



Christian Faith-Based Youth Work: Systematic Narrative Review

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Christian faith-based youth work: systematic narrative review

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ABSTRACT

Christian faith-based youth work is a valuable complement to school-based religious formation. This paper provides a review of research on Christian faith-based youth work. Five bibliographic databases were searched using terms to express the concepts (youth work) AND (Christian faith). The eight studies meeting the inclusion criteria were synthesised by four major themes in the papers. (1) The purpose of Christian faith-based youth work could be viewed as existing on a continuum between social purpose (supporting reflecting on issues of identity and life purpose) and evangelism. (2) In terms of processes and practices, holding spaces of meaning for young people was important, including giving young people roles of responsibility. (3) Amidst declining engagement with formal religion, the focus was more on involvement of young people in recognising need and addressing contemporary concerns. (4) Purpose, agenda, bias and professionalisation were highlighted as issues in relation to faith-based youth work. Creating places of meaning where young people feel valued and listened to in relation to spiritual issues was regarded as valuable within the social pedagogy of youth work. This synthesis of research provides a reference point for those engaged in practice, teaching or scholarship in Christian faith-based youth work.

KEYWORDS

Christian faith; faith-based youth work; systematic literature review; youth ministry; youth studies; youth work

Introduction

For the purposes of this review, Christian faith-based youth work refers to the provision of youth work services by a Christian organisation, where individuals and groups are given space to reflect on their lives and world in a Christian context. Such youth workers typically support the personal, social, emotional and spiritual development of young people outside a school context and where ‘youth work is underpinned by a tradition of informal education and the “voluntary principle”, which foregrounds young people’s choice of whether, how much, and for how long to get involved’ de St Croix (2018, 417).

Helping young people in their spiritual and holistic growth to adulthood is not confined to the classroom (Kuusisto, Hirsto, and Ubani 2019; [1]). In particular, Christian faith-based youth workers provide a valuable support to many young people in more informal settings than school. Youth work is a profession which places young people at the centre where the voluntary participation of young people is fundamental

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and which employs an informal educative approach comprising experiential learning, relationship building and conversation and dialogue. Indeed, Sercombe attests; ‘Youth work is a method of creating, forming and building voluntary relationships that is . . . when aligned with youth work values . . . concerned primarily with young people themselves . . . and that the actions of being with, and amongst, community are to some extent the realisation of voluntary participation, devolution of power, and being equal – these being key principles of youth work’ (2010, 93).

Faith-based youth work is developing steadily in many countries, in tandem with the development of academic studies and professionalised training in youth work (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2007; National Youth Agency 2020; Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2019). The development of academic study in youth work has created a need to undertake and synthesise research to support teaching and scholarship. This enables connections to be made with broader, supportive social science concepts. This in turn helps to relate youth work to the interests of teachers and other helping professions [12]. Reviews of research can provide a valuable resource for those involved in teaching by helping to build a greater sense of rigour and critique around key themes. The synthesis of research findings supports the integration of knowledge into practice based on best evidence.

The review seeks to understand the purpose of, the practices of and the principles of Christian faith-based youth work as reported in empirical research studies. Our scope includes ‘parachurch’ organisations, charities and youth work organisations which draw on the Christian faith in their origins and underpinning ethos. The denominations included in the papers in this review are those where empirical studies have been undertaken and published in peer-reviewed journals. The definition as to what constitutes ‘Christian faith-based youth work’ is discussed within the review.

This paper presents a unique and original contribution to knowledge in the form of a systematic narrative review of research on Christian faith-based youth work. This review is original in drawing together findings from empirical studies of Christian faith-based youth work so as to provide a reference point for teachers and for future studies (Smith, Stanton, and Wylie 2015; [4]). Throughout this paper, any reference to ‘faith-based’ refers to ‘Christian faith-based’.

Method

This review is part of a PhD study with the broader remit of exploring experiences of faith-based youth work from a Christian perspective. Rigorous reviews of research ([3][6][13]) typically follow three stages: (1) searching for studies and identifying those that are relevant ([2][8][9][11]); (2) appraising the quality of relevant studies [10]; and (3) synthesising key findings extracted from included studies [13]. The review presented in this study employed a very clear search process, adopted broad and justifiable quality inclusion criteria, and made use of key aspects of literature review methodology in the subsequent narrative synthesis ([13]).

Five bibliographic databases (JSTOR, ProQuest, PsycINFO, SCOPUS and Web of Science) were searched for relevant studies. The search formula involved 15 search terms (plus variant endings of these terms) structured as (youth work) AND (Christian faith). Four inclusion criteria were used: full text available in English; specific focus on Christian

faith-based youth work; original publication of original research; and published in a peer-reviewed journal. The definition of 'Christian' is that used by Operation World (2021), Statista (2021) and other international organisations providing an overview of the Christian church throughout the world. Studies meeting the inclusion criteria were synthesised by major themes in the papers.

This approach represents an original contribution to the field, not only in terms of this particular project but also to develop methodology for literature searching on other topics. The aim is to provide an overview of 'current best evidence' on the topic [5][7].

Synthesis

Eight relevant research studies were identified:

- Clayton and Stanton 2008 (England) drawing on 3 CEOs of parachurch organisations;
- De Kock 2015 (Netherlands) using 2 case studies of organisations outside formal church structures;
- Goreham 2004 (USA) involving 400 rural church groups across 8 denominations in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota. Denominations included: the Baptist General Conference, Evangelical Covenant Church, Evangelical Free Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, North American Baptist Conference, Presbyterian Church, USA, Roman Catholic Church, and the United Methodist Church.
- Nash, Collins-Mayo, and Mayo 2007 (England) drawing on self-defined 'Christian youth work projects';
- Stanton 2012 (England) with Christian organisations in Birmingham;
- Thompson and Ballantyne,; England) using faith-based organisations delivering detached youth work;
- Van Dijk Groeneboer 2015 (Netherlands) focusing on youth ministry settings within the Catholic Church; and
- Webber, Singleton, and Joyce 2010 (Melbourne, Australia) drawing on the largest Christian denominations; Catholic, Uniting Church, Anglican, Lutheran, Churches of Christ Victoria Council of Churches.

For further information about the denominations see their websites or Wikipedia.

The study by Goreham (2004) was a survey; the others were qualitative. Four studies conducted individual interviews with youth workers or leaders of faith-based organisations and three of the eight studies conducted interviews with young people. One paper used two case studies from the same Christian youth organisation. One study involved observation of small groups of young people over a school term. One study used focus groups with youth workers and one study conducted narrative interviews via email.

The studies meeting the inclusion criteria were synthesised using the four themes most evident across the papers:

- (1) the purpose of faith-based youth work;
- (2) the process and practice of faith-based youth work;

- (3) young people's association with religion and engagement with the Church; and
- (4) the challenges of having a faith-base in youth work.

These themes highlight the most pertinent concerns raised in the included studies. These themes ring true to the authors' experience in this field of work, a relevant concept in appraising rigour in qualitative research ([13]). These themes are discussed in turn.

Theme 1: the purpose of faith-based youth work

The question of the purpose of Christian faith-based youth work is connected to the origins and history of youth work itself. According to the National Occupational Standards for youth work of the National Youth Agency for the UK, the purpose of youth work is to: 'Enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential' (National Youth Agency 2020, 7). Clayton and Stanton (2008) conducted interviews with three senior leaders of faith-based organisation in England, asking: 'is Christian youth work evangelism or social action?' This question highlights what is perhaps the core tension in defining Christian faith-based youth work.

Thompson and Ballantyne (2017) interviewed seven detached Christian youth workers in England identifying the development of relationships between youth workers and young people to be the most significant purpose and impact of Christian detached youth work (2017). Through conversation about social and personal issues, youth workers, can develop deeper discussions which help young people to reflect on issues of personhood, identity and purpose (98–99).

De Kock (2015) considered two case studies within one Christian organisation in the Netherlands where three focus groups; one consisting of five youth workers, one consisting of 11, 17–18-year-olds and one consisting of four other employees were used to gather data. They suggest that the goal of the encounter between a young person and a youth worker is not to become a member of a faith community but to experience how one may look for meaning in life and how one may believe. By contrast, Stanton's study (involving interviews with 34 young people and eight youth workers in Birmingham, UK) found that youth work is often a connecting influence between young people and church as in the 'three-domain model' (Stanton 2012).

This model conceptualises many young people as engaging initially in either social activities or Christian teaching depending on their background (Domain One). Some young people (Domain Two) engage in bible study, discussion and social interaction. Domain Three represents church services where youth workers may provide an alternative sermon for young people. This study highlights the significance of the social community which for some is the foundation to engagement with a faith community. Stanton's model has parallels with that developed from the study by Webber, Singleton, and Joyce (2010) which examined ministry activities, pastoral approaches, and theological underpinnings across denominations in Australia involved interviewing fourteen youth workers from a range of youth ministries across

four Christian denominations and one para-church organisation. Four models were identified in that study: (1) social justice; (2) Christian discipleship; (3) friendship; and (4) liturgical initiation.

Thompson and Ballantyne (2017) suggest there is a dominant social purpose to work with young people, with youth workers working to explicit social outcomes, attributing much of their 'success' around relationship building. Youth workers here spoke of their 'incarnational' approach to youth work which: 'involves a complex weaving of the social and spiritual purposes of youth work' (110), drawing on a relational practice where the spiritual impact of their work is closely aligned to their social agenda as opposed to an institutional agenda (110). Incarnational youth ministry is viewed by some as a theological perspective on work with young people which means to live and work as Jesus did in his mission and ministry, immersed in the prevailing culture. The view here is that the youth worker must do likewise.

To summarise the material on this theme, the reviewed studies outlined a range of purposes of faith-based youth work, perhaps best expressed as on a continuum between social action and evangelism, with a debate about the relationship with encouraging engagement in (mainstream) 'church'. Faith-based youth work came into perspective as encouraging young people to reflect on their lives and their connection to the world around them, involving building relationships and dealing with existential questions.

Theme 2: the process and practice of faith-based youth work

The second theme focuses on process and practice, i.e. what and how of youth work. Key considerations were 'the encounter', 'place and space' and discipleship.

De Kock comments; 'religious learning processes are situated in the encounter . . . discussing and thinking about personal, societal and religious questions together. This concept of an encounter elucidates the tension between the longings of youngsters and the perspectives of the Gospel, which is the starting point of religious learning' (De Kock 2015, 231).

The fostering of a positive sense of 'Christian place' in helping to raise Christian consciousness among young people was a key concern for Nash, Collins-Mayo, and Mayo's (2007) two-phased research in England. Indeed, the concept of 'place' is used in a range of ways in literature. Nash, Collins-Mayo, and Mayo (2007), drawing on Watt and Stenson's work (1998, 252–253), define place as; 'a space which people in a given locality understand as having a particular history and as arousing emotional identifications and which is associated with particular groups and activities'. Phase One comprised a qualitative study of young people's experiences of Christian youth work through 297 face-to-face interviews. Phase Two consisted of fourteen youth workers recruited to carry out observations and interview 44 non-Church going young people. The study found that: 'it is the investing of youth work spaces with positive Christian meanings that we see as potentially helpful for the development of Christian consciousness amongst young people' (2007, 44).

Goreham (2004) carried out a survey of four hundred rural Church youth groups across eight mainline church denominations in three states in USA. The study found that church youth group programming and participation rates indicated of social capital in rural communities. In this instance, social capital is taken to mean the development of

relationships networks that provide bonds within groups and bridges between groups that strengthen a community (Coleman 1988; Putnam 2000). This contrasts with the study by Nash, Collins-Mayo, and Mayo (2007, 57) who argue that youth workers should work so that spaces become places: ‘The values, rules and physical dimensions of the spatial setting in which youth work occurs have a role to play in helping young people develop their sense of self by providing an environment in which questions of faith can be asked and possibilities opened up’ (Nash, Collins-Mayo, and Mayo 2007, 57). Although youth work has predominantly focussed on relationship building, Nash et al. suggest that an integrated approach to practice which gives credence to relationship building, activities and developing meaningful space can ‘... help to create a clearer sense of Christian place which will improve the effectiveness of Christian youth work in raising Christian consciousness among young people’ (Nash, Collins-Mayo, and Mayo 2007, 57).

Webber, Singleton, and Joyce (2010) found that a key feature of much Christian youth work was that young people were encouraged not just to participate in activities, but to take responsibility for organising them (Webber, Singleton, and Joyce 2010). The Christian-discipleship model was foundational to youth programmes where young people are treated as disciples (a learner), who follow the teaching and example of others more advanced in their faith. Successful models operated a ‘hands on’ approach, allowing for youth ownership and opportunities to design content, thereby developing talent and leadership.

To summarise the material on this theme, the studies highlighted the traditional focus on the encounter between the youth worker and the young person, but also the dimension of rooting beliefs in a place or space. The theme of discipleship was also evident, particularly in terms of structures that enabled the young people to take on roles of responsibility.

Theme 3: young people’s association with religion and engagement with the Church

Goreham (2004) highlights how young people are (or used to be) socialised into the theology and lifestyle of their denomination through their church’s youth ministry. However the Christian church in the UK is now struggling to attract young people (Stanton 2012; Nash, Collins-Mayo, and Mayo 2007), although this may vary considerably between countries. Van Dijk Groeneboer (2015) sought to identify the values and religious and institutional commitment of Catholic young people in the Netherlands. ‘Young people have not inherited the rebellious hostility to religion and church as seen in their parents’ generation; instead, for many youths, religion is simply irrelevant for day-to-day living’ (2015, 28). ‘Although today’s youth are indeed searching for answers to the big questions, they go about it in less traditional ways’ (Van Dijk Groeneboer 2015, 32). It is not clear from the studies included in this review how generalisable these findings are.

A ‘typology of youth’ is presented by Van Dijk Groeneboer (2015). Group One, the ‘Fortissimos’ comprise those who are highly engaged and committed to a religious institute. Group Two, the ‘Tranquillos’ consists of youth who will have nothing to do with religion, are not active in a church nor connected to a religious institute (35). Group Three, the ‘Legatos’ are young people who sometimes attend religious gatherings on

festive or holy days, who know religion through family life, from a distance, from the 'olden days' of their grandparents. Finally, Group Four are the 'Spirituosos', accounting for 20–25% of all young people. They are not attached to one main religion and invent a 'religion' for themselves by combining parts from several religions and spiritual movements. The conclusion was that for many young people faith may be disconnected from church and religion.

Stanton (2012) found that young people from non-church backgrounds sometimes engage with Christian groups. Young people who have rejected the church sometimes continue to nurture their beliefs in youth ministry settings (2012, 389). Social action plays a large part of Christian youth work programmes (Pimlott and Pimlott 2008; Clayton and Stanton 2008). This suggests that young people's engagement with Christianity is a two-way process: their self-identified needs are met and they find ways to 'give something back' . . . recognising the voice and choice of young people are to be promoted in order for youth work settings to thrive (Stanton 2012, 394).

Young people were often more willing to talk about faith, belief and values when invited to do so than youth workers anticipate (Nash, Collins-Mayo, and Mayo 2007, 53). Indeed, Nash, Collins-Mayo, and Mayo (2007) state: 'A specifically Christian perspective introduced into a conversation need not compromise the integrity of the informal educational encounter. In terms of Christian consciousness, our research indicates that Christian youth work is more effective at confirming and developing a church-going young person's existing Christian identity than generating that identity in a non-churchgoer. These young Christians valued the youth worker's help in thinking through their beliefs and the faith support they gave. This is not always available in other contexts' (Nash, Collins-Mayo, and Mayo 2007, 53).

To summarise the material on this theme, whilst young people who have grown up within a religious context may maintain their faith, young people generally see it as irrelevant to their lives. It is interesting to note that some of the research shows that there remains some interest among young people in spiritual activity. This is much more about the participation and involvement of young people, recognising need and dealing with contemporary issues rather than the setting rules to be obeyed. These types of activities, research suggests, work best in places of meaning where young people feel valued, listened to and share a sense of autonomy with youth workers.

Theme 4: the challenges of having a faith-base in youth work

Christian youth work is a contested terrain where there are expressions focused on meeting social need and others that focus primarily on faith transmission. The growing tension over the role of evangelism in Christian youth work has become one of the main issues facing the sector. Clayton and Stanton (2008) found that the increasing number of employed Christian youth workers ('professionalisation') might be working to undermine the effectiveness of Christian youth work, i.e. the subsequent impact on volunteering. Their findings show that opposition to evangelism within faith-based youth work settings has increased and that society has become increasingly intolerant towards the distinguishing characteristic of faith-based youth work and that which was once regarded as acceptable has become a taboo (2008, 113).

Debate exists around whether informal education, that is young-person-led and needs-led is compatible with faith-based youth work. Thompson and Ballantyne (2017) challenge this view and reaffirm that the emphases on choice, dialogue, relationships and participation in Christian youth work settings are crucial to young people's engagement. Tension exists in Christian youth work between meeting social, spiritual and institutional agendas. Some youth workers manage this by dividing their work into three domains. Whilst it would be over-simplistic to suggest that social, spiritual and institutional agendas can be completely separated, each domain represents a distinct agenda.

In Stanton's study (2012, 401), youth workers viewed their role as meeting community need whilst equally serving the interests of the church, balancing between providing youth work and Christian teaching. The key to this perspective may be the individual youth workers themselves who seek to address these themes in relation to their own beliefs and values. In this instance, the evidence illustrated the challenge in separating the social and spiritual purposes. Youth workers may frame these in an 'incarnational' approach that goes beyond a secular relational model of youth work. Indeed, for Christian (detached) youth workers in this study, their work was simultaneously social and spiritual, described as 'being church' (114).

Three challenging issues are: (1) the position of the youth worker; (2) the position of scripture; and (3) locating 'the Church' (De Kock 2015). De Kock (2015) discusses religious learning in missionary youth work where the ultimate goal is to help young people enter the faith tradition and a faith community, as well as receiving help in dealing with their questions and longings in life (2015, 231).

To summarise the material on this theme, faith-based activities are designed to reach young people, whether that be to attract them to church or to engage with them to raise consciousness of the Christian faith. Young people need to feel free to make their own choices and find their own answers. However this requires space to meet with others who can engage in meaningful conversation about beliefs and values, who can take time to really listen, use appropriate language and share their own beliefs.

Discussion

In terms of limitations, rigorous review of the literature such as this has proved challenging, not least because of the diverse nature of the literature. In order to maintain consistency it was necessary to have a clear boundary in terms of types of included papers. The line was drawn at including only research studies, although there are many interesting articles published that do not have an explicit basis in empirical data. In general, it was disappointing that there have been so few empirical studies undertaken on this topic.

The range of countries and denominations that were studied in the papers is a limitation, particularly given the small number retrieved. Detailed information about location and context for each study has been provided so that readers can more readily consider the generalisability to their own context. The studies were carried out between 2004 and 2018, during which time many societal changes have occurred such as Me Too, Extinction Rebellion and Black Lives Matter. Dates of studies are indicated clearly, so that findings reported can be considered in their social context.

The systematic literature search and robust methodology has ensured that this review has focused on published, peer-reviewed research thereby allowing a rigorous interrogation and comparison of the literature. The eight studies included in this review of literature have highlighted four pertinent themes: (1) the purpose of Christian faith-based youth work; (2) the process and practice of Christian faith-based youth work; (3) young people's association with religion and engagement with the Church; and (4) the challenges of Christian faith-based youth work. The eight included studies often addressed more than one of these four key themes.

The purpose of Christian faith-based youth work is sometimes unclear. The literature suggests a range of competing visions. It could be argued that the purpose of faith-based youth work exists on a continuum, ranging from social action to evangelism. This is reflected not only in terms of the data presented, but, also in terms of the range of activities and initiatives undertaken by Christian faith-based organisations. Issues of purpose, agenda, bias and professionalisation are key issues for faith-based youth work. Challenges and tensions remain in relation to the pedagogy of youth work which is viewed by some as being at odds with the underpinning values of the Christian faith. Holding these tensions together is not necessarily a bad thing, however, those engaged in faith-based practice must be clearer and more transparent about the work they do with young people and working to gain clarity around the purpose of faith-based youth work and in what ways the 'faith' aspect of their provision is evident both implicitly and explicitly.

In relation to the processes and practices of Christian faith-based youth work, Stanton (2013, 23–24) comments; 'a particular crisis point for institutional Christianity was the move to post-modernity when the status of churches became less secure as people began to construct their own realities without reference to a creator. Changing social conceptions of hierarchical authority and of knowledge as absolute began to change in an increasingly diverse society, and patterns of truth for one were found to differ to that of others.' The passing-on of faith is diminishing, and the growth in vicarious religion continues to rise. Research into church-based youth work suggests that whilst Christian youth workers do respond to social need through youth provision, they often face criticism (from their church) around the value of this (Stanton 2013). Whilst the church often invests economically and materially in youth work, it frequently fails to encourage or engage socially within the church community; 'thus young people do not establish relationship or a sense of community with the church' (Stanton, 2013). Whilst the core values of youth work – critical dialogue, equality of opportunity, respect and voluntary participation (National Youth Agency 2020) – have gained consensus, critical reflection is required. A key dimension is the young people's ownership of, and contribution to, programmes (Pantaléon et al. 2019), which can be related to the concept of discipleship within theological discourse.

The trajectory of young people's association with organised religion and institutional church continues to be downward in much of Europe and North America, although there are marked variations across European countries (Bullivant 2018), and the same is not true everywhere in the world. Whilst Christian faith-based youth work and youth ministry has sought to address some of these concerns, there remains a number of challenges pertaining to sociological, pedagogical and theological perspectives in relation to work with young people in these settings (Czyżowska et al. 2020). The potential danger

is that as youth work becomes more professional, it becomes more institutional. This may provoke further decline both in terms of structure and in terms of volunteering and the potential tensions around values, principles and local need (Stanton 2013, 23–24). Creating space and place for young people's spiritual growth has never been more important (Parker 2018, 2020; Su 2018).

Faith-based youth work presents various challenges. A key one is the balance between the mission of the church to spread the gospel, and the fact that people need to reach their own faith decisions. Where younger people are concerned, there will always be concerns that they are not being unduly coerced or their youthful idealism being taken advantage of. In our contemporary Western society, there is the added complexity that many people seem to regard religions as personal and purely subjective. For the Christian youth worker, a reworking of time-honoured approaches to apologetics perhaps need to be re-worked in relation to establishing the objectivity of truth. If faith is recognised as building on reason as a starting point, then the youth worker can confidently encourage young people to seek the truth, accompanying them on their journey (Kreeft and Tacelli 2009).

Historically, religion played an important role in the development of work with young people, from its origins in various Sunday School movements to the introduction of statutory youth services in the UK and elsewhere after the Second World War. The growth of Christian youth work programmes emerging is best understood as a response to this decline (Pimlott and Pimlott 2008). Whilst some would contend the inclusivity of Christian youth work, others would argue that 'successful youth groups are social, participatory, relational, experiential and a place where faith is connected to real life' (Stanton 2012, 389). De Kock suggests that faith formation at home may be isolated and unconnected from Church settings (2015, 218). Whilst young people may grow up outside of church affiliation, they maintain a willingness to live faithful lives that are committed to new forms of community outside traditional church structures, at what he describes as 'street level' (219). 'Faith-based youth work aims to raise Christian consciousness in young people – that is to say, build up their awareness and knowledge of the faith and provide a framework for decision-making informed by Christian values and encourage young people to develop a sense of identity as belonging to a Christian community' (Nash, Collins-Mayo, and Mayo 2007, 1; see also Baker and Power 2018; Chaudhry and Jalonen 2016).

Conclusion

This synthesis of research on Christian faith-based youth work has highlighted the purposes, process and practices involved. The synthesis has also summarised research findings on young people's association with religion and engagement with the Church, and also the challenges of having a faith-base in youth work. It is clear that there are challenges, tensions and dilemmas facing those in the faith sector both pedagogically and philosophically in terms of the influence that holding to a faith has on the practice and process of providing youth work services.

This synthesis will provide a reference point for those engaged in Christian faith-based youth work; those involved in school-based youth work programmes; and those teaching on youth worker training programmes. Like RE teachers, faith-based youth workers help young people to engage with important societal, personal and spiritual issues, building

awareness through trusting relationships. Authenticity and shared beliefs help the processes of trust and dialogue in the 'safe and meaningful spaces' created by Christian faith-based youth workers. Faith-based youth work raises consciousness of core values and internal vulnerabilities, nurtured in such a way so as to contribute to society, a particularly important contribution in the increasingly secular societies of north America and some European countries.

Authors' Own Publications [indicated in main text with numbers in square brackets []; to be moved to appropriate place after peer review]

[1] Best P, Manktelow R & Taylor BJ (2016) Social work and social media: online help-seeking and the mental well-being of adolescent males. *British Journal of Social Work*, 46(1), 257-276.

[2] Best P, Taylor BJ, Manktelow R & McQuilkin J (2014) Systematically retrieving research in the digital age: case study on the topic of social networking sites and young people's mental health. *Journal of Information Science*, 40(3), 346-356.

[3] Campbell A, Taylor BJ, Bates J & O'Connor-Bones, U (2018) Developing and applying a protocol for a systematic review in the social sciences. *New Review of Academic Librarianship*, 24(1), 1-22.

[4] Hendron JA, Irving P & Taylor BJ (2014b) The emotionally-intelligent ministry: why it matters. *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*, 17(5), 470-478.

[5] Killick C, Taylor BJ, Begley E, Anand JC & O'Brien M (2015) Older people's conceptualization of abuse: a systematic narrative review. *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect*, 27(2), 100-120.

[6] McGinn AH, Taylor BJ, McColgan M & McQuilkin J (2016) Social work literature searching: current issues with databases and online search engines. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 26(3), 266-277.

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