

‘I Am Spiritual but Not Religious’

Expanding Non-Religious Identities through Digital Kinship

Kevin Muriithi Ndereba

Abstract

In the post-COVID context, religious identities and practices have undergone transformation. While existing research has focused on religious institutions, there is a gap in understanding nuanced expressions of non-religious identities in the Kenyan context. In other research, Ndereba (2023b; 2024) has provided an analysis of non-religious identities, including atheism, in the Kenyan context. Grounded in an exploratory research perspective, this paper argues that digital kinship is providing a sense of identity, belonging, and expression for non-religious African youth, including those identifying as ‘spiritual but not religious’ (SBNR). The paper moves beyond traditional kinship structures to show how digital networks facilitate a cross-pollination of both religious and non-religious ideas in the pluralistic religious context of Africa. This research also shows that social media influencers provide a sense of ‘virtual communalism’ for those in a religious minority context of young Kenyans navigating the contemporary African (Kenyan) religious context. Digital kinship is foregrounded due to the capacity of social media to valorize religious and non-religious identities in societies, and it merits fresh analyses from religious scholars, theologians, and social scientists, especially those studying religion and non-religion among Africa’s digital natives.

Keywords

Digital kinship; digital non-religion; spiritual but not religious (SBNR); religion and communality; religion and digital transformation

Introduction

The argument that digital kinship is facilitating the emergence of non-religious identities such as ‘Spiritual but Not Religious’ (SBNR) requires some contextualization. SBNR is common, especially among the younger demographics within the global landscape (Van Mulukom et al. 2023), and in Africa and Kenya, to be specific. Thus, this article first considers the way young people engage with religion in Kenya. Secondly, it examines the growing non-religious identities around the world and in Kenya, with a brief survey of the key studies, networks, and scholarly societies that focus on non-religious identities and their various nuances. The article then focuses more closely on the emerging category of SBNR through a systematic review of

extant literature and connects the growth of this category to digital kinship. Digital kinship is an emerging concept, like other dynamic concepts such as Pentecostal kinship and Diaspora kinship that are understood not as new kinship structures but as an expansion of the concept of kinship, which is at the heart of African and Diasporic societies (Hjorth et al. 2020; Patel 2024). Digital kinship is critical in this study because of the ubiquity of social media among digital natives in Africa, and Kenya specifically (Ndereba 2023a). Social media provides an opportunity for identity, belonging, and expression of minority religious groups, including SBNR, especially within what is labelled the youngest continent. This article is exploratory, grounded in systematic literature review and the theory of digital kinship.

This paper explores the dynamic religious identities in the African continent, with specific reference to Kenya. Moving beyond the usual religious categories within African demographics, this paper then delves deeper into the growing non-religious identities. It does this by focusing on the SBNR category, which is in consonance with global youth culture. However, the unique angle in this article is exploring the digital kinship system and how this has implications for the SBNR and other non-religious identities among Kenyan youth.

Youth and Religious Identities in Kenya

The Constitution of Kenya (Article 260) defines youth as those aged between 18 to 35 years (KYDP 2019). However, other definitions of young people also include the adolescent or teenage age brackets, and some extend the lower boundary to around 13-15 years (NCPD 2017). The ‘youth bulge’ has been used to describe the growing youth demographic, observing that those under 35 years of age comprise 80% of Kenya’s population (NCPD 2017). King’oro (2023) also observes that late adolescence (18 to 19 years old) is marked by rapid biological changes; 20 to 24 years is marked by behaviours crystallizing in the emerging adulthood phase; and from 25 to 29 years, young people transition to adulthood, with the final stage of 30 to 35 years carrying a lot of restlessness as young adults settle into promising careers and family life. This portends a ‘blessing’ if the youth potential is tapped in the areas of employment, reproductive health systems, and other economic opportunities. However, given the swelling of the 15-to-24-year-old age group by 6 million every year for the next decade (NCPD 2017; World Bank 2023), this population growth may pose a challenge to Sub-Saharan Africa.

In the Kenyan context, religion and culture are intertwined, right from traditional societies to the contemporary context. Building on Durkheim and Geertz’s formulations of religion, Wangila (2023) observes that this intertwining of religion and culture in Africa presents a different analysis than is found in the Western context. Furthermore, religious affiliation, which may work in other contexts, is more nuanced in the African context. For instance, someone who may identify as a Christian may have amorphous affiliations and commitments, as they may attend more than one denominational service or mix traditional indigenous practices in a syncretistic manner (Wangila 2023). Thus, ‘Social boundaries are amorphous in reality as the social is an intersection of various experiential realities’ (Wangila 2023).

With a population of about 53 million people, over 40 distinct ethnic groups, and over 40 languages and dialects, Kenya is a diverse country in terms of ethnic, cultural, and religious demographics (Oucho 2021). While Christianity and Islam are presently the majority religions, African traditional religions and indigenous worldviews are equally prominent—either as distinct religious expressions or formative within African Christianity and Islam (Mbiti 1989). These indigenous worldviews embed certain African ethical values and norms, such as the sense of communality—which proffers an integrated and holistic way of viewing religion as connected to everyday life and to the wider society. Further, Christianity in Kenya is diverse, with mainstream or colonial-inherited expressions now influenced by indigenous

revival movements such as the East African Revival Movement (EARM); the growth of African Independent Churches (AICs); the burgeoning Pentecostal, Charismatic, and Neo-Charismatic Churches; Prophetic and Apostolic Movements; and Urban and Evangelical, non-denominational church expressions, among many others. Wangila (2023, 257) observes that Christianity forms 83% of the Kenyan religious affiliation, with Islam forming 11%, as follows:

They are mostly Sunni of the Shaf'i school of jurisprudence. Some claim affiliation with Shia and Ahmadi groups. While most Muslims are found in the coastal and northeastern regions, there are Muslims in all regions of the country. Over half of the Muslims are of Somali origin, with some Galla and Swahili speakers at the coast. Other ethnic communities with Muslim communities include the Bajun, the Mijikenda, and the Pokomo (Kurian 1992, 970–71; World Population Review 2019).

Other religious minorities comprise less than 2%, including Hindus, Sikhs, Baha'is, and those adhering to various traditional religious beliefs (KNBS 2019, 422). Thus, Kenya can be described as a highly religious country, with Islam, Christianity, and African traditional worldviews discernible within its cultural life. However, moving beyond this usual thesis of African religiosity (Mbiti 1989), this chapter considers the growth of non-religious identities in the Kenyan context, with specific reference to SBNR. While religion is a critical marker of Kenyan society, the emerging generations are showing mixed reactions to it, with some identifying and fully embracing non-religious identities, including secular humanism, atheism, and agnosticism among others (Ndereba 2023a).

Growth of Non-Religious Identities in Kenya

Exploring non-religious identities in Kenya must by necessity begin with the growth of atheism. Atheists in Kenya, for example, account for 755,750 of the Kenyan population and can be found in counties such as Kilifi, Nakuru, and Nairobi (KNBS 2019; Ndereba 2023b). Ndereba (2023b) notes the growth of institutes and networks that study non-religion, such as the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture (ISSSC, founded in 2005) and the International Nonreligion and Secularity Research Network (NSRN, founded in 2008). NSRN hosts an interdisciplinary journal called *Secularism and Nonreligion*.¹ *Explaining Atheism*, a three-year programme (2022–2024) led by Queen's University Belfast in collaboration with the University of Kent, Brunel University London, Coventry University, St. Mary's University Twickenham London, and the University of Notre Dame Australia, is a grant project which the author has participated in, and whose sub-granted projects show a wide range of studies on these themes across various global regions.²

While the study of non-religion is largely skewed to the global North and West due to the growing irreligious context, focus should also be paid to the developing secularism in several African regions and cities, including Abuja, Cape Town, Accra, and Nairobi, among others. Further, nonreligion in Africa should consider both the realities of lack of belief and lack of religious affiliation common in several African cities (Clarke 2009; Ndereba 2023b). Yet, it should move beyond this by analyzing other nuanced categories, such as SBNR, that reveal how boundaries of religion and nonreligion often oscillate (Jong 2015). This can also be seen across couples who are of mixed religious beliefs, with atheist scientists supporting their religious spouses (Ecklund and Johnson 2021). While Ndereba's (2023b) qualitative research shows how the faith and science dialogue is central to the formation of non-religious identities of male Kenyan atheists, this chapter shifts the focus to the SBNR group within the Kenyan context.

¹ See <https://secularismandnonreligion.org/>, accessed November 20, 2025.

² See <https://www.explainingatheism.org/>, accessed November 20, 2025.

Spiritual but Not Religious (SBNR) in Existing Literature

The SBNR category can be linked back to the growing decline within religious communities in North America, whereby Fuller (2001) portended that 40% of Americans had no connection to organized religion. Among these groups of what he calls ‘unchurched Americans’, Fuller (2001, 2–4) categorized them as:

1. Secular humanists: those who are grounded within a primarily naturalistic worldview that does not include the place of the supernatural or spiritual realities.
2. Ambiguous religion: those who have complex relationships with religious communities and may attend religious services but not formally join or not attend services but appreciate their importance.
3. Unaffiliated but religious: those who may consider themselves interested in spirituality but explore it outside the confines of organized religious traditions.

Since Fuller’s work, much of the scholarship has focused on the secularization impulses within North American and Western contexts, noting the globalizing forces as well as the growth of scientific and technological developments that have mediated purely naturalistic and secular worldviews and ideas. In 2023, a Pew Report showed how the SBNR category shares common emphases on the spiritual realities, seemingly as a response to the excesses of scientific-materialist accounts of reality. For example, large shares of both SBNRs (89%) and religious Americans (92%) say they believe people have a soul or spirit in addition to their physical body. Most people in both groups also say that there is something spiritual beyond the natural world, even if we cannot see it (88% and 92%), and that spirits or unseen spiritual forces exist (72% and 74%) (Pew Research Center 2023).

Additionally, the SBNR group participates in practices such as spending time in nature, introspection, and meditation. Half of the participants in the study said that they are likely to have a symbol such as a cross, jewel, crystal, shrine/altar, or a tattoo (Pew Research Center 2023, 78). Other empirical research has observed the prayer lives of the SBNR (Boyer 2022). This shows that while this group may not identify as or participate in religious institutions, they have a variety of ‘spiritual’ practices and views, such as mindfulness and meditation. In a similar vein, some scholars, such as Parsons (2018) and Boyer (2022), push back against simplistic understandings or stereotypes of the SBNR but describe SBNR as follows:

1. Contesting claims to an absolute authority or tradition. Boyer (2022) refers to this as ‘detraditioning’.
2. An emphasis on individualism as a celebration of free choice, progressivism, and a ‘seeker/quester/consumer mentality’ (Boyer 2022; Parsons 2018).
3. Anthropological view of humans as ideally good and therefore reject notions of ‘original sin’.
4. Question one traditional community and instead favour multiple, diverse, and even entangled plural forms of community.
5. Pursue a liberative and social justice concern.

The growth of the SBNR is premised on several counter-cultural movements in the late 1900s. First, the growth is attributed to the rise of metaphysical ‘isms’ or movements. Second, it is attributed to the popularization of the Eastern religious traditions with their pantheistic frame that favours some of the nuanced or even conflicting metaphysical and ontological claims within SBNR. Looking at British atheism, Nash (2022, 230) observes that the secularization path began with an embrace of Buddhism and other Eastern religions or spiritualism before atheism. Third, the growth is attributed to criticisms of communities of faith within the famous ‘God is dead’ movement and the growing New Atheist Movement in

the West (Parsons 2018). The New Atheist movement grew in the early 2000s due to the accessible work, both in print and popular media, of the ‘Four Horsemen’, Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, Christopher Hitchens, and Sam Harris, and other key figures such as Bertrand Russell (Copeman and Schulz 2022, 4, 31). However, exploratory work on SBNR moves beyond simplistic understandings of religion and spirituality that are tied to institutions to socio-cultural and political factors (Ammerman 2013, 276; Davari-Torshizi 2025; Mercadante 2020). Carey (2018, 264) follows this line of nuance by observing that spirituality is connected to ethical life, which can happen within or without religious institutions.

Emerging findings from the core research project of the Understanding Unbelief programme (2017–2020) revealed that SBNR is also the predominant way that people who identify as non-religious, that is, atheists and agnostics, define themselves (Bullivant, Farias, Lanman, and Lee 2019). This program was conducted through in-depth, face-to-face interviews (n = 30 per country, across three separate regions) and conceptually linked, nationally representative surveys (n = 1100 per country) across six geographically, culturally, linguistically, politically, and religiously diverse settings including Brazil, China, Denmark, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

While the transmission of religious identities has been premised on socialization theory, scholars have applied the same theorizing to show how children socialized with non-religious identities such as humanism are leading to the large-scale atheization of Britain (Lee 2023; Strhan et al. 2024). Expounding on this ‘generational’ loss of faith, the scholars argue that each succeeding generation is ‘less religious than the one before’ (Strhan et al. 2024, 455). Looking at the childhood experiences of humanist families, these scholars show that meaning-making activities that were tied to religious communities are now explored within ‘non-religious identities, such as humanist, romantic, or scientific sceptic’ (Strhan, Lee and Shillitoe 2024, 455, citing Lee 2015 and Van Mulukom et al. 2023). An anecdotal argument can be made for similar trajectories of the socialization of digital natives in Kenya, particularly within the urban regions and cities, and emerging non-religious categorizations. Empirical work to support this observation is needed.

Digital Networks as an Expansion of Existing Kinship Structures

However, by ‘digital kinship’, this article argues that the digital space provides a new context of kinship for young people who are digitally native. In the classical sense of the word, kinship refers to the sense of belonging that is so central to African social life (Layefa, Ezenagu and Esoso-Agbor 2022). Kinship is a common concept within anthropological studies. However, Radcliffe-Brown and Forde (2015) provide a comparative analysis of various African communities so as to expand the understanding of kinship from what they call ‘pseudo-history’. They describe kinship as the ‘linking [of] human beings together in an orderly arrangement of interactions, by which particular customs are seen as functioning parts of the social machinery’. Layeza, Ezenagu, and Esoso-Agbor (2022, 3) observe that kinship is what undergirds familial ties, beyond the nuclear family and to the extended family. Stockland (2022, 6/159), for example, observes how this sense of belonging has provided a buffer against social and economic changes, public health challenges, and political instability in the wake of modernity and neo-liberalism. He applies his argument to the context of growing African Pentecostal communities in Britain. Elsewhere, he shows how Christian religion, especially of the Pentecostal type, provides a defence mechanism or escape from kinship ties that may be the cause of witchcraft and other negative familial obligations on an individual (Stockland 2022, 18/159). This is usually the case for individuals who have emigrated to urban regions or other global Northern or Western countries in search of more individualistic forms of spiritual and communal life.

In addition to the emerging kinship concepts of Pentecostal and Diaspora kinships, several changes within contemporary African life call for an expansion of kinship beyond traditional kinship. First, digitally native generations in Africa have a broadened concept of family that moves beyond ethnic boundaries to incorporate other identity markers, such as ethnic, age, and regional boundaries, among others (Creighton 2018). Secondly, given the family changes occurring in African life, the concept of kinship can no longer be tied to the traditional family life. Some of these changes are necessitated by the migration of young people from rural to urban areas from their home countries to foreign countries in search of better education and political and economic stability. To show the scale of youth migration, Belmonte et al. (2020, 18–19) observe:

The number of young people who reside in another country has increased in absolute terms over the last three decades. UNDESA data show that, in absolute terms, the number of people aged between 15 and 29 years who have migrated, and as a result live in a country different from their own³ (stock), has increased during the past 30 years, from 37.7 million in 1990 to 57.6 million in 2019 (a 53% increase) [...] The relative majority of the global young migrants (34% of those between 15 and 29 years of age) lives in Asia, followed by Europe (27%) and Northern America (18%), while smaller shares live in Africa (12%), Latin America and the Caribbean (5%) and Oceania (4%).

This means that young people's sense of familiar ties in an age of digital connectedness and migration is transformed beyond the nuclear family of the African traditional setting. While young people may stay connected to their kinship systems, this system is now expanded and transformed.

Secondly, the reality of marital and family breakdown within contemporary African life does not provide the same social buffer that was present in traditional societies. Adedini, Somefun, Odimegwu, and Ntoimo (2020, 129) present the most recent surveys from Demographic and Health Survey data collected from four regional blocs of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to show the marital/familial dissolution patterns in SSA. Dissolution rate was measured by data from widowed, divorced, and separated women, and this data reveals the rate of dissolution was highest in East and Southern Africa (11.5% each). In Central Africa Africa, Congo-DR 9.7%, Cameroon 8.7%, Gabon 10.8%, and Chad 8.6%. In Ethiopia 10.8%, Kenya 11.4%, Rwanda 10.5%, and Uganda 13.1%. In West Africa, 10.5% in Ghana, 4% in Guinea, and 4.6% in Nigeria. In South Africa, Lesotho 10.4%, Zambia 12%, and Zimbabwe 13.9%. This data represents the rates from 2011 to 2015 in these countries (Adedini et al. 2020, 130–3).

Factors that contribute to marriage dissolutions include early marriages in West, East, and Southern Africa; the history of apartheid and attendant labour migration in Southern Africa; and the impacts of westernization, urbanization, and modernization (Adedini, Somefun, Odimegwu, and Ntoimo 2020, 143). Family studies scholars observe that this 'second demographic' change happening in SSA is evidenced by a decrease in marriage, an increase in divorce, an increase in single-parent homes, and an increase in cohabitation, which has a negative impact on children and young people, including decreased educational outcomes, increased risky sexual behaviours and increased poverty (Odimegwu et al. 2020, 10, 20–1). Thus, children and young people lack the social support that was present in traditional societies that strengthened the sense of kinship and its benefits.

The implication is that kinship is now transformed from the traditional concept to that of 'digital kinship', which is also connected to religious change and transformation. Empirical studies in the Ghanaian context show the transformation from traditional kinship to digital

³ For most countries (approximately 80%), immigrants are defined by their country of birth, but in some cases, by the country of citizenship. This depends on different national methodologies to produce statistics.

kinship whereby transnational family arrangements are maintained through ICT media for the purposes of connection, financial remittances, and communication (Bakuri and Amoabeng 2022). The ubiquity of smartphones and social media, particularly in the COVID period and social distancing contexts, has been heightened. Similarly, several scholars have examined the mediatization of religion, noting how digital media has transformed, extended, expanded, and popularized religion, with positive and negative effects (Asamoah-Gyadu 2015; Kiamu and Musa 2021, 144). Bernal (2019) also observes how the digital space offers social connection among marginalized communities such as Africans in the diaspora spaces, which is seen as mediating the social ties and connections to people, institutions, and communities both in the homeland and in the diaspora.

This paper, however, builds on this idea of ‘digital kinship’ to show its interrelatedness with the development of non-religious, atheistic, and other secular identities among Kenyan youth. Extant research has shown how digital connectivity fosters the emergence and growth of non-religious identities of the digitally native young people in Kenya and Morocco (Akaranga and Ongong’ a 2013; Ndereba 2023b; Richter 2022). Digital spaces provide a non-judgmental, liberal, accessible, and flexible space for young people to critically question and analyze religions. Beyond that, it also fosters a sense of community for religious minority groups like African non-religious and atheist youth. Since religion is still a vital marker of African societies, there is usually a sense of stigmatization of irreligious people in Africa. Through social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok, non-religious youth (including the SBNR) can explore their non-religious identities and foster a sense of community and collegiality. A quick analysis of social media platforms shows active engagement and involvement of non-religious groups on these platforms, but empirical data is needed to buttress this claim. Additionally, social media channels and influencers who have significant online followings provide spaces for young people to express their SBNR identities and further publicize the presence of these minority non-religious groups in the African setting.

Conclusion

This article provides a systematic review of changes in religious identities among young people within a globalizing context, with a specific focus on the growing *Spiritual but not Religious movements* in Kenya. It has shown that these new non-religious identities emerge because of the rapid changes brought about by digitization and globalization.

Secondly, this article has expanded the traditional or classical notion of kinship. Classical kinship is tied to the idea of extended families in the family setting but within an extended but connected geographical boundary. Kinship in this sense is seen as the way of structuring social ties and connections. However, digital kinship moves beyond these ethnic, age, geographic, and country boundaries. It embraces an expanded sense of community and connectivity. This is mediated through the rise of social media platforms that expand the sense of family beyond the traditional practice. Given the statistics of family breakdown and dissolution in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), digital kinship is seen as a critical space for fostering connectivity within this ‘second demographic’ and adverse changes affecting family life in the continent.

Third, the connection between digital kinship and non-religious identities is premised on the fact that digital media provides a space for expression, identity, and community for religious minorities such as the SBNR. Providing a safe space from stigmatization in the growing individualistic and expressive contexts of global (and African) youth cultures, social media platforms and influencers have provided a space for SBNR youth to express themselves. These influencers provide a sense of ‘virtual communalism’ for those in a

religious minority context of young Kenyans navigating the contemporary African (Kenyan) and plural religious context.

Anecdotal evidence of SBNR shows that non-religious youth are navigating post- and neo-colonial struggles while trying to retain African spiritual identities. The SBNR category of African youth falls within the remit of the permeability of religious and spiritual worldviews inherent in African traditional societies, as has been argued by several scholars such as Mbiti (1989) and Magesa (1997, 17–18).

Much empirical work needs to be done to examine the extent, varieties, and diversities of SBNR and other non-religious identities in Kenya and Africa. This is seen as providing a statistically valid base for enriching qualitative analyses of these small but growing non-religious populations on the continent. This will offer a distinct line of research and data that can be examined to show the transformation of religion and non-religion identities or belonging in Africa within the contemporary post-colonial, neo-colonial, and globalizing African contexts. The transformation will likely reveal that basic concepts of religions and non-religions are more nuanced and will provide a starting point for religious scholars, theologians, and social scientists of various stripes to explore some of these unique perspectives.

Kevin Muriithi Ndereba is the Director of Research and Innovation at St. Paul’s University, Kenya where he is also a Lecturer of Practical Theology. He is also a research fellow in the Department of Practical Theology and Missiology at Stellenbosch University. His research areas are youth ministry, apologetics, practical/public theology, science and religion. He is participating in several key research projects. He is author of *Youth Ministry after the Pandemic: Practical Theology from the Global South* (Wipf and Stock 2025) and editor of *Apologetics in Africa* (Langham 2024). E-mail: kndereba@spu.ac.ke, ORCID: 0000-0002-6029-0826.

Submission date: April 4, 2025

Acceptance date: May 5, 2025

REFERENCES

- Adedini, Sunday A., Oluwaseyi Dolapo Somefun, Clifford O. Odimegwu, and Lorretta Favour Chizomam Ntoimo. 2020. "Union Dissolution-Divorce, Separation, and Widowhood in Sub-Saharan Africa: Trends, Patterns, and Determinants." In *Family Demography and Post-2015 Development Agenda in Africa*, edited by Clifford O. Odimegwu. Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14887-4>.
- Akaranga, Stephen I., and Jude J. Ongong'a. 2013. "The Dynamics of Religiosity and Spirituality in Kenyan Public Universities." *International Journal of Education and Research* 1 (6): 18 pages.
- Ammerman, Nancy T. 2013. "Spiritual but not Religious? Beyond Binary Choices in the Study of Religion." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 52 (2): 258–78.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, J. Kwabena. 2015. "'We are on the Internet': Contemporary Pentecostalism in Africa and the New Culture of Online Religion." In *New Media and Religious Transformations in Africa*, edited by R. Hackett and B. Soares. Indiana University Press.
- Belmonte, Martina, Alessandra Conte, Daniela Ghio, Sona Kalantaryan, and Simon McMahon. 2020. *Youth and Migration: An Overview*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2760/625356>, JRC122402.
- Bernal, Victoria. 2020. "African Digital Diasporas: Technologies, Tactics, and Trends: Introduction." *African Diaspora* 12 (1/2): 1–10.
- Boyer, Mark G. 2022. *Monthly Entries for the Spiritual but Not Religious through the Year: Texts, Reflections, Journal/Meditations, and Prayers for the Spiritual but Not Religious*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.
- Bullivant, Stephen, Miguel Farias, Jonathan Lanman, and Lois Lee. 2019. *Understanding Unbelief: Atheists and Agnostics around the World: Interim Findings from 2019 Research in Brazil, China, Denmark, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States*. St Mary's University, Twickenham. Accessed November 20, 2025. <https://research.kent.ac.uk/understandingunbelief/wp-content/uploads/sites/1816/2019/05/UUReportRome.pdf>.
- Carey, Jeremiah. 2018. "Spiritual, but not Religious?: On the Nature of Spirituality and its Relation to Religion." *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 83 (3): 261–9.
- Clarke, Peter. ed. 2009. *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*. Oxford University Press.
- Copeman, Jacob, and Mascha Schulz. 2022. "Introduction: Non-religion, Atheism and Sceptical Publicity." In *Global Sceptical Publics: From Non-Religious Print Media To 'Digital Atheism'*, edited by Copeman, J., and M. Schulz. University College London.

Creighton, Theodore B. 2018. “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants, Digital Learners: An International Empirical Integrative Review of the Literature.” *Education Leadership Review* 19 (1): 132–40.

Davari-Torshizi, Mehdi. 2025. “Is the Spiritual Not Religious? Some Caveats Concerning Religious Diversity.” *Social Compass* 72 (1): 3–18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00377686241296795>.

Ecklund, Elaine Howard, and David R. Johnson. 2021. *Varieties of Atheism in Science*. Oxford University Press.

Fuller, Robert C. 2001. *Spiritual, but not Religious: Understanding Unchurched America*. Oxford University Press.

Hjorth, Larissa, Kana Ohashi, Jolynna Sinanan, Heather Horst, and Sarah Pink. 2020. *Digital Media Practices in Households: Kinship through Data*. Amsterdam University Press.

Jong, Jonathan. 2015. “On (Not) Defining (Non) Religion.” *Science, Religion and Culture* 2 (3): 15–24.

Kiamu, Boye Nelson, and Bala A. Musa. 2021. “Theorizing the Communication of Digital Religion as Popular Culture in Africa: The Case for Alternative Epistemological Models.” *Howard Journal of Communications* 32 (2): 139–55.

King’oro, Sellah Nasimiyu. 2023. “The Youth and Socio-Economic Development in Kenya.” In *The Palgrave handbook of contemporary Kenya*, edited by Nasong’o, Wanjala S., Amutabi, Maurice N., and Toyin Falola. Springer International Publishing.

KNBS. 2019. *Population and Housing Census: Volume IV*. Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.

KYDP. 2019. “Kenya Youth Development Policy.” Accessed November 20, 2025. <https://youth.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Kenya-Youth-Development-Policy-2019-Popular-version.pdf>.

Layefa, Goodluck, Ngozi Ezenagu, and Julianah Esoso-Agbor. 2022. “Revisiting Kinship in Contemporary West African Societies: The Case of Role-Relationship.” *F1000Research* 11: 965.

Lee, Loise. 2015. *Recognizing the Non-Religious: Reimagining the Secular*. Oxford University Press.

———. 2023. “Britain’s First Atheist Age: Atheism in Sociology, Public Life and Public Discourse.” Paper presented at British Sociological Association Annual Conference: Sociological Voices in Public Discourse, University of Manchester, 12–14 April, 2023.

Magesa, Laurenti. 1997. *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life*. Paulines Publications.

Mercadante, Linda. 2020. "Spiritual Struggles of Nones and 'Spiritual but Not Religious' (SBNRs)." *Religions* 11 (10): 513. <https://doi.org/10.3390/re11100513>.

Mbiti, John S. 1989. *African Religions and Philosophy*. Heinemann Educational Books.

Nash, David. 2022. "From Campaign and Dispute to 'Public Service Broad/Narrowcasting': Secularist and Atheist Media Strategies in Britain and America – A Contextual History." In *Global Sceptical Publics: From Non-Religious Print Media To 'Digital Atheism'*, edited by Copeman, J., and M. Schulz. University College London.

Ndereba, Kevin M. 2023a. "Faith Science and Non-Religious Identity Formation among Male Kenyan Atheists." *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 58 (1): 45–62.

———. 2023b. "Digital Ecclesiology and Africa's Digital Natives: Prospects and Challenges." *Acta theologica* 43 (1): 98–111.

———. 2024. "Atheism in Africa". In *Apologetics in Africa: An Introduction*, edited by Kevin M. Ndereba. Langham Publishing.

NCPD. 2017. "Youth Bulge in Kenya: A Blessing or a Curse" Policy Brief of the National Council for Population and Development. Accessed November 20, 2025. <https://ncpd.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Brief-56-YOUTH-BULGE-IN-KENYA-A-BLEESING-OF-A-CURSE.pdf>.

Odimegwu, Clifford O., Nicole De Wet, Sunday A. Adedini, and Sathiyasusuman Appunni. 2020. "Family Demography in Sub-Saharan Africa: Systematic Review of Family Research." In *Family Demography and Post-2015 Development Agenda in Africa*, edited by Clifford O. Odimegwu. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14887-4>.

Oucho, John. 2021. *Undercurrents of Ethnic Conflict in Kenya*. Brill.

Parsons, William B. 2018. *Being Spiritual but Not Religious: Past, Present, Future*. Routledge.

Patel, Shivangi. 2024. "Digital Kinship: The Future Calling." *Anthropology & Aging* 45 (2): 75–81.

Pew Research Center. 2023. "Spirituality Among Americans". Accessed November 20, 2025. https://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2023/12/PR_2023.12.7_spirituality_REPORT.pdf.

Radcliffe-Brown, Alfred Reginald, and Daryll Forde. 2015. *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*. Routledge.

Richter, Lena. 2022. "From 'Talking among' to 'Talking Back'? Online Voices of Young Nonbelievers in Morocco and the Moroccan Diaspora." In *Global Sceptical Publics: From Non-Religious Print Media to 'Digital Atheism'*, edited by Copeman, J. and M. Schulz. University College London.

Stockland, Katharine. 2022. *African Pentecostalism in Britain*. 1st ed. Routledge.

Strhan, Anna, Lois Lee, and Rachael Shillitoe. 2024. "Becoming Humanist: Worldview Formation and the Emergence of Atheist Britain." *Sociology of Religion* 85 (4): 454–81. <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/srad050>.

Van Mulukom, Valerie, Hugh Turpin, Roosa Haimila, Benjamin Grant Purzycki, Theiss Bendixen, Eva Kundtová Klocová, Dan Řezníček, et al. 2023. "What Do Nonreligious Nonbelievers Believe in? Secular Worldviews Around the World." *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality* 15 (1): 143–56.

World Bank. 2023. "Africa Human Capital: Key Messages Heads of State Summit." Africa Human Capital Technical Briefs Series Africa's Moment: The Promise of a Demographic Dividend. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/6e828910dabf285651ff47d684276df7-0010012023/original/002-Africas-Moment-The-Promise-of-Demographic-Dividend.pdf>.

Wangila, Mary Nyangweso. 2023. "Religion and the Cultures of Kenya." In *The Palgrave handbook of contemporary Kenya*, edited by Nasong'o, Wanjala S., Amutabi, Maurice N., and Toyin Falola. Springer International Publishing.

Zuckerman, Phil, Luke W. Galen, and Frank L. Pasquale. 2016. *The Nonreligious: Understanding Secular People and Societies*. Oxford University Press.