

Abstract

This doctoral thesis examines images of God across different stages of faith development from the perspective of anxiety. The study is rooted in the field of theology and delves into the interpretation of biblical texts from both the Old and New Testaments that relate to anxiety. During the investigation, at a certain point it becomes obvious that the theological-exegetical research method alone is insufficient to fully answer the research questions.

The empirical research employed a mixed-methods research approach, first using qualitative methods through interviews (21 participants), and later quantitative methods through questionnaires (199 participants) both involving voluntary individuals. The conceptual framework of the research envisions measuring the complex phenomenon of the image of God through Fowler's stages of faith development, based on the assumption that changes in the image of God result in changes in faith stages.

As a result of the research, we can conclude that neither the quantitative nor the qualitative research was able to demonstrate a statistically significant correlation between faith development and anxiety, when the effect of religiosity was controlled for. Thus, it can be stated that the research did not confirm a strong correlation between changes in faith stages — and the corresponding changes in the image of God — and the level of anxiety.

A positive correlation was found between the SHF questionnaire used in the quantitative research and international faith development scales. The internal reliability index of the SHF is presented, and it shows an adequate level.