PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPE AND ATTITUDE TOWARD CHRISTIANITY: A REPLICATION

LESLEI J. FRANCIS, MANDY ROBBINS, ANNA BOXER
Welsh National Centre for Religious Education
University of Wales, Bangor

CHRISTOPHER ALAN LEWIS, CONOR McGUCKIN, CHARLES J. McDAID
University of Ulster at Magee College

Summary.—A sample of 149 university students completed the Francis Psychological Type Scales together with the Francis Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity. The data indicated that university students classified as Feeling Types hold a more positive attitude toward Christianity than those classified as Thinking Types. These findings replicate the 1999 report of Jones and Francis.

The notion of psychological type, based on the pioneering work of Jung (4), proposes four basic psychological differences, defined as two orientations (introversion and extraversion), two perceiving processes (sensing and intuition), two judging processes (thinking and feeling), and two attitudes toward the outer world (judging and perceiving). A study (3) of the relation between psychological type and attitude toward Christianity among a sample of 82 student churchgoers, using the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (6) as a measure of psychological type and the Francis Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity showed Feeling Types held a significantly more positive attitude toward Christianity than Thinking Types, but there were no significant differences between extraverts and introverts, between sensers and intuitives, or between judgers and perceivers. This earlier study deserves replication among a more general sample of students not restricted to churchgoers.

Method.—A sample of 149 university students (43 men and 106 women) participated. Of these 39 were under the age of 20 years, 76 were in their twenties, 17 were in their thirties, and 17 were in the forties or fifties.

The students completed two scales. The Francis Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity (2) is a 24-item rating scale concerned with affective responses toward God, Jesus, Bible, prayer, and church, rated on a 5-point scale anchored by 5: agree strongly and 1: disagree strongly. Over 100 studies confirm its reliability and validity (5). Psychological type was assessed by the 40-item Francis Psychological Type Scales (1), in which a forced-choice format indicates preferences between extraversion and introversion, sensing and intuition, thinking and feeling, and judging and perceiving. The students were classified as introverts or extraverts, as sensers or intuitives, as thinkers or feelers, and as judgers or perceivers on the basis of their scores recorded on the Francis Psychological Type Scales.

Results.—The Francis Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity had a coefficient alpha of .97, a mean score of 79.8, and a SD of 24.7. The data presented in Table 1 indicate that students classified as Feeling Types reported significantly higher scores than students classified as Thinking Types on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity. There were no significant differences between extraverts and introverts, between sensers and intuitives, or between judgers and perceivers. This earlier study deserves replication among a more general sample of students not restricted to churchgoers.

1Please address correspondence to The Rev. Professor Leslie J. Francis, Welsh National Centre for Religious Education, University of Wales, Bangor, Normal Site, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2PX, Wales, UK or e-mail (L.J.Francis@Bangor.ac.uk).
between introverts and extraverts, between sensers and intuitives, or between judges and perceivers on the Scale of Attitude Toward Christianity.

These data confirm Jones and Francis' report (1999) that the judging process (thinking and feeling) is fundamental to individual differences in attitude toward Christianity. This alignment between attitude toward Christianity and the feeling function is consistent with Jung's definition of the feeling function, elaborated (7, 8) as the function particularly concerned with differentiation of values and making judgements based on values, and with the Christian tradition being concerned with affirming human values, i.e., individuals who prefer making judgements based on values are likely also to hold a more positive attitude toward Christianity.

REFERENCES
1. Francis, L. J. (under review) The Francis Psychological Type Scales (FPTS): internal consistency reliability and relationship with the MBTI.

Accepted November 27, 2002.