

Abstract

This paper constitutes an exploratory analysis of Christian Attitudes to the Anthropocene in a small sample of churchgoers from South-West England. Its main aims are to i) Ascertain what participants thought about the fundamentals of the Anthropocene ii) Assess how these beliefs were influenced by doctrines of time, salvation, dominion and stewardship iii) Explore methods for measuring these concepts iv) Control for religious variables and socio-demographics. In order to meet these aims, an online questionnaire was devised and sent to members of 36 churches in North Wiltshire. This included 2 open questions and 28 Likert-style questions. Analyses were mostly quantitative in nature and included bivariate statistical tests, logistical modelling, principal component analyses and the calculation of indices of reliability like Cronbach's Alpha. A qualitative assessment of the open questions was also performed using a cross-case analysis and integrated with the quantitative data. The results showed that i) Most respondents had never heard the term *Anthropocene*, yet accepted that humans have significant impacts on the global environment ii) Participants generally did not have an accurate view of geological time, yet tended to be concerned about the environment iii) Gnostic ideas of salvation were almost universally rejected with eco-centric ones generally favoured iv) Pro-stewardship values enjoyed widespread acceptance but did not preclude pro-dominion ones v) Beliefs on stewardship and salvation predicted attitudes to the Anthropocene vi) Socio-demographic variables generally did not vii) Some differences could be explained by denominational affiliation and church attendance frequency. Regarding the methodology specifically, this paper called into question indiscriminate use of Cronbach's Alpha in measuring complex philosophical concepts, but showed the usefulness of a mixed methods approach in socio-religious enquiries. Overall the research illustrated that perspectives on the Anthropocene do interact with theological beliefs, and there is much potential for further research in the domain, especially within the paradigm of mixed methods.