Chapter 9
Gendered Views Among Young Adults in a Global Study: Male and Female Worldview Prototypes

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Abstract Research focusing on gender and religion underlines the need to explore how religion is gendered and how religion genders. What is also often called for is an approach that allows for and can register complexity while not ignoring possible gender related differences. In this chapter, we begin with a short overview of the survey results that relate to gender and then turn to the worldview prototypes identified with the help of the Faith Q-Sort. Our primary focus is on the prototypes that are clearly gendered, that is to say, dominated by participants identifying as either male or female. We explore what characterizes these prototypes. Using interview material, we delve into questions of gender brought up by persons of these prototypes and illustrate the complex ways in which questions of gender and worldviews interact. The chapter underlines that gender differences and similarities captured in a survey only tell a small part of the story; that gender and religion are situated in contexts that shape the views on and understandings of both; and that gender and religion are complex notions allowing for creative engagements that can confirm, challenge or reimagine ideas concerning both.

Keywords Gender · Difference · Similarity · Complexity · Faith Q-Sort · Worldview

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9.1   Introduction

> People for whom religious views are alien – very often say so. They say 'God, God, God'
> all the time addressing God in a bit childish way and, on the other hand, emphasizing mas-
> culinity – the masculinity of God. It seems to be incorrect and there are philosophical argu-
> ments for this. I think there are also feminist [arguments], because there is a feminist
> approach, at least in Christianity. *Polish man, 25 (YPLSS329)*

> Even my lecturers at the university, who whenever they know that I'm in the Karate, like
> "Wow! Keep on going, like, and the thing is real? Like, are there really Arabs and reli-
> gious – who play?" […] The fact that they are wondering about this […] really enthusiasts
> you to continue, and "Let me prove to you that we are not […] a community that is closed
> […] and the girl […] until eighteen, nineteen had finished what she should be doing".
> *Israeli Muslim woman, 23 (YILSK028P)*

> Yes, I want to become a professor. Now everyone says that you need to become something
> as you grow up, or it is necessary that girls must take up job. But the strength that I get from
> Guruji, when we say that it is not possible for us or we are not able to do – the kind of
> encouragement that we get from our Guruji helps us a lot. I mean to say that to move along
> in life, religion plays a very important role. *Indian woman, 24 (YINMS038P)*

Questions relating to gender and religion were not directly brought up in the inter-
views conducted for the project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective
(YARG) that this chapter builds on (for more on YARG, see Chap. 1 of this volume).
Still, themes linking to the topic often surfaced. Through elements of the Faith
Q-Sort-method (FQS) – a method used for the first time on a grand scale in this
project – via current debates, and through personal experiences, aspects of gender,
religion and worldviews were pondered by the participants (for more on FQS see
Chaps. 1 and 3 of this volume). As the quotes above illustrate, for some there is a
need to challenge stereotypical ideas of what it means to be a religious person, oth-
ers express a satisfaction with traditional gender roles. Some critique religious
views on gender, while others take strength in their religious tradition to find their
own way in life, be that way in line with or in contrast to traditional notions of gender.

That religion and gender – in the form of gender roles, norms, hierarchies etc. –
surface in the interviews despite not being specifically brought up, is not surprising.
We are perhaps not yet completely past the so-called double-blindness (King, 2005)
that for long led to researchers in religion ignoring gender and researchers of gender
ignoring religion. However, the vast amount of research during the last couple of
decades focusing on gender and religion has underlined the need to explore how
religion is gendered and how religion genders (for overviews see Castelli & Rodman,
2001; King, 2004).

Processes of religious change has also highlighted the necessity of considering
gender. The notion of secularization has been illustrated to include aspects of gen-
der blindness, since secularization is not considered to affect men and women
equally or in similar ways (Aune et al., 2008; Woodhead, 2008). The so-called femi-
nization of religion (Palmer, 1997; Woodhead, 2001; Gemzöe & Keinänen, 2016)
has also put a focus on gender. Research on gender has underlined the need to

reconsider how we define and study religion (King, 2005; Dubisch, 2016). Focusing on religious institutions and hierarchies presents one aspect of religious life. Looking at the role of religion in everyday life and through aspects of practice and embodiment present another part of it (see e.g. McGuire, 2008).

What can the YARG-project bring to the debate and what possible new insights in relation to gender has the project produced? In this chapter, the focus is on the worldview prototypes identified with the help of the FQS, but to better comprehend our findings, we also present some survey results concerning gender and religion. To help situate our research, we begin with a short research overview.

9.2   Difference and Complexity

To say something certain and general about religion and gender is not possible. Still, a finding argued to be one of the few recurring results of sociological research is that women report more religious beliefs and behaviors than men do. Studies of some Jewish and Muslim groups and populations have given different results (Sullins, 2006), but in most religious settings the world over, women on average come across as more religious than men do. This has inspired many questions, not least why this is the case. Scholars have also wanted to go beyond the question of more or less and explored possible differences between men's religiosity and women's religiosity, not just in amount but in kind. In addition, the need to not just look at gender, but other elements too – that is to say an intersectional approach – has been highlighted.

Regarding the question of why women are more religious than men are, many possible answers have been presented. According to Sullins, four types of answers are notable. First, scholars have pointed to the "different structural location of women than men in a gendered social division of labor" (Sullins, 2006, p. 839). Men are in the work force, where religion plays less of a role, and women traditionally take care of the family, which gives them more time for religion and in addition places them in a sphere culturally related to religion. Second, the role of socialization has been underlined and it is argued that women and men are assigned "different sets of values, roles, and norms for behavior" that are argued to make them more or less open for religiosity (Sullins, 2006, p. 839). These sociological approaches have been questioned (see e.g. Miller & Stark, 2002) and the considered universal gender gap have led scholars to argue that, third, "gender differences in religiousness are associated with gender-linked personality characteristics" and fourth, "that a psychological mechanism, specifically the possession of testosterone, underlies both greater risk taking and lower religiousness on the part of males" (Sullins, 2006, p. 840).

Sullins (2006) is critical of any simple explanation of the gender gap and argues that social factors often help explain a great deal of the difference, but other factors should also be considered as parts of the explanation. Trzebiatowska and Bruce (2012) land quite squarely in a secularization model that links to the change in work relations, a process that would entail that women follow men into work life and into

a secular outlook. This perspective has, however, also been questioned since it ignores the difference in work still done by women and men in both the public and private spheres. Particularly the role of women in care work has been argued to open up for differently gendered perspectives on religion (Woodhead, 2008).

There is thus a need to avoid generalizations regarding both men's and women's religiosity or lack thereof. Still it is worth keeping in mind where the current research points. As highlighted, women tend to report more religious activity and beliefs than men do and men more often than women report being non-religious (see e.g. Furseth, 2010 and Chap. 8 in this volume). In addition, women have been shown to be particularly prominent in forms of alternative spirituality (Heelas & Woodhead, 2005; Utriainen, 2016). Women's religiosity has often also been argued to be more relational than men's religiosity (Bryant, 2007; Maddrell, 2016). Research has, however, also indicated other differences. Sullins (2006) illustrates how the difference we see between men and women mostly seems to relate to personal piety, not organizational participation. Sullins also reflects on the challenge with operationalizing religion and gendered effects on how surveys are answered. Similar problems are highlighted in studies on spirituality (Bryant, 2007).

The YARG-project specifically focuses on young adults. According to Arnett (2004), the religious and spiritual developmental process that starts during adolescence becomes even more pronounced during the third decade. Barry and Abo-Zena point to the "heightened self and identity exploration during the third decade" which "coupled with other cognitive, physical, and socioemotional developmental advances" makes emerging adults "the ideal age group for the study of religiousness and spirituality" (2014, p. 7). Many studies (e.g. Arnett & Jensen, 2002; Barry & Nelson, 2008) highlight slightly higher levels of religious practice and belief among women during young adulthood and slightly lesser decline during the transition to adulthood, a gender gap that according to Chan, Tsai and Fuligni "may be a precursor to the commonly-observed gender differences in religiosity during adulthood" (2015, p. 1563).

Maselko and Kubzansky (2006) also point out gender differences, but in addition highlight how religiosity/spirituality is important to consider together with other issues. Research on sexual minorities, religion, and well-being also highlights the importance of looking beyond a simple male-female gender divide (Dahl & Galliher, 2010). Many studies thus indicate the need for an intersectional approach. Gender, age, ethnicity, class and context, among other things all play a part. Schnabel (2016) has for example illustrated the role income levels coupled with gender play on religion. In their overview of research on religiosity and spirituality during the transition to adulthood, Barry et al. (2010) argue that when exploring variations in religiosity and spirituality, culture, community and gender are three important factors to consider.

What is called for is thus an approach that allows for and can register complexity while not ignoring possible gender related differences. What is also much needed is a transnational approach of the kind that the YARG-project allows.

9.3 Gender and the YARG-Survey

In analyzing the survey material and aspects of religion and gender, we have explored gender differences in the material and also performed regression analysis to illustrate the explanatory value of gender, or the lack thereof (for more on the survey, see Chap. 1 and Appendix 3).

When means of self-assessed religiosity amongst men and women is analyzed according to case study, the majority of case studies are characterized by no statistically significant gender differences (Table 9.1). This is true both for case studies where the reported degree of religiosity is relatively high, such as in Poland and in India, but also for the case studies where levels of self-assessed religiosity are the lowest (Russia, Canada and Sweden). However, when gender differences do occur, they consistently imply higher religiosity for women than for men. The response patterns for all respondents also imply higher religiosity for women than for men, although the differences are not remarkable.

In order to test the impact of gender on self-reported religiosity in relation to national background, socio-demographic background and religious background while controlling for age, hierarchical regression analysis was conducted. Before the analysis, precautions were conducted to ensure that there were no violations of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity or multicollinearity. In order to assess the explanatory power of national background, socio-demographic background and religious background as separate factors on gender, the analysis was conducted in

Table 9.1 Means for self-assessed religiosity on a 0–10 scale per gender in each case study

Country	n	Males		Females		Total		t-test (df)
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
Ghana	420	6.38	2.51	7.17	1.88	6.78	2.25	-3.67*** (384.32)
India	298	4.56	2.84	4.53	2.47	4.54	2.62	n.s.
Poland	299	4.17	2.60	4.74	2.83	4.51	2.75	n.s.
Turkey	346	4.17	2.65	4.40	2.47	4.33	2.52	n.s.
Japan	324	4.01	2.69	4.38	2.49	4.15	2.61	n.s.
Israel	760	3.79	2.85	4.51	2.87	4.20	2.88	-3.44** (758)
Muslims	199	4.89	2.11	6.06	1.98	5.56	2.11	-4.00*** (810)
Jews	292	2.94	2.89	3.73	3.24	3.40	3.11	-2.16* (290)
Druze	226	4.51	2.81	4.77	2.20	4.66	2.47	n.s.
Peru	317	3.38	2.95	4.37	2.61	3.95	2.81	-3.08** (258.06)
China	325	3.26	2.58	3.92	2.58	3.63	2.59	-2.30* (323)
Finland	481	2.98	3.31	3.82	3.16	3.54	3.23	-2.73** (479)
United States	295	3.15	2.78	3.51	2.71	3.37	2.77	n.s.
Russia	342	2.55	2.38	2.90	2.50	2.79	2.47	n.s.
Canada	410	2.76	2.95	2.71	2.67	2.73	2.75	n.s.
Sweden	322	1.65	2.39	2.20	2.64	2.04	2.56	n.s.
Total	4939	3.76	2.97	4.05	2.90	3.93	2.93	-3.40** (4160.89)

*Note 1. ***p < .001; **p < .01; *p < .05*

four steps. Gender was entered at step 1 along with year of birth. At step 2, national background was entered into the analysis as 12 dummy variables, which made it possible to assess the impact of each case study.[1] As a third step, three background variables that indicate individual access to resources were included. While items on how the family's income is estimated in relation to average and carrying responsibility of children or not constitute measures of individual access to resources, urban background constitutes a more structural factor which nevertheless may have different implications for the religiosity of young men and women. In the final step of the analysis, a measure of religious background was introduced in the form of an assessment on a 1–10 scale of the religiosity of one's home.

Model 1, where gender along with age was entered, explained a modest 0.5% of the variance in personal religiosity. While the introduction of national background (model 2) into the analysis raised the explanatory level of the analysis by almost 15%, the impact of the sociodemographic factors (model 3) only contributed slightly (1%) to the explanatory power of the analysis. Model 4, where the single item on childhood home religiosity was introduced, raised the explanatory power of the analysis drastically (26%). As a result, the final step of the analysis explained 42% of the variation in self-reported religiosity (Table 9.2).

As for the impact of gender on self-reported religiosity, the findings from the regression analysis suggest that being female is positively correlated with personal religiosity. However, model 1 (where only gender and age were regressed on personal religiosity), and model 4 (which includes all independent variables) nevertheless suggest that the impact of gender on personal religiosity is quite modest. The regression coefficients of the fourth model suggest that while the impact of gender is significant, it is not very strong, especially in comparison to childhood home religiosity. It is also interesting to note that the impact of national background in many cases exceeds the impact of gender.

9.4   The FQS

Q-methodology has been used to explore gender perspectives (see e.g. Brownlie, 2006). However, though the method does allow us to say something about the individuals loading on a certain prototype, Q-methodology has seldom explicitly been used to explore gender differences. Since the method aims to capture varieties of perspectives and does not directly aim to answer questions of prevalence, statistical analysis of the results are seldom done or even doable (McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Watts & Stenner, 2012). There are, however, some exceptions to this. Thomas et al. (1993) have in their study analyzed gender and race difference using a posteriori tests in terms of the 2 × 2 (Race x Sex) ANOVA design in the P-set (McKeown &

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[1] The Japanese case study in YARG included the survey only, and not the subsequent qualitative steps. Since it would not be possible to explore potential findings in relation to the Japanese case further, Japan was not included as a dummy variable in this analysis.

Table 9.2 Self-reported Religiosity Regressed on Gender, Controlling for Age (Model 1), National background (Model 2), Resource-related Background Variables (Model 3) and Childhood Home Religiosity (Model 4). Unstandardized regression coefficients

Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*
Intercept	4.96	0.38	5.06	0.40	6.04	0.42	2.76	0.36
Gender (1 = Female)	0.28**	0.09	0.51***	0.08	0.51***	0.08	0.48***	0.07
Year of Birth	−0.05**	0.02	−0.05**	0.02	−0.06***	0.02	−0.03*	0.02
Canada			−1.46***	0.21	−1.60***	0.21	−1.67***	0.18
China			−0.65**	0.22	−0.63**	0.22	−0.61**	0.18
Finland			−0.60**	0.21	−0.72***	0.21	−0.60***	0.17
Ghana			2.68***	0.21	2.75***	0.21	0.49**	0.18
India			0.39	0.23	0.20	0.23	−1.02***	0.19
Israel			0.07	0.19	−0.09	0.19	−0.69***	0.16
Peru			−0.28	0.22	−0.27	0.22	−1.42***	0.19
Poland			0.30	0.22	0.27	0.22	−1.07***	0.19
Russia			−1.46***	0.22	−1.37***	0.22	−1.57***	0.18
Sweden			−2.11***	0.23	−2.13***	0.22	−1.24***	0.19
Turkey			0.07	0.22	0.17	0.22	−0.84***	0.18
USA			−0.88***	0.22	−0.91***	0.22	−1.57***	0.18
Caretaker of children					0.73***	0.20	0.45**	0.16
Family's income compared to average					−0.15***	0.03	−0.10***	0.03
Urban background					−0.36***	0.09	−0.13	0.08
Religiosity of family (1–10)							0.57***	0.01
R^2	.01		.15		.16		.42	

Note. n = 4716; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Thomas, 2013, p. 33). However, McKeown and Thomas advice caution when using ANOVA to interpret Q-data "as the nonrandom nature of respondent selection limits the generalization on variable effects" (2013, p. 33). Despite this, the worldview prototypes identified by the YARG-project are interesting to analyze with a focus on gender, but the results are of a tentative nature.

Ideally, when analyzing gender differences, similar sample sizes are available. In some of the studied contexts in YARG, this is the case, but far from all. In line with the experience in many research projects, it has often been a lot more difficult to get men to participate than to get women (see e.g. Sax et al., 2003) and we ended up with a gender imbalance in some contexts that varies caution. The percentages of females and males of the total FQS-sample for all contexts is shown in Fig. 9.1. The FQS-study was conducted in 12 contexts. In Israel, three samples were included: Hebrew, Muslims and Druze. In Fig. 9.1, the results for the three samples are reported.

Regarding gender and the prototypes, a first interesting aspect are the prototypes that are only defined by either individuals identifying as male or as female. There are 14 female prototypes (Canada 4, Canada 5, China 3, India 3, India 7, India 8,
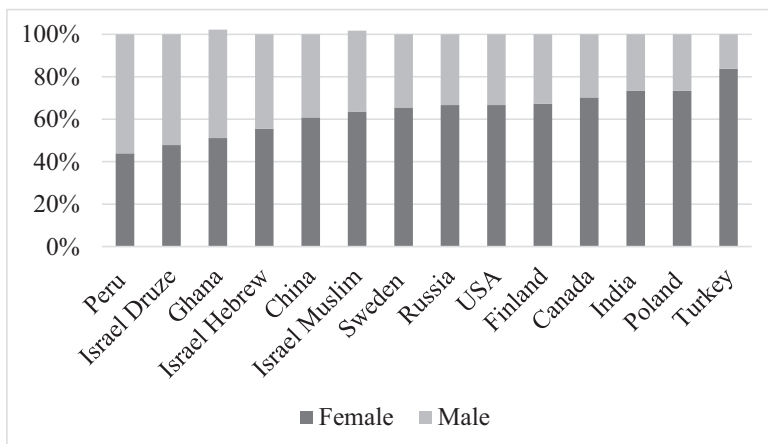
Fig. 9.1 Percentage of female and male FQS-participants for all contexts

Israel Hebrew 3, Israel Muslim 2, Poland 4, Russia 3, Sweden 3, Turkey 1, Turkey 3 and Turkey 5) and three male prototypes (Ghana 2, Poland 3 and Russia 5). The prototypes represented by only one gender are mostly prototypes with only 2–3 defining sorts. Because of this, we checked whether a gender difference would still be noticeable if sorts with a weaker loading were included. When adding all sorts with a loading of 0.4 or more, four of the prototypes (Canada 5, India 8, Turkey 1 and Turkey 3) continued to be represented by only one gender and this representation became stronger. For an additional two (Canada 4 and Poland 4) the gender difference was strengthened, even though the prototypes were no longer represented by sorts representing only one gender. For three prototypes (Poland 3, Russia 3, Turkey 5) adding the sorts down to 0.4 had no effect, but for seven (China 3, Ghana 2, India 3, India 7, Israel Hebrew 3, Russia 5 and Sweden 3) the gender difference was weakened. For two of these seven prototypes (India 3 and India 7), the gender difference was reversed.

Most prototypes include defining sorts by both female and male participants. In many of these, we can also see a gender difference. Figure 9.2 provides an overview of all the prototypes with at least a 10% difference. The percentages indicate how many percentages more of the total female or total male sample the prototypes are made up of. The gender difference is generally not great. Turkey 2 stands out, but in this case, the very limited number of male participants needs to be considered. When including sorts down to 0.4, some changes appear, but overall the most strongly gendered prototypes stay the same. For an analysis of gender, these prototypes are the most interesting, but who represents the most highly defining sorts must also be considered.

For Turkey 2, a prototype that is dominated by men, the three most highly loading sorts are by individuals who identify as female. Here again, the small number of male participants produce an unclear result. For some of the other highly gendered sorts we also find a mixture of genders representing the most highly loading sorts. This is noteworthy, as it indicates the need to look beyond sex and truly consider
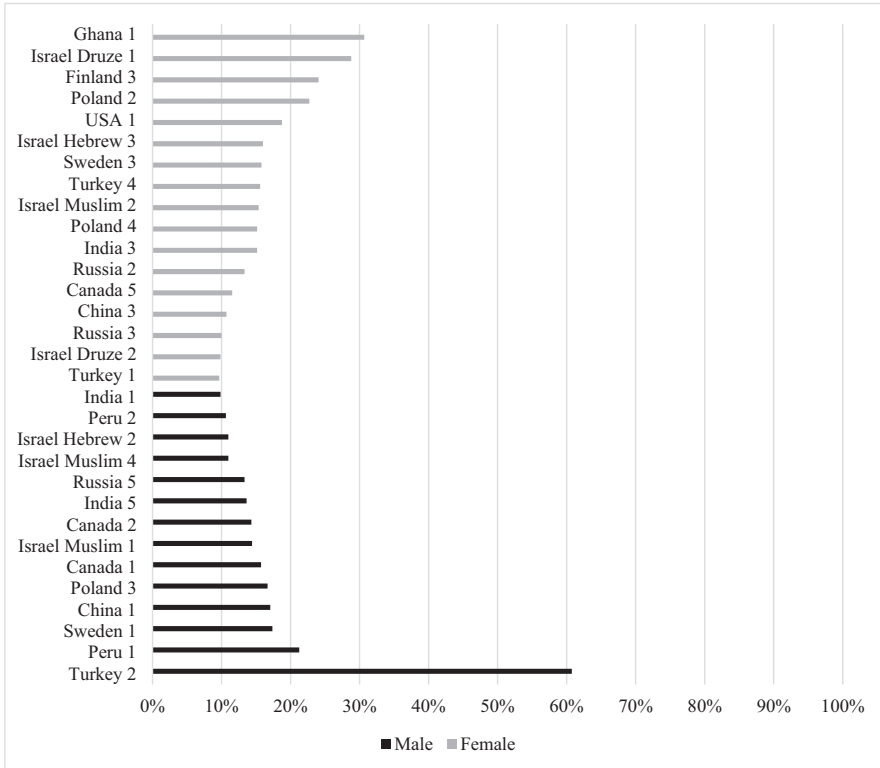
Fig. 9.2 Male and female dominance for all prototypes with a 10% or more gender difference

gender (Thompson, 1991), the many ways in which gender can be performed (Butler, 2004), the role worldviews can play in the performance of gender (King, 2004) and how religion can be a place where gender is sometimes performed in line with and sometimes in contrast to prevalent gender norms (Palmer, 1997).

Next, we provide an overview of the prototypes most clearly dominated by males and then of the prototypes dominated by females based on the prototype descriptions and the FQS-interviews. We especially explore how the individuals representing the highest loadings sorts connect their worldview to aspects of gender.

9.4.1 Male Dominated Prototypes

Based on previous research, we could predict that prototypes expressing a secular or rational worldview would be dominated by men. To a degree, this holds true. Turkey 2 has been labeled Secular Individualistic Rationalist, Peru 1 Non-Religious Progressive Humanist, Sweden 1 Liberal Progressive Humanist, China 1 Non-Religious This-Worldly Activist and Canada 1 Socially Concerned Rationalist.

As already discussed, Turkey 2 includes a much higher percentage of male participants (83% of the total number of males) than females (23% of the total number of females). However, the uneven gender division means that in actual numbers females dominate: for example, prototype 2 includes seven females and only five males. Participants identifying as female also, as mentioned, represent the most highly loading sorts. The prototype thus has a somewhat mixed gender identity, but an identity that in an interesting way relates to some prevalent notions of gender. In general, the persons of this prototype highlight a very rational view, identifying with statements such as "Views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires" (FQS60) and "Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles" (FQS70). This view has traditionally often been seen as male, but is here expressed by a person identifying as female:

> Scientific and rational things have generally been tried out and ascertained. [...] Thus, I can, at least, trust it as being real. I mean, "It exists. Yes, I can depend on this with trust!" I think the feeling of trust is more intense in a scientific reality. Here, I am asked to trust in something I do not know, but, there, there is something positively known, something that most people may know. This seems more logical. (YTRHE320)

Religion is by some individuals explained away as a dated way of viewing the world:

> For instance, I think, people – many years ago, people looked at the sun and said "My God! The sun will burn us!" Or it rained, and they said "This is God's punishment for us!" This is what they said in the past. (YTRHE013)

This stance is not expressed as particularly female or male by the participants. Instead, they are aware of their views being exceptional in the relatively religious society they are a part of. Gender inequality is touched upon by some, and seen as problematic, but this does not come across as a central concern. Though gender thus can be argued to play a part in this prototype, it is only one of many other aspects underlying this worldview.

Peru 1 is a prototype generally made up of activists working to change society and deal with different aspects of inequality. A defining statement for this prototype is "Actively works towards making the world a better place to live" (FQS51). Of all the males in the sample, 43% load significantly on this prototype but only 23% of those identifying as female. Of the five most highly loading sorts, four identify as male and one as other. Of all the 15 sorts that define this prototype only four are by individuals identifying as female. This is thus a clearly gendered prototype and interestingly issues of gender come across in many ways. Among the inequalities these activists talk about gender is one area of concern. This is particularly brought up in the discussion of statement FQS54 which they do not agree with.

> Thinks that men and women are by nature intended for different roles", I don't agree [...] I consider that perhaps the role of religion within all this is based on, perhaps, not imposition, but if recurrence of certain roles in which the woman shows a degree of subordination, in front of it perhaps they should change some things or to appear more open to the – the understanding of new roles that could be adopted in our society. (YPEMV051)

Some individuals also indicate concern with views on masculinity.

> Values, not necessarily – more than values I would say ways of thinking, that in society there are things that must be changed. The same I can mention a macho society, a racist society. Although people say no, but yes. If you realize it is very evident racism, machismo, social inequality. That is, if there are things that need to be changed. (YPESC082)

This prototype can thus be considered to express a way of being male that is open to change and equality. It breaks with some traditional notions of male dominance. However, that a prototype focusing on change and social activity is dominated by individuals identifying as male points to ideas of masculinity connected to notions of action and control. Put differently, this can indicate a society where the space to take action and work for change is a space more open to men than to women.

Sweden 1 is a somewhat mixed prototype. Though slightly dominated by males – 70% of all the male participants define this prototype – more than half of the participants identifying as female (53%) also do so. The two highest loading sorts are by individuals identifying as male, but many participants identifying as female also have a high loading. A defining statement for this prototype is "Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles" (FQS70) and there is a strong disagreement with the statement "Has dedicated his or her life to serving the divine" (FQS36). Looking at the highest loading sorts, some recurring features are noticeable. Though generally identifying as non-religious, many report belonging to the Church of Sweden. Though not as actively engaged in changing society as Peru 1, they still indicate a belief in human progress.

The sample from Sweden includes a fair number of young adults studying to become nurses. Their future profession is sometimes brought up in the discussions and underscores the caring aspect of this prototype.

> I mean, I have previously educated myself to become a nurse and pretty much the only thing that I have wanted to work with during the larger part of my life has been to help people out and just generally to work with other people. (YSEJK004)

This is thus also a prototype that breaks with any notions of care and care work being primarily seen as female. Though indicating a slight dominance by males, it is also a prototype that highlights the general secular views by young Swedish adults, independent of gender.

Taken together, the male dominated prototypes expressing a rational, humanist or secular worldview would seem to fit previous theorizing by often being dominated by men, but they do not follow a set model and many aspects need to be considered (for more on non-religious worldviews, see Chap. 8 of this volume). Gender is one of these but so are questions of context, values and social change.

What about the male dominated prototypes expressing some kind of a religious/spiritual worldview? When looking at the labels we find a great deal of variation. Poland 3 is called Uncertain Spiritual Seeker, Israel Muslim 1 Committed Practicing Believer, Canada 2 Spiritual and Experience-Oriented Individualist, India 5 Tradition-Oriented Universalist and Russia 5 Anxious Believer.

This description well describes Poland 3: "I left the harbor and I do not know where I am sailing to. […] I search for some path" (YPLSS329). The sorts loading on Poland 3 highlight the feeling of being lost and searching. Characteristic of the

two men who define Poland 3 is that they have both undergone a religious change, acquired knowledge about different religious traditions and thought a lot about their own beliefs. They both say that they withhold emotions in their personal lives, but also mention how their emotions are connected to their views and values. This is not surprising, as changes in their religious views are tied to their personal lives:

> My farewell to religion took place mostly because of my sexual orientation, but rather – not because of the view of the Church on this, because I didn't know it back then, but rather the influence sexual orientation has on one's perception of the world, that is an overall other-ness […]. Religion was the victim rather than the cause. (YPLSS164T)

Whereas one of the men wants to stay in the Christian tradition, but explores different denominations, the other is keen on acquiring knowledge about different religious traditions and discusses science as a belief system. During the interview, when the topic of faith and family comes up, it becomes clear that the person who wants to continue being a Christian has strong feelings about his faith:

> I am tempted to say: believing but not practicing, as it is – as many – as many people say. But no, for me it is just a sort of temporary period – as I said – I left the harbor, I am sailing across the sea – I do not know how to call it. I very clearly feel a need for God as a regulative idea, but on the other hand, as for living faith – opening for grace – oh, it is difficult. (YPLSS329)

It seems that these two men feel that you have to be authentic and serious, which leads them to acquire a lot of knowledge about religious traditions.

Of the six sorts that define Israel Muslim 1, three are male and three are female. The two highest loading sorts and the fourth highest loading sort are male. Israel Muslim 1 is represented by persons with an obvious religious outlook on life. As one of the highly loading individuals puts it: "Religion is something essential in my life" (YILSK264). Persons of this prototype see no problem with a connection between religion and the nation, and their behavior is guided by their beliefs. For the woman with the highest loading sort, this among other things entails not socializing with men and not even being friends with her male cousins on Facebook. With a traditional religious worldview also come fairly traditional goals in life such as a family. In their current lives however, their friends play a very central role.

From a gender perspective, the interviews bring in an interesting theme. Two of the defining male sorts include a discussion of statement FQS19 "Understands and relates to the divine as feminine". They have both placed this statement on −3, but are not strictly against the notion. The idea mostly seems novel to them. As one of them puts it: "The thing is a little difficult, {LG} because one never dealt with it, like, is God a male or a female, okay?" (YILSK027P). This highlights how the FQS can sometimes bring up themes regarding gender and religion that might otherwise not have been expressed.

As Canada 2 and India 5 are both defined by only three sorts each, which in both cases include two male sorts and one female and the female having the highest loading, we leave these out. Instead, we focus on Russia 5. The two men that define Russia 5 both present a liberal outlook. Both discuss and disagree with statement FQS54, "Thinks that men and women are by nature intended for different roles".

They also express a support for gay rights and one of them identify as gay. They are critical of institutional religion and a close tie between church and state and identify with statement FQS93 "Sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life":

> Yes. In fact, what can be more important than self-realization? Naturally, if you've been born to this world, you have to realize yourself somehow. That is, you live in some kind of a social environment, surrounded by people, and you have to find your place among them, in their midst, and to show yourself somehow. (YRUPV022)

They also express a strong belief in science and reject those religious ideas that are in conflict with scientific and rational principles, but they both also seem to struggle with fears that they try to control in different ways: one by turning to god and the other by living according to certain principles. This worldview is thus an interesting example of a very success driven perspective on spirituality. The relational aspect often found among women active in alternative spirituality is not completely missing, but it plays a limited role.

9.4.2   Female Dominated Prototypes

Based on previous research, we can expect the female dominated prototypes to be either traditionally religious or to express spiritual concerns. Looking at the prototypes with the highest dominance of female participants, this would seem largely to be the case. Ghana 1 is labeled Confident and Devout Believer, Israel Druze 1 Confident Religious Traditionalist, Finland 3 Emotionally Motivated Pluralist, Poland 2 Engaged and Community-Oriented Believer, Israel Hebrew 3 Security Oriented Unengaged Traditionalist and Sweden 3 Experience-Oriented Spiritual Pluralist. However, we also see examples of female dominated prototypes with more of a secular focus such as USA 1 labeled Socially Concerned Activist and Poland 4 Unengaged, Secularly Inclined Sceptic. As with the male dominated prototypes, a closer look at the sorts and interviews highlight cultural differences.

The sample from Ghana reflects a generally religious nature as well as a generically religious landscape and context. The Ghanaian data shows the overall highest sample of religious belonging and religiosity in the YARG data. Ghana 1 is made up of 15 defining individuals identifying as female (63%) and seven as male (32%). The prototype represents individuals with a traditionally theist and conservatively devout outlook expressed via an identification with statements such as "Has dedicated his or her life to serving the divine" (FQS36).

Though gender is not directly touched upon by the participants, some clearly gendered views are evident. One female participant shared how her religiosity influences her sexuality: "The sexuality – "His or her sexuality is strongly guided by a religious or spiritual outlook" (FQS59). Yes! I can say that this is actually – it helps me and most of my fellow Christians" (FGHFB220). Further reflecting on and sharing her views on the relationship between her religiosity and her moral personality and identity, she says:

> The scriptures, like, mold me to become a better person. It molds me to become a virtuous woman and to think well in effect to everything, everything! Yeah! Yeah! It really helps morally – it helps me to know how to dress, how to behave, how to even talk to people, how to relate with people, not looking down on people. (YGHFB220)

Similarly, the highest loading individual of the prototype, in response to whether she is what she is today because of her religious values of life, responded:

> Yes, I will say that because um, if I have not held fast to these values in life, like this one safeguarding my own purity, I don't think by now I would have been in the school or even completed. I think by now I would have been at home nursing my baby. (FGHBG087)

Identifiable in this prototype are also concerns and emotions traditionally gendered feminine, such as caring for children and the aged, which the participants see as religiously motivated. One participant explained that in addition to being touched by the suffering of others (FQS77), "Um, my faith that says we should take care of the poor and the needy in the society. Care for the widow. Feed them. Clothe them" (FGHFB023). When one considers the social-cultural context of the participants and the fact that certain so-called traditional roles of women, such as taking care of children and aged adults is still seen as the preserve of women, one understands how these expressions and aspirations of the participants are gendered. This stance is further strengthened by the fact that religious institutions and teachings continuously affirm such positions as divine and natural:

> And also it will interest you to know that I learnt that cooking is very important which other churches they won't say it, but our bishop, our pastor, my pastor will tell you that as a lady you have to learn how to cook because a way to a man's heart is his tummy. (FGHFB120)

Similar to Ghana 1, Israel Druze 1 represents individuals with a confident religious outlook on life, identifying with statements such as "Seldom if ever doubts his or her deeply held convictions" (FQS57) and "Feels that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors" (FQS58). Most of the persons of this prototype come from Druze villages, where even when their parents were not religious, participants usually reported an influence of their extended families' religiosity. The persons of this prototype find being religious central to the identity and personality of Druze women and men. The tendency of particularly females to identify with religion is considered desirable by some of the persons of this prototype. Responding to a question on a Druze religious council program aimed at teaching Druze religion in schools, a female participant says:

> There were a couple of them who became religious because of that thing like she went after religion, like, you used to see them and say "{No way} that these become religious during their life" because of intense amounts of the lipstick and the – going out, this teenage, and like that. No! At the end they went for the face cloak, not only became religious but also choose the face cloak. (YILSK057)

A Druze woman wearing a face cloak, which covers all the face except the eyes, is considered the highest degree of becoming religious among Druze women.

While gender was not specifically discussed by the persons of this prototype, the impression is that there are religious and cultural regulations that restrict the lives of women.

> I do not know, as I told you, that – for us a girl cannot sleep outside the house so – {it is not possible} to commute from [The interviewee's village name] on a daily basis. I cannot drive, that is if I want to come in my own car, and there is no one – like, I cannot restrict someone to take me and bring me every day, and I also cannot – from the other side, to come and go by bus every day. (YILSK111)

The above female participant had to go for a religiously-workable and allowable option working with children and women. While it remains important to understand that religion is central to the persons of this prototype and largely tends to define their own gender identity, it is also important for some of the Israel Druze women to define their own identity away from religion. To get an education and a life they are satisfied with, some young Druze women choose a non-religious life, despite holding traditional beliefs.

On the surface and based on previous research, Finland 3 comes across as a non-surprising prototype. This is a prototype with an openness to different religious traditions and perspectives and a tendency to connect with nature. It is also an emotionally driven prototype. Persons of this prototype identify with the statement "Is profoundly touched by the suffering of others" (FQS77). As one of the highest loading individuals puts it: "I'm really sensitive to other people's, like, other people's feelings. And in the sense that other people's suffering touches me" (YFIKD134).

As can be expected from the link to both an openness to emotions and to religious and spiritual thinking, the prototype is dominated by women. Of the 11 sorts defining this prototype, ten are by individuals identifying as female. However, the highest loading sort is by a person identifying as male, which underlines the problem with preconceived ideas about male or female religiosity/spirituality. At the same time though, the prototype does relate to relational issues often gendered female.

Gender is a topic touched upon by several of the highest loading individuals. In reference to statement FQS54, a cultural basis for gender roles is proclaimed:

> Oh right, I don't know how to explain it further, because in my opinion this is more of a culture-related question, that the different roles come more from there, that ((inside)) what kind of culture we end up in certain roles. (YFIKD129)

The highest loading individual also highlights this perspective and relates it to his upbringing.

> I've lived my whole life from since I was little in that it hasn't mattered whether you're a man or a woman. […] So no one ever said to us at home, that a woman couldn't be something, something that men could be. […] I don't really separate the sexes from each other, because in a way I believe that both have every right to, like act like however the other would act. (YFIKD128)

Poland 2 is defined by 17 respondents of which 15 have identified as female and two as male. Persons of this prototype emphasize a personal relationship with a divine being (FQS53), whom they perceive as a sheltering and nurturing parent (FQS41). One person describes the divine as "a kind of father for me and – um well, is an important person to me, such as my parents – mother and father" (YPLSS077P). A second aspect is that persons of this prototype describe themselves as regularly engaging in religious practices in private, but they also emphasize that public

religious activities and gatherings are important to them. This is expressed in a relational manner:

> These [being an active contributing member of a religious community] are the things that – are important for deepening faith, some communities, which, as family, are close to us and support us in moments of crisis, when we lose our way. (YPLSS077P)

Faith is important for this group; they emphasize longing for a more confident and deeper faith (FQS8) and take distance from those statements which represent religion as a human creation (FQS60) or the divine as empty of significance (FQS55). Their faith comes through in their social activities. One respondent explains the motivation for a religious life helping others as "a willingness to improve myself, become a better person" (YPLSS117P).

What comes forward very strongly in this group of young women is the choice of the respondents to believe and to speak up on their religious views and values, for example being against abortion. Although many of them were brought up religiously, the majority discusses a period where they actively chose to be religious and practice their faith:

> And only later um I had to decide about it, take it into my own hands and fight for it […] Also, well, some – well, you know, I did not like all things and some things were difficult, so […] priest or seminarians um brought many things to my attention and helped me in what I wanted. (YPLSS117P)

When it comes to gender roles, despite their ongoing studies at university, traditional gender roles are their ambition, though they are not always considered realizable.

USA 1 is again a prototype with a clear female dominance. Out of the 17 that define this prototype, 12 identify as female. The prototype includes two sorts who identify as other and three as male. The four highest loading individuals are female, while the fifth and seventh are other. Persons of this porotype generally do not identify as religious, although they do indicate that they believe in some way. Their upbringing has often been non-religious and they express a critique of a strong relationship between religion and nation (FQS71). Some are open to spiritual experiences and most have an interest in religion, though not generally on a personal faith-related level.

USA 1 is clearly an activist prototype with several individuals working for change. Here gender issues are essential. Many call themselves feminist or support gender equality. They also support sexual minorities and gay rights. The issues some have with religion are also sometimes tied to questions of gender:

> Yeah, it's like really important to me, equality between women and men and stuff, and yeah. When I have a problem with a religion that's often like, yeah, saying people is lesser, inherently, that I really have a problem with. (YUSTP015)

Some of the individuals defining USA 1 thus take a stand against traditional religious institutions based on views on gender.

9.5   Conclusion

Relating our findings to previous research, the results are complex. In contrast to previous research, our survey, though highlighting some gender differences and differences that are in line with the notion of a gender gap, do not show a clear gender difference. As our regression analysis illustrates, gender does only explain a modest part of differences in personal religiosity. Instead, the context, in particular, needs to be considered.

However, turning to the FQS, we also notice that numbers do not tell the whole story or that numbers are only a starting point. The worldviews captured with the FQS are sometimes gendered when it comes to the number of female or male individuals behind the defining sorts. Building on previous research, this gendering in numbers allows us to predict something about what the worldviews will entail, but it does not capture everything and says very little about the specific gender questions that are highlighted or brought up by the individuals behind the highest loading sorts.

In line with previous research, male dominated worldviews tend to be secular or rational – though not always and with varying degrees of domination. Depending on context, these worldviews also vary. While a rational perspective and belief in science is fairly common in all of them, aspects of gender surface in different and sometimes surprising ways. The key here is apart from the context also the specific individuals interviewed in the YARG-project; university students and in some contexts, students studying certain subjects. On this point, what the FQS brings to the study of secular or rational worldviews is a greater insight into how worldviews are situated in different contexts, but also in individual lives. These settings can bring in gender in multiple ways, such as through a fight for gender equality by men working for social change or a challenge of traditional gendered ideas of care work by men studying to become nurses.

Also in line with previous research, female dominated worldviews tend to be religious or spiritual in nature – but again, not always and to various degrees. Some of these worldviews clearly illustrate how religious traditions present and offer up gendered roles and life choices. The persons of prototypes indicating a strong connection to religion and tradition generally see traditional gender roles as ideal and something to work towards, although they also sometimes highlight the challenges with ideals of this kind in the present society. For them their position as university students also becomes interesting, as their studies sometimes, depending on context, forces them to postpone or re-define their own religious lives and goals.

From a gender perspective, the spiritual prototypes or prototypes highlighting a religious quest are also interesting. As expected, many of them are dominated by women. The persons of these prototypes indicate an awareness of and a concern with gender norms and a wish to challenge these. The idea of gender as something that is not fixed but performed thus shines through. Common for these prototypes is also a focus on feelings and emotions. This fits well with ideas of religiosity/spirituality gendered female, but again illustrates how worldviews can go against gender

expectations, as the prototypes are not always gendered female or, when gendered female, only include those individuals that identify as female.

To summarize, a focus on gender and the FQS highlights three aspects sometimes ignored or forgotten in a focus on the gender gap; (1) gender differences and similarities captured in a survey only tell a small part of the story; (2) gender and religion are situated in contexts that shape the views on and understandings of both, and (3) gender and religion are complex notions allowing for creative engagements that can confirm, challenge or reimagine ideas concerning both. The nature of Q-methodology means that our findings are not generalizable. Still, our findings highlight the need for a more complex approach to the religion and gender question and challenges future research to take a transnational approach; only when we look beyond certain cultural contexts can we truly begin to see and comprehend both gender differences and similarities.

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