the Catholic bishops continued to regard the system of education as dangerous to the faith and morals of the Catholic people. They pointed out that Catholics were being excluded from certain government appointments because of lack of university training. They again demanded equality of treatment for Catholics and Protestants (Morrissey, 1983, p. 149). They came to accept that the British Government would not grant a Roman Catholic University – an Irish Louvain. Dr. William Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, guided the Church to accept the need to reach a settlement.



Bishop O' Dwyer of Limerick conceded that if it was necessary for a student to attend a Queen's College, it was a matter for 'his own conscience' (Keogh, 1997, p. 63).

When Sir Bertram Windle became President of QCC in 1904 he cultivated friendly relations with Bishop O' Callaghan and with priests and religious. Gradually a thaw in College – Church relations set in (Murphy, 1997, p. 31). President Windle 'sought to bind the alumni by ties of happy association, religious, academic and well as recreative' (Taylor, 1932, p. 161). He permitted, with the approval of Bishop O'Callaghan, a Catholic Students' Union, while it was still a Queen's College (Keogh, 1997, p. 59). He engaged Catholic priests to address the Students' Union and established a *Triduum* for university students as an annual event. The bishop appointed two Catholic priests as chaplains in 1905 (Taylor, 1932, pp. 177-189). These events anticipated the settlement, which was made in 1908.

## **2.7 UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK – NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND**

In 1904, the Catholic laity of Cork demanded that a university education, which would require no sacrifice of conscience, should be provided (Murphy, 1995, p. 175). The Irish Universities Act (1908) was introduced in an attempt to make a settlement of the university question, which would be acceptable to Catholics. According to the Act: Trinity College remained independent; The Royal University was dissolved; two new universities, Queen's University Belfast and the National University of Ireland were set up. The latter consisted of a federation of University Colleges, Dublin, Cork and Galway (Keogh, 1997, p. 64). There was great disappointment in Cork that it was not given independent university status (Murphy, 1995, p. 175).



### **2.7.1 Provisions for Religion in THE IRISH UNIVERSITIES ACT (1908)**

With regard to religion the Act stipulated the following (See Appendix A4 for full text):

- There would be no religious tests for any member of the University or any privileges on the grounds of religious belief.
- Professors were to sign a declaration securing respectful treatment of the religious opinions of all students.
- No tests of religious belief were to be imposed on any professor or lecturer of theology or divinity.
- The Governing Body could recognise any professor of or lecturer in Theology or Divinity as a professor of the University if the professorship was founded and maintained entirely by means of private benefaction.
- The Governing Body could allow the use of any building belonging to the university or college for any teaching given by a professor of Theology or Divinity.
- The cost of any religious teaching was not to be defrayed out of any public funds including parliamentary grants and monies voted by the local authorities.
- No student was to be compelled to attend any theological teaching.

### **2.7.2 Acceptance of the National University of Ireland System**

The Irish Universities Act (1908) was broadly acceptable to the Irish bishops (Murphy, 1997, pp. 31-32). They perceived that the National University of Ireland (NUI) system was adaptable. Ecclesiastical disapproval was lifted. Catholic students could attend the colleges of NUI with a clear conscience (Murphy, 1995, p. 180). The bishops did not approve of Catholics attending Trinity College Dublin. Catholics were banned from doing so by Archbishop John Charles McQuaid from 1944 to 1970 (Cooney, 1999). Catholic clerical deans of residence were established in each of the universities. They were required to report on religion and conduct in each of the colleges to the university

standing committee of the bishops for presentation at the National Conference of Bishops at their annual meeting. A liaison committee was set up to create structured contact between the National Conference of Bishops and the senior NUI college officers. A part-time chair of theology was set up in UCD in 1912. This was replaced by three chairs for dogmatic, moral and biblical theology in 1938 (McCartney, 1999, p. 171). One part-time chair of theology was set up in UCC in 1955 (Murphy, 1995, p. 281). The bishops, however, did not establish Faculties of Theology in the constituent colleges. They made no effort to train some of the laity to become professional theologians. Theology was left exclusively as a seminary subject. Religious instruction, only, would be provided for university undergraduates (Keogh, 1997, pp. 67-72).

## **2.8 1908-1960 RELIGION, ESPECIALLY CATHOLICISM, EMPHASISED**

Notwithstanding the non-denominational character of NUI, UCC became, by deliberate policy, progressively more Catholic in its ethos. This process began under President Windle, gathered pace under President P. J. Merriman (1919–43), and reached its full flowering under President Alfred O’Rahilly (1943-54). It remained unchanged under President Henry St. John Atkins (1954-63). It then declined as a result of religious, educational and economic changes (Murphy, 1997, p. 32).

The spiritual care of the students was no longer solely in the hands of the deans of residence. The Rev. J. P. Bastible, Catholic dean of residence (1938-1960), acknowledged the help he received from the President, officers and staff of the College (Keogh, 1997, p. 77). UCC staff took part in Catholic events outside the boundaries of the College and major Catholic celebrations took place within the College precincts.



### **2.8.1 St. Anthony's Hall**

The 1908 Act made no residential provision. Berkeley Hall at UCC was lying derelict. Encouraged by President Windle, the Franciscan Order bought it in 1909 and restored it under the name of 'St. Anthony's Hall'. It was opened as a residence for their novices attending UCC and for Catholic male students (Murphy, 1995, p. 194). The chapel of St. Anthony's Hall was used as a parish church for staff and students who wished to attend. Lectures were arranged in the Hall on subjects of Catholic interest (Murphy, 1995, p. 194).

### **2.8.2 The 'Red Mass'**

The first Catholic celebration in the history of the College, a votive Mass of the Holy Ghost (to become known as the 'Red Mass' on account of the colour of the vestments used) was celebrated on 15 November 1909, in St. Anthony's Hall. The neo-medieval era had begun at UCC:

Thus another step was taken in introducing what was such an essential feature of life in the Middle Ages, namely, a corporate act of supplication at the commencement of the year for the light and guidance of the Holy Spirit during the weeks to follow (Taylor, 1932, p. 205).

This event evoked Protestant reaction. Canon J.W. Tristram asserted that this celebration violated the non-denominational nature of UCC by 'blurring the distinction between secular studies and religious worship' (Murphy, 1995, p. 196). This criticism was ignored. The 'Red Mass' continued to be celebrated at the commencement of each academic year. The venue from 1912 to 1976 was the large city-centre church of SS. Peter and Paul. Its eventual demise, in a new era, will be treated later in this chapter.

### **2.8.3 Honan Hostel and Honan Chapel**

The Franciscans decided to close St. Anthony's Hall in 1912. Sir John R. O'Connell, to whom the Honan Trust had been bequeathed to be used for charitable purposes in Cork,



decided to use the funds to reconstitute St. Anthony's Hall into a hostel for male Catholic students. It was reopened under the title 'The Honan Hostel' on 20 April 1914. It had a resident warden, Professor T. Smiddy and a chaplain, Rev. D. Cohalan, for whom a residence was provided adjoining the hostel (Murphy, 1995, p. 194). The governors of the hostel, incorporated by royal charter, consisted of bishops, UCC staff and representatives of the Catholic laity of Munster (Murphy, 1995, p. 194). The Hostel had accommodation for forty to fifty students. The primary aim of the Hostel was 'to develop in its students a spirit of work, and to deepen their conviction of the value of Christian ideals' (1917, UCC Calendar (1917-18), p. 251). Since the hostel authorities gave precedence to applications from scholarship students the residence became the centre of an intellectual élite (Murphy, 1995, p. 269). The replacement of the high wall by a low wall and railing was symbolic of the fact that the boundary between the secular and the sacred was not impenetrable.

Sir John R. O'Connell also decided to build a chapel, for both the students residing in the Honan Hostel and other students, on a site adjacent to the hostel. The foundation stone of St. Finbarr's / Honan Chapel, built according to the Hiberno-Romanesque architecture of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries, was laid on 18 May 1915 (Kelly, 1966, pp. iv & 1).

#### **2.8.4 Intensification of Spirituality and of Apostolic Activity**

From the 1920s to the 1950s Catholic nationalism became the philosophy of the State (Keogh, 1997, p. 73). UCC became a microcosm of the moral and religious ethos of the Irish Free State (1995, p. 232). The removal of the statue of Queen Victoria from the eastern pinnacle of the *Aula Maxima* and its replacement by one of St. Finbarr, in 1934, was symbolic of the combination of political and religious motives underlying activities in the College. Spirituality and apostolic activity intensified on the campus. Separate

retreats for men and women took place in October and during Lent. Staff and students took part in the annual Corpus Christi procession. A Confraternity for men students, for which there were special preachers, met in St. Maries of the Isle School. The chaplain, appointed and paid by the Governing Body, was full-time dean of residence for the male students. The women had their own officer of residence, sodality and special chaplain (Murphy, 1995, p. 197). As students were obliged to choose an officer of residence, declaration of religious affiliation was virtually obligatory. There were College branches of the Legion of Mary and of the St. Vincent de Paul Society (Murphy, 1995, p. 278). In his report to Bishop Cohalan in 1951, the dean of residence, Rev J.P. Bastible gave tribute to the excellent religious spirit shown by the UCC students. The League of Daily Mass attracted a very large number of student- members. The Guild of the Blessed Sacrament, which encouraged visits to the college chapel, functioned well during the session. The Lenten retreats were extremely well attended. There was a satisfactory attendance at the weekly meetings of the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart and the Sodality of Our Lady for women students. There was also an excellent attendance at an enclosed one-day student retreat. There were six *praesidia* of the Legion of Mary in UCC whose members were helpful in the organisation of sodalities, the Pioneer Society, the Blessed Sacrament Guild, the Altar-Servers' Guild and the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. In addition, Legion members visited hospitals and other institutions (Keogh, 1997, pp. 77-78).

According to Kay O’Riordan ‘half the student population was involved in religious activities’ (O’Riordan, 1998).

Apostolic activity extended beyond Cork through the Medical Missionary Society. This Society was funded by graduate subscriptions and by the Crowley-Foley fund. It assigned scholarships to medical students who were willing to work in Africa and other countries, for a limited period, when qualified. It also gave money to the hospitals to enable them to pay doctors (O’Riordan, 1998).



### **2.8.5 UCC the Venue for Major Catholic Events**

The College was the venue for a number of important Catholic events. The centenary of Catholic Emancipation in 1929 was celebrated by a garden party in the Quadrangle and by an open-air Mass in the UCC Athletic Grounds. The ceremony of the conferring of the Freedom of Cork on the papal nuncio in 1930 was conducted in the Quadrangle. The Patrician year of 1932 was celebrated in the UCC Athletic Grounds. When Pope Pius XI died in 1939, many college functions were cancelled or postponed and a Mass for the late pope was celebrated in the Honan Chapel. (Murphy, 1995, pp. 232-234).

### **2.8.6 Courses Animated by Catholic Principles**

Alfred O’Rahilly, Registrar (1920-1943) and President (1943-1954) of UCC assumed a central role in many areas of Catholic life: philosophy, sociology, theology, and scriptural studies. He claimed that Catholic social principles animated the courses in philosophy, sociology, medical ethics, and economics. This claim is supported by the fact that there was a strong clerical presence on the academic staff in philosophy, economics, psychology, and sociology (Murphy, 1995, pp. 280-281).

### **2.8.7 Courses in Catholic Apologetics, General Philosophy, Religion and Theology**

In November 1942, Rev. J. P. Bastible, Catholic dean of residence, organised a course in Catholic apologetics with the support of Bishop Cohalan, President O’Rahilly and other members of the Governing Body. The course consisted of three series of eight lectures each year. The 1943-44 course included:

1. Proof of God's existence. His attributes. God and nature; creating, concurrence. The laws of nature, good and evil, modern agnosticism.
2. Science and Religion. The status and claims of science. Reason and revelation. Law and chance. Vitalism. Determinism. Miracles. The Church, and science, including evolution.



3. **Political Principles** Man naturally social. Origin, basis and limits of state authority, marriage, family, education, population, nationalism, totalitarianism, church and state (Keogh, 1997, pp. 81-82).

An examination was taken on the completion of each series. Students achieved a standard greatly exceeding the anticipations of O’Rahilly. By 1950-51 there were 200 students, 20% of the student population, taking the course. Yet, the course had no official status. O’Rahilly was not satisfied and considered the provision of a formal university course, which would include the philosophy section of the apologetics course (Keogh, 1997, p. 82).

In addition to Philosophy, allowed at honours level by clerics only, a General Philosophy course was offered to lay students in 1954. This course was taught by Rev. Dr. James Good (Keogh, 1997, p. 89). From 1954 to 1958, negotiations proceeded between Bishop Cornelius Lucy of Cork, UCC and NUI towards a revision of UCC statutes in order to provide a Chair of Theology at UCC. The Chair of Theology was instituted in accordance with Statute LXI. The Senate of the National University of Ireland appointed Rev. Dr. James Good to the Chair on 2 December 1958.

The courses in apologetics and courses in theology were amalgamated in 1960 under the title ‘Religion and Theology’. The dean of residence retained the directorship of the courses, since the professor of Theology would have no funds at his disposal to cover expenses (Keogh, 1997, pp. 89-99). Theology never flourished as a full-time Chair and with Dr. Good’s departure from UCC in 1970 it was allowed to lapse (Murphy, 1997, p. 33). The opportunity to provide theology as a recognised degree course was lost even though there was at that time ‘an openness and a receptivity towards the academic study of religion’ (Keogh, 1997, p. 99).

### **2.8.8 Catholic Ceremony of Conferring and the Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas**

In promoting Catholicism in UCC, President O’Rahilly introduced a Catholic ceremony at Conferring and the display of religious pictures and crucifixes in the college. He also established the Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas Society (Keogh, 1997, p. 83). This Society was the local unit of *Pax Romana* (International Movement of Catholic Students). It held regular meetings at which important topical problems were discussed from a theological and philosophical point of view (1973, UCC Calendar 1973-74).

### **2.8.9 Paternalistic Control – Care of Female Students – La Retraite Hostel**

The College authorities in this period exercised a paternalistic control over student life and morals. Topics and speakers for College society debates had to be approved in advance by the President (Murphy, 1995, p. 278). Relationships between the sexes appeared to be guided by a strict code of propriety, mirroring the attitudes of the wider society to sexual morality (Murphy, 1995, p. 236).

Particular attention was given to the care and security of the female students. From the early years of UCC they could live at the Ursuline Convent, Blackrock (1912, p. 34).

The Sisters of La Retraite opened a hostel for women, La Retraite Hostel, west of the College in October 1923 (Murphy, 1995, p. 195). According to *UCC Calendars*, female deans of residence for female students were appointed for each denomination from 1912 until 1972. UCC female students were closely chaperoned. It was the duty of the female deans of residence to accompany the female students to functions such as camogie matches and dances.



### **2.8.10 Multi-denominational Claim**

While President O’Rahilly strongly promoted Catholicism, he claimed that the College was multi-denominational. He emphasised that provision was being made for the religious needs of students of other denominations and other religions (Murphy, 1995, pp. 276-278). The UCC Calendars show that there were deans of residence for Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist students throughout the history of the College. There were deans of residence for Non-subscribing Presbyterian students from 1862 to 1940; for Baptist students from 1940 to 1973; for Jewish students from 1938 to 1956 and again for 1963-64, and for Polish students from 1947 to 1958. President O’Rahilly organised a course in religious instruction for Church of Ireland students in co-operation with their local bishop (Keogh, 1997, p. 82). The appointment of a few Protestant lecturers was shown as a proof of tolerance (Murphy, 1995, p. 279). There was a marked decrease in the number of Protestant students attending UCC in those years (see Appendix A5).

### **2.8.11 UCC Not a Homogeneous Society**

UCC (1908-60) was not a homogeneous society permeated by a single ethos. The whole academic community was not concerned with the integration of secular learning and Christian faith. Not all staff attended religious ceremonies. According to Kay O’Riordan:

In the early years many lecturers would attend the “Red Mass” but in later years a lot of them did not want to be identified with it’ (O’Riordan, 1998).

Many staff and students had other concerns such as furthering professional careers and the Irish language revival (Murphy, 1995, p. 237).



### **2.8.12 UCC Students (1908-1960) Conformed but Not Coerced**

1908-1960 was an era of strong faith in Irish society. Students at UCC were not coerced into religious conformity. Take, for example, attendance at the 'Red Mass'; 'students seemed to go without being asked' (O'Riordan, 1998). The majority accepted without question the ethos of the prevailing moral - religious culture in which they had grown up (Murphy, 1995, p. 236). That culture was to undergo profound changes in the decades after 1960, with corresponding changes in the College and in the lives of its student

## **2.9 THE 1960S – ECONOMIC, EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL CHANGES**

Free second-level and grant-aided third level education were introduced in 1968. This not only provided educational opportunities for those previously debarred from them by economic circumstances but also changed attitudes. Education at all levels was seen, no longer as the privilege of a minority, but as the right of all who wished to avail of it. The numbers of students attending schools and colleges grew rapidly.

The arrival of television opened Irish society to the influence of the values of other cultures, especially to those of the Western World. The development of communication technology and improved modes of travel gave life in Ireland an international flavour. Students found themselves, not in an insular, but in a global context.

### **2.9.1 Changes in the Catholic Church – Vatican II**

There were changes in the Catholic Church also. During the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) it reformulated its notion of itself (*Lumen Gentium*) and its relationship to the world (*Gaudium et Spes*).

Since the long pastoral history of Christianity had been formed by pre-modern assumptions, suited to a village or largely rural society, the arrival of modernity posed a major cultural challenge for the Church. The embodiments and roots of faith that had proved sturdy in a simpler culture inevitably became less fruitful

and even counter-productive in this emerging cultural situation. Hence it is hardly surprising that Church responses remained negative for a long time and only with the Second Vatican Council did the Catholic Church enter into a more open dialogue and opt for a more positive interpretation of modernity (Gallagher, 1997, pp. 67-68).

In the wake of Vatican II, changes were introduced into the celebration of Mass and the Sacraments. The laity were encouraged to participate actively in worship in recognition of the Church as the 'People of God' (Vatican II, 1966c, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, p. 24). A new pastoral approach was required in recognition of the primacy of conscience and of the right to religious freedom which 'has its foundation in the dignity of the person' (Vatican II, 1966a, Declaration of Religious Freedom, p. 688). There was a new openness towards other Christian denominations and other Religions. All Catholics were urged to participate in

those activities and enterprises, which, according to various needs of the Church and opportune occasions, are started and organised for the fostering of unity among Christians (Vatican II, 1966b, Decree on Ecumenism, p. 347).

### **2.9.2 Student Change**

Students became more assertive. Student demonstrations took place in universities across the globe. At UCC, radical student leaders and agitators emerged from the mid-1960s onwards and new political societies were founded. In the 1970s students occasionally demonstrated in the Quadrangle and took over administrative offices in protest against fee increases and inadequate library and classroom accommodation. Yet they never disrupted the normal workings of the College (Murphy, 1995, p. 287). The process of student self-determination continued as College authoritarianism and clerical influence declined. Student Societies selected topics for debate and invited speakers without seeking approval (Murphy, 1995, p. 316).



### **2.9.3 Modernisation of UCC**

President Michael D. McCarthy (1967-78) prepared the College to meet the demands of a rapidly increasing student population by reforming and modernising the College. He reformed the appointments system, introduced a professional college administration, improved facilities for the academic staff, and assigned secretaries/typists to departments. Technicians, tradesmen, gardeners and 'general operatives' were employed. In 1972 he presented a twenty-year programme of physical development around the original buildings. He initiated a building programme which, with adaptations, continues in the 1990s (Murphy, 1995, pp. 320- 328).

### **2.9.4 Change of Role – Deans of Residence to Chaplains**

Changes in Irish society and changes in the Church had their impact on religious practices and attitudes within UCC. The role of clerical deans of residence had been instituted from the beginning of the Queen's Colleges. They ceased to function as such at UCC from the early 1970s when an Officer of Residence and an Assistant Officer of Residence were appointed to take charge of the supervision of the recognised hostels and lodgings (1970, UCC Calendar, p. 39). The clerics continued to function in the College as chaplains. The chaplaincy team was expanded to include a female chaplain in 1984. Kay O'Riordan, secretary to the deans of residence and chaplains (1951-1975), offers valuable insights into the changes which took place during those years.

According to her:

The deans of residence were authoritarian figures and had a disciplinary function. They were expected to deal with complaints made by land-lords/ladies. The first noticeable change occurred when Fr. Liam O'Regan (1968-70) was here. He was a man of the students. He used to go to the 'Rest', meet the students and have coffee with them. He was very approachable, very sympathetic with the students, very much a companion. He was of a younger generation too and the students got on well with him. He understood his role differently (O'Riordan, 1998).



The chaplains' role was that of caring for the spiritual and personal needs of the students. It was a supportive role. Chaplains were given the names and addresses of the students of their respective denominations. The task of getting to know the students of their denominations was relatively easy for the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, and Methodist chaplains since their numbers were comparatively few and they also got to know them in their churches. As the Catholic student population increased rapidly the task of getting to know students became ever more difficult, in fact impossible, for the Catholic chaplains.

Fr. Michael Crowley and Fr. Donal Linehan, who were chaplains in the 1970s, visited up to two thousand students in their places of residence each year. They became aware of the many difficulties which the students were experiencing, especially in relation to religion.

We are struck by the quiet and deep alienation of a good number of students from the Church and from God. Frequently, their understanding of the Church is that of a regimenting and pressurising agency for heaven, and that God is a source of security for which the need is no longer felt by one living in an affluent and well educated society. So many sermons and pastorals make no impact, not so much for their religious and moral values but in their appearing to come from a cultural background that does not reflect how people think about life today. ... It is clear to us that the students' religious faith must be better related to their intellectual, emotional and social development and not have an unbalanced dependence on religious practices and traditions (Crowley and Linehan, 1975).

As the student population continued to increase, the practice of visiting the students systematically was abandoned as 'this area of ministry is most unsatisfactory' (Crowley and Kenneally, 1979). The College authorities allow the chaplains access to the registration centre during registration weeks. There the chaplains meet the students briefly and give them a brochure outlining the chaplaincy programmes. They continue to visit students in times of distress or illness in their places of residence and in hospitals (Corkery and Clifford, 1998).

## **2.10 1960 – RELIGION RECEDES INTO THE BACKGROUND**

Changes came about rapidly. Religion is no longer a dominant feature at UCC. Rather it is a leaven of inspiration in the lives of many among the staff and student body. As characteristic of the modern era, mass public demonstrations of faith declined with the ‘emergence of privatised faith’ (Gallagher, 1997, p. 92). Traditional practices gave way to new modes of religious expression.

### **2.10.1 Change in Attendance at Masses**

In 1973-74 approximately seven hundred students attended the votive Mass of the Holy Spirit for the opening of the academic year, at the city-centre church of Ss. Peter and Paul (Crowley and Linehan, 1974). In 1976-77 the student attendance was only three hundred and fifty (Crowley and Linehan, 1977). It was celebrated in the Honan Chapel from 1977 onwards. Attendance continued to drop. In 1989-90 the attendance was so small that the chaplains decided to celebrate it on the feast of All Saints, 1 November, in 1990-91. This being a Holyday of Obligation a good congregation was assured (O'Murchú et al. 1990). From the mid-nineties the ‘Red Mass’ was no longer celebrated. Likewise, the Mass on the Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas on 7 March was last mentioned in 1973-74 when it attracted a poor attendance of staff and students (Crowley and Linehan, 1974).

Two Masses are celebrated daily in the Honan Chapel during term times. An extra Mass is celebrated each day during Lent. In 1972-73 the average attendance each day was 300-400. ‘The girls noticeably outnumbered the men’ (Crowley and Linehan, 1973). The celebration of daily Masses continues in the 1990s with an attendance of approximately thirty people at each celebration but there is an increase in active participation in the liturgy.

One of the main characteristics of our work in the Honan Chapel is the very active involvement of the lay ministers. It is wonderful to see such a large group of



young people involved, especially, when we consider that they are for the most part, away from any home pressures. We train readers and extraordinary Eucharistic ministers and that training and experience gives them courage to be involved in ministry when they go back to their own parishes (O'Murchú, 1992).

The Honan Chapel has a full congregation for Masses on Sundays. The congregation consists mainly of students whom distance prevents from going home at weekends. This includes overseas students whose numbers have increased enormously in recent years. Active participation is encouraged. A student cantor accompanied by a student organist leads the congregational singing. As the weekends are often lonely for students, the chaplaincy is open after the Masses for those who wish to socialise there. 'The attendance at Mass on Holydays and on Ash Wednesday is extraordinarily high' (O'Murchú, 1994). The Honan Chapel is inadequate to accommodate the crowds who attend even though Mass is celebrated six times on those days.

The Mass of Thanksgiving, which takes place before each graduation ceremony, is well attended by Catholic students and guests. A room is made available to other denominations for Communion Service or other religious services of thanksgiving.

### **2.10.2 New-Style Liturgical Music**

For many years, Aloys Fleischmann, Professor of Music at UCC (1936-1980) prepared choirs to participate in Masses for special occasions, such as graduation ceremonies. In the 1980s 'the rich austerities of sacred music' (Murphy, 1995, p. 347) gave way to folk music, performed by the UCC Folk Group, which regularly enhances the celebration of Mass in the Honan Chapel. Some members of the Group have composed liturgical folk music which is sung, not only by the UCC Folk Group, but also by folk groups throughout this country and abroad (O'Murchú, 1993). Overseas students, of various Christian denominations, have brought valuable talent to the Folk Group and enriched its repertoire. Since 1995 the Folk Group has been organised and trained by the students



themselves. As a result of their efforts it achieved recognition as a College Society in 1997 and is entitled to all the privileges which society status brings.

### 2.10.3 Changes in Student Outreach

There were six *praesidia* of the Legion of Mary operating at UCC in the 1950s. Two *praesidia* continued to offer dedicated service in the city in the 1970s. Membership, however, dwindled during the 1980s as ‘the thinking and discipline of the present Legion Manual seems too restrictive for many idealistic students’ (Crowley and McGann, 1980). The UCC *praesidium* closed in 1996.

In 1996 the Developing World Society was founded. It gained recognition as a College Society in 1997. ‘Its primary aim is to raise awareness, in the university community, of issues of justice and human rights in the Developing World’ (Corkery and Clifford, 1998). The members have been active in promoting the sale of Third World products and in the campaign for the abolition of Third World debt.

The Vincent de Paul Society has gained in popularity over the years. It is one of the most active societies in the College with approximately two hundred members. Besides their work for the poor and for senior citizens, its members offer free grinds to second-level students who could not otherwise afford them (O'Murchú, 1992).

Hundreds of students take part in the Concern and *Trócaire* fasts which the chaplaincy advertises each year. Also, during Rag Week, students raise large sums of money for local charities. In 1996-97 alone, a sum of £60,000-00 was raised (Mortell, 1997).

### 2.10.4 New Chaplaincy - ‘Iona’

The Chaplaincy occupied one room in the West Wing of the College until 1984 when it was given new premises at ‘Iona’ on College Road. A substantial religious library had been built up since 1928 through a grant which the Catholic bishops had given to the

College for the purchase of Catholic books for students (Keogh, 1997, p. 71). This library was moved into the lounge of 'Iona', which offered a comfortable reading area and a space where students could meet for tea or coffee. The full-time Catholic chaplains were each assigned an office where they could meet the students privately and confidentially. 'Iona' became a popular venue for meetings and discussions (Riordan and McGann, 1984). One room in 'Iona' was set aside as a *Seomra Ciúin*, - a quiet haven in a busy campus. This room has been used for prayer, meditation, and Bible study groups and also by those who wished to use it for private prayer.

Members of the Christian Union Society and of Christian Medical Fellowship use 'Iona' regularly. It was used also by Muslim students for a short period in the early 1990s, until the College assigned them alternative accommodation.

Rooms in the College are readily made available to members of any Christian denomination or of any religion requesting them for religious purposes. The Church of Ireland chaplain held a Communion Service once a week during term in a classroom in the 1980s (Riordan and McGann, 1985). The meeting rooms in *Áras na Mac Léinn* (Student Union Building), are used regularly for chaplaincy functions.

### **2.10.5 New Modes of Prayer**

Traditional forms of prayer, such as formal vocal prayers, do not appeal to students in the 1990s, but they are attracted to new forms such as Taizé prayer. The Taizé prayer group which meets in 'Iona' each week is popular with many students. Its membership reflects the international ecumenical character of the Taizé community in France.

Formed in the 1980s, it took on a new lease of life 1996-97.

This was reflected in greater numbers and, more importantly, in a growing sense of confidence, responsibility and ownership among the students. At the end of the year the chaplaincy sponsored a visit of several of these students to Taizé. This proved to be a very wholesome experience for all and they returned renewed and encouraged (Corkery, 1997).



This group has organised a weekend event at UCC to which they invited Taizé groups from Dublin and Limerick.

Retreats have taken on a different character. The preached *Triduum* during Lent has been replaced by a series of prayer services designed and presented by the students themselves. Retreats away from the College, such as ‘Springtime Spirituality’ weekends and the celebration of the feasts of the Celtic calendar promote an awareness of the immanence of God and reflect the current concern for the care of the environment.

Women’s World Day of Prayer and the Jewish Passover Meal are celebrated annually.

Interest in an ancient form of spirituality, the pilgrimage, has been renewed in recent years. The first such pilgrimage ‘In the Footsteps of the Saints and Scholars’ was organised, through the co-operation of the Chaplaincy, History Department, Celtic Studies Department, Adult Education Department and the Library, as a ‘UCC 150’ celebration event in 1995. Further pilgrimages have taken place in 1996, 1997, and 1998. The pilgrims are enriched by the heritage of early Christian spirituality in Ireland, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Austria (Corkery and Clifford, 1998).

### **2.10.6 Growing Ecumenism**

There has been a vast change in the relationship of members of the various Christian denominations towards each other since 1845 when Dr. Denis Bullen declared: ‘I should dread the effect of bringing together clergymen of opposing sects in an establishment’ (Pettit, 1973, p. 178). The facilities of the chaplaincy are available to the chaplains for Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, and Methodist students. They work with the Catholic chaplains as a chaplaincy team:

As a chaplaincy team, we have worked to strengthen the ecumenical dimension of our work and witness. As well as our annual joint witness during Church Unity Week, we now meet once a month for a morning of discussion on themes of common interest. These experiences have strengthened our relationships and our



shared commitment to building up the Christian community in the College (Corkery, 1997).

The chaplaincy team provided the religious dimensions to the celebrations, in 1995, of 'UCC 150'. These included a Mass in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, The Lough; Evening Song in St. Finbarr's Cathedral; and a Prayer Service in Boole II lecture theatre. The team also organised a one-day seminar entitled 'The Godless College' for the purpose of raising awareness of the need for a faculty of theology at UCC. The proceedings of this seminar have been published in *Theology in the University The Irish Context* by Corkery & Long. Following this initiative, The Education Department, UCC, in association with the Honan Trust, introduced a series of lectures 'Honan Public Lectures in Theology'. These lectures continue each year. UCC offers chaplains of different denominations a unique opportunity to minister together and thus to grow in the spirit of ecumenism.

### **2.10.7 Co-ordination of Services**

Since the 1970s many student support services have been set up at UCC. These include Health and Counselling Service, Careers Service, Accommodations Service, Disability Service, and Overseas Students' Service. The chaplains have worked in close co-operation with these services in developing common strategies for the well being of the students (O'Murchú et al. 1990). In 1997 these services, including the chaplaincy and the Students Union, were brought together officially under the title 'Student Services Management Group'. It is the task of this group to ensure that all services are co-ordinated and used to the maximum benefit of the students. Because of their experience of receiving phone calls at night from students in distress, the chaplains initiated the setting up of a Nite-line which came into operation in 1998-99.

### **2.10.8 Relationship between Chaplains and other Staff Members**

Cordial relationships exist between the chaplains and other staff members of the College. They meet each other in the Staff Common Room, in the restaurants, in the library and in other venues. Some members of the staff attend Masses and other liturgies in the Honan Chapel and in 'Iona' and are actively involved in liturgical ministries.

### **2.10.9 Era of Freedom (1960 -) Discipline Self-imposed**

Since the 1960s students have achieved ever-greater personal freedom. With the increase in student numbers it became impossible, and indeed undesirable, to monitor the religious practices or the moral conduct of students. In the 1990s Campus Watch was set up in order to ensure the safety of all students on the campus at night and also to detect the distribution of drugs in the College.

The mode of student accommodation changed radically in the 1990s when there was a 'transition from supervised residential accommodation informed by a denominational ethos to an independent, largely unrestricted mode of student life where discipline was necessarily self-imposed' (Murphy, 1995, p. 346). The Honan Hostel closed in 1991 and La Retraite hostel in 1993 (Murphy, 1995, pp. 347-348). Castlewhite Apartments, accommodating approximately three hundred students in single sex or mixed apartments were provided by the College in 1991. Several other apartment complexes, Brookfield, Deans Hall, North Quay Place, and Victoria Village have since been provided by private enterprise. The apartment complexes are well-managed commercial enterprises. The management ensures that the apartments are maintained to a high standard and that disturbance is controlled. Otherwise, students are allowed complete personal freedom. The majority of students cope very well with this arrangement. Chaplains are always willing to visit students in the apartments, when invited, for celebrations or in times of distress. The chaplains enjoy the co-operation of the



management of the apartments for the distribution of literature and the use of notice boards in the reception areas.

The majority of students go home at weekends. Coach companies provide transport at very reasonable rate to many parts of Ireland. This practice limits most Society and Club activities in the College to Monday - Thursday nights. Chaplaincy activities are also restricted to these nights.

## **2.11 UNIVERSITIES ACT 1997- UNIVERSITY STATUS FOR UCC**

It had been the desire of many in Cork, especially of President Bertram Windle, that UCC would be given independent university status. Windle believed that this was achievable under the 1908 ACT and 'he expressed his determination never to rest until he had accomplished this'(Taylor, 1932, p. 193). This desire was not realised until the passing of the UNIVERSITIES ACT 1997. According to this Act, UCC is now a constituent university of the National University of Ireland. The Act refers to religion only indirectly:

### **Section 18**

(6) In performing its functions a governing authority, or a committee where appropriate, shall –

(c) ensure as far as it can that the university contributes .... to respect for the diversity of values, beliefs and traditions in Irish society.

The values, beliefs and traditions of Irish society include the religions of the people.

The College will be enriched also by the diversity of values, beliefs and traditions of staff and students from other countries.

## **2.12 CONCLUSION**

In 150 years the College has grown from a three-faculty to an eight-faculty institution and from a student population of 115 to a student population of 10,498. Religion is no longer a contentious issue at UCC. Opportunities to worship and pray and to become

involved in charitable organisations are readily available to students. They are free to practise their religion, without coercion or the need to conform. This thesis is concerned with investigating how the young adults in this free environment relate to the question of religion.



## **CHAPTER III**

# **THEOLOGICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

# THEOLOGICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter II sought to provide an historical foundation for the investigation of religion in the life of the young adult at UCC. It outlined the efforts made at QCC/UCC to provide support for the religious and moral life of its students while seeking to maintain or override its non-denominational character. According to Fr. Brendan O’ Mahony:

The Church (the hierarchical, institutional and teaching Church) has been kept severely outside the walls of our third-level educational establishments. ...For the sake of accuracy I must add that there is a certain official Church presence in these various institutions through the appointment of chaplains, who do invaluable pastoral work among the students of these colleges. In that particular respect the churches do exercise a service towards the community of learners in higher education but not a specifically educational service (O'Mahony, 1980, p. 415).

In reviewing the literature, Chapter III seeks to provide the theological, psychological and sociological foundations for the investigation. The content of this review will reflect the expectation that the religious affiliation of the student population at UCC is predominantly Catholic with small percentages affiliated to other Christian denominations and to other World Religions. This expectation is justified by the religious breakdown of the population of the Republic of Ireland in the 1991 census (Stevens, 1995, p. 23) as shown on Table 3.1.

Table 3. 1Population of the Republic of Ireland in the 1991 Census

Roman Catholic	91.6%
Church of Ireland	2.53%
Presbyterian	0.37%
Methodist	0.14%
Others, not stated and no religion	5.4%



Account, however, must be taken of the fact that UCC is more pluralistic than the population in general since overseas students make up approximately 10% of its student population. This introduces a variety of religions to the campus. The Muslim students are particularly noticeable.

## **3.2 THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

According to Bernard Lonergan 'theology used to be defined as the science about God, today I believe it is to be defined as reflection on the significance and value of religion in a culture' (Lonergan, 1973, p. 33). Here, theology will be taken to mean both 'the science about God' and the mediation of religion in cultures.

### **3.2.1 Religion as a Universal Phenomenon**

Many attempts have been made to define religion. Anthropologists, such as Wax (1984), Poole (1986), Saler (1993), and Boyer (1994); religionists, such as Preus (1987), Penner (1986), Lawson (1990), and Masuzawa (1993); sociologists, such as Stark and Bainbridge (1987); and philosophers, such as McCauley (1990) admit that 'a definition of the term still eludes consensus' (Guthrie, 1996, p. 412). In this study it is understood that 'religion is the sum total of all our attempts to celebrate our faith publicly through worship, to reflect on the story of our faith, and to live out the values of that faith as a community' (Pastva, 1986, p. 14). This definition begs the question: Whence does faith arise?

In the nineteenth century some scholars, who thought that religion somehow manifested itself in pristine simplicity immediately after its creation, sought to find the origins of religion. Masuzawa (1993) points out that the collective efforts of Durkheim, Mueller, and Freud demonstrate the futility of this quest. According to Clarke and Byrne (1993) the desire to seek a science of society leads to the development of radical

theories – that is, those that in postulating causal explanations of religion will necessarily reject the ordinary descriptions or explanations provided by the believers themselves.

Religion is a universal phenomenon, occurring in every age and in every culture. The historian of cultures, Thomas Berry, considers that ‘the human is that being in whom this grand diversity of the universe celebrates itself in conscious self-awareness’ (Berry, 1988, p. 198).

There is much evidence to support the idea that human beings experience a primordial relationship with mystery - with what is sacred in life. Our nature is transcendent. Thus, the experience of God arises from within our nature as human beings in this universe.

According to Rahner:

The meaning of all explicit knowledge of God in religion and in metaphysics is intelligible and can really be understood only when all the words we use there point to the unthematic experience of our orientation towards the ineffable mystery (Rahner, 1974, p. 53).

The search for the meaning of our existence is intimately related to a belief in, or a denial of, the existence of God. Our notion of how we are to live our lives, of what holiness means to us, depends on how we perceive God.

One of the fundamental theological problems today relates to the possibility of experiencing God in the world. Lane (1981) suggests:

That God is co-experienced and co-known through the different experiences and knowledge of the human subject. God is co-present to us from the outset in all our experiences (Lane, 1981, p. 15).

To develop the argument, Lane reflects on the nature of experience, and of specifically religious experience. He outlines criteria for evaluating the religious dimension within human experience. The context in which revelation is to be understood is that of God’s presence in human experience:

Revelation begins in human experience and takes us beyond experience to the deeper divine dimension which we call the mystery of God at the centre of life (Lane, 1981, p. 35).



Faith is the response to this revelation, and is distinguished from beliefs which 'mediate faith, conceptualise faith and communicate faith' (Lane, 1981, p. 59).

God, then, is not "an outsider". The theologian, Maurice Blondel, insisted that a 'message that comes to a [person] wholly from outside, without an inner relationship to his [/her] life, must appear to him [/her] as irrelevant, unworthy of attention, and unassimilable by the mind' (Baum, 1979, p. 4). Blondel was of the opinion that divine revelation 'takes place in human life and creates history' (Baum, 1979, p. 11). If people examine their own experiences they discover the truth concerning who they are.

Everyone is led by action to discover 'the impossibility of exhausting the deep willing at the core of his [/her] being in a finite universe' (Baum, 1979, p. 17). Here, Blondel is in agreement with Paul Tillich who holds that if people are not able to be involved creatively in reality they will experience 'emptiness and meaninglessness' (Tillich, 1952, p. 54).

Each person has the option of being open to the infinite or of enclosing himself [/herself] in the finite order and thus frustrating the thrust of his [/her] own actions (Baum, 1979, p. 18 ). Religion may be accepted or rejected.

By late adolescence, however, young people seem to have been liberated from the social constraints imposed on the expression of religiosity and both males and females are freer to express their own personal disposition either positively towards or negatively against religion (Hall *et al*, 1998, p. 467).

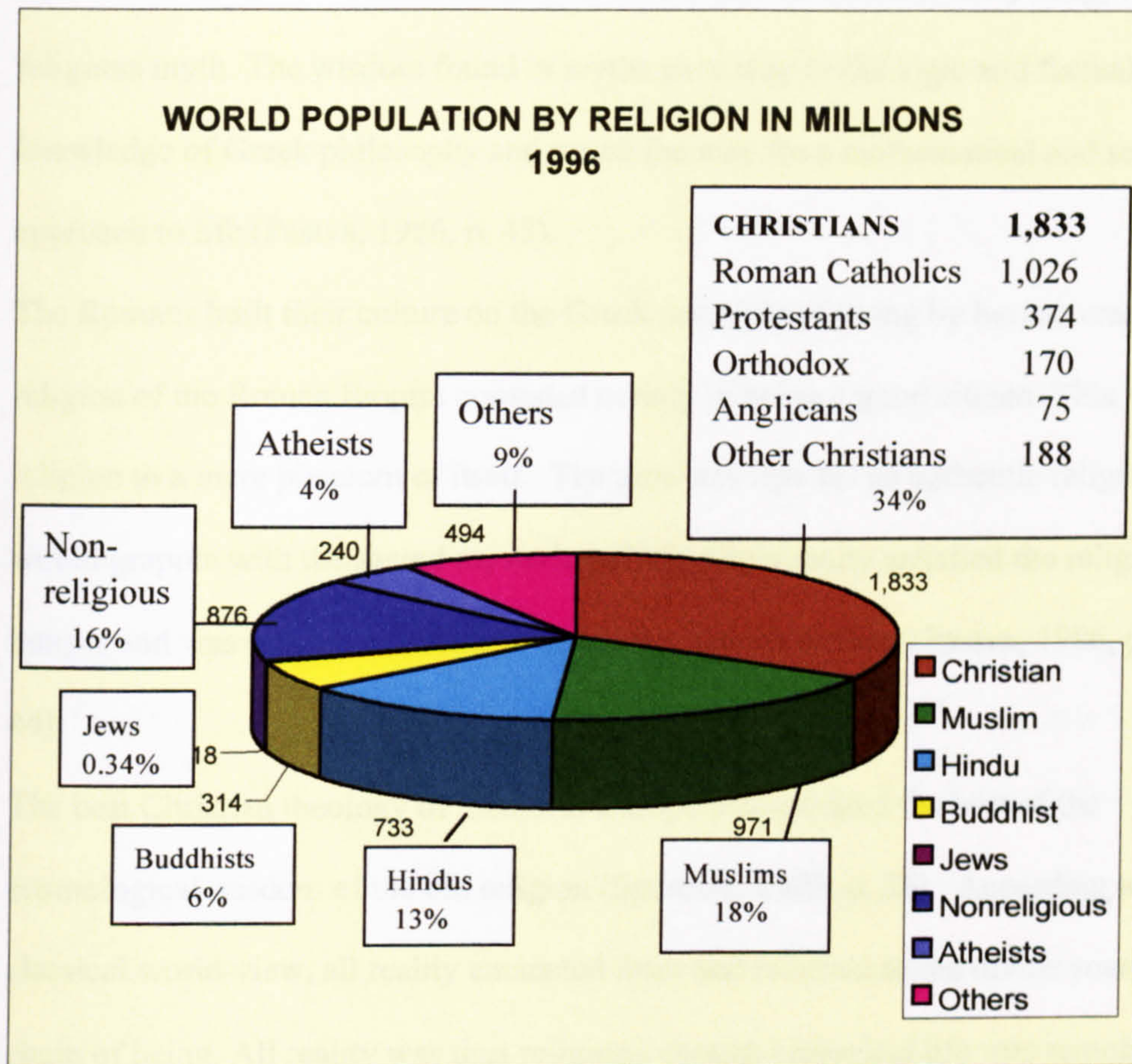
Karl Rahner traces the crisis of faith for modern people to the fact that 'the Christian is all too often taught by rote and externally indoctrinated; consequently he[/she] has little idea of what faith means for life as a whole' (Wegner, 1980, p. 5). Rahner concludes then, that it is important for theologians to address man [/woman] 'within the framework of his [/her] own experience and mediate faith to him [/her] within that framework' (Wegner, 1980, p. 14). It follows that pastoral ministry to young adults is effective only to the extent that those who minister understand them and their world.

### **3.2.2 World Religions**

Although people may have different ideas about the universe and about humanity's place in it, they all have some kind of answer to the question of human life and destiny. 'Their rituals and ceremonies may be so diverse as to defy an exhaustive description, but they all nevertheless, have rituals and ceremonies' (Sally, 1997, p. 7). Each religion develops its own special celebrations – prayers, sacrifices, meals, songs, processions and other gestures – which help people to express and communicate their faith. Religions include values, found in rules and codes of morality, which prescribe specific ways of living as a faith-filled community (Pastva, 1986, p. 14). If a religion's teachings possess a depth and a truth that give it universal appeal or special influence it may be regarded as a World Religion. Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shintoism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are regarded as world-class religions (Pastva, 1986, p. 15). Markham (1996) provides the information on World Religions given in Fig.3.1.

The founder of a new religious movement preaches a message which is prophetic and revolutionary. The new religion usually constitutes a challenge to the established order of things. However, if it is to survive and be transmitted to succeeding generations it must become institutionalised. It may thus become part of the established order and come to be viewed as something of limited and prosaic significance. Doctrines are defined in order to preserve the purity of its message or its implicit ethic. Values are translated into norms (O'Doherty, 1969, p. 581). The task is to ensure that the doctrines do not conceal the message or the norms the values.



**Fig. 3. 1 World Population by Religion in Millions 1996**

### 3.2.3 Religion and Cultures

There is evidence that religion has always been part of human experience. Through archaeology we learn something of ancient religion. It reveals a human consciousness rooted in cosmology. The excavated art, ritual objects, and womb-like caves from the Upper Palaeolithic through the Neolithic era in Europe reflect a variety of peoples who were clearly 'at home' in the universe. The great mother-goddess gave forth bountiful gifts on her surface and received people back into her earth-womb when they died. The cult of the sky-god and the adoration of the warrior replaced goddess worship when waves of barbaric invaders introduced the patriarchal chieftain system into Western culture (Spretnak, 1988, p. 35).



Religious faith received its first criticism from the Early Greek philosophers, best represented in the life and thinking of Socrates, who questioned everything, even religious myth. The wisdom found in myths gave way to the logic and factual knowledge of Greek philosophy and paved the way for a mathematical and scientific approach to life (Pastva, 1986, p. 43).

The Romans built their culture on the Greek principle of living by human reason. The religion of the Roman Empire consisted mainly in being a good citizen. This reduced religion to a mere phantom of itself. The time was ripe for an authentic religion that would grapple with the sacred mysteries of life. Christianity satisfied the religious hunger and was quickly established within the Roman Empire (Pastva, 1986, pp. 43-44).

The best Christian theology of medieval Europe incorporated the best of the cosmological wisdom of the old religion (Spretnak, 1988, p. 36). According to the classical world-view, all reality emanated from and returned to the divine source as in a chain of being. All reality was thus religious, though biological life was remote from the divine. Religion was the transcendent control point, fortified by stable institutions (Holland, 1987, p. 43). The circle is regarded as the symbol for the classical world-view.

### **3.2.3.1 The Rise of Secularism**

The Black Death, which reached Europe in 1347, had by 1349 wiped out one third of the population. It was a central traumatic moment in Western history. There were two responses to that moment – one towards a religious redemption out of the tragic world, the other towards greater control of the physical world. Thus, two dominant cultural communities were formed: the believing religious community and the secular



community with its new scientific knowledge and its industrial power (Berry, 1988, p.125).

Within the believing community the emphasis on redemptive spirituality continued through the religious upheavals of the sixteenth century and through the Puritanism and Jansenism of the seventeenth century. There was little concern for the natural world.

The emphasis was on redemption out of the world through a personal relationship with Christ, the interior spiritual life of the person and the salvific community, the believing Church, and happiness in the next life (Berry, 1988, p.126).

The secular scientific community with its 'mechanistic' world-view was born of the Scientific Revolution. The *Novum Organum* of Francis Bacon appeared in 1620, the *Principia* of Isaac Newton in 1687, and the *Scienza Nuova* of Giambattista Vico in 1725. The Enlightenment, with its sense of the absolute progress of the human mind, was expressed by Condorcet in 1793 in *Historical Survey of the Progress of the Human Mind*. The doctrines of social development were expressed in the 1848 *Manifesto* of Karl Marx. The discovery that the earth in all its parts, especially its life forms, was in a state of continuous transformation was expressed and explained by Charles Darwin in *Origin of Species* in 1859 (Berry, 1988, pp.127-128).

The Enlightenment was inspired by the belief that science would answer all questions and solve all problems (O'Conaill, 1997, p. 523). It promised to unleash the light of reason to shatter all residues of superstition and ignorance. It became the intellectual and cultural foundation for the modern world, which unleashed technology, politics, economics and culture from every restraint. This modern vision was so powerful that it became the only way most people could conceive reality (Holland, 1987, p. 40). The symbol of the modern era is the arrow of progress. The 'liberal story' of cultural and /or biological evolution demanded peoples' rational co-operation and foretold the movement of history towards ever-greater progress. The 'Marxist story' inspired the

trust that the contradictions of society would give birth to new, transcendent forms and thus carry history forward towards the classless reconciled society (Baum, 1991, p. 5).

However, the modern era has been 'associated not so much with conviction regarding progress as with puzzlement and existential doubt' (Whelan, 1994, p. 5).

Through the modern era the Western World experienced an ever-deepening secularisation, shutting out the power of religious mystery (Holland, 1987, p. 42).

Secularisation is 'that process by which many sectors of society and culture are removed from the influence of religious values, institutions and symbols' (Fogarty *et al*, 1984, p. 104). In a thoroughly materialistic and sceptical world, God was declared 'dead'.

It is increasingly being recognised that materialistic positivism, in its objectification of reality, has fragmented and impoverished our experience and alienated us from God, nature, one another and ourselves (Flanagan, 1999, p. 28).

Yet, the innate need for religious faith lived on (Pastva, 1986, p. 60). The works of the twentieth century anthropologists, E.E. Evans-Pritchard and Clifford Geertz lead to the appreciation of religion's distinctively human dimension and of the ideas, attitudes, and purposes that inspire it (Pals, 1996). Pals' comparison of seven theories of religion provides a guide to the understanding of the rôle of religion in human culture. He concludes:

The age of scientific general theories seems to have passed – perhaps forever. Insofar as they managed to misread or misunderstand the nature of religion in human affairs, it is all to the good that they should now be left behind. They were, and still remain, impressive exhibits of the way in which theoretical inquiry, even in error, serves as a powerful incentive to further exploration and deeper understanding (Pals, 1996, p. 283).

Berry (1988) describes a new opening to mystery through scientific discovery. Through the understanding of the infra-atomic world and the entire galactic system the great unity of the universe became apparent. A shift in consciousness took place. The human being was seen as that being in whom the universe in its evolutionary dimension became conscious of itself. A new creation story evolved equivalent in our times to the



creation stories of antiquity. According to this story, the cosmos and every being in the cosmos reflects the divine Being considered by Plato as the Agathon, the Good; by Polonius as the One; by the Christian as God. Secular society, however, does not see the numinous quality or the deeper psychic powers associated with its own story and the believing community is awaking only slowly to this new context of understanding (Berry, 1988, pp.127-133).

Cox (1984), Allen (1989) and Holland (1985) speak of the end of modern society and the dawning of the post-modern age. They are convinced that a cultural shift is taking place which is related to the human damage caused by capitalism and state socialism, the oppression of the bureaucratic state, the false trust in modern rationality, and the absence of spirituality. They believe that the new culture being born is open to religion (Baum, 1991, p. 11). The post-modern vision views history as ongoing creation. The new future challenges the present but it remains a future rooted in the past. Past and future thus form an ecology of the whole. Dynamic movement continues, not as rejection of the past, but as a deepening of its creative energy. It taps the tradition to break the idolatry of the present and thereby deepen new creation in the future. (Holland, 1987, pp. 52-53). The post-modern era is represented by the spiral symbol. It is characterised by uncertainty and radical pluralism. Reactions to it have given rise to fundamentalism and a new conservatism. Its destruction of any hope of shared beliefs and practices is resisted. Post-modern fragmentation, however, is embraced by New Age religion which emphasises the latent divinity within humanity (Flanagan, 1999, pp. 28-36). According to Woods:

One thing is certain: twentieth century men and women have not lost the instinct for religious meaning and purpose, even when institutionalism on the one hand and enthusiasm on the other obscure the traditional paths followed by generations of Christians (Woods, 1996, p. 333).

The twentieth century has seen the revision of every major tendency of Christian spirituality. At Vatican II the Catholic Church returned to the deepest apostolic roots of

service and ministry. Protestants were invigorated by the 'Back to the Bible' movement. After the Second World War there was a revival of monasticism in the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Churches. The ecumenical dimension of monasticism found expression in Roger Schultz' Taizé monastery in France. This monastery continues to attract thousands of young people every year and its spirituality has spread throughout the world. There has been a revival of medieval mysticism, of the Orthodox 'prayer of the heart', and a revitalisation of Ignatian and Celtic spiritualities. Soup kitchens and shelters for the urban homeless give concrete expression to 'the preferential option for the poor'. Asian forms of religious belief and practice found expression in the writings and conferences of Anthony de Mello S.J. 'The search for transcendence itself began to transcend the confines of institutional religion' (Woods, 1996, p. 348). The post-modern era seeks to satisfy a hunger for spiritual experience. According to Flanagan (1999), spiritual experiences are traditionally divided into two main categories – apophatic and kataphatic.

Kataphatic spiritual experience is focused on the sense of God *present* in something external to the person, such as nature, art, ritual or another person or on the content of a person's consciousness, such as visions or words. Apophatic spiritual experience is characterised by a sense of *absence* of God, rather than presence, and by the sense of the inadequacy of language to convey the mysterious reality encountered (Flanagan, 1999, p. 9).

Creation-orientated spiritualities have also arisen. They are displacing the classical anti-creation spiritualities of spatial transcendence and repressive asceticism and the modern anti-creation spiritualities of privatised pietism. Liberation theology is linked to this as the biblical vision of new creation. Thus, the foundation for an ecumenical Christianity is laid. Both Passover and Eucharist recall the past in order to move towards the future. The building of community is the foundation of the creative act. The communion is not simply social (among humans) or religious (with the divine) but also natural (with the ecological matrix). The formation of community, tapping the root, exercising creative imagination – these are the ultimately religious acts which begin to pervade and



transform the whole human experience. The god of classical domination fades, as does the modern god of subjective privatisation and autonomous secularisation. What discloses power is the living Mystery revealing itself in ongoing creation and re-creation. The post-modern Christian vision endeavours to represent post-classical Catholic and post-modern Protestant theological positions in a new and profoundly ecumenical creation. The sense of dynamism and negative judgement is the Protestant legacy; the positive sense of the goodness of the tradition of history is the Catholic legacy. Synthesised, they could represent a new historical stage of Christianity (Holland, 1987, pp. 54-59).

According to Gallagher (1997), culture has emerged as a major theme at the Second Vatican Council, in developments in Catholic positions since then, and in the distinctively gospel perspectives in the approach of the World Council of Churches. Gallagher shows that in the quicksands of postmodernity there is a place for a rock on which to build. What is needed is to find new meeting points for faith, Gospel and culture. 'The idols of cultural imperialism need not only unmasking but rivalling and replacing' (Gallagher, 1997, p. 130)

Such a development has implications for UCC where the divisive effects of the Reformation have had a negative influence on religion for one hundred and fifty years. We cannot but surmise what the difference might be for religion, had not the College been founded in the nineteenth century when 'the emphasis on science had pushed theology, which could not be explained fully on the basis of reason, to the periphery' (Mulcahy, 1997, p. 103).

The inter-denominational chaplaincy team, which currently operates at UCC, has a strong ecumenical drive, directed at easing the tensions of the past; positively confronting the issues of the present in order to move towards a harmonious future.

The rôle of such persons would be not to resolve the tensions around the issues of the day but to offer a vision of a universal culture and to promote the rational

discussion to which a university is dedicated. The goal would be to help move the debate, the struggle to define the future, to a common ground. In the university, the inclusion of religious life ought to be included as one of the dimensions of seeking to produce educated men and women (Asbury, 1992, p. 475).

This team has developed a pastoral programme which endeavours to integrate traditional and new spiritualities.

It is desirable that a university communicates a system of values and does not 'withdraw into a value-free domain isolated from genuine tension and conflict' (Lynch, 1989a, p. 17). This is as true for Irish as for American universities. If a system of values is not communicated,

the student gets no intimation that great mysteries might be revealed to him [/her], that new and higher motives of action might be discovered within him [/her], that a different and more human way of life can be harmoniously constructed by what he [/she] is going to learn (Bloom, 1987, p. 337).

Bloom (1987) emphasises the importance in university education of the question concerning the nature of the human person. He argues persuasively for a core curriculum in the university. Lynch (1989b) suggests that this should be considered seriously in Ireland. In spite of occasional lip service to Newman, we accept too easily the horizontal model of knowledge. Critical reflection may draw us away from unthinking imitation towards something creative and exciting in tertiary education (Lynch, 1989b, p. 70). This may be on the horizon for UCC. The President of UCC, Professor Wrixon, is keen to ensure that in an age of dramatic technological development, the humanities will not be forgotten at UCC. He is anxious that there be a humanities component in all science and technology courses (Hogan, 1999, p. 7). It is to be hoped that the humanities component will include Religious Studies.

### **3.3 PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

While the physical and biological sciences have explored the evolving cosmic universe change has also been sought in the inner world of the human being. Psychology has



been 'the explorer who in heroic adventure discovered the uncharted inner world' (O'Donoghue, 1997, p. 111). Religion, which belongs to that inner world, has been subjected to psychological investigation.

The theoretical study of religion from a psychoanalytic perspective has a long history beginning with Sigmund Freud who is regarded as the founder of psychoanalysis. His work on the interpretation of dreams and on religion and civilisation has influenced twentieth century thought and society. Freud espoused the controversial 'reductionist' explanations of religion. According to Freud the inner force and efficacy of religious doctrines lie in the powerful needs all persons have for security and order. He concluded that since religion arises from strong wishes, religion is an illusion (Freud, 1985).

On the other hand, Bryant (1987) shows that depth psychology can illumine people's experience of God and that faith can enable them to actualise their human potential. The inspiring account of the wealth of the world within, which he provides, can help people to become more human and vibrant in their belief.

Carl G. Jung, originally a follower of Freud, developed his own analytic psychology. Jung considered that the drive towards self-realisation is the basic human drive and he includes the collective unconscious in addition to the personal unconscious of Freud. Jung shows that the only way the individual can resist the pressures of the collective – State or Church- is by relating to God who relativises their power (Jung, 1985).

William James (1985) expresses in psychological terms what the theologians have already said in theological terms. When James speaks of making a proper connection with the higher power, this 'connection' might well be what the theologians call non-reflective awareness or the recognition of the ultimate. According to James 'one of the duties of the science of religion is to keep religion in connection with the rest of science' (James, 1985, p. 66).

Ann Ulanov (1985) develops more fully Jung's critique of an extrinsic form of religion and relates this to a loss of the symbolic sense. Like Rahner who speaks of the unthematic knowledge of God, both Ulanov and Jung stress that faith transcends the rational (Ulanov, 1985).

Buetow (1991) argues that it is necessary to take account of religion in seeking satisfactory answers to the important questions of life. He examined some modern philosophical systems, Far Eastern religions, Western religions and the social sciences in seeking support for this conclusion. Buetow found that the perspective of the majority of philosophical systems today would argue that the necessity for religion in personal development is slight. However, most followers of established philosophical systems like Realism and Idealism, and modern ones such as theistic Existentialism, argue that religion is essential to optimal personal formation. He also found that Hinduism, Buddhism and the major religions of the West regard the education of values as an essential element in personal formation.

The research of Heath (1996), Perry (1968), and Parker (1965) has shown that students do develop during their time at university. The university is directly concerned with intellectual growth but since human development is holistic, healthy growth implies a measure of development on all the various dimensions: intellectual, social, ethical and spiritual (Lochrie, 1986, p. 28). The research of Hall *et al* (1998) suggests the quality of one's relationship with God is highly related to, and may be significantly influenced by one's relational maturity. The ethical/moral and spiritual/faith/religious dimensions of development are therefore relevant to the life of the university student.

### **3.3.1 Moral Development**

The moral and faith development of the person has been the subject of much research in recent decades. The question of which aspect comes first in the life of the individual



continues to be debated. Since research on moral development got underway before research on faith development, moral development will be treated firstly here.

Jean Piaget is the recognised pioneer in the psychology of moral development. Piaget (1965) recognised two stages of development of moral maturity, the heteronomous stage and the stage of autonomy and mutuality.

Daniel J. Levinson (1978) developed a sequence of stages from childhood and adolescence to late adulthood. He considered that the Early Adult Transition period, from seventeen to twenty two, is the era of greatest energy and abundance. It is a period of rich satisfactions and crushing stresses (Levinson, 1985, pp. 93-95). During this period the person must remove the family from the centre of life and begin a process of change that will lead to a new home base for living as a young adult in an adult world. Attachment to the family does not end but the character of the relationship changes (Levinson, 1978, p. 75).

Lawrence Kohlberg's work on stage-theory development is well recognised. His basic conception of six psychological stages of development began with his doctoral dissertation proposal in 1955. His dissertation was an elaboration and reassertion of Piaget's stage approach to moral development. He was influenced by the moral tradition from Aristotle to Kant, Mill and Dewey and its expression both in philosophy and in literature (Kohlberg, 1984, p. vii). He was influenced also, by 'Kant's formal theory in moral philosophy' (Petrovich, 1986, p. 86).

In Kohlberg's work justice is the central issue. It is present in all stages but in stage six it is the principle of decision. He believed that the highest moral stage is a life lived according to the single ethical principle of justice. Kohlberg uses the term 'Cognitive-Development' because of the importance of the knowing and reasoning aspect of moral decision making.

The processes of knowing, reasoning, and judging were constituents of the texture of moral growth. Intelligence may be taken as a necessary but not sufficient reason of moral advance (Delaney, 1983, p. 7).

While Piaget focused attention on and explored the structural nature of cognition, the developmental nature of growth and the implication of these for the moral judgement of the child, Kohlberg studied the nature of development itself.

Each stage, as Kohlberg sees development takes place in a social context and, therefore, implies a relationship of the person to his [/her] environment – persons, places, objects. ... The development aspect emerges through a greater differentiation and integration of the demands of justice at each stage (Delaney, 1983, p. 7).

According to Kohlberg 'stages of moral judgement are structures of thinking about prescription, about rules and principles obliging one to act because the action is seen as morally right' (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 621). His moral dilemmas address three problems of justice that have been identified in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*: distributive justice, commutative justice and corrective justice. The fourth problem is that of procedural justice – concern for making one's judgements reversible and universalisable (Kohlberg, 1984, pp. 621-622). Kohlberg, like Piaget, does not concentrate on moral behaviour or on statements about whether an action is right or wrong but on the reasons given. 'These reasons are the levels or stages of moral maturity' (Duska *et al*, 1977, p. 43).

Kohlberg's initial research consisted of interviewing fifty American males every three years for eighteen years using 'The Nine Hypothetical Dilemmas' (Kohlberg, 1984, pp. 640-651). He identified six distinguishable orientations which became the basis for his six stages of moral development. Stage 7 was added later. Kohlberg divided the six stages into three major levels; the pre-conventional level which contains Stage 1 and Stage 2; the conventional level which contains Stage 3 and Stage 4 and the post-conventional level which contains Stage 5 and Stage 6 (Duska *et al*, 1977, pp. 45-47). A



person may be operating out of any one of the six stages at any period of his/her life.

Stages three to five are most typical of people in the 18 –23 age group.

The following are the six stages developed by Kohlberg:

**Stage 1: Heteronomous Morality (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 624).**

At this stage people conform to those who have the power to punish.

**Stage 2: Individualistic Instrumental Morality (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 626).**

At this stage people are looking for others who have the power to satisfy their needs.

**Stage 3: Interpersonally Normative Morality (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 628).**

At this stage people become conscious of others, authority must be pleased and respected. They are ‘moved by the expectation of praise and blame’ (Lobo, 1986, p. 296). The group plays an important rôle in their lives. They need a community to define rôles and duties and will easily identify with the church community and will want to be recognised as being good. ‘Maintaining the expectations of the church community, if one is visible, is valuable in its own right regardless of the consequences’ (Duska *et al*, 1977, p. 86).

**Stage 4: Social System Morality (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 631).**

At this stage ‘the motivation is the desire for social approval and respect for law and order’ (Lobo, 1986, p. 296). The church or, in the case of communist countries, the state is recognised as the voice of authority. Stage four people will view the church and its authority as the ‘voice of God’ (Duska *et al*, 1977, p. 89) and will look to it as a defender of correct order. They can have rigid and fixed views of the laws of God and of the Church and consider any questioning as arrogance.

**Stage 5: Human Rights and Social Welfare Morality (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 634).**

What is necessary in the fifth stage, is not a mere acceptance of laws which one has always obeyed, but 'critical (knowing) and free choice' (Duska *et al*, 1977, p. 91). There are, however, objective moral norms which will be taken into account by the mature person in making a decision.

Thus Kohlberg's scheme would be perfectly acceptable and compatible with Christian thought were we to concern ourselves with reasons for acting, and indeed it provides us with a gauge as to the relative maturity of the reasons behind the action (Duska *et al*, 1977, p. 92).

In the transition from stage four to stage five 'scepticism replaces certitude, relativism replaces absolutism and egocentricity replaces a previous group identity' (Duska *et al*, 1977, p. 96). This can be a difficult and lonely stage for the individual. The only help which parents or the Church can give is an understanding attitude until the person begins to move out of isolation to relate positively to others. He/she may then freely choose the Church, recognising its human limitations while agreeing with its goals. The person can also begin to accept his/her own personal sinfulness and limitations.

**Stage 6: Morality of Universalisable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical**

**Principle(s) (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 636).**

At this stage 'the primary motivation is the need to be consistent with ones own moral principles and thus avoid self-condemnation' (Lobo, 1986, p. 296).

Kohlberg's research continued for more than thirty years. He inspired many researchers into the field. They critiqued his results and worked in co-operation with him. He expanded his research to other parts of the world such as Turkey and Israel and to include female as well as male subjects.

### **3.3.1.1 Kohlberg Critiqued - Cultural and Ethical Relativism**

Locke (1986) points out that in Kohlberg's work there is a failure to distinguish cultural relativism from ethical relativism. Cultural relativism is understood as the doctrine that



different cultures have different moralities and ethical relativism is the doctrine that these different moralities are all equally valid and all equally right. For example:

The fact that a particular culture's morality permits a certain practice, female circumcision, does not of course mean that that practice is morally correct, not even within that culture but only that it is regarded morally correct within that culture, which is not at all the same thing (Locke, 1986, p. 25).

Kohlberg's position is that even if there are basic differences between different moralities, they all share the same six-stage developmental sequence. Locke maintains that 'Kohlberg does not succeed in demonstrating that these things are universal across all moralities; even if he did, they would seem to be evidence for cultural relativism rather than against it' (Locke, 1986, p. 26).

### **3.3.1.2 Gilligan's Critique of Kohlberg**

Kohlberg's achievements lie as much in the questions he has raised as in the answers he has given. Studies in the area of moral development offer other viewpoints – one of the most noted is that of Carol Gilligan. Gilligan (1982) asks if something has been omitted by the practice of leaving girls and women out of the theory building stage in developmental psychology. She reviews the work of Freud, Piaget, Erikson and Kohlberg and shows how these theories assume that male patterns of development define what is normatively human. She claims that their research 'contained a consistent conceptual and observation bias, reflected in and extended by, their choice of all male research samples' (Gilligan, 1982, p. 325). Only later did they inquire as to how women fit into their theories. Since 'male' was equated with the normatively human, any differences exhibited by women had to be explained as some sort of deviation, as an abnormality (Crysdale, 1990, p. 31).

... developmental theories have by and large frustrated a proper understanding of development by generalising from men to persons, by ignoring the developmental patterns of women, and by offering as a result conceptions of development which are inadequate, one-sided, and incomplete (Siegel, 1986, p. 73).

Gilligan (1982) recognises two related sets of problems; problems of psychological theory and problems of women's development. The argument was not statistical. It was interpretative and hinged on the demonstration that the examples presented illustrated a different way of seeing. She also points out that the standard set for measurement may be the cause of Kohlberg's repeated finding of developmental inferiority in women, rather than it being associated with the quality of women's moral thinking.

Gilligan (1982) aims to restore in part the missing text of women's development as they describe their conceptions of self and morality in the early adult years. She focuses on the differences between women and men and her aim is to enlarge developmental understanding by including the perspectives of both sexes. She conducted a study in which she asked men and women who had graduated from college five years previously the following question: 'How would you describe yourself?' Gilligan discovered:

In all the women's descriptions, identity is defined in a context of relationship and judged by a standard of responsibility and care. Similarly, morality is seen by these women as arising from the experience of connection and conceived as a problem of inclusion rather than one of balancing claims (Gilligan, 1982, p. 160).

Gilligan suggests that morality really includes two moral orientations; first, the moral of justice as stressed by Piaget and Kohlberg, and second, the ethic of care and responsibility which is central to understanding female moral judgement and action. As men describe themselves, involvement with others is tied to a qualification of identity rather than to its realisation. Instead of attachment, individual achievement and success are important for men. Power and achievement are man's identity, but they leave him at a distance from others who seem to be out of his sight in some sense.

Gilligan considers that women's morality is not immature, but that it is different from men's morality. She claims that these two modes of morality are not opposites. The goal of rights-orientation is justice which need not be uncaring and caring need not be unfair. Justice and caring are complementary.



Development for both sexes would involve an integration of both rights and responsibility through a principled understanding of the complementarity of these male and female views (Conn, 1986, p. 18).

Gilligan (1982) points out that these two voices operate within each sex and when they converge it is a sign of crisis and change. Therefore, the care perspective, in her account, is neither biologically determined nor unique to women. Gilligan offers a moral perspective differing from that previously embedded in psychological theories and measures, and it is a perspective that was defined by listening to both women and men describe their own experience. This viewpoint 'has been widely and enthusiastically accepted by many feminist scholars in numerous disciplines, as well as by many writers, politicians, journalists, and the public' (Mednick, 1999, p. 1119).

It has also been observed that women find it easier to move out of the care orientation to a justice orientation when the need arises. Men find it harder to develop the care orientation. They find it easier to stay in the rôle of justice morality. Moir and Jessel relate:

...there is a life-long male pre-disposition towards problems which can be analysed and compartmentalised, while women are more open to 'take in' a problem in all its complexity (Moir *et al*, 1989, p. 170).

The challenge is that we 'become persons who could acknowledge and incorporate difference instead of defensively needing to dominate whatever is defined as 'other'' (Harding, 1987, p. 298).

Kohlberg responded positively to Gilligan's critique:

Philosophers such as Frankena have agreed with Gilligan in stating that there are two distinct principles of moral orientations, one of beneficence and care, the other of justice, and that both must be accounted for by a moral theory. Gilligan asserts, and Lyons (1982) documents, that it is these two moral orientations that are reflected in sex differences in spontaneous ways of framing personal moral dilemmas by using both orientations. She reports that females are likely to use the orientation of care and response as their predominant mode and males more likely to use justice as theirs (Kohlberg, 1984, pp. 340-341).

### 3.3.1.3 Crysdale's Critique of Kohlberg and Gilligan

The Kohlberg/Gilligan debate has led Cynthia Crysdale to examine the structure of how women and men know value, make decisions and take actions.

Just as there is the anthropological question of a single or double human nature, there is the epistemological question of a single or a double structure to human consciousness and human knowing. ... Just how basic are the differences? (Crysdale, 1990, p. 33).

Crysdale (1990) takes the position that defends the unity of human consciousness and the structure of knowing. She attributes the gender differences that have been brought to light in empirical gender studies to the educational system, the economic system and family patterns of communication which have impressed upon women a rôle of passivity in regard to knowing. Furthermore, Lerner (1986) indicates that the social subjugation of women did not emerge with the original human ancestors but emerged over time in connection with dominance by race and class. Women have become experts in the knowledge born of belief. Crysdale contends that the *eros* of discovery is just as operative in women as it is in men, and that it is only a distorted and biased tradition that has hidden or overlooked this fact (Crysdale, 1990, p. 42). Belenky *et al* (1986) describe the ways of knowing that women have cultivated and learned to value, ways that are very powerful but have been neglected and denigrated by the dominant intellectual ethos of our time. Women have discovered that their own inner voice can contribute to the knowing process.

According to Crysdale the major differences between Kohlberg and Gilligan lie in their philosophical viewpoints on moral knowing. Any differences between them will have to be resolved on philosophical grounds, not empirical grounds. Yet, both Gilligan and Kohlberg fail, in her estimation, to provide a solid philosophical argument for their varying viewpoint (Crysdale, 1990, note 23, p. 47).

Research on moral development continues. Kohlberg was conscious of an 'invisible college' of developmentalists facing new assessment problems and joining in discussion



and debate about the frontiers of thinking about moral development (Kohlberg, 1984, p. viii).

### 3.3.1.4 Growth in Moral Maturity

According to Kohlberg each person is a natural moral philosopher who takes an active rôle in constructing his/her moral reality. This contradicts those who see all moral values as culturally transmitted and has important implications for all those who claim to teach morality – or those who think that there is such a thing as neutral moral education. The practical application of his work has been ensured. Kuhmerker *et al* (1991) aim at providing a map for viewing the breadth and significance of Kohlberg's work and at showing its applications to education, counselling, clinical practice, and pastoral ministry.

Growth in moral maturity continues through life. 'Life can be structured in ways that increase the likelihood of our maturing in morality' (Kraft, 1985, p. 45). At any time in our lives we can be acting according to one stage of development on one occasion and a different stage on another occasion. Our awareness of this will help us to decide what we need to do to mature. It also helps us to recognise how we are dealing with others.

'The central motivating force in goodness, as well as in spirituality, is love' (Kraft, 1985, p. 45). According to Kraft, morality is fundamentally a spiritual process. The spiritual riches of religion, prayer and worship must be valued as aids towards moral maturity. 'The moral challenge is for the body, ego and spirit to function in harmony in order to foster the moral goodness of self and others' (Kraft, 1985, p. 47).

For Christians, according to Häring (1981), the function of moral theology is to bring the Christian vision to bear on human living. Sorting out the details of moral problems is a secondary task. Its purpose is to form Christians: people whose minds are enlightened by truth and whose wills are fired by love. Häring would say that truth

without love is powerless, because it does not activate that passion for goodness which must fire the will. The whole person must be confronted with that vision of goodness which is Christ, so that the human heart can hunger and thirst for righteousness.

### **3.3.2 Faith Development**

It was Kohlberg's opinion that 'moral development chronologically precedes religious development so that the latter has nothing to contribute to the former' (Petrovich, 1986, p. 101). On the other hand, James Fowler claims that faith not only develops in a parallel series of stages, but also precedes and is necessary for moral stages.

Since the work of Fowler initially introduced 'faith development theory', much reflection has been generated on the rôle of developmental psychology in religious development. Fowler's heuristic and pioneering work contributed much to theology and related fields (Carmody, 1988, p. 93).

According to Fowler 'faith is a fundamental, universal and infinitely varied phenomenon requiring community, language, ritual and nurture' (Fowler, 1981, p. xiii). Fowler takes a broad view of faith, accepting that it may, in modern times, be either religious or secular in content. In his opinion, all people, be they believers, non-believers, agnostics or atheists, are concerned with how to put their lives together and with what will make life worth living (Fowler, 1981, p. 5). Fowler accepts the distinction which the comparative religionist, Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1979) makes between faith, religion and belief. The key question is not 'what do you "believe"?' but 'on what or whom do you set your heart?' (Fowler, 1981, p.14). He draws on H. Richard Niebuhr (1960) who identifies three types of relationship between self and others and their common relatedness to transcending centres of value and power: polytheism, henotheism, and radical monotheism. He agrees with Paul Tillich (1952) that those things or people that are of ultimate concern are much more powerful than claimed belief in a creed or a set of doctrinal propositions.



Faith as a state of being ultimately concerned may or may not find its expression in institutional or cultic religious forms (Fowler, 1981, p. 14). Fowler realises that even persons of faith tend to accept the culture's truncation of belief into assent to a set of propositions or commitment to a 'belief system' (Fowler, 1981, p. 13). Faith, for Fowler, is deeper and more personal than religion. It is the most fundamental category in the human quest for relations to transcendence. The intention behind this approach entails ecumenical and cross-cultural interests (Carmody, 1988, p. 94).

Fowler is aware that faith requires knowledge and vision. To set one's heart on someone or something requires that one has 'seen' or 'sees the point of' that to which one is loyal (Fowler, 1981, p. 11). The great danger in modern times is idolatry which, according to Fowler, consists in committing oneself to finite centres of value and power as the source of one's confirmation of worth and meaning and as the guarantor of survival with quality (Fowler, 1981, p.18). We may conclude that it is because people commit themselves to finite centres of value and power that despair is so prevalent, since finite centres may not be able to sustain indefinitely.

As Fowler's Stages of faith development are considered it is necessary to be constantly aware that it is this broad concept of faith which is understood. It is faith which does not necessarily find expression in institutional or cultic religious forms. Yet Fowler admits that 'the stories, myths, symbols, ethical teachings, and the discipline in the living faith of persons and communities provide the orienting motivating directions' (Fowler, 1986, p. 183).

### **3.3.2.1 Fowler's Faith Developmental Theory**

Faith, according to Fowler, is a powerful aspect of human growth and transformation. In exploring faith development he drew on the works of the following: Jean Piaget's rigorous research on cognitive development; Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral

development; Erik Erikson who, through his theory of psychological developmental stages, sought to illumine the growth and crises of the healthy personality (Erikson, 1980). Fowler also carried out his own extensive research. Over a ten-year period he interviewed approximately two hundred men and women, identifying patterns of stages and transitions in their faith experiences. As a result, he established a six-stage structural developmental theory:

Stage 1: The Intuitive - Projective faith of the young child.

Stage 2: The Mythic - Literal faith which the child begins to develop from the age of six.

Stage 3: The Synthetic - Conventional faith of the adolescent.

Stage 4: The Individuative – Reflective faith which may or may not be achieved by any person.

Stages 5 and 6: Conjunctive and Universalising faith.

In studying the faith development of the young adult we are mainly concerned with Stages 3 and 4 of this series.

### **3.3.2.2 Characteristics of Stage 3**

Many students entering university at age seventeen or eighteen will exemplify the characteristics of adolescence and will belong to the category which Fowler calls Stage 3. Fowler aptly names the faith of the Stage 3 person 'Synthetic - Conventional faith'. It is synthetic in that it is non-analytical; it comes as a sort of unified global wholeness. It is conventional, in that it is seen as being everybody's faith system or the faith system of the entire community (Fowler, 1981, p. 167).

The formal operational thinking of the Stage 3 person makes it possible to conceive ideal features of persons and communities. The Stage 3 person is likely to be idealistically or harshly judgmental of people and institutions in the light of these ideal



conceptions (Fowler, 1981, p. 152). The friend or first love becomes the mirror image of the self. This carries with it the new burden of 'self-consciousness' (Fowler, 1981, p. 153). An 'identity crisis' can be experienced when the images of self and those reflected by others do not correspond.

It is possible for the Stage 3 person to form a personal myth incorporating both the person's past and anticipated future. This gives him/her faith in the emerging self and trust that the future will fulfil its promise. It also contains the fear that the dream may not be fulfilled (Fowler, 1981, p. 152). The Stage 3 person is accepting of authority that is located externally to the self. This may be the authority of a person in a traditional authority rôle or it may be the consensus of a group. The Stage 3 person is a 'conformist', governed by the expectations and judgements of significant others. He/she has not got sufficient confidence in his/her own identity and judgement to hold an independent view (Fowler, 1981, p. 173). He/she believes what he/she has been taught and is often keen to impress others, especially persons of the opposite sex.

A Stage 3 person does have an 'ideology', a system of values and beliefs which have not yet been objectively examined. His/her system of meaning and values is tacitly held. The symbols and rituals by which he/she expresses faith are inseparable from their meaning (Fowler, 1981, p. 162).

A Stage 3 person constructs social relations as extensions of interpersonal relationships. He/she does not think of society in terms of a network of laws, rules, and systematically determined patterns. Other persons are known and evaluated in terms of their personal qualities and interpersonal ways of relating (Fowler, 1981, p. 162).

While these characteristics are quite acceptable in the adolescent, it is desirable that a transition from Stage 3 to Stage 4 takes place in the late teens or early twenties.

### **3.3.2.3 Transition from Stage 3 to Stage 4**

Persons and groups can and often do find equilibrium in Stage 3. If a person belongs to a community, the majority of whose members are Stage 3 people, moving beyond Stage 3 is unlikely. He/she becomes permanently dependent upon the 'tyranny of they', failing to achieve autonomy of judgement and action. Whereas, if a person belongs to a community, the majority of whose members are Stage 4 people, transition is likely to occur (Fowler, 1981, p. 162). Encountering other perspectives can lead to critical reflection on one's own beliefs and values.

When persons at Stage 3 encounter situations that lead to critical reflection of their tacit value systems they begin the transition to Stage 4. This may be caused by clashes with people in authority or with changes in practices that seemed unchangeable.

Leaving home, as many university students do at this time, can facilitate the transition. Fowler points out, however, that there is a danger that the clubs or societies which students join may be conventional ideological groups, thus making it difficult for them to develop their own identity and outlook. Likewise, religious groups supported by the chaplaincy are open to the possibility of reinforcing a conventionally held and maintained faith system and of causing students to remain dependent on external authority and group identity (Fowler, 1981, p. 178).

There are two requirements for the successful transition to Stage 4 - the Individuative-Reflective Stage. Firstly, the person must critically examine his/her value system. Secondly, authority must be relocated within the self. Fowler calls this the emergence of the 'executive ego'. In meeting these two requirements a person creates a new identity and life-style. A new quality of choice and personal responsibility for his/her values and for the communities to which he/she belongs becomes possible. Fowler points out that if only one of these two requirements is met the person will remain in a long-lasting equilibrium in a transitional position between Stage 3 and Stage 4.



### **3.3.2.4 Characteristics of Stage 4**

According to Fowler, there are certain characteristics which identify a person who has reached the Individuative-Reflective Stage. A Stage 4 person has the capacity for critical reflection on self-identity and outlook; constructs a perspective on life while being genuinely aware of social systems and institutions; regards meanings as separable from the symbolic media that express them. Meanings tacitly held previously become explicit at Stage 4. Since social relations are no longer seen as extensions of personal relationships, a Stage 4 person thinks in terms of the laws, rules and standards that govern social rôles (Fowler, 1981, p. 180).

There are tensions associated with the transition to Stage 4 which are unavoidable. The transition often causes an upheaval in a person's life. It can be a frightening and disorientating time. The burden of responsibility for his/her commitment, life-style, beliefs and attitudes may be difficult to carry. As the meanings of religious symbols are translated into conceptual prose the person experiences a sense of loss and even guilt (Fowler, 1981, p. 180). However, if the transition is made in the late teens or early twenties it is less traumatic than if made later in life (Fowler, 1981, p. 182).

### **3.3.2.5 Parks' 'Young Adult Stage'**

Parks (1986) questions the transitional period between Stage 3 and Stage 4 of Fowler's developmental theory and also the cases of those students who, in Kohlberg's evolution of moral judgement, found principled moral reasoning inadequate and/or seemed to regress. She identifies a distinct stage within what was believed to be a transitional period. She calls this stage the 'young adult stage'. It was difficult to identify it because of the ambivalence characteristic of it:

But most of our prevailing assumptions and theoretical formulations have not been able to help us perceive and sponsor the particular character and integrity of young adult faith; as a consequence we have perhaps also failed to comprehend

messages of yearning, hope and promise upon which the whole human family finally depends (Parks, 1986, p. 78).

Parks (1986) closely examines the move between Fowler's Stage 3 and Stage 4 in terms of form of cognition, dependence and community, and she analyses how these three strands of development are gradually woven together in adult faith (Wallworks, 1987, p. 352).

The three strands represent intellectual, affective and social development respectively. There are also, three major themes in Parks' theory: faith, becoming adult, and the environment of higher education. Parks draws on the works of William Cantwell Smith, H. Richard Niebuhr, Richard R. Niebuhr and William Lynch in giving a fresh formulation to the dynamics of faith. She defines faith as 'meaning-making' and links it directly with the imagination, thus helping us appreciate the creative power of imagination in faith (Fowler, 1987, p. 347). Parks speaks of imagination as the power to 'compose ultimacy', 'to grasp the whole', 'to apprehend the transcendent' (Carmody, 1988, p. 93). She draws critically upon both psychosocial (Erikson and Keniston) and constructive developmental (Piaget, Fowler, Kegan, Perry, and Gilligan) theories of adult development. In Parks' opinion 'the environment of higher education is an ecology of resources for sponsoring and mentoring persons in the passage to young adulthood' (Fowler, 1987, p. 347).

### **3.3.2.5i Forms of Cognition**

Parks anchors her model in a description of intellectual development, recognising that it is this dimension of young adult development that is most unambiguously the focus of higher education (Parks, 1986, p. 43). Her description is based on the nine positions identified in Perry (1968). Parks modifies these nine positions into four positions or forms.



The first form of knowing is *authority bound and dualistic* in character. Authority, presumed to have access to the Truth, may be located in a person or group or in the conventional ethos. The person is unable to examine it critically from the outside. It is dualistic in that it can make clear distinctions between what is true and untrue, right and wrong, 'we' and 'they'. There is little or no tolerance for ambiguity (Parks, 1986, pp. 44-45). Just as Fowler realises that development beyond Stage 3 does not inevitably occur, Parks accepts that development of cognition beyond this authority-bound dualistic form, though desirable, may not occur. She recognises that some students arrive in university with this form of knowing very much intact, while for others, it has already begun to dissolve.

The second form of knowing is that of *unqualified relativism*. A person is likely to move to this form when experiences in life do not fit the assumptions of his/her conventional world. Perhaps the collapse of 'the' romantic relationship or of 'the' career opportunity causes shipwreck of self, the world, and 'God' (Parks, 1986, p. 48). When, as a result of some such experience, the person moves to the form of *unqualified relativism* a new power and freedom is experienced at the cost of an earlier certainty. A position of *unqualified relativism* is difficult to sustain. A person will most likely begin to look for a way of composing truth which is more adequate to lived reality than other possibilities (Parks, 1986, p. 49).

The third form of knowing is *commitment to relativism*. To move to this form is to take self-conscious responsibility for one's own knowing. It corresponds to the shift from a 'tacit' to an 'explicit system' of knowing of which Fowler speaks. According to Parks, this is the movement that is most characteristic of the young adult in the university years. She recognises that there are two eras within this form. The first era is that of *probing commitment*. During this era the person explores possible forms of truth and their fittingness to his/her experience of self and the world. The second era is that of

*tested commitment*. The person is no longer exploring his/her world-view, marriage, career commitment, life-style, or faith. He/she experiences the quality of centredness in contrast to the ambivalence or dividedness of the earlier era (Parks, 1986, p. 84).

Parks holds that the fourth form, *convictional commitment*, does not occur until well after the ordinary college years (Parks, 1986, p. 50).

Recognising that intellectual development necessitates changes in emotions, Parks turns her attention to the second strand. She calls this the affective strand of development in the weaving of mature faith and she describes it in terms of forms of dependence.

### 3.3.2.5ii Forms of Dependence

If focusing on cognition helps us to understand how a person thinks in composing meaning at the level of faith, focusing on dependence helps us to understand how a person feels.

The first form of dependence, Parks calls *dependent*. It operates at the time of *authority-bound knowing* and is characterised by dependence upon a sense of felt relationship to the assumed authority (Parks, 1986, p. 55).

The second form of dependence, Parks calls *counter-dependence*. *Counter-dependence* is the move, in opposition to authority, to explore new ways of being. It may be accompanied by feelings of devastation, betrayal, bewilderment or mere restlessness. There is a need for distance from authority, as that relationship is still experienced as quite powerful:

.... it is as though a strength has been established which can now 'push away from the dock' of that which has been sure moorage, to move out into the deep waters of exploring for oneself what is true and trustworthy (Parks, 1986, p. 55).

The period of *counter-dependence* is a difficult time for parents, teachers, or administrators. Young people should be encouraged to explore the experience and



should be supported in so doing. Eventually, they may begin to recognise that authority does not hold ultimate truth or power.

The third form of dependence, Parks calls *inner-dependence*. The person begins to resist authority less and finds authority within him/herself. When this has been achieved the person takes conscious responsibility for adjudicating competing claims for truth and care (Parks, 1986, p. 57).

Parks (1986) describes two eras within the form of *inner-dependence*. These two eras are *fragile inner-dependence* and *confident inner-dependence*. During the era described as *fragile inner-dependence* there is a dependence on an external authority but one whom the young adult has chosen because this authority makes sense in terms of his/her observation and lived experience. Parks calls this chosen external authority a mentor. The mentor is expected to provide insight and emotional support. While this is a period of promise it is also one of vulnerability:

The feelings are those of special promise, hope, glimmering possibility, challenge and sometimes, exhilaration. The feelings to which the young adult is therefore correspondingly vulnerable are special forms of disappointment, failure, exclusion, abandonment, emptiness and hopelessness (Parks, 1986, p. 87).

The final step in the journey of trust is from *inner-dependence* to *inter-dependence*, the fourth form of dependence in Parks' categories. The person who has achieved *inter-dependence* realises that there is a need for nurturance, affection and belonging throughout the whole of life in both the public and private domains. This realisation may be accompanied by feelings of delight, wonder, freedom or perhaps a deep sadness at not being understood by others (Parks, 1986, p. 60). As a person's intellectual and emotional awareness develops there is a transformation of his/her relationships. This brings us to the third strand in Park's model, the strand of belonging, which she describes in terms of form of community.

### 3.3.2.5iii Forms of Community

Parks calls the first form of community, *conventional community*. A person belongs to a *conventional community* through family ties, social class, religion, peer values and pressure, or sex rôles. Its boundaries are drawn so as to include only "those like us".

People are judged according to the values and norms of this community (Parks, 1986, p. 64).

As a person begins to think critically, the values and norms of the conventional community are brought under examination. These norms and values may be rejected as the boundaries of the social horizon expand. The person experiences the second form of community, that which Parks calls *diffuse community*. At a time when one truth seems as good as another, there is a sense that any sort of relationship may be as good as any other (Parks, 1986, p. 64).

However, since the experience of human connectedness is necessary if a person is to move from *unqualified relativism* to *commitment in relativism*, he/she must choose a group to which to belong. This is the third form of community, which Parks calls the *self-selected class or group* (Parks, 1986, p. 65). It has been observed that this *class or group* generally consists of those who hold similar political, religious, and philosophical views though the boundaries of ethnicity, class, and geography have expanded (Parks, 1986, p. 66).

Between the *conventional forms* of community and the *self-selected class or group*, Parks proposes that there is a form of community particular to the young adult. This is the *ideological compatible community* within which there are structured and largely rational attempts to understand self and the world and to prescribe directions and corrections. This community provides a sense of distance from the conventions of the young adult's past and from the larger society with which the young adult must still negotiate terms of entry (Parks, 1986, pp. 90-91).



A person beginning to take responsibility for his/her meaning-making experiences unavoidable tensions between competing values and possible life choices. According to Parks, Fowler contradicts himself in sometimes suggesting that *individuating faith* finds it necessary to collapse such tensions and elsewhere suggesting that *individuating faith* can tolerate these tensions. Parks resolves this contradiction in recognising that it is the young adult who is vulnerable to collapsing such tensions, while the more tested adult can maintain the tension of the dichotomy between self and the larger social world. Eventually the tension of dichotomies resolves into the truth of paradox. The confident adult has the ability to engage as well as critique the world as it is. The form of community of the confident adult is not the *ideologically compatible community* but the *self-selected class or group* that confirms from without what is confidently known within (Parks, 1986, pp. 91-93).

Parks calls the fourth form of community *open to 'others'*. In this form of community the person of mature faith becomes committed to inclusive community marked by justice and love (Parks, 1986, p. 66). Since people generally do not compose this form of community until after the post-mid-life period it is unrealistic to expect university students to be open to the type of inclusiveness which it demands.

In the model, which Parks presents, the three strands of development - cognition, dependence, and community - form a tapestry of faith development. She looks to the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures for images of the forms of faith corresponding to the three forms already described. She finds an example of this in Exodus. The sojourn in Egypt, the journey through the wilderness, the experience of the Spirit within, and life in the Promised Land aptly describe four such forms of faith. Images of God in the Christian Scriptures do likewise. She also finds in Confucian teaching, in Hindu wisdom, and in Buddhist vision, images which seem to substantiate her arguments (Parks, 1986, pp. 70-71).

### **3.3.2.6 Fowler's Critique of Parks**

Fowler finds Parks' vision excessively idealistic. Students are under pressure in pursuing the route to job prospects. They may be burdened by work or financial debts to finance their education and may not be available for the kind of teaching which Parks' envisions. Fowler would like to see the set of hypotheses she has generated subjected to empirical testing and refinement, drawing on a more diverse sample of young adults that might include school drop-outs, community college students, members of the military and those who are already in the work force. He suggests that in subsequent work, Parks should take the task of making more explicit the governing theological and faith commitments which are so powerfully implicit in her book and thinking (Fowler, 1987, p. 349).

### **3.3.2.7 Practical Applications of Fowler's Theory**

The new knowledge and awareness of growth in faith as an on-going developmental process enables us to understand faith better and consequently enables us to be better models in facilitating the growth and development of faith in others. Fowler's six-stage development theory has proved a useful resource for teachers of religion and for pastoral workers. Science- and-religion courses, such as that taught at Southeast Missouri State University, offer students the opportunity to integrate their worldview, taking seriously both religious ideas and scientific information. The stages of faith development of Fowler are used as a framework for interpreting changes in student viewpoints. Examples from student writing assignments demonstrate shifts in the cognitive understanding of faith that coincide with Fowler's stages (Gathman *et al*, 1997).

While there is now a considerable body of empirical data to support the theory of sequential stages of growth, there are other viewpoints. According to O'Donoghue



(1997), we need to rediscover contradiction as a creative force within us. In contradiction there is light and energy and where there is energy there is life and growth. Hegel recognised this:

Hegel, alone, had the vision, subtlety and hospitality of reflection to acknowledge contradiction as the complex force of growth, which disavows mere linear progress in order to awaken all the aggregate energies of the experience. It is the turbulence of their inner conversation, which brings an integrity of transfiguration and not a mere replacement of one image, surface or system by another which so often passes for change (O'Donoghue, 1997, p. 148).

Fowler agrees that statistical information and research evidence do not reveal the real essence of religion. 'Nevertheless, they tell part of the story and may give us some idea of what is happening, and point out challenges, opportunities and dangers for the future' (Fowler, 1987, p. 15).

### **3.3.2.8 Fowler and Lonergan**

Carmody (1988) critiques Fowler and draws a comparison between Fowler's structural developmental stages and Lonergan's attempt to identify the psychological basis of faith in his work, *Method in Theology*. Lonergan presents his account of conversion within the context of transcendental method. In doing so he embodies a normative theological and philosophical stance. Lonergan's treatment of religious experience, though apparently less pluralistic than Fowler's discussion of 'faith', is more satisfactory from the perspective of faith development (Carmody, 1988, p. 95). Carmody attempts to indicate heuristically, how Lonergan's transcendental method can be fruitfully combined with Fowler's stages in providing a more holistic approach to the developmental path of faith. Lonergan, unlike Fowler, does not separate structure from content (Carmody, 1988, pp. 96-98).

Lonergan's conversion theory also accounts for the existential moment. Because of Fowler's over-dependence on developmental psychology with its invariant sequence of

stages, such existential occurrences are less easy to accommodate (Carmody, 1988, p. 101).

Carmody suggests that Fowler's work would be enhanced by a study of the works of Lonergan. He also suggests that he move from stages to transcendental method as his basic paradigm, thus 'the exciting endeavour of mapping faith growth which Fowler has so powerfully initiated can assume a more holistic, adequate perspective (Carmody, 1988, p. 105).

In this study the stage development theories of Kohlberg and Fowler and the movements within Parks' 'Young Adult Stage' will be used as a basic framework in understanding the religious development of the young adult and in interpreting the research data. These theories will be used with caution in light of the critiques of Gilligan and Crysdale and Fowler and in view of the possibility of alternative approaches, such as that of Lonergan. Faith will be regarded, not in the broad sense used by Fowler, but as religious in content. The religious content will be that of the Christian faith since Christianity is expected to be the faith of the majority of the subjects of the research.

### **3.4 SOCIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

Theology and psychology offer some aspects of explanation regarding religion and the nature of the person. Other sciences, such as sociology, offer other aspects of explanation. The earliest sociologists, who founded the new science of society in the nineteenth century, were agnostic and anti-clerical if not always anti-religion. They did not accept that religion could explain the nature of persons or the meaning of the human condition. Rather, they believed that people could attain their full stature when they had achieved a scientific understanding of human society. In the early decades of the twentieth century professional sociologists omitted questions about religion in the quest



for the scientific understanding of society. The pioneering work undertaken by groups of church members was not held in high regard by professional sociologists. This attitude has changed, however, since those who staff denominational research centres have been professionally trained in the techniques of sociological research. The fact that the universal decline in religiosity, once thought inevitable, has not occurred has stimulated sociologists to understand and explain religion as a social phenomenon (O'Doherty, 1969, pp. 575-577).

It is important to understand what values we live by, how we see the world around us, and where changes in our values and attitudes are taking us, for on those values and attitudes depends the way in which we approach work, marriage, leisure, politics or religion, and the satisfactions—or otherwise—which result in this life or the next (Fogarty *et al*, 1984, p. 1).

Recent studies point towards a link between inward or intrinsic religion and both mental and physical wellbeing. The research of Frankel and Hewitt (1994) among Canadian university students revealed a positive relationship between faith group involvement and various aspects of health status.

### **3.4.1 Changes in Irish Society – Secularising Tendencies**

The rapid changes in many aspects of life in Ireland in the second half of the twentieth century have made this country a rich field for sociological research. Ireland provided a particularly interesting test case for the generally hypothesised relationship between industrialisation, modernisation and religious transformation. In the case of Ireland, however, the fact that modernisation took place before industrialisation had to be taken into account in any consideration of secularisation theory (Hornsby-Smith *et al*, 1994). The stability and continuity characteristic of the Irish Free State ended in 1958 with the publication of the Programme for Economic Expansion. Within a ten-year period, state-induced economic development industrialised Irish society. Agriculture declined in importance and a major process of urbanisation was generated by the migration of

workers from peripheral regions to the towns and cities. There was a steady increase in the number of female workers in the labour force. Class transformation was swift.

Securing access to a favoured location in the class system depended on the ability to take advantage of the opportunities for education which opened up in the 1960s.

Secularising tendencies might be expected not only among the economically successful, but also among the 'rootless' migrants and unemployed of recent urban developments (Hornsby-Smith *et al*, 1994, pp. 13-16).

The secularisation process began to break down the close alliance between the Catholic Church and the State, which had its origins in the political circumstances of nineteenth century Ireland. The rôle of the Catholic Church in education and health-care became more restricted (Inglis, 1987), (Inglis, 1998). The special position of the Catholic Church enshrined in the 1937 Constitutions was removed by referendum in 1972.

A cultural shift has occurred from a position of virtual 'moral monopoly' for the Catholic Church to a multiplicity of values and lifestyles (Hug, 1999, p. 7).

Over a short period the sale and distribution of contraceptives was legalised, homosexual relationships were decriminalised and the right to travel to a foreign country for an abortion was recognised. The Status of Children Act, 1987, abolished the status of illegitimacy. The prohibition on divorce contained in the 1937 Constitutions was removed by referendum in 1995 (Hug, 1999). If legislators came to the conclusion that the law need no longer prohibit what was condemned by the church they were entitled to act accordingly (Hornsby-Smith *et al*, 1994, p. 19).

According to Fallon (1998), Ireland is now in certain respects, a confused and driven country, psychologically ill at ease with itself. Often the questions of where it is going and what it aspires to be are shelved. It has changed from an age (1930-1960) in which the authority of the Catholic Church was rarely seriously questioned by the great majority, to an era in which 'there is a reaction against the Church which is often as



critical and simplistic as the worst dogmas and shibboleths of 40 years ago' (Fallon, 1998, p. 3).

### **3.4.1.1 Counter-Secularising Tendencies**

Any description of religious change in Ireland must take into account not only the impact of economic development but also the consequences of the renewal processes within the Churches. There are clear signs of religious revitalisation and counter-secularising tendencies. Acceptance of policies of economic growth need not necessarily imply a process of secularisation. Roman Catholicism, in particular, has been influenced by the changes set in motion by the Second Vatican Council. Renewal programmes have been introduced through the institution of faith development offices in many dioceses. Pope Paul VI (1975) and Pope John Paul II (1988) encourage all baptised people to share responsibility for the Church's mission. O'Shea *et al* (1992), Coughlan (1989), Lyons (1993), White (1991), Sofield and Kuhn (1995), Harrington (1997), and Hurley (1998) are among the many contributors to the rich variety of literature and resource materials for pastoral ministry which has become available. Many of the practices of the post-Famine 'devotional revolution' have been discarded but there has been a revival of pre-Famine popular Catholicism (Carroll, 1995) which is proving attractive to all age groups, including the young adults. Concern for the environment has led to a revival and development of creation-centred spiritualities such as that of Meister Eckhart (Hurley, 1998). Ecumenical prayer practices, such as Taizé chant are popular with the young. Young adults attend Taizé youth rallies in large numbers.

In recent time the Catholic hierarchy has been seen less in the rôle of close collaborator of the state and more in that of social critic. Such a rôle can be viewed as part of a process of revitalisation rather than of secularisation. Seeds of a transformed

Catholicism are also found in the success and international recognition of *Trócaire*, the Third World development organisation. A growing number of organisations working in inner-city areas with deprived groups are attempting to raise awareness of some of the social injustices associated with uncontrolled forms of western capitalism. Also lay-initiated and lay-run organisations have been successful in motivating Catholics in defence of traditional positions regarding divorce and abortion (Hornsby-Smith *et al*, 1994, pp. 16-19).

### **3.4.2 Research of Religion**

Sociologists have been monitoring the changes in Irish society. Sociological research has included European and national surveys of religion and, of greatest relevance here, surveys of students in third level education. Comparative studies show the patterns and trends of people's religious practices and their attitudes to religious and moral values. Some of the surveys relevant to this study will now be reviewed. They will be treated in chronological order in order to show the tendencies and patterns emerging. The early research of the 1960s and 1970s has special significance since the young adults of the 1990s are the sons and daughters of those who were young adults in those years.

#### **3.4.2.1 1966-1967 O'Doherty Survey at University College Dublin**

Conscious of the dearth of sociological research at that time, Katherine O'Doherty investigated the relationship between religious behaviour and religious values among university students at University College, Dublin, during the academic year 1966-1967. She used the personal interview method to survey a random sample of one hundred students drawn from third year Arts and second year Medical students (third year at university). All subjects were registered as Irish, Roman Catholics and 84% of them were under twenty-two years of age.



O'Doherty (1969) found that 79% of the students were meeting all the disciplinary obligations of the Church in relation to attendance at Mass, reception of the sacraments, and fasting. In fact, the majority of students were attending Mass more frequently than was required. She found that there were significant differences between men and women regarding their religious practice. Women practised more frequently than men. When asked what they considered the most important demand which the Church makes on its members, 74% of the students mentioned matters pertaining to morals; 46% mentioned matters pertaining to discipline, and 26% mentioned matters pertaining to doctrine. She concluded that the image, which appeared to predominate in the minds of the students, was of a Church concerned with matters pertaining to morals. 38% of the students were shown to have explicit awareness of religious values, i.e. they identified particular responsibilities to the community as deriving from religious beliefs. 39% identified specific activities which they themselves wanted to pursue, and which they viewed as following from the fact of being Christian students. She found some evidence that the developed teaching of the Church on doctrinal issues was seen as irrelevant to the concerns of daily life. While religious practice was high, students showed a low level of awareness of the importance which the Church ascribes to faith and doctrine. Too much emphasis placed on the performance of specific activities may result in conformity while lacking any awareness of those values which the rules have been designed to achieve (O'Doherty, 1969, pp. 582-590).

This study of 1966-67 offers an indication of the reason for the decline in religious practice in the thirty years since that time. Religious practice, which was built not on religious belief but on discipline and morals, would inevitably decline when discipline became more relaxed and when the moral standards of the Church regarding sexuality became disputed and, to some extent, discarded.

### **3.4.2.2 1967-68 Christian Journalists' Circle Survey at UCD**

In the 1967-1968 academic year a survey, sponsored by the editor of the magazine *Reality*, was carried out by the Christian Journalists' Circle among second year students registered in all the degree faculties of University College, Dublin. One fourth of all students were surveyed with a response rate of 72%. 287 of the 295 respondents were Catholic, 3 were Anglican, 1 Lutheran, 1 Quaker, 1 Jew and 1 Buddhist. In the report clerics and members of religious orders were distinguished from the majority whenever it seemed important, hence the term 'lay student'.

84% of the respondents regarded religion as important. 9.5% were not convinced about their religion. The survey showed that those in the liberal faculties (Arts, Law, Commerce, Social Science) were less convinced (51.6%) than those in the Scientific faculties (Science, Medicine, Engineering and Architecture, Veterinary Medicine and Agricultural Science) (60.0%) (Power, 1969a).

Of the professedly Catholic-born lay students, 83.5% said that they always attended Sunday Mass, and 58.8% said they attended week-day Mass at least on one or two occasions within the month previous to answering the questionnaire (Power, 1969b). The results showed that 59.5% of lay students never read the Bible. 44.8% of lay students were interested in the documents of Vatican II and had either read some of them or read about them (Power, 1969c).

Approximately 70% of the lay students in the sample did not feel that their religious education had been a satisfactory preparation for life. The majority of participants believed that the Irish Catholic clergy were doing their job 'fairly well' but their comments tended to be critical rather than laudatory. There were 153 comments made which criticised the Irish clergy for being in some way out of touch with at least some section of the people among whom they were working (Power, 1969d).



### **3.4.2.3 1973 Religious Practice and Beliefs of UCC Undergraduates**

Páraic S. Parfrey undertook a social survey of UCC undergraduates in 1973. Parfrey investigated student use of alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, LSD, barbiturates or amphetamine experience, and religious practice and belief. The population in the survey was 3,207, having a male: female ratio of 3:2. It was 90% Catholic and 93% Irish nationality. A questionnaire mailed to 458 students had a response rate of 97% (Parfrey, 1976, pp. 103-104).

Parfrey found that 79% of the males and 90% of the females attended religious services at least once a week. He found that 84% of males and 94% of females believed in God. The results showed a high correlation between belief in God and at least weekly attendance at church services. Science and technology were not shown to have a negative effect on the social rôle and existence of religion. Age was a factor, which affected religious belief and practice. Students fewer than 20 years were found to attend religious services more frequently and to have a higher level of belief than those over 20 years. Social class, family conflict, and affluence were found to affect religious belief and practice. Religious practice and beliefs were also shown to be related to intoxicant use and to the nature of moral practices, such as cheating at examinations, having sexual intercourse outside marriage, and getting drunk, which were considered the most serious (Parfrey, 1976, pp. 105-112).

### **3.4.2.4 1973-74 National Survey**

The Unit for Research and Development was set up by the Catholic Episcopal Conference in June 1970 as a division of the Catholic Communications Institute. In June 1975 it was established as a separate Commission, and the Council for Research and Development was set up. Its objective was to be an advisory body to the Episcopal Conference and to supervise and assist in research projects approved or requested by the

Conference. The main function of the Council was to devise appropriate research programmes, to evaluate research programmes proposed by Episcopal Commissions and to explore and identify development needs and possibilities in relation to the Catholic Church in Ireland (Council For Research and Development, 1976).

In 1973-1974 the Council for Research and Development carried out a national survey of religious beliefs, attitudes, values and practice. This survey, directed by Máire Nic Ghiolla Phádraig, had 2,499 respondents and a detailed analysis was produced in four volumes in 1976. A report summarising the data and analysing their implications was produced in 1978. The findings showed a high level of belief and practice in the population in general. However, the analysis pointed to lower levels of belief and practice among men, young people, urban dwellers, and the better-educated (Nic Ghiolla Phádraig, 1976).

#### **3.4.2.5 1974 A Survey of Young People in Church of Ireland Groups**

In 1974 the Church of Ireland carried out a survey of its younger members throughout Ireland, North and South. The responses were obtained within a broad-based Church context of schools and parishes. The level of belief in God was high, at 74%. This was found to correspond with regular Church attendance at 78% (weekly 67%, twice monthly 11%). Regular attendance was higher for rural areas than for cities. It was also found to be higher for females than for males (Carroll, 1975, pp. 27 & 11-13).

“Worship” was found to be the highest motivating factor for Church attendance. This factor increased with age, reaching 48% for those in the 18+ age bracket. There was evidence also of social pressure as ‘family’ and ‘expected to go’ received substantial responses (Carroll, 1975, p. 11).

There was a consistently low response from the 15-17 year olds. Thus, it was evident that the status conferred at Confirmation had little basis in reality in terms of their



membership of the Church. This was seen to indicate that the adult image of the Church was making it difficult for the younger people to identify with it (Carroll, 1975, p. 15).

Dorr supports this view:

Unless young people and lay people are given voice and power to participate in the formation of Church life, the Church itself is in danger of cultivating exactly the passivity that it might criticise in the surrounding culture. It is not enough to be asked to foster 'reproduction of religious meaning'; each generation needs to forge an 'original production' of the Christian vision (Dorr, 1996, p. 133).

The survey showed that the greatest problem facing young people at that time was drink/drugs. Drink as distinct from other drugs was most problematic because of its availability, its social acceptance, and its relative price. Other problems highlighted were boredom, lack of freedom, loneliness, absence of firm moral guidelines, and lack of religious guidance (Carroll, 1975, p. 26).

In the years since the survey, the Church of Ireland has developed programmes for its youth. Youth officers, development officers and volunteers have been involved.

Their work is varied, embracing all aspects of church life, including the provision of spiritual development weekends, assistance with nurture groups, exchanges with other church groups at home and overseas and support for clergy and youth leaders (Warke, 1994, p. 51).

#### **3.4.2.6. 1976 Inglis' Survey of University Students**

The 1973-74 national survey had highlighted third-level students as the group most at risk in relation to religion. As a result, Tom Inglis carried out a similar survey on behalf of the Council for Research and Development among undergraduate university students in 1976. A sample was drawn on the undergraduate student populations in University Colleges Dublin, Cork and Galway, Trinity College Dublin and students registered for a full-time National University Degree at Maynooth. The exclusion of Queens University Belfast and the New University of Ulster was because of the refusal of the authorities to allow access to the students' registers.

The analysis was confined to students with Catholic backgrounds since there was an insufficient number of students from Protestant backgrounds to allow for analysis (Inglis, 1978a).

Inglis (1978a) found that 86% of students from Catholic backgrounds still regarded themselves as members of the Church while 14% no longer regarded themselves as Catholic. This figure was as high as 20% for TCD and as low as 5% for UCC.

Disagreement or disillusionment with the Church was the reason given by the majority of students for abandoning their religion. According to Inglis, 'the two crucial factors, as shown by analysis, are religious practice and religious belief, with religious practice the more important of the two' (Inglis, 1978a, p. 407).

The judgements of Catholics and ex-Catholics were not divided on moral issues such as 'using contraceptives', 'having sex before marriage', 'having an abortion' etc. While 75% of the Catholic students believed in Heaven, only 37% believed in Hell. The lower level of belief in hell 'might indicate a gap in the perception of the theology of salvation which has been caused by a move away from the oppressive ethical dictates of hellfire sermons, to a more 'positive' approach' (Inglis, 1978a, p. 408).

Inglis (1978a) found that a large proportion of Catholic students did not agree with the Church's moral teachings. Only about one Catholic in ten gave God and the supernatural as his/her primary orientation in life. The inner-worldly humanitarian orientation was not directly linked with a Christian perspective. Although the majority of Catholic students still saw themselves primarily as Christians, Inglis queried if this was becoming compartmentalised into a religious belief and practice which did not permeate the rest of their lives (Inglis, 1978a, p. 421).

According to Inglis (1978b), the religious and moral attitudes of close friends had the greatest influence on the religiosity of Irish students.



### 3.4.2.7 1981 The European Value Systems Study

The questions being asked in the early 1980s were: 'Have we lost the value system of Judeo-Christianity which for nearly two thousand years has influenced the behaviour pattern and belief of Europeans? Are we in a post-Christian era?' (Byrne, 1984, p. v).

In attempting to answer such questions, a survey of European values and attitudes was carried out in 1981. In Ireland, the survey was carried out by Gallup and Irish Marketing Surveys and was financed by the Conference of Major Religious Superiors of Ireland. The sample size was 1,217 with the under-25 age group deliberately over-sampled (Whelan, 1994, p. 2).

Reporting on the survey, (Fogarty *et al*, 1984) indicated that Ireland was an outstandingly religious country in 1981. Nearly everyone of whatever age group still believed in God. But in general the indicators showed a clear and in some cases a strong shift towards vaguer beliefs, lower religious practice and a more critical attitude to the Church increasing from people born before 1916 to the youngest group (Fogarty *et al*, 1984, p. 8). Membership of religious organisations was found to be far higher in Ireland than the European average, and even more so in the North than in the Republic (Fogarty *et al*, 1984, p. 35). While people wished to remain within the Church they questioned the Church's authority over their private lives (Fogarty *et al*, 1984, p. 104).

In the case of religion and morality, the dominant finding was that there had been a change across generations with confidence sliding steadily downwards across the age groups (Fogarty *et al*, 1984, p. 25). Only a third of those under twenty-five believed that their Church's answers on moral problems and problems of family life were adequate. Those in the 18-24 year age-group showed greater confidence in the police than in the Church (Fogarty *et al*, 1984, p. 27). People educated to 19 or 20 years of age were more likely than any others to have doubts about the full applicability of the moral commandments to themselves. Graduates were more permissive than any other group

on sex and drugs but not particularly permissive on civic dishonesty (Fogarty *et al*, 1984, p. 18).

The survey highlighted the Church's problems both of evangelisation and of restoring its credibility, especially with younger and more educated people. Among the clearest trends on relations between parents and children was the declining importance attached by parents to developing religious faith, age group by age group, and among many of the more educated and qualified (Fogarty *et al*, 1984, p. 93). Warren (1982) heavily underlines the critical need for adults to examine and to grow in their own faith if they are to be effective witnesses of the Christian way of life to the young.

The nature of the process of communicating Christian faith is such that the question of teen faith development is intimately tied to the way adults hold their faith, and even beyond that to the way whole parish communities live their faith (Warren, 1982, p. 206).

If young people see that faith does not really touch the lives of those around them they tend to react against it and become apathetic.

#### **3.4.2.8 1982 Dublin Survey**

In 1982, Michael Paul Gallagher, with the assistance of students at UCD, administered a survey to three hundred people in Dublin. For this purpose, he selected some of the sentences used by the American sociologist, Fr. Bruce Biever, who had done a comprehensive survey in Dublin in the early sixties. The emphasis was more on attitude than on external behaviour. Gallagher concluded that more people are marginalised from church and faith internally than their external behaviour would yet indicate. He pointed to the interior and hidden malnutrition of faith among the under forties in Irish society (Gallagher, 1983, pp. 34-35). Commenting on Irish religious surveys, Gallagher remarks:

What emerges is a picture of high practice having little influence on values, and of a solid institutional Church fostering little on the level of spiritual experience, and



of a younger generation suffering more from confusion over faith than from any definite rebellion against religion (Gallagher, 1983, p. 36).

Faith and religion seemed to have less impact than might be expected on those that are fully practising. The problem was that 'religion appears as a self-contained compartment, adequate in itself, but divorced from the other compartments where the main activities of normal life take place' (Ryan, 1983, p. 6).

Gallagher (1983) points out that atheism can offer a healthy prophecy against our impoverished pictures of God and the shoddiness of faith unlived. He speaks of a new ecumenism between believer and unbeliever based on their common experience of darkness. This ecumenism can bring about 'a humbling of any over-confident clarities about God or non-God. It can unite them in a relationship of new reverence before silent mystery' (Gallagher, 1983, p. 122).

#### **3.4.2.9 1984 National Survey**

In 1984 a second National Survey of the Council for Research and Development was carried out among Catholics, under the direction of Dr. Ann Breslin and Mr. John Weafer. Its purpose was to investigate if patterns of religious belief, practice, moral values and attitudes towards the Church had changed since the first survey carried out in 1973-74. There were 1,006 respondents.

This survey showed that adherence to the faith was still strong but that the proportion of those expressing doubt regarding Church teachings had expanded considerably. It showed an increase in the percentage of those who attend Mass more than once a week, the legal minimum required by Church decree. It showed a percentage decrease in weekly attendance at Mass, an increase in the percentage of infrequent attendance, but no significant growth in the numbers who 'never' attend. It showed an increase in the percentage of those who prayed daily, those who prayed as a family and those who reported various 'experiential' aspects of prayer. It showed a large decrease in monthly

confession attendance over the ten-year period. It showed substantial goodwill towards the Catholic Church and its ideals and an increased desire for lay involvement in Church affairs. It showed that the percentage of people who condemned certain behaviours as 'always wrong' had decreased and that the percentage of people having recourse to 'private judgement' had increased (Breslin *et al*, 1984).

This survey highlighted the 21-25 age group, the group which the 1973-74 survey had shown to be most 'at risk'. The 1984 survey showed an increase since 1974 in the level of Mass attendance and reception of Holy Communion of this young group, which, however, remained below the national average. The conclusion drawn was that this age group was not becoming increasingly disaffiliated from the Church (Breslin *et al*, 1984, pp. 50-54). The survey showed that the beliefs, practices and moral attitudes of women approximated more closely to that of men, not only in the youngest group, but also in those aged 31-50 (Breslin *et al*, 1984, p. 4).

The findings showed the urgency for pastoral planning which is directed towards the less orthodox groups: the young, the urbanised, and those with highest levels of education. Since it was groups with combinations of these characteristics which showed most doubt in regard to Church doctrines, and more independence in moral judgements, it is not likely that they will respond to pronouncements of a dogmatic nature nor to threats of punishment in the afterlife. Rather, reasoned arguments based on an informed rationale may be an appropriate method of guiding their moral choices. This approach would require the adoption of different models of evangelisation in order to reach people who are at different levels of commitment and at different stages of moral development. The survey underlines the urgency of developing appropriate Youth Ministry Programmes (Breslin *et al*, 1984, p. vi).

#### **3.4.2.10 1987 Survey of Catholic and Protestant Young People**

In 1987 a survey of 766 young people from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland was undertaken because of the concern of the Churches concerning the apparent deterioration in the relationship between the Irish Churches and large numbers of young people.



According to this Inter-Church Survey the areas in which young people would turn to a Priest/Minister/Pastor/Church Elder were suicide and religious discrimination but less so for other issues. A relatively high proportion of both Catholics and Protestants believed they had 'no-one' to turn to in times of trouble, especially in the areas of sexual difficulties and political problems. This indicates an apparent absence of a sense of community in the various religious denominations (Weafer, 1991, p. 21).

Respondents were quite satisfied with the rôle played by their religious denominations in areas such as poverty, Third World issues, famine relief, homelessness, peace issues, the disabled and the elderly. They were less satisfied with the Churches' rôle in the areas of employment/unemployment, sexual issues (AIDS, divorce and abortion), the rôle of women in society, and politics. The reason for the difference in opinion between these two lists may be partly due to the Churches' treatment of these problems but also the fact that the latter list of issues is more real and tangible to the lives of many young adults (Weafer, 1991, p. 22).

Approximately half of both Protestants and Catholics expressed some level of dissatisfaction regarding their involvement in their respective churches. They indicated that they would like to become involved in youth groups, Church liturgies, Bible study classes, and social work (Weafer, 1991, p. 22).

Young Catholics and Protestants gave similar reasons which prevented them from going to Church: boredom, peer pressure, difficulty in believing, conservatism of the Church, and a waste of time (Weafer, 1991, p. 22). They also gave similar reasons why they did not get involved in their parish/congregation. The three most commonly cited reasons were peer-pressure, lack of interest, and the dominant position of older Church members (Weafer, 1991, p. 23).

The young people indicated the following ways of involving youth: youth clubs, youth Masses/Youth Services, asking youth for help, encouraging involvement, listening to youth, livening up of Services, etc.

The issues which they would like to discuss with Church leaders were also similar, such as: no openings for youth, give youth responsibility, be open to suggestions etc.

(Weafer, 1991, p. 24).

Weaver (1991) concluded that if the aspirations of these young people led to equally forceful and enlightened action, there was hope for the future of Christianity in Ireland.

#### **3.4.2.11 1987 Survey of University Students – MacAirt**

Dr. Julian MacAirt carried out a survey of students in Trinity College Dublin, University College Dublin, University College Cork, University College Galway, and St. Patrick's College, Maynooth in 1987. It was not possible for MacAirt to secure a random sample since it was not the policy of the authorities of the Colleges to release lists of students' names. The survey was administered to class groups through the co-operation of lecturers and professors. Post-graduate students were not included in his sample. He was disappointed with the low level of Protestants sampled even in TCD. As a result, he confined his analysis to baptised Roman Catholics (MacAirt, 1990, pp. 172-174).

MacAirt (1990) found lower levels of belief and somewhat lower levels of practice than was found by Inglis in 1976. He also found a much higher proportion believing in heaven than in hell and the devil. 74% considered relationship with the family very important, whereas only 54% considered relationship with God to be very important. MacAirt made an important observation that more students practised religion (72% attendance at Mass at least weekly) than believed in the tenets of religion (65% belief in a personal God, 64% belief in the resurrection of Christ).



MacAirt (1990) divided his Catholic respondents into three categories according to their beliefs and practices: Ordinary, Nominal, and Lapsed. He reckoned that of the 91% declaring themselves Catholics 34% were in fact Nominal Catholics. His findings support the statement: 'High church-going, shaky beliefs and unchristian life-values can co-exist in many individuals' (Gallagher, 1983, p. 35). He observed that 'Ordinary' Catholics were more positive towards their clergy and parish than 'Nominal' or 'Lapsed' Catholics. He notes that since students were exposed widely to the influence of the media, both television and national newspapers, it is arguable that 'their criticisms of the clergy are in part learned from the media, which for years has been mostly anti-clerical in Ireland' (MacAirt, 1990, p. 182).

MacAirt (1990) concluded that the spiritual climate of Ireland was changing rapidly.

#### **3.4.2.12 1990 European Values Systems Survey (EVSS)**

In 1990 a second European Values Systems Survey was carried out in ten European countries, including the Republic of Ireland. The questionnaire used in this study was designed to measure values in important domains of life such as religion and morality, politics, work, marriage and the family (Whelan, 1994, p. 2). Hornsby and Whelan (1994) drew on the European Values Surveys of 1981 and 1990 to examine changes and continuity in religious and moral values in Ireland.

During the 1980s the proportion of respondents identifying themselves as belonging to a religious denomination declined very slightly, from 98 to 96 per cent. In Ireland the long-term trend towards religious homogeneity continued, Roman Catholics accounting for 97 per cent of those who expressed a denominational affiliation. The proportion attending church (usually Catholics attending Mass) declined from 83 to 81 per cent (Hornsby-Smith *et al*, 1994, pp. 20-21).

The results showed a high level of importance attached to religious rites of passage among all age groups. There was a significant shift in views regarding the nature of God. Between 1981 and 1990 the proportion believing in a personal God fell from 77 to 67 per cent, while there was a corresponding increase from 15 to 24 per cent in the number whose notion of God was closest to 'some sort of spirit or life force'. This shift in opinion occurred in all age groups. The proportion thinking of themselves as religious people increased, between 1981 and 1990, from 67 to 72 per cent. The figures ranged from 63 per cent of those aged twenty-five or less to 85 per cent of those seventy years or over (Hornsby-Smith *et al*, 1994, pp. 29-34).

The effects of four variables, age, sex, education, and location, were used in order to test hypotheses deriving from secularisation theory. It was found that while there was no evidence to support claims of secularisation as far as changes throughout the 1980s are concerned, there were indications that a major cultural shift may have occurred for those born in recent decades (Hornsby-Smith *et al*, 1994, p. 23). The analysis showed that age, third-level education, sex, unemployment, primary life-style depreciation, and being in full-time unpaid home duties to have independent effects on frequency of church attendance. For a twenty-year-old urban male the probability of attending church weekly or more often was 0.46 (Hornsby-Smith *et al*, 1994, p. 28).

Having examined the Irish data of EVSS, Greeley (1994) concludes that the importance of the EVSS may have been over-stated. Greeley (1994) disagrees with Ester *et al* (1994) that religion has lost some of its importance to human beings in the decade which separated the two EVSS studies (1981 and 1990). Greeley (1994) argues that the processes behind the labels such as 'modernisation', 'rationalisation', 'urbanisation', and 'industrialisation' are more intricate, complex and subtle than sociologists admit and that they would need to be analysed in much greater detail before generalisations are made.



Greeley (1994) points to various AIDS studies to indicate that in Europe and in the United States marital fidelity has never been higher. In its analysis of 'secularisation', EVSS changed the question regarding membership of religious organisations thereby invalidating the comparison across time. The decline in Mass attendance is concentrated in those cohorts born in the 1950s and 1960s. Yet the proportion of those cohorts describing themselves as 'religious' has increased from 66% to 72% over the nine-year period. Greeley (1994) argues that religion influences life even when the church loses its direct control of life. In Ireland 'the Church seems to have lost the sexuality game and to have won (or at least be winning) the spirituality game' (Greeley, 1994, p. 138). Greeley (1994) considers that perhaps the increase in belief in life after death in many countries is an indication of the beginning of an enormous revival of religious faith if not of institutional attachment. Generalised and overarching theories are easily refuted by data in other studies or even – as in the case of Ireland – by a re-analysis of EVSS data. Greeley (1994) suggests that both 'secularisation' and 'modernisation' models ought to be replaced by theories 'which view religion as part of the human condition whose influence ebbs and flows as religious experiences, images and narratives interact with other social phenomena' (Greeley, 1994, p. 140).

Greeley recognises that there are enormous and fascinating changes going on in every aspect of Irish life, including religion, but claims the 'secularisation' label does not provide a useful label for studying change. According to Greeley the Irish have an ancient and powerful heritage which is deeply rooted in their culture and tradition, a culture that is unique and fascinating, and a heritage that will, as it has in the past, both change and survive. It will not be retrieved in the universities or the episcopal offices unless teachers and leaders are more willing to listen to the religious experience of their own people than they seem today (Greeley, 1994, p. 141). According to Greeley, Irish theologians, by equating religion and one of the richest religious traditions in the world

with sexual ethics, give away the game to those who are their adversaries. He recommends that future religious research should focus on the experiential, imaginative, metaphorical and narrative content of Irish religion – which is both unique and important for the rest of the world (Greeley, 1994, p. 142).

### **3.4.2.13 1991-92 Survey of University Students - Doherty and Pringle**

In the academic year 1991/2 Doherty and Pringle carried out a survey of first year students, under 22 years of age, in nine university campuses in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The study was confined to the analysis of church attendance.

They assumed that frequency of church attendance was an indication of the strength of religious beliefs, while recognising that there may be other non-religious factors involved. 19.9% of their sample were Protestant, 75.7% were Catholic, and 4.3% were of no faith (Doherty *et al*, 1993, p. 280).

Doherty and Pringle (1993) found that 31.7% of Protestants attended church weekly and a further 20.4% attended monthly. They found 65.7% of Catholics attended church weekly and a further 19.1% attended monthly. They also found that 9.7% of those who claimed no faith attended monthly, indicating social or family pressures to attend. Their sample of students had a lower level of church attendance than students of any other studies which were based on samples of the entire population, but the proportions never attending church were lower than those of other studies.

Doherty and Pringle (1993) examined the spatial variation in church attendance. In general, they found that those living in cities and towns were much less likely to attend church, while those from villages and rural areas attended more frequently.

It may be suggested that in rural areas there is a more traditional lifestyle, and that the church plays an important social rôle in the life of the community, while the more impersonal social urban milieu leads to a decline in traditional values and lifestyle, of which church attendance is part (Doherty *et al*, 1993, p. 287).



Doherty and Pringle found that while females attended church more frequently than males, the gender difference was far more pronounced for Protestants than for Catholics. They also found a trend of lessening church attendance with age present among both Protestants and Catholics alike. They also examined the effect of social class on church attendance. For Catholics social class made very little difference in relation to church attendance, whereas for Protestants those from a non-manual family attended more often than those from a manual family.

Doherty and Pringle concluded that religion still plays a substantial part in the lives of students in Ireland, both north and south. They suggested that the difference between Protestants and Catholics might lie in the differing theological emphasis of the two faiths.

The study has demonstrated that religious affiliation still translates into religious practice for a substantial proportion of the sample, and that there is broad similarity in this experience in both north and south of the island. There are signs of a weakening of faith of some groups, particularly within Protestantism, where the indications of a rise in secularism is most evident (Doherty *et al*, 1993, p. 290).

#### **3.4.2.14 1997 National Survey**

During the 1990s the Catholic Church in Ireland has come under a critical spotlight as never before in recent memory. This has been triggered by a series of scandals involving members of the clergy and religious and by the changes in Irish society as a whole. Enda McDonagh articulated the question in the minds of many: 'how is the gospel of Jesus Christ to be preached and lived in Irish society today in the face of the diminishing credibility of message and messenger?' (McDonagh, 1996, p. 21).

In July 1997 the Episcopal Conference requested that the Council for Research and Development commission Irish Marketing Surveys (IMS) to conduct a survey which would reveal the attitudes of Irish Catholics. IMS surveyed 1400 adults throughout the

Republic of Ireland, taking a cross-section of the population in terms of age, sex, geographical distribution and social class (Hanley, 1998, p. 18).

Fifty-one percent felt that the Church in Ireland had been permanently damaged by the recent scandals involving clergy and religious. Almost three-quarters (72%) of respondents claimed that their religious beliefs and practices had been completely unaffected. Only just over a quarter (29%) of all Catholics felt that their confidence in the priests of their parish had been adversely affected (Hanley, 1998, p. 18).

The survey showed that the percentage of Irish Catholics aged 18 and over attending weekly Mass was 65% in 1997 for the country as a whole. For those aged 15-34 years the percentage attending weekly Mass was 50%. A small, but by no means negligible, percentage (6%) attended Mass more frequently than they did three or four years previously. The survey showed a growing gulf between the religious practices of rural and urban dwellers (Hanley, 1998, p. 18).

Even though on average only 65% of the Catholic population attend weekly Mass, almost 40% receive weekly Communion – 11% more than did so twenty-three years ago. There may be fewer people going to Mass every week, but those that do so, this suggests, treat their participation in the liturgy more seriously (Hanley, 1998, p. 1).

Hanley (1998) concludes that we are living through a period when participation in the Sacraments is being transformed for some from a duty sanctioned by tradition into a choice, which increasing numbers of Mass-goers are making consciously and critically. Thus religion is lived all the more fully because of its conscious nature. 'These people are the vanguard of a leaner, but possibly more vibrant, Irish Catholic Church of the future' (Hanley, 1998, p. 1).



### **3.4.2.15 1998 National Survey**

In January 1998 the Marketing Research Bureau of Ireland (MRBI) Ltd. on behalf of RTE carried out a national survey of Irish Catholics for a Prime-Time programme which was broadcast on February 2nd 1998. According to that survey the percentage of Catholics attending Mass weekly was 60%. It showed a wide margin between rural and urban rates of attendance. The rate for rural Mass attendance was 77%, whereas the rate for urban was 48%.

A comparison of these figures with those of previous surveys showed a steep decline in church attendance over a twenty-five-year period. The reasons given for non-attendance were boredom, priests out of touch, too much trouble, and decline in social pressure. On the positive side, 82% of Catholics indicated that they considered religion important in their lives and 72% approved of the quality of spiritual and community work done by priests (Cosgrave, 1998, pp. 681-685). According to Cosgrave (1998), non-attendance at Mass is not equivalent to lapsing from Christian religious faith and Christian morality. Cosgrave suggests that the quality of parish or diocesan life should not be measured according to the numbers attending church but according to how the Church understands itself and how the Christian faith is being nourished and fostered and how the quality of Church life is being improved (Cosgrave, 1998, p. 688).

### **3.4.2.16 Conclusions**

In the thirty-year period covered by these surveys the pattern of religion in people's lives has changed. The corporate maturing process which seems to have taken place could be compared with that described by Kohlberg and Fowler for the individual. In the 1960s there seems to have been many conventional-type Christians in Ireland. High levels of religious practice did not have a solid foundation in faith and doctrine. The crises caused by the vast social changes challenged people to make definite choices.

Many decided not to practise or drifted into non-practice. Those who continue to practise show evidence of deeper levels of faith and of participation in Church affairs. The task of the Churches at the present time is twofold: firstly, to minister to those who continue to practise and to build on the positive trends which have emerged; secondly, to hone the skills needed to evangelise those who have left in the years of early adulthood. The Churches have reached a critical stage in these last years of the second millennium. The research has been a very valuable aid to knowing and understanding the changes which have taken place. Already meaningful responses have been made. Warren (1982) cautions us to be patient, not to expect too much. Growth in faith is a life-long process.

### **3.5 NEED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The research already done has shown that the rate of change of religious practice and values has accelerated in the 1990s, indicating the need for continuous research. The topic –religion- is of the utmost importance. As the literature has shown, it is not just one aspect of life, it is intrinsic to the very nature of the human person.

National and European research has shown that, with regard to religion, young adult students in third level education are most vulnerable to religious change at the present time. It follows that they, more than any other group, should be the subjects of detailed religious research. This researcher has therefore decided to make young adult students at UCC the subjects of research.

The researcher considers that this research is necessary in order to establish a context for chaplaincy ministry at UCC into the 2000s.

Chaplaincy is not always as effective as it might be. What is needed is a closer examination of the situation that is encountered in the circumstances of a particular university so that the chaplain's ministry might be better shaped by the situation as well as by theological and educational considerations (Lochrie, 1986, p. 13).



This is in keeping with Wittgenstein's notion that youth ministry should be started with a diagnosis of need and followed up with a presentation of a way of life in full flow (Dorr, 1996, p. 23).

It is imperative to use up-to-date research as a basis for ministry. As far as this researcher can establish, research on religion based solely on a sample of UCC undergraduates has not been undertaken since Parfrey's study in 1973. In that study, religion was part of a larger study which also examined the use of drink, drugs and cigarettes. In recent years, the surveys of religion in Irish universities carried out by MacAirt in 1987 and by Doherty and Pringle in 1991-1992 experienced sampling limitations on account of the difficulty of obtaining access to lists of students' names within universities. The present researcher, being an employee of UCC, was able to overcome this difficulty, as will be explained in Chapter IV. Since the post-graduate student population has increased dramatically in recent years, she has also included post-graduate students in the sample.

The present researcher was also in a unique position to undertake this research, as her rôle as chaplain at UCC brought her into daily contact with the students. This made it relatively easy to interview students and also to be a 'participant observer' of their religious experiences.

It is hoped that this research will be of interest to all concerned with the growth and development of the young adults at UCC. It will be of interest to the young adults themselves, as it will offer them an opportunity to take an objective view of themselves in relation to religion. It will be of interest to those who minister in the parishes from which the young adults come. It will be of interest to parents and to teachers of religion at primary and post-primary level.

# **CHAPTER IV**

## **RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODS**



# RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODS

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned with the research design and the research methods used by the researcher for the purpose of investigating 'Religion in the Life of the Young Adult at UCC'. The term 'research design' refers to the basic plan or strategy for a study that will produce specific answers to specific questions. According to Walker (1985b, p. 179), 'the real art of design is to select from the many techniques and to marry the chosen ones in mutually supportive ways'. The term 'research methods' refers to the methods used for data generation and collection. It is concerned with 'measurement, quantification, and instrument building, and with ensuring that instruments are appropriate, valid and reliable' (Oppenheim, 1994, p. 6). According to Kaplan, 'the aim of methodology is to help us to understand, in the broadest possible terms, not the products of scientific inquiry, but the process itself' (Fogarty *et al*, 1984, p. 38).

## 4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODS

The design used in this research is known as 'multiple triangulation' (Denzin, 1970, p. 472). According to Cohen and Mannion (1994, p. 233), triangulation may be defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behaviour. There is greater confidence in the data collected when different methods yield substantially the same results (Cohen *et al*, 1994, p. 233). In this study qualitative and quantitative methods are used on the same population. This method is considered the most suitable because:

Where a researcher seeks information from which her inferences can be generalised to wider populations, methods using statistical data will be most efficient. Where she looks for information representing a personal or phenomenological perspective, a process rather than a product, accounts of interviews, will meet her need more successfully. If she wants to integrate

objective and subjective perspectives, she will use contrasting methods (Cohen *et al*, 1994, p. 232).

Multiple triangulation enables the researcher to describe systematically the facts and characteristics of a given population.

It is concerned with the conditions or relationships that exist; practices that prevail, beliefs, points of view, or attitudes that are held; processes that are going on; effects that are being felt; or trends that are developing (Best, 1981, p. 102).

In this case a survey, depth interviews, and participant observation were the methods used in creating the research design.

### **4.2.1 Survey**

The main research method used in this investigation was a survey which was carried out by means of a questionnaire administered to young adult students at UCC. It had a descriptive/analytic design, since this investigation was concerned not only with 'how many' but also with 'why'; not only with enumeration and description but with the analysis of causes (Oppenheim, 1994, p. 13). This type of survey was particularly suitable for this investigation, since it allowed the researcher to explore relationships between variables and to draw inferences from the results.

### **4.2.2 Depth Interviews**

While a neutral stance was necessary for the quantitative study, the researcher considered it necessary to engage fully her subjects. She, therefore, supplemented the survey by depth interviews with individual students and university chaplains. 'The depth interview is a conversation in which the researcher encourages the informants to relate, in their own terms, experiences and attitudes that are relevant to the research problem' (Walker, 1985a, p. 4). The advantage of the depth interviews is that the interviewer is not bound by a rigid questionnaire designed to ensure that the same questions are asked of all respondents in exactly the same way. It is therefore possible to



follow up interesting ideas introduced by the informant. The depth interview, however, is not completely unstructured. A degree of structure is necessary to provide a framework in which the informant feels free to elaborate his/her ideas. In this research a structure was provided by means of an interview guide which was used as a memory aid by the interviewer. The depth interviews were recorded and transcripts of the tapes were analysed individually in the context of the concepts and categories developed as the analysis proceeded (Walker, 1985a, p. 4). In this research ten depth interviews were carried out before the survey. A further ten interviews were carried out as a follow-up to the survey.

### **4.2.3 Participant Observation**

The survey was further supplemented by the method known as participant observation. Central to the participant observation method is involvement and detachment (Walker, 1985a, p. 6). It was possible for the researcher to use this method because, as a chaplain at UCC, she interacted with the students and observed them in many diverse situations during the research period.

### **4.2.4 Unsuitable Methods**

Consideration was given to other methods, such as case studies, group interviews, structured and semi-structured interviews, and projective techniques. Case studies were deemed to be unsuitable as it would be inappropriate and indeed impossible to observe the religious practices and moral behaviour of individuals over a period of time.

Individual interviews were chosen in preference to group interviews because of the potentially sensitive nature of the topic (Hedges, 1985, p. 74). The depth interview was chosen in preference to structured and semi-structured interviews because of the desire to obtain views and opinions from different perspectives. The to use projective

techniques were considered unnecessary as the researcher was confident that the depth to which she wished to probe in the interviews could be achieved by direct questions. The research design is summarised in Table 4.1. The research methods will now be described in greater detail.

**Table 4. 1 The Research Design**

<div><div>Preliminary Depth Interviews</div><div>Descriptive/Analytic Questionnaire Survey</div><div>Participant Observation</div><div>Follow-up Interviews</div></div>
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**4.3 PRELIMINARY DEPTH INTERVIEWS**

**4.3.1 Objectives**

The first objective of the preliminary depth interviews was to identify concepts and categories for the development of the survey questionnaire. Through these interviews the researcher hoped to improve the conceptualisation of the research question and to identify the variables which might be used in the investigation. The second objective was to gain insights which would illuminate the results of the survey.

**4.3.2 The Interview Guide**

An interview guide was used for the purpose of assisting the researcher in remembering the topics about which she wished to elicit information. It consisted of a list of topics and sub-topics around which each interview was conducted (see Appendix B1). As



recommended by Oppenheim (1994, p. 111), it was designed to achieve a funnel effect in the interview situation. Consequently, each interview began with broad questions concerning the student's life in UCC, and the 'field' was progressively narrowed to deal with specifically religious questions.

### 4.3.3 The Interview Sample

Details of the gender, age, faculty and the code name used for each subject of the interview sample are shown on Table 4.2. The sample consisted of eight students and two chaplains of third level colleges. Male and female students, from different faculties, of different ages, some involved in chaplaincy activities and others not involved, were recruited. The two chaplains interviewed were Roman Catholic priests.

**Table 4. 2 Preliminary Interviews Sample**

Subject	1	2	3	4	5
Gender	Male	Female	Female	Female	Male
Age	20	22	22	22	22
Faculty	Commerce	Food-Science	Food-Science	Commerce	Engineering
Chaplaincy	Involved	Involved	Not involved	Involved	Not involved
Code Name	John (1M20CIC)	Mary (2F22F-SIC)	Iris (3F22F-SNIC)	Teresa (4F22CIC)	Michael (5M22ENIC)
Subject	6	7	8	9	10
Gender	Female	Female	Male	Male	Female
Age	23	23	-	-	21
Faculty	Arts	Engineering	-	-	Arts
Chaplaincy	Not involved	Involved	Chaplain	Chaplain	Involved
Code Name	Sheila (6F23ANIC)	Ann (7F23EIC)	Fr. Joe (8MC)	Fr. Timothy (9MC)	Nuala (10F21AIC)

#### **4.3.4. Reliability and Validity**

Because of the small sample the results of the interviews do not claim reliability and validity in the statistical sense. It can be taken, however, that the views expressed by students and chaplains were not untypical.

#### **4.3.5. Recruitment and Venues**

Five students who visited the chaplaincy regularly and the two chaplains were approached directly by the researcher. She explained to each person that she was carrying out research on 'Religion in the life of the young adult at UCC' and that she wished to benefit from his/her knowledge, experiences, and insights. All those requested responded positively. The five students were each requested to recruit a student who was not known to the researcher and who had never been to the chaplaincy. Three of them did so and thus the total number of student interviewees was eight. In the case of the students, eligibility with regard to age and full-time student status was established.

The venues, dates, and times of interviews were arranged. Six student interviews took place in the office of the researcher at the chaplaincy. This venue was convenient and was acceptable to the interviewees. Two student interviews took place in rooms of the College. One chaplain was interviewed at the chaplaincy in UCC. The other chaplain was interviewed at his college. The co-operation of secretaries was obtained to ensure that the interviews were not interrupted. The interviews were carried out during the period February – April 1995.

#### **4.3.6. The Interview**

In each interview, the researcher took charge of the situation, welcoming the interviewee, establishing her own rôle as researcher, and conveying what the rôle of the



interviewee should be. Chairs were arranged so that the interviewee and the researcher were positioned half facing each other, allowing for eye contact and observation of each other's facial expressions but without causing confrontation (Morton-Williams, 1985, p. 39). The interviewee was assured that the interview was entirely private and confidential and that material quoted in the report would be indexed to individual transcripts by a code name, thus ensuring that the identity of the interviewee would not appear on the report.

The researcher explained that it was desirable to tape-record the interview in order to achieve a high degree of fidelity, and the permission of the interviewee for the tape-recording was sought. The two-way microphone of the tape-recorder was placed in position. The interview guide was placed on the table in an unobtrusive position.

Respondents were drawn out on each topic listed in the guide by appropriate probes, and helped in the interview situation so that it became a collaborative event (Hull, 1985, p. 32).

Every attempt was made to eliminate all influencing factors. Yet it must be recognised that, since the interview relies on self-report, it is open to problems such as 'social desirability bias' (Flanagan, 1994, p. 376). This is a tendency for the interviewee to give 'appropriate' or 'socially acceptable' answers in order to gain acceptance from the researcher. It must also be recognised that the interview may be influenced by subjectivity and bias on the part of the researcher (Cohen *et al*, 1994, p. 272). The researcher tried to eliminate such biases by informing the interviewee that her responses were to be regarded as neutral and were to be taken to indicate a non-judgemental acceptance of what the interviewee was saying. Body language, such as facial expression, which is reported to contribute as much as 55 percent of any communication was consciously controlled by the researcher (Drummond, 1993, p. 56).

The interview lasted thirty to forty minutes, depending on how voluble the interviewee was. The interviewee was thanked for his/her co-operation. Hospitality (tea/coffee) was not offered to the student interviewees, as having gone into some depth with regard to their lives, it was considered inappropriate to enter into a more conventional social relationship at that point (Morton-Williams, 1985, p. 40).

### **4.3.7 Transcripts**

Following each interview the researcher made notes on how the interview was perceived and on the situational contexts and meaning systems of the participants. The researcher transcribed each interview personally. Although this was a time-consuming exercise, each interview requiring four to five hours to transcribe, it enabled the researcher to become familiar with the content of the interviews. The transcripts were then computerised.

### **4.3.8 Analysis**

According to Hull (1985, p. 31), the task of the analyst of transcript data is to disclose significance in the transcripts. Analysis began by listening to the interview twice while reading the transcript. Tone of voice, innuendoes, emphases, etc. were noted. Categories and concepts were extracted for use in constructing the survey questionnaire. The passages, which the researcher considered to convey the interviewees' intended meanings, were highlighted. These passages were organised according to topic, using 'copy' and 'paste' computer techniques. They were used in creating the questionnaire and were woven into the discussion of the report. The corpus of 'data' was thus refined to extracts which were accorded the status of 'evidence' by their use as supportive or illustrative material (Hull, 1985, p. 29).



## **4.4 THE SURVEY**

### **4.4.1 Postal Questionnaire**

A written questionnaire is regarded as a suitable instrument of enquiry for use with university students. The post is the most convenient method of distribution. Accurate lists of names and addresses of students are filed in the registration records of the College. However, when the researcher found that a high degree of formality was required in accessing these lists, she decided to use the postal method for the main survey but not for the pilot study.

The advantage of using the postal method was that a student received the questionnaire in his/her place of residence and was totally free, without any embarrassment, to decide whether or not to respond. As the questionnaire was answered in private there was a high probability that the student would give honest and frank responses.

Licensed envelopes were used in preference to stamped addressed envelopes. The licence was obtained from the Post Master General, General Post Office, Oliver Plunkett St., Cork. The envelopes were printed at D. O'Mahony & Sons Ltd, Printers, 6 Parliament St., Cork. This method was efficient and economical.

### **4.4.2 Developing the Survey Questionnaire**

The first task of the researcher was to translate the general purpose of the survey into a specific central aim. The second task was to identify and itemise the subsidiary topics related to the central aim. The third task involved formulating specific information requirements relating to each of these topics. Finally, a questionnaire was designed for the purpose of eliciting the required information (Cohen *et al*, 1994, p. 85).

#### **4.4.2.1 The Central Aim of the Survey**

The specific central aim of the survey was to investigate the place of religion and its expression in the life of the young adult at UCC in the 1996-97 academic year.

#### **4.4.2.2 Subsidiary Topics, Hypotheses, Information Requirements**

Thirteen subsidiary topics were used to investigate the central aim of the research. For each of these topics a hypothesis was formulated. The variables to be measured in testing the hypotheses were expressed as questions in the questionnaire. The thirteen subsidiary topics and the corresponding hypotheses are as follows:

1. The place of religion in students' lives  
The hypothesis is that religious issues are a high priority in students' lives.
2. Membership of Religion  
The hypothesis is that the majority of students are members of a World Religion.
3. Public worship  
The hypothesis is that high membership of religion translates into high attendance at religious services in accordance with the norms of Christian Churches.
4. Private Prayer  
The hypothesis is that the practice of private prayer is related to the importance of membership of religion.
5. Christian beliefs  
The hypothesis is that the level of acceptance of Christian beliefs is related to the frequency of attendance at religious services.
6. Work for charitable groups  
The hypothesis is that work for charitable groups is related to the importance of religion.
7. Students' knowledge of chaplains and use of chaplaincy  
The hypothesis is that the percentage of students who know the chaplains and use the chaplaincy is low.
8. Belief in God  
The hypothesis is that belief in God is related to membership of religion.
9. Spiritual experiences  
The hypothesis is that spiritual experience is common and not confined to those who are members of a religion.



**10. Meaningfulness of life**

**The hypothesis is that most students find life meaningful.**

**11. Moral values**

**The hypothesis is that moral values are related to religion.**

**12. Discussion of religion**

**The hypothesis is that religion is seldom or never discussed with friends.**

**13. Desire to be better informed about religious matters**

**The hypothesis is that few students desire to be better informed about religious matters.**

#### **4.4.2.3 Research Instrument -The Questionnaire**

The variables to be measured in collecting the information required on each subsidiary topic were expressed in the form of a questionnaire (see Appendix B.2). The questionnaire used in this research was specifically designed for students of UCC.

Examining the questionnaires which had been used in previous research, the researcher found none of them was totally suitable for this investigation. It is permissible for a researcher in this situation to 'supplement or modify them or even to construct his [her] own' (Lovell *et al*, 1970, p. 32).

Questions 1-10 were designed to collect demographic data specific to university students.

Questions 11-19 were designed to examine the priorities of students' lives as identified in the preliminary interviews. The place of religion among students' concerns was of particular interest.

Questions 20-69 were designed to examine students' religiosity according to the categories used by Nic Ghiolla Phádraig (1976), Inglis (1978) and Breslin and Weafer (1984) i.e. membership of religion, practice, beliefs, charitable work, spiritual experience and moral values. Questions relating to worship at UCC, the chaplains and

chaplaincy at UCC, meaningfulness of life, discussion of religion and openness to more information on religion were also included.

As students are not required to state religious affiliation at registration it was not possible to confine the sample to members of any one religion. Yet since it was envisaged that respondents of World Religions other than Christianity would be too few to allow analysis of their religious practices and beliefs, the section of the questionnaire dealing with these issues (Questions 31-52) was confined to members of Christian denominations only. Members of a World Religion other than Christianity and those of no religious affiliation were guided through the questionnaire by means of filter questions as shown on Table 4.4.

In order to be inclusive of members of different Christian denominations the term 'religious service' was used in relation to public worship. The word "Mass" was used only in reference to worship in the Honan Chapel which is a Catholic foundation.

Items of known validity used in Fogarty *et al* (1984), in Breslin and Weafer (1984), and in Fahey *et al* (1994) were selected for beliefs (Questions 38-45 and 53), spiritual experiences (Questions 54-55), and moral values (Questions 57-67).

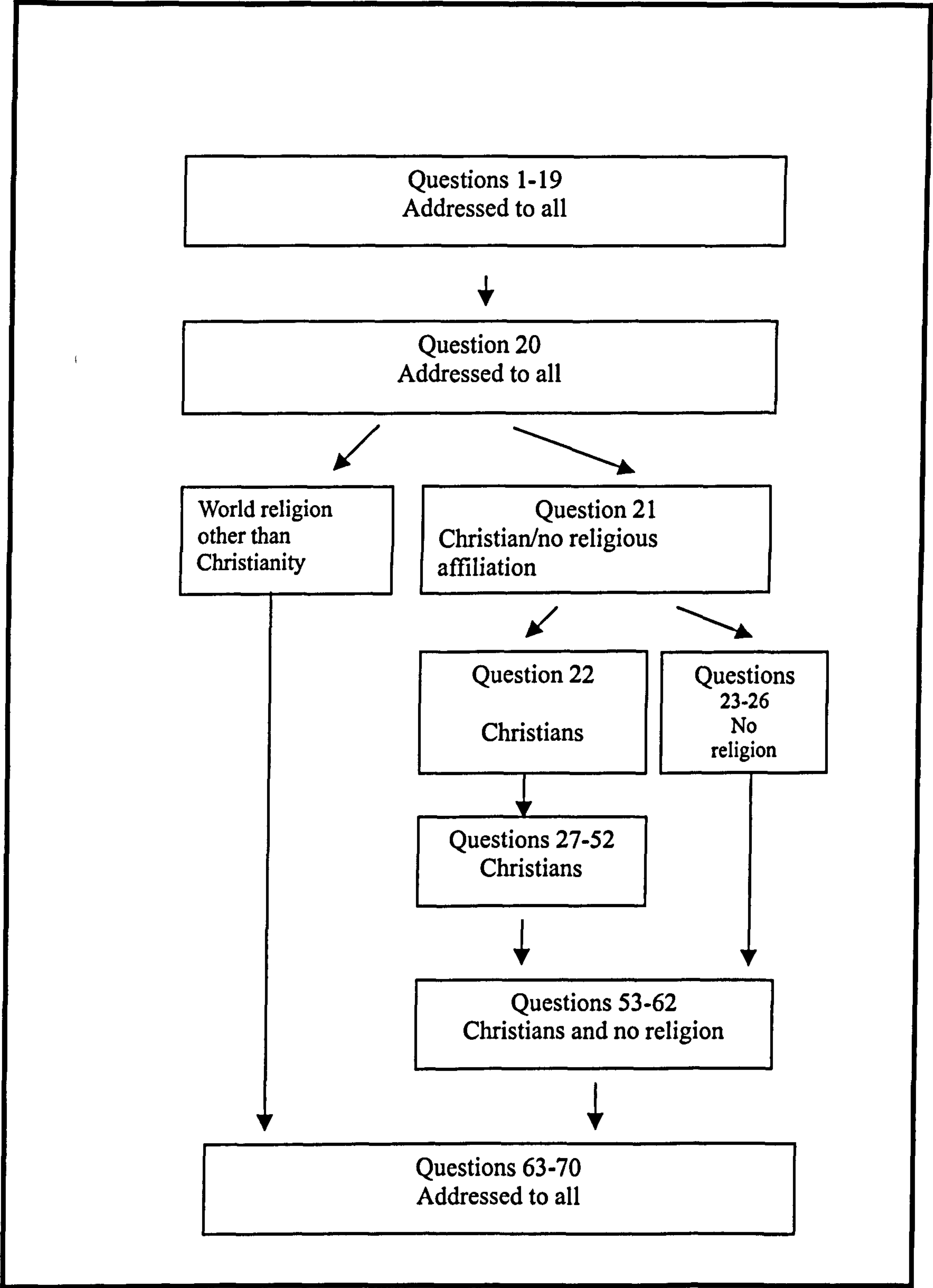
The survey is summarised on Table 4.3



**Table 4. 3 Summary of the Survey**

<b>Specific Central Aim</b>	<b>Itemisation of subsidiary topics</b>	<b>Hypotheses to be investigated</b>	<b>Information / variables to be measured</b>	<b>Questions</b>
<b>To examine the place of religion and its expression in the life of the young adult at UCC in the 1996/1997 academic year</b>	Demographic data		Age, gender, nationality, locality, school, faculty, year, degree status, accommodation	1 – 10
	Priorities of student's life	That religious issues are a high priority in students' lives	Parents, friends, staff, academic success, acceptability to peers, religious issues, money, social life	11 -19
	Membership of Religion	That the majority of students are members of a World Religion	World Religion, Christian Denomination, reasons for leaving/ staying, importance of membership, consideration of leaving	20 - 30
	Public Worship	That high membership of religion translates into high attendance at religious services.	How often? Why?	31 -32
	Religious functions at UCC	-	Which?	33 - 34
	Private prayer	That it is related to the importance of membership.	How often? Why?	35 -37
	Christian beliefs	That they are related to the frequency of attendance at religious services.	Bible, God the Creator, Jesus the Son of God, The Resurrection, Heaven, Afterlife, Hell, forgiveness of sins	38 - 45
	Work for Charity	That it is related to the importance of religion.	Which charity?	46 -47
	Students' knowledge of Chaplains and use of Chaplaincy	That the percentage is low.	Recognition, notions, visits, reasons	48 - 52
	Belief in God	Related to the frequency of attendance at religious services.	Belief, doubts, non-personal, atheism, agnosticism, other.	53
	Spirituality	That it is common to many, and not confined to members of a religion	Experience, nature, frequency	54 -55
	Meaningfulness of life	That most students find life meaningful	Is life meaningful?	56
	Moral values	That moral values are related to religion.	Abortion, sex outside of marriage, divorce, euthanasia, world resources, drink, drugs, cheating, sexual orientation, murder and injury, morals and family life	57 -67
	Discussion of religion with friends	That religion is seldom or never discussed	How often?	68
	Desire to be better informed on religious matters	That few students desire to be better informed on religious matters	Desire to be better informed	69
	Reactions to the questionnaire	-	Open	70

Table 4. 4 Flow Chart of Questionnaire





### 4.4.3 Pre-pilot Study

Specialists in education, religion and moral theology examined the contents of the first draft of the questionnaire. Changes were made. A statistician checked its suitability for analysis using the computer programme SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The layout of the questionnaire was improved on the advice of a researcher in the Economics Department of UCC.

Six students were requested to pre-pilot the questionnaire. They were requested to indicate any problems which they experienced in relation to the questions or the instructions. They were also requested to note the starting and finishing times. These respondents considered that the questions asked were fair, not too demanding or probing, yet going far enough to elicit usable material. On their advice, two items in the moral values section were changed. Item 64 'It is morally offensive not to pay on public transport' was changed to 'It is a moral offence to cheat at examinations'. Item 66 'Ireland should assist in the defence of Europe' was changed to 'It is wrong to kill or seriously injure another person'. Question 48 was changed from 'Do you know the College Chaplain(s) of your religion?' to 'Do you know the College Chaplain(s) of your religion to see'? indicating that recognition only was required of the question. The time taken to complete the questionnaire was found to be approximately 10 minutes.

### 4.4.4 Coding of Questionnaire

The pre-coding of the questionnaire was done at this point. A variable name, not exceeding eight characters, was assigned to each variable in the questionnaire. For ease of identification, the letters were chosen from the name of the variable and the number in each variable name corresponded to the number of the variable in the questionnaire e.g. Q4. 'In which of the following did you grow up'? The variable name given was 'Localit4'. Value labels were assigned to categories e.g. male = 1, female, = 2. Where

more than one response was allowed (e.g. Q. 30), each answer was coded 'Yes' = 1, 'no response' = 2. Coding of open-ended questions and 'other *please specify*' categories were dealt with later.

The questionnaire included two Likert-type attitudinal scales. Items 38 – 45 make up an eight-item scale designed to measure students' attitudes to Christian beliefs. Items 57 – 67 make up an eleven-item scale designed to measure students' attitudes to moral values. Using Likert's method, a number of statements were phrased so that they could be responded to on a 5-point rating scale, defined by the labels *Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree*. Responses for each item were scored 1 – 5. Strong agreement with items was given a score of 5 and strong disagreement was given a score of 1. In order to maintain respondents' attention, some statements were not phrased in accordance with Christian beliefs and moral values. These statements and their scores were reversed, for consistency, in the analyses. As the term 'summated ratings' indicates, a respondent's attitude score is determined by adding his or her ratings for all the items in the scale; the higher the score, the stronger the acceptance of the belief or the agreement with the moral value (Fishbein *et al*, 1975, pp. 71-72). This procedure is based on the assumption that all the items are measuring the same underlying attitudes (Oskamp, 1977, p. 31). Thus, items must meet Likert's criterion of internal consistency. An item meets the criterion of internal consistency if the item score correlates significantly with the attitude score (Fishbein *et al*, 1975, p. 72). Tests of internal consistency were carried out on the pilot responses and on the total sample.

#### **4.4.5 Fielding of Pilot Study**

The researcher, a chaplain at UCC, considered that being identified with the questionnaire could cause bias. She discussed this problem in relation to the fielding of



the pilot study with the pre-pilot group. A member of the group, a Master of Education student, volunteered to field the pilot study.

On 12 March 1996, this field-worker approached twenty-five male and twenty-five female students in the Boole Library, UCC, requesting each person to oblige by completing the questionnaire. She explained that the purpose was solely to test the questionnaire. She assured them that there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers; that what was required was that they give frank and honest responses. She assured them that they were not required to identify themselves on the questionnaire. The students co-operated and she collected the completed questionnaires approximately 20 minutes later.

The post-coding on open-ended and 'other (*please specify*)' questions was then carried out. The responses were entered into a database of the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

#### **4.4.6 Data Cleansing**

Frequencies were run for all variables for the purpose of data cleansing. Where a mistake was suspected the case was checked against the corresponding questionnaire.

#### **4.4.7 Reliability of Scales in the Pilot Study**

Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) co-efficient of reliability was used to test the reliability of the two attitudinal scales (Items 38-45 and 57-67). Cronbach's alpha is derived from the average correlations of all the items on the scale.

Cronbach's  $\alpha$  has several interpretations. It can be viewed as the correlation between this test or scale and all other possible tests or scales containing the same number of items, which could be constructed from a hypothetical universe of items that measure the characteristic of interest (Norusis, 1994, p. 147).

If all the variations in observed scores are due to errors of measurement, the reliability co-efficient will be zero. If there is no error of measurement, the reliability co-efficient

will be one. 'A guideline often used is to require alpha to be 0.70 or above' (Rodeghier, 1996, p. 159). A reliability co-efficient,  $\alpha = 0.87$  was found for the eight item scale on Christian beliefs (38 – 45). The value was sufficiently high to enable all eight items to be retained in the scale. A reliability co-efficient,  $\alpha = 0.69$  was found for the eleven item scale on moral values (57 – 67). Six of these items (57, 58, 59, 60, 63, and 65) showed high loadings on the first component of the component matrix of a factor analysis. A reliability co-efficient,  $\alpha = 0.73$  was found for these six items. Since the other five items brought the value of alpha only slightly below 0.70 they were retained in the questionnaire.

The pilot study was completed by May 1996. Since students were involved in examinations at that time, the researcher decided not to administer the survey until the new academic year.

#### **4.4.8 Survey Population and Survey Sample**

The total student population at UCC is quite diverse. Definite boundaries were required, therefore, in order to define the population to be investigated. The survey population was confined to students in the age bracket 18 – 23 years who were taking full-time degree courses at the College in the 1996-97 academic year. There were 7340 students in this frame. It was considered that a 'proposed sample' of one in ten would yield an 'achieved sample' sufficiently large to allow for the analysis of the variables which were used as measurements:

The number of variables researchers set out to control in their analysis and the type of statistical tests they wish to make must inform their decisions about sample size prior to the actual research undertaking (Cohen *et al*, 1994, p. 90).

The method of sampling used was systematic sampling. Systematic sampling is a modified form of simple random sampling. When simple random sampling is used the subjects are selected at random from a list of the population in such fashion that every



member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. In systematic sampling the subjects are selected in a systematic fashion (Cohen *et al*, 1994, p. 87).

In this survey it was desirable to ensure that the number of subjects drawn on each faculty was proportional to the number of students in that faculty. 'To the extent that the sample fails to represent accurately the population under survey, there is a sampling error' (Cohen *et al*, 1994, p. 90).

In September 1996 the researcher sent a letter to Professor Moran, Registrar of UCC, requesting access to such a sample. Because of the confidential nature of the records of the College, names and addresses could not be released to the researcher. However, the permission of the Registrar was given for members of the staff of the Registration Office to assist the researcher. A staff member drew a systematic sample on the 7,340 full-time 18–23 year-old student population. Every tenth student, starting with a number picked at random, was selected across each of the faculties. Thus a sample of 734 students was obtained.

#### **4.4.9 Fielding of Survey**

Conscious that being identified with the survey could cause bias, the researcher enlisted a fieldworker to field the survey. The covering letter (see Appendix B3) was sent by the field worker and the questionnaires were returned to her address.

Packets containing the questionnaire, covering letter, and pre-addressed licensed envelope were prepared by the researcher and taken to the Registration Office of UCC. Names and addresses of the population sample were placed on the packets by the staff of that office. Arrangements were made with the staff of UCC Postal Services to handle the mail. This was done on 26 November 1996. The cost of postage was invoiced to the researcher.

#### **4.4.10 Encouragement of a High Rate of Response**

In order to ensure that the achieved sample would be satisfactory, the following strategies were used to encourage a high rate of response:

1. The layout of the questionnaire was designed with a view to attractiveness and ease of completion. Most questions could be answered by placing a tick in a box. The spaces allowed for open-ended questions and the 'other (*specify*)' category were kept to a minimum in order not to discourage students by the sheer bulk of the questionnaire.
2. A questionnaire could be completed in approximately 10 minutes. Thus, too great a demand was not made on a student's time.
3. The covering letter appealed for help. It assured the students that confidentiality was safeguarded by the fact that the researcher had no access to names and addresses as the questionnaire was sent directly from the Registration Office of the College.
4. The fact that the envelope containing the questionnaire was franked by the College Postal Services showing the College crest increased the likelihood that it would be opened and the contents taken seriously by the student.
5. The use of a licensed envelope for the return of the completed questionnaires was intended to convey the importance of the survey.
6. The timing of the survey was considered important. The researcher decided that the best time would be early November. By that time the students are settled into College and yet the pressures of examinations are not on them. However, because of the time taken in making the arrangements described above, they were not posted until 26 November. This proved to be a good time as most of the responses were returned before the end of term.



7. A card, thanking the respondents and appealing to the non-respondents, was sent out on 4 December 1996 (see Appendix B4). A final letter of appeal was sent on 27 January 1997 (see Appendix B5). Both of these were labelled by the staff of the Registration Office and mailed through the College Postal Service.

#### **4.4.11 Achieved Sample**

The initial response was quite good. 50% of completed questionnaires were returned within one week, 484 (66%) were returned by 20 March 1997.

Each completed questionnaire was assigned a subject number and filed accordingly for ease of retrieval.

#### **4.4.12 Coding**

The coding system used in the pilot study was used again in coding the responses to the survey. Further work was required in post-coding the open-ended and ‘other *please specify*’ responses. The responses to Item 70 ‘What is your reaction to the Questionnaire?’ were reduced to six categories as described in Chapter V.

The responses were then entered into the data file of the computer programme SPSS.

#### **4.4.13 Missing Data**

Responses which were illegible or not recorded were ignored in the data file. SPSS excludes all responses identified as missing in calculating entries in the Valid

Percentage column. Valid percentages sum to 100 over all possible answers that are not missing.

#### **4.4.14 Data Cleansing**

Frequencies were run for all variables for the purpose of data cleansing. Where a mistake was suspected the case was checked against the corresponding questionnaire.

#### **4.4.15 Analysis of Data**

The data were analysed using the following procedures in SPSS:

- Frequency procedures report the number of valid cases for each variable.
- Descriptive procedures report summary statistics for each variable. The measure of central tendency used in this analysis is the arithmetic mean. The measure of variability used is the standard deviation. Standard deviation has the advantage that it is a measure expressed in the same units as the observations.
- Cross Tabulations examine the association between categorical variables.
- Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) is a test of statistical significance which helps to determine whether a systematic relationship exists between two variables. From the value of chi-square, the probability (p) of obtaining such a value can be calculated when in fact the variables are independent. If the probability (p) is greater than one chance in 20 i.e. .05 it is regarded as not being significant. If it is less e.g. 1 in 1,000 (.001) the value of chi-squared is regarded as being significant. Chi-square indicates whether variables are independent or related. It does not indicate the how strongly, or in what way they are related.
- T-tests compare pairs of means e.g. do the mean values for male and female respondents differ in relation to the importance of religious issues?
- ANOVA (Analysis of variance) tests compare several means e.g. do the mean values for city, town and rural respondents differ in relation to the importance of religious issues?



- The *post hoc* Schéffe and Dunnett T3 tests give pair-wise comparisons of means.

The Schéffe test can be used when equal variance is assumed. The Dunnett T3 test can be used when equal variance is not assumed.

#### **4.4.16 Presentation of Results**

In Chapter V the results obtained by using SPSS procedures are presented in tables created in Word for Windows 97. This is economical in terms of space. For ease of access to information, some results are displayed visually by means of bar charts and pie charts. The charts were created in Excel and imported into Word for Windows 97.

### **4.5 FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS**

#### **4.5.1 Objective**

The objective of the follow-up interviews was to gain insights into the religious experiences of students who were involved in groups such as the Taizé prayer group, the Folk Group, The Academy, St. Vincent de Paul Society, the Developing World Society, Amnesty International and Children's Aid. These interviews took place during April 1999.

#### **4.5.2 The Interview Guide**

The interview guide (Appendix B6) was prepared as an aid to the researcher in focusing on the particular group being investigated in the interview. It was not intended to restrict the interviewee's responses.

### 4.5.3 The Interview Sample

The interview sample consisted of 10 students (three males and seven females) ranging from 19 to 23 years, from different faculties and involved in different Groups/Societies as shown in Table 4.5.

**Table 4. 5 Follow-up Interviews Sample**

<b>Subject</b>	11	12	13	14	15
<b>Gender</b>	Female	Female	Female	Male	Female
<b>Age</b>	19	19	23	20	23
<b>Faculty</b>	Commerce	Science	Arts	Arts	Arts
<b>Group/Society</b>	Taizé Prayer	Taizé Prayer	Academy	Academy	St.Vincent de Paul
<b>Code name</b>	Brigid (11F19CT)	Kathleen (12F19ST)	Margaret (13F23AA)	Paul (14M20AA)	Joan (15F23AV)
<b>Subject</b>	16	17	18	19	20
<b>Gender</b>	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female
<b>Age</b>	21	21	21	23	20
<b>Faculty</b>	Arts	Arts	Law	Arts	Arts
<b>Group/Society</b>	Academy	Amnesty International	Children's Aid	Developing World	Developing World
<b>Code Name</b>	William (16M21AA)	Catherine (17F21AI)	Claire (18F21LCA)	Patrick (19M23AD-W)	Colette (20F20AD-W)

### 4.5.4 Reliability and Validity

Because of the small sample the results of the interviews do not claim reliability and validity in the statistical sense. It can be taken, however, that the views expressed are not untypical of the Group or Society to which a student belonged.



### **4.5.5 Recruitment and Venues**

All interviewees were recruited personally by the researcher. The purpose of the interview was explained and the request for the interview made. The venue, date, and time for the interview were arranged. Three interviews took place in the Chaplaincy, four in *Áras na Mac Léinn* (Student Union Building), one in a lecture room and two in the apartments of the interviewees.

### **4.5.6 Interviews, Transcripts, Analysis**

The execution of the interviews, the transcripts, and the analysis followed the same pattern as for the preliminary depth interviews.

## **4.6 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION**

The researcher made records of observations regarding religion in the life of young adults at UCC throughout the course of the research. These records have been used in illuminating the discussion of the research.

While participant observation lies at the heart of field investigation, unobtrusive research is only part of the anthropologist's toolbag and occurs alongside the systematic collection of data obtained through the conducting of interviews and social surveys and through the examination of documentary material (Bastin, 1985, p. 96).

## **4.7 ETHICAL ISSUES**

The researcher was aware of the need to follow correct ethical procedures in every aspect of the research. Every effort was made to safeguard the rights of all those involved in the research. All necessary permissions were sought and received. Since the researcher had no access to the identity of the respondents to the questionnaire confidentiality was not an issue. Code names were used in the report when referring to the extracts of interviews, thus concealing the identity of the interviewees.

# **CHAPTER V**

## **ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY**



# ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The survey was the principal method used in investigating ‘Religion in the Life of the Young Adult at UCC’. The methods used for the collection and analysis of data have been described in Chapter IV. In this chapter, hypotheses and related issues are tested. The results are presented with the aid of tables and are illustrated by figures.

## 5.2 RESPONSE RATE

The 18-23year-old student population at UCC, in the 1996-97 academic year, was systematically sampled across the faculties, as shown in Table 5.1 (see Fig. 5.1 Appendix C1). Of the 734 questionnaires sent out, 484 (66%) completed ones were returned.

Table 5.1 Response Rate in Relation to Faculties

Faculty <i>N = 481, Missing 3</i>	Arts/CS	Com	Eng	Food S/T	Law	Med	Sc
Survey Population  N = 7,340	2720	1040	550	440	350	560	1680
Proposed Sample  N = 734	272	104	55	44	35	56	168
Achieved Sample  N = 484 (65.9%)	176 64.7%	69 66.3%	34 61.8%	29 65.9%	24 68.6%	37 66.1%	112 66.6%

*Art/CS = Arts and Celtic Studies, Com = Commerce, Eng = Engineering, Food S-T = Food Science and Technology, Med = Medicine, Sc = Science.*

The number of students in each faculty in the proposed sample was supplied to this researcher by the Registration Office at UCC. Since every tenth student had been selected across the faculties, the numbers shown in the survey population row are

approximate numbers obtained by multiplying the given numbers by ten. As students did not distinguish between the faculty of Arts and that of Celtic Studies, these two faculties are combined in this report. Table 5.1 shows that the response rate for all the faculties ranged from 61.8% to 68.6%. (see Fig. 5.2 Appendix C2). This response rate was considered satisfactory for the purposes of the research.

The response rate in relation to gender is shown in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2 The Response Rate in Relation to Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>Survey Population</b> N = 7,340	2870	4470
<b>Proposed Sample</b> 734	287	447
<b>Achieved Sample</b> 484 65.9%	182 63.4%	302 67.7%

The numbers of males and females in the proposed sample were also supplied to this researcher by the Registration Office at UCC. Table 5.2 shows that the response rate of male students was 63.4% and that of female students 67.7%. This response rate was considered satisfactory.

### **5.2.1 Sampling Error**

Whether a sample is large or small, it is an established statistical fact that there may be a difference between the percentages reported for the sample and those which would be found if the complete population had been surveyed. This difference is known as the sampling error. It can be accurately calculated so that the readers of the sample survey results may interpret the percentages with due caution (Breslin *et al*, 1984, p. 7).



The size of the sample used affects variation in the sampling error is. In general, the larger the sample, the smaller the sampling error. In addition, larger sampling errors may occur when comparing small sub-groups of large samples (Breslin *et al*, 1984, pp. 7-8).

The size of the sampling error is also dependent on the proportion of people who are in agreement about a certain issue. The sampling error is greatest where the proportions are near to 50% and least when proportions approach 100% or zero.

The formula for the calculation of the sampling error is as follows:

$$\text{S.E.} = \pm 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{p(100 - p)}{n}}$$

where p represents the proportionate response and n the sample size.

Using this formula it is possible to predict the range of the minimum and maximum error within which the sample falls (Breslin *et al*, 1984, p. 165).

In this survey, with a sample of 484, a percentage response of 50%, with a sampling error of 4.4% would represent a population percentage of between 45.6% and 54.4%.

This is the worst possible result. Whereas, a percentage response of 90% with a sampling error of 2.7%, would represent a population percentage between 47.3% and 52.7%. These predictions are accurate at the 95% level of confidence. It is important that, when reading percentages, to note that small percentage differences may be attributed to sampling error and not to real differences between groups.

5.3 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Questions 1-10 of the questionnaire were intended to elicit background information with a view to creating a profile of the respondents. Questions 1-10 are as follows:

- 1. What age are you?-----
- 2. Please indicate your gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
- 3. What is your nationality? -----

4. In which of the following did you grow up?

City (100,000 or more)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Large town (10,000 – 99,999)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small town (1,500 – 9,999)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural (below 1,500)	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. In what type of school did you receive your second level education?

Denominational secondary school/college	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-denominational secondary school/college	<input type="checkbox"/>
VEC school/college	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community school	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comprehensive school	<input type="checkbox"/>
Second level school outside Ireland	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 6. In which Faculty at UCC do you study? -----
- 7. Which year of your course are you taking at present? -----
- 8. If you have previously taken a University Degree/Diploma, please name  
-----

9. At which of the following do you live during term time?

At home	<input type="checkbox"/>	In a bed-sit	<input type="checkbox"/>
With a relative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Share a house/apartment	<input type="checkbox"/>
In digs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)-----	



10.

If you are in digs or share a house/apartment, is it

single sex? ☐

mixed? ☐

A summary of the responses is shown in Table 5.3 and illustrated in Figs. 5.3-8 Appendices C3-C8.

Table 5.3 Profile of Respondents

Age N =484	18yrs.	19yrs.	20yrs.	21yrs.	22yrs.	23yrs.	
	85 17.6%	118 24.4%	112 23.1%	85 17.6%	57 11.8%	27 5.5%	
Gender N =484	Male	Female					
	182 37.6%	302 62.4%					
Nationality N =484	Irish	Asian	American	British	Irish-Amer.		
	474 97.9%	5 1.0%	3 0.6%	1 0.2%	1 0.2%		
Locality N = 483 Missing 1	City	Large Town	Small Town	Rural			
	136 28.2%	76 15.7%	98 20.2%	173 35.8%			
School N = 482	D. Sec.	Non-D Sec	V.E.C.	Com. S	Comp S.	S-L S o Ir	
	379 78.3%	12 2.5%	20 4.1%	46 9.5%	19 3.9%	8 1.7%	
Faculty N=481 Missing 3	Arts & CS	Com	Eng	Food S/ T	Law	Med	Science
	176 36.6%	69 14.3%	34 7.1%	29 6.0%	24 5.0%	37 7.7%	112 23.3%
Year of Course N=483	1	2	3	4 / 1 P-g	5 / 1/2 P-g	6 / 2/3 P-g	
	121 25.1%	134 27.7%	118 24.4%	69 14.3%	29 6.0%	12 2.5%	
Graduate Status N = 484	U-g.	P-g.					
	417 86.2%	67 13.8%					
Accommodation Type N = 484	Home	Relatives	H/A share	Digs	Bed-sit	Own house	
	195 40.3%	7 1.4%	245 50.6%	30 6.2%	4 0.8%	3 0.6%	
H/A share or Digs N = 269 missing 6	Single sex	Mixed					
	156 58.0%	113 42.0%					

D. Sec = Denominational secondary school/ college, Non-D Sec = Nondenominational secondary school, V.E.C. = Vocational school/ college, Com. S = Community school, Comp. S = Comprehensive school, S-l S o Ir = Second level school outside Ireland. u-g = under-graduate, p-g = post-graduate.

**Age:** The majority of the students (82%) lie in the age range 18-21 years (see Fig. 5.3 Appendix C3). In this report the respondents have been grouped into three age ranges: 18-19yrs, 20-21yrs, and 22-23yrs. The mean ages of male and female students are compared in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4 Comparison of Ages of Male and Female Students**

	Number	Mean Age	S. D.	Difference between means	Statistical measure
Male	182	20.25yrs.	1.51	0.43yrs.	T-test: t(482) = 2.682 p = .008
Female	302	19.82yrs.	1.39		

The mean age of female students is 0.43yrs. less than the mean age of male students (Table 5.4). The t-test shows that the difference between the means is statistically significant.

**Nationality:** 474 (97.9%) students are Irish. The non-Irish comprise one British, three American, five Asian and one Irish-American.

**Locality:** 28.2% of students have grown up in a city, 15.7% in a large town, 20.2% in a small town and 35.8% in a rural area (see Fig. 5.4 Appendix C4). Since the differences in results for ‘large town’ and ‘small town’ were not found to be significant, these two categories are combined as ‘town’ in this report. The distribution of male and female students as regards locality is shown in Table 5.5.



Table 5. 5 Locality by Gender

	City	Town	Rural	Statistical measures
Male N = 182	63 34.6%	67 36.8%	52 28.6%	x <sup>2</sup> = 8.652 df = 2 p = .013
Female N = 301 Missing 1	73 24.3%	107 35.5%	121 40.2%	

*x<sup>2</sup> = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = significance level*

34.6% percent of the males by comparison with 24.3% of females are from the city whereas 40.2% percent of the females by comparison with 28.6% of the males come from rural areas. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant.

**Schools attended:** The majority of the students (78.3%) have been educated in denominational secondary schools. The distribution of students educated in other types of schools is as follows:

- 2.5% in non-denominational secondary schools.
- 4.1% in V.E.C. colleges/schools.
- 9.5% in community schools.
- 3.9% in comprehensive schools.
- 1.7% in second-level schools outside Ireland.

(see Fig. 5.5 Appendix C5)

**Faculties:** The greatest proportions of students are in the Arts/Celtic Studies (36.6%), Science (23.3%), and Commerce (14.3%) faculties.

7.1% of students are in Engineering, 6.0% in Food Science and Technology, 5.0% in Law and 7.7% in Medicine (see Fig. 5.6 Appendix C6).

**Year of course:** 25.1% of students are in 1st year, 27.7% in 2nd year and 24.4% in 3rd year of courses.

There is a fall-off in numbers for 4th year / 1st post-graduate, 5th year / 1st / 2nd post-graduate, and 6th year / 2nd / 3rd post-graduate. This is as expected, since most under-graduate courses are of three or four years' duration (see Fig. 5.7 Appendix C7).

**Accommodation:** During term 40.3% of students live at home. The most popular type of accommodation for those living away from home is house/apartment sharing. 50.6% of the students opt for this type. Relatively few students live with relatives, in digs, in bed-sits, or own their own homes (see Fig. 5.8 Appendix C8).

58% of those who are away from home live with people of the same sex, while 42% live in mixed accommodation.



5.4 PRIORITIES OF STUDENTS' LIVES

Qs. 11-19 were designed to test the hypothesis that religious issues are a high priority in students' lives. Students were asked to rate nine aspects of their lives using values 1-5 on the Likert scale. Qs. 11-19 are as follows:

*Please indicate, on the table below, how important certain aspects of your life are to you at the present time.*

		Very important	Important	Undecided	Not very Important	Un- important
11.	My relationship with my parents					
12.	My relationship with people of the same sex					
13.	My relationships with people of the opposite sex					
14.	My relationship with academic staff					
15.	Academic success					
16.	How acceptable I am to my peers					
17.	Religious issues					
18.	Money					
19.	My social life					

The results are presented in descending order of the mean values obtained on the Likert scale in Table 5.6. They are illustrated in Fig. 5.9 Appendix C9.

**Table 5. 6 Priorities of Students' Lives**

	Very important	Important	Un- decided	Not very important	Un- important	Mean	S.D.
Values on the Likert Scale	5	4	3	2	1		
<b>Relationship with parents</b> N = 483      Missing 1	283 58.6%	178 36.9%	16 3.3%	6 1.2%		4.53	.63
<b>Academic success</b> N = 484	238 49.2%	212 43.8%	19 3.9%	14 2.9%	1 0.2%	4.39	.72
<b>Relationships with same sex</b> N = 484	220 45.5%	233 48.1%	17 3.5%	12 2.5%	2 0.4%	4.36	.71
<b>Relationships with opposite sex</b> N = 483      Missing 1	194 40.2%	247 51.1%	23 4.8%	18 3.7%	1 0.2%	4.27	.74
<b>Money</b> N = 480      Missing 4	163 33.9%	250 52.1%	31 6.5%	35 7.3%	1 0.2%	4.12	.84
<b>Social life</b> N = 484	137 28.3%	279 57.6%	39 8.1%	28 5.8%	1 0.2%	4.08	.78
<b>Acceptability to peers</b> N = 481      Missing 3	76 15.8%	209 43.4%	76 15.8%	99 20.6%	21 4.4%	3.46	1.11
<b>Relationship with academic staff</b> N = 481      Missing 3	31 6.4%	153 31.8%	135 28.1%	137 28.5%	25 5.2%	3.06	1.03
<b>Religious Issues</b> N = 481      Missing 3	26 5.4%	134 27.8%	100 20.8%	151 31.4%	70 14.6%	2.78	1.16

- 'My relationships with my parents' was rated as the most important aspect of students' lives. ANOVA and t-tests were carried out to investigate if its importance varied with age or if it depended on whether or not students resided at home. No statistically significant differences emerged.
- 'Academic success' was rated as the second most important aspect of students' lives
- 'My relationship with people of the same sex' was rated in third place, of greater importance than 'My relationship with people of the opposite sex' which fell into fourth place.



- ‘Money’ and ‘My social life’ were very closely rated in fifth and sixth places respectively.
- ‘How acceptable I am to my peers’ was rated in the seventh place.
- ‘My relationship with academic staff’ was rated in the eight place.
- ‘Religious issues’ was rated in the ninth place. 33.2% of students regarded ‘Religious Issues’ as very important/ important, 20.8% are undecided and 46.0% regard it as not very important/ unimportant.

When the responses ‘very important’ / ‘important’ are summed for each item, it is found that only ‘Relationship with academic staff’ and ‘Religious issues’ fall below 50%.

The hypothesis that religious issues are a high priority in students’ lives is rejected.

5.4.1 Analysis of ‘Religious Issues’

Having rejected the basic hypothesis, differences between subgroups within the sample, in terms of their ratings of ‘Religious issues’, were examined. The first question to be considered was ‘Do males and females rate ‘Religious issues’ differently’? To answer this question a cross-tabulation of ‘Religious issues’ and gender was carried out. The results are shown in Table 5.7.

Table 5. 7 Religious Issues by Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	S. D.	T-Test
Religious Issues N = 481 Missing 3	Male	181 Missing 1	2.61	1.15	t(479) = -2.569 p = .01
	Female	300 Missing 2	2.89	1.15	

The analysis showed that females rated 'Religious issues' more highly than males (Table 5.7). According to the result of the t-test, the difference is statistically significant. This finding needs to be seen, however, in the light of a general tendency for females to rate all aspects more favourably than males, as shown in Table 5.8 and illustrated in Fig. 5.10 Appendix C10.

**Table 5. 8 Priorities of Students' Lives by Gender**

	Gender	N	Mean	S. D.	T-Tests
Relationship with parents Missing = 1 (female)	Male Female	182 301	4.40 4.60	.66 .59	$t(346.81) = -3.508$ $p = .001$
Academic success	Male Female	182 302	4.28 4.45	.84 .63	$t(303.85) = -2.589$ $p = .010$
Relationships with same sex	Male Female	182 302	4.11 4.51	.70 .67	$t(364.85) = -6.126$ $p = .000$
Relationships with opposite sex	Male Female	181 302	4.26 4.28	.74 .74	$t(481) = -.314$ $p = .754$
Money	Male Female	180 300	4.04 4.17	.86 .82	$t(478) = -1.593$ $p = .112$
Social life	Male Female	182 302	3.93 4.17	.82 .74	$t(482) = -3.239$ $p = .001$
Acceptability to peers	Male Female	180 301	3.30 3.55	1.12 1.10	$t(370.29) = -2.409$ $p = .017$
Relationship with academic	Male Female	182 299	2.95 3.12	1.06 1.01	$t(369.82) = -1.769$ $p = .078$

The t-tests show that females register significantly higher values than males for 'Relationship with parents', 'Academic success', Relationships with the same sex', 'Social life' and 'Acceptability to peers'. The differences in ratings for 'Relationships with the opposite sex', 'Money' and 'Relationships with the academic staff' are not statistically significant.

Ratings of the importance of 'Religious issues' were also compared in terms of age, locality, school, faculty and year of course. No significant differences emerged.

In addition, no evidence was found for any other generalised trend similar to that whereby females were more positive than males about all the aspects of life under investigation.



5.5 MEMBERSHIP OF RELIGION

Qs. 20-21 were designed to examine the hypothesis that the majority of students are members of a World Religion. Q. 22 seeks to establish the Christian denominations to which students are affiliated. Qs. 23-26 examine when and why students have abandoned the religion in which they were brought up. Qs. 27-28 inquire why students continue to belong to a religion and the importance of membership to them. Qs. 29-30 inquire if students, who are members of a religion, have considered abandoning it and if so, why? Qs. 20-30 are as follows:

20. Are you a member of a World Religion other than Christianity?

Yes ☐ No ☐

[If 'Yes' please move to 57 on p. 8]

21. Are you a member of a Christian denomination at present?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If 'Yes' Answer 22.	If 'No' Answer 23-26
<div>22. To which Christian denomination to you belong?</div> <div>Baptist <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Church of Ireland <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Methodist <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Presbyterian <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Roman Catholic <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Other Christian (specify)-----</div> <div>-----</div> <div>Now move to 27.</div>	<div>23. Were you brought up in a Christian denomination?</div> <div>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div>24. If 'Yes' please indicate which</div> <div>-----</div> <div>25. At what age did you decide to leave it?</div> <div>-----</div> <div>26. Why did you leave it?</div> <div>-----</div> <div>-----</div> <div>Now move to 53</div>

27. The reason why I continue to belong to the Christian Denomination indicated above is:-

- Parental influence

☐

I made a personal decision to do so

☐
- Social pressure

☐

I never fully analysed my reasons

☐
- Other (*specify*)

-----

28. How important is membership of your Religion to you?

- Very important

☐
- Important

☐
- Not Important

☐

29. Have you ever seriously considered discontinuing the practice of Religious?

- Yes

☐

No

☐

30. If ‘Yes’ why? (*you may tick more than one item if appropriate*)

- Serious doubts above its beliefs

☐

Desire for freedom from its restrictions

☐
- Disillusionment with its organisation

☐

Other (*specify*)-----
- Disillusionment with its members

☐

-----

5.5.1 Religious Affiliation.

The results relating to membership of religion are presented in Table 5.9 and illustrated in Fig.5.11, Appendix C11.



Table 5. 9 Membership of Religion

N = 484						
Muslim	Christian			No Religion		
3 (0.6%)	430 (88.8%)			51 (10.5%)		
	Roman Catholic	Church of Ireland	Other Ch. Den.	Brought up R. C.	Brought up Ch. of I.	Never a member
	414 (96.3%)	11 (2.6%)	5 (1.1%)	47 (92.1%)	1 (2.0%)	3 (5.9%)

- The three students who belong to a World Religion other than Christianity indicated that they are Muslims. These students were not required to answer Qs. 21-56 which related specifically to Christianity.
- Of the 430 Christians, 414 (96.3%) are Catholic, 11(2.6%) are Church of Ireland and 5 (1.1%) are of other Christian denominations.
- 51 (10.6%) are not members of any religion.

Three students were never members of a religion.

48 were brought up as Christians (47 as Catholics and one as Church of Ireland).

These students were not required to answer Qs. 27-52.

5.5.2 Membership of Religion by Gender

To establish if there is a relationship between membership of religion and gender, a cross-tabulation was carried out. The results are presented in Table 5.10 and illustrated in Fig. 5.12 Appendix C12.

Table 5. 10 Membership of a Religion by Gender

	Religion	No Religion	Statistical measures
Male	154	28	x <sup>2</sup> = 7.271 df = 1 p = .007
N = 182	84.6%	15.4%	
Female	279	23	
N = 302	92.4%	7.6%	

x<sup>2</sup> = chi-square,    df = degrees of freedom,    p = significance level

The results in Table 5.10 show that the percentage of females (92.4%) who are members of a religion is higher than the percentage of males (84.6%). The chi-square test indicates that the difference is statistically significant.

5.5.3 Cessation of Membership of Religion

The questions regarding when and why students left religion will now be addressed. The ages at which the 48 students who were brought up as Christians ceased membership are shown in Table 5.11 and illustrated in Fig. 5.13 Appendix C13.

Table 5. 11 Age of Leaving Religion

	Age									
	9yrs.	12yrs.	13yrs.	14yrs.	15yrs.	16yrs.	17yrs.	18yrs.	19yrs.	20yrs.
N = 45	1	2	2	6	6	9	6	9	2	2
Missing 3	2.2%	4.4%	4.4%	13.3%	13.3%	20.0%	13.3%	20.0%	4.4%	4.4%

The results in Table 5.11 show that one student left religion at the age of 9 years. The majority left between the ages of 14 and 18yrs. Two students left at the ages 19 and 20yrs. No students in the age range 21-23yrs. had left their religion.



Further analysis shows the distribution of students who have no religious affiliation in terms of locality, school and accommodation (Table 5.12).

**Table 5. 12 No Religion by Locality, School and Accommodation**

Locality	City N = 136	Town N = 174	Rural N = 173	
N = 48	20	20	8	$x^2 = 13.591$ df = 2 p = .001
	14.7%	11.5%	4.6%	
School	D. Sec. N = 379	Other N = 105		
N = 48	35	13		$x^2 = 5.183$ df = 1 p = .023
	9.2%	12.4%		
Accommo- dation	Home N = 195	Other 289		
N = 48	28	20		$x^2 = 3.891$ df = 1 p = .049
	14.4%	6.9%		

$x^2$  = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = significance level

The results in Table 5.12 show that a higher percentage of city students than town students and a higher percentage of town students than rural students have left religion. A lower percentage of students who have been to denominational schools than students who have been to other types of schools have left religion. Students who live at home are more likely to have left religion than those who live away from home. The similarity between the results for city students and for students who live at home arises from the fact that 80.9% of city students live at home. The chi-square tests for locality, school and accommodation indicate that these results are statistically significant.

**5.5.4 Reasons for Cessation of Membership of Religion**

The reasons given by students for cessation of membership of religion, with the breakdown for gender, are presented of Table 5.13.

Table 5. 13 Reasons for Cessation of Membership of Christian Denominations

	Responses N =47 Missing = 1	Male N = 25	Female N = 22
<b>Disagreement with doctrines</b>	18 38.3%	7 28.0%	11 50.0%
<b>No longer believed in God</b>	11 23.4%	7 28.0%	4 18.2%
<b>Mass meant little (Catholic students)</b>	5 10.6%	3 12.0%	2 9.1%
<b>Disillusionment</b>	4 8.5%	3 12.0%	1 4.5%
<b>No interest</b>	2 4.3%	1 4.0%	1 4.5%
<b>Could not relate to it or understand it</b>	2 4.3%	2 8.0%	-
<b>Baptised but that is all</b>	2 4.3%	-	2 9.1%
<b>Unanswered questions</b>	1 2.1%	-	1 4.5%
<b>Satisfied with personal spirituality</b>	1 2.1%	1 4.0%	-
<b>Cynicism as a result of the study of history</b>	1 2.1%	1 4.0%	-

The reasons given most frequently by students for ceasing membership of religion are matters of faith i.e. disagreement with doctrines and disbelief in God. ‘Mass meant little’ may be regarded as much a matter of faith as of practice. Although other reasons, such as disillusionment and no interest, occur less frequently, they help us understand the difficulties which students experience in relation to religion.

Disagreement with doctrines occurred more frequently for females than for males.

Disbelief in God occurred more frequently for males than for females. Both males and females registered difficulty in relation to Mass.



5.5.5 Continuation of Membership of Christian Denominations

Having considered those who are no longer members of a Christian denomination, we now look those who continue as Christians. The reasons which they gave for continuing are presented in Table 5.14 and illustrated in Fig. 5.14 Appendix C14.

Table 5. 14 Reasons for Continuing to Belong to Christian Denominations

	Reasons				
	Parental influence	Social pressure	Personal decision	Reasons not analysed	‘Other’
Responses N = 423 Missing 7	102 24.1%	14 3.3%	135 31.9%	143 33.8%	29 6.9%

The results on Table 5.14 show that:

- 24.1% of students continue to belong to a Christian denomination because of parental influence.
- 3.3% of students continue because of social pressure.
- 31.9% of students have made personal decisions to continue to belong to a Christian denomination.
- 33.8% of students who belong to a Christian Religion have not analysed their reasons for doing so.

Some of the reasons given in the ‘Other’ category were:

- Didn’t bother to leave (8)
- Didn’t join another (2)
- No reason to leave (2)
- More meaning to life (1)
- ‘Entertainment value’ (1)

5.5.6 Importance of Membership of Religion

The importance which students attach to membership of religion was examined by using a three-point Likert scale (Q.28). The responses were analysed for gender and locality. The results are presented in Table 5.15 and illustrated in Fig. 5.15 Appendix C15.

Table 5. 15 Importance of Membership of Religion

		Very important	Important	Not important	Statistical measures	
Scale 1-3		3	2	1	Mean	S.D.
Total Responses N = 430		56 13.0%	192 44.7%	182 42.3%	1.71	.68
Gender	Male N = 156	13 8.3%	56 35.9%	87 55.8%	1.53	.65
	Female N = 274	43 15.7%	136 49.6%	95 34.7%	1.81	.69
N = 430						
Locality	City N = 113	14 12.4%	37 32.7%	62 54.9%	1.58	.70
	Town N = 152	23 15.1%	63 41.4%	66 43.4%	1.72	.71
N = 429 Missing 1						
	Rural N = 164	19 11.6%	92 56.1%	53 32.3%	1.79	.63

The results in Table 5.15 show that:

- 13.0% of students regard membership of religion as ‘very important’.
- 44.7% of students regard membership of religion as ‘important’.
- 42.3% of students regard membership of religion as ‘unimportant’.
- Female students rate the importance of membership of religion higher than male students.

The results of the t-test:  $t(428) = - 4.225$ ,  $p = .000$ , indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean values of male and female students.



The results of the t-test:  $t(428) = -4.225$ ,  $p = .000$ , indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean values of male and female students.

- With regard to locality, the analysis of variance shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of city, town and rural students.

ANOVA:  $F(2,426) = 3.432$ ,  $p = .033$

*Post hoc* Scheffé test: city/rural,  $p = .034$   
city/town,  $p = .246$   
town/rural,  $p = .615$

Rural students rate membership more highly than town students who, in turn, rate it more highly than city students. The post hoc *Scheffé* test indicates that the significant difference lies between the means for city and rural students only.

### 5.5.7 Serious Consideration of Discontinuing the Practice of Religion

Q. 29 investigated if any of the 430 students, who are still affiliated, have seriously considered discontinuing the practice of religion. The responses show that 172 (40.0%) students have done so. These responses have been analysed for gender, age, locality and faculty. The results are presented in Table 5.16.

Table 5. 16 Considered Discontinuing the Practice of Religion by Gender, Age, Locality and Faculty

Number of Responses = 172(40.0%)								Statistical measures
Gender N = 430	Male N= 153	Female N= 277						$x^2 = 7.469$ $df = 1$ $p = .006$
	74 48.3%	98 35.4%						
Age N= 430	18-19yrs. N = 190	20-21yrs. N = 174	22-23yrs. N = 66					$x^2 = 4.743$ $df = 2$ $p = .093$
	76 40.0%	62 35.5%	34 51.5%					
Locality N= 430	City N = 112	Town N = 153	Rural N = 165					$x^2 = 3.337$ $df = 2$ $p = .188$
	53 47.3%	58 37.9%	61 36.9%					
Faculty N= 429 Missing 1	Arts/ CS N = 153	Com N = 67	Eng N = 33	F-S/ T N = 28	Law N = 21	Med N = 29	Sc N = 98	$x^2 = 6.077$ $df = 6$ $p = .415$
	64 41.8%	21 31.3%	12 36.4%	10 35.7%	10 47.6%	10 34.5%	45 45.9%	

$x^2$  = chi-square,     $df$  = degrees of freedom,     $p$  = significance level

A higher percentage of males than females have seriously considered discontinuing the practice of religion. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant.

Students of all age groups, localities and faculties have seriously considered discontinuing the practice of religion. The chi-square tests show that the differences are not statistically significant. The results for gender, age and locality are illustrated in Fig. 5.16 Appendix C16.

5.5.8 Reasons for Considering Discontinuing the Practice of Religion

Q. 30 investigated the reasons why students considered discontinuing the practice of religion. Students were invited to give more than one reason if they so wished. A total of 172 students (75 male and 97 female) responded to this question. The responses were



analysed for gender. The percentages given for males and females are calculated on the total numbers of male and female respondents to this question. The responses together with the gender analysis are presented in Table 5.17.

**Table 5. 17 Reasons for Considering Discontinuing the Practice of Religion**

Reasons	Responses N = 172	Male N = 75	Female N = 97	Statistical measures
Disillusionment with its organisation	116 67.4%	51 68.0%	65 67.0%	$\chi^2 = .035$ $df = 1$ $p = .852$
Serious doubts about its beliefs	108 62.8%	48 64.0%	60 61.9 %	$\chi^2 = .040$ $df = 1$ $p = .841$
Disillusionment with its members	80 46.5%	29 38.7%	51 52.6%	$\chi^2 = 3.091$ $df = 1$ $p = .079$
Desire for freedom from its restrictions	42 24.4%	16 21.3%	26 26.8%	$\chi^2 = .701$ $df = 1$ $p = .402$
Other reasons	24 14.0%	9 12.0%	15 15.5%	-

$\chi^2$  = chi-square,     $df$  = degrees of freedom,     $p$  = significance level

The results in Table 5.17 show that:

- the objective reason ‘Disillusionment with its organisation’ occurred most frequently.
- the personal difficulty ‘Serious doubts about its beliefs’ was given by 62.8% of students.
- 46.5% showed disillusionment with the members of their religion.
- 24.4% desired to be free from the restrictions of religion.

The chi-square tests show that the differences between the male and female responses are not statistically significant for any of these four reasons.

The reasons given in the ‘Other’ category are as follows:

- Indifference: 8.
- Irrelevance of religion to modern life: 5.

- Personal tragedies: 5.
- Religion has been the cause of war and divisions: 2.
- Religion is not necessary for a good moral life: 2.
- Hypocrisy: 2.

### Summary

Membership of religion is high and is rated very important/important by 57.7% of students. 31.9% of students have made personal decisions to remain Christians while 24.1% remain because of the influence of their parents. Students have left religion mainly because of crises of faith. Many, who are still members, have seriously considered leaving because of disillusionment and crises of faith.

### Conclusion

**The hypothesis that the majority of students are members of a World Religion is accepted.**

## 5.6 PUBLIC WORSHIP

Qs. 31-34 investigate the hypothesis that high membership of religion translates into high attendance at religious services in accordance with the norms of Christian Churches. It also examines the reasons why students attend religious services. It looks, in particular, at the attendance at religious functions at UCC. Qs. 31-34 are as follows:

**31. Approximately how often do you attend religious services at present?**

- |                       |                          |                                      |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| More than once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> | Once or twice a year                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Once a week           | <input type="checkbox"/> | On specific occasions, e.g. weddings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Once a month          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Never                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |



32. Why do you attend religious services ?  
(You may tick more than one box if appropriate)

It is basic to my religious believe	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have always gone	<input type="checkbox"/>
I consider it my duty	<input type="checkbox"/>	To please my family	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel a better person for doing so	<input type="checkbox"/>	To pray for my needs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify)-----			
-----			

33. Do you attend any religious functions at UCC? Yes ☐ No ☐

34. If ‘Yes’, please indicate which services. (You may tick more than one item if appropriate)

Masses in the Honan Chapel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bible reflection/Prayer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taizé Prayer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prayer services of Christian Union	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prayers for Church Unity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Folk Group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Specify)-----			

5.6.1 Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services

Q.31 investigated the frequency of attendance at religious services for the 430 respondents who identified themselves as members of a Christian denomination. The frequency of attendance at religious services is shown in Table 5.18.

Table 5. 18 Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services

Frequency	More than once a week	Once a week	Once a month	Once or twice a year	On specific occasions	Never
Responses N = 430	10 2.3%	230 53.5%	76 17.7%	62 14.4%	47 10.9%	5 1.2%

The results show that 2.3% of students attend religious services more frequently than once a week; 53.5% attend weekly; 17.7% attend monthly; 14.4% attend once or twice a year; 10.9% attend on specific occasions, and 1.2% never attend. A summary of these results is illustrated in Fig. 5.17 Appendix C17.

To establish the factors which influence the frequency of attendance at religious services, cross-tabulations were carried out with gender, age, locality, accommodation type and membership of Christian denominations. The results are shown in Table 5.19.

**Table 5. 19 Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services by Gender, Age, Locality, Accommodation Type and Christian Denomination**

		Frequency			
		At least once a week	Once a month	Occasionally	Statistical measures
Gender	Male N = 153	80	21	52	$\chi^2 = 7.631$ df = 2 p = .022
		52.3%	13.7%	34.0%	
N = 430	Female N = 277	160	55	62	
		57.8%	19.9%	22.4%	
Locality	City N = 112	50	18	44	$\chi^2 = 18.369$ df = 4 p = .001
		44.6%	16.1%	39.3%	
	Town N = 152	81	29	42	
N = 429 missing 1		53.3%	19.1%	27.6%	
	Rural 165	108	29	28	
		65.5%	17.6%	17.0%	
Accommodation	Home N = 167	89	23	55	$\chi^2 = 6.911$ df = 2 p = .032
		53.3%	13.8%	32.9%	
N = 430	Other N = 263	151	53	59	
		57.4	20.2%	22.4%	
Ch. Den.	Ch. of Ir N = 11	1	5	5	-
		9.1%	45.5%	45.5%	
	R. Cath N = 414	235	70	109	
N = 430		56.8%	16.9%	26.3%	
	Other N = 5	4	1		
		80.0%	20.0%		

$\chi^2$  = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = significance level  
Ch of Ir = Church of Ireland, R. Cath = Roman Catholic, Other = Other Christian denomination



The results in Table 5.19 show that:

- females attend religious services more frequently than males. The chi-square test shows that the difference is significant. This is illustrated in Fig. 5.18 Appendix C18.
- city students attend religious services less frequently than town students, who, in turn, attend less frequently than rural students. The chi-square test shows that these differences are significant. This is illustrated in Fig. 5.19 Appendix C19.
- students who live at home attend religious services less frequently than those who do not live at home. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant.

Weekly attendance at religious service (Mass) is the norm for Roman Catholics. The results show that 56.8% of Roman Catholic students attend at least weekly. Monthly attendance at religious service (Communion Service) is the norm for members of the Church of Ireland. The results show the 54.6% of Church of Ireland students attend at least monthly. It is not possible to comment on the 'Other' category since it has only five students belonging to a variety of Churches.

Attendance at religious services was also investigated for age groups. No statistically significant differences emerged.

### **5.6.2 Reasons for attendance at religious services**

Q.32 investigated the reasons for attendance at religious services. Students were invited to give more than one reason if they so wished. 414 students (143 males and 271 females) gave responses. The responses were analysed for gender. The results are set out on Table 5.20 in descending order of frequencies. They are illustrated in Fig. 5.20 Appendix C20.

Table 5. 20 Reasons for Attendance at Religious Services

Category of Response	Total N = 414 Missing = 16	Male N = 143 Missing = 10	Female N = 271 Missing = 6
To please my family	168 40.6%	60 42.0%	108 39.9%
I feel a better person for doing so	124 30.0%	30 21.0%	94 34.7%
I have always gone	122 29.5%	42 29.4%	80 29.5%
It is basic to my belief	102 24.6%	37 25.9%	65 24.0%
To pray for my needs	98 23.7%	27 18.9%	71 26.2%
I consider it my duty	92 22.2%	34 23.8%	58 21.4%
To feel closer to God and others	16 3.9%	8 5.6%	7 2.6 %
I like going	12 2.9%	4 2.8%	8 3.0%
Time to think	6 1.4%	-	6 2.2%
Catholic guilt	2 0.5%	1 0.7%	1 0.4%

The total of 742 responses indicate that many students gave more than one response.

The results in Table 5.20 show that:

- ‘To please my family’ received the highest number of responses.
- many students are influenced by emotions i.e. ‘I feel a better person for doing so’, ‘To feel closer to God’, ‘I like going’ and ‘Catholic guilt’
- many students gave religious motivations i.e. ‘It is basic to my belief’ and ‘To feel closer to God and others’.
- many students attend because of the moral obligation i.e. ‘I consider it my duty’
- many students attend to pray for needs.

When compared, male and female responses were found to be quite similar except that:



- a higher percentage of females than males gave the emotional response ‘I feel a better person for doing so’.
- a higher percentage of females than males attend Religious Services ‘To pray for my needs’.

5.6.3 Attendance at Religious Services at UCC

Q.33 investigated the frequency of attendance at religious services at UCC.

69 (16%) students, who are members of Christian denominations, attend religious services at UCC. The responses have been analysed for gender, age, locality, faculty and Christian denomination. The results are shown on Table 5.21.

Table 5. 21 Attendance at Religious Services at UCC

								Statistical measures
Gender	Male	Female						$x^2 = 2.582$ , df = 1, p = .108
	N = 153	N = 277						
	19	50						
Age	18-19yrs.	20-21yrs.	22-23yrs.					$x^2 = 4.530$ , df = 2, p = .104
	N = 190	N = 174	N = 66					
	25	36	8					
Locality	City	Town	Rural					$x^2 = 7.566$ , df = 2, p = .023
	N = 112	N = 152	N = 165					
	11	22	36					
Faculty	Arts/ CS	Com	Eng	F-S/ T	Law	Med	Sc	$x^2 = 3.366$ , df = 6, p = .762
	N = 153	N = 67	N = 33	N = 28	N = 21	N = 29	N = 98	
	24	12	5	5	4	7	11	
Ch. Den.	Ch. of Ir	R. Cath	Other					-
	N = 11	N = 414	N = 5					
	1	66	2					
	9.1%	16.1%	40.0%					

$x^2$  = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = significance level

A higher percentage of female than male students attend religious services at UCC.

The result of the chi-square test shows that the difference is not statistically significant.

With regard to age groups, the result of the chi-square test shows that the differences between the groups are not statistically significant.

With regard to locality, rural students attend more frequently than town students who, in turn, attend more frequently than city students. The result of the chi-square test shows that the differences are statistically significant.

With regard to faculties, the result of the chi-square test shows that the differences between faculties are not statistically significant.

66 of the 69 students who attend religious functions at UCC are Roman Catholics. This is as expected since the Honan Chapel is a Catholic foundation.

#### **5.6.4 Nature of Religious services at UCC**

The religious services which students attend at UCC are as follows:

- Masses in the Honan Chapel: 64 (14.9%)
- Taizé Prayer: 2
- Bible reflection / prayer: 1
- Prayer services of Christian Union: 4

#### **Summary**

It had already been established that 88.8% of students are members of Christian denominations. The results here show that 56.8% of Roman Catholics attend Mass at least weekly and that 54.6% of Church of Ireland students attend Service at least monthly. The frequency of attendance at religious services is related to gender and locality. While the family has the most influence on attendance, students are also



influenced by religious, moral and emotional motives. 16% of students worship at UCC. They are mainly Catholics who attend Masses in the Honan Chapel.

Conclusion

The hypothesis that high membership of religion translates into high attendance at religious services in accordance with the norms of Christian Churches is rejected.

5.7 PRIVATE PRAYER

Qs. 35-37 were designed to establish if students prayed privately and if so, how often? and why? The data will be used to investigate the hypothesis that the practice of private prayer is related to the importance of membership of religion. Qs. 35-37 are as follows:

35. Do you pray privately?    Yes ☐                      No ☐  
[If 'No', please move to 38.]

36. If 'Yes', approximately how often do you pray?

Every day

☐

Once a week

☐

Occasionally

☐

37. Why do you pray? (You may tick more than one item if appropriate)

Out of routine

☐

For success in examinations

☐

I feel better for doing so

☐

In recognition of God in my life

☐

To make requests for myself and others

☐

Other (specify) -----

-----

5.7.1 Frequency of Private Prayer

The responses to Q. 35 indicate that 323 (75.1%) students who are members of Christian denominations pray privately. For purposes of analysis, the ‘No’ responses to Q. 35 were added as ‘never’ to the responses to Q. 36. The frequency of the practice of private prayer was cross-tabulated with gender and with the importance of membership of religion. The results are shown on Table 5.22.

Table 5. 22 Frequency of Private Prayer by Gender and by the Importance of Membership of Religion

						Statistical measures
Frequency		Every day	Once a week	Occas- ionally	Never	
Total: N = 430		127	20	176	107	
		29.5%	4.7%	40.9%	24.9%	
Gender N = 430	Male N = 153	42	4	54	53	x <sup>2</sup> = 15.190 df = 3 p = .002
	Female N = 277	85	16	122	54	
		30.7%	5.8%	44.0%	19.5%	
Importance of membership of religion N = 430	V. important N = 56	34	4	13	5	x <sup>2</sup> = 35.954 df = 4 p = .000
	Important N = 192	72	14	92	14	
	Not Important N = 182	21	2	71	88	
		11.5%	1.1%	39.0%	48.4%	

x<sup>2</sup> = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = significance level

The results on Table 5.22 show that:

- 29.5% of Christian students pray privately every day, 4.7% weekly, 40.9% occasionally and 24.9% never pray.
- female students pray more frequently than male students. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant.
- 60.7% of those for whom membership of religion is very important pray daily.  
37.5% of those for whom membership of religion is important pray daily.



11.5% of those for whom membership of religion is unimportant pray daily.

The chi-square test shows that these differences are statistically significant.

It may be concluded, therefore, that the more important membership of religion is to a student, the more like he/ she will pray daily.

Prayer frequency was also examined in terms of locality and age, but no significant differences emerged.

5.7.2 Reasons for Private Prayer

Q. 37 investigated the reasons why students pray privately. Students were allowed to give more than one reason for praying. A total of 330 students (104 males and 226 females) responded. The ‘other’ category was eliminated, as it was possible to assign the responses to the given categories. The responses were analysed for gender. The percentages given for males and females are calculated on the total numbers of male and female respondents to this question. The results are shown on Table 5.23.

Table 5. 23 Reasons for Praying Privately

	Respondents	Male	Female
	N = 330	N =104	N =226
To make requests for myself and others	252	79	173
	76.4%	76.0%	76.5%
In recognition of God in my life	199	72	127
	60.3%	69.2%	56.2%
Success in exams.	131	38	93
	39.7%	36.5%	41.2%
I feel better for doing so	113	30	83
	34.2%	28.8%	36.7%
Out of routine	32	18	14
	9.7%	17.3%	6.2%

The results in Table 5.23 show that:

- prayer of petition is the most popular form of prayer. It includes ‘To make requests for myself and others’ and ‘Success in exams’. This form of prayer implies a relationship of dependency on God.
- 66.3% of student pray as a recognition of God in their lives.
- 34.2% of students feel better for praying.
- 9.7% of students pray out of routine.
- More female students give the emotional reason ‘I feel better for doing so’.
- A higher percentage of male students pray as a matter of routine.

### **Summary**

The practice of private prayer is common among Christian students. Its frequency is related to the importance of membership of religion and to gender. Students pray for requests, to express recognition of God and because they find that the experience is good for them.

### **Conclusion**

**The hypothesis that the practice of private prayer is related to the importance of membership of religion is accepted.**



5.8 BELIEF IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES

**Qs. 38–45** were designed to test the hypothesis that the level of acceptance of **Christian beliefs** is related to the frequency of attendance at religious services.

Eight core doctrines of the Christian Churches were presented and students were asked to indicate their acceptance or rejection of each doctrine. Qs. 38-45 are as follows:

*Please indicate your acceptance or rejection of each of the following statements:-*

		Accept Strongly	Accept	Unsure	Reject	Strongly Reject
38.	The Bible is the word of God					
39.	God is the Creator of the world					
40.	Jesus is the Son of God					
41.	Jesus has risen from the dead					
42.	There is a Heaven					
43.	There is no survival of any kind after death					
44.	Hell does not exist					
45.	God forgives sinners who repent					

Items 43 and 44 were changed, for consistency, as follows:

**Table 5. 24 Reversal of Belief Statements**

Questionnaire Statement	Christian Belief
There is no survival of any kind after death	There is a life after death
Hell does not exist	There is a Hell

Scores on the Likert scale were assigned accordingly.

The results are presented in Table 5.25 in descending order of mean values. They are illustrated in Fig. 5.21 Appendix C21.

Table 5. 25 Belief in Christian Doctrines

Doctrine	Strongly Accept	Accept	Unsure	Reject	Strongly Reject	Mean	S.D.
Values on the Likert scale	5	4	3	2	2		
There is a Heaven N = 430	165 38.4%	150 34.9%	97 22.5%	13 3.0%	5 1.2%	4.07	.91
Jesus is the Son of God N = 430	140 32.6%	194 45.1%	74 17.2%	14 3.3%	8 1.9%	4.04	.88
God forgives sinners who repent N = 425 Missing 5	117 27.5%	192 45.2%	92 21.6%	15 3.5%	9 2.1%	3.92	.91
Jesus has risen from the dead N = 430	108 25.1%	177 41.2%	117 27.2%	18 4.2%	10 2.3%	3.84	.93
There is a life after death N = 430	139 32.3%	124 28.8%	131 30.5%	20 4.7%	16 3.7%	3.81	1.06
God is the Creator of the World N = 430	110 25.6%	161 37.4%	106 24.7%	39 9.1%	14 3.3%	3.73	1.04
The Bible is the Word of God N = 429 Missing 1	52 12.1%	158 36.8%	156 36.4%	51 11.9%	12 2.8%	3.44	.95
There is a Hell N = 430	49 11.4%	78 18.1%	206 47.9%	64 14.9%	33 7.7%	3.11	1.04

The results in Table 5.25 show a high level of belief in heaven, in the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins, life after death and that God is the creator of the world. Only 48.9% of students believe that the Bible is the Word of God and only 29.5% believe in Hell.

The hypothesis that the level of acceptance of Christian beliefs is related to the frequency of attendance at religious services was tested by comparing the means of those who attend religious services ‘at least weekly’, ‘monthly’ and ‘occasionally’.



ANOVA tests together with the *post hoc* Scheffé and Dunnett T3 tests were used for this purpose.

Table 5. 26 Christian Doctrines by Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services

	Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services						Statistical measures
Beliefs	At least Weekly		Monthly		Occasionally		
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	ANOVA tests
There is a Heaven	4.33	.78	3.92	.87	3.61	.99	F (2,425) = 28.0, p = .000 Dunnett T3: weekly/monthly: p = .001 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .076
Jesus is the Son of God	4.34	.73	3.84	.75	3.58	.96	F (2,423) = 37.8, p = .000 Dunnett T3: weekly/monthly: p = .000 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .105
God forgives sinners who repent	4.12	.90	3.73	.80	3.64	.88	F (2,423) = 13.5, p = .000 Scheffé test: weekly/monthly: p = .004 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .805
Jesus is risen from the dead	4.17	.80	3.63	.77	3.32	.96	F (2,427) = 42.9, p = .000 Dunnett T3 test: weekly/monthly: p = .000 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .044
There is life after death	3.97	1.04	3.79	1.02	3.50	1.06	F (2,427) = 7.86, p = .000 Scheffé test: weekly/monthly: p = .443 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .179
God is the Creator of the world	4.02	.95	3.42	1.09	3.19	1.15	F (2,427) = 28.1, p = .000 Dunnett T3 test: weekly/monthly: p = .000 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .423
The Bible is the Word of God	3.62	.96	3.21	1.01	3.05	1.02	F (2,427) = 14.4, p = .000 Scheffé test: weekly/monthly: p = .007 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .559
There is a Hell	3.26	.99	3.09	1.09	2.79	1.03	F (2,427) = 8.0, p = .000 Scheffé test: weekly/monthly: p = .490 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .137

The ANOVA test for each of the eight doctrines shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean values of those who attend religious services 'at least weekly', 'monthly' and 'occasionally'. Pair-wise comparisons by means of Scheffé (used when equal variances are assumed) and Dunnett T3 (used when equal variances are not assumed) tests indicate statistically significant differences between the means for weekly/monthly and weekly/occasionally, in most cases. The monthly/occasionally differences between means are not statistically significant except for 'Jesus is risen from the dead'. Those who attend religious services weekly show the highest level of Christian beliefs.

### **Conclusion**

**The hypothesis that the level of acceptance of Christian beliefs is related to the frequency of attendance at religious services is acceptable.**



5.9 VOLUNTARY WORK FOR CHARITABLE GROUPS

Qs. 46 &47 were designed to investigate the hypothesis that work for charitable groups is related to the importance of religion. The data required for this investigation was obtained from the responses to Q. 46. The responses to Q. 47 establish the nature of the charitable work undertaken by the students. Qs. 46 & 47 are as follows:

46. Have you worked for any charitable group at UCC or elsewhere?

Yes ☐ No ☐

47. If ‘Yes’, for which of the following did you work? (You may tick more than one if appropriate)

Vincent de Paul Society	<input type="checkbox"/>	Concern	<input type="checkbox"/>
L’Arche Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trócaire	<input type="checkbox"/>
Simon Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cork Local Charities	<input type="checkbox"/>
SHARE	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)-----	

5.9.1 Level of Participation in Work for Charitable Groups

The responses to Q.46 showed that 191 (44.5%) students, who are members of Christian denominations, have worked for charitable groups either at UCC or elsewhere. Work for charitable groups was cross-tabulated with the importance of membership of religion. The results are shown in Table 5.27.

Table 5. 27 Work for Charity by the Importance of Membership of Religion

	Membership of Religion			
	Very important N = 56	Important N = 192	Unimportant N = 179	Statistical measures
Work for charity N = 191	22 39.3%	86 44.8%	83 46.4%	$x^2 = .874$ $df = 2$ $p = .646$

$x^2$  = chi-square,     $df$  = degrees of freedom,     $p$  = significance level

The results on Table 5.27 show that a higher percentage of students for whom membership of religion is unimportant work for charitable groups than those for whom religion is very important/important. The chi-square test, however, shows that the differences between the groups are not statistically significant. There is no foundation for concluding that the greater the importance of religion the more students work for charitable groups.

Further analysis of the responses to Q.46. did not show a relationship between work for charitable groups and gender, age, faculty or school. A relationship with locality, however, emerged as shown in Table 5.28. Comparisons of subgroups in relation to work for charitable groups are illustrated in Fig. 5.22 Appendix C22.

Table 5. 28 Work for Charitable Groups by Locality

	Locality N = 430			
Work for Charity	City N = 112	Town N = 153	Rural N = 165	Statistical measures
N = 191	78 69.6%	55 35.9%	58 35.2%	$x^2 = 40.24$ , $df = 2$ , $p = .000$

$x^2$  = chi-square,     $df$  = degrees of freedom,     $p$  = significance level

The results in Table 5.28 show that 69.6% of city students, by comparison with 35.9% and 35.2% of town and rural students, respectively, have worked for charitable groups.



The statistically significant difference indicated by the chi-square test, obviously refers to the difference between city students and others.

5.9.2 Charities Supported by Students

Q. 47 investigated the charities for which students had worked. The results were analysed for gender and locality. They are shown in Table 5.29 and illustrated in Fig. 5.23 Appendix C23.

Table 5. 29 Charities for which Students have Worked

Charitable Group	Responses N = 430	Locality N = 430			Gender N = 430	
		City N = 112	Town N = 153	Rural N = 165	Male N = 153	Female N = 277
Vincent de Paul Society	47 10.9%	14 12.5%	14 9.2%	19 11.5%	10 6.5%	37 13.4%
L'Arche Community	6 1.4%	4 3.6%	1 0.6%	1 0.6%	-	6 2.2%
Simon Community	9 2.1%	4 3.6%	1 0.6%	4 2.4%	3 2.0%	6 2.2%
SHARE	73 17.0%	53 47.3%	11 7.2%	9 5.5%	29 19.0%	44 15.9%
Concern	43 10.0%	15 13.4%	16 10.5%	12 7.3%	13 8.5%	30 10.8%
Trócaire	36 8.4%	13 11.6%	15 9.8%	8 4.8%	9 5.9%	27 9.7%
Cork Local Charities	34 7.9%	17 15.2%	7 4.6%	10 6.1%	14 9.2%	20 7.2%
Other Charities	61 14.2%	23 20.5%	22 14.4%	16 9.7%	21 13.7%	40 14.4%

The results in Table 5.29 show that students have worked for a wide variety of charities. The most popular charity is SHARE, a Cork-city project for housing and caring for the elderly poor. This project was initiated by Presentation College, Cork (a boys' college). It is supported by a high percentage of males and by a high percentage of city students.

The Vincent de Paul Society operates as an official Society within UCC. It is the second most popular charity, supported by a higher percentage of female and rural students.

Concern (Third World) and Trócaire (A Catholic Church Third World project) are promoted by the chaplaincy at UCC. Student Societies raise funds for Cork Local Charities during Rag Week.

There is a wide variety of 31 charities listed in the 'Other Charities' category, such as The Irish Wheelchair Association, Surgeon Noonan Fund (supporting medical students who work overseas), COPE (helping the handicapped) and CASA (Caring and Sharing Association).

### **Summary**

Almost half the students have worked for charitable groups. Work for charity is not related to the importance of religion. City students, more than town or rural students have worked for charity. SHARE, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Concern, Trócaire and Cork Local Charities are the groups best supported by students.

### **Conclusion**

**The hypothesis that work for charitable groups is related to the importance of religion is rejected.**



5.10 CHAPLAINS AND CHAPLAINCY

Qs. 48-52 were designed to test the hypothesis that the percentage of students who know the chaplains and use of the chaplaincy is low. It also investigated students' notions of the chaplains and the reasons why some students use the chaplaincy while others do not. Qs. 48-52 are as follows:

47. Do you know the College Chaplain(s) of your religion to see?

Yes ☐ No ☐

49. Which of the following statements best describes your idea of a College Chaplain?

- A person who organises religious services ☐
- A person who is available to advise students ☐
- Other (*specify*)-----

50. Have you ever been to the College Chaplaincy ? Yes ☐ No ☐

If 'Yes', answer 51.	If 'No', answer 52.
51. What was your purpose in going there? (You may tick more than one box)	52. Which of the following prevented you? (You may tick more than one box)
To socialise with friends <input type="checkbox"/>	Did not know about it <input type="checkbox"/>
As a member of a Chaplaincy group <input type="checkbox"/>	Did not know what to expect there <input type="checkbox"/>
To speak to a Chaplain <input type="checkbox"/>	Did not know anyone going there <input type="checkbox"/>
To collect Concern/Trócaire card <input type="checkbox"/>	Fear of religion being imposed on me <input type="checkbox"/>
To have a Mass Card signed <input type="checkbox"/>	Fear of what my friends might think <input type="checkbox"/>
Other ( <i>specify</i> )-----	Other ( <i>specify</i> )-----
Now Answer 53.	Now Answer 53.

5.10.1 Students’ Knowledge of Chaplains

Q. 48 inquired if the students knew the chaplain(s) of their own denomination to see. The phrase ‘to see’ was intended to indicate that only a minimum knowledge was being investigated. 66 (15.3%) students responded positively. The responses were analysed for gender, age and locality. The results are shown in Table 5.30 and illustrated in Fig. 5.24 Appendix C24.

Table 5. 30 Students Who Know the Chaplains to see

				Statistical measures
Gender  N = 430	Male N = 153	Female N = 277		x <sup>2</sup> = 7.15    df = 1    p = .007
	14	52		
	9.2%	18.8%		
Age  N = 430	18-19yrs. N = 191	20-21yrs. N = 173	22-23yrs. N = 66	x <sup>2</sup> = 7.99    df = 2    p = .018
	19	35	12	
	9.9%	20.2%	18.2%	
Locality  N = 430	City N = 112	Town N = 153	Rural N = 165	x <sup>2</sup> = 8.22    df = 2    p = .016
	10	21	35	
	8.9%	13.7%	21.2%	

x<sup>2</sup> = chi-square,    df = degrees of freedom,    p = significance level

The results in table 5.30 show that:

- female students are more likely than male students to know the chaplains. The chi-square test shows that the difference between male and female students is statistically significant.
- students in the age groups 20-21yrs. and 22-23yrs. are more likely to know the chaplains than those in the 18-19yrs. age group. The chi-square test shows that the differences which occur are statistically significant.



➤ rural students are more likely to know the chaplains than city or town students. The chi-square test shows that the differences which occur are statistically significant.

Other sub-groups such as those of faculty and Christian denomination were also examined but no significant differences between the subgroups emerged.

5.10.2 Students’ Ideas of a College Chaplain

Q.49 requested students to select the statement which best described their idea of a College chaplain. 424 students responded. The responses, with an analysis for gender, are shown on Table 5.31 and illustrated in Fig. 5.25 Appendix C25.

Table 5. 31 Students’ Ideas of a College Chaplain

		Total N = 424 Missing 6	Male N = 153	Female N = 271 Missing 6
	A person who organises religious services	105 25%	37 24.3%	68 25.0%
	A person who is available to advise students	256 60.4%	93 61.2%	163 60.0%
	Both of the above	50 11.8%	17 11.2%	33 12.1%
	‘Other’ category ▼			
Positive	A person who mixes with the students	2 0.5%	-	2 0.7%
	A person who helps us lead a loving life	2 0.5%	2 1.3%	-
	A person who is kind and approachable	2 0.5%	-	2 0.7%
Neutral	Don’t know	5 1.2%	2 1.3%	3 1.1%
Negative	A person who is pious and preaches rights to others while standing behind an organisation which does wrong.	1 0.2%	1 0.7%	-
	A man awaiting transfer.	1 0.2%	1 0.7%	-

The results on Table 5.31 show that:

- 60.4% considered that the role of chaplains is to advise students.
- 25% regarded the role as that of organisers of religious services.
- 11.8% indicated that chaplains have a dual role, to organise religious services and to advise students.
- The ‘Other’ category contained some positive, neutral, and negative comments, as seen in Table 5.31.

Chi-square tests did not show statistically significant differences between male and female responses.

5.10.3 Number of Students Who Have Visited the chaplaincy

The responses to Q. 50 indicate that 27 (6.3%) students had been to the chaplaincy.

These responses were analysed for gender. The results are shown in Table 5.32.

Table 5. 32 Students Who Have Visited the Chaplaincy

			Statistical measures
Gender	Male N = 153	Female N = 277	$x^2 = 5.487, \quad df = 1, \quad p = .019$
N = 430	4	23	
	2.6%	8.3%	

$x^2$  = chi-square,     $df$  = degrees of freedom,     $p$  = significance level

The results in Table 5.32 show that a higher percentage of female than male students visited the chaplaincy. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant.

Further analyses were carried out for age, locality, faculty and Christian denomination. No statistically significant differences emerged.



5.10.4 Reasons for Visiting the Chaplaincy.

In Q. 52 students were asked why they visited the chaplaincy. The responses were analysed for gender. The results are presented in Table 5.33 in descending order of frequency.

Table 5. 33 Reasons why Students Visited the Chaplaincy by Gender

	Total N = 430	Male 153	Female 277
As a member of a chaplaincy group	11 2.6%	1 0.7%	10 3.6%
To socialise with friends	8 1.9%	3 2.0%	5 1.8%
To speak to a chaplain	3 0.7%	-	3 1.1%
To collect Trócaire/Concern card	3 0.7%	-	3 1.1%
To have a Mass card signed	3 0.7%	-	3 1.1%
To pray alone	1 0.2%	1 0.7%	-
To attend Christian Union Meetings	2 0.5%	1 0.7%	1 0.4%

The results in Table 5.33 show that:

- the two most common reasons given for visiting the chaplaincy were ‘As a member of a chaplaincy group’ and ‘To socialise with friends’.
- students also indicated that they visited the chaplaincy to speak to a chaplain, to collect Trócaire/Concern cards and Mass cards, to pray alone or to attend meetings of Christian Union.

### 5.10.5 Why students did not visit the chaplaincy

Q. 52 sought to establish why students did not visit the chaplaincy. They were invited to give more than one answer if they so wished. The responses were analysed for gender.

The results are shown in Table 5.34 and illustrated in Fig. 5.26 Appendix C26.

**Table 5. 34 Why Students Did Not Visit the Chaplaincy by Gender**

	<b>Total N = 430</b>	<b>Male N = 153</b>	<b>Female N = 277</b>	<b>Statistical measures</b>
<b>Did not know about the chaplaincy</b>	82 19.1%	26 17.0%	56 20.2%	Not significant
<b>Did not know what to expect</b>	83 19.3%	20 13.1%	63 22.7%	$\chi^2 = 7.48, df = 1,$ $p = .006$
<b>Did not know anyone going there</b>	87 20.2%	31 20.3%	56 20.2%	Not significant
<b>Fear of religion being imposed on me</b>	37 8.6%	14 9.2%	23 8.3%	Not significant
<b>Fear of what friends might think</b>	18 4.2%	11 7.2%	7 2.5%	$\chi^2 = 4.84, df = 1,$ $p = .028$
<b>‘Other’ category ↓</b>				-
<b>No need to go</b>	158 36.7%	69 45.1%	89 32.1%	
<b>No interest</b>	48 11.2%	19 12.4%	29 10.5%	
<b>No time</b>	10 2.4%	5 3.3%	5 1.8%	
<b>Didn’t want to go</b>	16 3.7%	4 2.6%	12 4.3%	
<b>Could not find it</b>	3 0.7%	1 0.7%	2 0.7%	
<b>Hypocrisy about the chaplaincy</b>	2 0.5%	1 0.7%	1 0.4%	

The results in Table 5.34 show that:

- the most common reason given for not visiting the chaplaincy was ‘No need to go’.



- many students do not know about the chaplaincy, the activities which take place there, or the people who go there.
  - fear of religion being imposed and fear of what friends might think prevented some students from going there.
  - some students had no interest in it, no time for it or simply did not want to go there.
- A few students could not find it. Two students were of the opinion that there is hypocrisy about the chaplaincy.
- a higher percentage of female than male students 'Did not know what to expect'. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant.
  - a higher percentage of male than female students were influenced by 'Fear of what my friends might think'. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant.
  - higher percentage of male than female students had 'No need to go'. It was not possible to test this response as it was one item within the 'other' category.

## Summary

The percentage of Christian students who know the chaplain of their own denomination to see is 15.3% . The majority of students (72.2%) consider that the function of the chaplains is to advise students. Less than half of the students (36.8%) see chaplains as organisers of religious services. 6.3% of students have visited the chaplaincy. Students go to the chaplaincy mainly as members of groups and to socialise with friends. Students do not go to the chaplaincy mainly because they have no need to go or because of lack of knowledge about it.

## Conclusion

**The hypothesis that the percentage of students who know the chaplains and use of the chaplaincy is low is accepted.**

5.11 BELIEF IN GOD

Q. 53 was designed to investigate students’ beliefs about God. The responses were used to test the hypothesis that belief in God is related to membership of religion. Students who are not members of a religion were included for this and subsequent questions. Q. 53 is as follows:

*Q.53. Regardless of whether you are a member of a Religious denomination, which of the following statements comes closest to expressing what you believe/don’t believe about God?*

I believe that God exists	<input type="checkbox"/>
While I have doubts, I do believe in God	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don’t believe in a personal God, but I do believe in a Higher Power.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don’t believe in God.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don’t know if God exists.	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of the above answers represents what I believe about God.	<input type="checkbox"/>
What I believe about God is ( <i>specify</i> )-----	
-----	

The responses to this question were cross-tabulated with membership of religion, gender and locality. The results are shown in Tables 5.35&36 and illustrated in Fig. 5.27 Appendix C27.



Table 5. 35 Belief / Non-Belief in God by Membership of Religion

		Statements of Belief / Non-Belief in God					
		I believe that God exists	While I have doubts, I do believe in God	Not in a Personal God, but in a Higher Power	I don't believe in God (Atheist)	I don't know if God exists (Agnostic)	Other statements of belief
Total responses		178	159	70	21	36	14
N = 478 Missing = 3		37.2%	33.3%	14.6%	4.4%	7.5%	2.9%
Religion *	Christians	170	156	58	9	25	11
	N = 429 Missing 1	39.6%	36.4%	13.5%	2.1%	5.8%	2.6%
	No Religion N =48 Missing 3	7	3	12	12	11	3
N = 477 Missing 4		14.6%	6.3%	25.0%	25.0%	22.9%	6.3%

$\chi^2$  = chi-square,     $df$  = degrees of freedom,     $p$  = significance level

The results in Table 5.35 show that:

- 37.2% of students believe that God exists. A further 33.3% believe even though they have doubts. Thus, a total of 70.5 % of students believe in God.
- 14.6% of students do not believe in a personal God but in a Higher Power.
- 4.4% are atheists.
- 7.5% are agnostics.

2.9% of students made statements in the ‘other’ category as follows:

- A Being who created the world: 2.
- God is in the way we live: 2.
- Everything revolves around God: 2.
- God is there for security: 1.
- God is a face, not a being: 1.
- God is there for me: 1.
- An unseen: 1.

- God is love: 1.
- A guardian angel for each of us: 1.
- I cannot believe God cares about me: 1.
- SHE is a soul: 1.

A cross-tabulation compares the beliefs of Christians with those who are not members of a religion. Christians have a higher level of belief in God than non-members. Non-members show a higher level of belief ‘Not in a personal God but in a Higher Power’. There are higher percentages of atheists and agnostics among non-members. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant:

$* x^2 = 90.339, \text{ df} = 5, \text{ p} = .000$

It must be recognised that a total of 20.9% of students who are not members of a religion believe in God and that a further 25% of them believe ‘Not in a Personal God but in a Higher Power’. Note must also be taken of the fact that there are atheists (2.1%) and agnostics (5.8%) among those who claim to be Christians.

**Table 5. 36 Belief/Non-belief in God by Gender and Locality**

		Statements of Belief / Non-Belief in God				
		I believe that God exists /While I have doubts, I do believe in God	Not in a Personal God, but in a Higher Power	I don't believe in God (Atheist)	I don't know if God exists (Agnostic)	Other statements of belief
Gender *	Male N = 178	110	31	13	17	
		61.8%	17.4%	7.3%	9.6%	4.5%
N = 477 Missing 4	Female N = 299	227	39	8	19	6
		75.9%	13.0%	2.7%	6.4%	2.0%
Locality **	City N = 133	86	21	7	15	4
		64.7%	15.8%	5.3%	11.3%	3.0%
	Town N = 173	119	34	9	6	5
N = 477 Missing 4		68.8%	19.7%	5.2%	3.5%	2.9%
	Rural N = 171	132	14	5	15	5
		77.2%	8.2%	2.9%	8.8%	2.9%

$x^2 = \text{chi-square}, \text{ df} = \text{degrees of freedom}, \text{ p} = \text{significance level}$



The results of the cross-tabulation show that females have a higher level of belief in God than males. A higher percentage of males believe 'Not in a Personal God but in a Higher Power'. Also a higher percentage of males are atheists and agnostics. The chi-square test shows that these results are statistically significant:

$$* \quad x^2 = 17.896, \quad df = 5, \quad p = .003$$

City students show a lower level of belief in God than town students who, in turn, show a lower level of belief than rural students. The chi-square test shows that these results are statistically significant:

$$** \quad x^2 = 20.64, \quad df = 10, \quad p = .024$$

### **Summary**

76.0% of Christians by comparison with 20.9% of those who are not members of a religion believe in a personal God. Belief in God is also related to gender and locality. Female students and rural students show the highest levels of belief.

### **Conclusion**

**The hypothesis that belief in God is related to membership of religion is accepted.**

5.12 SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES

Qs.54-55 were designed to test the hypothesis that spiritual experience is common and is not confined to those who are members of a religion. Q.54 inquired if students had spiritual experiences. Four examples of spiritual experiences were suggested and students were requested to respond to each example. Q. 55 investigated the circumstances in which spiritual experiences occurred and the frequency. Qs. 54-55 are as follows:

54. Did you ever have any of the following spiritual experiences?

- (i)

An awareness of being in the presence of God

Yes ☐

No ☐
- (ii)

An experience of communication with God

Yes ☐

No ☐
- (iii)

An experience of deep personal peace

Yes ☐

No ☐
- (iv)

An experience of detachment from this world

Yes ☐

No ☐

55. If you have answered ‘Yes’ to any item in Q.54, did it occur in the following instances?

		Very often	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1	In a natural setting					
2	When listening to music					
3	When praying alone or with others					
4	On happy occasions					
5	On sad occasions					
6	Other ( <i>specify</i> ) -----					



5.12.1 Nature of Spiritual Experiences

The responses to Q. 54 show that 315 (65.5%) students (118 male and 197 female) had at least one type of spiritual experience (see Fig. 5.28 Appendix C28). The responses were cross-tabulated with membership of religion. The results are shown on Tables 5.34 and illustrated in Figs. 5.29 Appendices C29.

Table 5. 37 Spiritual Experiences by Membership of Religion

	Totals	Religion		
	N = 481	N = 481		
Spiritual Experiences		Christians	No Religion	
		N = 430	N = 51	
An awareness of being in the presence of God	131 27.2%	121 28.1%	6 11.8%	$x^2 = 5.54, df = 1, p = .019$
An experience of communication with God	92 19.1%	87 20.2%	4 7.8%	$x^2 = 3.38, df = 1, p = .066$
An experience of deep personal peace	223 46.4%	195 45.3%	27 52.9%	$x^2 = 1.32, df = 1, p = .246$
An experience of detachment from this world	122 25.4%	101 23.5%	21 41.2%	$x^2 = 7.00, df = 1, p = .008$

$x^2$  = chi-square,     $df$  = degrees of freedom,     $p$  = significance level

The results on Table 5.37 that:

- 27.2% of students have experienced an awareness of the presence of God. A higher percentage of Christians than those who are not members of a religion have had this experience. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant.
- 19.1% of students have experienced communication with God. A higher percentage of Christians than those who are not members of a religion have had this experience. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant.

➤ 46.4% of students have experienced deep personal peace. A higher percentage of those who are not members of a religion than Christians have had this experience.

The chi-square test shows that the difference is not statistically significant.

➤ 25.4% of students have experienced detachment from this world. A higher percentage of those who are not members of a religion than Christians have had this experience. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant.

A total of 34 (66.6%) students who are not members of a religion have had at least one type of spiritual experience.

A cross-tabulation was carried out to investigate if spiritual experience is related to gender. The results are shown in Table 5.38 and illustrated in Fig. 5.30 Appendix C30.

Table 5. 38 Spiritual Experiences by Gender

	Gender		Statistical measures
	N = 481		
Spiritual Experiences	Male N =181	Female N = 300	
An awareness of being in the presence of God	40 22.1%	91 30.2%	$x^2 = 3.77$ df = 1, p = .052
An experience of communication with God	32 17.7%	60 20.0%	$x^2 = .372$ df = 1, p = .542
An experience of deep personal peace	93 51.4%	130 43.3%	$x^2 = 3.05$ df = 1, p = .08
An experience of detachment from this world	59 32.6%	63 21.0%	$x^2 = 8.14$ df = 1, p = .004

$x^2$  = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = significance level

Table 5.38 shows the numbers of male and female students who have had spiritual experiences. The chi-square tests show that the differences are not statistically



significant except for the experience of detachment from this world which is experienced by a higher percentage of male than female students.

5.12.2 Circumstances and Frequency of Spiritual Experiences

The circumstances under which spiritual experiences occur and the frequency with which they occur are shown in Table 5.39 in order of decreasing frequency. They are illustrated Fig. 5.31 Appendix C31.

Table 5. 39 Circumstances and Frequency of Spiritual Experiences

Circumstances	Frequency					Statistical measures	
	Very often	Often	Some-times	Seldom	Never	Mean	S.D.
Value on Likert Scale	5	4	3	2	1		
In a natural setting N = 249	40	63	96	22	28	3.26	1.17
Happy occasions N = 256	36	69	91	31	29	3.20	1.17
Sad occasions N = 252	36	64	69	32	51	3.00	1.33
Listening to music N = 246	29	49	64	47	57	2.78	1.32
Praying alone or with others N = 242	16	46	85	33	62	2.66	1.23

The results in Table 5.39 show that:

- spiritual experiences take place most often in a natural setting.
- students have had spiritual experiences on happy and sad occasions and when listening to music.
- spiritual experiences take place least often when praying. Prayer seldom or never provides spiritual experience for 95 students.

23 students indicated other circumstances in which they had spiritual experiences. These are as follows:

- When on drugs: 6.
- When alone for a long time: 6.
- When with a close friend or close friends: 5.
- In the presence of a holy person or place: 4.
- When composing: 2.

### **Summary**

The majority of students (65.5%) have had spiritual experiences. The most common spiritual experience is that of deep personal peace. Membership of religion is not a determining factor. Spiritual experience occurs most frequently in a natural setting.

### **Conclusion**

**The hypothesis, that spiritual experience is common and is not confined to those who are members of a religion, is accepted.**



5.13 MEANINGFULNESS OF LIFE

Q. 56 was designed to test the hypothesis that most students find life meaningful.

The data were used to investigate if membership of religion or other factors are related to the meaningfulness of life. Q.56 is as follows:

*Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statement.*

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
56.	Life is meaningful					

The responses to Q.56 are shown in Table 37 and illustrated in Fig. 5.32 Appendix C32.

To investigate if religion is an influential factor, meaningfulness of life was cross-tabulated with membership of religion. The results are included in Table 5.40.

Table 5. 40 Meaningfulness of life by Membership of Religion

		Strongly agree/ Agree	Undecided	Disagree /Strongly disagree	Statistical measures
Total N = 476 Missing = 5		409 85.9%	51 10.7%	16 3.4%	
Religion	Christian N = 425 Missing = 5	371 87.3%	41 9.6%	13 3.1%	x <sup>2</sup> = 6.163, df = 2, p = .046
	No Religion N = 51	38 74.5%	10 19.6%	3 5.9%	

x<sup>2</sup> = chi-square,    df = degrees of freedom,    p = significance level

The results on Table 5.40 show that:

- the majority of students (85.8%) strongly agree/ agree that life is meaningful. 10.7% are undecided and 3.5% disagree/ strongly disagree with the statement.

➤ a higher percentage of students who are members of a Christian denomination than those who are not members of a religion strongly agree/ agree that life is meaningful. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant. An investigation was carried out by means of a cross-tabulation to inquire if meaningfulness of life is related to gender. The results are shown on table 5.41.

Table 5. 41 Life is Meaningful by Gender

		Strongly agree/Agree	Undecided	Disagree /Strongly disagree	Statistical measures
Gender	Male	146	20	12	$\chi^2 = 10.24$ , df = 2 p = .006
	N =178	82.0%	11.2%	6.7%	
	Female	263	31	4	
N = 476 Missing 5		88.3%	10.4%	1.3%	
N = 298					

The results on Table 5.41 show that a higher percentage of female than male students strongly agree/ agree with the statement ‘Life is meaningful’. The chi-square test shows that the difference is statistically significant.

Further tests were carried out to investigate if meaningfulness of life is related to locality, age or the importance of academic success. No statistically significant results emerged. Post-graduate students were found to have a high score of 4.41 on the Likert scale (1-5).

The mean scores on the Likert scale (1-5) for gender, age, locality, religion and post-graduates are illustrated in Fig. 5.33 Appendix C33.

Summary

The majority of students show a positive attitude to life. The meaningfulness of life is related to membership of religion and to gender.

Conclusion

The hypothesis that most students find life meaningful is accepted.



### 5.14 MORAL VALUES

**Qs. 57-67** were designed to investigate the hypothesis that moral values are related to religion. All respondents were requested to complete these questions. The three Muslim students, however, were excluded from the analysis because it was considered that three cases were too few. The comparisons were then made between Christian and those who are not members of a religion. Qs. 57-67 are as follows:

*Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements:*

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
57	Abortion is every woman's right.					
58.	Sex should be reserved for marriage.					
59.	Divorce should be available in every country.					
60.	Euthanasia is acceptable.					
61.	World resources should be shared according to need.					
62.	Excessive drinking is acceptable.					
63.	Taking soft drugs is acceptable.					
64.	It is a moral offence to cheat at examinations					
65.	Marriages between gay couples should be recognised in society.					
66.	It is wrong to kill or seriously injure another person.					
67.	Moral principles are important in helping to create a happy family life.					

For consistency, statements which were not expressed in accordance with traditional Christian values in the questionnaire were changed as follows:

**Table 5. 42 Reversal of Moral Values Statements**

<b>Questionnaire Statement</b>	<b>Restated in Accordance with Traditional Christian Values</b>
Abortion is every woman’s right	Abortion is not every woman’s right
Divorce should be available in every country	Divorce should not be available in every country.
Euthanasia is acceptable	Euthanasia is not acceptable
Excessive drinking is acceptable.	Excessive drinking is not acceptable.
Taking soft drugs is acceptable.	Taking soft drugs is not acceptable.
Marriages between gay couples should be recognised in society.	Marriages between gay couples should not be recognised in society.



In Table 5.43 the statements are arranged in descending order of mean values on the Likert scale. Thus, the level of agreement with traditional Christian moral values decreases down the table.

**Table 5. 43 Level of Agreement with Traditional Christian Moral Values**

		Agreement with Traditional Christian Moral Values						
		Strongly agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	S.D.
Values on Likert Scale		5	4	3	2	1		
	N							
It is wrong to kill or seriously injure another person	480 Missing 1	374 77.9%	67 14.0%	15 3.1%	8 1.7%	16 3.3%	4.61	0.90
Moral principles are important in helping to create a happy family life.	476 Missing 5	202 42.4%	233 48.9%	33 6.9%	4 0.8%	4 0.8%	4.31	0.71
World resources should be shared according to need	474 Missing 7	167 35.2%	224 47.3%	56 11.8%	20 4.2%	7 1.5%	4.11	0.87
It is a moral offence to cheat at examinations	476 Missing 5	105 22.1%	216 45.4%	66 13.9%	71 14.9%	18 3.8%	3.67	1.09
Excessive drinking is not acceptable	478 Missing 3	78 16.3%	204 42.7%	97 20.3%	90 18.8%	9 1.9%	3.53	1.03
Taking soft drugs is not acceptable	478 Missing 3	94 19.7%	144 30.1%	93 19.5%	131 27.4%	16 3.3%	3.35	1.17
Abortion is not every woman's right	477 Missing 4	88 18.4%	106 22.2%	97 20.3%	114 23.9%	72 15.1%	3.05	1.34
Euthanasia is not acceptable	473 Missing 8	71 15.0%	63 13.3%	167 35.3%	142 30.0%	30 6.3%	3.01	1.14
Marriages of gay couples should not be recognised in society	476 Missing 5	55 11.6%	48 10.1%	115 24.2%	180 37.8%	78 16.4%	2.63	1.21
Divorce should not be available in every country	476 Missing 5	31 6.5%	59 12.4%	104 21.8%	194 40.8%	88 18.5%	2.48	1.12
Sex should be reserved for marriage	480 Missing 1	20 4.2%	26 5.4%	69 14.4%	219 45.6%	146 30.4%	2.07	1.02

An examination of the mean value for each item shows that:

- students are highly opposed to killing or seriously injuring another person.  
(Depending on definition of abortion)
- students rate the importance of moral values in helping to create a happy family life very highly.
- students are strongly in favour of the equitable distribution of world resources.
- the majority of students (67.5%) are not in favour of cheating at examinations
- students show a considerable degree of tolerance for excessive drinking and taking of soft drugs.
- students hold liberal views in relation to sexual morality i.e. 'Sex should be reserved for marriage', 'Abortion is not every woman's right', 'Divorce should not be available in every country', and 'Marriages of gay couples should not be recognised in society'.
- students hold a liberal view regarding euthanasia.

The level of agreement with traditional Christian moral values is illustrated in Fig. 5.34 Appendix C34.

The hypothesis that moral values are related to religion was tested twice. Firstly, independent sample t-tests were used to compare the means of the moral values for Christians and those who are not members of a religion. Secondly, ANOVA tests were used to investigate if the frequency of attendance at religious services is related to moral values.

The comparison of the means for Christians and those who are not members of a religion are shown in Table 5.44.



**Table 5. 44 Moral Values by Membership of Religion**

	Membership of Religion				
Moral Values	Christian		No Religion		
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
It is wrong to kill or seriously injure another person	4.61	.91	4.68	.79	t(475) = -.530, p = .596
Moral principles are important in helping to create a happy family life.	4.33	.68	4.14	.95	t(471) = 1.798, p = .073
World resources should be shared according to need	4.07	.89	4.41	.61	t(469) = -2.594, p = .010
It is a moral offence to cheat at examinations	3.68	1.09	3.57	1.15	t(471) = .639, p = .523
Excessive drinking is not acceptable	3.51	1.02	3.60	1.11	t(473) = -.579, p = .563
Taking soft drugs is not acceptable	3.44	1.13	2.60	1.28	t(473) = 4.878, p = .000
Abortion is not every woman's right	2.06	.89	1.63	.81	t(473) = 3.212, p = .001
Euthanasia is not acceptable	3.06	1.13	2.55	1.12	t(468) = 2.911, p = .004
Marriages of gay couples should not be recognised in society	2.70	1.20	1.90	.98	t(471) = 4.494, p = .000
Divorce should not be available in every country	2.56	1.13	1.80	.83	t(72.11) = 5.870, p = .000
Sex should be reserved for marriage	2.11	1.02	1.56	.67	t(475) = 3.765, p = .000

The results on Table 5.44 show that:

➤ no statistically significant differences were found between Christians and those who are not members of a religion for:

- 'It is wrong to kill or seriously injure another person'.
- 'It is a moral offence to cheat at examinations'.
- 'Excessive drinking is not acceptable'

- Christians have a higher level of acceptance of ‘Moral principles are important in helping to create a happy family life’ than those who are not members of a religion. The t-test shows that the difference is not statistically significant.
- those who are not members of a religion show a higher level of acceptance of ‘World resources should be shared according to need’ than Christians. The t-test shows that the difference is statistically significant.
- Christians have a higher level of rejection of euthanasia than those who are not members of a religion. The t-test shows that the difference is statistically significant.
- Christians have a higher level of acceptance of sexual moral values than those who are not members of a religion. The t-tests show that the differences are statistically significant.

The results of the analysis of moral values by frequency of attendance at religious services are shown in two Tables 5.45a and 5.45b, as they do not fit in a single table.



**Table 5. 45a Moral Values by Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services**

	Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services						
Moral Values	At least Weekly		Monthly		Occasionally		
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	ANOVA tests
It is wrong to kill or seriously injure another person	4.57	.96	4.70	.88	4.63	.81	F (2,426) = .616, p = .541 Scheffé test: weekly/monthly: p = .567 weekly/occasionally: p = .836 monthly/occasionally: p = .888
Moral principles are important in helping to create a happy family life.	4.38	.67	4.38	.59	4.19	.74	F (2,422) = 3.27, p = .039 Scheffé test: weekly/monthly: p = 1.000 weekly/occasionally: p = .050 monthly/occasionally: p = .169
World resources should be shared according to need	3.98	.91	4.26	.79	4.13	.90	F (2,422) = 3.18, p = .042 Scheffé test: weekly/monthly: p = .059 weekly/occasionally: p = .607 monthly/occasionally: p = .343
It is a moral offence to cheat at examinations	3.75	1.08	3.79	1.03	3.45	1.11	F (2,423) = 3.55, p = .030 Scheffé test: weekly/monthly: p = .973 weekly/occasionally: p = .047 monthly/occasionally: p = .108
Excessive drinking is not acceptable	3.53	1.11	3.59	.81	3.42	.95	F (2,424) = .635, p = .530 Dunnett T3 test: weekly/monthly: p = .943 weekly/occasionally: p = .753 monthly/occasionally: p = .510
Taking soft drugs is not acceptable	3.74	1.07	3.28	1.05	2.90	1.09	F (2,424) = 24.21, p = .000 Scheffé test: weekly/monthly: p = .006 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .062

The results in Table 5.45a show that the more frequently students attend religious services the higher their level of agreement with the following four moral values:

- Moral principles are important in helping to create a happy family life.
- World resources should be shared according to need.
- It is a moral offence to cheat at examinations.
- Taking soft drugs is not acceptable.

The ANOVA tests show that the differences are statistically significant. The *post hoc* Scheffé and Dunnett T3 tests were used to examine the effect of frequency, pair-wise. An examination of these results indicates that students who attend religious services weekly show the highest level of agreement with these moral values.

Acceptance of the following two moral values:

- It is wrong to kill or seriously injure another person.
- Excessive drinking is not acceptable.

was not found to be related to the frequency of attendance at religious services.

Statistically significant differences were not found between those who attend weekly, monthly, or occasionally.

**Table 45b Moral Values by Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services**

	Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services						
Moral Values	At least Weekly		Monthly		Occasionally		
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	ANOVA tests
Abortion is not every woman's right	3.4	1.23	2.96	1.33	2.65	1.28	F (2,425) = 13.251, p = .000 Scheffé test: weekly/monthly: p = .043 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .280
Euthanasia is not acceptable	3.28	1.15	3.05	1.00	2.60	1.01	F (2,422) = 14.59, p = .000 Dunnett T3 test: weekly/monthly: p = .287 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .009
Marriages of gay couples should not be recognised in society	2.86	1.21	2.24	1.17	2.55	1.16	F (2,423) = 5.12, p = .006 Scheffé test: weekly/monthly: p = .021 weekly/occasionally: p = .075 monthly/occasionally: p = .770
Divorce should not be available in every country	2.81	1.18	2.50	1.03	2.10	.93	F (2,422) = 16.39, p = .000 Dunnett T3 test: weekly/monthly: p = .088 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .020
Sex should be reserved for marriage	2.36	1.10	1.91	.82	1.75	.80	F (2,426) = 17.15, p = .000 Dunnett T3 test: weekly/monthly: p = .001 weekly/occasionally: p = .000 monthly/occasionally: p = .443



The results in Table 5.45b show that the more frequently students attend religious services the higher the level of agreement with the five moral values:

- Abortion is not every woman's right.
- Euthanasia is not acceptable.
- Marriages of gay couples should not be recognised in society.
- Divorce should not be available in every country.
- Sex should be reserved for marriage.

The ANOVA tests show that the differences are statistically significant. The *post hoc* Scheffé and Dunnett T3 tests were used to examine the affect of frequency, pair-wise. An examination of these results indicates that students who attend religious services weekly show the highest level of agreement with these moral values.

### Summary

The levels of agreement with traditional Christian moral values vary. The levels of agreement with sexual moral values and the rejection of euthanasia are low. The highest levels of agreement are found with values regarding killing or injuring people, the importance of moral principles for a happy family life, the sharing of world resources and cheating. There is considerable tolerance of excessive drinking and the taking of soft drugs.

The level of agreement with traditional Christian moral values is higher for Christians than for those who are not members of a religion for some values. The difference between the two groups is not significant regarding killing or injuring, moral principles important for family life, cheating and drinking. Those who are not members of a religion show greater concern that world resources should be shared according to need. Frequency of attendance at religious services is related to some values, especially those regarding sexual morality.

Conclusion

The hypothesis that moral values are related to religion is acceptable but with some reservations.

5.15 DISCUSSION OF RELIGION WITH FRIENDS

Q. 68 was designed to test the hypothesis that religion is seldom or never discussed with friends. Q. 68 is as follows:

Q.68 I discuss religion with my friends	Often	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Seldom	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

The responses, often, seldom and never, were assigned the values 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The results are shown in Table 5.46 and illustrated in Fig. 5.35 Appendix C35.

Table 5. 46 Frequency of discussion of religion with friends

	Frequency			Statistical measures	
	Often	Seldom	Never	Mean	S. D.
Value	3	2	1		
Total Responses	68	278	130	1.87	.63
N = 476	14.3%	58.4%	27.3%		



The results in Table 5.46 show that 14.3% of students often discuss religion with friends, 58.4% seldom do so and 27.3% never do so.

Cross-tabulations were carried out to investigate which variables may be related to the discussion of religion. The results for the frequency of discussion of religion with friends by gender and accommodation are shown on Table 5.47

**Table 5. 47 Frequency of Discussion of Religion with Friends by Gender and Accommodation**

		Frequency			Statistical measures		
		Often	Seldom	Never	Mean	S. D.	T-tests
Value		3	2	1			
Gender	Male N = 178 Missing 4	24 13.5%	91 51.1%	63 35.4%	1.78	.67	t(345.36) = -2.381 p = .021
	Female N = 298 Missing 4	44 14.8%	187 62.8%	67 22.5%	1.92	.61	
Accommod- ation	Home N = 191 Missing 4	18 9.4%	110 57.6%	63 33.0%	1.76	.61	t(474) = -3.001 p = .003
	Other N = 285 Missing 4	50 17.5%	168 58.9%	67 23.5%	1.94	.64	

The results on Table 5.47 show that

- females discuss religion more frequently than males. The t-test indicates that the difference is statistically significant.
- students who live away from home discuss religion more frequently than those who live at home. The t-test indicate that the difference is statistically significant.

Sub-groups of other variables such as age, locality, faculty and membership of religion were also investigated but no statistically significant results emerged. Those who visited the chaplaincy were found to discuss religion more frequently than those who did not visit it but the difference is not statistically significant.

Conclusion

The hypothesis that religion is seldom or never discussed with friends is accepted.

5.16 DESIRE TO BE BETTER INFORMED ABOUT RELIGIOUS MATTERS

Q. 69 was designed to test the hypothesis that few students desire to be better informed about religious matters. Q. 69 is as follows:

69. I would like to be better informed about religious matters?

Yes ☐ No ☐

In response to this question, 223 (47.9%) students indicated that they wish to be better informed about religious matters. To establish which categories of students desire to be better informed about religion, cross-tabulations were carried out with the variables: gender, age, locality, faculty, religion, visits to the chaplaincy and the importance of ‘Religious issues’. The results are shown in Table 5.48 and illustrated in Fig. 5.36-37 Appendix C36-37.



Table 5. 48 Desire to be Better Informed about Religious Matters

						Statistical measures
<b>Gender</b>  N = 466 Missing 18	<b>Male</b> N = 176	<b>Female</b> N = 290				$x^2 = .211$ , $df = 1$ , $p = .727$
	82	141				
	46.6%	48.6%				
<b>Age</b>  N = 466 Missing 18	<b>18-19yrs.</b> N = 193	<b>20-21yrs.</b> N = 191	<b>22-23yrs.</b> N = 82			$x^2 = 4.96$ , $df = 2$ , $p = .084$
	83	94	46			
	43.0%	49.2%	56.1%			
<b>Locality</b>  N = 466 Missing 18	<b>City</b> N = 134	<b>Town</b> N = 168	<b>Rural</b> N = 164			$x^2 = .264$ , $df = 2$ , $p = .876$
	62	83	78			
	46.3%	49.4%	47.6%			
<b>Christians</b>  N = 413 Missing 17	<b>Ch. of I.</b> N = 11	<b>R. Cath</b> N = 397	<b>Other Ch.</b> N = 5			$x^2 = 9.47$ , $df = 6$ , $p = .149$
	4	192	2			
	36.4%	48.4%	40.0%			
<b>Chaplaincy</b>  N = 413 Missing 17	<b>Visit</b> N = 27	<b>Don't visit</b> N = 386				$x^2 = 9.71$ , $df = 1$ , $p = .003$
	20	181				
	74.1%	46.9%				
<b>Religious Issues</b>  N = 463 Missing 21	<b>Very important</b> N = 25	<b>Important</b> N = 126	<b>Undecided</b> N = 98	<b>Not very important</b> N = 145	<b>Un-important</b> N = 69	$x^2 = 28.5$ , $df = 2$ , $p = .000$
	21	85	45	57	14	
	84.0%	67.5%	45.9%	39.3%	20.3%	

The results in Table 5.48 show that:

- students of both genders, of all age groups, localities, and Christian denominations desire to be better informed about religious matters. The chi-square tests show that there are no statistically significant differences between subgroups of these variables.
- 74.1% of the students who visit the chaplaincy would like to be better informed about religious matters. The chi-square test shows that the difference between these students and those who do not visit the chaplaincy is statistically significant.

- The higher students rate the importance of ‘Religious Issues’, the greater their desire to be better informed about religious matters. The chi-square test shows that the differences are statistically significant.

There were two other results which do not appear in Table 5.44.

- 1) 20 (39.2%) students who are not members of a religion desire to be better informed about religious matters.
- 2) All three Muslim students desire to be better informed about religious matters.

**Conclusion**

The hypothesis that few students desire to be better informed about religious matters is rejected.

**5.17 REACTIONS TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Q.70 invited students to react to the questionnaire. The question was presented as follows:

70.	What is your overall reaction to this questionnaire? -----
	-----
	-----

439 (90.7%) students responded. The reactions were reduced to six statements which were divided into three main categories; positive, neutral and negative. The frequency with which each statement occurred, together with the breakdown for Christians and for those who are not members of any Religion are presented on Table 5.49.



Table 5. 49 Reactions to the Questionnaire

Type of reaction	Reaction Statements N = 439	Frequency	Christians N = 390	No Religion N = 47
Positive 75.8%	Made me think deeply about my religion	158 36.0%	149 38.2%	9 19.1%
	Interesting; would like to see the results	141 32.1%	125 32.1%	16 34.0%
	Questions are relevant to today's society	34 7.7%	31 7.9%	3 6.4%
Neutral 13.9%	Indifferent	61 13.9%	51 13.1%	10 21.3%
Negative 10.3%	Questions too general; responses too limited.	35 8.0%	31 7.9%	4 8.5%
	What is the point?	10 2.3%	5 1.3%	5 10.6%

The results in Table 5.49 show that:

- 75.8% of students gave positive responses. The statement ‘Made me think deeply about my religion’ indicates that 36.0% of the students, at least, were willing to give serious thought to religion. 32.1% found the questionnaire interesting and would like to see the results. 7.7% affirmed the relevance of the questionnaire to today’s society.
- 13.9% showed indifference.
- 10.3% gave negative responses, such as, ‘Questions too general; responses too limited’ and ‘What is the point’? There were no aggressive or angry reactions.
- 59.5% of students who are not members of any Religion gave positive responses.
- In comparing the reactions of Christians with those who are not members of a religion, it was found that 78.2.0% of the former by comparison with 59.5% of the latter gave positive response. Those who are not members of a religion gave higher percentages of neutral and negative responses than Christians.

Overall, the reactions indicate that the questionnaire was well received by the students.

**CHAPTER V1**

**DISCUSSION**



# DISCUSSION

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The students whose religiosity is the focus of this research are enmeshed in a web of historical, theological, psychological, and sociological factors. The research coincided with the important historical moment when, in 1997, UCC acquired the status long desired – that of university. It takes its place among the universities of the world already recognised as an important centre of teaching and research. The political and religious circumstances, which determined its non-denominational character, have been discussed. One hundred and fifty years on, circumstances have changed. Politically, the Republic of Ireland is an independent State. Religiously, the antagonism between Christian denominations has given way to ecumenical dialogue and co-operation. In this research the nature of the institution is taken into account but the focus is on the young adult students.

Culturally, Ireland is in the melting pot of a fast transition from a traditional to a modern/ post-modern culture. Previous research has shown that the transition to a modern/post-modern society has been accompanied by a growing secularisation but that renewing and revitalising efforts in the Churches have determined that secularisation has not gone apace as it otherwise would. The young adult students at UCC in 1996/97, who were the subjects of this research, were born in the late 1970s long after these changes were set in motion. This research has investigated, by means of a survey, depth interviews, and participant observation, the degree to which these students engage with religion in their lives. The results of the survey have been reported in Chapter V. Here these results will be discussed in the light of the testimonies offered in the pre-survey and post-survey interviews and of the observations made by the researcher who was a

chaplain at UCC throughout the research period. The testimonies are printed in italics indicating that they are presented as spoken by the interviewees.

## **6.2 PROFILE OF YOUNG ADULTS AT UCC – IMPLICATIONS FOR RELIGION**

The profile of the respondents, as summarised on Table 5.3, reveals a rather homogeneous group. Most respondents (97.9%) are of Irish nationality. This has emerged because the sample was drawn on the full-time students registered for degree courses at UCC and therefore did not include the overseas students who take part of their courses at UCC and who account for approximately 10% of the total student population. 78.3% of respondents have been educated in denominational second-level schools. 88.8% of respondents are Christians of whom 96.3% are Catholics. The Arts, Science and Commerce faculties account for 74.2% of the respondents. 86.2% of respondents are undergraduates. 82.7% are in the age range 18-21 yrs. 91.5% of respondents are in the 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> year of their degree courses. There are other factors, such as gender and locality which differentiate between the respondents and which have implications for religion.

### **6.2.1 Gender in Relation to Religion**

The male: female ratio of the respondents is 1: 1.6. This arises from the fact that the female population has outnumbered the male population since the late 1980s (Appendix A5) and also to the higher response rate (67.7%: 62.7%) of female students. Analysis of variables by gender shows statistically significant differences for gender in many areas, e.g. the higher rating of 'Religious issues' (Table 5.7), the higher membership of religion (Table 5.10) and the more frequent attendance at religious services (Table 5.19) by females. More females know the chaplains (Table 5.30) and visit the chaplaincy (Table 5.32). Females find life more meaningful than males (Table 5.38). In assessing



the religiosity of males and females, account must be taken of the tendency of females to rate many other aspects of life more highly than males. The opinions of females, however, are supported by facts, such as, membership of religion and attendance at religious services. Overall, the results point towards a higher degree of religiosity in females than in males. A question, similar to that asked by Gilligan (1982) in relation to the moral development, might be ‘Are females more religious than males or are they simply different?’

### **6.2.2 Locality in Relation to Religion**

The localities in which respondents had grown up [city (28.2%), town (35.9%), or rural (35.8%)] were shown to influence their religiosity. When variables were analysed by locality statistically significant differences were found between city, town and rural students, e.g. rural students attend religious services more frequently than town students who, in turn, attend more frequently than city students (Table 5.19). It appears that the life-style in rural areas is more favourable to religion than that in the city. This is probably because a sense of community, which is an important aspect of Church, has been better retained in rural areas than in the cities. The geographical parish has more relevance in rural than in city areas. The alternative, the enrolment parish, which helps people to become attached to a particular faith community, has yet to be introduced to cities in Ireland. Also, spiritual experiences, occurring most often in natural surroundings (Table 5.39), are more accessible to rural students.

The number of students who have done work for charitable groups is significantly higher for city than for town or rural students (Table 5.28). This does not necessarily contradict the notion that rural students are more religious than city students, since work for charitable groups was found to be unrelated to the importance of membership of

religion (Table 5.27). Also, there are more charitable groups operating in cities, thus making such work more accessible to city students.

### 6.2.3 Age in Relation to Religion

The differences between age groups in relation to membership of religion and religious practices were not found to be statistically significant. It might have been expected that the survey would produce evidence of religious growth. Viewing these results positively, they indicate that students do not become less religious while attending UCC. It is questionable if growth is possible for the large numbers of students (45.7%) who regard 'religious issues' as not very important/unimportant (Table 5.5). The following extract, however, indicates that Margaret, who is twenty-three years of age, is conscious that she has matured with the years:

*Interviewer: Are you saying that your attachment to religion has matured over the years?*

*13F23AA: Yes, because I'm maturing and I'm aware of what is important in my life. It is becoming more important as I am allowing myself to be more open to it.*

*Interviewer: Are you the exception?*

*13F23AA: I don't know if I am the exception. A lot of young people will not admit that religion is important, as it is not 'cool'. A lot of them will not admit it is important to them as they rebel against anything their parents think should be important to them.*

We will see later that Teresa and Ann also witness to religious growth in their lives. It is likely that students are experiencing the transition between Stage 3 (Synthetic – Conventional) and Stage 4 (Individuative – Reflective) of faith development. Parks (1986) called this transition the 'Young Adult Stage'. Its relevance will be discussed later. It is also likely that students in this age bracket are moving from Stage 4 (Social System Morality) to Stage 5 (Human Rights and Social Welfare Morality) of moral development. This again will be discussed later.



### **6.2.4 School, Faculty and Year of Course in Relation to Religion**

The differences in the importance ratings of 'Religious issues' for 'School attended', 'Faculty' and 'Year of Course' were not found to be significant statistically. Since 78.2% of respondents have been educated in denominational schools it would be expected that more than 33.2% would rate 'religious issues' as very important/important. It may be that the young adult students are experiencing what Parks (1986) calls *counter-dependence* and are therefore reacting against religion as experienced in school.

## **6.3 PRIORITIES OF STUDENTS' LIVES**

The hypothesis that religious issues are a high priority in students' lives has been rejected.

In discussing their lives, student interviewees indicated that academic success, relationships with parents, family and friends, social life and money were their main concerns. Only two students mentioned religion spontaneously. The results of the survey showed the relative importance of these issues (Table 5.6). They confirmed the findings of the interviews that religious issues are not a high priority. The fact that 'Relationship with parents' ranked highest in the importance ratings of the respondents merits further attention.

### **6.3.1 'Relationship with parents' – Implications for religion**

Continuation in education in young adult life has implications for family life.

Heretofore, parents could expect their teenage children to become independent financially and to move out of the home. Now, parents can expect to have their student sons and daughters living with them and/or dependent on them until they are in their

early-twenties, or longer, should they opt for post-graduate studies. This makes considerable demands on parents.

Students are aware of the importance of parents in their lives. Exposed to a new environment and separated from school friends, thoughts turn to home and to the supports that it offers, as John explains:

*John (1M20CIC): I had no one here. There was no one out of my class here. I was just gone seventeen. I was not used to being around people or mixing with a lot of people. I would say I might have been a bit reserved. I used to worry whether I would ever open up a bit and of course we all know how that has turned out. I can remember staying in digs and I'd go into the lad I was staying with and say ' Gee! We have only another five nights now and we will be going home again on Friday'. Not an exaggeration! We used to say that.*

The desire for independence is tempered by an increased appreciation of parents according to Brigid:

*Brigid (11F19CT): When you finish school you are dying to get away from home and to be independent. But then you realise how much your parents mean to you and you look forward to getting home on a Friday night and sharing with them what has been going on during the week.*

The importance of relating well to parents has implications for religion. 24.1% of respondents indicated that their reason for continuing their membership of a Christian denomination was because of the influence of their parents (Table 5.14). It is not surprising that parents have an influence on the religion of their sons and daughters. It is the parents' privilege to make decisions regarding the baptism of their children and their education as Christians. Parental influence is a positive factor as long as it is not experienced as coercive. William explains how he experienced this influence:

*William (16M21AA): There was a background there. My mother was involved in the church and retreats, but there was no active encouragement. We didn't read the Bible every night, but it was in the background. I suppose there was underlying encouragement.*

A further indication of the importance of parents is found in the reasons given for attending religious services. 40.6% of respondents indicated that one of the reasons for attendance at religious services was to please the family (Table 5.20). Since relationship



with parents is so important to students, it is not surprising that students will attend religious services rather than create controversy at home. The problem is that this may prevent students from making mature decisions in relation to religious practice.

According to Parks' developmental theory, young adults are expected to experience a period of *counter-dependence* in which there is a need for distance from authority in order 'to move out into the deep waters of exploring for oneself what is true and trustworthy' (Parks, 1986, p. 55). Not having freedom to make their own decisions regarding religion may cause resentment and prevent young adults from achieving *inner-dependence* and eventually, *inter-dependence*. John's explanation of the reaction against religion corresponds with Parks' developmental theory. He is of the opinion that reaction against religion is but one aspect of the reaction against all restrictions of home. It is part of the process of growth into freedom.

*John (1M20CIC): I think, when you are at College, you are away from home, you are free and you associate religion with being tied down at home. Whereas, when you come to College you have the choice and you can say 'No'. It may not be that you are against religion – it is part of your own growth into freedom. I think it is a swing away from everything that is associated with being at home. I don't see why, if at home you are doing one set of things, when you come away you automatically shun the whole lot of them. I mean, you are bound to ask questions and you're bound not to like some of the stuff that you have done at home, but if you go from one extreme to the other – I don't see how it could be healthy, really. There is swinging in the opposite direction and there is going to the opposite extreme as well. I mean, I suppose, swinging in the opposite direction is necessary really because you have to put out your own feelers. But I don't know how going from one extreme to the other helps.*

According to Sheila, students who live away from home experience greater freedom than those who continue to live at home do:

*Sheila (6F23ANIC): My friends who came from Cork city would not see UCC as a place of radical freedom from religious restrictions because they were still living at home. Those of us who moved and were living on our own for the first time would have freedom. That made a difference.*

*Interviewer: How?*

*Sheila (6F23ANIC): It gave you control over your own life.*

Students need to be free and independent. This is the key to development. Ann describes her experience of her faith journey through what Parks (1986) calls the movement from *counter-dependence to inter-dependence*:

*Ann (7F23EIC): I have felt subsequently that there has been a bit of loss of personal integrity there for a while because I turned my back on all religion and it was a while before I came back to it. I stopped going to Mass for two years. I was very alone, even though I did not realise it initially because there were all these new friends everywhere. But when they left I realised that I had lost a lot of what was mine and had not gained very much. Yes, either you lose it completely or you come back. And I feel very strongly about it now – not necessarily the religious part of it but the traditional part of it – everything that I have grown up believing to be good is now very important to me, whereas before it might not have been.*

It may be difficult for parents to allow their sons and daughters the freedom to distance themselves from religion which they themselves cherish. On the other hand, national surveys, discussed in Chapter III, show the decline in religious practice of the adult population in Ireland. Parents, who do not practice religion themselves, are likely to have a negative influence on the religion of their children.

### 6.3.2 Academic Success, Relationships, Social Life – Implications for Religion

Personal freedom is very valuable and very necessary, yet the life of a student is subject to many restrictions. Academic life requires discipline and dedication. 85.9% of respondents agree/strongly agree with the statement 'Life is meaningful' (Table 5.40). This is not surprising since the elements of student life, such as, academic success, relationships, and socialising, were found to be very important/important to very high percentages of students (Table 5.6). Study, on the one hand, is enjoyable but, on the other hand, it is a source of anxiety as Sheila and John relate:

*Sheila (6F23ANIC): I just like being here because I just like reading books that I want to read as opposed to having to do various things for school. I like being able to read about things I had always been interested in but that weren't on the school curriculum.*



*John (1M20CIC): There was one subject I was doing and I did not know if I was good enough to be doing it. As it turned out I was - just about. I was worried over that, not just when I started first but for the whole three years of my degree.*

According to Fr. Joe, a university chaplain, the pressures of academic life make it difficult for students to find time for religion:

*Fr. Joe (8MC): Leave religion out of it totally, they are on an academic mission in the university and they don't have time for anything else. The biggest percentage is caught in the wheel, in the rat race so to speak.*

Yet this research, as will be shown later, has found that a considerable proportion of students do find time for worship and prayer and charitable works.

Forming relationships with others is an important aspect of the life of the young adult student. Success as a person is often seen to depend on how well he/she bonds with those of the same sex and with those of the opposite sex. John expresses the anxiety regarding this issue:

*John (1M20CIC): There were a couple of the lads and when they came first their biggest worry was would they ever get a girl friend. I mean, it seems a little bit silly now but, at the time, the conversation was all about that. The whole time, in the restaurant for a cup of coffee, that is what we would be talking about.*

Relationships with academic staff were not found to be as important as other relationships. This is understandable, as the lecture system does not facilitate relationships between staff and students, particularly in the larger faculties.

Finding a balance between study and socialising is part of the process of maturing according to Ann:

*Ann (7F23EIC): During second year I went out too often and drank too much. I did 'OK' in the exams - not great- but then that Summer I turned around and came back the following Autumn and changed work patterns, changed going-out patterns and my results reflected that.*

The great variety of clubs and societies in the College provides ample opportunities for socialising and for taking part in interesting activities. Patrick expresses his appreciation of his involvement in a society:

*Interviewer: What does involvement in the Developing World Society mean to you?*



*19M23AD-W: I think it is just another aspect of my life. I have made friends, which is great. Developing friendship and relationships is always nice. The regular members in the Society who turn up every week are my friends and sometimes we go for a drink together. On St. Patrick's Day we marched down town as the Developing World Society and went for a drink afterwards.*

Joining a club or society, however, can be a daunting experience for a first year student, as Colette explains:

*Colette (20F20AD-W): It was strange for a first year coming in, as I did, not knowing the situation of the whole College and I did not know how Societies work and I had never been in a Society before, as I come from a small village.*

Because of the pressures for academic success, many clubs and societies find it difficult to maintain membership and so are always keen to get new members. Patrick felt very welcome:

*Patrick (19M23AD-W): I felt good, as it is always nice to get the numbers and having been there since it is always great to see a new face. I felt I was welcomed.*

The difficulties which clubs and societies of the College experience in attracting members apply also to the chaplaincy and to the groups which are associated with it.

### **6.3.3 'Acceptability to Peers' in Relation to Religion**

'Acceptability to peers' was shown to be less important to students than relationships (Table 5.6). Independence of others continued to be manifested throughout the survey. Only 3.3% of students continue membership of religion because of social pressure (Table 5.14). Social pressure was not given as a reason for attendance at religious services. Interviewees involved in religious groups and in charitable activities indicated that they give very little consideration to what others think about them, for example:

*Patrick (19M23AD-W): I'm independent minded, most of my friends have their own beliefs and opinions as well. Sometimes they oppose me and that's good too as it makes them more alert. It is always good to argue.*

*Nuala (10F21AIC): I told a few of my friends I was in the UCC Folk Group and they were interested but I got no negative reaction. People were just surprised and were almost encouraging you.*

These considerations seem to indicate that most students have moved beyond Fowler's Stage 3 (Synthetic-Conventional) stage of development.

### 6.3.4 'Religious Issues'

'Religious issues' was found to be very important/important for 33.2% of students.

20.8% of students are 'undecided' regarding the importance of 'Religious issues'.

46.0% regard religion as not very important/unimportant (Table 5.6). According to

Colette, religion is merely functional:

*Colette (20F20AD-W): I think we are socially constructed. The whole idea of religion is constructed. It helps people to define their identity within a world which doesn't make sense. It is just for psychological benefit and also for society to organise itself and to come together in a certain way.*

A further indication that religion is not important for a sizeable number of students is the fact that 33.8% of those who continue membership of a Christian Religion have not analysed their reasons for doing so (Table 5.14). Some interviewees indicated that religion is compartmentalised and so does not impinge on their day-to-day living.

*Michael (5M22ENIC): Students do not relate religion and university whatsoever.*

*Interviewer: Why do you think this is so?*

*Michael (5M22ENIC): Because university is a godless centre of learning. It is almost a totally impersonal thing. Your lecturer comes in, gives the lecture, disappears and your next lecturer comes in. Well, in a way, we were lucky in the Civil Engineering because we knew all our lecturers by the end of our degree course and our lecturers knew all of us. But if you were part of a bigger faculty, you go and you take your notes and you go home.*

Sheila agrees:

*Sheila (6F23ANIC): Certainly, there was no connection between anything I ever studied and religion. The only time they met was on graduation day when I went to Mass before my graduation.*

Joan who is an overseas student and a member of the Baptist Church gives her observations of religion among UCC students:

*Joan (15F23AV): I know most of UCC students are Catholic. I don't see that Christianity is an everyday way of life with them. It is the same way in the University of ... I got the impression that religion wasn't very important for them - Mass on Sunday, ashes on Ash Wednesday and the celebration of Easter Sunday.*



*My impression of UCC students and religion is that religion is important when it comes to important dates like celebrating Christmas and Easter. Some get ashes on Ash Wednesday and I ask them 'Will you spend time thanking God and with God'? I don't get a sense of time spent with God and learning his Word and going through the Bible.*

For Joan, life and religion are integrated:

*Joan (15F23AV): On religion I wouldn't say anything. On Christianity I would say it is a way of being, it is something we share in our everyday lives, it is something inside of us that shines through us. In one sentence, Christianity is a way of being.*

Teresa had been a reader and a minister of the Eucharist in the Honan Chapel and a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Yet these activities and her life as a student of economics and French were not connected. The 'Light Out of Darkness' course at the chaplaincy helped her to see her life as an expression of her religious faith.

*Teresa (4F22CIC): I think it is only in the last year or so that they started to come together. Yes, I think I kept religion and life separate. Then I wanted to bring religion into my life. I really had to make a concentrated effort to bring religion into my Economics and it was really the 'Light Out of Darkness' course that helped me bridge that gap. I tend to compartmentalise anyway. Eventually I found that I could transfer from one to the other. It was easier with French. People say that Economics is not easily reconcilable with Religion. I suppose it is very theoretical, whereas, when you are studying the language of a country you are talking about people so it is easier in that sense. With Economics as well, people say to me 'How can you be an economist and be worried about your society'? But, you can. Maybe I am making the effort as well by being involved with the St. Vincent de Paul Society and by being more aware of people and considering their feelings.*

Students exhibit characteristics of the modern era into which Ireland had a belated entry in the middle of the twentieth century. Progress, as exhibited through the importance of academic success, is important. Life is compartmentalised and religion is pushed into the private domain. Yet, as a post-modern world-view emerges, the desire for a holistic approach to life leads to a rediscovery of the spiritualities former times which help the integration of religion with the rest of life.

## Conclusion

While religious issues are not a high priority for the majority of students, but it must be acknowledged that there is a considerable proportion of students for whom religion is a



high priority. Consideration must also be taken of the implications which other issues, such as relationships with parents and academic success, have for religion.

## **6.4 MEMBERSHIP OF RELIGIONS**

**The hypothesis that the majority of students are members of a World Religion has been accepted.**

The enquiry into membership of religions (Qs. 20-21) revealed three categories of students:

- 1) Members of a World Religion other than Christianity.
- 2) Christians
- 3) Students who have no religious affiliation.

### **6.4.1 Members of a World Religion other than Christianity.**

Three respondents are members of a World Religion other than Christianity (Table 5.9).

They are Muslims who study in the faculty of dentistry/medicine at UCC. They were requested to answer Qs. 57-70. The number of such students in the sample was not sufficient to allow any general conclusions to be drawn regarding Muslims students. It was found, however, that all three indicated a desire to be better informed about religious matters.

Muslim students at UCC have been assigned a room for prayer. In addition, in 1997 they were given the use of de Vere Hall in *Áras na Mac Léinn* (Student Union Building) to mount an exhibition on their religion. This was an opportunity for students of other religions to become acquainted with the beliefs and practices and with the sacred book, the Koran, of this World Religion. On that occasion, the Muslim students made a presentation of a copy of the Koran to this researcher as a gift to the chaplaincy.

### 6.4.2 Christians

430 respondents (88.8%) are Christians. Of those 414 (96.3%) are Catholic, 11 (2.6%) are Church of Ireland and 5 (1.1%) are of other Christian denominations (Table 5.9).

Because of the disproportion between Catholics and other Christian denominations it is not possible to make comparisons between denominations. The generic term 'Christian' will be used most often except where it is obvious that the responses are those of a particular denomination.

Christian students may be divided into three groups according to the responses to Q. 28 'How important is membership of your religion to you'?

Group I: Students for whom membership of religion is very important.

Group II: Students for whom membership of religion is important.

Group III: Students for whom membership of religion is unimportant.

The results showed that the importance of membership of religion is related to gender and to locality. Females regard membership of religion more highly than males. Rural students regard membership of religion more highly than town students who, in turn, regard it more highly than city students do (Table 5.15).

It is of interest to know if the three groups determine other aspects of religion. To investigate this, selected categories of variables have been examined by means of cross-tabulations, t-test, and ANOVA tests, according to these groups. The results are presented on Table 6.1.

While all three groups follow the same patterns in relation to beliefs and moral values, the results indicate that the more highly membership of religion is rated the more likely it is that the student:

- has made a personal decision to belong
- attends religious service weekly
- prays daily

- visits the chaplaincy
- accepts Christian beliefs
- believes in God
- holds less liberal views on sexual morality
- does not find euthanasia acceptable
- considers that moral principles are important for family life
- discusses religion
- desires to be better informed on religious matters

There are some noticeable exceptions to this trend. Differences between the three groups were not found to be significantly different for the following variables:

- Work for charitable groups
- World resource should be shared according to need
- Excessive drinking is acceptable
- It is an offence to cheat at examinations
- It is wrong to kill or injure another person
- Life is meaningful

The results showed that 40.4% of Christians have seriously considered discontinuing membership of religion. Their main difficulties related to faith in Christian beliefs and disillusionment with Church organisation and Church members (Table 5.17). In terms of developmental theory, such serious consideration may be regarded in a positive light. Growth in faith is more likely to occur for those who seriously consider their options than for the 33.8% of students who have not analysed their reasons for continuing to belong to a Christian denomination (Table 5.14).



Table 6. 1Christian Groups by Selected Categories of Variables:

Group I – Membership of Religion Very Important

Group II - Membership of Religion Important

Group III - Membership of Religion Not Important

	Made a personal decision to belong	Weekly religious service	Daily prayer	Visited chaplaincy	Accept 'Bible is the Word ..'	Accept 'God is the Creator ...'	'Accept Jesus is the Son of God'	'Accept Jesus is risen ...'	Accept 'There is a heaven'	Accept 'There is a hell'	'Accept There is life after death'	Accept 'God forgives sinners ...'	Charitable work	Belief in a personal God
Group I 13.0%	69.6%	85.7%	60.7%	12.5%	51.8%	51.8%	98.2%	96.4%	94.6%	35.7%	80.4%	87.5%	39.3%	94.6%
Group II 44.7%	38.0%	74.0%	37.5%	8.3%	40.6%	40.6%	90.6%	80.5%	87.05%	35.9%	66.1%	81.3%	44.3%	88.0%
Group III 42.3%	8.8%	26.4%	11.5%	2.2%	45.6%	45.6%	56.0%	42.45	51.1%	20.3%	47.8%	56.0%	45.6%	56.6%
ANOVA/ Chi-square Tests	*	*	*	*	NSSD	NSSD	F(2,422) = 57.9 P = .00	F(2,422) = 60.7 P = .000	F(2,424) = 65.6 P = .000	F(2,424) = 16.9 P = .000	F(2,421) = 17.4 P = .000	F(2,420) = 27.8 P = .000	$\chi^2 = .874$ df = 2 p = .646	*
Post hoc Scheffé comparisons	-	-	-	-	-	-	I & II differ from III	I & II differ from III	I & II differ from III	I & II differ from III	I & II & III differ	I & II differ from III	-	-

$\chi^2$  = chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = significance level NSSD = No statistically significant difference \* Tests not applicable.

Table 6. 1 (Continued) Christian Groups by Selected Categories of Variables:

Group I – Membership of Religion Very Important

Group II - Membership of Religion Important

Group III - Membership of Religion Not Important

	Agree 'Life is meaningful'	Agree 'Abortion is not every...'	Agree 'Sex reserved for marriage'	Agree 'Divorce should not...'	Agree 'Euthanasia is not every ...'	Agree 'World resources shared'	Agree 'Excessive drinking not..'	Agree 'Soft drugs not acceptable'	Agree 'Offence to cheat ...'	Agree 'Gay marriages not recognised...'	Agree 'Wrong to kill / injure a person'	Agree 'Morals important for family life'	Discussion of religion (Often)	Desire to be better informed
Group I 13.0%	91.1%	71.4%	21.4%	39.3%	44.6%	87.5%	55.4%	64.3%	71.4%	32.1%	87.5%	96.4%	28.6%	58.9%
Group II 44.7%	89.6%	45.8%	11.5%	22.4%	34.4%	80.2%	55.7%	58.3%	69.8%	21.9%	93.2%	93.2%	10.4%	56.8%
Group III 42.3%	80.8%	29.7%	4.4%	12.1%	18.1%	78.0%	59.9%	41.2%	62.1%	20.3%	89.6%	87.4%	11.5%	31.3%
ANOVA Tests	NSSD	F(2,423) = 19.5 P = .000	F(2,424) = 12.4 P = .000	F(2,420) = 15.6 P = .000	F(2,420) = 14.0 P = .000	NSSD	NSSD	F(2,423) = 10.8 P = .000	NSSD	F(2,421) = 3.6 P = .027	NSS	F(2,420) = 10.8 P = .000	*	*
Post hoc Scheffé comparisons	-	I & II & III differ	I differs from II & III	I & II & III differ	I & II differs from III	-	-	I & II differs from III	-	I differs from II & III	-	I differs from II & III	-	-

p = significance level      NSSD = No statistically significant difference      \* Tests not applicable

### **6.4.3 Students who are not members of any Religion**

Of the 51 respondents who are not members of any religion, three (one Irish, one Asian, and one American) have never been members of any Religion. Of the 48 students who have ceased membership of Religion, most have done so before the end of secondary school i.e. between 14 and 18 years (Table 5.11). This corresponds with the findings for young English Catholics:

Studies in England have shown that, in the case of young English Catholics, dissatisfaction with the Church and religion in general can set in before the end of secondary school. Young people were rejecting the Church and religion before they had an opportunity to develop a mature understanding of it (MacMahon, 1987, p. 3).

The fact that 9 (20%) students abandoned religion at age 18 may indicate that students are vulnerable to a religious crisis in the transition from second level to third-level education.

Difficulties regarding faith – disagreement with doctrines and disbelief in God - were the main reasons given for abandoning religion (Table 5.13). Ceasing membership of a religion, however, does not necessarily imply non-belief in God or the absence of spiritual experiences. 20.9% of students who are not affiliated to a religion believe in God and a further 25% believe in a Higher Power. 22.9% are agnostics and 25.0% claim to be atheists (Table 5.35). Also, 66.6% of these students indicated that they have had spiritual experiences, such as ‘An awareness of being in the presence of God’, ‘An experience of communication with God’, ‘An experience of deep personal peace’, and ‘An experience of detachment from this world’ (Table 5.37).

Those who are not members of a religion were found to have more liberal attitudes towards sexual morality and euthanasia than Christians. They were also less opposed to taking soft drugs. On the other hand, they showed a higher level of agreement with the statement ‘World resources should be shared according to need’ than Christians. There



were no statistically significant differences between those who are not members of a religion and Christians with regard to other moral issues (Table 5.44).

Students who are not members are not closed to religion. They discuss religion with their friends as often as those who are members of a religion. Also, 39.2% of them would like to be better informed about religious matters. It should not be taken for granted that those who leave religion in their teens will never again renew their membership. It is possible that they will do so while at College or later.

### **Conclusion**

Membership of religion is high. The importance of membership has implications for many other aspects of religion. Those who are not members of a religion are not altogether alienated and express many attitudes similar to those who are members.

## **6.5 PUBLIC WORSHIP- ATTENDANCE AT RELIGIOUS SERVICES**

**The hypothesis that high membership of religion translates into high attendance at religious services in accordance with the norms of Christian Churches has been rejected.**

The term 'religious service' was used in the questionnaire as a general term for Mass, Communion Services. Weekly attendance at Mass is the norm for Catholics, whereas monthly attendance at Communion Service is the norm for members of the Church of Ireland. It was found that 55.8% of Catholic students attend Mass at least weekly and that 54.5% of Church of Ireland members attend Communion Service at least monthly. For both Catholic and Church of Ireland students there is a discrepancy of approximately 34% between membership and the norm for public worship.

The attendance of Catholic students at weekly Mass has declined steadily since 1976. Inglis (1978) found that, in 1976, 80.5% of Catholic students at university attended

Mass at least weekly. MacAirt (1990) found that, in 1987, 72% of Catholic students attended Mass at least weekly. The weekly Mass attendance rate of young adult students at UCC has decreased by 26% in this period of twenty years. However, their attendance rate is above that of the 1997 IMS National Survey of Catholics which found that, for those aged 15-34 years, the percentage attending weekly Mass was 50%.

Account must also be taken of the 17.7% of students who attend religious services at least once a month and the 25.3% who attend occasionally. This is an indication that these students do not have a rigid approach to religion. Evidently, they do not feel cut off from religion because they do not adhere strictly to the norms.

### **6.5.1 Religious Services at UCC – The Honan Chapel**

The survey showed that 16% of students attend religious services at UCC. This is mainly accounted for by Catholic students attending Masses in the Honan Chapel (14.9%). This researcher has observed that approximately 200 students attend Mass in the Honan Chapel on Sundays during the first term each year. The numbers increase to approximately 500 during the second and third terms when a second Mass is celebrated. The increase in attendance is due to the fact that, as examination time approaches students tend to go home less frequently at weekends. Another factor is that the Boole library is open for study on the Sundays before examinations. Many students are therefore on campus and find it convenient to attend Mass in the Honan Chapel. Kathleen appreciates the opportunity to worship with other young people at Masses in the Honan Chapel:

*Kathleen (12F19ST): I like them very much because there are so many young people there and I like the music and singing etc. At home in my parish very few of my age-group go to Mass so I like when I am in UCC to experience religion in the Honan Chapel with my own age group.*

The chaplains promote the idea that Baptism is not only a call to Christian discipleship but also a call to minister to others. Students who attend Masses in the Honan Chapel



are encouraged to become ministers of the Eucharist, readers, music ministers and ministers of hospitality. Each year some students respond. They take part in training sessions, are publicly appointed as ministers at Masses during the month of November, and carry out their duties conscientiously. A sense of community develops among the ministers as William explains:

*William (16M21AA): I went there for Mass, Feast Days, Holy Days and the Lenten services as well and the more I went the more it grew on me. Friendship had a lot to do with it because a lot of the friends I made in first and second year were involved in Chaplaincy groups, like the Folk Group and were frequenting the Honan. I didn't make a beeline for it at first, but there is an atmosphere about it, the chapel itself and the liturgies, it is hard to describe, but it is welcoming there, even for the 'ordinary' Mass and you notice it. It isn't just any church, there is a buzz around it that draws you in and it drew me in and I got involved in the ministry as a reader in November 1996.*

The Honan Chapel was built when the student population was approximately 500. In order to accommodate the large numbers of staff and students who attend Mass there on Church Holydays it is necessary to celebrate Mass six times. The 5.15 p.m. Mass is the most convenient one for most people. The researcher has observed that many people are not able to get into the chapel at this time and so stand outside, often in inclement weather. This may give the impression that a very large percentage of students attend Mass on Holydays but it must be kept in mind that the student population is approximately 11,000 and that the numbers of students observed by the researcher correspond approximately to the 14.9% found in the survey.

Attending Masses in the Honan Chapel is a private affair for most students. There is little opportunity for students to speak to each other and to form a Christian community. Students are invited to the chaplaincy for refreshments after Mass but just about fifteen students attend.

On the occasions of memorial Masses, students are invited to prepare the liturgy. The researcher has observed that students have a very good knowledge of the rite. They take

the task seriously, using their talents in music, singing, and poetry to create very meaningful liturgies. They show no hesitation in encouraging their colleagues to attend. UCC has a tradition of having religious services of thanksgiving before each graduation ceremony. Catholics celebrate Mass in the Honan Chapel and if other denominations decide to have a Religious Service they are assigned a room for that purpose. The researcher has estimated an attendance of 70-80% of graduates at each Mass. This is in keeping with the finding that even those who do not attend regularly do so on specific occasions, graduation being one such occasion. Since members of families also attend, we may speculate if students are at least partly motivated by the desire to please the family.

The UCC Folk Group performs at Mass in the Honan Chapel once each week. It was founded in 1985 and became recognised as a College Society in 1997. What distinguishes it is that most of the music used by the Group has been composed by students of UCC. The students themselves select the music and produce booklets for the liturgical seasons. According to Nuala, participation in the Folk Group is a faith experience for the members:

*Nuala (10F21AIC): We learned harmony and we learned how to sing the repertoire. There was a great bond. You felt casual and could sing as you wanted to sing - not too professional either, but a sense that you understood music and it sounded good - the guitar and the whole social element - everyone had a connection. It wasn't a religious connection, we weren't religious freaks, but there was a sense of faith there, even through the music and singing. There were two or three people who sang in a loving - in an almost profound way - in a good way. I was playing the keyboard and felt conscious of getting it right. X was playing the guitar and emphasising faith through the music, which I found interesting. It took me a while to get into that, even though I had faith but I was focusing on the music.*

*I feel with the Folk Group you don't have to be a total purist in the Christian area but you have to have some belief, otherwise, it won't be meaningful. There are some lapsed Catholics in the Folk Group. They are searching for something that they can relate to and for some people the Folk Group does it for them and it is a way of life for them.*



Nuala appreciates the acoustics in the Honan Chapel and learned to value congregational singing:

*Nuala (10F21AIC): At that time we were trying to figure out placement in the chapel - whether we would sing at the top, the middle or the back and we varied from time to time as there are wonderful acoustics in the Honan. Our main aim was to get the congregation involved, which was new to me as I thought choirs and folk groups sang religious stuff, but sang to you rather than with you. I hadn't known about involving the congregation but that was the aim of the Folk Group at the time. We had a committee and we made out leaflets and left them on the seats for the people to sing. I grew into the idea that that was OK. I have never been in a Protestant Church but I admire how the congregation sings together, which is a good thing and helps everybody to bond, rather than somebody singing down at people and people not joining in. When the Folk Group is among the people they tend to sing and get involved. It is a rejuvenation of the faith and everyone was trying to stimulate people whether they were musical or not and involve everyone in the chapel. This was a new aspect for me – a good one.*

Ann explains that the Folk Group enticed her to attend Mass in the Honan Chapel:

*Ann (7F23EIC): I was just curious. I thought there must be College Mass in UCC. I don't know why it was College – I must have felt that I wanted to belong more to the College and because of the geographical location of the labs, I was not getting to know many people in College. Once I got there it was the music which kept me. When I heard of the Folk Group I said 'Oh great' and once I was in there I was hooked.*

Since only 14.9% of students indicated that they attend Masses in the Honan Chapel, at least 40% of students attend weekly Mass in parish churches. This is understandable as many live at home and many others travel home at weekends. Margaret Fraser, a Catholic chaplain at Bristol University, is aware of the advantages which parishes have over chaplaincies:

Whilst parishes are often stable communities, chaplaincies have constantly changing populations and whilst the advantage is that any cliques are short-lived, chaplains have to work hard to build up a sense of community and continuity (Fraser, 1999, p. 395).

Fraser indicates many ways in which chaplaincies and parishes could help each other.

For example, an invitation to the UCC Folk Group to take part in Mass in a parish church would be challenging for the Folk Group members and hopefully, inspiring for the congregation.

## Conclusion

While accepting the hypothesis that high membership of religion does not translate into high attendance at Religious Services in accordance with the norms of Christian Churches, account must be taken of those who worship less regularly than the norm. There is evidence, also, of deep faith as expressed by interviewees.

## 6.6 PRIVATE PRAYER

**The hypothesis that the practice of private prayer is related to the importance of membership of religion has been accepted.**

The survey showed that 75.1% of students, who are members of a Christian denomination, pray privately. 30% do so daily. 60.7% of those for whom membership of religion is very important pray daily. 37.5% of those for whom membership of religion is important pray daily. 11.5% of those for whom membership of religion is not important pray daily (Table 6.1). This indicates that if membership of religion is important, it is likely that the student will pray daily.

The main reasons given for praying were to make requests (including success in examinations), to show recognition of God in their lives, and because it helped them to feel better.

Opportunities are provided at the chaplaincy to explore many different forms of prayer such as meditation, and scripture reflection. Taizé prayer, which combines chant, meditation, scripture reflection and prayers of petition, is popular with young adults. A student committee is responsible for advertising, arranging the *Seomra Ciúin*, and facilitating the prayer session. As chaplain, the researcher attended these prayer sessions regularly and was impressed by the prayerful atmosphere and the faith of the students. Kathleen and Margaret explain what Taizé prayer means to them:



*Kathleen (12F19ST): The hour of Taizé prayer is the most important hour in the week. It is an opportunity to ease down and relax and to become aware of the presence of God. I love the chanting and the sense of being in harmony with other students of my own age.*

*Margaret (13F23AA): I didn't go every week. It was a case of putting time aside for it. I found it great to unwind and de-stress; the peace is what comes to mind, the chant and the readings. The atmosphere was calming.*

As a committee member, Brigid found the task of organising the Taizé prayer very enjoyable:

*Brigid (11F19CT): I love organising. I get a great buzz out of it especially when we had the Taizé groups from Dublin and Limerick in Cork for the Taizé Weekend. I was very pleased also to return to Taizé with UCC companions last Summer.*

Fiand (1999) believes that what is needed in prayer is a movement away from a task-oriented egocentricity to an ego-transcendence which unleashes energies capable of personal, ecclesial, and cosmic transformations:

What if we were to experience prayer as something other than primarily an obligation to worship, either communally or privately, imposed on us or endured to 'render our dues'? ... What if prayer were a continuous thanking for the reality that embraces us ... as a constant 'yes' to life and to love, a perpetual affirmation and surrender – not anything we *do*, but rather *everything we are*? (Fiand, 1999, p. 5).

This is a simple approach to prayer and one which could provide the 'missing link' between religion and other aspects of students' lives. Students find encouragement from each other's presence at worship and prayer and appreciate the community aspect when they experience it.

### **Conclusion:**

The practice of daily private prayer is related to the importance of membership of religion. Furthermore, some students are deeply prayerful.

## **6.7 ACCEPTANCE/ REJECTION OF CHRISTIAN BELIEFS**

**The hypothesis that the level of acceptance of Christian beliefs is related to the frequency of attendance at religious services has been accepted.**

The results showed a high level (over 60%) of acceptance of Christian beliefs with the exception of 'The Bible is the Word of God' and 'There is a hell'. A high level of Christian belief does not always translate into religious practice in accordance with the norms of Christian Churches. For example, only 55.8% of Roman Catholics attend religious service (Mass) at least once a week.

All eight doctrines were analysed for frequency of attendance at religious service (Table 5. 23). It was found that those who have the highest levels of attendance at religious services show the highest levels of belief in doctrines. This seems to indicate that belief and practice complement each other.

The high level of acceptance that 'Jesus is the Son of God' (77.7%) and that 'Jesus is risen from the dead' (66.3%) may indicate why those, who do not attend religious services regularly, do so on special occasions such as Christmas and Easter (Fig. 5.21, Appendix C21).

The results showed some confusion in relation to eschatological beliefs. Only 61.1% believe in life after death, yet 73.3% believe in heaven (Fig. 5.21, Appendix C21). The students are optimistic regarding life after death as shown by the fact that belief in heaven (73.3%) is much higher than belief in hell (29.5%) (Fig. 5.21, Appendix C21). This, perhaps, is because of the emphasis, in recent times, is on the love and mercy of God rather than on judgement and punishment. Inglis (1978a) found the same trend among students in 1976. However, not many students totally reject the possibility of hell. 206 (47.9%) respondents are unsure of its existence (Table 5.25). There have been conflicting views regarding hell throughout the history of Christianity. Within the Catholic Church the understanding is expressed as follows:



...contemporary theology is inclined to interpret the teaching of the Church as referring to the *possibility* of hell. There is no official church statement about the actual damnation of any individual human being. The possibility of hell stands in sharp contrast with the affirmation of the *reality* of heaven as the fulfilment of human history that has already been accomplished in the person of Jesus (Hayes, 1987, p. 459).

The views of the students regarding heaven and hell reflect this theology.

Belief that the Bible is the Word of God is relatively low at 48.9% (Fig. 5.21, Appendix C21). Since the reading of the Bible forms an important part of Christian religious services it follows that non-acceptance of the Bible as the Word of God may have a negative effect on a person's desire to attend religious services. The low level of acceptance of 'The Bible is the Word of God' may be due to misunderstanding of the meaning of inspiration in scripture. There is a danger that students may think that they are expected to accept a literal interpretation of the texts as promoted by fundamentalists.

Table 5.25 shows that rejection of doctrines is quite low but that there is a considerable degree of uncertainty, as indicated in the 'unsure' column.

Ann explains that she has ideas about religion which she learned earlier and which have not been sorted out:

*Ann (7F23EIC): There are an awful lot of things, which I associate with Catholicism and with religion that I haven't sorted out for myself. I have picked up an enormous number of silly things along the way which are not in Scripture or anywhere. Things which somebody, somewhere, told me and that I took it on board and have been living with it since.*

Sheila considers that it is part of the maturing process to question matters of faith:

*Sheila (6F23ANIC): I think all of us would question certain things at different times for different reasons. I don't think we could mature without questioning. I am not saying that questioning has to include rejection but I don't think we can mature without questioning.*

The problem is not that there are questions regarding faith but that at UCC, apart from an occasional debate/discussion of the Philosophical Society or the Academy, there is

no forum for addressing such questions. Furthermore, most students seldom or never discuss religion themselves (Table 5.46).

### **Conclusion**

There is a high level of acceptance of core Christian beliefs. There is also evidence of confusion and uncertainty. The fact that the level of acceptance of Christian beliefs is related to the frequency of attendance at religious services. It may be expected that those whose faith is strong attend most frequently. On the other hand, participation in religious services helps to raise the level of faith.

## **6.8 VOLUNTARY WORK FOR CHARITABLE GROUPS**

**The hypothesis that work for charitable groups is related to the importance of religion has been rejected.**

Religious faith is expected to find expression in concern for others. The results of the survey showed that 44.5% of Christian students had worked for a variety of charitable organisations. The St. Vincent de Paul Society has a large student membership at UCC. The researcher has seen its members taking part in a variety of charitable works from entertaining senior citizens to giving private tuition to pupils of second level schools who could not otherwise afford it. She has observed also, that students collect large sums of money for Trócaire and Concern and for local charities each year.

Statistical tests show that there is no significant difference between those who regarded membership of religion very important, important, or unimportant in relation to works of charity (Table 5.27).

### **Conclusion**

Work for charity is not necessarily an expression of the importance of religion. It is a further indication that religion does not inform other aspects of life, even those which are regarded as an expression of religious faith, such as work for charitable groups.



## 6.9 CHAPLAINS AND CHAPLAINCY

**The hypothesis that the percentage of students who know the chaplains and use the chaplaincy is low has been accepted.**

A team of three full-time Catholic chaplains, one part-time Church of Ireland chaplain, one part-time Presbyterian and one part-time Methodist chaplain work at UCC. As far as full-time chaplains is concerned the ratio of chaplains to students is approximately 1:3,500. In 1976 the ratio of chaplains to students was 1:1,654 and that was above the average (1:1,400) for Irish universities at the time (Inglis, 1978, p. 245). This shows that the situation has deteriorated enormously since 1976. The fast turn over of students each year, the fragmented nature of the campus and the very limited opportunities for the chaplains to meet students on a formal basis make it difficult for chaplains and students to get to know each other. In fact, only 66 (15.3%) students know the chaplain of their denomination to a minimum degree, i.e. 'to see'. The situation improved in 1999 when the chaplains were given a forty-minute period during orientation week to address first year students. If this continues, all students will, eventually, have had an opportunity to meet the chaplains formally at least once.

60.4% of students indicated that the rôle of a chaplain is to advise students, whereas only 25% of students indicated that the rôle of the chaplain is to organise religious services (Table 5.31). Yet, only 3 (0.69%) respondents indicated that they went to the chaplaincy to speak to a chaplain. It is more likely that students go to the chaplaincy to meet their friends than to meet a chaplain (Table 5.33). Fr. Timothy finds that some students visit him to discuss their problems:

*Fr. Timothy (9MC): Well, the student going through a crisis would come to me – certainly a number of students have over the years. They would see it as a crisis and would come in the knowledge that it is confidential. Students are often anxious. There can be a whole lot happening in their lives that has to do with home, with money problems etc. The faith side of it might be a very minor issue. If I identify the problem as an area that needs attention from a professional counsellor I would suggest that they see one.*

Chaplains at UCC have a policy of meeting the students informally by dining with them in the College restaurants and coffee dock. This enables the chaplains to meet students who do not visit the chaplaincy. Yet, the number of such contacts is limited in relation to the entire student population.

Only 27 (6.3%) students had been to the chaplaincy. Students who visited it regularly, however, were well impressed. William explained how he experienced it:

*William (16M21AA): Great - the whole informal friendly atmosphere - you can come in and have a cup of tea and it is away from the hustle and bustle of College. Especially at lunchtime where there are queues for everything, in the chaplaincy there are only about 20 people. It is never packed and if new people come in they are not ignored. Somebody starts chatting to them. Everyone in the chaplaincy gets to know each other.*

According to Kathleen, students may fear that religion will be imposed on them if they go to the chaplaincy:

*Kathleen (12F19ST): They are a bit wary of it but if they come they find that religion is not imposed on them and they are quite at home. Last week my friend came in with me and liked it so much that she stayed on even when I went away.*

The following extract shows that Michael developed a fear of the chaplaincy:

*Michael (5M22ENIC): I did not have a need for the Chaplaincy in first year and as a result I did not go. Later, to tell you the truth, I would have developed a fear of the Chaplaincy because I had not been exposed to activities like that for a while. I began to say 'if I do go in there now, what happens'? I don't know what to expect in the Chaplaincy. I could walk in at 4 p.m. in the afternoon and I would now know what I would be walking into.*

*Interviewer: And that creates a fear?*

*Michael (5M22ENIC): Yes! that creates a fear – I have a great fear anyhow of the unknown. Chemistry is chemistry and Engineering is engineering, but the chaplaincy.... Careers Office is about jobs, Students Union is about students, but then the chaplaincy is about religious matters.*

*Interviewer: How could you have been helped?*

*Michael (5M22ENIC): The chaplaincy to me would have to have a very human face and not a brochure that you got on registration that said the chaplaincy is this or that. It would have to be very much a human face because that is the way things were for me all the time.*

The high student: chaplain ratio makes it impossible for most students to meet the chaplains personally. Besides, many students may not want to know the chaplains. The chaplains are sensitive to this. The position of the chaplaincy, off the main area of the



College and away from the Honan Chapel, makes it more difficult for students to find it. It further compartmentalises religion and may give the impression that serious engagement with religion is for the minority.

According to Sheila, the chaplaincy should offer an alternative to parish religion:

*Sheila (6F23ANIC): A chaplain's job is to let people know that there is more to religion than parochial religion, which is all they would have experienced until they came to college. There are radical issues out there and I think it is important for us at this stage in our development when we are questioning things, to know that the Church is not afraid to address issues. The chaplaincy should not be like parish religion at home. The congregation is different here. At this point in our lives it would be nice to express ourselves spiritually in a different kind of way.*

The Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas was founded for the specific purpose of affording opportunities to discuss topical problems from a theological and philosophical point of view. In the 1990s the committees of this Society considered it expedient to rename it 'The Academy' as it was difficult to get students to attend talks or debates on religious topics. Religious topics are on their programme only occasionally, thus abandoning the only forum for regular discussion of religious issues at UCC. The following is an extract from an interview with William, auditor of the Academy, in which he explains its religious significance:

*William (16M21AA): The year was quite a success. I tried to get my friends interested and had the active support of the chaplain from beginning to end. We grew slowly and had some very successful events. The first was a talk by one of the counsellors in the College on 'What is happiness'? Then we had a debate on 'Why believe in God'? and it went very well.*

*Interviewer: Is it unusual for College students to organise a specifically religious talk?*

*William (16M21AA): I suppose it is, but the Academy was initially focused on religious and spiritual matters and seeing it had that heritage, which is still part of it, I felt it should not be abandoned. Also, what makes the Academy different to other debating societies are two things:*

*1.its informality*

*2.the fact that it can debate spiritual and Christian issues or non-Christian issues.*

*I would see that as an advantage to the society, as there is no boundary to the topics which may be tackled. Every person has a need for some spiritual development and there has to be a society which caters for that. There are other groups within the chaplaincy which provide different expressions of spirituality and we would hope to give one other outlet that people can use.*

Paul, an atheist, attended the meetings of the Academy for secular motives:

*Paul (14M20AA): Being informal and youth based makes for secular appeal, distancing it from the Philosophical Society and making it more relevant to the students. If you want an organisation to be successful it would have to suit the students' needs rather than try to suit them to the Academy's needs. There was a big attendance when the journalist, T.P. O'Mahony, turned up. The talk on feminism was a big hit. Mostly females were in the audience and it was more relevant to them.*

Involvement in the chaplaincy facilitates friendship. As found in the survey, socialising and making friends are very important to students and the chaplaincy has a rôle to play in this. The chaplains organise weekends away from the College. The researcher found that these were risky undertakings as students are apt to change their minds very easily. Yet, a reasonable number (10-15) would always turn up. The researcher found the students' ability to combine the secular and the sacred on these weekends intriguing. A typical weekend programme included cooking, going to the pub, prayer sessions at midnight followed by a walk on the beach and a 'sing-song' until morning. Margaret had her first experience of the chaplaincy through such a weekend:

*Margaret (13F23AA): I had known of it but hadn't gone in there. After the weekend away I was forever going in there. It was great to have a place to go - no pretences and very relaxed and welcoming, interested and interesting - a nice place to chill out and meet people.*

The proportion of students in the College who avail of the chaplaincy and its programmes may be small but it is likely to be equal if not greater than the proportion of people of any age group who get involved in such activities in parishes or else where. Those who avail of it benefit in many ways, including spiritually.

### **Conclusion:**

Although the percentage of students who know the chaplains and make use of the chaplaincy is low, those who avail of the chaplaincy appreciate its value.



## 6.10 BELIEF IN GOD

The hypothesis that belief in God is related to membership of religion has been accepted.

Question 53, which investigated belief in the existence of God, was addressed to all respondents, except those who are members of a World Religion other than Christianity (Three Muslim students). 70.5% of students believe in God even though 33.3% have doubts (Table 5.35). There is evidence of confusion for 58 (13.5%) students who are Christians and yet, do not believe in a personal God but in a Higher Power. They are rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, which is a central Christian belief. There are relatively few atheists [21 (4.4%)] and agnostics [36 (7.5%)] among the respondents. There is evidence that some, who claim to be Christians, have not given much thought to its implications since there is a contradiction between being a Christian and being an atheist (2.1%) or an agnostic (5.8%) (Table 5.35).

Colette is not sure if God exists:

*Colette (20F20AD-W) I think there is a possibility. I try to be as rational as possible in analysing things like that, cause and effects. I just don't agree and turn the other side.*

It was found that images of God varied among the interviewees.

*Interviewer: What is your image of God?*

*Margaret (13F23AA): A male, more of a presence in my life, something good. I love nature, walks by the sea, trees. Any day I walk out the door and see a blue sky, I think it is from Him. Anything good or positive for me is related to God.*

Joan is open to male and female images of God:

*Joan (15F23AV): The Indians have a strong sense of the female. My parents and grandparents were Indians, with a strong Christian perspective and philosophy of life. I come from a multi-cultural society. I don't think God is male or female but it helps to say 'Heavenly Father'.*

## **Conclusion**

Belief in God is related to membership of religion. Yet, belief in God is not confined to those who are members of a religion. 20.9% of respondents who are not members of a religion believe in God and a further 25.0% believe in a higher power.

### **6.11 SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES**

**The hypothesis that spiritual experience is common and not confined to those who are members of a religion has been accepted.**

65.5% of respondents have had spiritual experiences. This is an indication that they are aware of a dimension of life beyond its immediate concerns and that they are aware of themselves, not as finite, but as transcendent beings. Spiritual experiences were found to be *kataphatic*, i.e. experience of a sense of God in nature, through music, on happy occasions, and on sad occasions. Some students have had more than one type of spiritual experience. An experience of deep personal peace is the most common spiritual experience. Six students indicated that they had spiritual experiences when on drugs. This is not surprising in view of the tolerance of the use of soft drugs which was shown in response to Q. 63 (Table 5.43).

66.6 % of respondents who have no religious affiliation were found to have had spiritual experiences. These include 'An awareness of being in the presence of God' (11.8%) and 'An experience of communication with God' (7.8%). 52.9% of them have had 'An experience of deep personal peace' and 41.2% of them have had 'An experience of detachment from this world' (Table 5.37). Although these students have abandoned the practice of organised religion they are spiritual people.

The openness to spirituality provides a wide variety of opportunities for pastoral ministry. The revival, in the twentieth century, of the spiritualities of former centuries and the introduction of Eastern forms of spirituality to the West mean that there is a vast



range of resources from which to choose. Ignatian spirituality, with its emphasis on finding God in all things, is particularly suited to bridging the gap between religion and other aspects of life. The researcher has found that courses, such as Springtime Spirituality, Garden Spirituality and the celebration of the festivals of the Celtic calendar appeal to young adults. This is probably because they connect with the experiences of life. Participants are creatively involved and learn to appreciate religious ritual. They also encourage the discussion of religion.

## **Conclusion**

Spiritual experience is common and not confined to those who are members of a religion. The rich spiritual heritage offers a wide variety of possibilities for assisting people in spiritual growth.

## **6.12 MEANINGFULNESS OF LIFE**

**The hypothesis that most students find life meaningful has been accepted.**

85.9% of respondents find life meaningful. Those who are members of a religion find life more meaningful than those who are not members (Table 5.40). This supports the idea that religion contributes to meaningfulness in life. It is in agreement with Bryant (1987) who holds that faith can help people to actualise their human potential.

According to David Quinn, there is a wealth of sociological evidence which confirms that 'religion is good for you' (Quinn, 2000, p. 9).

The most important statistic to consider, in pastoral terms, is that 3.4% of students do not find life meaningful. It is also worth noting that 6.7% of males by comparison with 1.3% of female students do not find life meaningful. This is an indication that more males than females are at risk in the College. The problem is that in a large student population it is difficult to identify those who are at risk.

Some students have a very positive attitude to life. Colette explains her philosophy:

*Colette (20F20AD-W): I try to make life as happy and as comfortable as possible for the people around me. That is why I get involved in the Developing World Society. My philosophy of life is to help people. If we are put on this world for a reason it is to help people and to live with each other in harmony.*

Students attach a high degree of importance to academic achievement, success in relationships, money and other finite values. For a holistic understanding of life, these need to be balanced by seeing the importance of non-finite values found in religious meaning.

## **Conclusion**

While most students find life meaningful, the fact that a small proportion do not is a cause for concern to chaplains and those in other support services, such as the medical and counselling services.

### **6.13 MORAL VALUES**

**The hypothesis that moral values are related to religion has been accepted but with some reservations.**

All respondents were requested to answer Qs. 57-67, which investigated attitudes to moral values. The responses have already been discussed in relation to the importance of membership of a Christian denomination. In general, the results show that students hold liberal attitudes towards sexual morality as shown by the responses to ‘Abortion is not every woman’s right’, ‘Sex should be reserved for marriage’, ‘Divorce should not be available in every country’, and ‘Marriages of gay couples should not be recognised in society’.

Although all respondents showed liberal attitudes to sexual morality, those for whom membership of religion is important and who attend religious services frequently hold less liberal views, particularly in relation to abortion (Table 5.45b and Table 6.1).

The liberal attitude indicates that students regard sexual morality as a private matter of conscience unrelated to the moral values of the Churches to which they belong.



Reconciling objective moral standards and subjective values is a source of tension within Churches. According to Parks' (1986) theory, this tension is unlikely to be resolved until people reach the *inter-dependent* form of development when meaningful dialogue becomes possible.

The highest level of disagreement was with 'Sex should be reserved for marriage'. This is the aspect of sexual morality which most concerns young adult university students.

Opportunities for third level education results in marriages taking place later in life than formerly. The question of sex before marriage is one which young adults have to confront. The ready availability of contraception makes sex before marriage more of an option than heretofore and must therefore be approached in terms of the integrity of relationships.

There was a high level of agreement with the statement 'Moral principles are important in helping to create a happy family life'. It is difficult to reconcile this result with the high level of disagreement with the statement 'Sex should be reserved for marriage'. It is likely that the respondents do not favour sexual promiscuity but rather fidelity to ones' partner, whether married or unmarried.

Only (28.3%) of students agreed with the statement 'Euthanasia is not acceptable'.

Many do not recognise that it is not our prerogative to control the timing of our own death. It is the item about which the most students are undecided (35.3%). There are many factors, such as compassion to be taken into account here. According to Colette, euthanasia is an emotive issue:

*Colette (20F20AD-W): I have seen people on TV wanting to die and other people helping them to die and I think in some ways if they want to die they should be allowed to die, but mass murder of people is a different thing.*

There was a high level of agreement with the statement 'It is wrong to kill or seriously injure another person' (Table 5.43). Many students do not, obviously, regard euthanasia as killing another person as it implies the consent of the person involved.

Drinking is an important element of the social life of university students. Moderate drinking is the ideal and this is the attitude of the 59.0% of students who agreed that excessive drinking is not acceptable. 20.7% of students, however, approve of excessive drinking (Table 5.43). In student culture there is an expectation that a person should drink excessively on certain occasions, such as celebrating examination results.

There was also considerable tolerance of the taking of soft drugs as seen by the fact that 30.7% of students disagree with the statement 'Taking soft drugs is not acceptable' (Table 5.43). Campus Watch is vigilant with regard to the distribution of drugs in the College bars and elsewhere on campus. Drug pushers see university students as easy targets and will try every means of access.

It has been shown that academic success is considered very important to the majority of students. However, they have a moral sense in relation to success. 321(67.5 %) students agreed with the statement 'It is a moral offence to cheat at examinations'.

The equitable distribution of world resources is a matter of concern to the majority of students. The survey revealed that 82.5% of respondents strongly agree/agree with the statement 'World resources should be shared according to need' (Table 5.43). This is an indication that these young adults have a strong sense of social justice. This is confirmed by the fact that students work for justice through societies, such as the Developing World Society, Amnesty International and Children's Aid Society. Colette explains why she became involved in the Developing World Society:

*Colette (20F20AD-W): I'm interested in justice for other countries. There is a need to focus more on it and to create more awareness among people about the political, the economic and the social aspects of how the world works and the way we are being unfair and exploiting the developing world. I'm helping other people even though in some ways it is obscure, because it is politics and economics, so I don't meet the people whom I help in a small way. It helps me to develop as a person also, as I learn how to organise events, write up reports, go to lectures, analyse things, and know what is happening around the world.*

Catherine has been a member of Amnesty International for almost two years. This organisation endeavours to raise the consciousness of others concerning the plight of



those who are wrongfully imprisoned. She explains how the organisation operates at UCC and the co-operation which the students gets from members of the academic staff:

*Catherine (17F21AI): Basically we are called an adoption group. You are given a case study and you pursue that. Maybe some poor man is a prisoner of conscience in Tibet and you write a letter to the government of China asking them to let him out because he hasn't done anything wrong. You pursue that but you rarely get a reply.*

*During Rag Week, with the consent of the lecturers, we burst into lecture rooms and tried to kidnap the lecturer and then talked about Amnesty International and how these kidnappings happen so often. This made an impression.*

Claire realised that there was no society at UCC caring for children with special needs.

She and her friends founded the Children's Aid Society. This society is unique to UCC.

Claire explains why they formed the society:

*Claire (18F21LCA): We started with 'Chernobyl Children' and it basically grew from there. We were impressed by the 'on the ground' action which they are taking against child labour, child prostitution and street children. We hold information evenings, documentary showings, have stands in the College as well as fund-raising discos, which are great fun.*

Claire is conscious that she has been privileged in life and thinks that it is only right that she should work for others:

*Claire (18F21LCA): I have been the recipient of an abundance of luck and privilege in my life and I think it is only fair that others should receive justice in their own lives and I think that is what motivated me. January, last year, when I was really busy with final year Arts my friend and I visited the mother of a child with special needs. I realised that my little worries about essays were luxury worries and my priorities came to the fore in a good way. Some people ask if it is not depressing to come across child labour or child prostitution, but I don't think so because you are doing something about it in a good way and that gives you a lot of power over it.*

Work for social justice does not necessarily have religious significance. It was found, in some cases, that social justice is inspired by humanitarian rather than religious motives.

Although the Developing World Society was founded as a chaplaincy group, the

auditor, Colette, does not want it to have religious or spiritual significance:

*Colette (20F20AD-W): Basically, Y and I make sure that it doesn't, it might have spiritual significance for individuals within the group but we try not to give it any religious significance. I don't think religious groups should be involved in this type of thing exclusively, because they are coming from one viewpoint and they have their own agendas and their own policies which they have to live up to*



*before they have to live up to other things. We try to distance ourselves from the Chaplains, though they are a great help and we appreciate that they help us out. We have a stall once a month for selling fair trade products and promoting fair trade and other issues that we highlight at the fair trade stall. A Chaplain collects the items and drives us. This is more practical than ideological help. It has religious significance for individuals, but it does not exist as a religious Society.*

The Developing World Society has no religious significance for Patrick, yet he appreciates the work of Trócaire. For him, the important thing is to feed those in need:

*Patrick (19M23AD-W): Personally, no. I can't speak for the rest of the group. Some are anti-religion and some are pro-religion, but we all use the Chaplaincy in UCC and the Chaplains offer us the use of the car whenever we need it, like getting goods from Oxfam to here or from here back to Oxfam. They are brilliant people.*

*Interviewer: Do they use this to promote religion?*

*Patrick (19M23AD-W): I didn't get that impression. I take them as people and there is more to them than one issue, religion is only one. I have no qualms about approaching anybody. I am grateful for any help I can get for what I am fighting for. We don't tackle religious issues. We co-operate a lot with Oxfam and Trócaire. Trócaire is a brilliant group. It was set up by the bishops of Ireland and is a religious group but we have never seen this as an issue. We are more concerned with people issues. Yes, religion is there and everybody can take religion or leave it, but let's feed them first.*

Claire, who works for Children's Aid, offered an interesting insight that the work itself is a spiritual experience:

*Claire (18F21LCA): One of the interesting things about working in a Society like this is that you get all types of people. Some people aren't Church-going, some are spiritual, others are not. I think it is more a conscience thing, people turn spiritual in the sense that they want to help others, not that their religion is telling them to do it, it is not religious in context. The feeling when you are doing it, is a spiritual experience. Religion is not an issue. The College is secular but people would find work like this spiritual and that would be a private thing for them*

These interviewees may not be consciously operating from religious motives but they are not antagonistic towards religion and are ready to co-operate with religious groups, such as the chaplaincy and Trócaire, in the promotion of social justice.

The attitudes of respondents to moral values indicate that they are likely to be experiencing the transition from Stage 4 (Social Systems Morality) to Stage 5 (Human Rights and Social Welfare Morality) of Kohlberg's stages of moral development. They



are operating out of 'critical (knowing) and free choice' (Duska *et al*, 1977, p. 91) but have yet to take objective moral norms into account in making decisions.

## Conclusion

While some moral values are related to religion, members of religion and non- members have similar attitudes to a number of moral values.

### 6.14 DISCUSSION OF RELIGION WITH FRIENDS

**The hypothesis that religion is seldom or never discussed with friends has been accepted.**

The results showed that 85.7% of students seldom or never discuss religion with friends (Table 5.46). Male students are less likely than female students to discuss religion with their friends. Those who live at home are less likely than those who share a house/apartment to discuss religion. This is an indication that religion is regarded as a private matter and that it is not appropriate to discuss it with others. This may be caused by a lack of confidence and of embarrassment to speak about religion. According to some interviewees, religion is like politics: you do not know where the other person stands, so you protect yourself. In a country where most people are Catholics and where relationships between denominations and religions are not antagonistic, it is difficult to understand why such protection is deemed necessary. Iris sums it up as follows:

*Iris (3F22F-SNIC): Religion is not really spoken about in a conversation. I know in our house there were six of us, I was in the same house for three years, we talked about absolutely everything but we never spoke about religion. It is not something I would bring up in conversation either, because you can't talk about going to Mass or your own beliefs, you don't know what the other person believes in. It is like politics really, you are not going to let other people know how you feel about religion. You are not going to talk to them.*

Fr. Timothy, a chaplain, agrees with Iris:

*Fr. Timothy (8MC): I think that is part of our culture that you do not really talk about religion or politics. You might talk about scandals but you don't talk about your own religious experience. Students have not been given the language for doing that even at 2<sup>nd</sup> level.*

Teresa is of the opinion that the silence regarding religion is not because religion is unimportant but rather that the right setting is needed and that the chaplaincy provides such a setting. She thinks that it is only right that there should be a place in UCC where students can discuss religion.

*Teresa (4F22C1C): We need somewhere where we can grow – get involved in things. I think people have an inhibition when it comes to discussing their faith and things that matter to them in that sense. It is very difficult if you are at a lecture in Boole 4, you are not going to start chatting about something that means a lot to you but which is very private. When you are with a group of people, like the group of us who have been to the chaplaincy over the years, there is no problem in talking about religion; it is something very natural. In a way the Chaplaincy is there for people who want to explore their faith and their spirituality and have people around them. It is, actually, important that there is a forum for people to air their views and be taken seriously. I know from experience of the students in Brookfield and Deans Hall, where I have been living, that there is always an unwillingness to bring up the topic of religion, but when they know that I am involved in the chaplaincy, they are more willing to bring up such topics. They will do so if they know that they are not going to be ridiculed by their peers.*

Michael is of the opinion that it is more difficult for students of Engineering than for students of Arts or Law to discuss any topic, religion or other:

*Michael (5M22ENIC): There may be a possibility that the Engineering faculty is different from the Arts faculty because we don't do essay writing or reading, we don't do anything expressive. Whereas, a student who has to express him/herself in essays may deal with topics which have a religious aspect. What I found is that students who did Arts and Law etc. would be much better read. They would have a broader base of knowledge and that they would have definite ideas and thoughts about things which we would not even consider. So, if you go and interview one of those, they may have a different outlook completely and the reason may be that we don't do that vast amount of general reading. We learn specifics.*

Sheila, an Arts graduate, gave a positive reaction when asked if she discussed religion:

*Sheila (6F23ANIC): Gosh yes! Not specifically theological issues – more broad questions of basic understanding – 'What do we need to make sense of our world, to make sense of going through life or whatever?' - would be discussed. We went around in mixed groups and there were numerous nights when we stayed up until 3 or 4 a.m. and we would talk about everything – religion would be part of it. But, 'Is there a God'? as opposed to 'Do I believe in Communion'? I knew students who were practising Catholics and many students who weren't. We were all at different phases. There wasn't any shyness of each other in relation to religious issues.*



Sheila's response indicates that the conditions most favourable to the discussion of religion is a mixed group, away from home and free to stay up all night. These conditions apply when students are away on weekends organised by the chaplains. On these occasions they are open to the discussion of religion.

## Conclusion

Students seldom or never discuss religion with friends. They will do so only in a safe environment.

### 6.15 DESIRE TO BE BETTER INFORMED ABOUT RELIGIOUS MATTERS

The hypothesis that few students desire to be better informed about religious matters has been rejected.

Almost half of the respondents (47.9%) indicated that they desire to be better informed about religious matters. This does not necessarily mean that they would attend courses on religion if they were offered but it does indicate an interest in the topic. Some of the interviewees also indicated their desire to learn more about religion. Iris would be interested in a lecture series on a religious topic:

*Iris (3F22F-SNIC): I never even thought about that, I suppose you can never know enough. We don't have any more religion classes now. I don't feel I'll need more of them. If I did have more of them it would not be a load. I am happy with what I learned in religion class in secondary school. But, I would be interested if the Chaplaincy outlined a lecture series. The tour of the German monasteries at the end of this year was a brilliant idea. It is really good that a course should be organised on early Irish monasticism.*

*A Chaplaincy in a university is not like a parish because in an academic environment you need academic input. It should raise issues. Even controversial issues, which won't be discussed in safer Catholic forums, could be raised in a University setting.*

Ann expressed a need to learn more about religion. At Mass she listens to another person's ideas but she would like to be in a position to ask questions:

*Ann (7F23EIC): We have religion on one level when we go to Mass and we have the companionship in here (the chaplaincy) which I do not always associate with*

*religion at all. There could be another level that would allow us to address our personal religion. If you go to Mass you are listening to somebody else. You may have a whole pile of questions but you never get a chance to ask them.*

Courses on religious topics are offered in the chaplaincy but as these do not merit any academic credit very few students attend. To be taken seriously, courses would need to be accredited, in some way, by the College.

### **Conclusion**

Many students desire to be better informed about religious matters. The pressures of study are such that it is difficult for them to give time to courses on religion while at College. They may be open to opportunities for adult religious education at a later date.

### **6.16 REACTIONS TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The reactions to the questionnaire were 75.8% positive (Table 5.49). It had offered students an opportunity to think deeply about their religion. This indicates that students took more time in answering the questionnaire than they had been requested to do. It is also a positive indication that 32.1% of respondents would like to see the results. It is of particular interest that respondents who are not members of a religion indicated that the questionnaire gave them an opportunity to think deeply about religion and that they are interested in seeing the results. There were neutral and negative responses but these were not as numerous as might have been expected.

### **6.17 CONCLUSIONS**

The students who were the subject of this research are a representative sample of the full-time young adult student population of UCC in 1996/97. We can therefore, draw general conclusions about the young adult student population from the results. When applying the results in the tables to the student population, sampling error, as explained in Chapter V must be taken into consideration. Some general comments are given here.



It has been shown that gender and locality are the two factors which have most bearing on religiosity. Females and rural students show the highest levels of religiosity.

Students show characteristics typical of modern society. Greater importance is given to the secular than to the religious aspect of life by many, but not all, students. Religion tends to belong to the private domain and to be compartmentalised from everyday events.

Membership of religion is high. The majority of students are Catholics. There are a small percentage of students who are members of the Church of Ireland and other Christian denominations. There are also a small percentage of Muslim students. Total alienation from religion or the spiritual is minimal.

The practice of religion falls behind the norm for the Christian Churches. There is a considerable amount of religious practice which is less frequent than the norm but which may be regarded in a positive light. Approximately half of the students show high levels of religious practice.

Belief in God and acceptance of the core Christian beliefs is high but there is a considerable degree of uncertainty, confusion and contradiction.

A high proportion of students works for charitable groups and in the promotion of social justice. There is evidence that these arise from humanistic rather than religious motives.

Only a small proportion of students knows the chaplains or visits the chaplaincy. Those who avail of the chaplaincy are very positive about it.

Students have a sense of the spiritual and relate to it in the world around them. This sense of the spiritual is common to those who are members of a religion and those who are not.

Students have a liberal attitude to sexual morality. They show considerable tolerance of excessive drinking and the taking of soft drugs. A considerable number approves of euthanasia. Most students do not approve of cheating or of killing or injuring others.

They have a high degree of acceptance of the importance of moral principles for a happy family life.

The majority of students find life meaningful.

Most students seldom or never discuss religion with their friends.

Almost half the students would like to be better informed about religious matters.

While there is evidence of secularising trends, yet there is counter-evidence of much authentic religion in the lives of young adult students at UCC.



# **CHAPTER VII**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

Facts, testimonies and observations have been interwoven to create a picture of religion in the life of the young adult at UCC. It is a complex picture of many shades and colours expressing the rich variety of students' lives, each one a unique individual with his/ her own orientation towards religion. It will be viewed from different perspectives by a variety of interest groups to which the researcher puts forward some recommendations for their consideration.

The most important interest group is that of the students themselves. This research comes from within the student population. Students have given their responses and spoken for themselves. The report of the research mirrors back to them their own evidence regarding their membership of religion, practices, beliefs and values. It raises questions for them both as individuals and as a group. For example:

- What are my priorities?
- Is life at UCC meaningful to me? What gives it meaning?
- Who am I as a human being?
- What do I believe in?
- What are my values?
- What changes will I make?

Thus, they may be enabled to enter the action/ reflection/ action process of social analysis positively and creatively in planning their lives (O'Brien, 2000).

Since the purpose of the research was to provide an informed basis for pastoral ministry to the young adults at UCC, it follows that the chaplains at UCC are an important interest group in relation to it. Pastoral recommendations given here are aimed at building on the strengths and addressing the weaknesses observed in the results.



The Board of Governors, Academic Council of UCC and the Governors of the Honan Trust may judge from the research how adequately the provisions for religion at UCC meet the needs of the present situation. The parents of students and of prospective students will have a special interest in this research. It assures them of their importance in the lives of their sons and daughters throughout their university education.

Principals and teachers of feeder schools will find in the research some indications of the outcome of their efforts to provide a religious education for their students. They may wish to look critically at the programmes they are now offering to those who will be the next generation of students at UCC.

The research has implications for clergy and other pastoral ministers of originating parishes and dioceses. Unlike teachers, their ministry to young adults at UCC has not ended. As the majority of students return home at weekends, pastoral ministry to them is the concern of their parishes and dioceses.

The research has implications for society in general. Students do not live as part of an isolated group. The place of religion in a society influences that of young adult students in third level education.

Recommendations follow for pastoral ministry based on the research; recommendations for further research are put forward.

## **7.2 PASTORAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.2.1 Creation of Awareness of Religion at UCC**

Pastoral ministry at UCC arises not only from the desire of a religion or of a denomination to minister to its members on campus, but also, from the nature of the human being. Pastoral ministry supports the notion that we are transcendent beings with an eternal destiny. Immediate concerns, important in their own right, are to be viewed from this perspective.

It has been argued that, although UCC is nondenominational, that is not synonymous with being irreligious. Throughout its history the College has recognised the importance of religion through the appointment of deans of residence and chaplains. It continues to employ a team of chaplains and provides a chaplaincy for Christians and a place of worship for Muslims. As modern culture has the power to undermine religious faith, the challenge for a chaplaincy team is to keep faith alive as an ever-present reality within the College. Their presence in the College is in itself a witness to the importance of religion. They promote religion by interacting with the staff and students and by providing a programme of religious services and events. These programmes are promoted in an encouraging but non-coercive manner through the brochures and handbooks which students receive at registration and through advertisements on notice boards and in *Eolas* (UCC weekly news bulletin). In addition to these methods for the promotion of religion, it is recommended that chaplains use a web page on the UCC web site for religious purposes. This is a medium of communication which is attractive to young people and which they can access at their convenience. Since the web site can be accessed globally, the information provided would reach a wide range of people, such as prospective students, parents, school staffs and the general public.

### **7.2.2 All Members Responsible for the Mission of Their Churches**

Pastoral ministry to the students and staff at UCC is not the sole responsibility of the chaplains. The students are adults, albeit young adults. The research has shown that 88.8% of students are Christians (the majority Roman Catholics). A Christian Church is a community of which all the members are responsible for its mission (Spring, 2000). The Second Vatican Council states that, by virtue of baptism, all the faithful have a common responsibility for the mission of the Church. Ordained, religious, and lay, participate in different but complementary ways:



And so amid variety all will bear witness to the wonderful unity in the Body of Christ: this very diversity of graces, of ministries and of works gathers the children of God into one, for, “all these things are the work of the one and the same Spirit” (1Cor. 12:11) (Vatican II, 1966b, p. 59).

Young adult members share responsibility for the mission of their Churches. This should be given formal recognition at UCC by setting up a chaplaincy pastoral council, consisting of chaplains, student and staff representatives, for each Christian denomination. The desirability of establishing pastoral councils arises from the understanding of Church as the ‘people of God’. This is the model of Church by which Vatican II ‘affirmed, in terms congenial to most Protestants, the sense of the Church as ‘people of God’ envisioned by John Henry Newman a century earlier’ (Woods, 1996, p. 338). Pastoral councils are now a feature of parishes in which parish renewal and development are in progress:

Parishioners sharing responsibility for the care and future of their parishes is a theological insight and a theological truth... It is simply something which is right (Harrington, 1997, pp. 103-104).

As membership of religion is very important/ important to a substantial proportion of students it should not be difficult to find students who are willing to serve on pastoral councils. It is recommended that each faculty be represented, while seeking to ensure gender balance and range of age among the members. The participation of staff members would ensure the continuity of the council, since the time-span of students at College is necessarily limited.

The pastoral councils would have the responsibility for planning the chaplaincy programmes and for enlisting the co-operation of a wider circle of people in putting them into practice. This would ensure the relevance of the programmes to the staff and students. It would also contribute to heightening the level of awareness of religion and of its importance in the College.

The research shows there is a substantial minority of students who are not members of a specific religion. Most of these students were Catholics who left the Church in their

mid-teens. According to Parks' (1986) psychological theory, as discussed in Chapter III, it is to be expected they will, at some time, reach the form of *inter-dependence* when they are ready to dialogue with the Church and possibly renew membership. Some may be ready to do so during their student years. A suitable programme, such as the RCIA (Rite for the Christian Initiation of Adults) should be made available to them. Listening to them and understanding their difficulties regarding doctrines or their disillusionment with the Church would be a source of valuable insights to those involved in pastoral ministry. Reconciliation is a two-way process. Conversion is required, not only of those who have been alienated, but also, on the part of Churches themselves, their members and their organisations. The renewal of membership should be celebrated liturgically if the persons involved so wish.

Those who have never been members of a religion should also be invited to take part in initiation programmes. Membership of a religion is a gift of grace and pastoral ministry has the responsibility of ensuring that it is open to everyone at all times.

It was found that alienation from religion was more prevalent among city than among town or rural students. Community in the city does not centre on the geographical parish as it does in towns and rural areas. It is recommended that communities such as the *Sant' Egidio* communities which are based on scripture reflection and prayer and work for the poor be introduced at UCC for the support, not only of city students, but of students who live in the city during their university education.

### **7.2.3 Greater Participation in Liturgies**

The research has shown that attendance at religious services falls below the norm for Christian Churches. It also showed that the level of faith was related to the frequency of attendance. Students would be encouraged to attend more often if the liturgies were more meaningful to them. This would necessitate involving young adults in the



preparation and celebration of the liturgy. Already, students who attend Masses in the Honan Chapel participate as readers, as ministers of the Eucharist and take part in the entrance and offertory processions. If a travelling microphone were provided, some of the 'Prayers of the Faithful' could come spontaneously from the congregation and thus relate better to the needs of the people. A student cantor, accompanied by a student organist leads the congregation in singing, but with limited success. It is recommended that the Folk Group participates in the Sunday Masses. This is difficult because many of the members go home at weekends. It may be possible for them to participate in the Masses on Sunday once a month if the dates were fixed at the beginning of the academic year. This may have the result that some of the students, who attend Sunday Masses regularly in the Honan Chapel, would join the Folk Group.

It would encourage students to attend Mass more frequently if they got to know others in the congregation. Molloy (1999) recommends that the 'Sign of Peace' may be more effective if transferred to the end of Mass so that people might continue to converse with each other as they leave the church/chapel.

It was found that 73.5% of students attend religious services at least monthly, but only 16.0% attend religious services at UCC. The pastoral care of young adult students falls to the parishes in which they worship. It is recommended that the chaplains of UCC and the clergy and pastoral workers of those parishes collaborate with each other in the pastoral care of young adult students. The clergy and pastoral workers have an advantage over the chaplains at UCC, as they know the students over a longer period. It is important they maintain contact with them and invite them to minister in the local churches. It is recommended that a member of the pastoral team of each parish be given special responsibility for ministry to young adults. The parishes and the chaplaincy at UCC should avail of the help of the youth ministry offices of the Diocese of Cork and

Ross and of adjoining dioceses which have personnel and resources available for ministry to people in the age group 18 – 30yrs.

Young adult students should critically consider their motives for attendance at religious services. Some students attend only to please their parents. Parents and students need to discuss this with each other in the light of the developmental theories discussed in Chapter III. They may, thus, find new pathways to understanding, freedom and growth.

#### **7.2.4 Learning New Methods of Prayer**

The research has shown that 75.8% of students pray privately at least occasionally.

Private prayer is essential for developing the spiritual life. It is regrettable that, for many students, prayer is not a source of spiritual experience. The practice of prayer can be improved by learning from a variety of methods and selecting the method which best suits the individual. Some students learn new methods through attending prayer and meditation sessions at the chaplaincy or elsewhere. There are many aids available in books and on tapes. Help is also available on the Internet through ‘prayer spaces’ from different parts of the world. The Irish Jesuits offer an approach to prayer, based on the Ignatian method, in their web site. The web page, already recommended for the chaplaincy, could carry aids to prayer, designed specially for UCC students by UCC students.

#### **7.2.5 Clarification of Beliefs**

The research has shown that while there is a high level of belief in most of the core Christian doctrines, there is also a considerable level of uncertainty, as indicated by the percentages of the ‘unsure’ responses. Students need to understand the meaning of doctrines at a level suited to their general standard of education. It is difficult to offer



this in the absence of formal religion courses. The homilies at religious services could contribute to this to some degree at least. Particular attention should be given to ‘The Bible is the Word of God’, since the reading of scripture is so central to the liturgy of the Mass and Communion services. The chaplaincy team could offer courses in scripture, such as ‘The Exodus Experience’ (Fritz, 1989), which relate scripture to everyday life. ‘God is the Creator of the World’ or a related topic could be the subject of a Religion v Science debate by the Academy or other debating Societies. It has to be accepted that a degree of doubt always surrounds matters of faith and that perfect clarity is not possible.

### **7.2.6 Motivation in Charitable Works**

The young adult students are to be commended for their work for charitable groups and for the promotion of social justice. The research has shown that such work is not necessarily an expression of religious faith. It has value in itself as an expression of humanitarian concern. Christians, however, should see it as an expression of the Gospel commandment – ‘Love your neighbour as yourself’ (Mt. 22:39). It is recommended that those who issue sponsorship cards, such as Trócaire and Concern, would include reminders of the religious significance of the work in their promotion literature. This work has a spiritual value even if it is not consciously carried out for religious reasons. Did Jesus not say ‘As often as you did it for one of my least brothers/ [sisters], you did it for me’ (Mt. 25:40)?

### **7.2.7 Chaplains Better Known – A New Chaplaincy**

The research has shown that only 15.6% of students know the chaplains by sight. It has been pointed out that, from 1999, chaplains have an opportunity to meet first-year

students formally during orientation week. This will have a cumulative effect as time goes on. Chaplains could avail of many other opportunities to become known to students. For example, the celebrants of Masses in the Honan Chapel could either be introduced or could introduce themselves. Clubs and Societies days are particularly good opportunities to meet the officers of Clubs and Societies, as they are available to talk to those who visit their tables. There are many occasions when it is possible for chaplains to meet students informally. Wearing a small name-badge would help identity on those occasions. The Board of Governors should increase the number of chaplains to restore the chaplain / student ratio at least to that which prevailed in the 1970s. The new team should be made up of male and female, ordained and non-ordained chaplains. A wider variety of pastoral programmes could then be made available. Offices for the new chaplains should be located in the main buildings, thus enabling them to be more accessible to students.

The chaplaincy at UCC is located at 'Iona' on College Road. The research has shown that only 6.3% of students have visited it. It is a detached building outside the main area of the College and entered through a narrow gate. Religion tends to be private and compartmentalised. The chaplaincy, as it is at present, further promotes this image of religion. The lounge accommodates approximately twenty people, the *Seomra Cíúin* (Prayer room) fifteen. This is but a token in terms of a student population of over eleven thousand. In view of the high membership of religion shown in the research, 'Iona' is inadequate as a chaplaincy.

This researcher offers two suggestions. The first suggestion is that the Governors of the Honan Trust build a new chaplaincy as a replacement for the Honan Hostel which was sold to the College in 1992. In view of the high proportion of Catholic students at UCC and of the advances in ecumenism during the twentieth century, this should not pose a problem in relation to the use of the funds. Financial support for this new facility could



be sought throughout the dioceses of Munster. In planning the new chaplaincy, research of the designs of chaplaincies and Newman Centres in universities throughout the world should be carried out.

The new chaplaincy should have a spacious central area where many students could socialise with friends – the main reason why students visit the chaplaincy. It should be well supplied with religious books, pamphlets and tapes for students' use. This area could be used for liturgies when a space, less formal than the Honan Chapel, is required.

The chaplaincy *Seomra Ciúin* (prayer room) should be easily accessible from this central area. Some chaplains' offices, but not all, should be located in this building. The new chaplaincy should indicate that religion is an important aspect of life and that the facilities which support it are readily accessible to all members of the college.

The second suggestion is that the Board of Governors of UCC provide a new purpose-built facility in the vicinity of *Áras na Mac Léinn* (Student Union Building) to accommodate all the services of the Service Management Group. This building should have an open area for each service with facility rooms adjoining. This would offer a non-threatening approach essential, especially, to the chaplaincy. It would bring all student services into the same area of the campus and make access to them easier for the students. It would help to dispel the mystique associated with the chaplaincy as it exists at present. A further advantage of this location would be its close proximity to the Honan Chapel.

In addition to these facilities, a quiet room is needed in each of the main buildings. Because of the crowds, students are constantly subjected to noise. They need quiet peaceful spaces for their health as for their spirituality. The research has shown that students do experience a deep personal peace when the right conditions prevail. They experience this most frequently in a natural setting. This could easily be simulated by

arrangements of stones, plants and running water. These spaces could be used for quiet prayer or simply to relax.

### **7.2.8 Creation of Opportunities for Spiritual Experiences**

The research has highlighted the downward trend in attendance at religious services since the 1970s. While every effort must be made to encourage people to attend regularly, it is necessary to focus attention at the deeper level of spirituality. The research has shown that 65.5% of students have had spiritual experiences. Many methods both in the Western and Eastern traditions for enabling spiritual experiences have, already, been mentioned. Ireland has a tradition of pilgrimages. The pilgrimage, as a source of spiritual renewal, has been revived in preparation for the millennium and has proved attractive to all age groups (Dublin Diocesan Jubilee Committee, 1999). It is recommended that a special UCC pilgrimage to *Guagán Barra*, the site of the early Christian monastery of St. Finbarr in West Cork, be developed. This has potential in view of the connections of the College with St. Finbarr, the natural beauty of the site and the rich spiritual heritage associated with it. Spirituality related to local saints, such as Declan, Gobnait, Ita and Munchin should be promoted. The life of Jean Donovan, a former student of UCC, who was martyred in El Salvador is commemorated in the Divine Office on December 2nd each year. This commemoration should be celebrated at UCC as a source of spiritual inspiration.

Spiritual experience is of primary importance in pastoral ministry, since motivation depends more on the emotions than on the intellect. Conversion takes place deep in the personality by 'the replacement of the heart of stone by the heart of flesh, a replacement beyond the horizons of the heart of stone' (Lonergan, 1973, p.243).



### **7.2.9 Care of Students Who Do Not Find Life Meaningful**

The research has shown that the majority of students find life meaningful. There is, however, a small minority of students who do not find life meaningful. All members of the college, especially members of the support services, need to be vigilant for those who do not find life meaningful. Parents, also, need to be on the alert for signs of meaninglessness in their own sons or daughters. Help from counsellors or a change of course may help a student's problem. The chaplains also have an important rôle in relation to such students. Visits to them at their places of residence or at a hospital may be required.

### **7.2.10 Promotion of Moral Maturity**

It is the obligation of the Christian Churches to promote high moral standards in accordance with the Gospel values of the beatitudes (Mt. 5: 3-11). The freedom of conscience of the individual must also be respected (Vatican II, 1966a, p. 240).

According to developmental theory, as expounded by Kohlberg, it is only when people have reached Stage 5 (Human Rights and Social Welfare Morality) that they are able to take objective moral norms into account in decision-making (Duska *et al*, 1977). It is possible that many students have not yet made the transition from Stage 4 (Social System Morality) to Stage 5. In making the transition, it is necessary to argue and debate moral issues. According to Bernard Lonergan:

One has to listen to criticism and to protest. One has to remain ready to learn from others. For moral knowledge is the proper possession only of morally good men [/women] and, until one has merited that title, one has still to advance and to learn (Lonergan, 1973, p. 240).

It is recommended that moral issues be raised in homilies and debated occasionally by the debating Societies of the College. Students may come to realise that good moral behaviour 'consists in opting for the truly good, even for values against satisfaction,

when value and satisfaction conflict' (Lonergan, 1973, p. 240). Moral development is a life-long process. It is unrealistic to expect that people will have reached their full potential by 23 years of age, but it is important that the goals to be achieved are set.

### **7.2.11 Encouragement of the Discussion of Religion**

The majority of students indicated that they seldom or never discuss religion with their friends. Students who attend Masses at UCC would be encouraged to do so if a few minutes were given after the homily to allow them to discuss the theme with those around them and to offer responses.

The members of the Philosophical Society at UCC occasionally debate religious issues. In view of the poverty of discussion revealed in this research, the committee of this Society and of the Historical and Law Society might consider debating topical religious issues more often.

Chaplains are occasionally invited by Campus Radio to speak on religious topics. It is recommended that this be developed into a regular programme on religious affairs and that students be invited to take part in the discussions.

E-mail discussions of religion are to be recommended. E-mail would add an exciting global dimension to the discussion of religion. It would encourage students taking part to become better informed about their own religion.

### **7.2.12 Education on Religious Matters**

This research has shown that almost half of the respondents desire to be better informed on religious matters. With the exception of courses in ethics for medical and dental students, there are no formal religion courses available to undergraduate students. It is to be recommended that the Academic Council seriously consider the introduction of



such courses to the curriculum of the College. This will be expected, in the near future, when applicants will have taken religion as a subject in the Leaving Certificate.

The chaplaincy web page could be used to explain doctrines at a level suited to university students. New religion books and pamphlets should constantly be added to the Boole and chaplaincy libraries. Learning is a life long exercise. The desire to be better informed on religious matters may be fulfilled when students have completed their degrees and are under less pressure academically.

### **7.3 FURTHER RELATED RESEARCH**

All research is limited and this research is no exception. It has investigated religion in the life of the young adult at UCC in the 1996-1997 academic year. As Irish society continues to change, it is inevitable that religion in people's lives will also change.

Further research, at regular intervals, is required to monitor the changes. It is suggested that a detailed investigation be carried out every ten to twelve years at UCC.

The qualitative aspect of this investigation was informative to the quantitative. It is suggested that the qualitative aspect be given additional importance in future investigations. Furthermore, the qualitative research could embrace group interviews, which would allow interviewees to interact. Very valuable additional insights and nuances would thus be obtained.

The research did not show significant differences between the age groups in their responses. The age factor would need to be researched by the use of longitudinal studies of individual cases, carried out each year throughout the duration of university life.

This research focused on the young adults who are full-time students at UCC. While this group includes the majority of students at UCC, there are other important groups whose contributions to religion at UCC should be investigated.

One group is the overseas students who spend a term or a year at UCC. These students account for approximately 10% of the student population. Their presence has religious significance for the College. They include members of a wide variety of Christian denominations as well as Muslims, Jews and Hindus. Research on religion in the lives of these students would be a very valuable contribution to the overall consideration of religion at UCC.

A second group, which has become sizeable at UCC since the mid-1990s, is the mature student group. This group has introduced a new and important dimension to the College, not least in the field of religion. The contribution of the mature students to religion at UCC justifies serious research.

Research on the religion of the part-time students should also be carried out. Many of these are employed and have a perspective on religion from outside the university environment. It would be interesting to investigate how they compare with full-time students.

Research on religion should be ongoing in universities, third level institutes and colleges. Comparative studies could then be carried out. This would enable these institutions and the Churches to see the overall picture for young adults in third level education. Research on the religion of young adults who are not in third level education would also be valuable for comparative purposes.

There is scope for research on the spiritual heritage of UCC. The staff and students walk the pathways of the monks of the Gill Abbey monastery. It would be worthwhile to explore their spirituality as a source of inspiration in a modern university. Likewise, the spirituality of the Dominican friars who are buried under Deans Hall (student apartment complex) should be researched. The spirituality of many former staff members and students of the College and its contribution to local and global spirituality opens up a wide area of possible research. Hundreds of missionaries; priests, religious brothers,



religious sisters and laity, were educated at UCC. The impact, which this experience had on their missionary work, should be researched while they are still available to give their own testimonies. Other research might include: research on the Honan Chapel, not only its history and its architecture, but also its influence on the religion and spirituality of staff members and students; the religious influences of the Honan and La Retraite Hostels on the students who resided in them; the benefit of the courses in Apologetics and in Religion and Theology to those who attended them. Through this research a treasury of spirituality, particular to UCC, could be made available for the inspiration of all who will tread its pathways in the future and whose lives may also enrich its heritage.

#### **7.4 CONCLUSION**

In putting forward recommendations to various interest groups, the researcher acknowledges that these groups are in the best position to propose their own responses to the research. 'Abraham Maslow shows that you cannot motivate people to do anything. You can only help them to motivate themselves by providing appropriate incentives' (Coyle, 2000, p. 18). It is hoped that the research provides the incentive which will motivate all concerned with religion in the life of the young adult at UCC to treat it as an important aspect of their lives and to provide the necessary supports.

According to Paolo Freire:

There is no such thing as a neutral education process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of generations into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes the 'practice of freedom', the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world (Cited in Mayo, 1995, p. 5).

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# **APPENDICES**



**Appendix AI            COLLEGES (IRELAND) ACT, 1845**

XIV. And for the better enabling every student in the said colleges to receive religious instruction according to the creed which he professes to hold, be it enacted, that it shall be lawful for the president and professors, or other governing body of each of the said colleges which shall be constituted in and by the said letters patent, to assign lecture-rooms within the precincts of such college, wholly or in part, for the use of such religious teachers as shall be recognised by such governing body, subject in each case to the approval of her majesty, her heirs and successors, and also subject to the like approval, to make rules concerning the days and times when such religious instruction shall be given therein, and for securing that the same shall not interfere with the general discipline of the college; provided always, that no student shall be compelled by any rule of the college to attend any theological lecture or religious instruction other than is approved by his parents or guardians, and that no religious test shall be administered to any person in order to entitle him to be admitted a student of any such college, or to hold any office therein, or to partake of any advantage or privilege thereof; but this proviso shall not be deemed to prevent the making of regulations for securing the due attendance of the students for divine worship at such church or chapel as shall be approved by their parents or guardians, respectively.

XV. And for the better government of the students in the said colleges, be it enacted, that no student shall be allowed to continue in any of the said colleges unless he shall dwell with his parent or guardian, or with some near relation or friend selected by his parent or guardian, and approved by the president of the college or with a tutor or master of a boarding-house licensed by the president of the college as hereinafter provided, or in a hall founded and endowed for the reception of students and recognised by the college as hereinafter provided.

XVI. And be it enacted, that every person who is desirous of being licensed as a tutor or master of a boarding-house in any of the said colleges shall apply in writing under his hand to the president of the college for his licence; and it shall be lawful for the president if he shall think fit, to require of any such applicant such testimonials of character and fitness for the office as shall be satisfactory to him; and the application shall specify the house or houses belonging to or occupied by the applicant, and intended by him for the reception of students, and the number of students, who may be conveniently lodged and boarded therein, and also the provision or regulation proposed to be made for securing to the said students the means of due attendance upon such religious instruction and divine worship as may be approved by his parents and guardians and recognised by the governing body of the college, and thereupon it shall be lawful for the president, in his discretion, to grant or withhold the licence for the academical year then current or then next ensuing; and every such licence shall be registered in the archives of the college, and shall endure until the end of the academical year in which it shall be registered, and shall then be of no force unless renewed in like manner, but shall be revocable at any time, and may be forthwith revoked by the president of the college, in case of any misbehaviour of such tutor or master of a boarding-house, or of the students under his care, which, in the opinion of the president and a majority of the professors of the college, ought to be punished by immediate revocation of such licence.

XVII. And be it enacted, that it shall be lawful for any person whomsoever having power to make an absolute disposition thereof to give, grant, devise, bequeath, or assure, by any deed, will, or other instrument sufficient in law to create or convey an estate therein, any messuages, lands, tenements, and hereditaments, or any estate therein, or any interest arising thereout, or any money, chattels, and effects, to any trustee or trustees willing to accept the trust, or to the commissioners of charitable



donations and bequests in Ireland and their successors, in trust for founding and endowing halls for the reception of students in any of the said colleges, and by such deed, will, or instrument to establish rules or to specify the authority for establishing rules to be observed by the students admitted to the benefits of such foundation, and to specify the authority by which the observance of such rules is to be enforced; provided always, that no such hall shall be recognised by any of the said colleges unless the instrument of foundation shall provide that such rules, and also the appointment from time to time of the principal or other person holding chief authority in such hall, shall be of no force until allowed by the person or persons appointed or to be appointed as aforesaid by her majesty, her heirs and successors, to execute the office of visitor of the said college.

XVIII. And for the encouragement of persons willing to found and endow halls for the reception of students in the said colleges as aforesaid, be it declared and enacted, that if her majesty, her heirs and successors, shall be pleased, by letters patent under the great seal of Ireland, to incorporate any number of persons willing to found and endow any such hall or halls as aforesaid, such incorporated hall shall be deemed a public work, for the promotion of which the commissioners of public works in Ireland may make loans within the meaning of an act passed in the second year of the reign of his late majesty, instituted 'an act for the extension and promotion of public works in Ireland', and of all acts passed or to be passed for the amendment thereof; and that it shall be lawful for the commissioners of public works in Ireland to make loans to such incorporated bodies, respectively, for the extension and promotion of such foundations according to the provisions of the last-recited acts.

XIX. And be it enacted, that it shall be lawful for any person whomsoever having power to make an absolute disposition thereof to give, grant, devise, bequeath, or assure, by any deed, will, or other instrument sufficient in law to create or convey an estate therein,

any messuages, lands, tenements, and hereditaments, or any estate therein, or interest arising thereout, or any money, chattels, and effects, to any trustee or trustees willing to accept the trust, or to the commissioners of charitable donations and bequests in Ireland, and their successors, in trust for establishing and maintaining lectures or other forms of religious instruction for the use of such students of the said colleges, respectively, as shall be desirous of receiving the same, subject to such regulations consistent with the intentions of the donor thereof, as shall be made by the governing body of the college, and approved by her majesty, her heirs and successors; provided always, that no such gift shall take effect until it shall have been accepted by the governing body of the college, and until her majesty, her heirs and successors, shall have signified her or their approval of the regulations according to which such gift is to be applied (Moody and Beckett, 1959b, pp.727-729).



## Appendix A2

## Statutes of Punishment

1. Any Student guilty of any of the following offences, shall be liable to expulsion from the College; but it shall be competent to the Council, should they deem it more conducive to the discipline of the College, and the reformation of the offender, to impose some lighter punishment for the same:

- I. Habitual neglect of attendance for Divine Worship, at such Church or Chapel as shall be approved by his Parents or Guardians.
- II. Habitual neglect of attendance on the Religious Instruction provided for Students of his Church or Denomination, in the Licensed Boarding-house in which he may reside.
- III. Immoral or dishonest practices.
- IV. Treasonable or seditious conduct.
- V. Drunkenness.
- VI. Grievous offences against College rules or discipline.
- VII. Wilful and serious injury to the property of the College.

2. For all offences and violations of the Statutes, Rules, and Ordinances of the College, of a less grievous nature than the preceding, the Council shall have power to inflict such fine or other punishment as shall appear to them suitable to the same.

3. No student who has been expelled from any of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland, shall be allowed afterwards to enter or pursue his studies in any of the said Colleges.

### *Rules of Council, regarding the General Discipline of the College*

1. It shall be the duty of every Professor and Officer of the College, and more especially of the Deans of the several Faculties, to assist in maintaining discipline, and in repressing, by admonition and reproof, misconduct and disorder among the Students.

2. If any Student should prove inattentive to the admonition and reproof of any Dean, Professor, or officer, it shall be the duty of such Dean, Professor, or officer, to report the offender to the Vice-President.

3. If the Vice-President shall deem it necessary or desirable, he shall summon the offender to appear before the Council at its next subsequent Meeting, when he shall be solemnly admonished by the President or acting Chairman of the Council.

4. If any Student shall have been summoned before the Council a second time during the same Term, he shall forfeit the Term, and be excluded from the College during the remainder thereof.

5. If the offence for which any Student shall be summoned before the Council, be of a grave character, it shall be competent to the Council to suspend him during either one or two Sessions, according to their discretion.

6. It shall be the duty of the Steward and Porters of the College, to report to the Vice-President, any instances of disorder or breach of discipline which they may observe.

By Order of the Council,  
Francis Albani, *Registrar*

## Appendix A3 Regulations to be observed by Proprietors of Licensed Houses

*Regulations to be observed by Proprietors of Houses Licensed by the President, for the Residence of Students of Queen's College, Cork, and to be observed under penalty of withdrawal of Licence.*

1. The Proprietor shall on the first day of each Term, make a return to the Registrar of the College, of the names of all Students residing therein.
2. In case of Students commencing to reside during a Term, their names shall be reported to the Registrar, immediately on their entering into possession of their rooms.
3. The proprietor shall in all cases, arrange that each Student shall have a separate Bed, and separate means of cleanliness, and shall in case of more than one person sleeping in the same Room, lodge with the Bursar of the College, a plan of such Room, with the arrangement of beds proposed.
4. No apartment shall be used as a Bedroom, unless provided with chimney flu, or other satisfactory provision for ventilation.
5. The Residences licensed for Students, Terms, and Ten of the Clock in Summer Term, and violation of this rule, except on permission granted by the Registrar of the College, will be punished by the Council, to whom the Proprietor of the House is hereby bound immediately to report any such violation of the rule.
7. All playing at games of Chance, Cards, or Dice, is absolutely forbidden, under penalty of withdrawal of the Licence.
8. The introduction of spirituous liquors by Students into Licensed houses, is strictly forbidden, and any case of intoxication occurring in a Boarding-house, must be immediately reported by the Proprietor, under penalty of withdrawal of the Licence.
9. The Proprietor is bound immediately to report to the Registrar of the College for the information of the Council, any Quarrelling, or Political or Polemical Disputations, or any acts of immorality or misconduct, committed by any Students belonging to his Boarding-house.
10. The frequenting of Smoking-rooms, Taverns or Public-houses, is strictly forbidden to Students, and Proprietors of Boarding-houses are required to report to the Registrar of the College, any case of such being practised by Students belonging to the Boarding-houses.
11. The Proprietors of Boarding-houses, shall furnish every facility of access to the Reverend the Deans of Residence, to communicate with, and afford Moral and Religious aid and instruction to the Students of the respective Religions resident in Boarding-houses, and shall provide an apartment for morning and evening prayer, should such be required by the Reverend Deans or any of them, and shall co-operate in the arrangements of the several Deans of Residence, for the attendance of Students on Public Worship.
12. The Proprietor of each Boarding-house shall obtain from each Dean of Residence, a copy of the Regulations for Moral and Religious discipline, proposed by the Dean and certified by the President, as not interfering with College Business, and shall post up said copy of rules in some suitable part of the Residence, and direct the attention of Students to the same.

Signed, by Order of the President,  
Francis Albani, *Registrar.*



## **Appendix A4**

## **IRISH UNIVERSITIES (1908) ACT**

### **Section 3**

1. No test whatever of religious beliefs shall be imposed on any person as a condition of his becoming or continuing to be a professor, lecturer, fellow, scholar, exhibitioner, graduate, or student of, or of his holding any office or emolument or exercising any privilege in, either of the two new universities, or any constituent college; nor in connection with either of these universities or any such constituent college shall any preference be given to or advantage be withheld from any person on the ground of religious belief.
2. Every Professor upon entering into office shall sign a declaration in a form approved by the Commissioners jointly under this Act, securing the respectful treatment of the religious opinions of any of his class.
3. Nothing in this section shall apply to any Professor of or Lecturer in Theology or Divinity; provided that no test of religious belief shall be imposed by the Governing Body of either of the two new universities or any constituent college on any such Professor or Lecturer as a condition of his appointment or recognition by the Governing Body as such Professor or Lecturer.

### **Section 7**

Provided that nothing in this provision shall prevent the recognition by the Governing Body of the University of any Professor of or Lecturer in Theology or Divinity as a Professor of the University so long as the Professorship is founded and maintained entirely by means of private benefaction, or the use of any building belonging to the university or college, for any teaching given by such Professor, or for any other religious teaching no part of the cost of which is defrayed out of public funds. But no student shall be compelled to attend any such theological teaching, or religious instruction, and no Professor of or Lecturer in Theology or Divinity shall be eligible for membership of the General Board of Studies or of any Faculty other than the Faculty of Theology (Keogh, 1997, pp. 65-66)

Appendix A5

Student Numbers 1849 – 1997

Student Numbers 1849 - 1997										
Session	Total No	Male	Female	R. Cath	Ch of En/Ir	Presbyt-erian	Wes/ Meth	Other Ch Den/ World Religion	No Relig-ion	No entry.
1849-50	115		-	62	43	2	7	1		
1859-60	171		-	85	68	5	8	2		
1869-70	252		-	94	134	8	16			
1879-80	300		-	152	108	22	12	6		
1889-90	238			155	57	16	7	3		
1899-90	178			106	56	3	10	3		
1909-10	368			274	67	7	16	3		
1919-20	660			630	20	1	4	5		
1929-30	564			540	10	-	2	4		
1935-36	893			877	4	2	4	6		
1949-50	954	674	280	928	11	9	-	6 (Jews)		
1959-60	1,407	1,037	370	1280	8	-	1	1 Ch. 3 (Jews)		114
1972-73 *	3,982	R. Cath 2,241	R. Cath 1,612	3,853	40				89	
1979-80 *	5,088	R. Cath 2,601	R. Cath 2,264	4,865	77				94	5
1989-90 *	7,070	R. Cath 2,938	R. Cath 3,471	6,409	105			109	161	291
1992-93 *	9,408	R. Cath 3,306	R. Cath 4,308	7,614	77			41	52	1,847
1996-97	10,498	4,296	6,202	Students not required to give religious affiliation						

*R. Cath = Roman Catholic; Ch of En/Ir = Church of England/Ireland; Wes = Wesleyan; Meth = Methodist; Ch Den = Christian Denomination*

- The gender breakdown for Roman Catholics was taken from Catholic chaplains' reports to Catholic bishops. Gender break-down for these years was not available from archival records at UCC.



## **Appendix B1**

## **Preliminary Interview Guide**

### **Students' Interviews**

#### **1. General impressions of UCC**

- (i) Initial impressions of UCC
- (ii) Experiences of life at UCC
- (iii) Present situation

#### **2. Religion**

- (i) What part has religion played in your life while a student at UCC?
- (ii) Relevance
- (iii) Practice
- (iv) Beliefs
- (v) Personal involvement
- (vi) Integration of religion and other areas of life

#### **3. Awareness of facilities for Religion at UCC**

- (i) The Honan Chapel
- (ii) The Chaplaincy
- (iii) The Chaplaincy Programme
- (iv) The Chaplains

#### **4. Suggestions regarding religion:**

- (i) For students
- (ii) For chaplains
- (iii) For College Authorities

### **Chaplains' Interviews**

- 1. Patterns observed among students in relation to religion.
- 2. Role of the chaplain.
- 3. Chaplaincy structure/organisation.
- 4. Areas which should be investigated
- 5. Specific questions which should be asked

Appendix B2

AN OBJECTIVE INQUIRY INTO THE RELIGIOUS PRACTICES,  
BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES OF 18-23 YEAR OLD  
STUDENTS AT UCC

For each question please tick the appropriate box or write in the space provided.

1. What age are you? .....
2. Please indicate your gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
3. What is your nationality? .....

4.	In which of the following did you grow up?	
	City (100,000 or more)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Large town (10,000 – 99,999)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Small town (1,500 – 9,999)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Rural (below 1,500)	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.	In what type of school did you receive your second level education?	
	Denominational secondary school/college	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Non-denominational secondary school/college	<input type="checkbox"/>
	VEC school/college	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Community school	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Comprehensive school	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Second level school outside Ireland	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. In which Faculty at UCC do you study? .....
7. Which year of your course are you taking at present? .....
8. If you have previously taken a University Degree/Diploma, please name  
.....



9.

At which of the following do you live during term time?

At home

☐

In a bed-sit

☐

With a relative

☐

Share a house/apartment

☐

In digs

☐

Other (specify)-----

10.

If you are in digs or share a house/apartment, is it

single sex?

☐

mixed?

☐

*Please indicate, on the table below, how important certain aspects of your life are to you at the present time.*

		Very important	Important	Un-decided	Not very Important	Un-important
11.	My relationship with my parents					
12.	My relationship with people of the same sex					
13.	My relationships with people of the opposite sex					
14.	My relationship with academic staff					
15.	Academic success					
16.	How acceptable I am to my peers					
17.	Religious issues					
18.	Money					
19.	My social life					

20.

Are you a member of a World Religion other than Christianity?

Yes

☐

No

☐

[If 'Yes', please move to 57 on p. 8]

21 Are you a member of a Christian denomination at present?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If 'Yes' Answer 22.	If 'No' Answer 23-26
<p>22. To which Christian denomination to you belong?</p> <p>Baptist <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Church of Ireland <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Methodist <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Presbyterian <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Roman Catholic <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other Christian (specify)-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Now move to 27.</p>	<p>23. Were you brought up in a Christian Denomination?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>24. If 'Yes' please indicate which</p> <p>-----</p> <p>25. At what age did you decide to leave it?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>26. Why did you leave it?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Now move to 53. ( page 6)</p>

27. The reason why I continue to belong to the Christian Denomination indicated above is:-

Parental influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	I made a personal decision to do so	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	I never fully analysed my reasons	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify)	-----		

28. How important is membership of your Religion to you?

Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>
Important	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not Important	<input type="checkbox"/>



29. Have you ever seriously considered discontinuing the practice of Religious?

Yes ☐ No ☐

30. If 'Yes', why? (you may tick more than one item if appropriate)

Serious doubts above its beliefs ☐ Desire for freedom from its restrictions ☐  
Disillusionment with its organisation ☐ Other (specify) -----  
Disillusionment with its members ☐ -----

31. Approximately how often do you attend religious services at present?

More than once a week ☐ Once or twice a year ☐  
Once a week ☐ On specific occasions, e.g. weddings ☐  
Once a month ☐ Never ☐

32. Why do you attend religious services ? (You may tick more than one box if appropriate)

It is basic to my religious belief ☐ I have always gone ☐  
I consider it my duty ☐ To please my family ☐  
I feel a better person for doing so ☐ To pray for my needs ☐  
Other (specify)-----  
-----

33. Do you attend any religious functions at UCC? Yes ☐ No ☐

34. If 'Yes', please indicate which services. (You may tick more than one item if appropriate)

Masses in the Honan Chapel ☐ Bible reflection/Prayer ☐  
Taize Prayer ☐ Prayer services of Christian Union ☐  
Prayers for Church Unity ☐ Folk Group ☐  
Other (Specify)-----

Every day ☐

Once a week ☐

Occasionally ☐

Out of routine	<input type="checkbox"/>	For success in examinations	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel better for doing so	<input type="checkbox"/>	In recognition of God in my life	<input type="checkbox"/>
To make requests for myself and others	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other ( <i>specify</i> ) -----	
-----			

**Please indicate your acceptance or rejection of each of the following statements:-**

		Accept Strongly	Accept	Unsure	Reject	Strongly Reject
38.	The Bible is the word of God					
39.	God is the Creator of the world					
40.	Jesus is the Son of God					
41.	Jesus has risen from the dead					
42.	There is a Heaven					
43.	There is no survival of any kind after death					
44.	Hell does not exist					
45.	God forgives sinners who repent					



46. Have you worked for any charitable group at UCC or elsewhere?

Yes ☐

No ☐

47. If 'Yes', for which of the following did you work? (You may tick more than one if appropriate)

Vincent de Paul Society ☐

Concern ☐

L'Arche Community ☐

Trócaire ☐

Simon Community ☐

Cork Local Charities ☐

SHARE ☐

Other (specify)-----

48. Do you know the College Chaplain(s) of your religion to see?

Yes ☐

No ☐

49. Which of the following statements best describes your idea of a College Chaplain?

A person who organises religious services ☐

A person who is available to advise students ☐

Other (specify)-----

50. Have you ever been to the College Chaplaincy? Yes ☐ No ☐

If 'Yes', answer 51.	If 'No', answer 52.
51. What was your purpose in going there? (You may tick more than one box)	52. Which of the following prevented you? (You may tick more than one box)
To socialise with friends <input type="checkbox"/>	Did not know about it <input type="checkbox"/>
As a member of a Chaplaincy group <input type="checkbox"/>	Did not know what to expect there <input type="checkbox"/>
To speak to a Chaplain <input type="checkbox"/>	Did not know anyone going there <input type="checkbox"/>
To collect Concern/Trócaire card <input type="checkbox"/>	Fear of religion being imposed on me <input type="checkbox"/>
To have a Mass Card signed <input type="checkbox"/>	Fear of what my friends might think <input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify)-----	Other (specify)-----
Now Answer 53.	Now Answer 53.

**53** Regardless of whether you are a member of a Religious Denomination, which of the following statements comes closest to expressing what you believe/don't believe about God?

I believe that God exists

□

While I have doubts, I do believe in God

□

I don't believe in a personal God, but I do believe in a Higher Power.

□

I don't believe in God.

□

I don't know if God exists.

□

None of the above answers represents what I believe about God.

□

What I believe about God is (*specify*)-----

-----

**54** Did you ever have any of the following spiritual experiences?

(i)

An awareness of being in the presence of God

Yes

□

No

□

(ii)

An experience of communication with God

Yes

□

No

□

(iii)

An experience of deep personal peace

Yes

□

No

□

(iv)

An experience of detachment from this world

Yes

□

No

□

**55.** If you have answered 'Yes' to any item in Q.54, did it occur in the following instances?

		Very often	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1	In a natural setting					
2	When listening to music					
3	When praying alone or with others					
4	On happy occasions					
5	On sad occasions					
6	Other ( <i>specify</i> ) <div>-----</div>					



Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statement.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
56.	Life is meaningful					

Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements:

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
57	Abortion is every woman's right					
58.	Sex should be reserved for marriage.					
59.	Divorce should be available in every country.					
60.	Euthanasia is acceptable					
61.	World resources should be shared according to need.					
62.	Excessive drinking is acceptable.					
63.	Taking soft drugs is acceptable.					
64.	It is a moral offence to cheat at examinations					
65.	Marriages between gay couples should be recognised in society.					
66.	It is wrong to kill or seriously injure another person.					
67.	Moral principles are important in helping to create a happy family life.					

68. I discuss religion with my friends                      Often                      ☐
- Seldom                      ☐
- Never                      ☐

69. I would like to be better informed about religious matters?
- Yes                      ☐                      No                      ☐

70. What is your overall reaction to this questionnaire? -----
- 
- 

*Please check that you have answered every question which is applicable to you.*

**Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and co-operation.**

**Kindly return within one week.**



## **Appendix B3**

## **Letter Accompanying Questionnaire**

27 St. Christopher's Road,  
Montenotte Park,  
Cork.

26 November 1999.

Dear Student,

I need your help. I am carrying out a survey for a PhD degree using the enclosed questionnaire. I request your co-operation in answering it. It should take approximately 10 minutes. What I need are your frank replies, not what may be considered right or wrong answers.

It is important that you personally complete this questionnaire as your name has been drawn on a random sample of the entire 18-23 year old student population of UCC. I can understand that you may be reluctant to answer a questionnaire on religion but I can assure you that this questionnaire is completely anonymous, as your name and address have not been given to me. I am indebted to the staff of the Registrar's Office at UCC for placing the label on the envelope and sending it to you directly.

I need a high return if the survey is to be valuable so I would be most grateful if you will complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed envelope within one week of receiving it.

Thank you for your time and co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

*Catherine M. O'Brien*

Catherine M. O'Brien.

**Appendix B4**

**First Appeal for Return of Questionnaire**

**(Postcard)**

St. Christopher's Road, Montenotte Park , Cork.

Dear Student,

You will recently have received a questionnaire 'An Objective Inquiry into the Religious Practices, Beliefs and Attitudes of 18-23 yr. old students at UCC'  
If you have already returned the completed questionnaire I thank you sincerely.  
If you have not yet done so I appeal to you to do so as soon as possible.

Yours Sincerely,

Catherine M. O' Brien.

4 December 1996



## Appendix B5      Second Appeal for Return of Questionnaire

27 St. Christopher's Road  
Montenotte Park  
Cork

27 January 1997

Dear Student,

I am taking this opportunity to write to you as one of the students to whom I sent a questionnaire 'An Objective Inquiry into the Religious Practices, Beliefs and Attitudes of 18 – 23 yr.-old students at UCC'. I sent out 736 questionnaires in all. So far I have received back 463 questionnaires. This is a very good initial response of 63%.

If you are one of those who has already responded I thank you sincerely.

I am concerned that 273 questionnaires have not been returned. If you have not yet returned yours, I appeal to you to return it as soon as possible.

It is normal practice at this stage to send another copy of the questionnaire to those who have not yet responded, but as I have not access to names and addresses I do not know who has returned a questionnaire and who has not. As it would be very uneconomical to send out 736 copies of the questionnaire, I have left some copies with Emer O'Driscoll in the Registrar's Office. Should you have discarded the questionnaire, you can receive a copy by calling Emer at 902257. Your help and co-operation will be very much appreciated.

I wish you every success in your own studies.

Yours sincerely,

*Catherine M. O'Brien*

Catherine M. O'Brien.

## **Appendix B6**

## **Follow-up Interview Guide**

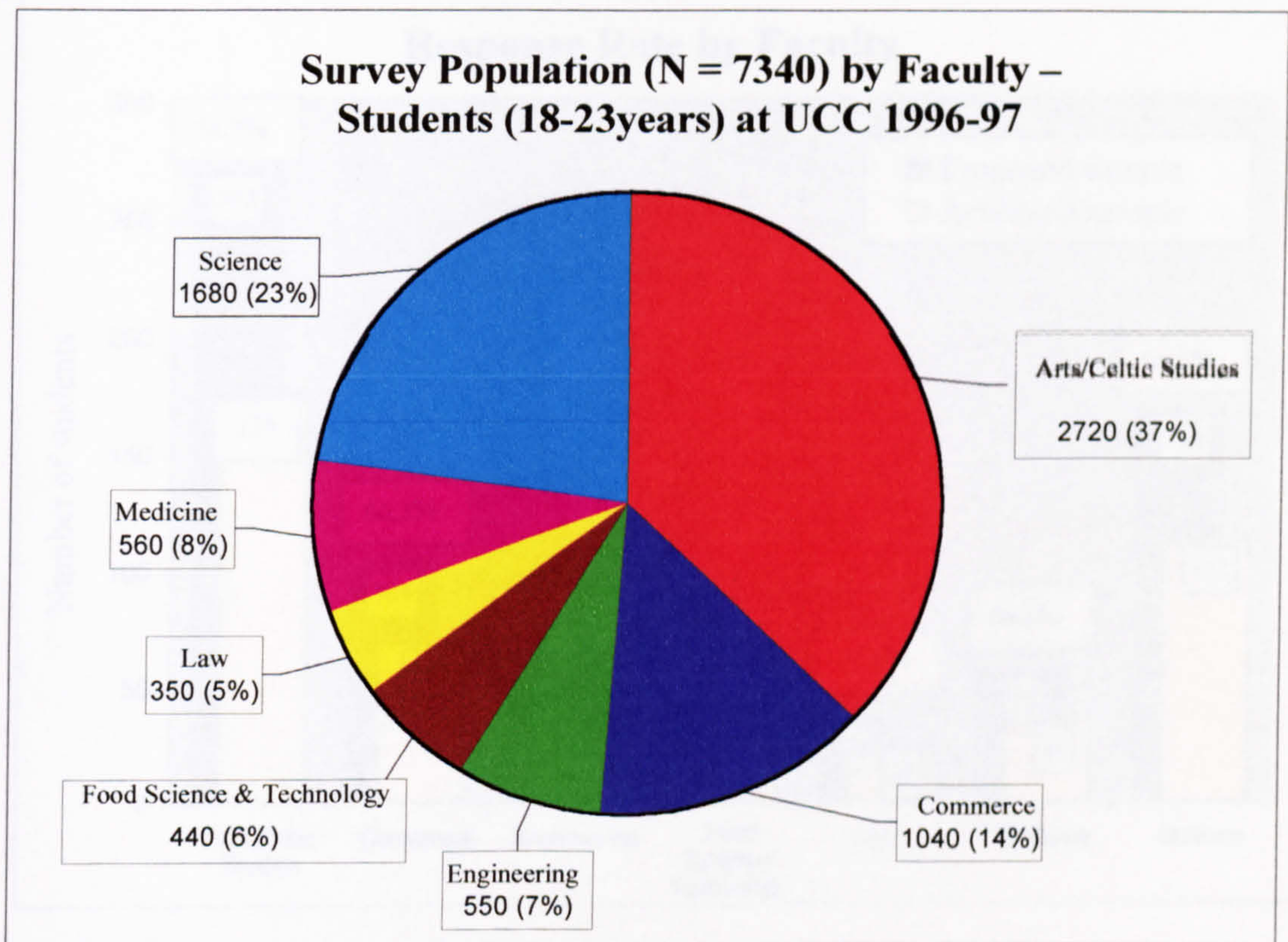
- 1) General background
- 2) Why did you join (name of Group/Society)?
- 3) How did you find out about (name of Group/Society)?
- 4) How long have you been in the Group/Society
- 5) What does membership of the Group/Society mean to you?
- 6) Do you have any particular role in the Group/Society
- 7) Does this Group/Society have any religious/spiritual significance for the members?
- 8) How do your friends regard your involvement?

What plans do you have for the future of the Group/Society?



## Appendix C1

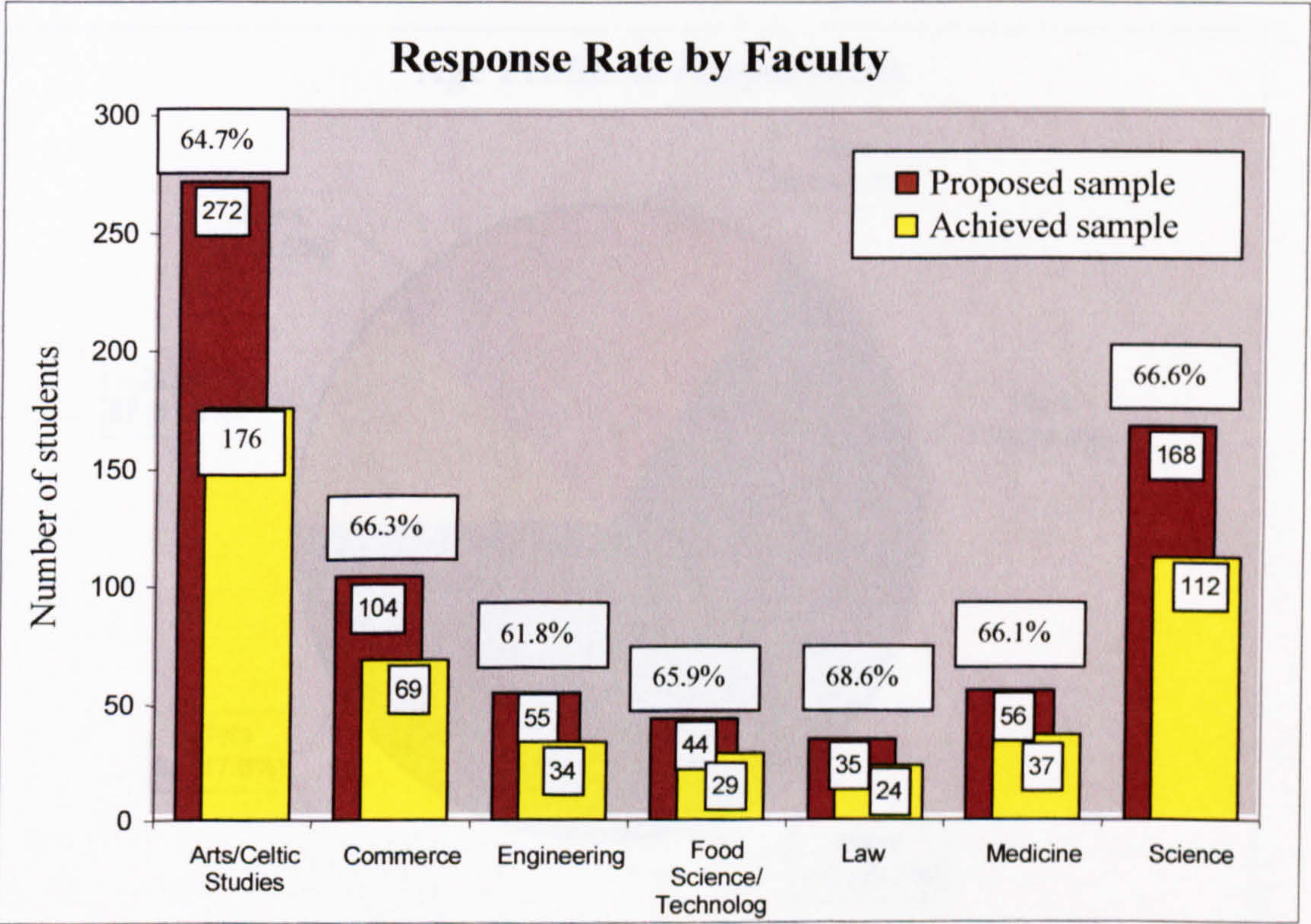
**Fig. 5. 1 Survey Population by Faculty**





Appendix C2

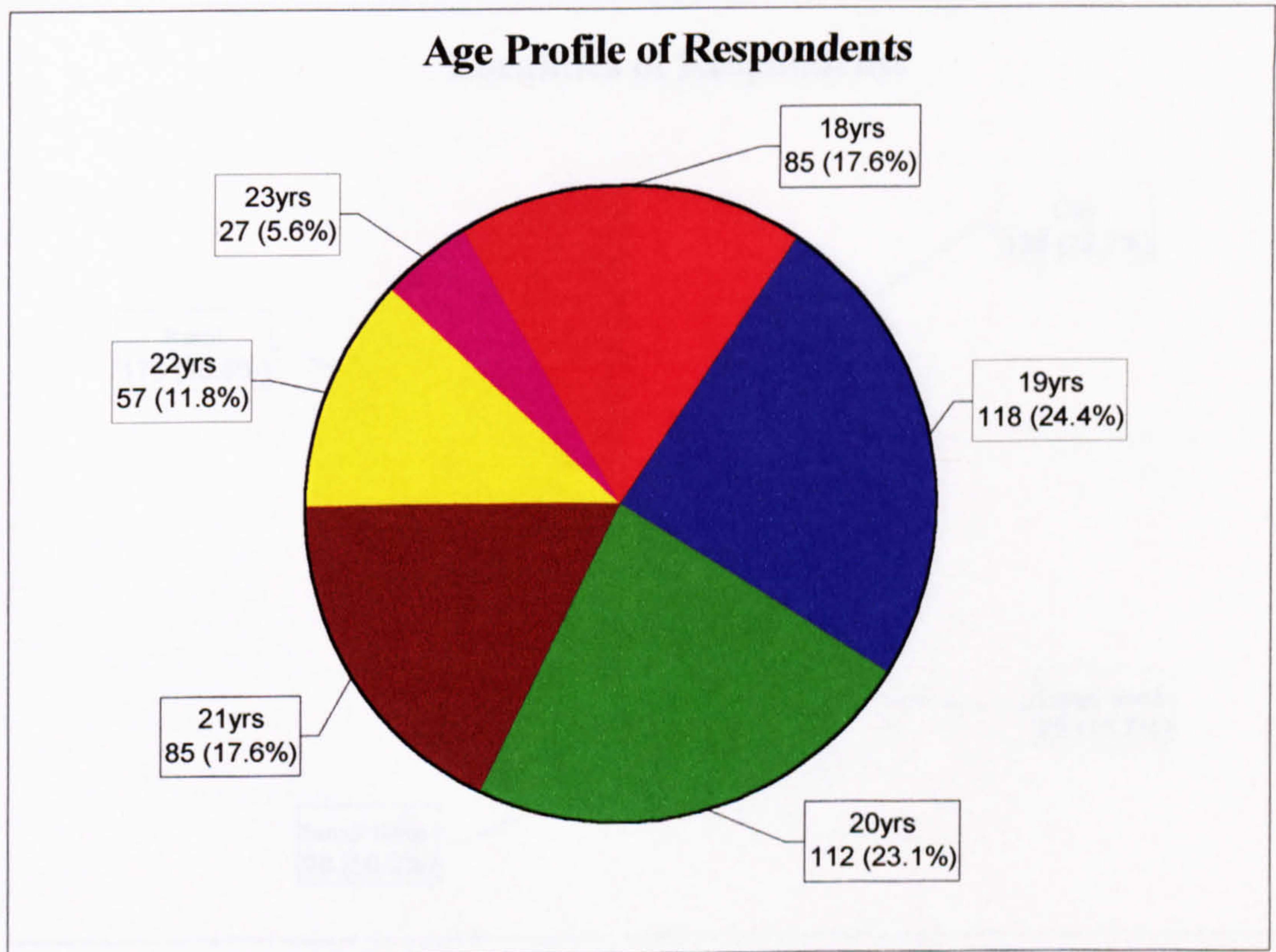
Fig. 5. 2 Response Rate by Faculty





## Appendix C3

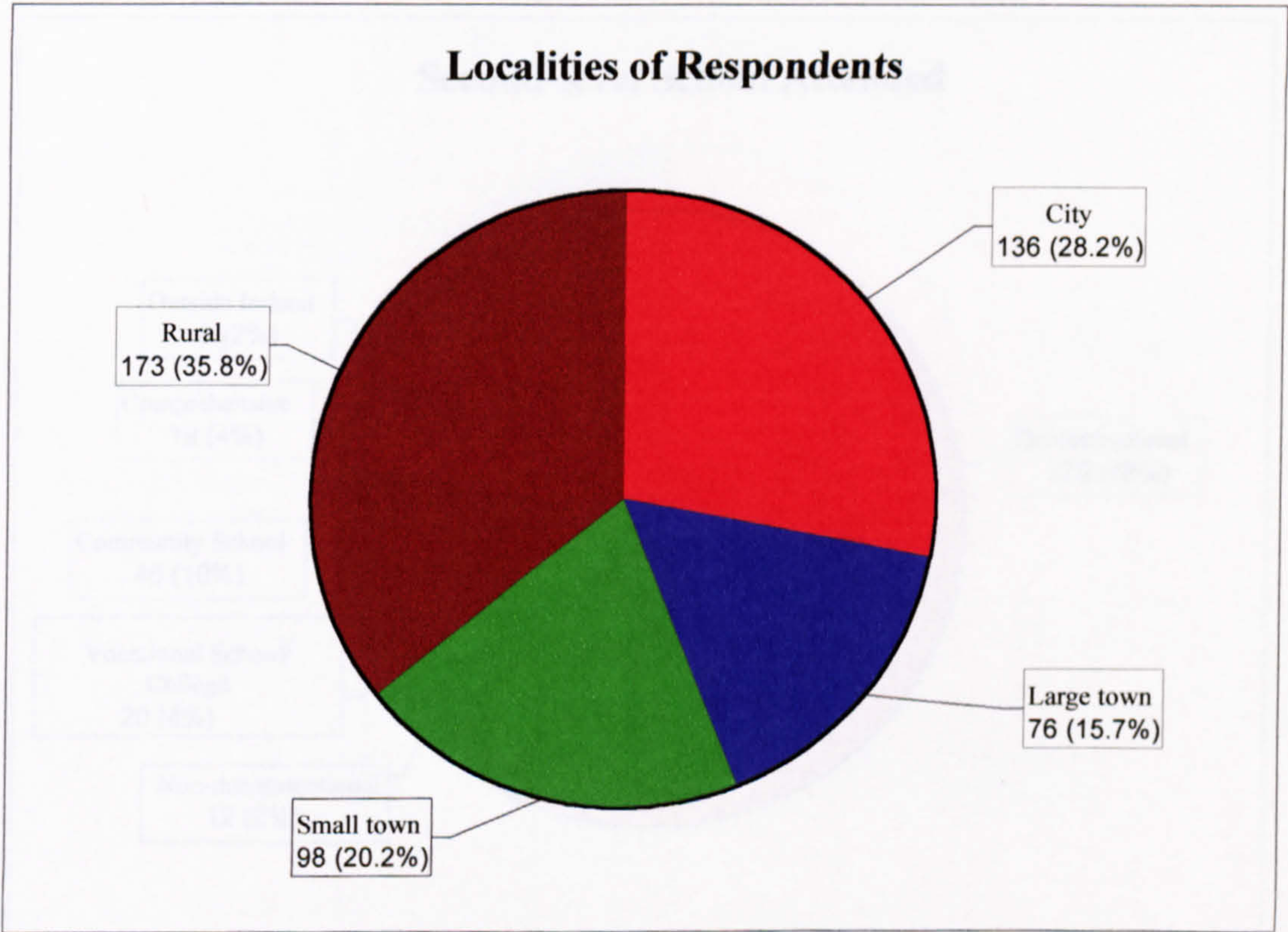
**Fig. 5. 3 Age Profile of Respondents**





Appendix C4

Fig. 5. 4 Localities of Respondents



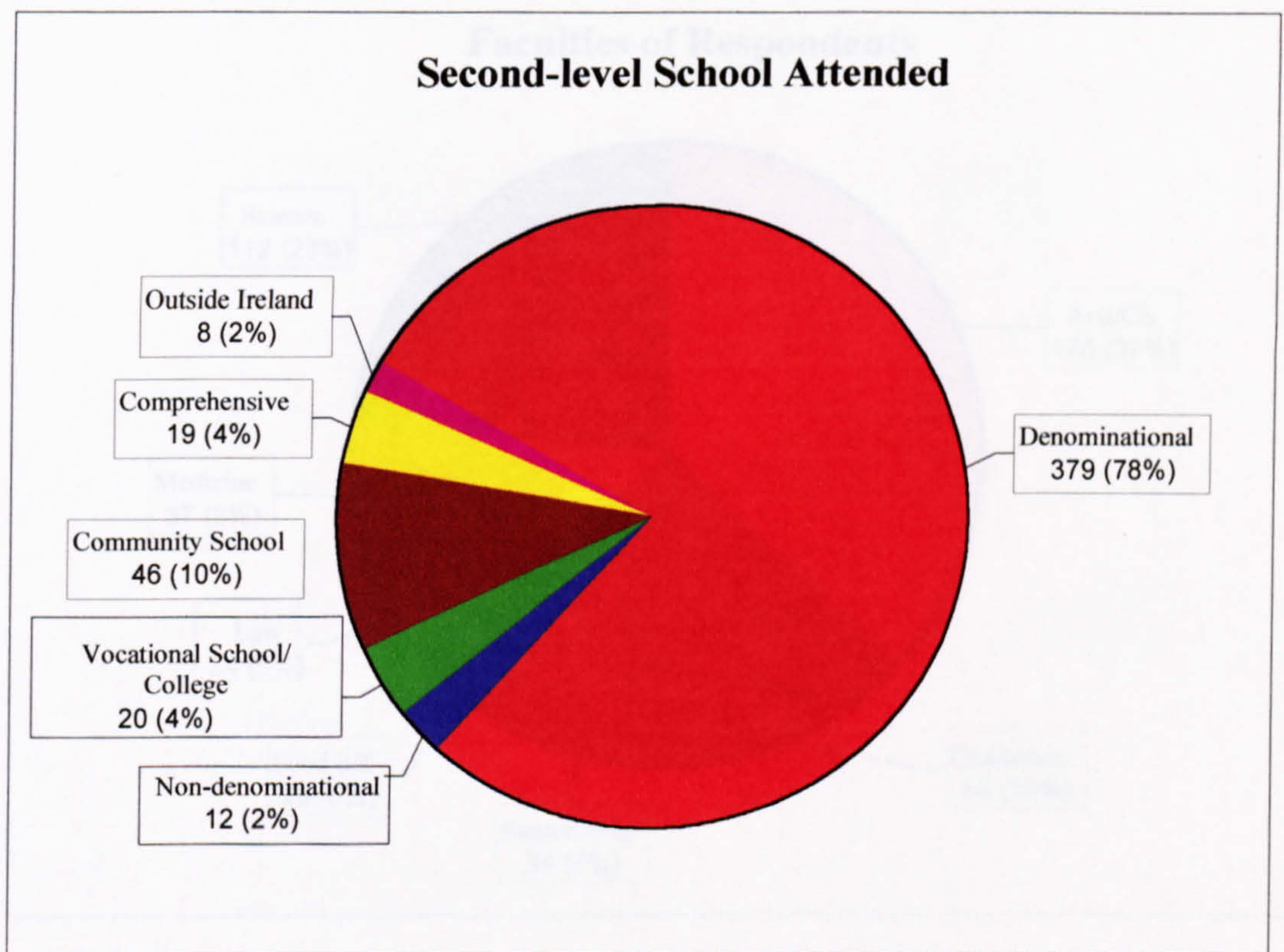


Appendix C6

**Appendix C5**

Fig. 5. 6 Facilities of Respondents

**Fig. 5. 5 Second Level Schools Attended**



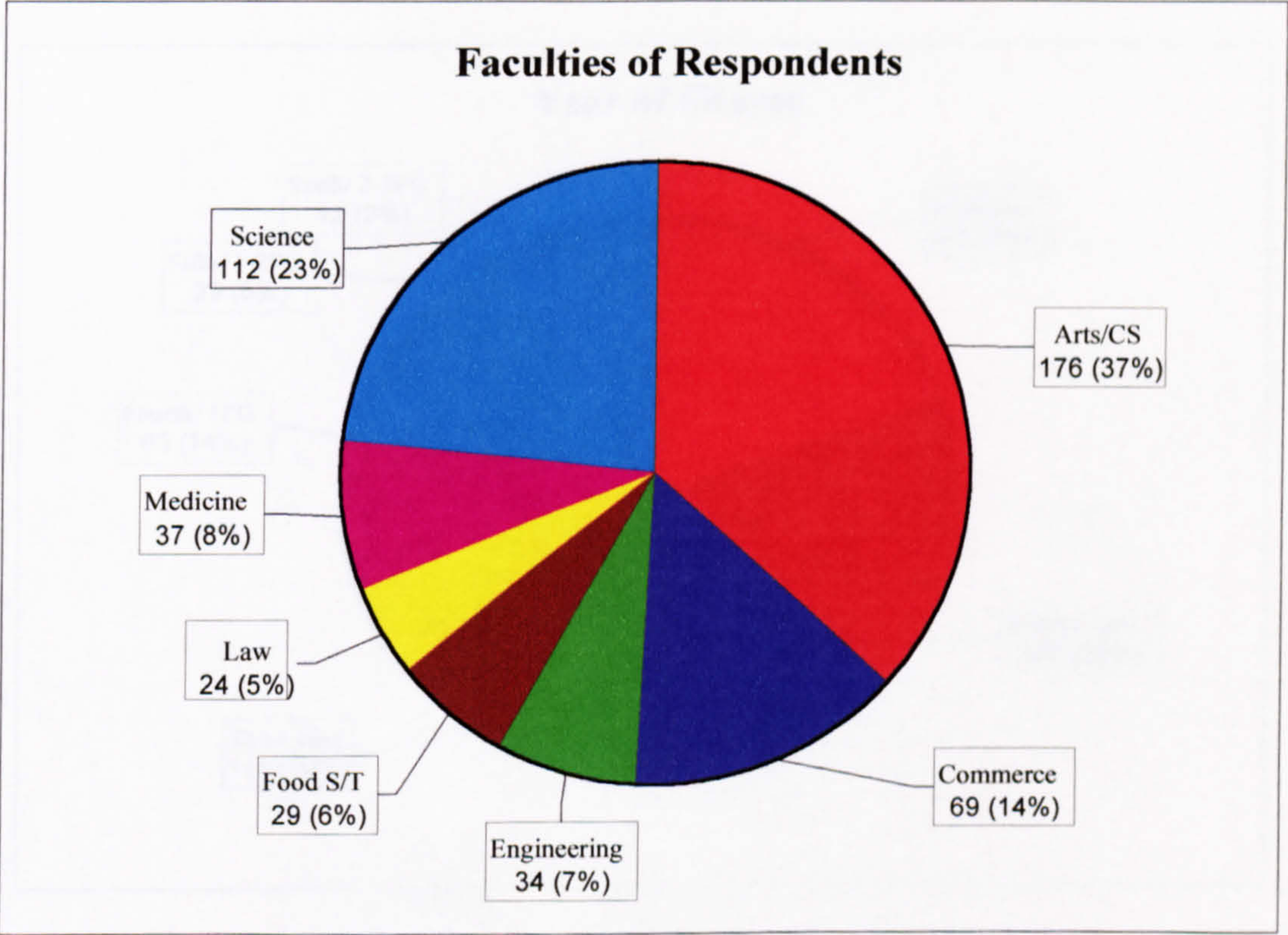


Appendix C6

Appendix C7

Fig. 5. 6 Faculties of Respondents

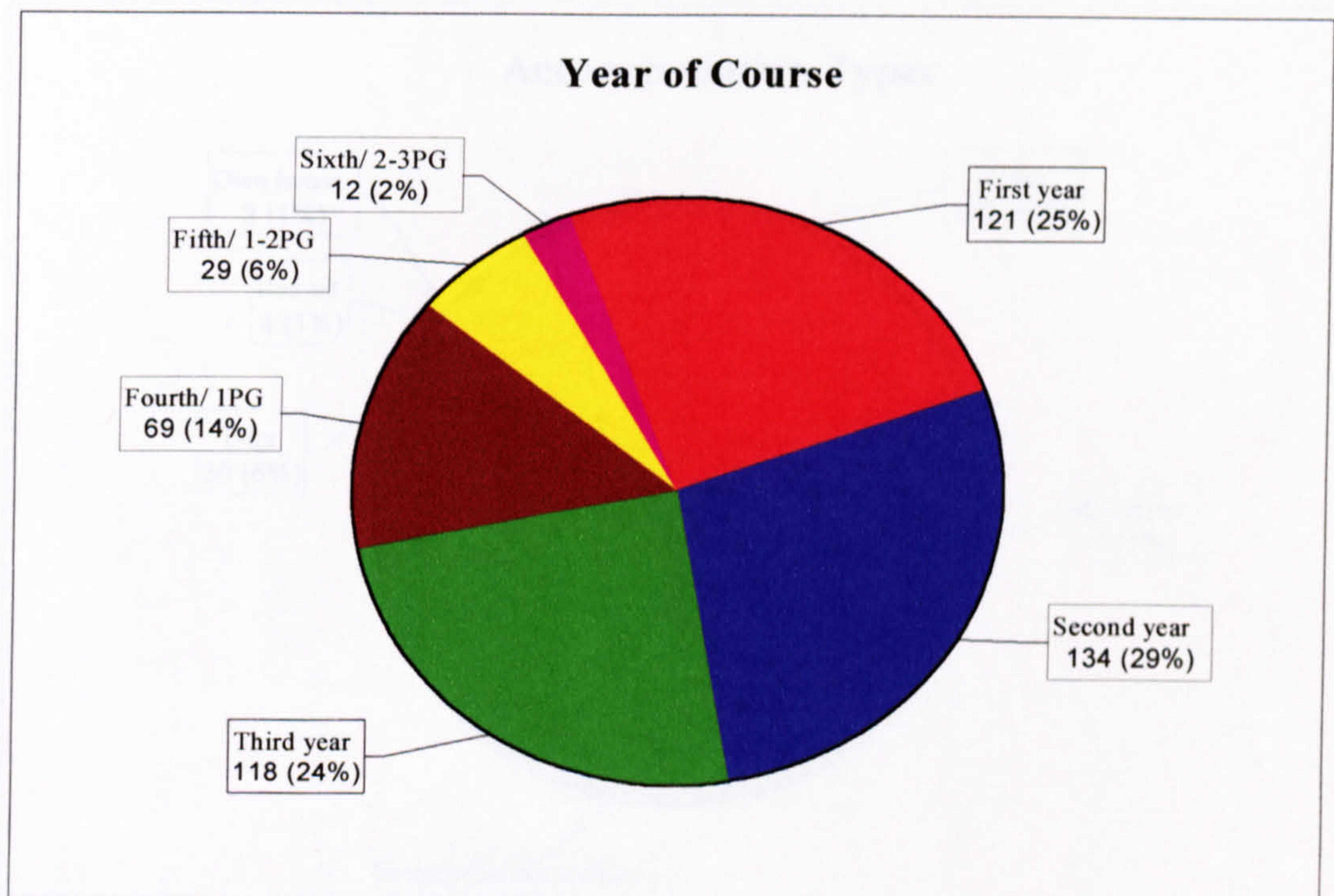
Fig. 5. 7 Year of Course





## Appendix C7

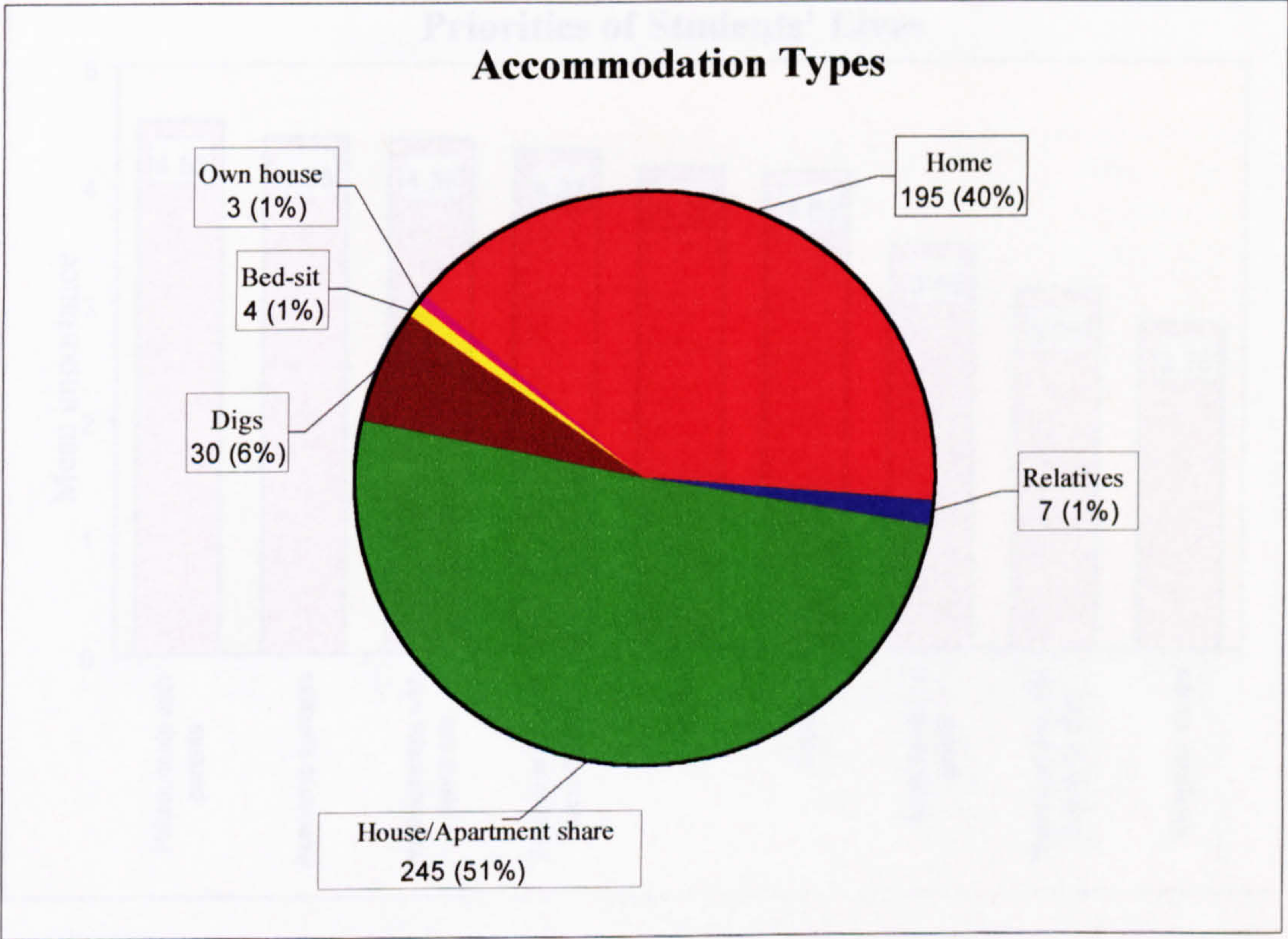
**Fig. 5. 7 Year of Course**





Appendix C8

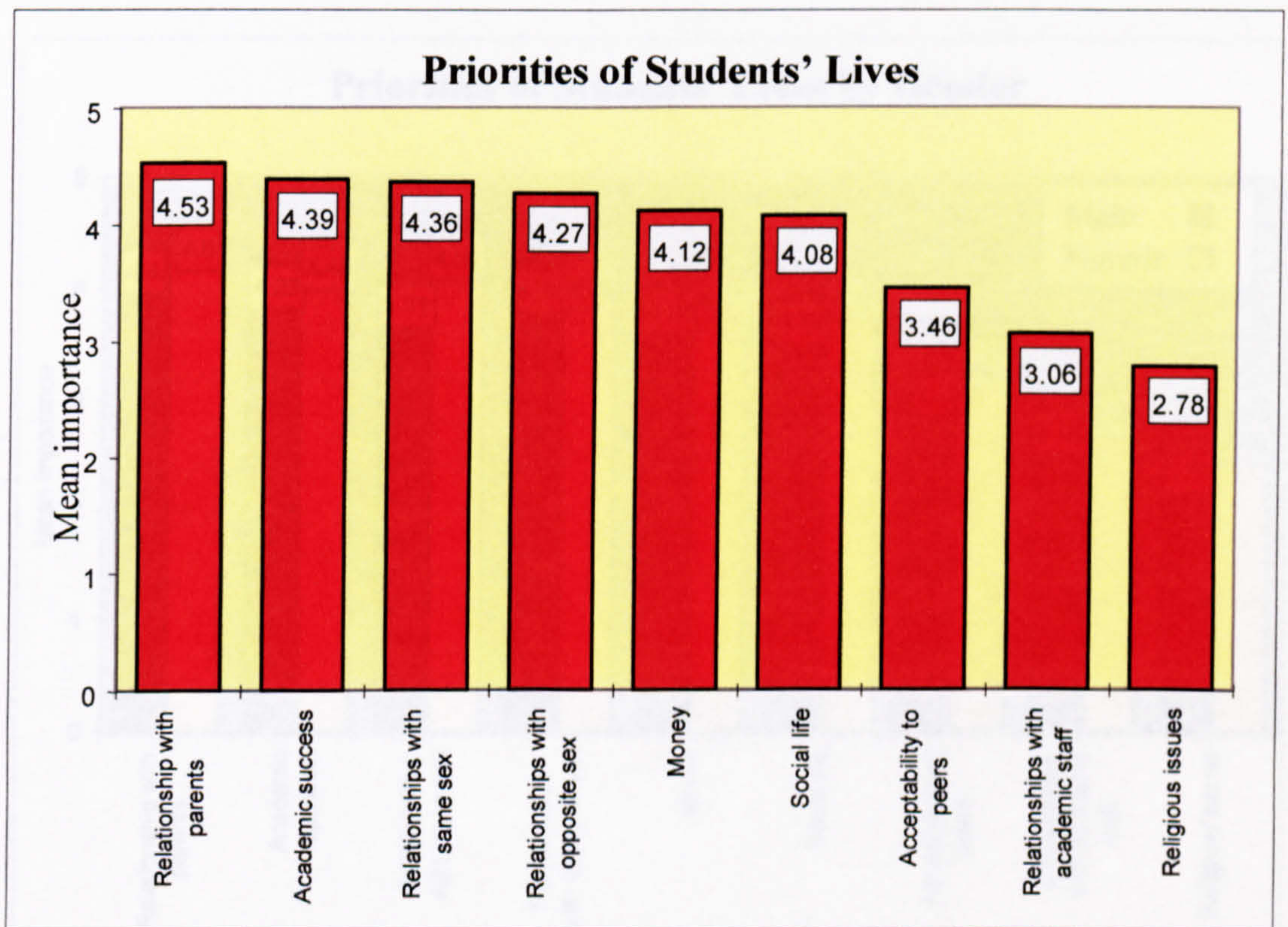
Fig. 5. 8 Accommodation Types





## Appendix C9

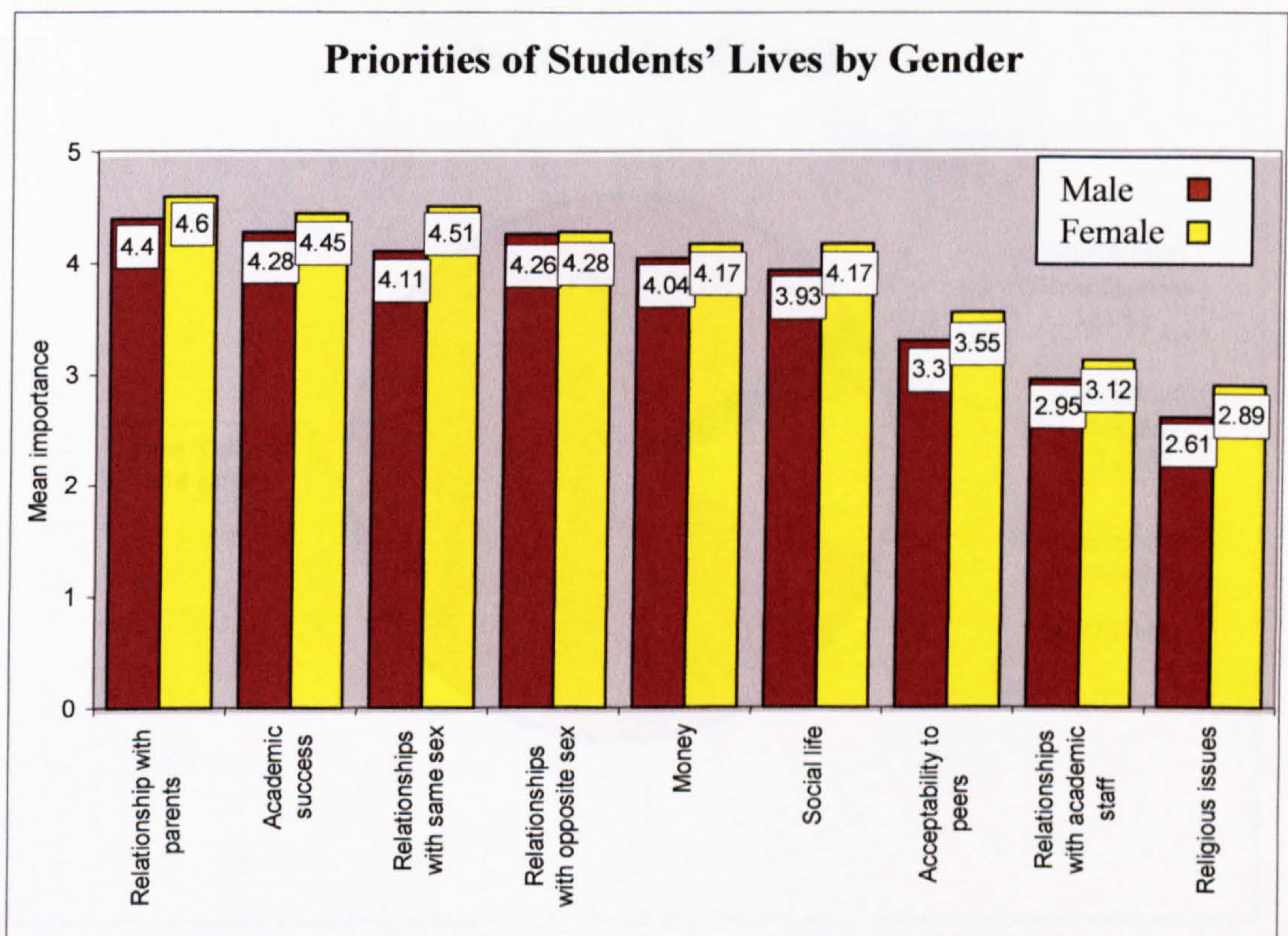
**Fig. 5. 9 Priorities of Students' Lives**





## Appendix C10

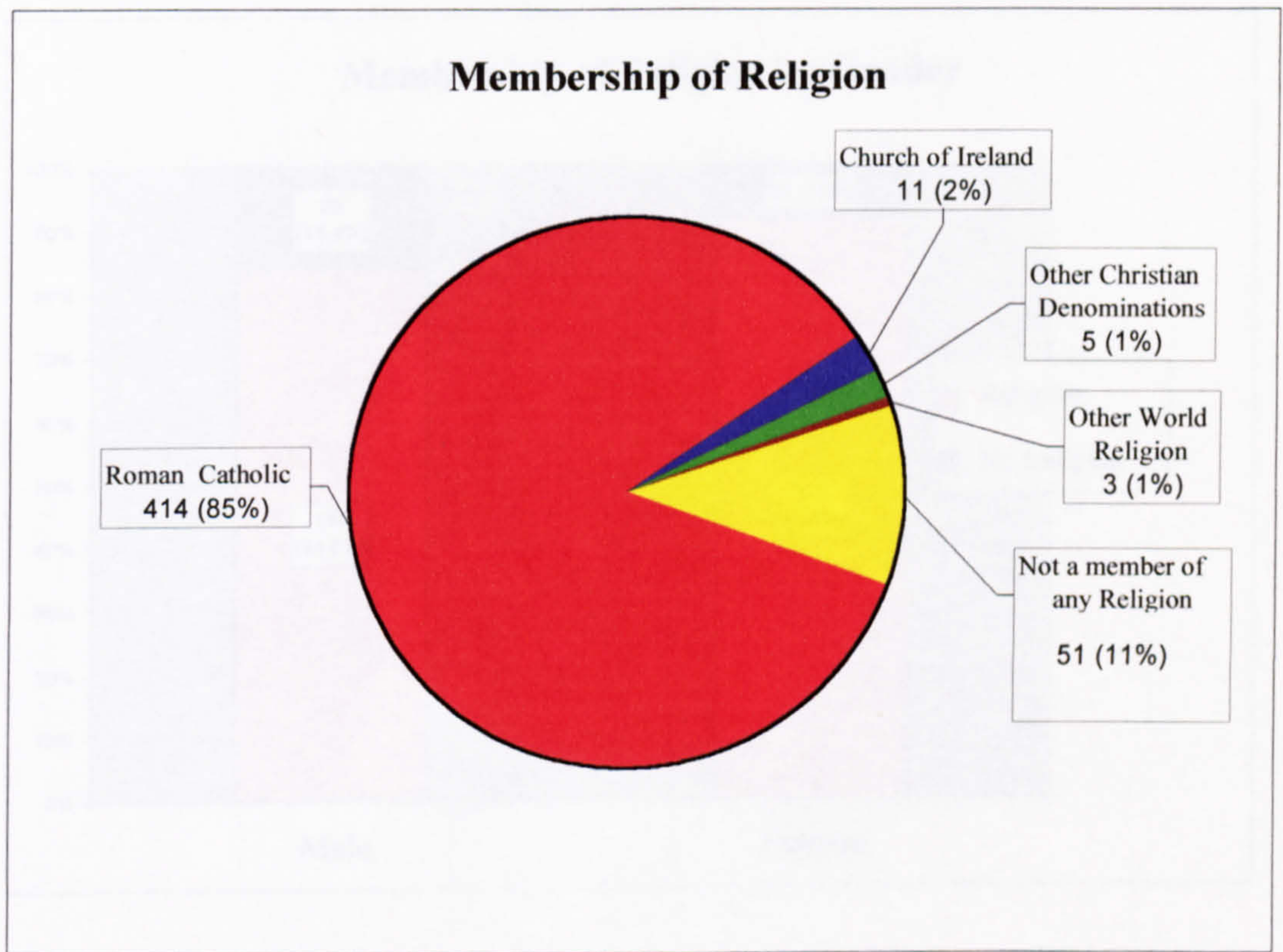
**Fig. 5. 10 Priorities of Students' Lives by Gender**





## Appendix C11

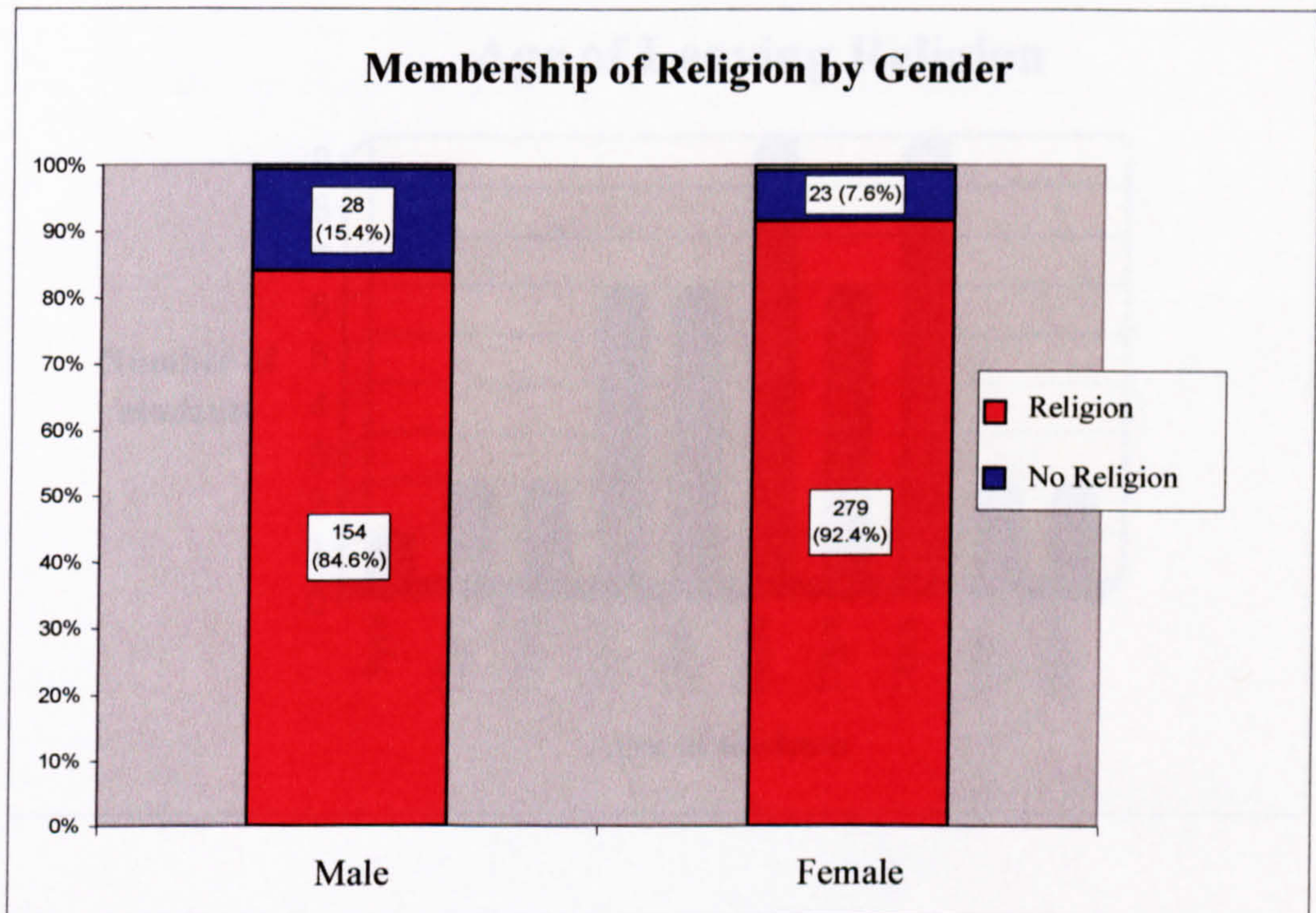
**Fig. 5. 11Membership of Religion**





## Appendix C12

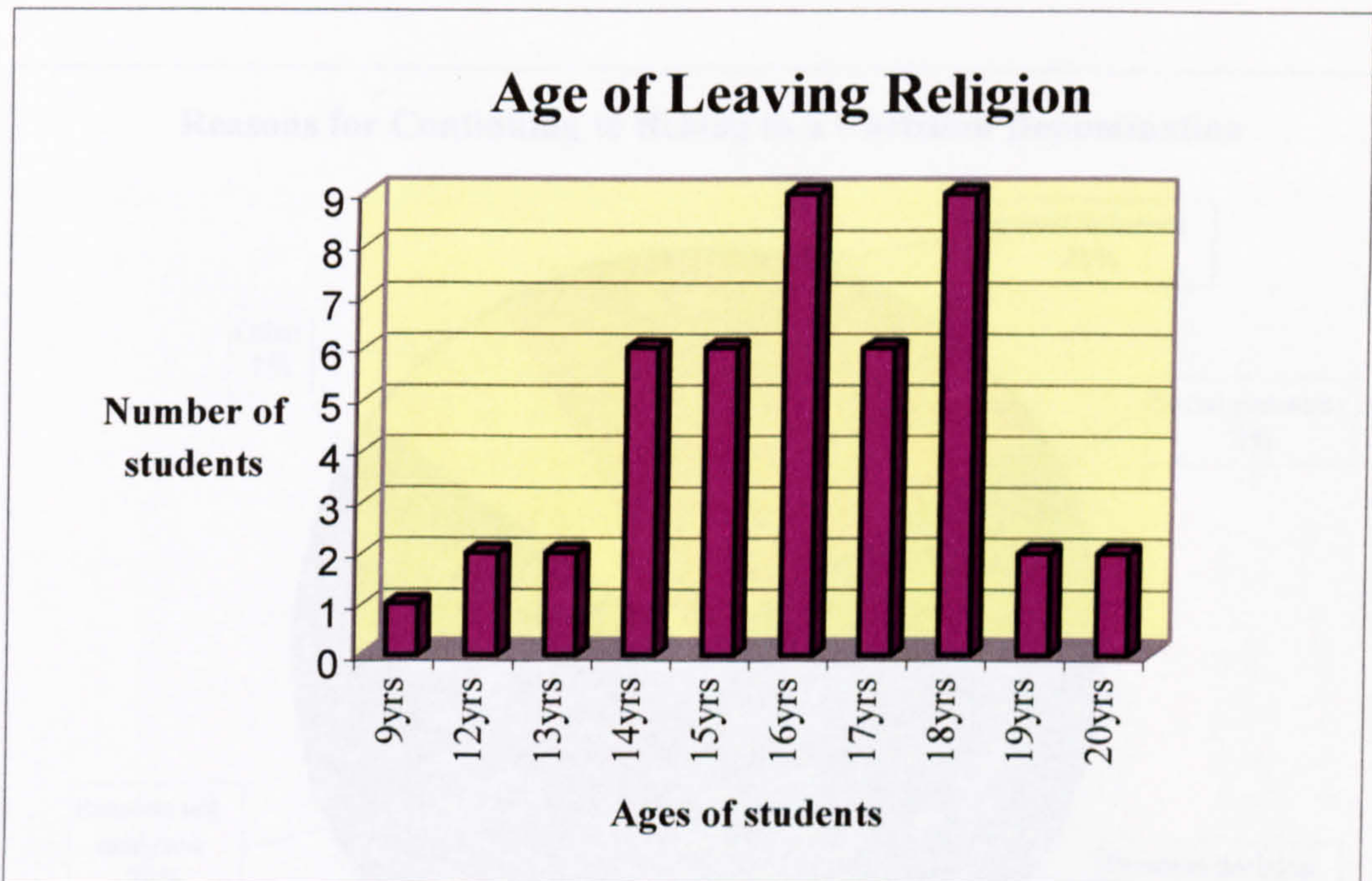
**Fig. 5. 12 Membership of Religion by Gender**





Appendix C13

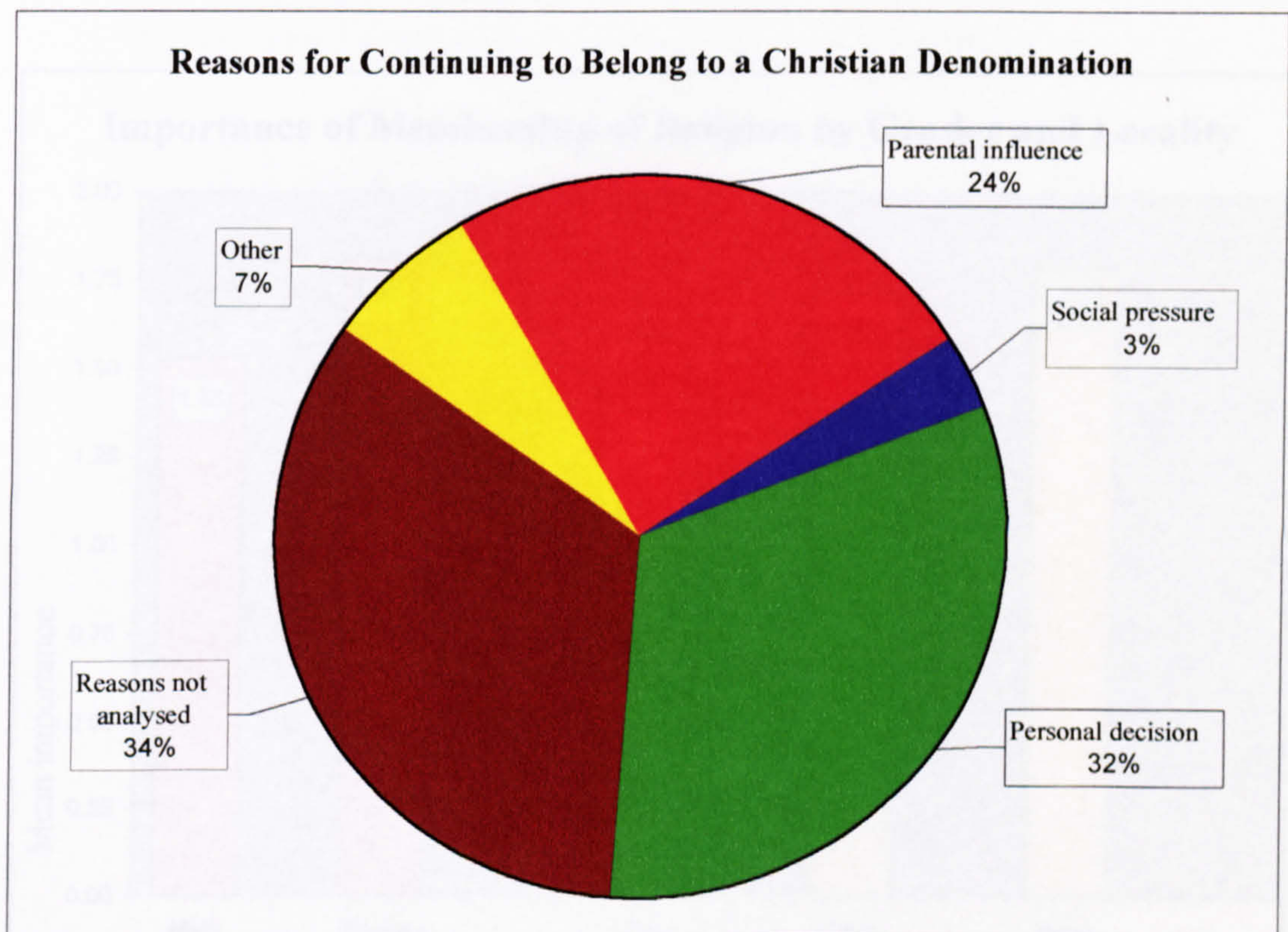
Fig. 5. 13 Age of Leaving Religion





## Appendix C14

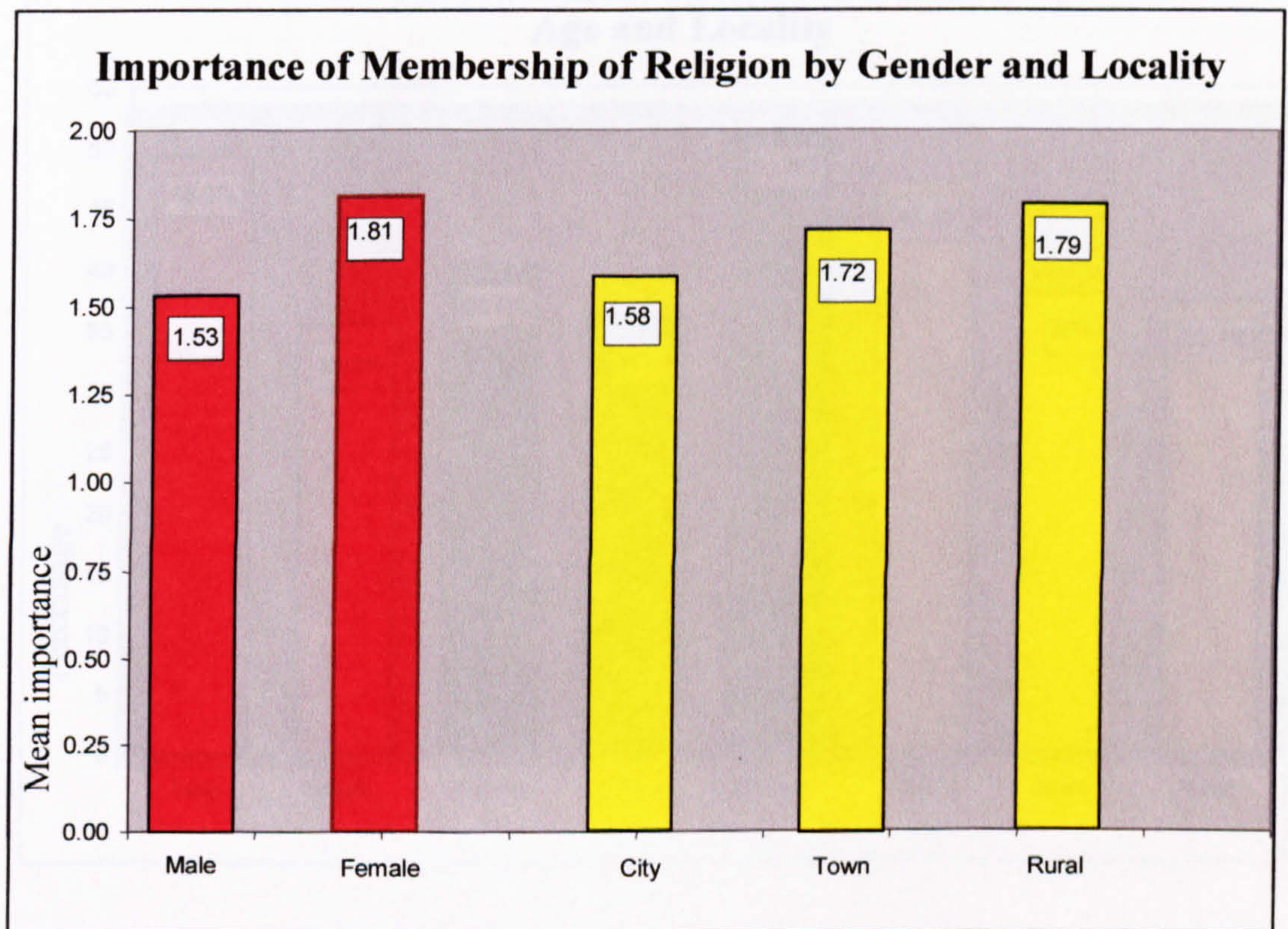
**Fig. 5. 14 Reasons for Continuing to Belong to a Christian Denomination**





## Appendix C15

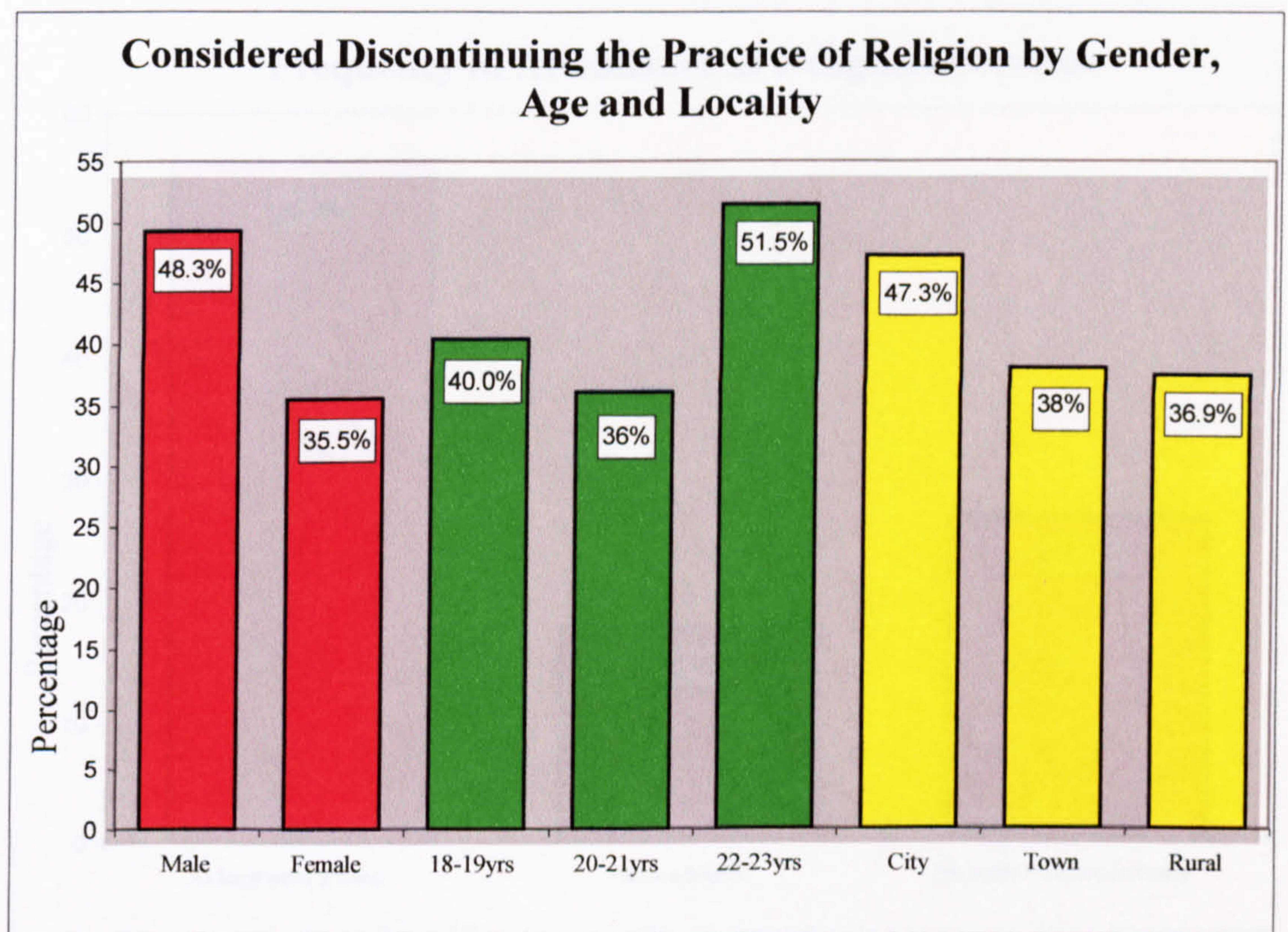
**Fig. 5. 15 Importance of Membership of Religion by Gender and Locality**





## Appendix C16

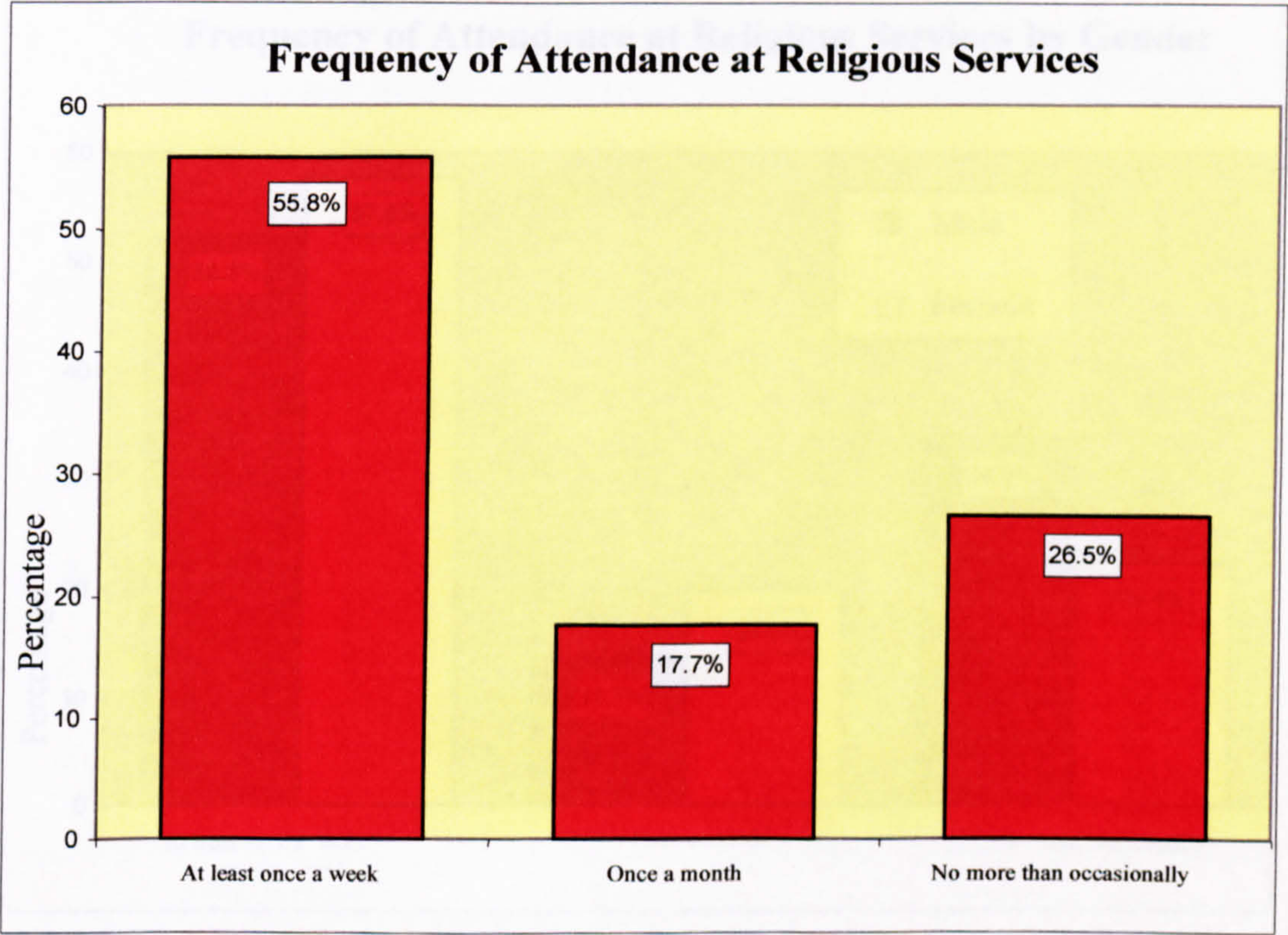
**Fig. 5. 16 Considered Discontinuing the Practice of Religion**





Appendix C17

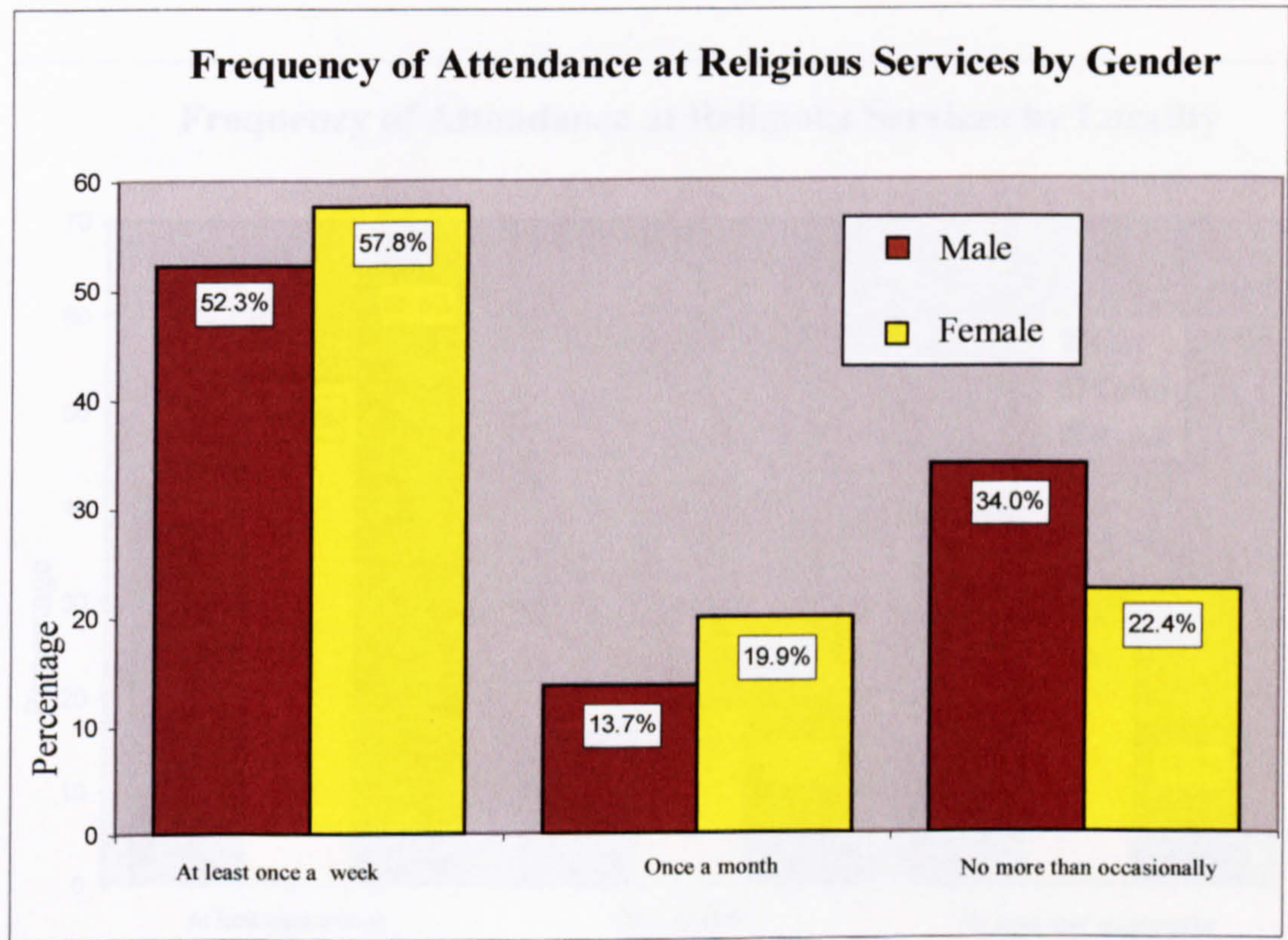
Fig. 5. 17 Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services





## Appendix C18

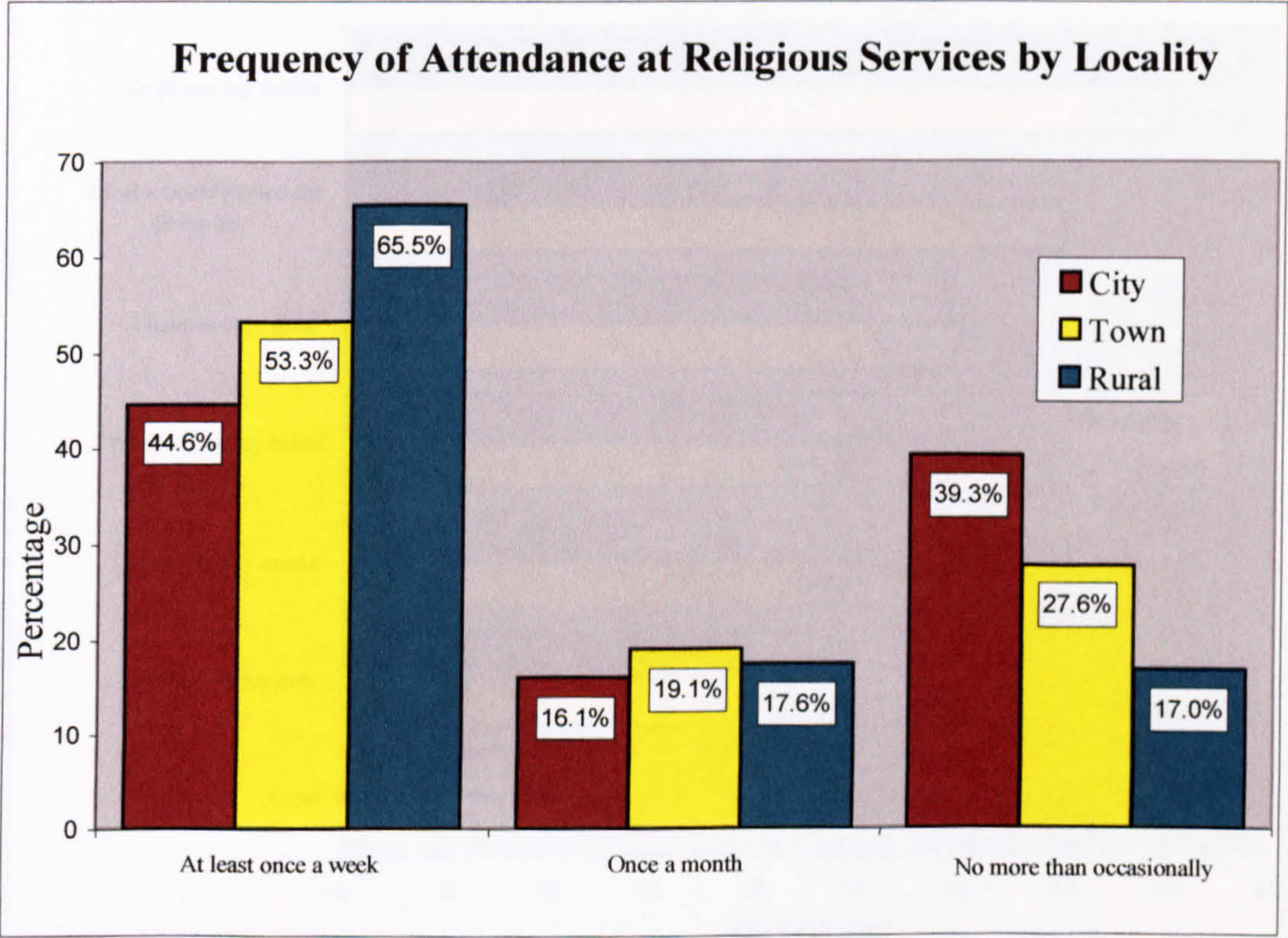
**Fig. 5. 18 Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services by Gender**





Appendix C19

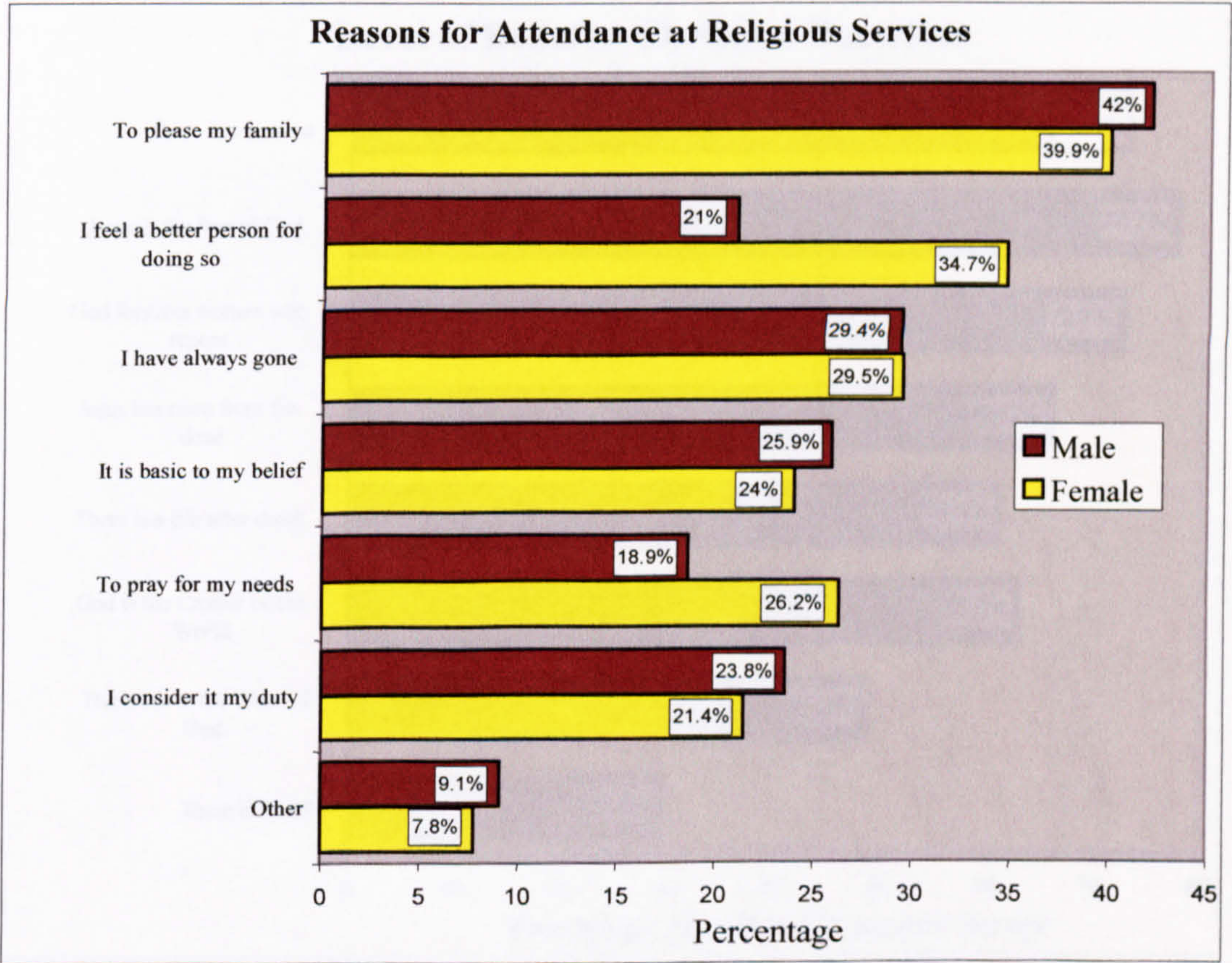
Fig. 5. 19 Frequency of Attendance at Religious Services by Locality





Appendix C20

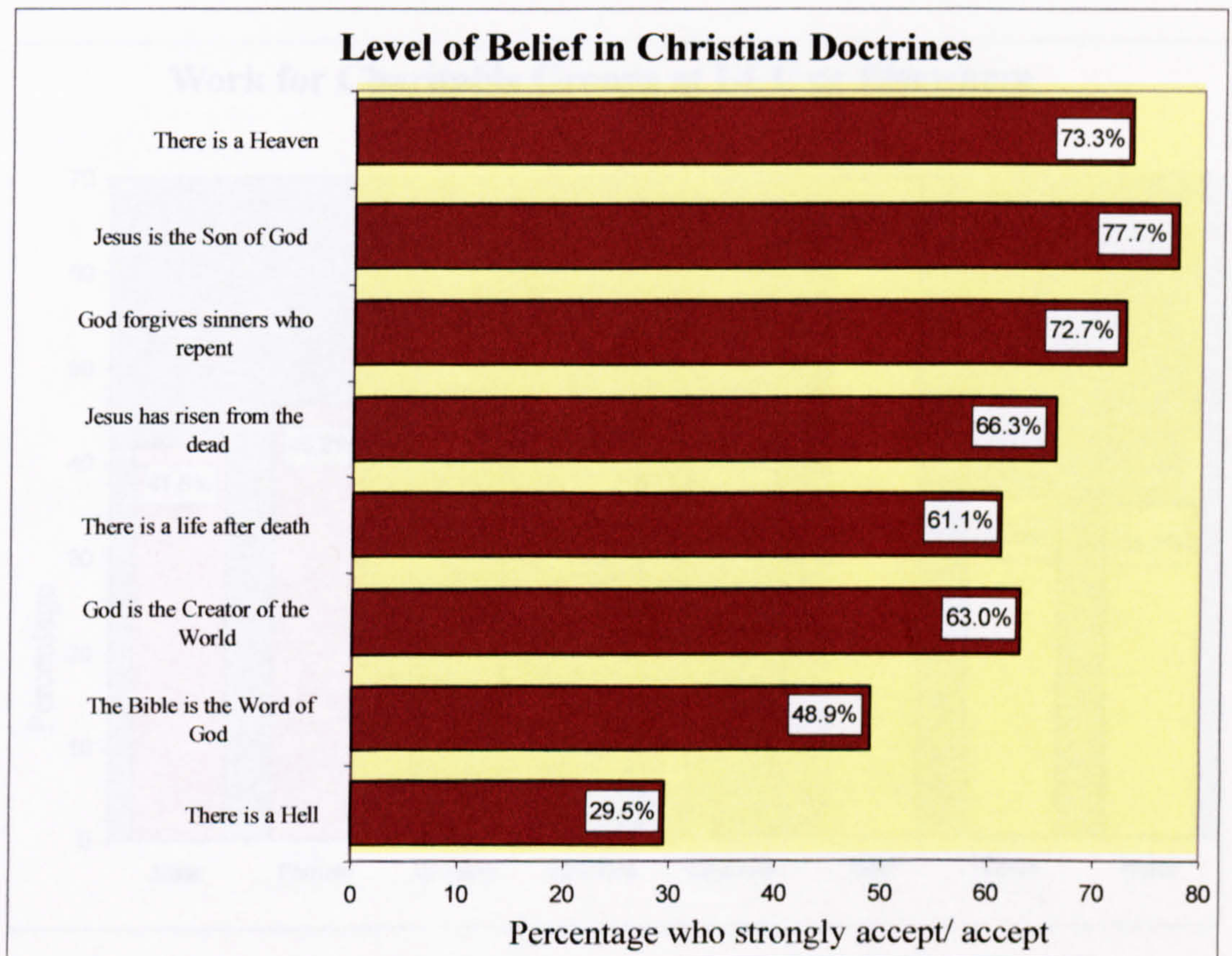
Fig. 5. 20 Reasons for Attendance at Religious Services





## Appendix C21

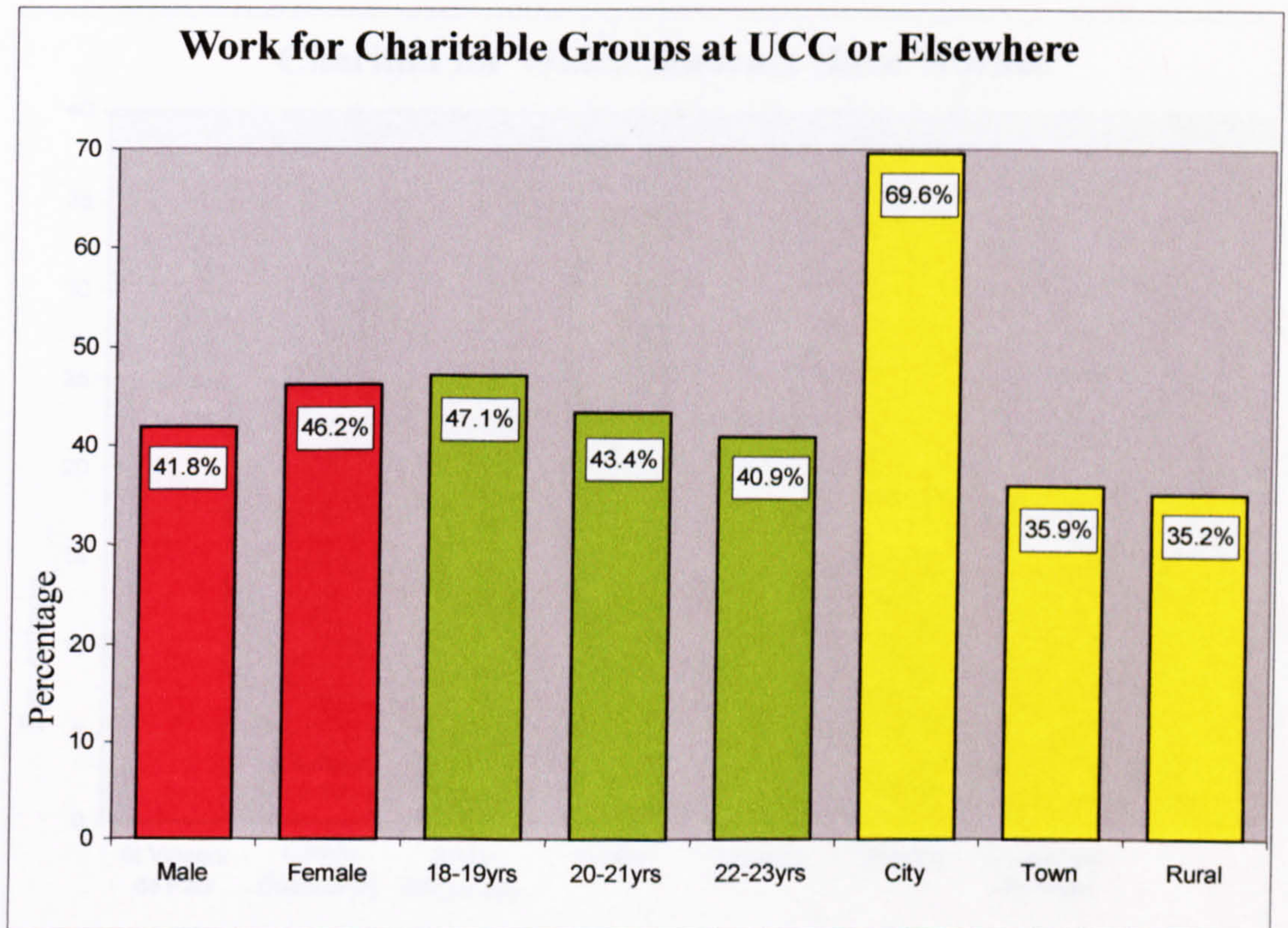
**Fig. 5. 21 Level of Belief in Christian Doctrines**





## Appendix C22

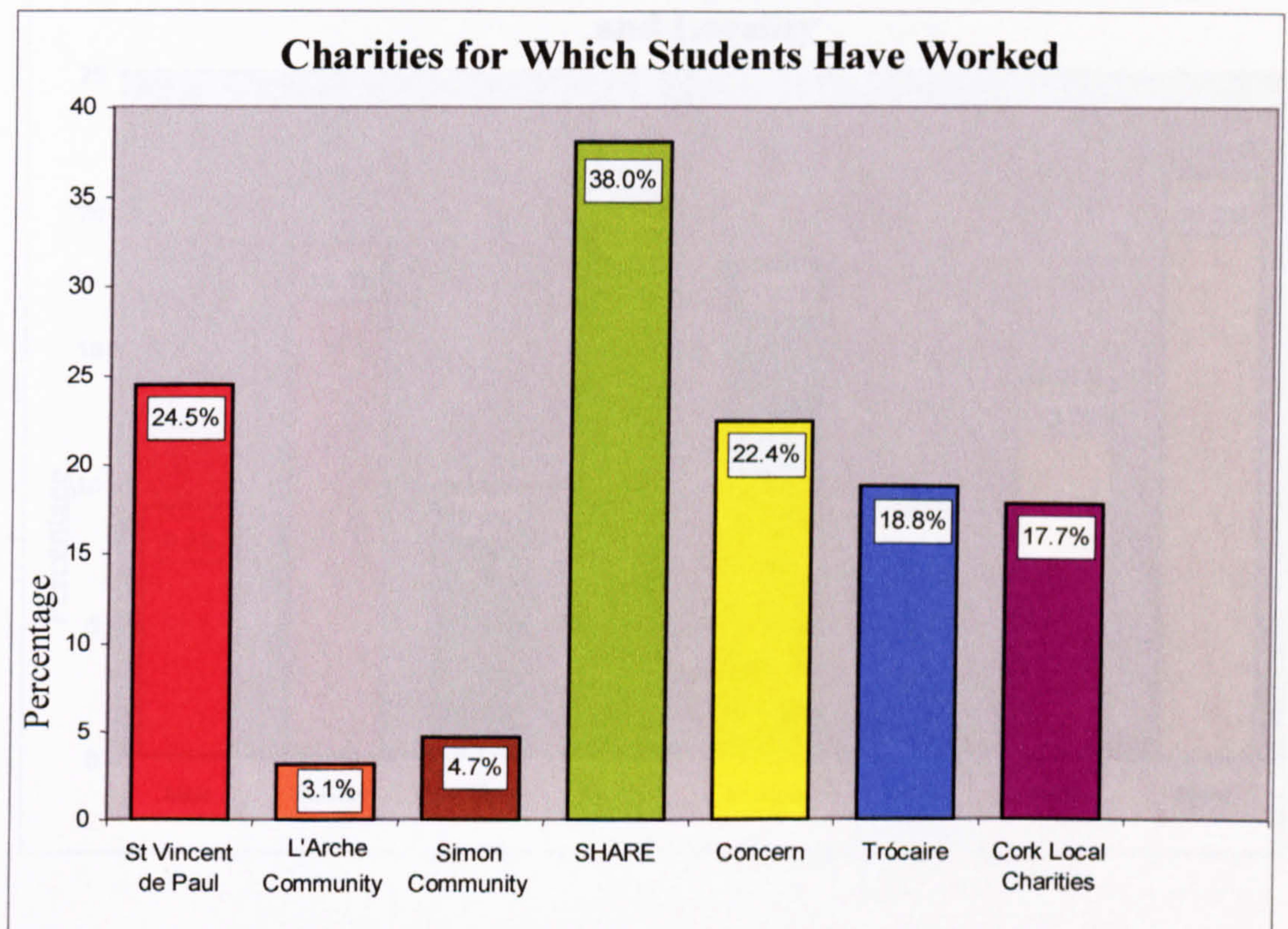
**Fig. 5. 22 Work for Charitable Groups**





## Appendix C23

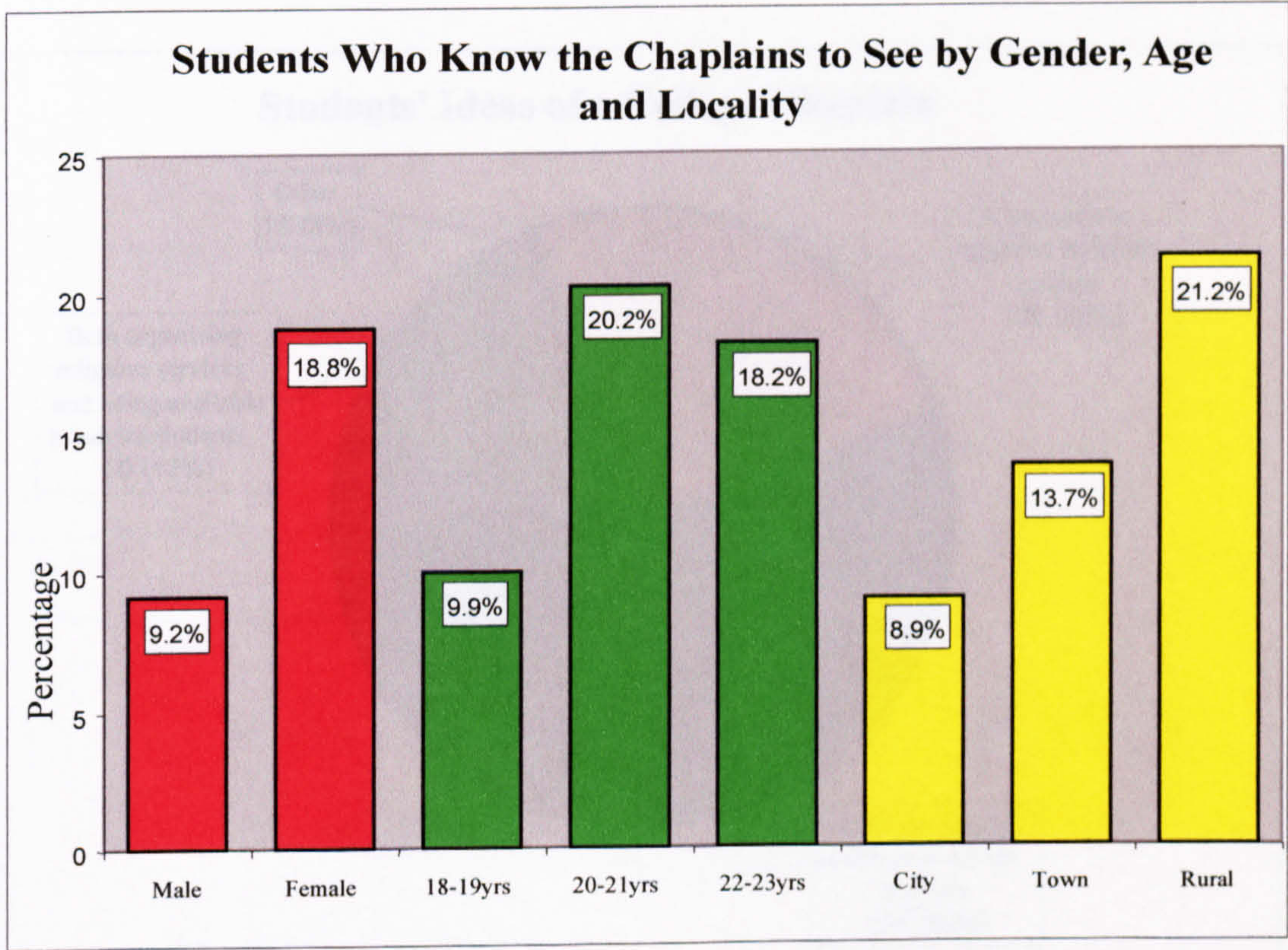
**Fig. 5. 23 Charities for Which Students Have Worked**





Appendix C24

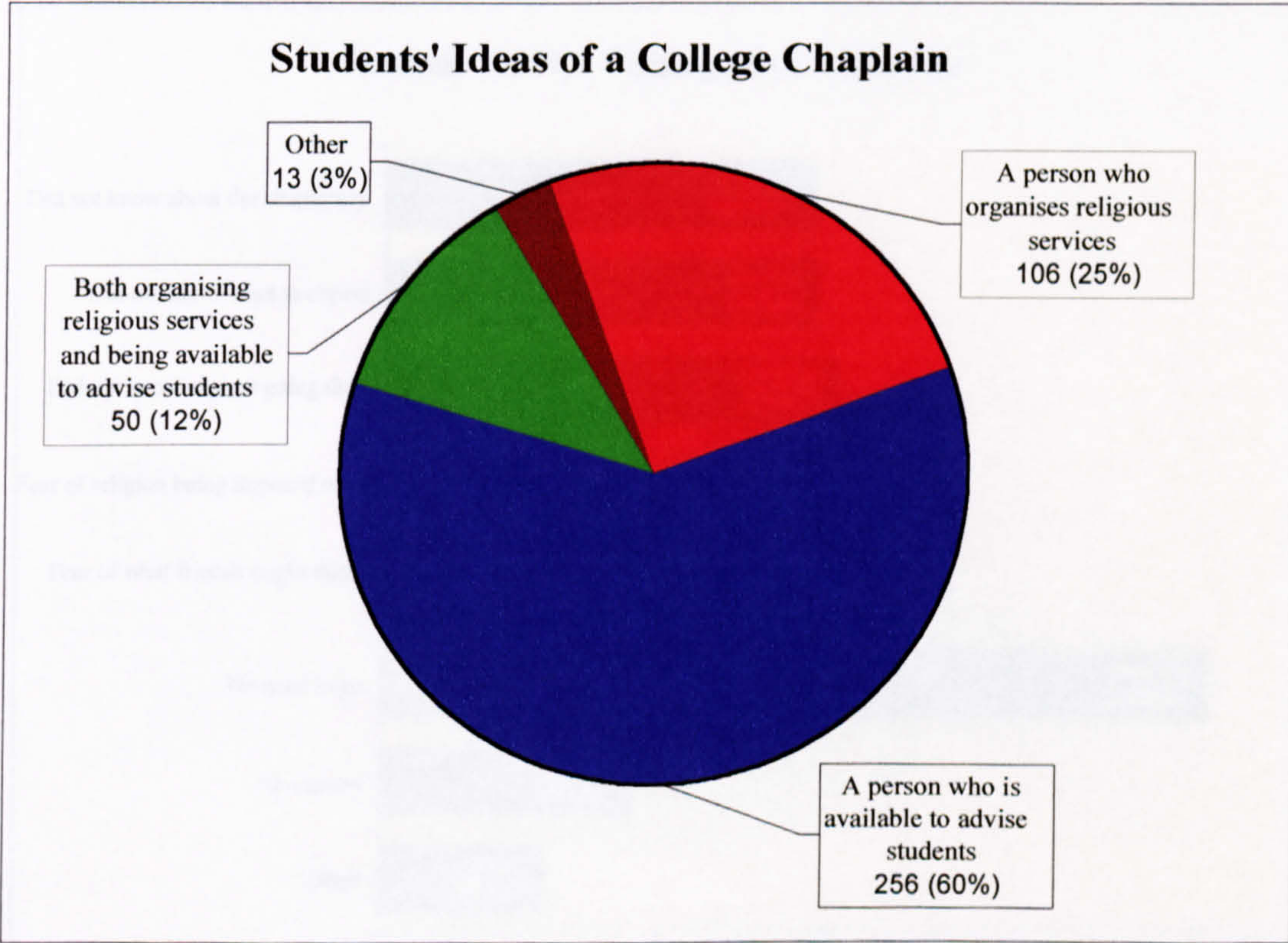
Fig. 5. 24 Students Who Know the Chaplains to See





Appendix C25

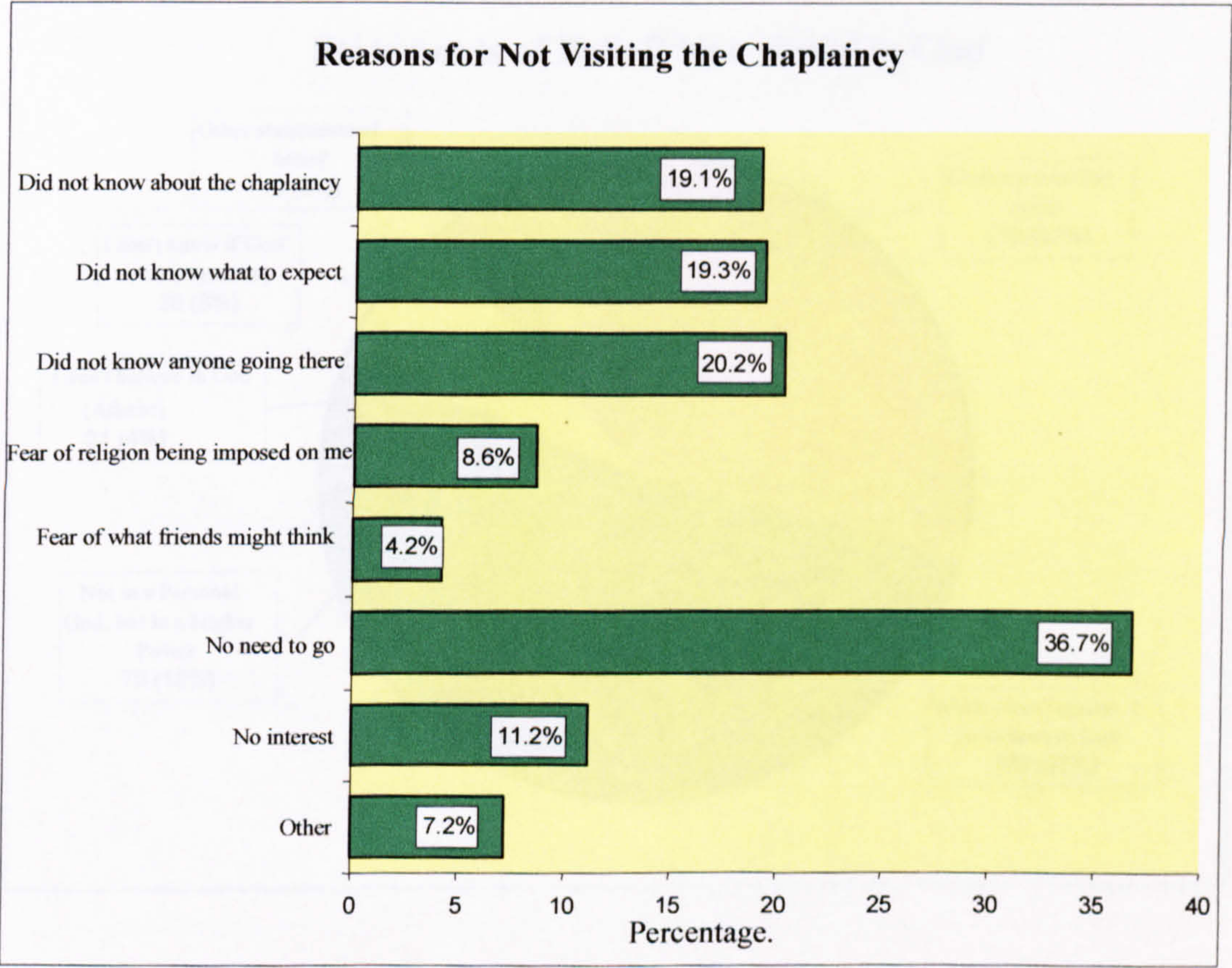
Fig. 5. 25 Students' Ideas of a College Chaplain





Appendix C26

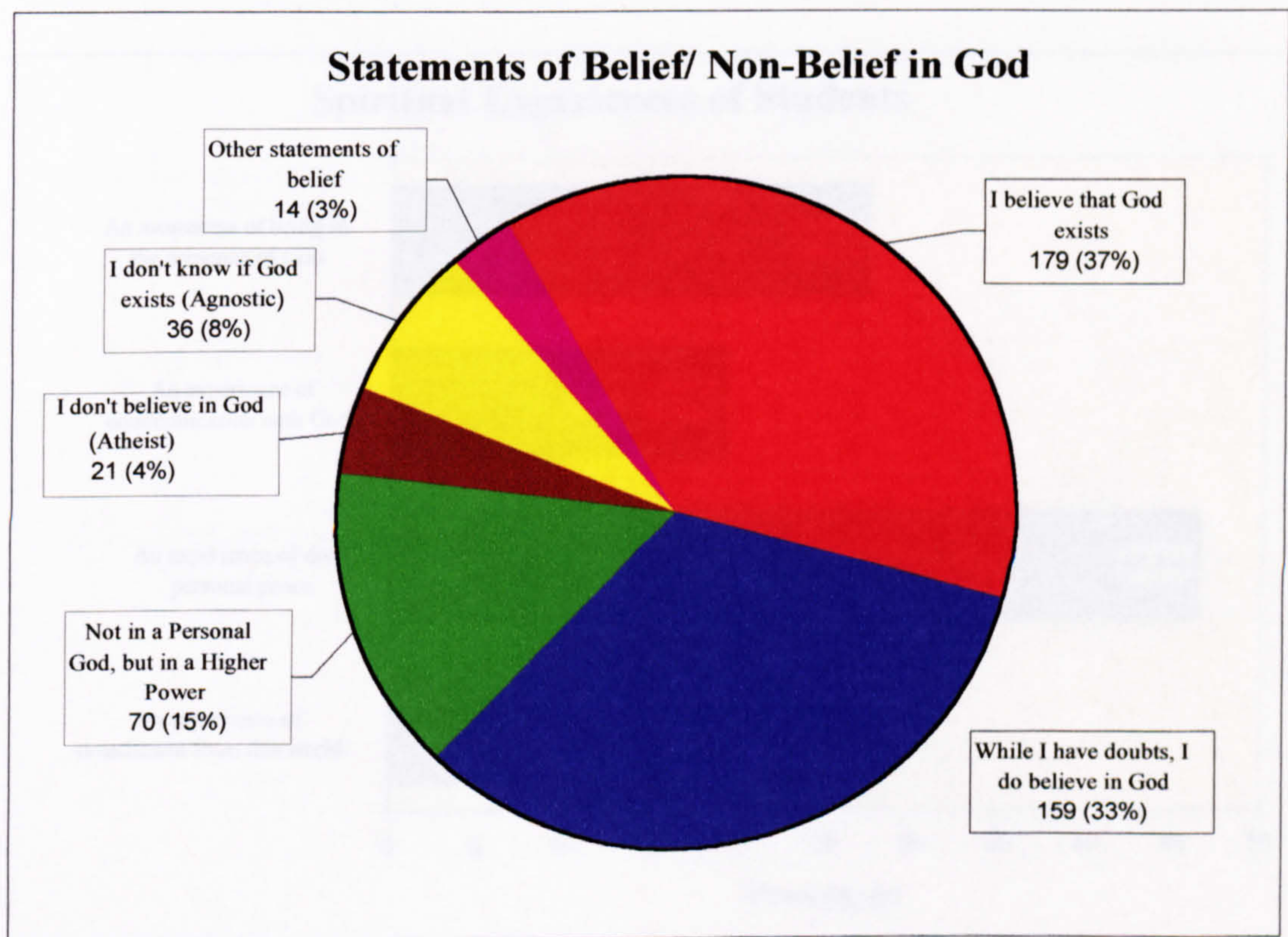
Fig. 5. 26 Reasons for Not Visiting the Chaplaincy





## Appendix C27

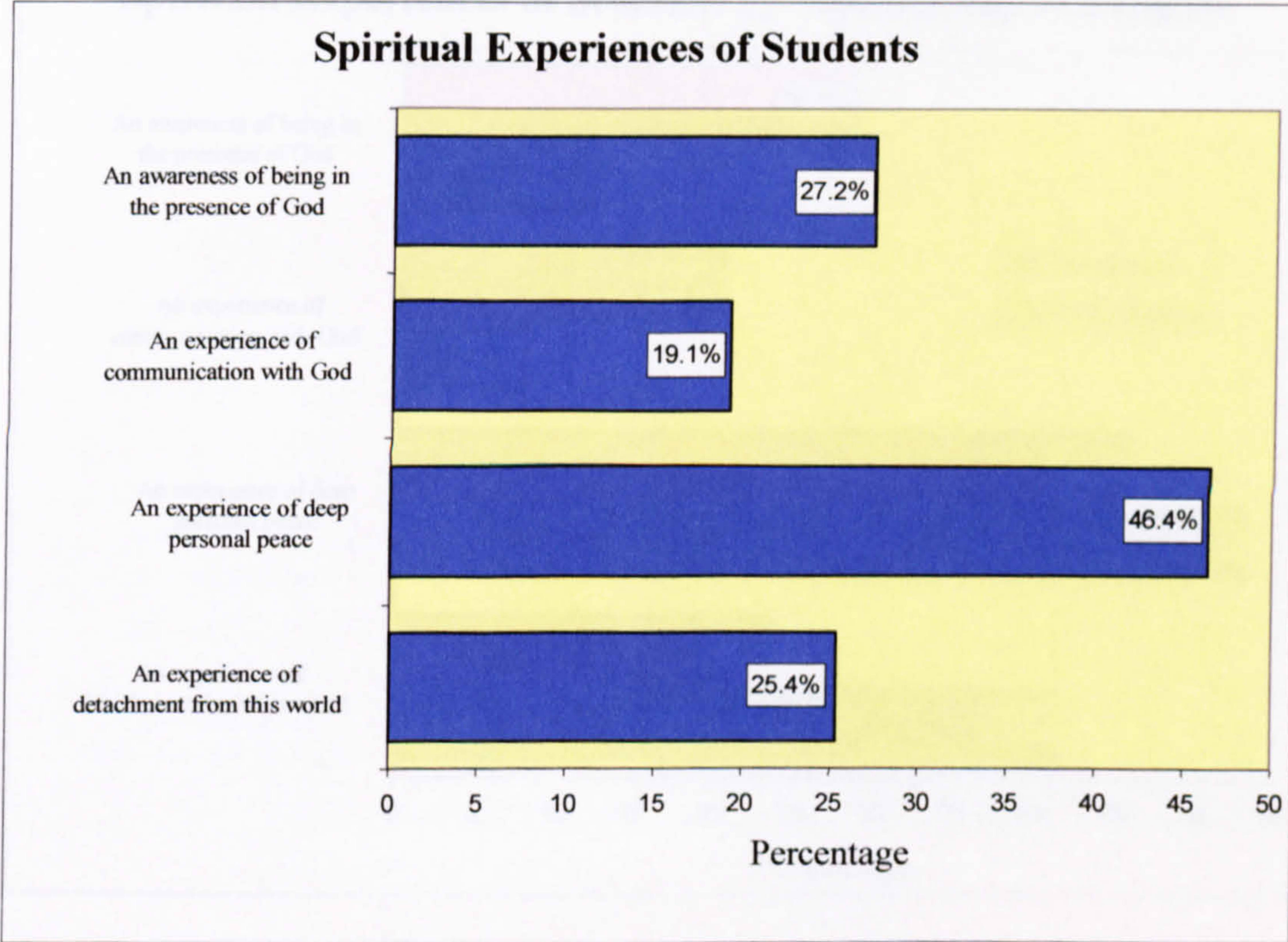
**Fig. 5. 27 Statements of Belief/ Non-Belief in God**





Appendix C28

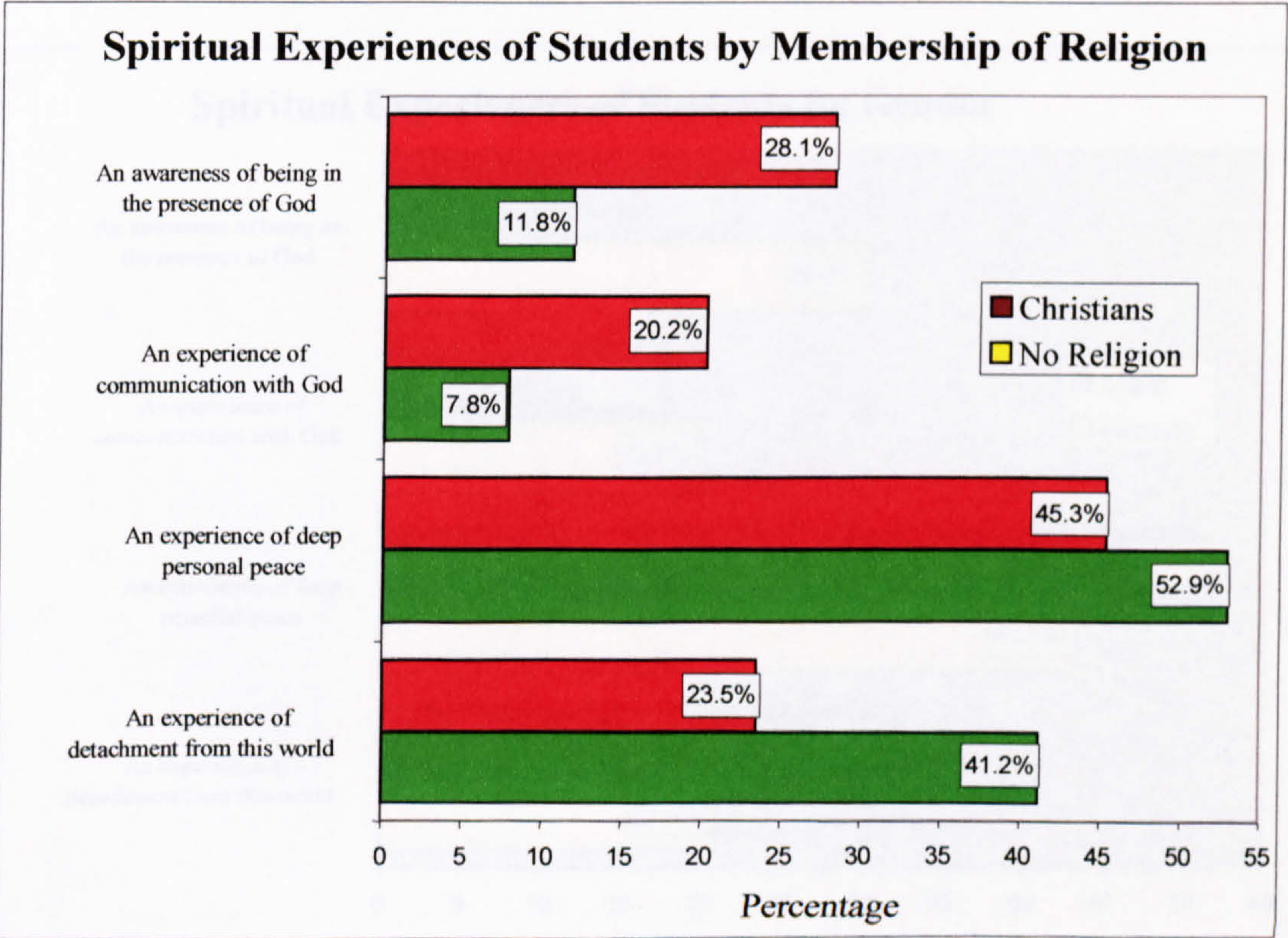
Fig. 5. 28 Spiritual Experiences of Students





Appendix C29

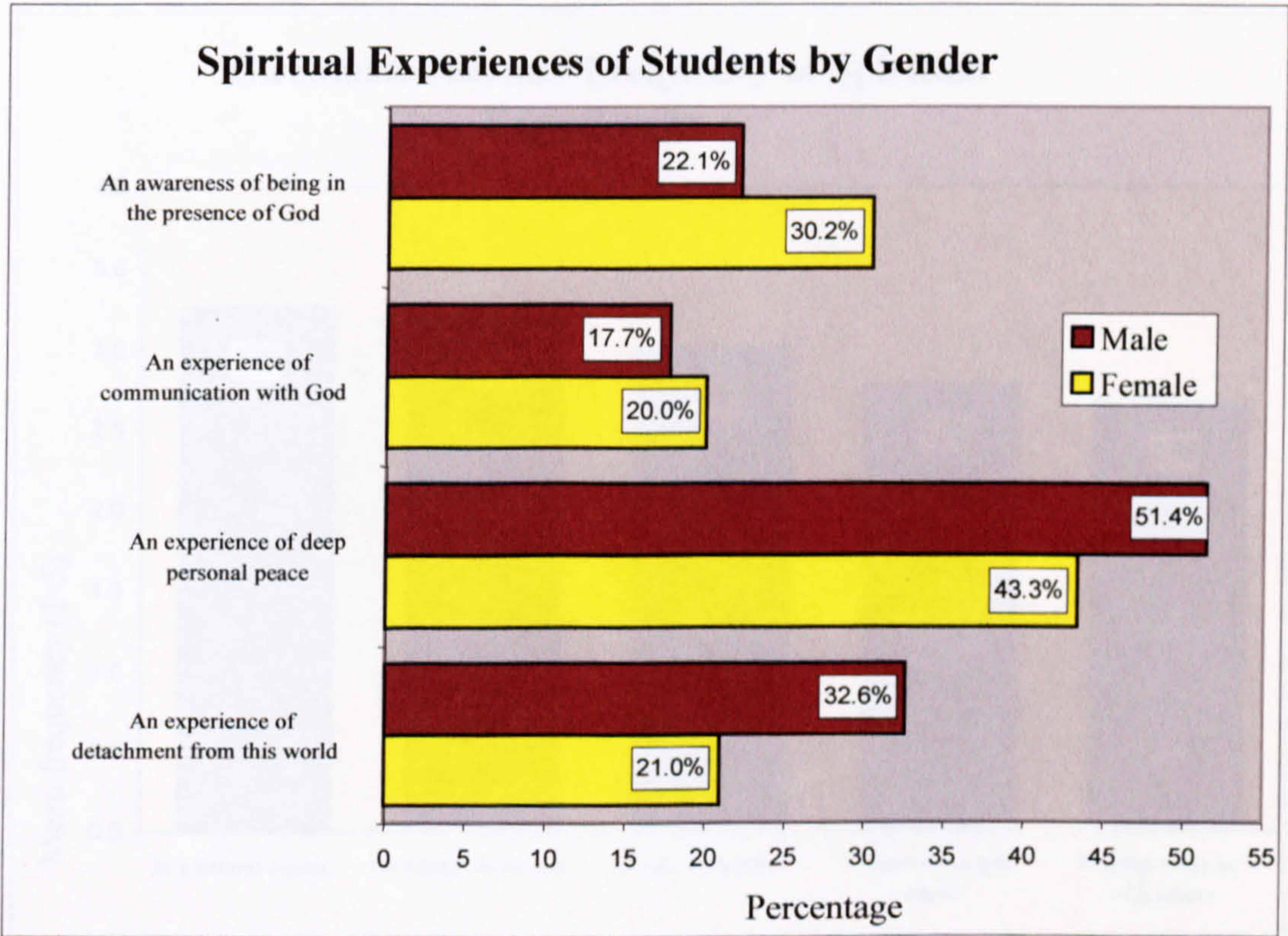
Fig. 5. 29 Spiritual Experiences of Students by Membership of Religion





Appendix C30

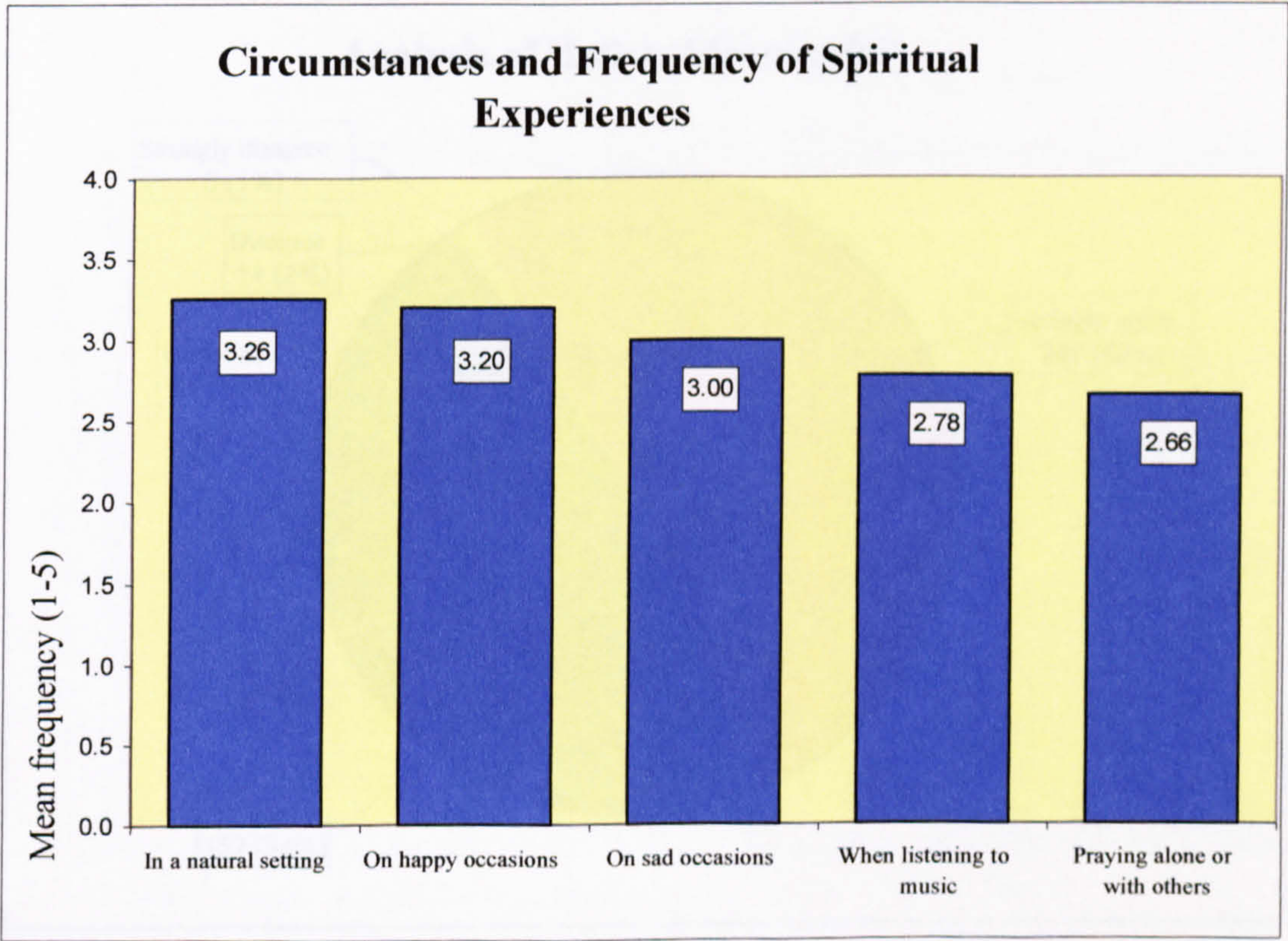
Fig. 5. 30 Spiritual Experiences of Students by Gender





Appendix C31

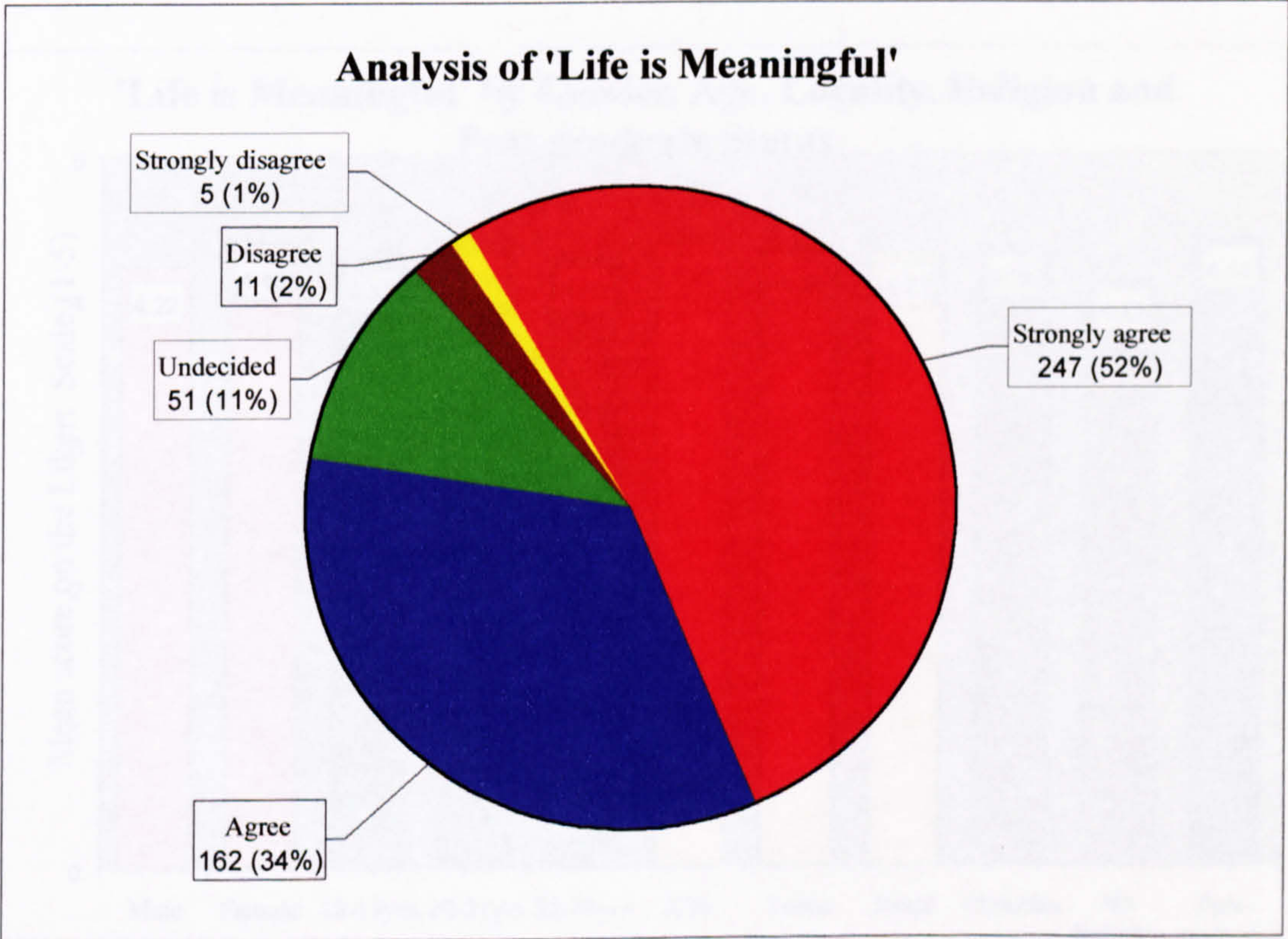
Fig. 5. 31Circumstances and Frequency of Spiritual Experiences





Appendix C32

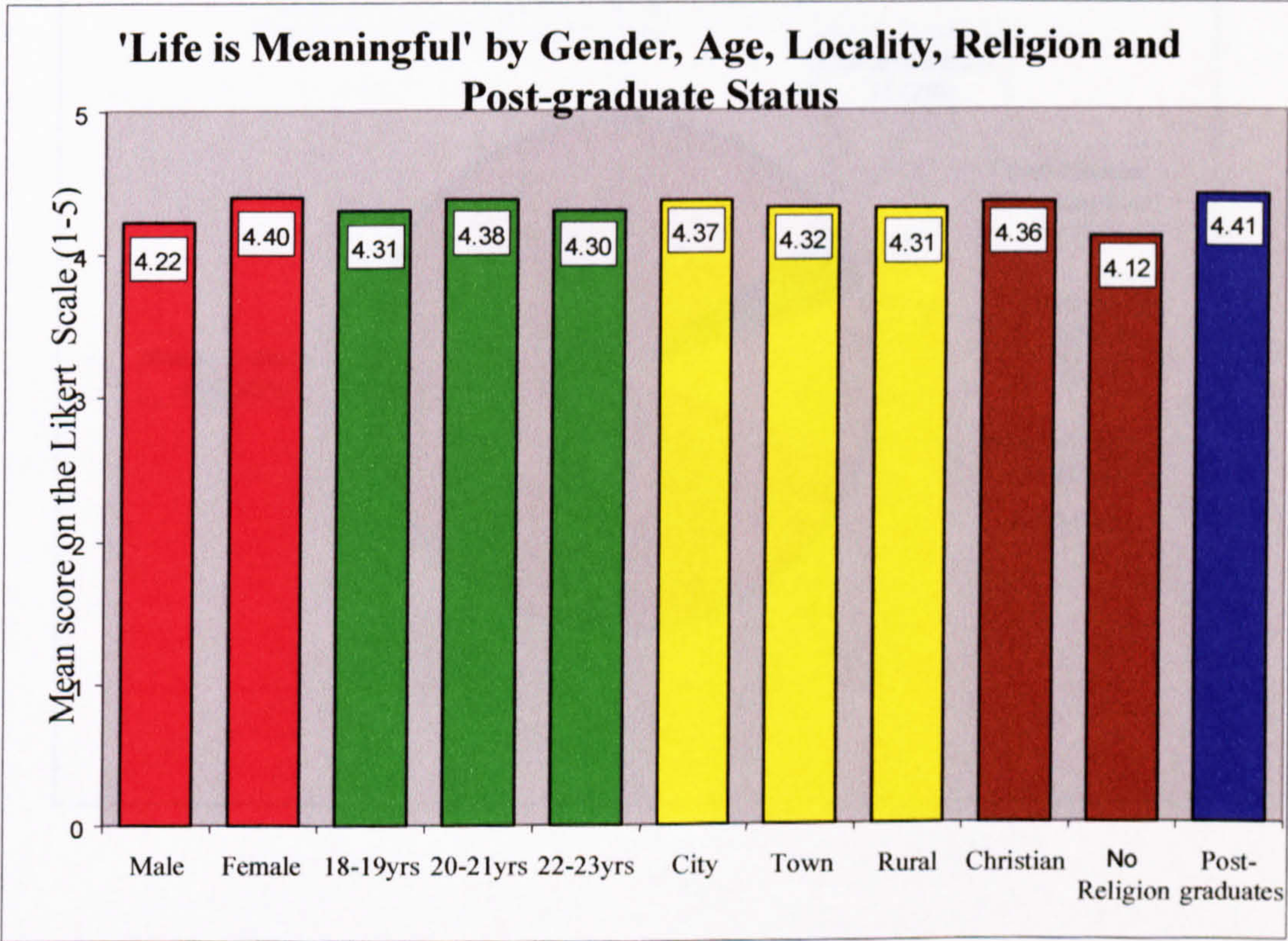
Fig. 5. 32 Analysis of ‘Life is Meaningful’





Appendix C33

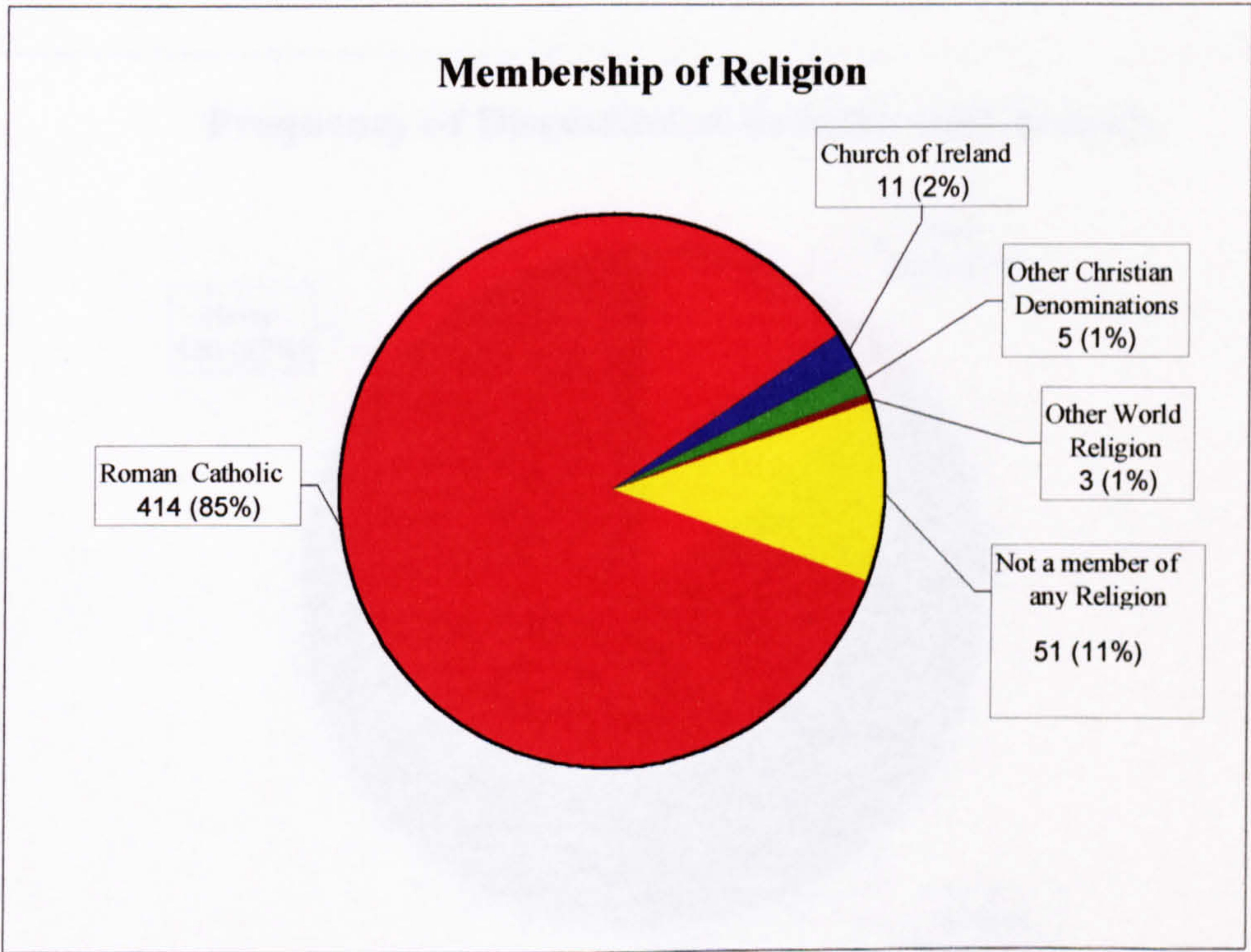
Fig. 5. 33‘Life is Meaningful’ by Gender, Age, Locality, Religion and Post-graduate Status





Appendix C34

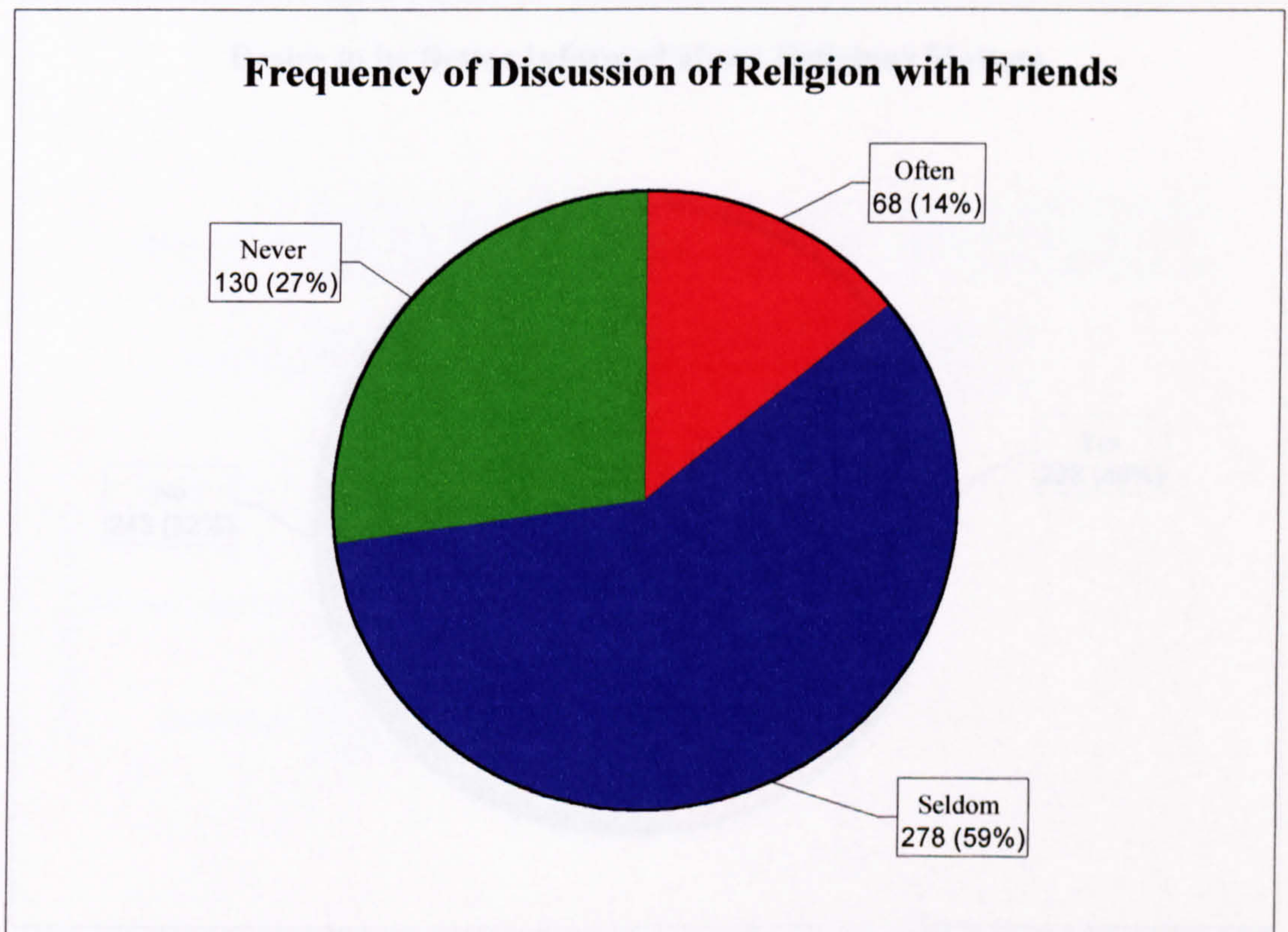
Fig. 5. 34 Level of Agreement with Traditional Christian Moral Values





**Appendix C35**

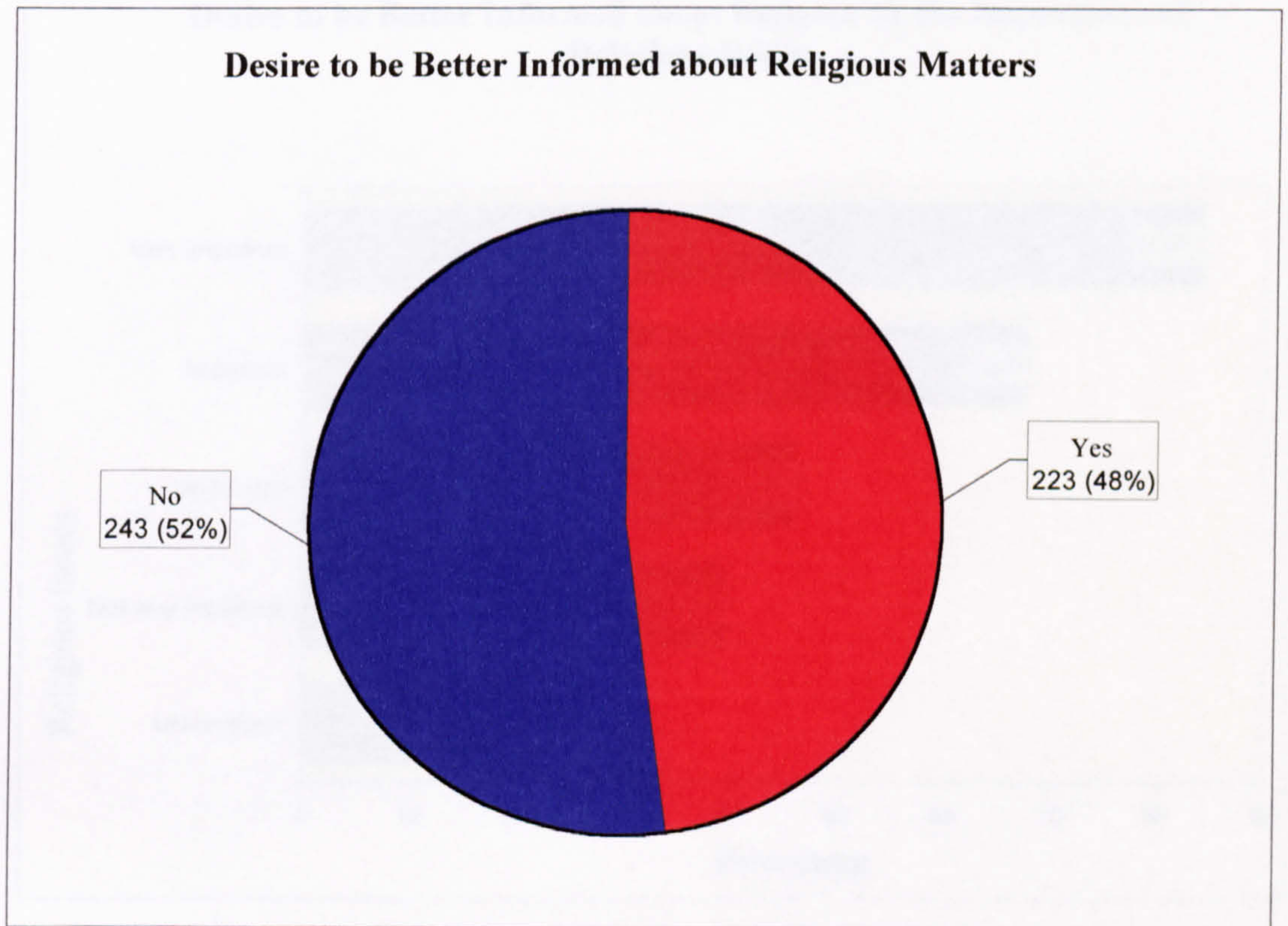
**Fig. 5. 35 Frequency of Discussion of Religion with Friends**





## Appendix C36

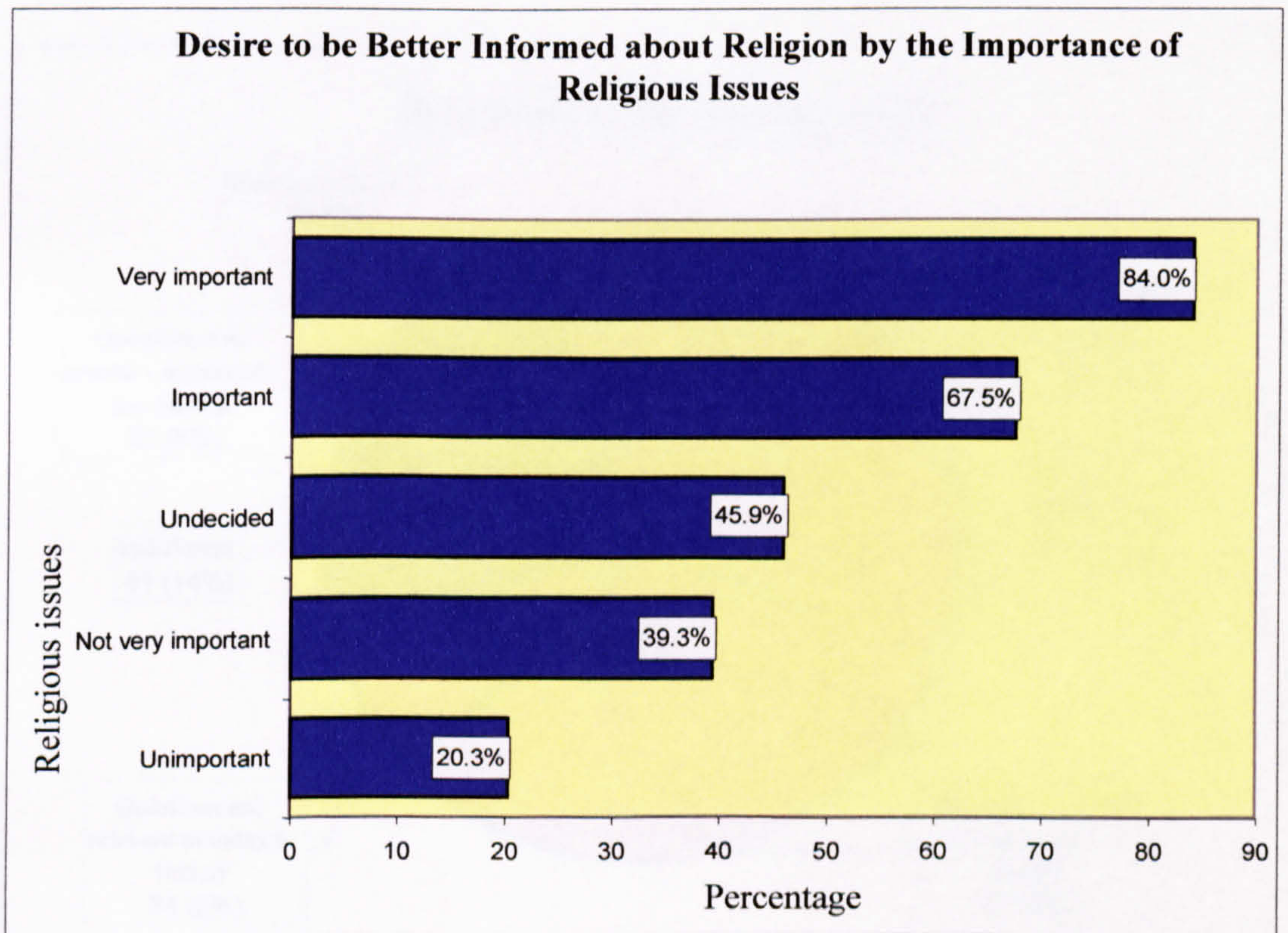
**Fig. 5. 36 Desire to be Better Informed about Religious Matters**





## Appendix C37

**Fig. 5. 37 Desire to be Better Informed about Religion**





Appendix C38

Fig. 5. 38 Reactions to the Questionnaire

