

Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion

Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion

Series Editors

Andrew Village
Ralph W. Hood Jr.

VOLUME 26

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VOLUME 26

Edited by

Andrew Village
Ralph W. Hood Jr.



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Preface

Religion is something that can be both intensely personal and experienced through interactions with others. Personal beliefs and religious practice can be crucial in determining how some people go through life, offering the means of understanding existence and coping with difficult times. Yet religion is also a social phenomenon. At a time when individualism seems to be the dominant zeitgeist of the West, it is worth noting that where religious practice persists it is still usually expressed through the interaction of individuals with some sort of religious institution. This engagement between individuals and institutions is a two-way street: individuals create and shape the institutions to which they belong, but institutions can have a powerful effect on the lives of individuals. These effects can be positive or negative: religious institutions are known to foster social engagement and psychological coping, but they can also be challenging places to be, especially for religious professionals.

This volume of *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion* includes papers that cover a wide range of individual and social interactions. The special section brings together studies from around the world that examine the issue of work-related health among clergy, while the general papers report research on both individual religiosity and social religious phenomena.

In an example of how religion influences at the individual level, Russell Phillips and Clara Cheng have examined a wide range of coping mechanisms used by Buddhists in the United States. They use various sub-scales of a previously reported coping scale (the BCOPE) to assess the relative importance of different coping methods in relation to gender, Buddhist traditions, ethnicity and experience. Their work has both practical and theoretical implications.

A common experience for Christians in many mainstream churches in Europe and North America is that of living in declining institutions. Steve McMullin's paper reports the very different responses of men and women to church decline, based on an extensive series of interviews. Gender differences in religion are widely known and reported, but the idea that there may be a gender-specific response to institutional decline is new, and this study will surely be the springboard for others on this topic.

Religious institutions can do more than just promote individual religiosity; they can also foster social engagement and interaction. The next two papers in the volume explore this in very different ways. Philip Hughes has worked for many years with the Christian Research Association in Australia. His study of teenagers in Roman Catholic schools shows the ways in which young people interact with the institutional church. This is typically built on individual

choice, so that engagement is often in terms dictated by the young people themselves, rather than the Church. The institution can remain useful and relevant to a largely secular generation by offering the opportunity for attachment through 'non-religious' activities. A similar sort of opportunity exists for those who join the Friends associations of cathedrals in the UK, as reported by Judith Muskett in her paper on factors promoting social capital in these quasi-religious institutions. The particular interest of this paper is the way in which love for the building itself can predict the generation of wider social capital.

Mandy Robbins and William Kay report on the psychological type profile of Pentecostal pastors in Singapore. This study adds to the increasing literature that demonstrates the way in which individual differences can predict religious expression and affiliation to religious institutions. In this particular case, the sample of pastors is shown to have a psychological profile that is different from the Singaporean population at large, and distinct from Pentecostal pastors in the UK. In his paper, Joseph Ferrari shows how individual religious and spiritual dispositions among Roman Catholic deacons are partly predicted by their levels of general education. How individuals function in the religious institution of the Catholic Church seems to depend on their exposure to different levels of education.

In the final paper of the general section, Tania ap Siôn extends her pioneering work in analyzing the individual expressions of intercessory prayer as recorded on prayer boards of churches and cathedrals. This particular paper reports on prayers from Southwark Cathedral in South London, a cosmopolitan area that contrasts with Bangor Cathedral in rural Wales and Lichfield Cathedral in the English Midlands, which attracts more pilgrims. Ap Siôn's system of categorizing prayers allows systematic comparisons of how individuals interact with the institutions.

Our special section this year has been guest-edited by Professor Leslie Francis from Warwick University in the UK, and develops his ongoing interest in clergy work-related health. The notion of burnout is well known among social psychologists who study professionals working in a variety of jobs, especially those related to the medical and caring professions. The Maslach Burnout Inventory has been widely used to assess burnout, but Francis has worked with others over the last decade or more to produce a measure that is more relevant to clergy. He has also reconceptualized the concept of burnout by recognizing that for many clergy the negative affect related to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment is offset by the positive rewards and satisfactions of their ministry. An increasing number of studies are showing that this 'balanced affect' model of burnout is a better way of understanding clergy work-related health. The papers in this section show a

variety of ways in which workers from different research groups around the world have approached the study of the psychological health of clergy.

As RSSR moves into its second quarter century I am delighted to welcome as co-editor Ralph Hood, professor of Social Psychology at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Ralph is well known around the world for his work over many years on the psychology of religion, especially in areas such as mysticism and religious experience. He brings to the role a wealth of experience in publishing research and editing journals and I hope that together we can ensure that the series continues to flourish in the years ahead.

Andrew Village

Co-editor

Acknowledgements

The editors would like to thank all those people who sent work in to be considered for this volume. Some came unsolicited and others responded to requests to submit work for the general or special sections. We thank all our contributors for responding in a timely and careful manner to editorial suggestions, requests and demands. Peer-reviewing is often an arduous and thankless task, and a thorough and insightful review from experienced experts is an increasingly valuable asset for any editor. We are grateful that our referees offered helpful and insightful comments that enabled us to make informed judgments and helped the authors to improve the quality of their work.

Special thanks are due to Leslie Francis, who has been a long-time contributor to the series, and who took up with his usual zeal the request to edit the special section. He has collated work from his immediate research group and added to it material from around the world to create a most valuable collection that continues the tradition of guest editors over the last few years.

Those who have produced an edited collection will know all about the stresses and strains of gathering material and getting it into shape to meet the publisher's deadline. My efforts in that task have been made immeasurably easier by the work of Judith Muskett, who kindly volunteered to copy-edit the manuscript before it went to Brill. She has an extraordinary eye for detail and an immense capacity for work, and the editors thank her for ensuring this volume arrived on time and in good condition. We thank as well the staff at Brill for their support and patience in helping to ensure this volume was produced to their usual high standards.

Andrew Village
Ralph W. Hood, Jr.
Editors

Manuscript Invitation

RSSSR is an annual interdisciplinary and international volume that publishes original reports of research, theoretical studies, and other innovative social scientific analyses of religion. For future volumes we welcome the submission of manuscripts reporting on research that contributes to the behavioural and social-science understanding of religion, whether done by members of those disciplines or other professions. However, we do not include studies that are purely historical or theological. Manuscripts should be original contributions based upon any of the quantitative or qualitative methods of research or the theoretical, conceptual, or meta-analytical analysis of research on religion in general or on any specific world religion. They should not be under consideration for publication by any other journal or publication outlet and should comply with the professional ethical standards of psychology, sociology, and other social science professions.

Manuscripts may be submitted at any time during the year, although those received before the end of July have the best chance of inclusion in the volume of the following calendar year. They should be submitted electronically in MS Word format to the editor using this email address: RSSSR@yorks.ac.uk. Author guidelines are available from the series webpage: www.brill.com/rssr.

Manuscripts that are judged by the editors as relevant to the coverage of *RSSSR* are reviewed anonymously for quality and then either accepted (usually along with constructive suggestions for revision) or rejected. Manuscripts relevant to our subject that are not accepted for publication also receive the benefit of critiques and suggestions that can aid their improvement for submission elsewhere. Authors will be required to complete a copyright transfer form, giving Brill the rights to publish the work.

RSSSR is also interested in developing 'special topic sections' for inclusion in future editions. Special topic sections include a series of guest-edited papers on a specific theme. If you have a suggestion for a special topic section or would be interested in editing such a section, please do not hesitate to contact the editors.

Authors' Biographies

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of *Religion* and *Journal of Contemporary Religion*. Forthcoming work includes chapters in *Anglican Cathedrals in Modern Life: The Science of Cathedral Studies* (Palgrave Macmillan) (edited by Leslie J. Francis).

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Manuscript Reviewers

The editors would like to thank those scholars who assisted us with peer-reviewing contributions to this volume. They have given freely of their time and expertise in order to help contributors to improve their submissions and promote quality in the social scientific study of religion.

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Who Uses Buddhist Coping? Convergent and Discriminant Validity for the BCOPE

*Russell E. Phillips III and Clara Michelle Cheng**

Abstract

In the past two decades, researchers have often examined the construct of religious coping, including its predictors and implications. However, few such studies are conducted on Buddhists. Researchers recently created a reliable and valid scale of Buddhist coping (the BCOPE), and correlated the scale with measures of adjustment to stress, but no research has yet explored predictors of Buddhist coping. The present study examined how various demographic and spiritual variables related to 14 Buddhist coping methods in a sample of 860 Buddhists living in the United States. Compared to less spiritual individuals, spiritual persons generally employed more Buddhist coping methods with positive implications, but not Buddhist coping techniques associated with negative implications. Older, more experienced Buddhists were typically less likely to use negative Buddhist coping methods than younger Buddhists. There were few differences in Buddhist coping across Buddhist sects, gender, or ethnicity. The present study provides information on the convergent and discriminant validity of the BCOPE, and who is likely to employ various Buddhist coping methods. Practical implications and future research directions are discussed.

Keywords

buddhism – religion – religious coping – spirituality

The scientific study of religious coping has increased in the past 20 years and informed a diverse set of applied disciplines, from clinical psychology to the medical field (Hood et al., 2009). Defined as cognitive and behavioural means

* *Author Note:* Russell E. Phillips III, University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg, USA; Clara Michelle Cheng, Carlow University, Pittsburgh, USA. Correspondence and data access are available through Russell Phillips at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg, 150 Finoli Dr., 137 Faculty Office Building, Greensburg, PA 15601, USA. Telephone: (412) 377-9855. Email: rep50@pitt.edu.

for dealing with stress involving the sacred (Phillips et al., 2014), religious coping has been studied across many religious traditions including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism (Abu Raiya et al., 2008; Pargament et al., 2000; Rosmarin et al., 2009; Tarakeshwar et al., 2003). However, there has been a dearth of research on Buddhism, even though there are an estimated 350 million Buddhists worldwide, and a 170% increase in the number of Buddhists in the United States over the past 20 years (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008; T.W. Smith, 2002)

Prior Research Concerning the Validity of a Measure of Buddhist Coping

More recently, Phillips et al. (2009) discovered multiple types of Buddhist coping through qualitative analyses with Buddhists in the United States. This formed the basis of a measure assessing Buddhist methods for dealing with stress (the BCOPE – Phillips et al., 2012). The BCOPE contains 14 subscales, each measuring a different type of Buddhist coping (see Table 1 for a list of the 14 subscales, their definitions and psychometric properties). All subscales have adequate to strong internal reliability. Empirical support for the construct validity of the subscales was demonstrated through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses (Phillips et al., 2012). In terms of incremental validity, the 14 Buddhist coping methods predicted outcomes from stress over and above demographic variables and general spiritual variables. Regarding criterion validity, ten of the coping methods consistently related to better outcomes from stress: looking for spiritual support from one's sangha, practicing meditation and mindfulness, acting morally, showing kindness to others, turning to Buddhist teachings for help, and interpreting stressful events through the lens of Buddhist concepts like inter-being, impermanence, not-self, and right understanding (Phillips et al., 2012). These coping methods are known as Buddhist resources or positive Buddhist coping techniques. Other methods were consistently associated with poorer adjustment: believing that one has failed to live up to Buddhist principles while dealing with a stressor, reflecting on how Buddhism is difficult to practice when facing stress, and resigning oneself to one's karmic fate in the situation (Phillips et al., 2012). Such strategies are known as Buddhist struggles or negative Buddhist coping techniques. The fourteenth subscale, Active Karma, has both positive (e.g., related to greater levels of growth) and negative (e.g., related to greater levels of depression) implications.

There is not yet evidence of convergent or discriminant validity for the BCOPE, outside of intercorrelations among the Buddhist coping subscales,

TABLE 1 *BCOPE subscale definitions and psychometric properties (after Phillips et al., 2012)*

BCOPE Subscales and Definitions		α	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	<i>Inter-Being</i> : understanding that everything is connected and nothing is independent when dealing with a stressor.	.80	3.08	0.69
2	<i>Not-Self</i> : reflecting on the idea that there is no sustaining, substantial self when dealing with a stressor.	.81	2.82	0.71
3	<i>Impermanence</i> : realizing that most things change, including the stressful circumstance.	.83	3.12	0.66
4	<i>Right Understanding</i> : trying to view a stressful event as it really is, without personal biases or desires.	.71	3.18	0.54
5	<i>Dharma</i> : obtaining information from Buddhist teachings/scripture to cope with stress.	.85	3.05	0.72
6	<i>Meditation</i> : focusing in a relaxed, nonjudgmental way on a particular object as a way to cope with a stressor, such as thinking – or not thinking – about the stressful event.	.86	3.05	0.72
7	<i>Mindfulness</i> : coping with stress by maintaining nonjudgmental awareness and tolerance of one's body, thoughts, behaviour, emotions, and surroundings in the present moment.	.57	3.00	0.55
8	<i>Morality</i> : acting with benevolent intentions concerning a stressful life event, in ways that help oneself and others.	.83	2.89	0.57
9	<i>Lovingkindness</i> : being genuinely friendly, warm, nonjudgmental, empathic, and compassionate to oneself and others as a way to deal with a stressor.	.76	3.06	0.62
10	<i>Sangha Support</i> : talking to other Buddhists to receive affirmation, comfort, and assistance concerning a stressful event.	.85	2.22	0.78
11	<i>Active Karma</i> : attributing a stressor as due to one's past choices and intentional actions, while considering possible intentions and consequences of future actions regarding the stressor.	.81	2.17	0.66
12	<i>Fatalistic Karma</i> : incorrectly believing that a stressful event is the consequence of one's past actions, and these consequences will occur no matter what one does.	.79	1.29	0.46
13	<i>It's Not Easy Being Buddhist</i> : expressing unpleasant feelings about the difficulties of practicing Buddhism while dealing with a stressful event (e.g., lamenting that there is no God to pray to take away one's problems).	.66	1.57	0.51
14	<i>Bad Buddhist</i> : reframing one's reaction to a stressful event as having failed to live up to Buddhist values.	.63	2.12	0.59

Note. *M* and *SD* are based on the average item score for each subscale (range 1.00 to 4.00). α = Cronbach's alpha.

which were found to relate to each other in meaningful ways (Phillips et al., 2012). Meaning-making Buddhist coping methods (i.e., using Buddhist concepts such as inter-being or not-self to interpret a stressful situation) were strongly related to each other and to Buddhist behaviours such as acting morally, practicing loving kindness, meditation, and mindfulness. The two karma subscales were most strongly related to each other, as were the three Buddhist struggles subscales (Phillips et al., 2012). A statistical analysis of other variables suspected to relate to Buddhist coping (i.e., convergent validity), and variables not expected to relate to this construct (i.e., discriminant validity), can provide empirical evidence for the theoretical underpinnings of the construct. Further, it can help identify who is more likely to utilize these coping methods. Specifically, we question how Buddhist coping might relate to demographic variables, as well as general spiritual variables. Through the lens of Pargament's (1997) religious coping theory, we will explicate why these variables should or should not relate to Buddhist methods of dealing with stress.

Possible Relationships between Demographic Variables and Buddhist Coping

Pargament (1997) theorized that women and racial minorities are generally more spiritual and utilize more religious coping, because of the discrimination and traditional lack of power they have in society. Discrimination and disenfranchisement might lead to more stress and lack of available resources, requiring reliance upon an ultimate power to help the individual cope in the world. Indeed, research has generally borne out this hypothesis (see Pargament, 1997, for a review). However, we question whether this theory would hold for Buddhist coping methods. First, Buddhists in the United States tend to be more educated and have higher income than the average American (Gregory, 2001; Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008). Therefore women and minorities who are Buddhists might not find themselves in as difficult a position as their Christian counterparts. Second, the most common ethnic minority for Buddhists is Asian-American (Gregory, 2001; Phillips et al., 2012), in contrast to Christianity, which has a higher percentage of African-Americans (Pargament, 1997). The generally higher socioeconomic status of Asian-Americans than other minorities in the United States (Ryan & Siebens, 2012) raises questions as to whether there will be an ethnic difference in Buddhist forms of coping. Third, the belief that individuals without power might turn to a transcendent force suggests an issue of

control: by utilizing an omnipotent power, an individual might regain a sense of influence in an otherwise uncontrollable situation. However, many Buddhists do not believe in a deity that can change the conditions of their environment (Phillips et al., 2009). For these reasons, we surmise that there will be no difference in the 14 Buddhist coping methods across gender or ethnic identities.

We also wished to compare Buddhist coping in American citizens and immigrants, because a significant number of Buddhists in the United States are from other nations (Phillips et al., 2012). This analysis was exploratory, with no *a priori* hypothesis, as we could envision arguments for higher and lower levels of Buddhist coping in immigrants. On the one hand, immigration is a stressful experience (Xiao et al., 2010) and might require higher levels of coping than American citizens face on a day-to-day basis. On the other hand, the most common ethnicity for Buddhist American immigrants is Asian-American, a group with a high socioeconomic status, on average (Phillips et al., 2012; Ryan & Siebens, 2012). With higher wealth and resources than other ethnicities, Buddhist immigrants might not be in need of as much coping as their less-well-off counterparts, the American citizen.

Another demographic variable of interest in the present study is age. Older participants generally engage in religious coping more than their younger counterparts (Pargament, 1997). For instance, in a national sample of 3,417 adults, older Christians were more likely to seek spiritual comfort and support to problems than younger participants (Ferraro & Koch, 1994). The most frequent explanation for this relationship is that older participants, closer to the end of their life, turn to religion as a way to deal with the prospect of their own death (Pargament, 1997). Religion, defined here as a search for significance in ways related to the sacred (Pargament, 1997), provides a sense of comfort through the prospect of an afterlife. However, this explanation might not fit for Buddhists, as the theology within this religious tradition is unclear as to the existence of an afterlife (H. Smith, 1991). Although some Buddhist sects involve elaborate ideas concerning life after death, others have not (H. Smith, 1991). Therefore, we are not convinced that older Buddhists would utilize more Buddhist resources than their younger cohorts. Therefore, analyses between age and Buddhist resources will be exploratory, with no *a priori* hypotheses. We do, however, believe that older participants will generally express fewer Buddhist struggles (e.g., believing that one is practicing Buddhism incorrectly) than younger individuals. We believe that with experience comes a more refined understanding of Buddhism, which will allow older individuals to grasp the misunderstandings inherent in Buddhist struggles.

Possible Relationships between Spiritual Variables and Buddhist Coping

Researchers have not examined how spiritual variables relate to Buddhist forms of coping. For example, are more spiritual persons (i.e., those who search for the sacred, Phillips et al., 2009) more likely to use Buddhist means for dealing with stress? Few studies have examined spirituality as a predictor of religious coping. Instead, researchers have focused on how religiosity relates to sacred forms of coping, finding a consistent positive relationship between these two variables (Pargament, 1997). However, many Buddhists do not consider themselves to be religious and do not believe that Buddhism is a religion (Gregory, 2001; Phillips et al., 2009). Although it is beyond the scope of the present study to explore in depth the differences between the constructs of religion and spirituality, Buddhist practices and beliefs appear consistent with the definition of spirituality in that they seek transcendence of the self (Phillips et al., 2009). Taking these facts into consideration, we decided to examine the relationship between Buddhist coping and the construct of spirituality, rather than religiosity. Specifically, we suspect that persons with higher self-rated spirituality will generally report greater use of Buddhist coping methods. The relevance of the transcendent in more spiritual persons should lead them to more readily access sacred forms of coping, such as Buddhist resources and struggles.

We decided to examine an even less frequently addressed measure of spirituality, years practicing Buddhism. Typically, such a measure is not possible in research with Christianity, the majority religion in the United States, because most individuals were raised in their spiritual tradition (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008) and the number of years practicing faith is confounded with age. However, a significant number of Buddhists in the United States grew up in a religion that they no longer identify with (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008; Phillips et al., 2012). We surmise that those with more years practicing Buddhism will generally report less Buddhist struggles because experience leads to a refined understanding of Buddhist principles. However, our analyses concerning years practicing Buddhism and Buddhist resources will be exploratory. On the one hand, it might be assumed that experienced Buddhists are aware of a larger repertoire of 'healthy' Buddhist coping methods and therefore utilize more Buddhist resources. On the other hand, studies of treatment outcome interventions that introduce Buddhist practices (e.g., meditation or mindfulness) to Western samples demonstrate that participants quickly learn and utilize the coping methods that they are taught (see Baer, 2003, for a review). For example, Margolin and colleagues (2007) instructed drug addicts on the

Eightfold Path, including how to consider Buddhist ideas such as impermanence when dealing with stress, and how to meditate. After just 12 weeks every participant reported a daily meditation practice and many reported significant increases in employing Buddhist methods of coping (Margolin et al., 2007). In summary, theory and prior research does not lend itself to a clear hypothesis concerning years practicing Buddhism and the use of Buddhist resources.

We suspect that there would be no relationship between a third spiritual variable, Buddhist sect, and the 14 Buddhist coping methods. Although not examined in prior research with Buddhists (Phillips et al., 2012), studies with Christians have rarely found differences between Christian groups and religious coping (see Pargament, 1997, for a review). For instance, Osborne and Vandenberg (2003) found no significant differences between Catholics and Disciples of Christ on the following religious coping strategies: engaging in religious good deeds, connecting to a higher power, using religion to avoid thinking about the stressor, and turning to one's church for spiritual support in times of stress. Given that the content of the Buddhist coping scales appears important to the philosophies of all major sects, including Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana, we expect no differences in each groups' use of Buddhist coping.

Present Study

To address the questions about who engages in Buddhist coping, the convergent and discriminant validity of the BCOPE, the present study assessed Buddhist coping in 860 Buddhists living in the United States in 2007. We examined the associations between gender, age, race, and citizenship status with the 14 Buddhist coping techniques. We correlated spirituality, years practicing Buddhism, and Buddhist sect with Buddhist coping to test six hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 was that males and females would not differ on their use of Buddhist coping.

Hypothesis 2 was that Buddhist coping would not vary by ethnicity.

Hypothesis 3 was that older participants would report fewer Buddhist struggles than younger ones.

Hypothesis 4 was that spirituality would be associated with all forms of Buddhist coping.

Hypothesis 5 was that more experienced Buddhists would report lower levels of Buddhist struggles.

Hypothesis 6 was that there would be no difference in the use of Buddhist coping across the four major Buddhist sects.

Methods

Sample

The present study is part of a larger project initially reported in Phillips et al. (2012) that contained a sample of 860 Buddhists living in the United States. After removal of incomplete data (i.e., participants who did not complete the survey) and outliers (explained in Results section below), 837 participants remained. Just under half (45%) were male, averaging 46.1 years of age ($SD = 13.4$). Immigrants made up 13% of the sample, and had lived in the country for 18.7 years on average ($SD = 16.0$). Most participants were Caucasian (88%), with 6% Asian, 4% mixed/biracial, 1% Hispanic, and 1% other. The largest Buddhist sect was Mahayana (39%), followed by Vajrayana (34%), Theravada (21%), and combination/other (6%). Participants had practiced Buddhism for an average of 12.2 years ($SD = 10.0$). On a four-point scale, participants reported that they were between 'moderately' and 'very spiritual' ($M = 3.4$, $SD = 0.7$).

Measures

A background questionnaire explored demographic variables such as age, gender, ethnicity, whether the participant was from the United States, and if not, how long they had lived in the United States (rounded to the nearest year). Participants were asked three questions concerning Buddhism and overall spirituality: to what Buddhist sect they belonged (possible answers: 'Theravada', 'Mahayana, including Zen', 'Vajrayana, including Tibetan', or 'other Buddhist sect'); how long they had practiced Buddhism (rounded to the nearest year); and how spiritual they were (rated on a four-item scale from 1 = 'not at all spiritual' to 4 = 'very spiritual'). The single-item measure of self-perceived spirituality is a common indicator of this construct (Abu Raiya et al., 2008; Phillips et al., 2012; Tarakeshwar et al., 2003), and was given in lieu of a longer scale in order to keep the number of items in the total survey to a manageable level.

The BCOPE (Phillips et al., 2012) was used to assess Buddhist forms of coping with stress. It includes 14 subscales totaling 58 items. Participants are asked to consider a recent stressful event and rate how frequently they used each item to deal with the difficulty using four-item scale ranging from 1 = 'not at all' to 4 = 'a lot'. The scale has adequate internal reliability (see Table 1 for subscale Cronbach alphas), and exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses demonstrate the construct validity of the measure. The BCOPE also shows good criterion validity, with 10 subscales consistently relating to positive outcomes from stress and three relating to negative adjustment (Phillips et al., 2012).

Procedure

The measures noted above were placed in an online survey. Individuals interested in a lottery draw and in participating in future studies were directed to a second online survey to provide their email. Three participants were randomly chosen for the draw and sent a \$50 gift card. Participants were recruited by contacting leaders of sanghas throughout the country, found on Facebook and the web directory Buddhnet. Sangha leaders were asked to send the survey website link to other Buddhists.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

We first checked for outliers in the data. Any participants with data that lay three standard deviations and 150% outside the interquartile range were eliminated (Bluman, 2004). The following variables contained outliers that were eliminated from all analyses: years practicing Buddhism (seven participants with more than 41 years' experience), Right Understanding (five outliers with mean-per-item scores below 1.61), Lovingkindness (two participants with mean-per-item scores lower than 1.16), Mindfulness (six outliers with mean-per-item scores below 1.50), Bad Buddhist (three outliers with mean-per-item scores above 3.89), and It's Not Easy Being Buddhist (three outliers with mean-per-item scores above 3.50).

We checked to ensure that our data were normally distributed. Since both the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests of normality are sensitive to sample size (Glass, Peckham, & Sanders, 1972; Harwell, Rubinstein, Hayes, & Olds, 1992), we explored histograms, Q-Q plots, kurtosis, and skew values for all continuous variables. The majority of the data approximated a normal distribution, except for four variables: Passive Karma, It's Not Easy Being Buddhist, years practicing Buddhism, and self-rated spirituality. These four variables contained a kurtosis or skew value greater than one. Although there is no definitive cutoff, values close to zero approach a normal distribution, and researchers suggest values greater than one indicate severe non-normality (Bluman, 2004; Cutti, 2014). Passive Karma, It's Not Easy Being Buddhist, and years practicing Buddhism had a positive skew, and after reviewing various transformations, a square root transformation was used as this calculation resulted in skew and kurtosis values closest to zero and below one. We reflected self-rated spirituality because this variable had a negative skew (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996), and then explored various transformations. The square root transformation resulted in a skew and kurtosis value closest to zero and below

one. We used these transformations in all inferential analyses. For descriptive statistics, the mean-per-item was used to allow for easier data interpretation. Table 2 lists the means and standard deviations for Buddhist coping as a function of gender, race, immigration status, and Buddhist sect. To help control for Type I errors, given the number of analyses run, we used a significance level of $p < .001$ for all analyses reported in this study.

Convergent and Discriminant Validity: Demographic Variables and Buddhist Coping

We ran a one-way MANOVA to test Hypothesis 1, that there was no difference between men and women across the 14 Buddhist coping methods. The MANOVA was significant (Wilks's Λ (14, 798) = 0.90, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .10$), indicating that men and women differed on at least one Buddhist coping method. Follow-up one-way ANOVA tests indicated that women scored higher than men on 3 of the 14 Buddhist coping methods, namely Sangha Support (F (1, 811) = 20.47, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .025$), Inter-Being (F (1, 811) = 17.36, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .021$), and Mindfulness (F (1, 811) = 15.27, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .018$). In sum, the null hypothesis was confirmed for 11 of the 14 types of Buddhist coping, but disconfirmed in three analyses.

We also compared Buddhist coping as a function of ethnicity (Hypothesis 2). We collapsed ethnicity into a white/non-white category given the low numbers of ethnic minorities. A one-way MANOVA revealed a significant difference between whites and nonwhites on Buddhist coping (Wilks's Λ (14, 807) = 0.92, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .082$). Follow-up one-way ANOVA tests indicated that nonwhites used more Active Karma (F (1, 820) = 50.33, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .058$) and Fatalistic Karma (F (1, 820) = 22.23, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .026$) than did whites (Table 2). Thus, the null results expected in Hypothesis 2 were confirmed in 12 of 14 analyses, and disconfirmed in two cases.

We ran Pearson bivariate correlations between age and Buddhist coping methods to test Hypothesis 3 (Table 3). The expected inverse relationship between age and Buddhist struggles (Bad Buddhist) was significant in 1 of 3 analyses, but there was no significant relationship between age and Buddhist resources.

A one-way MANOVA comparing the exploratory analysis of Buddhist coping in immigrants and non-immigrants was significant (Wilks's Λ (14, 808) = 0.94, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .07$). Follow-up one-way ANOVA tests indicated significant differences for 1 of the 14 Buddhist coping techniques, namely Active Karma (F (1, 821) = 35.56, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .042$). Specifically, immigrants were more likely to view the situation as due to karma than were non-immigrants (Table 2).

TABLE 2 *Mean (SD) Buddhist coping scores in relation to demographic and spiritual variables*

	Gender		Ethnicity		Status		Buddhist sect		
	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Immigrant	Native	Theravada	Mahayana	Vajrayana Other
<i>N</i> =	365	456	728	102	725	106	173	321	283 45
Sangha Support	2.10 (0.75) ^a	2.34 (0.78) ^a	2.23 (0.76)	2.27 (0.85)	2.29 (0.80)	2.22 (0.77)	2.16 (0.79)	2.26 (0.79)	2.27 (0.76) 2.12 (0.76)
Lovingkindness	3.13 (0.62)	3.25 (0.61)	3.18 (0.61)	3.29 (0.66)	3.22 (0.63)	3.19 (0.62)	3.11 (0.65)	3.16 (0.63)	3.29 (0.59) 3.23 (0.56)
Morality	2.85 (0.56)	2.94 (0.55)	2.87 (0.55)	3.06 (0.56)	3.05 (0.61)	2.88 (0.55)	2.95 (0.53)	2.87 (0.56)	2.90 (0.55) 2.91 (0.68)
Meditation	3.02 (0.71)	3.08 (0.70)	3.07 (0.70)	2.99 (0.74)	3.00 (0.76)	3.07 (0.70)	3.10 (0.69)	3.11 (0.73)	3.03 (0.67) 2.83 (0.79)
Mindfulness	2.94 (0.50) ^a	3.08 (0.53) ^a	3.02 (0.52)	3.02 (0.58)	3.04 (0.55)	3.01 (0.52)	3.02 (0.54)	3.01 (0.51)	3.04 (0.53) 2.97 (0.56)
Dharma	3.00 (0.73)	3.10 (0.70)	3.04 (0.72)	3.20 (0.65)	3.17 (0.69)	3.04 (0.72)	2.99 (0.73)	3.01 (0.76)	3.19 (0.64) 2.94 (0.67)
Right Understanding	3.20 (0.48)	3.20 (0.53)	3.20 (0.50)	3.18 (0.58)	3.19 (0.53)	3.20 (0.51)	3.13 (0.53)	3.21 (0.51)	3.24 (0.50) 3.21 (0.49)
Inter-Being	2.99 (0.67) ^a	3.18 (0.66) ^a	3.08 (0.66)	3.21 (0.73)	3.16 (0.76)	3.09 (0.66)	2.94 (0.71)	3.13 (0.66)	3.17 (0.65) 3.10 (0.66)

TABLE 2 Mean (SD) Buddhist coping scores in relation to demographic and spiritual variables (cont.)

	Gender		Ethnicity		Status		Buddhist sect			
	Male	Female	White	Non-white	Immigrant	Native	Theravada	Mahayana	Vajrayana	Other
Not-Self	2.86 (0.69)	2.82 (0.70)	2.81 (0.69)	3.00 (0.71)	3.00 (0.73)	2.81 (0.69)	2.82 (0.70)	2.81 (0.70)	2.91 (0.66)	2.61 (0.76)
Impermanence	3.04 (0.65)	3.20 (0.64)	3.11 (0.65)	3.26 (0.66)	3.28 (0.65)	3.11 (0.65)	3.11 (0.68)	3.09 (0.64)	3.19 (0.65)	3.13 (0.62)
Active Karma	2.21 (0.68)	2.13 (0.64)	2.10 (0.63) ^b	2.59 (0.67) ^b	2.52 (0.72) ^c	2.12 (0.63) ^c	2.10 (0.62)	2.09 (0.66) ^d	2.31 (0.65) ^d	2.14 (0.60)
Fatalistic Karma	1.32 (0.49)	1.25 (0.40)	1.25 (0.42) ^b	1.47 (0.55) ^b	1.35 (0.44)	1.26 (0.43)	1.27 (0.42)	1.27 (0.41)	1.32 (0.49)	1.18 (0.52)
Bad Buddhist	2.07 (0.58)	2.15 (0.57)	2.11 (0.58)	2.15 (0.52)	2.15 (0.54)	2.11 (0.58)	2.14 (0.59)	2.11 (0.59)	2.12 (0.55)	2.04 (0.67)
Not Easy Being Buddhist	1.58 (0.51)	1.53 (0.48)	1.56 (0.49)	1.54 (0.53)	1.47 (0.48)	1.57 (0.49)	1.57 (0.52)	1.56 (0.49)	1.55 (0.48)	1.58 (0.49)

Note. ^aSignificant difference ($p < .001$) between males and females; ^bsignificant difference between whites and non-whites; ^csignificant difference between immigrants and non-immigrants; ^dsignificant difference between Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhists.

TABLE 3 *Pearson bivariate correlations between Buddhist coping, age, and general spiritual variables*

Buddhist coping variable	Age	Years	Spirituality
Sangha Support	.07	.01	.23*
Lovingkindness	.06	.05	.33*
Morality	.10	.12	.25*
Meditation	.08	-.01	.22*
Mindfulness	.05	.06	.18*
Dharma	.09	.09	.18*
Right Understanding	.00	.12	.17*
Inter-Being	.09	-.01	.20*
Not-Self	.06	.07	.15*
Impermanence	.04	-.01	.11
Active Karma	-.13*	.04	.13*
Fatalistic Karma	-.09	-.04	-.01
Bad Buddhist	-.20*	-.19*	-.09
It's Not Easy Being Buddhist	-.08	-.13*	-.10

Note. Years = years practicing Buddhism; Spirituality = self-rated spirituality. * $p < .001$.

Convergent and Discriminant Validity: Spiritual Variables and Buddhist Coping

We also conducted Pearson bivariate correlations between years practicing Buddhism, self-rated spirituality, and the 14 Buddhist coping methods (Table 3). Hypothesis 4 was confirmed in 10 of 14 cases. Specifically, self-rated spirituality was significantly associated with Active Karma and 9 of 10 Buddhist resources. However, self-rated spirituality was not related to the three Buddhist struggles. Concerning Hypothesis 5, years practicing Buddhism was significantly inversely related to 2 of 3 Buddhist struggles. The exploratory analyses between years practicing Buddhism and Buddhist resources were unrelated ($p > .001$).

To test Hypothesis 6 (that there were no significant differences in Buddhist coping across the Buddhist sects), we ran a one-way MANOVA. The MANOVA was significant (Wilks's Λ (42, 2365) = 0.88, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$). Follow-up one-way ANOVA tests revealed one significant difference, concerning Active Karma (F (3, 810) = 8.32, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$). Multiple comparisons using Tukey's HSD revealed that Vajrayana practitioners used more Active Karma than Mahayana practitioners (Table 2). Thus, the null results expected in

Hypothesis 6 were confirmed in 55 of 56 cases (four Buddhist sects compared across 14 Buddhist coping methods).

Discussion

The goal of the present study was to examine who uses Buddhist coping, and explore the convergent and discriminant validity of the BCOPE. As expected, more spiritual persons were generally more likely to utilize Buddhist resources than less spiritual persons, and older, more experienced Buddhists, were less likely to experience the Buddhist struggle of harshly judging their spiritual practice. Counter to our hypothesis, age and Buddhist experience generally did not relate to other spiritual struggles, nor did spirituality predict Buddhist struggles. In most cases, as expected, persons of different genders, ethnicities, and sects used Buddhism similarly when dealing with stress. We explore these findings more below, examining in particular discrepancies from expectations through a review of prior research and theory.

Review and Interpretation of Findings

As expected, demographic variables rarely predicted Buddhist means for dealing with stress. Concerning Hypothesis 1, our null expectations for the relationship between gender and Buddhist coping were confirmed in 11 of 14 cases. Unexpectedly, females did score significantly higher than males in terms of practicing mindfulness, looking to their sangha for support, and considering how all things are connected. Perhaps women's greater use of the latter two coping methods is because women are more likely to utilize social resources when dealing with stress (Taylor et al., 2000). Known as the 'tend-and-befriend hypothesis', sociological and evolutionary psychological theory suggests that women's roles in society often focus on connection and nurturance, which might lead them to rely on social resources when under duress (Taylor et al., 2000). The construct of emotional intelligence might offer some insight into why women scored higher on mindfulness. On average, women are more aware of their emotions and more able to find ways to deal with their feelings than are men (see Fernandez-Berrocal, Cabello, Castillo, & Extremera, 2012, for a review). Mindfulness is one way to become aware of, and deal with, feelings (Phillips et al., 2009). In support of this idea, women are more likely than men to participate in mindfulness-based treatments and they also report more benefit from such interventions (Katz & Toner, 2012). Users of the BCOPE should keep these facts in mind, and practitioners might want to pay special attention to social resources and mindfulness interventions for their female clients.

Researchers could explore if socially-oriented Buddhist coping methods such as turning to one's sangha or considering the connection between all things predict outcomes from stress in women more than secular social resources, such as instrumental or emotional social support.

Concerning Hypothesis 2, the null expectations were confirmed in 12 of 14 instances. The two unexpected differences concerned the idea of karma, with ethnic minorities more likely than whites to consider how karma could be involved in a stressful event. This finding was similar to the results for immigration status, as the only Buddhist coping method to differ between immigrants and non-immigrants was the idea that a person's actions have karmic repercussions (i.e., Active Karma), which was higher for immigrants. Prior studies have demonstrated the unpopularity of the idea of karma in American society, whereas karma is a more accepted concept in Asian societies (Agrawal & Dalal, 1993; Davidson, Connor, & Lee, 2005), a group that makes up the majority of Buddhist immigrants and is the largest Buddhist ethnic minority in the U.S. (Gregory, 2001; Phillips et al., 2012). The difference in using karma was an exception, and in most cases people of different ethnicity and immigrant status used similar forms of Buddhist coping to deal with stress. Healthcare workers should recognize that their Buddhist clients, regardless of ethnicity, could benefit from a range of Buddhist resources to combat stress, but they may also want to explore with immigrants or people from ethnic minorities the role of karma in this process. Researchers could explore if the appraisal of karma is associated with outcomes above and beyond secular appraisals of stress or internal and external locus of control.

Concerning experience and coping, we had expected that with experience would come wisdom and recognition of the errors in thinking associated with Buddhist struggles. Age was inversely related to 1 of 3 Buddhist struggles (Hypothesis 3), and years practicing Buddhism inversely related to 2 of 3 Buddhist struggles (Hypothesis 5). More specifically, the struggle of negatively evaluating one's Buddhist practice (i.e., Bad Buddhist) was related to both age and years practicing Buddhism, suggesting that experience softens judgment and lessens the likelihood of experiencing this spiritual struggle. However, both experienced and inexperienced Buddhists were unlikely to consider that their karmic fate is sealed within a situation. It appears that Buddhists quickly learn the correct definition of karma in the Buddhist philosophy, realizing that they can change their future through their current actions (H. Smith, 1991). Overall, the results suggest that practitioners should look out for self-judgment in inexperienced Buddhist clients. Although experience was not related to a fatalistic view of karma, perhaps personality traits such as external locus of control are associated with this coping method. Future research could explore

how locus of control or the big five personality traits are related to a fatalistic view of karma.

In terms of our exploratory research question concerning the relationship between age, years practicing Buddhism, and Buddhist resources, there were no significant correlations. Thus, experience (age, years practicing Buddhism) was related to Buddhist struggles in 3 of 6 analyses, but none of 20 analyses linked Buddhist resources with experience. It appears that although experience can buffer Buddhists from certain spiritual struggles, Buddhists learn early on how to utilize the resources of their spiritual tradition, and continue to employ them as they gain experience. This parallels research findings that non-Buddhist clients in psychotherapy quickly learn and incorporate Buddhist practices into their lives (Baer, 2003; Margolin et al., 2007). Given the association between Buddhist resources and positive outcomes from stress (Phillips et al., 2012, 2014), it behoves practitioners to examine such coping strategies to help their clients overcome problems. Further, treatment-outcome research is needed that demonstrates that such interventions are helpful.

The expected correlation between Buddhist coping and self-rated spirituality (Hypothesis 4) was confirmed in 10 of the 14 analyses. Interestingly, the non-significant correlations involved Buddhist struggles and Active Karma, a coping method with mixed implications. It seems that spiritual Buddhists use more Buddhist resources, but do not necessarily experience more struggles, than less spiritual Buddhists. Given the low frequency of Buddhist struggles, perhaps spiritual Buddhists are motivated enough to study Buddhism to the point that they do not misinterpret the teachings (and therefore experience such struggles), and the less spiritual simply do not utilize Buddhist coping methods. Future longitudinal research is needed that explores the frequency with which Buddhists study their spiritual tradition, both soon after they take up the practice, and later. Further, researchers could conduct more fine-grained analysis of Buddhists' spirituality, using reliable and valid measures of psycho-spiritual constructs that do not require a theistic belief, such as the Mysticism Scale (Hood, 1975), the Spiritual Transcendence Scale (Piedmont, 1999), and the Self-Transcendence Scale (Cloninger, Svrakic, & Przybeck, 1993). Can these measures predict Buddhist coping, and can Buddhist coping predict outcomes from stress over and above these measures? The consistent relationship between self-rated spirituality and Buddhist resources indicates that healthcare workers should incorporate such coping strategies into therapy with their more spiritual Buddhist clients.

Concerning Hypothesis 6, (no difference across the four Buddhist sects in their use of Buddhist coping), the null finding was supported in 55 of 56 comparisons (14 Buddhist coping methods across four Buddhist sects). The only

significant difference was that Vajrayana Buddhists reported thinking about the karmic repercussions of their actions more than Mahayana Buddhists. This may be a function of the tantric scriptures within Vajrayana Buddhism, some of which emphasize the manifestations of collective karma (Kyegu Buddhist Institute, 2006). Further research is needed to examine the differences between Vajrayana and Mahayana Buddhists, and other sects as well, as little is known about variations in psycho-spiritual variables between these groups. The fact that only one of 56 comparisons was significantly different reveals the similarity of Buddhist coping across different philosophies.

Limitations and Implications

Some limitations of the current study should be noted. First, the cross-sectional component of the study prevents us from assuming a unidirectional relationship between demographic or general spiritual variables and Buddhist coping. For instance, we cannot assume that being spiritual is what leads a person to utilize more positive forms of Buddhist coping. Perhaps success in using certain forms of Buddhist coping leads a person to become more spiritual. Research is needed that examines Buddhist coping and spirituality over two points in time. A second limitation of the present study is the potential of a mono-method bias, as all measures were self-report. It is possible that due to social desirability or other forms of bias, participants were more likely to report that they were spiritual and endorse healthy forms of Buddhist coping, while denying the use of Buddhist struggles. Future research should include behavioural or observer-rated measures when examining Buddhist methods of dealing with stress. Finally, the correlations demonstrating convergent validity of the BCOPE were in the low-to-moderate range. Readers should keep this in mind when considering spirituality, age, and years practicing Buddhism as a predictor of Buddhist coping. Future research might examine other predictors that lead to Buddhist methods for dealing with stress, such as the onset of certain types of stressful events, personality traits, and other spiritual variables. Perhaps Buddhism is used most often to cope with stress when the situation is outside a person's control, if a person is high in conscientiousness, or if a person regularly experiences a mystical state while meditating.

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Gendered Responses to Decline in Protestant Congregations

*Steve McMullin**

Abstract

In this study of 16 Protestant congregations, men and women responded quite differently to open-ended survey questions and in focus group discussions about the observed decline of their congregations. The quantitative data indicated that the women were more religiously devout, which one would expect to mean that women would be more negatively affected by substantial congregational decline. That conclusion was contradicted by the qualitative data, which demonstrated that declining congregations actually offered women opportunities for spiritual growth. In their survey answers, the women reported that they attend church more often than men, they rated the importance of faithful church attendance more highly than the men, and they considered religion more important to their personal lives than did the men. Yet it was the men whose religious faith seemed to be more threatened by congregational decline. These findings provide important new insights into the ways that men and women experience religious life differently, while also demonstrating that quantitative measures alone are insufficient for determining differing levels of religious devotion between men and women.

Keywords

congregational decline – gender – religiosity – spiritual growth

Sociologists have noted that quantitative measures of religious devotion are consistently higher among women than among men (Walter & Davie, 1998; Davie, 2002, p. 8; Woolever, Bruce, Wulff, & Smith-Williams, 2006). There is evidence that this phenomenon exists across cultural and religious lines (Stark, 2002, pp. 496–500). With an overarching assumption that these measured

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differences between women and men are related to different rates of secularization, earlier theorists focused on what were then lower levels of education and lower rates of labour-force participation among women (Luckman, 1967; Martin, 1967; Nelson & Potvin, 1981; Gee, 1991) but as women's levels of education and rates of labour force participation have increased, their comparatively higher rate of attendance at religious services has not changed. The complexity of the issue is demonstrated by the fact that while a study of Americans found that lower rates of labour-force participation do not explain women's higher levels of church attendance (de Vaus, 1984), subsequent research argued that there is a connection in the Canadian context (Gee, 1991). Ulbrich and Wallace (1984) demonstrated that women's church attendance does not diminish as more women enter the labour force and Canadian data indicate that "mothers working in the paid labour force are more likely to bring their children to a place of worship than are mothers who do not work outside the home" (Jones, 1999, p. 16). Regarding education, research indicates that higher levels of education actually increase church attendance although it may diminish religious belief (Iannaccone, 1998, p. 1470; Sacerdote & Glaeser, 2008) and that children's rates of church attendance increase as the educational attainment of the mother increases (Jones, 1999, p. 14). Some studies have considered the effects of marriage and family circumstances on the religious behaviours of men and women (de Vaus & McAllister, 1987; Edgell Becker & Hofmeister, 2001). Although their conclusions differ, these helpful studies have at least three things in common: first, an assumption that the explanation for more frequent and consistent church attendance among women is found in factors such as work, education, marriage, family, and age that are *external* to religious life. Second, a failure to examine factors *within* the religious and social life of the congregations themselves that may, intentionally or unintentionally, affect the attendance and participation of men and women. Third, most of these studies assume that quantitative measures of participation have the same meaning for men as for women.

More recent attempts to explain differences in religiosity between men and women have focused on gendered physiological differences, or on differences in the ways that men and women are raised in patriarchal families (Stark, 2002; Miller & Stark, 2002; Collett & Lizardo, 2009; Lizardo & Collett, 2009). Other arguments have focused on masculine or feminine traits of religious adherents. Thompson describes religion as a feminine institution and says that being religious is a consonant experience for people (whether women or men) with a feminine orientation. While clarifying that both men and women can have a feminine orientation, he explains that "for those men and women whose expe-

riences and opportunities have developed their 'feminine' outlook, being religious would seem to have greater personal meaning" (Thompson, 1991, p. 383). Although this is an interesting attempt to find non-economic explanations for higher levels of religious devotion among women, the argument is tautological. If the characterization of religion as 'feminine' is based on the fact that women are more likely to be religiously devout, it has no explanatory power. If it is based on cultural stereotypes of masculinity and femininity, it may obscure rather than elucidate relationships between religion and gender. The characterization by Schoenfeld and Mestrovic (1991) of some religious groups as masculine (instrumental) and some as feminine (expressive) has similar problems. Lummis (2004) notes that explanations of women's higher rates of religious participation that are based on the supposed feminization of religious congregations may relate to what certain groups (church officials, psychologists of religion) already believe or want to believe is the reason (p. 405).

Not only have these recent discussions failed to resolve the question (Bradshaw & Ellison, 2009), but scholars have continued to avoid the question of how religion itself may contribute to the gendering of the religious experiences of their members. Because similar gender differences are found across religious lines, scholars have assumed that the reasons must not be found within the religious organizations themselves and have looked for answers in the social environment that is *outside* of the church. What has not been considered are the ways in which the social role of religion may be different for men and women.

In discussions of gender and religion, measures of religious devotion have tended to be quantitative – how often men and women attend worship, how often women and men pray, etc. This study of 16 declining religious congregations notes higher levels of church attendance among women (as would be expected) but it also looks at qualitative measures of how women and men describe their experience of religious life and in particular how they experience religious life in a faith community that is in decline. As will be demonstrated, such decline may serve to emphasize differences in the ways that men and women respond to religious experience.

Although it is axiomatic that the higher levels of religious devotion among women are universal, at least one study suggests that there are exceptions (beyond those of groups that regulate participation by gender). Susan Palmer's (1994) *Moon Sisters, Krishna Mothers, Rajneesh Lovers* considers gender in new religious movements (NRMs) and discovers that, paradoxically, larger numbers of women than men are attracted to new religious movements that are patriarchal in organization, while women account for a smaller proportion of group

members in more egalitarian NRMS. She concludes that it is not that women are attracted to patriarchal groups, but that groups that are patriarchal in nature have a different type of social organization and that "the formal inequality and expected submissiveness of women in traditionalist and ideologically patriarchal communities may afford women greater power in interpersonal relations than does the 'liberated' milieu of 'sexual freedom'" (Palmer, 1994, p. 229). In other words, it is the characteristics of the group itself that leads to the higher rates of participation by women.

In this study of declining congregations, the responses of men and women to survey and focus group questions provide evidence that the attendance patterns of men and women and their experiences of church life are affected quite differently by the decline of their congregations. The hypothesis is that religious decline has different results in men and in women: in a declining congregation, men attend Sunday services less often not just because they are less devout but also because devoutly religious men are more negatively affected by the congregation's decline than are women.

Method

This study includes 16 declining congregations belonging to seven different Protestant denominations in the United States (6) and Canada (10). Most congregations were chosen based on referrals by denominational officials who believed that these congregations were representative of declining congregations in their denomination; two of the congregations were referred to me by neighbouring pastors as good examples of chronic decline and one congregation was recommended to me by a fellow sociologist of religion. The response rate was high: of 18 congregations invited to participate, only two (both in the same mainline denomination) declined to take part. Each of the 16 congregations had experienced noticeable and steady declines in both membership and worship attendance. In all cases, the decline in weekly church attendance had been substantial. Eight of the congregations describe themselves as mainline and eight describe themselves as conservative and/or evangelical. Two of the congregations (both mainline) had female senior pastors, and three (two mainline, one conservative) had women serving as associates on the pastoral staff. In every congregation, more women than men were in attendance at the worship service when congregants completed the survey.

A total of 551 congregants between the ages of 18 and 101 (M age = 56.5) completed an eight-page questionnaire about their congregation. The survey was distributed at the close of a Sunday morning worship service to all adults in

attendance and consisted of both quantitative measures and open-ended questions. In every congregation except one that participated in the survey, at least two-thirds of the adults completed the survey. The survey included the following two items: 'How important do you believe it is for you to attend church services every week?' and 'How important do you believe that religion is for your own life?', each with a 10-point response scale that ranged from 1 ('not at all important') to 10 ('essential').

Formal interviews were conducted with 21 church leaders (16 men and 5 women, including 16 ordained clergy of whom 13 were men and 3 were women). In 15 of the congregations, at least one pastor was interviewed; in a few cases an additional one or two church leaders were interviewed. A total of 71 church members (42 women, 29 men) in ten of the congregations participated in 11 focus groups. In all but one case, survey participants volunteered to participate in a focus group; in one congregation the pastor insisted in choosing the focus group participants. I attended worship services at each of the congregations and took copious field notes. Whenever possible I also attended church business meetings, board or session meetings, adult study groups, and church-related social activities.

The larger research project is a sociological attempt to understand the social dynamics of congregational decline; it was neither designed nor intended to elicit an understanding of ways that men's and women's experience of congregational life differ, but the data that emerged show important ways that the responses of men and women were dissimilar.

Results

Effects of Congregational Decline

Congregants who indicated in the survey that they had observed a decline in their congregation were then asked an open-ended question: 'How has the decline in attendance affected you personally?'. The responses to the question demonstrate that the female respondents were more likely to express their sadness at the decline of the congregation, while the men were more likely to express that they feel upset. Not surprisingly, in the open-ended responses both men and women expressed that the decline of their congregation was a cause of sadness in their lives. However, of the 378 respondents (75.1% of all respondents) who had observed that their congregation had declined, almost twice as many women (27.1%) than men (15.5%) wrote that they felt 'sad' or 'sorry' because of the decline (the words were chosen by the respondents and descriptive words such as 'sad' or 'sorry' did not appear

anywhere in the survey). On the other hand, to the same open-ended question it was the men who were more likely to respond with emotion about how they were personally affected by the decline of their church.

In addition to survey results, in the focus groups the women were more likely to express grief about changes in society and to question whether such changes are good, while the men wanted to know what action could be taken to reverse the congregation's decline, a concern that was not expressed by any of the women. Unlike any of the women, men in several congregations asked if the research results would provide guidance about what the church should do to arrest the decline. Unlike any of the men, several women asked for confirmation from the research that most other churches are also experiencing decline.

Importance of Church Attendance

In every one of these declining congregations there were many more women than men in attendance. Among survey respondents who indicated their gender, 293 (57.3%) were women, and 218 (42.7%) were men, which when compared to the actual numbers of men and women in attendance indicates that men were more likely to complete the questionnaire than were women. Overall, men who were in attendance at the worship services rated the importance of attending church every week with a mean score that was significantly lower than the mean score among the women (Table 1).

However, this difference was statistically significant only in mainline and not in conservative congregations (Table 2). This finding is in keeping with the argument by Walter and Davie (1998) that "it is the mainline churches that demonstrate the greatest fall off in attendance by men" and that "the Independents, Pentecostals and the Orthodox have been able to resist this trend" (p. 642).

TABLE 1 *Importance of church attendance and religion by gender*

	<i>N</i> =	Men 213		Women 287		<i>T</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Importance of attending church services weekly		7.98	2.17	8.63	1.57	-3.89***
Importance of religion in own life		8.78	1.69	9.37	1.21	-4.60***

Note. *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 2 *Importance of church attendance and religion by gender and tradition*

	<i>N</i> =	Men		Women		<i>T</i>
		127		182		
Mainline congregations		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Importance of attending church services weekly		7.57	2.39	8.51	1.51	-4.27***
Importance of religion in own life		8.5	1.74	9.36	1.05	-5.09***
	<i>N</i> =	Men		Women		<i>T</i>
		85		105		
Conservative congregations		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Importance of attending church services weekly		8.5	1.65	8.83	1.66	-1.11
Importance of religion in own life		9.1	1.57	9.40	1.45	-1.35

Note. *** *p* < .001.

Although the women are somewhat more devout in church attendance, men's attitudes about attending church faithfully are affected by church decline more than are women's attitudes about church attendance. For respondents who had not observed that their congregations had declined (even though in every case the congregation had experienced substantial decline) there was no significant difference between men and women regarding the importance they placed on faithfully attending church services. But for those who did realize that their congregation is in decline, the effect on men's attitudes toward faithfully attending church was significantly greater than it was on women (Table 3). Men who had not observed that their congregation is in decline place greater importance on attending faithfully, but their sense of the importance of weekly attendance decreases when they believe the congregation is in decline, much more so than for women. If the quantitative data indicates that men do not rate church attendance as highly as women, why would a decline in church attendance affect their behaviour more than the behaviour of women?

TABLE 3 *Change in importance of attending weekly based on observation of decline*

	<i>N</i> =	Men 48		Women 73		
No decline observed by respondent		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>
Importance of attending church services weekly		8.29	1.80	8.66	1.53	-1.22
	<i>N</i> =	Men 155		Women 204		
Decline observed by respondent		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>
Importance of attending church services weekly		7.85	2.32	8.62	1.62	-3.71***

Note. *** $p < .001$.

Qualitative Data: The Effect of Decline on Faith and Practice

The complexity of men's attitudes toward faith and practice is expressed by one man's answer to the open-ended survey question about how he has been personally affected by the decline in his congregation: "[It] makes it hard to stay at this church. If it were not for the pastor, I would leave" (male 1:17).² In a focus group this man, a long-standing member who serves on the governing board of his church, expressed a low level of commitment to the congregation because of the decline he has observed, but he has such a high level of respect for the pastor that for the pastor's sake he keeps attending even though he would rather leave. He is not alone in thinking about leaving a declining congregation. In their responses to the same open-ended survey question about how they are affected personally by the decline of their congregation,

² Respondents are identified by gender and by congregation. 'male 1:17' indicates the man who is the 17th survey respondent in congregation 1.

several men indicated in their responses that they are now less interested in attending:

Male 1:27. Discouraging – made me want to leave too.

Male 5:183. [I'm] looking elsewhere for a replacement.

Male 6:200. Makes me less enthusiastic as a participant. I have considered transferring to a more 'vital' congregation.

Male 7:248. I attend less often. I feel a lack of passion.

Male 8:265. [I] feel like the church is dying; [I] may need to find a new one.

Male 12:499. I don't want to go as often.

In one conservative church where I conducted the survey and recruited volunteers for future interviews, by the time I returned for the interviews one of the young men in leadership had left the congregation. In the interview, he described his feelings this way:

It was saddening and disheartening for me when I looked into the pews and saw so much empty space, and the church, it was no secret, when I attended church meetings it was no secret that they knew that their population had decreased. It's like they don't want to make the congregation better. I'd say that's the main thing they're not doing – they're not trying.

MALE 1:1

In their survey responses, a number of men described the sense of hurt and loss they feel because of the decline of their congregation (the men chose their own words – they were not suggested anywhere in the survey):

Male 2:77. Very strongly. Has [strengthened] my decision to attend less. Heavy weight that is tacitly understood, felt. Not always expressed.

Male 2:119. It hurts! What will life be 50 years from now? Will there be any Christians left in the world?

Male 6:2. Yeah it hurts to see maybe a dozen young people up front on a Sunday morning, when you think back at one time there were 400 children in this congregation.

Male 11:416. In the past, with some people who left it was almost like a death in the family. People hurt, didn't understand and kept asking what's wrong but really they knew what was wrong.

In their survey responses, some men expressed feelings of frustration about the decline of their congregation:

Male 9:352. Caused me to be frustrated that I have no ideas for halting the decline.

Male 9:378. [I] don't understand why folks stop attending. Their reasons sometimes seem like excuses.

Male 9:388. Made the need to change more important.

Male 14:526. Determination that church *MUST* change...or we will be closing our doors.

Male 14:531. We are dying!

Responses to the same open-ended survey question show that the observation that their congregation is in decline makes some men question their faith:

Male 1:20. It is not as easy to accept the Word of God when it looks like no one believes it or wants to go to church. Makes religion look less important.

Male 4:160. Great doubt in what the church is trying to say.

Male 6:212. A wishing for the days of old (not so old) when [the church] was full of people on Sunday, etc. Leaves us wondering why?? Is it modern technology or a less caring attitude?

Male 7:255 Some sense of irrelevance can creep in to my mind. There can be a tendency to blame ourselves and feel guilty.

Male 12:456. I think it causes people to question their motives for coming to church. 'Where have they gone and what am I not seeing?'

Neither in their survey responses nor in any of the focus groups did even one woman express such doubts or questions. Many women expressed sadness, discouragement, depression, or worry about the future of the congregation, but no woman suggested that her faith was affected negatively. Some of the men expressed fear and anxiety:

Male 2:108. Makes us feel vulnerable and anxious about the future.

Male 5:170. Fear, anxiety.

Male 5:178. The fear that the next generations will not be part of the church community.

Male 5:184. Decreased satisfaction, unhappiness, concern over the future of the church. General depression. Concern for the future.

Male 8:1. I actually lose sleep over the declining numbers and the way people are treated.

Some men referred to the loss of family and friends in their worship experience:

Male 2:87. My children have gone to a more 'modern' church.

Male 2:128. Disappointment that friends no longer attend. Sad that my own family members do not attend.

Male 5:191. Church not meeting their needs, especially the age group 20–40 years old. Not meeting Sunday School needs. Feel a loss of the church family.

Male 5:169. Lonely while in church. Feel let down.

Male 10:373. As my children have grown, the lack of young people has caused them to seek other churches.

The pastor of a mainline congregation noted a man in her declining congregation who has expressed to her his discouragement:

There was an 86-year-old man who came in at the beginning of this week, and I know him, he's a lovely man, and he was very discouraged. His three children don't go to church, his grandchildren don't go to church – they were all raised. And he's not feeling well himself, so he's a bit depressed. 'I don't know if I should keep coming' and 'what's the point anymore?'

PASTOR 6

These men's responses were quite unlike the responses from the women. In all of the survey responses, interviews, and focus groups, only one woman expressed hurt, none expressed that the decline had had any negative effect on their religious faith or commitment, and only two said they were thinking of going to another church. In fact, to the open-ended survey question 30 women (10.2%) explicitly responded that the decline in their church has had no effect on them, while only 7 men (3.2%) said it has had no effect.

Unlike any of the responses from the men, several of the women provided responses to the same open-ended survey question that express positive aspects of the congregation's decline:

Female 1:13. Many have 'stepped up' to assume more responsibility.

Female 1:14. Makes me pray; makes me think and evaluate.

Female 1:25. I've become more involved.

Female 1:36. Gives new opportunities to serve.

Female 2:102. Look for solutions. Increase my personal commitment.

Female 6:226. Made me pray more. I call people to tell them we miss them.

Female 7:234. It has impacted my children and has led them to invite friends to Sunday School and youth fellowship.

Female 8:323. Shown me the need to above all seek God's direction for where he wants his church to go.

Female 10:387. Should inspire us to reach out and encourage others to be involved.

Female 9:387. Feel that we are needed to participate.

Female 9:394. Makes one rethink how to better meet community's needs.

Female 12:443. I think it is good to have a small congregation.

Female 9:492. Allows us to become better acquainted with some who do attend – encourages me to become more involved.

These women view the decline of their congregation as a test of their faith and commitment, or perhaps as an opportunity to learn and grow spiritually. In one focus group that was unusual because it was the only one made up entirely of women, one participant explained her reaction to the decline of her congregation by saying, "I often ask the question, I wonder what God is trying to do here? Where do we fit into that?" (Female 2:6). Such perspectives were very different from any of the responses of men. Neither in the open-ended survey responses nor in any of the focus groups did even one man refer to any silver lining in the decline of his congregation.

Aune (2004) concluded that it is the gender imbalance in religious congregations that increases the opportunities available to women, but this study demonstrates that such opportunities are not solely the result of gender imbalance (which exists in most congregations) (p. 197). The opportunities arise specifically because of the congregation's experience of decline. It is not just that there are not enough men to fill positions; in declining congregations men become less motivated to be involved while women become spiritually invigorated.

Since the quantitative measure indicates that women rate religion and church attendance to be more important to their lives, it would seem curious that the men seem more upset by decline than the women were it not for the qualitative data that show that many women experience spiritual growth in the midst of congregational decline in ways that are unlikely for men. The women's own personal faith commitment is an important resource for responding to decline in ways that were not expressed by any of the men. Women rely on their religious faith more than men when coping with congregational decline.

Social Differences

There are some important differences in the ways that men and women perceive and experience the decline of their congregation. First, the data provide evidence that women may have been prepared in congregations and/or in

society to apply their religious faith to difficult circumstances in ways that men have not similarly been prepared. That some women explained that decline had led them to pray more or to more fervently seek God's will supports such a hypothesis. On the other hand, men seem to have been socialized to focus on results and are not prepared to respond with increased religious faith in the same way when the desired results are not apparent (see Krause, Ellison, & Marcum, 2002, for a discussion of ways that women and men are socialized differently and receive social supports in different ways from society and from religious congregations).

A similar difference existed in the responses of the clergy. It was only male pastors who talked about feelings of guilt and failure as leaders. In the interviews of pastors, three of the men became quite emotional (including two who began to cry) while talking about being personally affected by the decline of their congregations; five of the men spoke about seeking a different vocation. The three women clergy who were interviewed all expressed more of a pastoral role in the face of the uncertain future of their congregations. One woman who is a mainline pastor quite unemotionally explained her perspective on the congregation's uncertain future this way:

At least we're going to go out with a bang. We're going to make a difference. Before we leave, it's kind of like, okay if we have to close, if the ministry in this place is done, if God's purpose for us in this place is done, then at least when we go out we can say, we've at least been able to contribute and be Christ's presence in the community in this manner.

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Second, it was very apparent that these congregations provide better social networks for women than for men. The reasons appear to be complex. For generations, women's organizations in most congregations provided leadership opportunities and positions of influence for women at a time when such opportunities were unavailable either in the wider congregation or in society. The church women's organizations not only provided such opportunities, but over time they developed as important and lasting social networks. Because of those social ties, such organizations persist even in congregations where women now provide the majority of church leadership. Meanwhile, similar organizations for men never developed to the same extent because men were involved instead in the leadership of the whole congregation. Consequently, in most congregations organized social ties did not develop in the same way among men. Women organized and directed the congregations' social life. With women now assuming many positions of congregational leadership, and

in most of these declining congregations the women have assumed the majority of leadership positions, the women find themselves both with strong social ties in the congregation and with leadership positions that carry authority and responsibility. The men no longer fill many leadership positions, they are fewer in number, and they do not have the same social ties or social groups in the church to make the congregation a central aspect of their social lives.

Before the worship service began at one mainline congregation, I overheard a conversation between two men. A man leaned forward from the pew behind me to greet an older man sitting beside me. "You missed a great meal at the Men's Club supper this week," he said. The man beside me replied bluntly that he did not agree with the men's club now that all of the men of the congregation have automatically been made members. He stated that the church men's club should be only for those men who pay a membership fee, and that he would not be attending again until it changed. The man seated behind me quietly responded that if they had done that, only three men would have attended the supper. It seemed that the man beside me was looking for a social group where 'belonging' has meaning while the reality is that no such high-commitment men's social organization exists or is possible. Yet the congregation has such a high-commitment organization for women. Congregations provide for women the social opportunities that developed before women were as prominent in leadership but now that women have also assumed most leadership roles, men may see church as 'women's work' as one mainline pastor expressed it. At a monthly council meeting at another mainline church, one of the two men (Male 4:1) referred apologetically to the "oestrogen/testosterone imbalance" evident in both the church council (seven women, two men) and in the congregation on Sunday morning.

The data suggest that men are more focused on the church's level of attendance and membership than are women. For many men and for the men who are pastors especially, a church that is in decline means failure and shame. Men expressed that such decline causes hurt and doubt, that it leads to more infrequent attendance, and that it causes some men to consider leaving for another congregation. Few women expressed those responses; one even expressed that she prefers a smaller church, and several were enthusiastic that there are more opportunities for them to serve as the size of the congregation decreases. The women expressed that they are less negatively affected than men by a decline in attendance and membership and that they are better able to respond positively in the face of the decline in their congregations.

The women in this study were not so much focused on reversing the decline as they were interested in how to cope as the congregation became smaller. One woman said that being in a declining church is "like hosting a family

dinner, and many decline the invitation" (Female 2:117). That is a social image that expresses a sense of sadness, disappointment, and loss. Several women expressed similar sentiments: that they miss friends and family members who used to attend with them. The men on the other hand were likely to express concern about what will happen if the decline is not reversed: that the church will close and that society will be negatively affected. In the focus groups, men used business metaphors to refer to the church, while women more often used family metaphors.

For social scientists, the use of quantitative measures that count participation in ritual practices is convenient, but it may be misleading if less frequent church attendance among men does not mean that they are less religiously devout. Sullins (2006) distinguishes helpfully between affective (personal piety) religiousness and active (organizational participation) religiousness, arguing that personal piety among men may in some instances be greater than that of women even though the women are actively participating in the organization at higher levels. The qualitative data from this study underscore the importance of that distinction: the affective religiousness of the men may actually lead to lower levels of attendance, at least in declining congregations, while decline either has no effect or in many cases has a positive effect on the active religious participation of women.

If men find religious meaning not in the social networks within congregations but in the congregation's achievements and ability to influence the wider society, then qualitative measures of meaning would be more salient for understanding the extent of men's religiosity in comparison to women. The qualitative data suggest that men find meaning in a religious congregation that is achieving goals while women (including women clergy) find meaning in the internal social relationships of the congregation and in the experience of spiritual consolation.

The data demonstrate that in declining congregations, men and women experience congregational life in quite different ways. In a declining congregation, the men are not necessarily less frequent in attendance because they are less religiously inclined. It was the fact that religion was so important to some men that made the decline so frustrating that it led to less frequent attendance. Some men explicitly stated their frustration with the congregation's decline, whereas several women explicitly stated that they attended more frequently and were more involved because of the decline. In those cases, less frequent attendance among men is not a sign of decreased religiosity, but of the fact that the decline affects their religious life quite differently (and more negatively) from the way it affects women. Women were less likely even to notice that their congregation was in decline, presumably because it made less

difference to their religious experience. When it comes to measuring the relative religiosity of men and women, quantitative measures may be problematic if men who consider religion to be very important respond to congregational decline by attending less often while religiously devout women respond to decline by attending more frequently or by not even noticing that a decline is taking place.

Conclusion

The data from this study of declining Protestant congregations provide important new insights regarding ways that the religious lives of men and women differ. In particular, the qualitative data show that men's religious experience is more closely tied to the congregation's decline in attendance and membership than is the case for women in the same congregations. Men find no spiritual consolation in a declining congregation while women find new opportunities amidst the decline. For many men, including clergy, a declining congregation is a negative experience that may lead to religious doubt and a desire to attend less often or even to leave the congregation. Women, although they are likely to be saddened that friends no longer attend, see decline as a call for greater religious commitment and an opportunity for social closeness. Decline means that there are additional opportunities for women to serve in leadership as well as a heightened awareness of the importance of their service for the congregation. Rather than leading to religious doubts, decline leads many women to a greater appreciation of their religious beliefs and practices.

The qualitative data refute the idea that men's and women's differing rates of religious practice simply result from a 'time lag' between women and men in the process of being secularized (Trzebiatowska & Bruce, 2012, p. 178). In this study, the men are not leaving church because they have less interest in spirituality, and if they find religious beliefs implausible the men make it clear that it is not because of outside secularizing forces but because of their negative experience of congregational life. The women are not more devout because women lag behind in their susceptibility to secularizing forces but because the declining congregation takes on a more central role in their social lives. Methodologically, this study shows that qualitative data provide important new information about the meaning of religious practices that are measured by quantitative research methods.

Because this study of declining congregations was not originally designed to focus on religious differences between men and women, questions were not designed to elicit responses about the ways that men and women experience

the social life of their congregations in different ways. Instead, the unexpected and clear differences between the responses of men and women emerged from the qualitative data. Now that these differences have been identified and analyzed, there is an opportunity to formulate new research questions for future study.

It would be instructive to ask how the social lives of men and women differ in congregations, and then to investigate the effects that those differences have. Specifically, the following questions might be investigated: how have the social experiences of women, including their experiences of congregational life, prepared them to maintain their religious faith and their commitment to their faith community during times of congregational decline? How have women been socialized in congregations and/or in society in ways that prepare them to respond to decline in different ways than men respond? How are the social relationships in religious congregations different for women than for men? What are the main ways that women encourage and support one another socially in a declining congregation, what effect do those social supports and social ties have on their religious faith, and are those same supports available for men in the same congregations?

It would also be informative to see how the responses of women and men in declining congregations would compare to the responses of women and men in stable or growing congregations in order to determine whether the experience of decline accentuates differences that occur in congregations of all types or if these differences between men and women are only apparent in congregations that are experiencing decline.

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Teenage Participation in Local Church Life: Multiple Doors

*Philip Hughes**

Abstract

Many commentators have noted that individualism and consumerism have influenced how people in Western societies engage with religious traditions and institutions. This paper examines involvement with church through services and other activities among 4,161 pupils attending Catholic secondary schools in Australia in 2011–12. Participants were asked how often they attended worship at a church, and whether or not they had in engaged with other activities run by churches during the previous 12 months. Those who attended other church-related activities but not worship did not affirm as strongly as those who attended worship that religious faith helped shape their lives. However, they affirmed the importance of faith more than those who had no connections with a church, and they were also engaged in giving to charity, fund-raising and participation in social justice activities more than those who only attended worship. The results suggested that some of these young people were engaging with church in ways that suited their particular interests, rather than the expectations of their families or church community. In the effort to engage with young people, churches would do well to provide ‘many doors’ into a variety of activities through which connections can be made.

Keywords

church involvement – individualism – religion – Roman Catholic – teenagers

In modern, Western societies, in the words of Zygmunt Bauman, our being is socially constructed “first and foremost as consumers rather than as producers” (Bauman, 1992, p. 49 quoted in Miller, 2003, p. 53). People throughout the Western world are bombarded by a great range of products to be consumed,

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in their music, food, clothes, holidays, gadgets, and in every other aspects of life. The skills of people in the Western world in production have been narrowed as their roles as consumers have expanded. Miller (2003) notes that "as people spent less time in the skilled, traditional labor of domestic production, they had less experience as active producers and more as passive consumers" (p. 54).

There has long been a focus on the individual in Western societies, but, sociologically, individualism developed new forms in the 1960s and 1970s as traditions came to be seen as secondary to the interests of the individual (Giddens, 1994), and categories of gender, age, social class, political and religious affiliation faded in their influence on the shape of the individual as life began to be seen as a biography to be created by individual (Giddens, 1991; Heelas & Woodhead, 2005). In many societies, children are raised to be obedient to others, such as their parents or the elders of the community, and thus to act in terms of what their parents consider to be appropriate for the family or what the elders consider to be appropriate for the community. However, in the typically smaller family units of Western societies since the 1960s and 1970s, parents have focused on meeting the needs of the individual child (Berger, Berger & Kellner, 1974, p. 173), so that from their earliest years, children are raised reflecting on their own needs and interests. Hence, Westerners, including most Australians of Western heritage, have grown up seeing life as something for the individual to create according to their own personality, interests and desires, rather than in terms of fulfilling certain roles attached to gender, social class or religious heritage.

Sociologically, contemporary Western individualism is seen in the priority of the individual over family or community in the formation of social wellbeing, and in the notions of rights and responsibilities. This does not necessarily mean that Western people are self-centred and selfish, but that their thinking begins with the individual. Nevertheless, such individualism can easily become a focus on the self to the exclusion of the needs of others (Bond, 2004). This individualism interacts with consumerism in such a way that for many Westerners the focus of life is on meeting their personal needs through the personal consumption of goods and services. Music, for instance, has changed from being the skilled practices of a community to something that is chosen by an individual according to their personal preferences. As such, 'music products' are taken out of their original contexts, whether it be folk festivals, songs for working in the fields, accompaniment to dining in European palaces, religious meditations or social comment and critique. For the purposes of the exchange of the product, music is 'packaged' by the

marketers into commodities which can be interchanged for money, that can function in any context, and which can be used at the whim of the individual. Much of the listening to music occurs individually at a time and place chosen by the individual, totally separated from the music's original social, geographical or historical context.

There has been much discussion for more than 20 years about the impact of the individualism and consumerism of postmodernity on religious faith (for example, Ahlbäck & Dahla, 2009; Flanagan & Jupp, 2009; Heelas & Woodhead, 2005; Lyon, 2000; Miller, 2003; Roof, 1993, 1999). Many kinds of impacts have been noted. At a basic level, Miller (2003, p. 78) notes one impact as the rising interest in the material aspects of religion, from prayer beads and icons to jewellery and clothing, as well as from books to music. Consumer mentality also influences the sort of rituals in which people choose to engage. Liturgy must be accessible, even colourful, but not confrontational, unless it is a condemnation of those who are not participating.

More generally, the choices of the religious traditions in which people engage may be seen as demonstrations of the consumer culture of the Western world. It has been widely suggested that religion has become a 'therapeutic enterprise' (Miller, 2003, p. 85; Smith & Denton, 2005, pp. 172–175). In relation to adolescents in the USA, Smith and Denton say, "Faith and spirituality become centered less around a God believed in and God's claims on lives, and more around the believing (or perhaps even unbelieving) self and its personal realization and happiness." They explain that 'therapeutic individualists' seek out religious and spiritual practices, feelings and experiences that satisfy their own subjectively defined wants and needs (p. 175). Miller (2003, p. 72) puts it in similar terms: religion is seen as something which can bring personal benefits to the individual such as a sense of inner harmony, heightened self-realisation, or emotional wellbeing. People try out Buddhist Vipassana meditation and Jewish Midrash to see what fits best with their personal sense of spirituality. Some have found the religious culture too bound in tradition and insufficiently pliable for modern consumeristic sentiments. Hence, they have begun to talk about forming their own religion or spirituality, such as the 'Sheilaism' identified by Robert Bellah and his co-authors in *Habits of the Heart* (2008). Sheila Larson, one of the interviewees in this book, described her religion as something which was shaped by her own personal experiences and was quite independent of traditional religions.

In the individualization and commodification of life, some people have moved away altogether from the terminology and practice of religions. Instead they have taken up the language of spirituality. This terminology has strong individualistic undertones, and spirituality is often contrasted with the

traditions, organizations and communities of religions. Carrette and King (2005) see two stages in the recent development of the language of 'spirituality'. The first, they describe as emphasising "the association of 'spirituality' with the interior life of the individual", which, they argue, occurred in conjunction with development of the concept of the individual as "an independent, autonomous and largely self-contained entity within society" (p. 41). The second stage occurred in the late 1980s and 1990s as 'spirituality' was co-opted by corporate enterprise to meet its own demands for a flexible and compliant workforce and to replace religion with something more malleable and marketable that would not be critical of corporate capitalist culture (p. 45).

Heelas and Woodhead (2005) also argue that a massive cultural shift has occurred in Western culture. At its heart, they see a change in how the aims of life are conceived, from fulfilling duties associated with social roles to the fulfilling of individual subjectivity in terms of knowing oneself and responding to one's inner deep desires. While they argue that this change in culture initiated what they describe as the 'spiritual revolution', it also had a differential impact on different types of churches. They argued that those churches which were least open to the fulfilment of the subjectivity of individuals declined most rapidly while those churches most attuned to fulfilling the subjectivity of individuals experienced least decline, some even growing.

At a practical level, the desire for personal fulfilment is sometimes seen in the ways that many people shop around for churches when they move to a new area. They make their choices not just on the denominational tradition, but on the ways in which they are welcomed, the 'user-friendliness' of the service, the atmosphere, and other factors. In Australia, Sam Hey (2013) has noted the growth of megachurches as reflecting the competitive marketplace in which religious organisations now exist: "In the midst of this free market competition, the megachurches have grown because their participants and leaders have treated religion as a product that must be marketed to compete successfully with other potential interests" (p. 233). He notes that "the market orientation of megachurches is evident in the way their leaders identify and respond to market opportunities, being 'seeker friendly', building brand loyalty and marketing their 'products'" (p. 234). Within the individualistic and consumer-orientated culture of the Western world, people look for activities and experiences which will enhance their 'self-realisation and happiness' in religious organisations, it is postulated that people will engage with churches in a piecemeal and individualistic way. Rather than joining a community and participating in events of that community, people will look for activities and forms of involvement that reflect their personal interests and which they think will enrich their personal experiences.

Most churches offer a range of activities through which they seek to grow faith and build community. However, the centre of their life is, in most cases, the weekly services of worship. When one looks on the noticeboard outside a church, or visits the website, or even makes a phone-call to a church, it is mostly the weekly services that are advertised. Once inside the church, one picks up the weekly bulletin and finds details of all the other activities that are occurring in the church such as prayer groups, bible studies, music groups, choirs, social nights, sporting teams, craft activities, social justice activities, and the provision of welfare.

The first research question addressed by this paper is whether young people choose among the various activities offered by a church, becoming involved in those which interest them personally rather than identifying with a religious community and becoming engaged in all the activities of the community, if they are involved in a church at all. This would mean, for some young people, that they would become involved in activities other than worship if these other activities were seen as more personally fulfilling. There is some anecdotal evidence for people picking and choosing the sorts of activities they are involved in within a church. In interviews over several years with students in Catholic and other church-related schools in various projects, the Christian Research Association has asked students about whether they might be involved in a church in the future. Some have responded positively. When asked what forms that involvement would take, some young people have explained that they are really not interested in attending worship services, but would like to be involved in social justice or welfare activities. They would be happy to help with a soup kitchen, for example (Hughes, 2012, p. 16).

A second research question emerges from the first. If people were involved in specific limited activities within a church, rather than with the community as a whole, what influence would this have on the impact of religion on their lives? Would it mean that religion would have less influence on their beliefs and values and on the extent to which they saw religion as shaping their lives? Would they have lower levels of commitment to religious faith?

Method

The opportunity to test these research questions came through data collected during surveys of students aged between 12 and 18 in Catholic secondary schools in Australia in 2011 and 2012. These surveys were following earlier surveys conducted in 2005 and 2006 as part of a national study of youth spirituality. The original surveys contained a variety of questions about religious faith,

spirituality, values, and religious practices. In 2011 and 2012, the following question was added: 'In the past 12 months, how often have you attended the following activities associated with a church (apart from Mass or services)? 1. A small group for discussion or study; 2. A social justice group; 3. A sporting team; 4. A youth group; 5. A music or drama group; 6. A community welfare group (e.g., Vinnies)'. For each item there four possible responses: 'Never'; 'On special occasions'; 'Monthly or more'; 'Weekly or more'. Other questions in the survey provided the opportunity to explore how responses to this set of questions related to levels of involvement in church services, and how responses were associated with religious belief and commitment, with a personal sense of purpose, principles and satisfaction in life, and with social action.

All Catholic Education Offices around Australia were offered the opportunity to run these surveys for the cost of school-level reports. Four dioceses in two states of Australia agreed to use the surveys. These dioceses represented a range of social contexts: urban, rural and remote parts of Australia, highly multicultural suburban to monocultural areas of people of Anglo-Celtic origins. In some dioceses, all Catholic schools were encouraged to participate in the survey. In other dioceses, a representative group of schools was chosen by the Catholic Education Office for participation. In choosing the representative group, it was ensured that the schools were located in different socio-economic areas of the diocese, and thus had some potential to represent the variety of school contexts in the diocese. In all, 29 Catholic schools used these surveys among their students.

In some schools, all students completed the survey. In other schools, just students in years 5, 7, 9 and 11 completed it. However, in all cases, whole classes of students were invited to participate, which meant that there was no self-selection in undertaking the surveys and virtually a 100 per cent completion rate. Students who were positive about religious faith were equally likely to be surveyed as those who were not. Again, the selection processes were designed to ensure that a full range of students in terms of age, ability and social background participated and that no particular groups of students were excluded through the selection processes. In total, 4,161 students completed surveys. The surveys were completed anonymously on computers in school class time.

While the students were all attending Catholic schools, many were attending non-Catholic churches. Students were not asked their denominational affiliation. While many students would respond to such a question in terms of family identity, interviews with young people have indicated that that question is not meaningful for many young people today, precisely because of the

post-traditionalism and conception of the individual as making choices about denominational attendance not on the basis of family identity, but on the basis of what activities are found to be attractive. However, students were asked about the denominations of the churches they had attended in the past 12 months and invited to name more than one denomination if they had attended activities in the churches of more than one denomination.

Results

Attendance at Worship and Other Church-Related Activities

Comparing the 2005 and 2011 surveys, the proportion of students attending a church service monthly or more often fell from 35% to 27%. However, the proportion of students who said they never attended also dropped from 34% in 2005 to 30% in 2011. There was an increase in the proportion who attended occasionally, from 31% to 43%.

Forty-five per cent of students said that they attended other activities associated with local churches monthly or more often. When these two forms of involvement were put together, it was found that 15% of students said they attended worship and other activities in a church monthly or more often, 9% of students said they attended worship but not other activities monthly or more often, 30% of students attended other activities, but not worship monthly or more often, and 46% of students attended neither worship nor other activities monthly or more often. Overall, 13% of the total sample said they were frequently involved in one or more of these other church activities but never attended services of worship. This meant that more students were involved in church-related activities apart from services of worship than were involved in worship. The connections between students and the churches were not primarily through attendance at worship, and churches had more connections with students through activities other than through attendance at worship.

Gender and Involvement

Girls attended worship more frequently than boys with 25% of girls reporting that they attended monthly or more often compared with 21% of the boys. However, boys reported attending other activities associated with churches more frequently than girls: 33% compared with 29%.

Age and Involvement

There were some differences of involvement, both in worship and in other activities, by age (Figure 1). In general, there was a tendency for older students

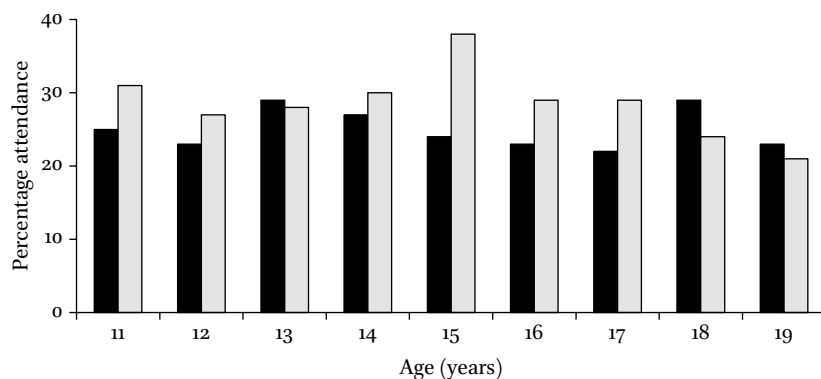


FIGURE 1 *Percentage of students attending worship (solid bars) or other church activities (shaded bars) by age.*

Note. Attendance rated as at least once a month.

to attend worship less frequently than younger students, with the exception of those who were 18 years of age, suggesting that some students cease attending worship services during their years in secondary school. On the other hand, the attendance of those students 11 and 12 years old was lower than those who were 13 and 14 years old, which may suggest that it represents another cohort of young people with a lower 'base-line' of attendance at worship while in primary school.

Involvement in other activities associated with a local church also tended to drop away in the final years of school. However, attendance was maintained in these other activities over the period when a significant drop occurred in involvement in worship during the middle years of secondary schooling. The patterns of involvement outside worship varied according to the nature of the activity. In musical bands, sport and youth groups, the level of activity dropped after year 9 in secondary school. The level of involvement in welfare activities was maintained a little longer, through year 10. However, in relation to small discussion groups and social justice groups, there were quite high levels of continuing involvement through years 11 and 12.

Worship Attendance and Involvement

The relationship between attending worship and attending other activities varied between different sorts of activity. More than half of those involved in youth groups, social justice groups and small discussion groups attended services of worship monthly or more often. However, less than half of those who were involved in church-related community welfare activities, music and drama groups and sporting teams attended worship monthly or more often (Table 1).

TABLE 1 *Involvement in worship for students involved in other church activities*

Church-related activity	N	Percentage attending worship		
		Never	Occasionally	At least monthly
Small group for discussion or study	276	14%	30%	56%
Social justice group	185	12%	28%	60%
Sporting team	1457	31%	41%	29%
Youth group	421	10%	26%	64%
Music or drama group	502	20%	39%	41%
Community welfare group	266	17%	34%	49%

Note. Total group of students surveyed: 4,161 in 29 schools.

Involvement in Church-Related Activities and Family Involvement

Are these additional activities simply keeping young people attached to a church for a while before they cease attending altogether? Of those who were not attending worship services monthly or more often at the time of the survey, but who were attending other activities, 26% indicated that they used to attend worship services frequently when they were in primary school. Thus, they had decreased their attendance since that time, but were continuing to be involved in other activities in the church. However, 42% had attended worship services less than monthly while in primary school and 32% had never attended worship services when in primary school. Thus, the majority of students who were involved in non-worship activities did not have a history of regular involvement with church, implying that such activities had attracted them into the life of the church.

Most of those students who said they attended services of worship monthly or more often were attending with their parents: 73% indicated that their mothers attended at least once a month, and 58% indicated the same was true for their fathers. It should be noted that some students failed to respond to the question about their father's involvement, suggesting that this might slightly overestimate the proportion of fathers attending worship. In comparison, among those who did not attend worship monthly but were attending other activities, just 11% indicated that their mothers attended church at least once a month, and 7% said their fathers attended at that frequency. Many of these students said that their parents attended services on special occasions. However, it would appear these young people who

attended activities other than worship were more influenced by the involvement of their friends. Although no direct questions were asked about the involvement of friends in non-worship activities, 22% of these students indicated that they had close friends who attended Mass or services of worship monthly or more often.

Denominations of Churches Attended

Students were asked about the denominations of the churches they had attended in the past year. Overall, 36% had not attended a church at all in the past year, 54% attended churches of just one denomination, 7% had attended churches of two different denominations, and 3% had attended churches of three or more denominations. Two-thirds (67%) who had attended indicated a Catholic Church, 6% an Anglican church, 4% a Baptist church, 4% a Uniting Church, 3% Churches of Christ, 3% a Lutheran church, and 2% a Pentecostal church. The survey did not measure the denominations of the churches in which additional activities were taking place. However, anecdotal evidence through interviews with students suggests that it was not infrequent for Catholic students to be attending a youth group in a Protestant church while also attending Mass in their Catholic parish.

Of those who had been to a Catholic Church in the past year, 28% had been to additional activities frequently, but had been to Mass less than once a month. The proportion attending just additional activities apart from worship was higher among those connected with Baptist churches (30%), Anglican churches (35%), Uniting churches (36%) and Lutheran churches (38%). On the other hand, most of those associated with Pentecostal churches (68%) and Coptic churches (59%) were involved in both extra activities and worship and only a few attended just the extra activities.

Immigrant Involvement

Another factor that is evident from the data is that these other activities were attracting proportionately more Australian-born students than immigrants (Table 2). Although Australian-born students generally had lower levels of involvement in churches, higher proportions attended just other activities. Overseas-born students were more likely than Australian-born students to be attending just worship and to be attending both worship and other activities.

Religious Belief, Personal Characteristics and Social Involvement

A range of questions about religious commitment and practice, about personal life and social involvement were included in the survey. It is possible, therefore, to examine whether the profiles of students who attended only

TABLE 2 *Percentage of Australian and overseas-born students in Catholic schools attending worship and/or other activities in local churches*

Place of birth	N	Neither worship nor other activities	Only other activities	Only worship	Both worship and other activities
Australia	3639	47%	30%	8%	15%
Elsewhere	403	40%	25%	10%	24%

Note. $N = 4,042$ (119 students did not answer the question on place of birth). In each column the differences between the two groups of students were significant at $p < .01$.

additional activities were different either those who did not attend anything connected with a church or those who also attended worship (Table 3). As expected, worship attendance was associated with greater religious affirmation and practice of faith. Those who also attended other church-based activities generally had higher levels of affirmation than those who simply attended worship. Religious scores were also higher among those who attended only non-worship activities than among those who were not involved in churches in any way.

There was a lower level of belief in God among these people who attended only other church activities, compared with those who attended worship. Approximately one third (34%) of them indicated that they believed in a personal God involved in the lives of people compared with a little under two thirds (62%) of those who attended worship. However, there was a significant difference between these students who attended only other church activities apart from worship and those who attended neither worship nor other church activities. At the same time, among those who attended other activities apart from worship, almost half (49%) said either that they believed in some sort of spirit or life-force, or that they do not know what to think about the existence of God. Another 10% were clear that they did not believe there was any spirit, life-force or God.

The differences in the nature of church involvement were not associated with strong differences in other personal characteristics measured. Many students who attended neither worship nor other church activities felt that life had a purpose and affirmed they had strong principles which guided how they lived. Nevertheless, attendance at both worship and other church activities was associated with higher levels of affirmation of sense of purpose. More students involved in church activities other than worship affirmed their involvement in social justice and fund-raising activities than students who attended

TABLE 3 *Religious, personal and social beliefs, attitudes and activities in relation to level of church involvement*

	Neither worship nor other activities	Only other activities	Only worship	Both worship and other activities
<i>N</i> =	1926	1236	362	637
<i>Religious factors</i>				
Made a commitment of life to God	11%	17%	34%	49%
Try to base life on the teachings and example of Jesus	16%	23%	53%	61%
Religious faith helps shape how one lives	8%	12%	32%	47%
Pray often	14%	19%	42%	58%
Believe in a God who is a personal being involved in people's lives	28%	34%	62%	70%
Believe there is a God who created the world but is not involved in it	6%	7%	8%	4%
Believe there is some sort of spirit or life-force	27%	24%	15%	17%
Don't know what to think	27%	25%	13%	8%
I don't think there is any sort of spirit, God or life-force	13%	10%	2%	1%
<i>Personal factors</i>				
Feel that life has a purpose	54%	60%	53%	65%
Have strong principles which guide how one lives	36%	40%	40%	48%
<i>Social measures</i>				
Have often discussed political or social issues with friends	9%	9%	8%	16%
Have often discussed environmental issues with friends	6%	7%	8%	13%
Have often donated to charity	13%	16%	21%	29%
Have often taken part in fund-raising activities	8%	11%	8%	23%
Have taken part in social justice activities	6%	11%	9%	20%

Note. *N* = 4,161. Percentages are those who agreed with the statement. In each row the differences between the four groups of students were significant at $p < .01$.

worship but not other activities. However, significantly higher proportions of those students who were involved both in worship and in other activities affirmed their involvement in fund-raising, social justice activities, donations to charity, and discussion of environmental, political and social issues with friends.

Satisfaction in Life

In every area of life, the mean score of satisfaction was highest among those who attended both worship and other activities, with the exception of satisfaction in sporting activities (Table 4). In several areas of life including friends, hobbies and arts, home life, and life as a whole, the level of satisfaction in life was similar or a little higher among those who attended just other activities than among those who attended just worship. Those who attended worship tended to have higher levels of satisfaction in their school work and in their spiritual life. Those who attended just other activities had higher levels of satisfaction in relation to their sporting activities and their health and fitness than those who just attended worship and those who had no involvement.

TABLE 4 *Satisfaction in various areas of life in relation to level of church involvement*

	Neither worship nor other activities		Only other activities		Only worship		Both worship and other activities		
Mean satisfaction scores	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>
With friends	8.1	2.1	8.3	2.0	8.1	2.0	8.4	1.7	7.09***
With hobbies and arts	7.5	2.4	8.0	2.2	7.7	2.3	8.2	2.0	19.65***
With home	7.5	2.5	7.9	2.3	7.9	2.1	8.1	2.2	11.21***
With life as a whole	7.5	2.5	7.9	2.3	7.9	2.0	8.1	2.1	12.56***
With health and fitness	7.3	2.5	7.8	2.3	7.5	2.4	8.0	2.2	10.65***
In sports	7.1	2.7	8.0	2.3	7.2	2.6	7.9	2.2	37.52***
In school	6.5	2.4	6.6	2.3	7.1	2.1	7.4	2.1	28.04***
In spiritual life	5.8	3.0	5.9	2.8	7.1	2.4	7.6	2.2	83.25***

Note. *N* = 4,161. In each case, satisfaction was rated on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest).

*** *p* < .001.

Discussion

The decline in the religious practices of students in Australian Catholic schools has been tracked for many years (Flynn & Mok, 2002; Hughes, 2007). While the dominant pattern of declining levels of Mass attendance seems to be reflected in this study, the increase in the numbers attending occasionally is noteworthy. This increase in occasional attendance may reflect changing patterns of involvement in church life, in line with the theory that young people are participating on the basis of what they feel is their personal interest rather than on the basis of a duty to the communion. Hence, rather than a pattern of regular attendance, every week for some and two or three times a year for others, attendance in this sample appears to be more ad hoc, with many young people attending from time to time, sometimes for festivals, other times for personal reasons.

The survey responses show that many students were frequently involved in other activities associated with churches despite the lack of advertising or direct encouragement from the churches. Some of those involved frequently in other activities attended services of worship occasionally and some never attended worship. This different pattern implies that many young people were choosing what they were involved in, suggesting that they did not see themselves as involved generally in a community, but in particular activities which interested them.

The higher level of involvement of Australian-born than immigrant young people in these extra activities *without* attending worship reflects the different ways in which Australian-born young people approached the church. It is likely they have been more influenced than recent immigrants by Western individualistic consumer-style attitudes. Among young immigrants, there was a stronger sense of being involved in a community of which worship was the major activity and other activities complemented worship. These results also show that these additional activities have engaged some young people who had not attended church in the past and whose families had not been involved. These activities also helped to maintain links with young people who did attend worship in the past, but who had ceased that form of involvement.

The cross-tabulations of the nature of involvement with various measures of religion show that the levels of religious commitment among the students who engaged only in non-worship church-related activities was quite low compared with those who attended services of worship. Just 23% indicated they tried to base their lives on the teachings and example of Jesus, compared with 53% of those who attended worship and 61% of those who attended both worship and other activities. Few who attended just non-worship activities

indicated that religious faith helped shape how they lived. Few of them prayed often and they were generally more dubious about the existence of a personal God. At the same time, it is possible that these activities provided opportunities for the expression of Christian values in giving to charities and fund-raising and taking part in social justice activities. Certainly those involved in these extra church-related activities were more likely to have engaged in such activities than either those who just went to worship, or those who neither attended worship nor any other church-activities.

It is possible that the limited religious commitments of those involved in these additional activities may provide part of the reason for that level of involvement. Perhaps they were comfortable in these additional activities in relation to what they personally believed and what they saw the churches as teaching. However, they may not have been so comfortable in worship. Thus, they were involved in activities which did not demand a high level of commitment, or confidence in the major tenets of faith, but had some involvement in activities where Christian values were expressed and where discussion of the nature of life and faith could take place.

Conclusions

The results reported here are in line with the suggestion that young people in Australia engage in church activities in different ways and at different levels. Even though the churches are primarily opening their doors for worship, many young people find side-doors to a variety of groups and activities. Some of the young people who find these side-doors have not grown up within the church. It is likely that involvement, in many cases, is influenced more by friends than by parents, while involvement in worship is influenced mostly by parents. For other young people, who have been involved in worship in earlier years of their lives, these activities provide a way of maintaining contact with the churches.

The patterns of church involvement are in line with the hypothesis that in contemporary consumer society, people engage in the particular activities that interest them, rather than being involved in and committed to a community which holds certain beliefs and runs certain activities. Many young people seem to look at the activities as discrete options rather than seeing themselves as connected to the community as a whole. It could be argued that these young people are taking a self-centred, self-interested approach to their church involvement, but the data were not able to indicate young people's motivations. Involvement in social justice and social welfare activities indicates that for some involvement may be motivated by a desire to help others. It would

appear that the choice to be involved in worship, for example, is not simply a matter of personal enjoyment or family habits, but also a matter of personal belief and religious commitment. Many young people who are not sure they can affirm faith in God, or that prayer is meaningful, attend only non-worship activities associated with the church. Their patterns of involvement reflect the individualistic tendency to treat every activity, service and commodity as something distinct in which the individual can participate in their own way, rather than seeing activities as part of the life of wider community to which they belong.

What should churches do in response to this variety of forms of involvement? One response would be to say that these young people may be effectively 'free-riders'. The majority of them are not willing to make a commitment of faith. Many show no sign of becoming involved in the worship life of the church, but could be said to be using the church for their personal and individual interests. Another response might be that these other activities are providing a continuing form of contact with young people who are not sure about faith. In some cases, it is providing young people who have doubts about the content of belief opportunities to express Christian values in terms of social justice and the care of others, as well as opportunities to discuss Christian issues and to develop a sense of belonging to a Christian community. In a 'post-traditional society' (Giddens, 1994, p. 6), one will inevitably find a great range of beliefs and values. If churches are to make connections with people, they need to open many doors. Churches cannot rely on all young people coming first to worship, and then providing additional activities in which they can be involved. The fact that many young people are finding their way into church-related activities apart from through services of worship suggests that there is potential to make and develop church connections. If these side doors can be linked to pathways to various forms of exploration of faith and community, these other activities have the potential to contribute to the growth of faith, as well as personal and social growth.

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Building Associations among Cathedral Friends: From Topophilia to Fiat Social Capital?

*Judith A. Muskett**

Abstract

Anglican cathedrals depend in part on their 'Friends' to support ministry and mission and to meet considerable building maintenance costs. Binding together subscribers in their topophilic sentiments, Friends' charities may rely in turn on social capital to act as a catalyst for generosity. This study set out to explore whether topophilia is predictive of social capital among cathedral Friends. It draws on questionnaire data provided by 923 Friends of six English cathedrals. The results of multiple linear regression show that individual Friends' social capital, measured by a modified version of the Williams Religious Social Capital Index, was predicted by the strength of their bond with the cathedral as place. Additional factors predicting social capital were: sex and education, involvement in other religious groups, social motivation for joining the Friends, and activity therein. The paper concludes by introducing the concept of 'fiat social capital' (a resource sponsored by such an organization adopting an instrumental approach). The findings will help Friends organizations to pursue charitable aims more effectively; and they increase knowledge about sources of social capital in cathedrals, a phenomenon investigated thus far in congregations.

Keywords

cathedrals – fiat social capital – Friends – topophilia – voluntary associations – Williams Religious Social Capital Index (WRSCI)

The present and future of Anglican cathedrals “lies particularly in their ability to enable and sustain a range of connections” (Theos & The Grubb Institute, 2012, p. 62). As “enormous magnets for all sorts of people” (Platten, 2012), cathedrals make three-way connections between people, place and God (Platten &

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Lewis, 1998). While this capacity to make connections may be important for missional purposes and to build beneficial links between disparate local communities in an increasingly atomised world (Theos & The Grubb Institute, 2012), connections between people, place and God can be crucial for a more profane purpose, that of fundraising, not only to meet day-to-day running costs, but also to conserve and maintain cathedral buildings, the ongoing costs of which are immense. At the simplest level, as the number of connections increases, so too does the likelihood of leveraging more money. But there is also a more subtle value in the connections a cathedral makes: religious social networks influence generosity (Brown & Ferris, 2007; Putnam & Campbell, 2010). If literature that explores generosity with money and time in a religious context highlights social capital as a predictor thereof, the challenge must be to identify mechanisms that will create and sustain relationships conducive to building the resource.

Against that background, this study explores factors associated with measurable social capital in cathedrals. The focus is on 'Friends' organizations, whose charitable aims tend to require members to assist in maintaining, repairing, and restoring cathedral fabric, and to beautify the buildings (Muskett, forthcoming). All 42 Anglican cathedrals in England have a Friends association. Most were established in the late 1920s or early 1930s; and deep affection was the basis of cathedral Friendship (Muskett, 2012a). Objectives of modern cathedral Friends' groups are similarly rooted in an affective relationship (Muskett, forthcoming); and their contributions to fundraising and volunteering, and capacity to build community, are well-documented (Archbishops' Commission on Cathedrals, 1994; Beeson, 2004; English Tourist Board, 1979). Memberships total 55,000 (Beeson, 2004). Dissemination of information through official publications was, and remains, important for both sides of the dyad: information enables Friends, near and far, to keep in touch; and it engenders a well-informed appreciation of the cathedral, reinforcing the bonds of affection, and helping to sustain the supporter base.

Given the enduring premise of cathedral Friendship, the specific point of interest in this study is the potential influence of Friends' topophilia (their love of place) over stocks of social capital in these charities. It will be claimed that by understanding factors to influence connections among Friends cathedrals are better-placed to adopt strategies to engineer the social structure, thereby maximizing scope for generosity.

The argument in this article, which depends on the social capital construct fully discussed elsewhere (e.g., Muskett, 2014), is developed in several steps. First, *topophilia* will be defined; and note will be taken of accounts of topophilic bonds with cathedral as places. Second, attention will turn to the influence of

place on social capital formation. Third, mention will be made of factors recognized to influence social capital (subsequently employed as controls in the analysis here). With that framework in mind, the fourth section hones the research question and contextualizes the study within a broader field concerned with the measurement of social capital. Fifth, the method adopted for the enquiry is described, the index employed to measure Friends' social capital outlined and the independent and control variables itemized. The results are analyzed in the sixth section, and discussed in the seventh. Finally, conclusions are drawn and the broad impact of the study assessed.

Topophilia and Cathedrals

Topophilia (from the Greek *topos* 'place' and *-philia* 'love of') is defined as "the affective bond between people and place" (Tuan, 1974, p. 4). Neatly coupling sentiment with place, the notion fascinated geographers such as Yi-Fu Tuan (1972, 1974) and Edward Relph (1976), but resonated also with sociologist James Gibson (2009) and philosophers Gaston Bachelard (1958), in his exploration of home, and Alan Watts (2007), in his autobiography. Sounding to Watts "almost like a disease or perversion", topophilia was said by him to approximate to a Japanese word denoting a 'sophisticated nostalgia' (2007, p. 11).

Topophilia takes many forms, and its emotional range and intensity vary (Tuan, 1974, p. 247). Intense topophilic sentiments may be stirred by a place that is home, or is the locus of significant memories, or recalls historical events hallowing the scene (pp. 93–94); indeed, aesthetic appreciation of a place can be especially enduring when blended with the memory of human incidents (p. 95). Turning even casual attention to a place can be transcended by what Relph (1976) termed a "peak experience of topophilia": the form of a place, or our inclination towards it, can penetrate the consciousness resulting in "feelings of joy, ecstasy, of awe or despair, of unity with our surroundings, of perfection" (p. 123). Although fleeting in the moment, the impact can be profound, and "constitute a touchstone" by which other experiences of place can be evaluated (p. 123).

It is noteworthy that cathedral buildings (both medieval and modern) – as locations possessing 'high imageability' (Lynch, 1960), which tends to persist over time – feature in these geographical studies of topophilia and the significance of place (see Relph, 1976, p. 73; Tuan, 1974, pp. 11, 137, 172 and 183). In their "overwhelming physicality" (Anderson, 1998, p. 97), cathedrals have "the ability to catch people off guard and fill them with a sense of awe" (Rylands, 2006, p. 129). This capacity suggests that cathedrals are a mechanism in vicarious

religion, by which the passive majority becomes acquainted with the religion performed by the active minority (Muskett, 2015; see also Davie, 2015). Empirical studies have demonstrated that the cathedral as place – its connection with history/tradition, its embodiment of local and national culture, its role as a symbol and icon of community identity, its ability to convey a sense of the sacred – has significance not only for worshippers, but also for tourists and local residents (including agnostics and atheists) (e.g., Francis & Williams, 2010, forthcoming; Holmes & Kautzer, 2013; Theos & The Grubb Institute, 2012).

James (2006) identified a “surprisingly personal character” in the relationship that individuals can have with cathedrals (p. 13). For him, the intimacy of bonds with Lincoln Cathedral portrayed by Danziger (1989) presupposed the attachment of a ‘personality’ to that place. This idea finds echoes in Inge’s *Christian Theology of Place* (2003). Inge favoured a relational view of place, arguing that “any conception of place is inseparable from the relationships that are associated with it” (p. 26); and he drew attention (p. 85) to Relph’s (1981) and Tuan’s (1972) work implying that places have a ‘personality’. James’ (2006) analysis of the special affinity with cathedral buildings highlighted Scruton’s (2006) notion of the ‘corporate person’: a mechanism to explain how an old school, a pub or club can become an object of loyalty and affection, to which human beings relate as if to each other (p. 70).

The Influence of Place on Social Capital

Analysis of the roles that place and proximity play in the formation of social capital prompted Lorenzen (2007) to argue that geography is especially important for bonding social capital: “the initiation of strong ties is very geographically sensitive”. Such ties “usually radiate from a particular place – such as ... a club or other organization that holds people together geographically over a period – or a physical artefact or facility ... that makes people meet and talk regularly” (p. 807). The relationship between spatial proximity and social connections has also been investigated by Glaeser and Sacerdote (2000) who, like Putnam (2000), emphasized that people who are spatially far apart are less likely to form social connections.

If proximity and place have the capacity to influence the social capital formation, it may also be the case that a resource akin to social capital is formed between cathedral Friends and place, as if place were another member in the equation. The key here may be the nature of ‘regard’, the fruits of which (friendship, care and gift exchange) make life worth living for most people (Halpern, 2010). Offer (1997) posited that regard “provides a powerful incentive for trust”

(p. 454). Furthermore, he argued that regard “promotes sociability and sociability facilitates cooperation” (p. 455). This suggests a link between regard (in this argument, for a place – the cathedral) and social capital. Indeed, the rhetoric of relationships with cathedrals (Archbishops’ Commission on Cathedrals, 1994; Danziger, 1989; Muskett 2012a; Theos & The Grubb Institute, 2012; The Times, 1931) mirrors the rhetoric of bonding social capital, the type found in family and close relationships (Putnam, 2000). Crucially, bonding social capital is an essential basis for forming bridging social capital (Furbey, Dinham, Farnell, Finneron, & Wilkinson, 2006), which cathedrals have a seminal role in creating (Theos & The Grubb Institute, 2012, p. 12).

Broader Influences on Social Capital Formation

Accordingly, from a theoretical standpoint, Friends’ bonds with a cathedral – their tophophilia – may influence social capital among the membership. But what else influences social capital in the context of a voluntary association? The ability to establish and maintain social capital is beyond individual control (Messer, 1998), but societal social capital ultimately rests on the attitudes and behaviours of individuals, who either enhance or detract from aggregate stocks (Green & Brock, 1998). It follows that variance in individuals’ characteristics, attitudes and behaviours affect the formation of the resource (Brehm & Rahn, 1997). A review of relevant social capital literature reveals a range of factors found to influence social capital in religious voluntary associations (e.g., socio-demography; intensity and persistence of membership; religion).

Factors such as age, sex and education are typically taken into account in studying civic engagement through voluntary associations and the impact of social capital on giving and volunteering (Bourdieu, 2010; Brown & Ferris, 2007; Lam, 2006; Li, Pickles, & Savage, 2005; Putnam, 2000; Putnam & Campbell, 2010; Stolle, 1998). However, the way they may influence social capital formation is not necessarily straightforward; and there has been a call for further investigation of how such factors increase giving through their impact on social capital (Brown & Ferris, 2007).

It is axiomatic that face-to-face interaction within voluntary associations creates social capital: “what really matters from the point of view of social capital and civic engagement is not merely nominal membership, but active and involved membership” (Putnam, 2000, p. 58). Nonetheless, the emphasis of social capital theory on face-to-face contact has been challenged (Maloney, 1999; Muskett, 2012b; Whiteley, 1999; Wollebaek & Selle, 2003). Surprisingly, the relationship between participation and persistence in membership has been

found to be negative (Cress, McPherson, & Rotolo, 1997). Likewise, generalized trust (a key component of social capital) falls off for long-time members (Stolle, 1998).

Religion is a potent and long-lasting source of social capital (Greeley, 1997); and churches and congregations are among the key producers of social capital at local level (Ammerman, 1997; Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995; Cnaan, Wineburg, & Boddie, 1999; Putnam, 2000). Four different dimensions of religiosity (participatory, private/devotional, affiliative and theological/belief) promote membership in voluntary associations (Lam, 2002). Slater (2005) suspected that faith has a distinctive influence over the nature of membership schemes associated with places of worship; and analysis of cathedral Friends' publications intimated that the religious context of generosity is significant (Muskett, forthcoming).

Research Question

Given that social capital makes possible the achievement of ends that would otherwise be impossible (Coleman, 1988), and the concept is a potentially useful tool when probing the structural basis for charitable giving in a religious context (Nemeth & Luidens, 2003), this study asks whether cathedral Friends' topophilia predicts their social capital. The particular interest in the effect of Friends' love of place stems from the fundamental premise of cathedral Friendship, which seeks to capitalize on the affective bond between supporter and building. It is speculated that social capital is associated with topophilia, on the basis that regard for the place (as corporate person) is a powerful incentive for trust and promotes sociability.

In order to operationalize the research question, it is prudent to contextualize this study within a broader field concerned with measuring social capital and, especially, social capital among Christian church-related groups. As already noted, societal social capital ultimately rests on the attitudes and behaviours of individuals, who enhance or detract from aggregate stocks (Green & Brock, 1998). For this reason, Coleman's (1990) and Putnam's (1993, 1995a) emphasis on social capital as a property of communities has been disputed. As Brehm and Rahn (1997) observed:

It is not after all, a 'community' that participates or builds trust, but the people who comprise that community who belong to civic organizations and acquire positive feelings for others ... 'Communities' do not join the PTA or enlist in farming organizations, parents and farmers do. (pp. 1002–1003, 1016–1017)

The context for social capital is crucial (Smidt, 2003a). Just as the distinct context within which personal friends interact is key to understanding the nature of those relationships (Allan, 1998; Spencer & Pahl, 2006; Summers, 2009; see also Muskett, 2013), so the frame of reference for social capital is crucial to understanding the sources of specific stocks. It follows that social capital generated in a religious domain will be distinctive when compared with social capital generated elsewhere. On the basis of a series of papers examining the inter-relationship of religion, social capital and democratic life in the U.S., Smidt (2003b) concluded that there are certain qualities which mark out religious social capital (even though, in some ways, all social capital is fundamentally alike). Indicators of social capital in a religious context should therefore recognize the distinctiveness of the resource. Against that background, the Williams Religious Social Capital Index (WRSCI) (Williams, 2008) was developed in cathedral congregations to measure social capital within micro-level studies of religious groups.

Method

Sample

As part of a larger project, a postal questionnaire was sent to the individuals listed as Friends of six cathedrals in England in 2011. Participation in the survey was entirely voluntary, and Friends were assured of their anonymity. Just over half of the 923 respondents (52%) were female; almost three-quarters (74%) were 65 or over; and 44% held a degree.

Measure of Religious Social Capital

The WRSCI (Williams, 2008) employs the 5-point Likert-scale technique (Likert, 1932) to measure direction of attitude towards 12 well-focused statements (three related to each of four aspects of the resource: trust, and bonding, bridging and linking social capital) (5 = agree strongly; 4 = agree; 3 = not certain; 2 = disagree; 1 = disagree strongly). Certain modifications were made to the index for use among cathedral Friends: Muskett (2014) discusses the scale properties of the modified index (WRSCIM).

Independent Variables

To gauge tophophilia, the 5-point Likert-type scale was employed, measuring direction of attitude towards the following statement: 'The cathedral is a building with which I have a strong bond'. Independent variables, employed as controls in the analysis, were: age, sex, education (whether or not respondents held a degree), propensity for generalized interpersonal trust (assessed by

asking respondents whether generally, they would say that most people can be trusted: 1 = 'You can't be too careful in dealing with people'; 2 = 'It depends on people/circumstances'; 3 = 'Most people can be trusted'), and proximity of home to the befriended cathedral (0 = live outside the cathedral town/city; 1 = live in the cathedral town/city).

Four aspects of religion were assessed including religiosity (11-point scale ranging from 0 = not at all to 10 = extremely religious), attendance at acts of worship at the befriended cathedral (0 = never; 1 = few times a year; 2 = at least six times a year; 3 = monthly; 4 = fortnightly; 5 = weekly; 6 = more than once a week) and involvement in other religious groups (0 = no; 1 = yes). Religious motivation to join the Friends was assessed by a single item in a list of motives: 'to preserve the cathedral as a place of worship', which had a 7-point numerical response scale, with polarities labeled 'Totally unimportant' and 'Very important'.

Being motivated by social reasons to join the organization was assessed with the same scale using three items: 'to make new friends'; 'to be part of a community of people with similar cultural interests'; 'to participate in the programme of social activities'. A summated rating scale (achieving a very good level of internal reliability) was built from these three items ($M = 11.83$; $SD = 5.25$; $\alpha = .87$). Persistence in membership was assessed by the question 'In total, for how many years have you been a Friend of your cathedral?'. Activity in the organization was assessed by three categorical variables related to participation in the AGM, organized trips, and social events (for each: 0 = no; 1 = yes). A summated rating scale (achieving a respectable level of internal reliability) was built from the three items ($M = 1.40$; $SD = 1.18$; $\alpha = .72$).

Results

Descriptive Statistics

More than four fifths of respondents (83%) agreed or agreed strongly that the cathedral is a building with which they have a strong bond; just 4% disagreed or disagreed strongly, while the remaining one eighth (12%) was uncertain. Just over half of the Friends (52%) said that most people can be trusted. More than two-thirds (70%) lived outside the cathedral town/city, with the remainder (30%) living inside the town/city. Nearly all respondents (96%) reported themselves to be religious. Just over one tenth (11%) rated themselves between 1 and 3 on the scale, suggesting they were not particularly religious; 69% clustered around points 4 to 8 on the scale; and 16% positioned themselves just below or at the very top of the scale (9 or 10). Most respondents attended acts of worship at the cathedral which they befriended, although for 52% this was

as few as six times a year or less. One fifth (21%) attended acts of worship there at least once a week. Just one sixth (15%) never attended an act of worship there. Preservation of the cathedral as a place of worship was rated by 92% as an important motivating factor upon joining. Half (50%) declared that they had been involved in the last 12 months in another religious group.

Social factors were important motivators for between one third and one half of Friends upon joining. To participate in the programme of social activities was important for 48%; to be part of a community of people with similar cultural interests was important for 53%; while the opportunity to make new friends was important for 34%. There was a fairly high level of persistence in the membership: 22% had been members for between six and ten years; and 44% for 11 years or more. Around one in twenty was a new member, having belonged for just one year. In total, 34% had belonged for five years or less. The majority of Friends (67%) was active in at least one aspect of the organization where they would come into face-to-face contact with fellow members. Patterns of involvement differed according to the nature of the events: social occasions attracted more members (57%) and Friends' trips fewest (36%), while the AGM attracted 48%.

The mean scale score for WRSCIM was 34.69 ($SD = 9.68$). Respondents who declared that they participated in associational activities were likely to record higher scores than those who reported that their membership was socially passive in style (active $M = 37.86$, $SD = 8.44$; passive $M = 28.20$, $SD = 8.77$) (Muskett, 2014).

Correlations

A series of bivariate analyses was computed to examine the relationship between the dependent variable (WRSCIM) and topophilia and also the 12 other independent variables used as controls. A significant positive relationship was found between the strength of bond with the cathedral and WRSCIM ($r = .270$, $p < .001$). WRSCIM also had a significant positive correlation with age ($r = .101$, $p < .001$); and a significant negative correlation with education ($r = -.186$, $p < .001$). The correlation between WRSCIM and the sex of Friends was not significant. WRSCIM had a significant positive correlation with proximity to the befriended cathedral ($r = .180$, $p < .001$); how religious Friends declared themselves ($r = .154$, $p < .001$); attendance at cathedral worship ($r = .342$, $p < .001$); having joined to preserve the cathedral as a place of worship ($r = .181$, $p < .001$); involvement in other religious groups ($r = .130$, $p < .001$); having joined for social motives ($r = .586$, $p < .001$); and social activity within the organization ($r = .521$, $p < .001$). There was no significant relationship between WRSCIM and generalized social trust or persistence in membership.

When correlations among the independent variables were considered, the strength of bond with the cathedral was found to have a significant positive correlation with: how religious Friends declared themselves ($r = .189, p < .001$); attendance at cathedral worship ($r = .273, p < .001$); having joined to preserve the cathedral as a place of worship ($r = .227, p < .001$); persistence in membership ($r = .104, p < .001$); and level of social activity ($r = .146, p < .001$).

Multiple Linear Regressions

The groups of independent variables were entered in blocks to form a series of nested models (Table 1).

TABLE 1 *Predictors of religious social capital (WRSCIM) among cathedral Friends*

Variable	WRSCIM				
	Model 1 <i>B</i>	Model 2 <i>B</i>	Model 3 <i>B</i>	Model 4 <i>B</i>	Model 5 <i>B</i>
<i>Socio-demographic variables</i>					
Sex (male)	-.027	-.027	.013	.024	.103***
Age	.069*	.068*	.060*	.040	-.017
Education (degree)	-.173***	-.175***	-.188***	-.182***	-.104***
<i>Propensity to trust</i>					
Generalized social trust		.032	.020	.003	-.010
<i>Proximity</i>					
Live in cathedral city			.166***	.071*	-.016
<i>Topophilia</i>					
Strength of bond with cathedral			.262***	.170***	.176***
<i>Religion</i>					
How religious				.009	.045
Attendance cathedral worship				.250***	.030
To preserve place of worship				.085**	.036
Involvement religious groups				.123***	.077**
<i>Intensity</i>					
Social motivation					.423***
Years as a Friend					-.021
Activity in Friends association					.290***
R^2	.041	.042	.140	.204	.491
R^2 change	.041***	.001	.099***	.073***	.278***

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

In model 1, age and education (no degree) predicted WRSCIM. Model 2 revealed that generalized social trust had no predictive power, when taken together with the socio-demographic variables. In model 3, tophophilia predicted WRSCIM to a greater extent than geographical proximity. In model 4, three of the four factors related to religion were predictors of WRSCIM, with attendance at cathedral worship being the strongest, and how religious Friends rated themselves having no predictive power. In the final model, persistence in membership had no predictive power, while intensity of activity and social motivation predicted WRSCIM (motivation to a greater extent than activity). Model 5 explained 49% of the variance; and the addition of the variables related to intensity had the highest explanatory strength in all models (R^2 change = .278; $p < .001$).

Discussion

Geography was expected to impact upon social capital, through tophophilia and proximity. Both geographical variables had a significant positive correlation with WRSCIM. Although living in the cathedral city predicted WRSCIM in regression model 3 and to a lesser extent in model 4, the variance for which it accounted was directed through the intensity variables in model 5. Model 5 supports the case that there is a link between tophophilia and social capital; and confirms that bonding with a place functions as a robust foundation for social capital between human actors. This is an original finding, the consequences of which, for cathedral Friends and analogous membership organizations, will be drawn out in the conclusion.

Among the control variables, social capital was influenced by two socio-demographic factors. Even though no significant correlation was revealed between sex and WRSCIM, sex predicted WRSCIM in the final regression model, once account was taken of the influence of the cluster of intensity variables. Education had a negative influence throughout the five regression models, contrary to findings elsewhere (Hall, 1999; Halpern, 2005; Lin, 1999). Age predicted WRSCIM in regression models 1 to 3, but the variance for which age accounted was directed through the religious and intensity variables in models 4 and 5. Despite the significant positive correlation between each religious variable and WRSCIM, the impact of religion on social capital formation came about in the final regression model through propensity to be involved in another religious group. How religious Friends declared themselves to be had no predictive power over WRSCIM (models 4 and 5). Attendance at cathedral worship and being motivated to join the organization to preserve the cathedral as a place of worship influenced the outcome in model 4; but in model 5 their

influence was seen to be mediated through the intensity variables. The influence on social capital of face-to-face contact with fellow members is unremarkable. Yet, it is intriguing that observed social motives in the final regression model had greater explanatory power ($B = .423, p < .001$) than measured involvement ($B = .290, p < .001$).

Although persistence in membership had no role in relation to social capital formation, persistence correlated significantly with the strength of bond with the cathedral (which in turn predicted social capital in the final regression model). It is impossible to infer the direction of causation in this relationship: the longer a Friend remained in membership, the greater his/her bond with the cathedral; likewise, the greater his/her bond with the cathedral, the greater the likelihood of his/her persisting in membership. A virtuous circle is likely in that respect; and also in the case of the significant positive correlations between topophilia and level of activity in the organization, and attendance at cathedral worship. Such virtuous circles can be utilized productively by Friends organizations. Research suggests that discovering the influences on stocks of social capital is a key to maximizing gifts of money and time to the charities. So, the insight emerging from this study about the predictive power of topophilia upon social capital provides a useful basis on which cathedrals can plan to exploit their membership for charitable purposes.

Nonetheless, it must be recognized that there can be unease at applying social capital language in the context of faith communities (Furbey et al., 2006), and that use of the capital motif in the religious field encourages an unfortunate focus on the resource's utility (Davey, 2007; Dinham, 2012; Graham, 2008). Yet, it is precisely the utility of the resource which must be of interest (however unpalatable) to religious charities, such as cathedral Friends, charged with raising funds for the public good. On the basis of the legal framework overseen by the Charity Commission (2008), within which cathedral Friends charities operate, it is reasonable to assume that trustees will act rationally to maximize benefits and minimize costs when they choose between different courses of action, in order to yield the best outcomes.

In the context of a voluntary association such as a cathedral Friends organization, social capital is the sum of the resources that accrue to that group by virtue of the networks of institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992); and these relationships facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for the benefit of the organization (Putnam, 1995b). Ultimately, social capital at the disposal of the group depends on social cohesion. Such cohesion can come about naturally (as a result of strong ties) or arise over time (through perpetuation of weaker ties):

Social solidarity may exist among interrelated actors by fiat ... when cultural values, backed by effective norms, dictate that family members will look out for another and care for one another. Or solidarity may arise out of conditions of repeated interaction among the same actors over time, during which forms of social capital such as trust and mutual obligations accumulate. (Sandefur & Laumann, 2000, p. 80)

Social solidarity typically arises in cathedral Friends groups not 'by fiat' in Sandefur and Laumann's usage (i.e., endogenously, by virtue of primordial ties), but through situations where there is repeated interaction over time. The findings here suggest that this interaction would occur on the basis of bonding with the cathedral as if it were human; by being motivated to join by social reasons; through attendance at events/meetings and going on trips; and by learning such habits through belonging to other religious groups.

Perhaps it is possible also to employ the term 'by fiat' to capture the essence of social capital sponsored by organizations, such as the cathedral Friends, which adopt an instrumental approach. Usage of 'fiat' (from the Latin, 'it shall be') in this sense would have resonance with the act of creation, when God said 'Let there be light' (*Fiat lux*, Genesis 1:3). The notion of 'fiat social capital' would take its cue from the economic discourse rife in the field of social capital. It would derive from the idea of 'fiat money' (Friedman & Schwartz, 1986; Ritter, 1995), which is a "creature of the state" (Selgin, 2003, p. 155) – not fixed in objective terms to the value of gold – and created internally in a community to make feasible trades that would otherwise not be possible. Fiat social capital would be a subset of what is commonly termed 'corporate social capital' (e.g., Leenders & Gabbay, 1999), which in turn is distinct from personal capital with inward benefits such as those identified within cathedral congregations (Francis & Williams, 2010, forthcoming). Just as there is unease about applying the capital language to informal social networks in the context of a faith community, so using 'corporate' language in relation to a church-related charitable organization could be equally uncomfortable. The notion of "social capital management" referring to "the purposeful alteration of social structure to fit ... goals" (Leenders & Gabbay, 1999, p. 491) cannot be objectionable to a charity, but it may be a step too far within the context of cathedral Friends associations to use corporate language to describe a resource at the disposal of the organization. Fiat social capital may therefore be preferred in such a context, and the term is proposed as an alternative.

While individuals have the capability to create social capital, it is not necessarily in their interests to bring it into being, because the 'public good' aspects

are experienced by others (Coleman, 1990). This being the case, it falls to Friends organizations actively to foster the resource. Social capital is not an asset that can be imitated from place to place. Rather, this unique resource is built through organic, bottom-up accumulation; and policy-making may play a central role in setting the process in motion (Lorenzen, 2007). Here, then, ‘fiat’ serves to make a clear distinction between an endogenous resource that springs from relationships occurring naturally, and a resource that can be fabricated through the coordinated efforts of a Friends organization, as policy-maker, taking an active role in engineering of social structure. It may be especially relevant for such policy-making to galvanize the input of those outside the cathedral (who may not ‘belong’ to the church) and indeed the non-religious, for Friends organizations are a key mechanism by which such individuals may act together (Cameron, 2003) and ultimately have more leverage than when acting alone. Bonds with a cathedral, as corporate person, may be a prime example of an endogenous as opposed to fiat resource. It is unlikely that the organization could set in motion the process by which topophilic bonds are initially accumulated. The geography of social capital implies that there is a requirement for some degree of the ‘face-the-place’ basis of co-presence (Urry, 2002). But authentic bonds with the place – and the attendant “sense of deep care and concern for that place”, and the responsibility for “care-taking” (Relph, 2008, pp. 37, 38) – could be sustained by the efforts of policy-makers. Thus, a cathedral could engineer the social structure of its Friends organization by initiating strategies to strengthen topophilia. It could achieve this with lectures about the significance and day-to-day activity of the building, special member-only functions there, and behind-the-scenes tours. It could also strengthen topophilia with regular free and attractive information, and social-media postings, concerning the history, architecture and day-to-day work of the building. Crucially, associational information can compensate for a lack of activity and enable passive members to contribute (albeit vicariously) (Knoke, 1981; Muskett, 2012b).

Conclusion

This investigation of the influence of topophilia on social capital formation, as represented by the strength of bonds with the cathedral as a place, is original. It was undertaken in light of the geographical sensitivity of particular types of social tie (Lorenzen, 2007), the theology of place (Inge, 2003), the notion that places can have a personality (James, 2006; Relph, 1981; Scruton, 2006; Tuan, 1972), and Offer’s (1997) economy of regard, which provided a convenient

theoretical link between regard for an object and the formation of social capital. Employing data from over 900 Friends of six English cathedrals, the study found that bonding with a place functions as a robust foundation upon which social capital can develop between human actors. This is a significant finding, relevant not only to cathedrals, but also to friend/member groups associated with different places of worship, historic buildings and other iconic locations which may inspire topophilia. Given the socio-demographic profile of the participants in this study, which broadly mirrors that of respondents in Holmes and Slater's (2007) survey of heritage groups' supporters, the findings are likely to be applicable to the wider heritage friends/members movement. Accordingly, suggested policies to fabricate stocks of 'fiat social capital' (an original concept, defined as the social capital sponsored by an organization adopting an instrumental approach) could impact not only on the cathedral Friends movement, but also upon friend/member groups attached to institutions such as museums, galleries, theatres and heritage attractions. It is recommended that a measure analogous to the WRSCI (Williams, 2008) be employed to assess the influence of bonds with such places on the formation of social capital there. This would be with a view to advising policy-makers on engineering the social structure, to garner fiat social capital to achieve otherwise impossible ends.

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The Psychological Type Profile of Singaporean Pentecostal Pastors: A Research Report

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Abstract

This study compares the psychological type profile of pastors who lead Pentecostal churches in Singapore with Singaporean population norms. Data provided by 117 pastors who completed the Francis Psychological Type Scales demonstrate that these leaders were more likely to prefer introversion, sensing, feeling and judging than were the wider population. The implications of these findings are briefly discussed in relation to ministry, missionary training, and mission.

Keywords

clergy – Pentecostal – psychological type – Singapore

The growth of Christianity, and Pentecostalism in particular, in Singapore and Southeast Asia has been documented by Kay (2012; 2013a; 2013b). Protestant missions in the nineteenth century resulted in a wave of denominational activity in many parts of the world including what was then called the Far East (DeBernardi, 2008). By the beginning of the twentieth century Christianity had long been established in the region, even though it never reached more than about 5% of the population. The limited reach was mainly because the various denominations (Methodists, Anglicans and Presbyterians) catered for the spiritual needs of colonial expatriates rather than the larger and more mixed indigenous population.

An Assemblies of God missionary couple left China in 1928 to avoid anti-Western opposition. They arrived by boat in Singapore and stayed there, initially founding a Cantonese congregation and then, in 1932, an English-speaking

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one (Abeysekera, 1992). From these beginnings the Assemblies of God numbers increased at a steady, though unspectacular, rate until 1972. In that year the charismatic movement began to have an impact following evangelistic meetings that included preaching by Billy Graham (1978) and David Yonggi Cho (Wong, 1996). The influence of both the charismatic movement and the nationwide crusades raised the profile of Christians and promoted a significant growth in the number of Singaporean Pentecostals. Recent figures (Ong, 2008) report a total of 51 Assemblies of God congregations with some 21,500 members.

Research into the personality profiles of Pentecostal pastors has largely focused on samples drawn from the UK. A number of studies have employed Hans Eysenck's model of personality while others have employed the Jungian model of personality operationalized by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI: Myers & McCaulley, 1985), the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (KTS: Keirsey & Bates, 1978) and the Francis Psychological Type Scales (FPTS: Francis, 2005). Eysenck, in a long and productive series of studies dating back to the 1940s, came to the conclusion that personality was best described by reference to a series of traits that could be grouped together into three main factors. These factors are extraversion/introversion, neuroticism/stability and tough-mindedness/tender-mindedness (or psychoticism verses non-psychoticism). The extravert is outgoing, sociable and adventurous while the introvert is quieter, retiring and cautious. The neurotic is prone to anxiety and emotionally labile while at the other end of the scale the stable person remains unworried in the face of risk. The psychoticism scale is concerned with attitudes to other people, the high scorer being seen as troublesome, solitary, aggressive and without empathy, whereas the low scorer has the opposite of these tendencies (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1991).

Eysenck's model was used by Kay (2001) in a survey of 930 Pentecostal pastors in the UK. These pastors were drawn from the four main Pentecostal denominations in the country: the Apostolic Church, Assemblies of God, Church of God and Elim Pentecostal Church. Kay found that Pentecostal ministers scored significantly lower on the neuroticism scale than the general population, implying that they were generally more emotionally stable than the population at large. With regard to extraversion/introversion there were no significant differences between Pentecostals and the population norms, although Pentecostal pastors were more likely to be extraverted than their counterparts from more liturgical denominations (e.g., Anglicans), and the most successful Pentecostal pastors were also those most likely to be extraverted. This is not surprising given the nature of Pentecostal worship,

which could be considered to be more extraverted than that of other mainstream denominations. Whereas Pentecostals, in personality terms, tend to reflect the balance of extraversion and introversion among the general population, denominations such as Anglicans may provide a spiritual home for more introverted individuals.

While Eysenck based his account of personality on physiological differences between individuals (i.e., in reactivity to stimuli), an alternative tradition for measuring personality starts from a basis in clinical experience. A growing body of research in the psychology of religion has employed psychological-type theory derived from the work of Carl Jung (1971). The theory is based on 'preferences' between four psychological processes. These processes are constituted by two perceiving functions, sensing (S) and intuition (N), and two judging functions, thinking (T) and feeling (F). Sensing and intuition are concerned with the way in which people take in information. A person with a preference for intuition tends to acquire information by making links between ideas, focusing on the big picture and abstract ideas. A person with a preference for sensing tends to acquire information through the five senses, focusing on detail and present realities. Thinking and feeling are concerned with how people make decisions from the information they have acquired. A person with a preference for thinking tends to make decisions by employing objective logic; a person with a preference for feeling tends to make decisions by considering the impact such decisions will have on others, and will often seek consensus.

Alongside the functional pairs are two other pairs: judging (J) and perceiving (P), and introversion (I) and extraversion (E). The first pair indicates how people relate to and organize their outer world. Judging refers to a tendency to approach the outer world in a planned and orderly manner, whereas perceiving refers to a tendency to approach the outside world in a spontaneous and flexible manner. The second pair indicates where an individual prefers to process information: in the external social or physical world in the case of extraverts, or in the inner world of thoughts and ideas in the case of introverts.

Although individuals may operate in any of the ways implied by the four sets of pairs, psychological type theory is based on the observation that most individuals tend to have a preferred way of acquiring information, a preferred way of making decisions, a preferred way of orientating to their outer world, and a preferred location for psychological processing. These four preferences combine to give an individual's psychological type and, with four sets of pairs, there are sixteen possible psychological types (e.g. ESTJ, INFP).

There is a growing body of literature reporting the psychological type preferences of ordained clergy and laity from a range of Christian denominations. In the UK, psychological type has been employed within a number of evangelical contexts using two different operationalizations of the theory. For example, three studies have employed the 126-item Form G (Anglicized) of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI: Myers & McCaulley, 1985) to explore the type profile of 92 male evangelical missionary personnel, 190 male Pentecostal bible college students, and 81 male evangelical Anglican seminarians. Two studies have employed the FPTS to explore the type profiles of 134 Newfrontiers lead elders, and 154 Newfrontiers leaders.

Craig, Horsfall, and Francis (2005) found a high proportion of 92 male evangelical missionary personnel were classified as ESTJ; with percentages of 55% for extraversion, 60% for sensing, 70% for thinking, and 75% for judging. Francis, Craig, and Butler (2007) found that a high proportion of 81 male evangelical Anglican seminarians demonstrated a preference for ESTJ; with percentages of 58% for extraversion, 57% for sensing, 56% for thinking, and 78% for judging. Kay, Francis, and Craig (2008) found similar preferences among 190 male Pentecostal bible college students. Many demonstrated a preference for ESTJ, with percentages of 52% for extraversion, 74% for sensing, 56% for thinking, and 65% for judging.

A study among 134 lead elders in the Newfrontiers neo-Pentecostal network of churches in the UK employed the FPTS (Francis, Gubb, & Robbins, 2009). In this study, elders (who hold an ecclesiological position similar to that held by elders among traditional Baptists) were found to belong mainly to ISTJ and ESTJ groups. Just over half reported a preference for extraversion (52%), sensing (52%), and thinking (54%), while over three-quarters (78%) reported a preference for judging. Francis, Robbins, and Ryland (2012) found among a sample of 154 Newfrontiers leaders preferences for extraversion (52%), sensing (71%), thinking (60%), and judging (86%).

The type profiles of these evangelical and Pentecostal groups are different from their Anglican counterparts, particularly in respect of the judging functions of thinking and feeling. Anglican leaders tend to more often prefer the feeling function (see for example Francis, Craig, Whinney, Tilley, & Slater, 2007) whereas the evangelical and Pentecostal or neo-Pentecostal groups tend to prefer the thinking function, suggesting they may be more dispassionate than consensual in their decision-making.

Relatively little is known about the psychological type profile of evangelical groups in other cultural contexts. The present study seeks to fill this gap by exploring the psychological type profile of Pentecostal pastors in Singapore. This paper considers two research questions. First, what is the psychological

type profile of Pentecostal pastors in Singapore? Second, how do the psychological type profiles of such Pentecostal pastors compare with the population norms for Singapore?

Method

Sample

The ministerial questionnaire was distributed by the Assemblies of God National Office in Singapore to 170 ministers with a request that the booklet be completed and returned anonymously. Six ministers from City Harvest also participated. Respondents who completed the questionnaire were allowed to claim a small voucher that entitled them to purchase coffee and food. The response rate was 69% ($n = 117$). Just over 95% of the Singaporean respondents were affiliated to Assemblies of God and all answered in English. Of the 117 pastors who completed the FPTs, 59% were male and 41% were female; 4% were in their 20s, 19% were in their 30s, 19% were in their 40s, 41% were in their 50s, 17% were in their 60s, and 1% were aged 70 or over.

Instrument

Psychological type was assessed by the Francis Psychological Type Scales (FPTS; Francis, 2005). This 40-item instrument comprises four sets of ten forced-choice items related to each of the four components of psychological type: orientation (extraversion or introversion), perceiving process (sensing or intuition), judging process (thinking or feeling), and attitude toward the outer world (judging or perceiving). Recent studies have demonstrated that this instrument functions well in church-related contexts. For example, Francis, Craig, and Hall (2008) reported alpha coefficients of .83 for the EI scale, .76 for the SN scale, .73 for the TF scale, and .79 for the JP scale among a religious sample.

Data Analysis

The scientific literature concerned with psychological type has developed a highly distinctive way of presenting type-related data. The conventional format of 'type tables' has been employed in the present paper to allow the findings from this study to be located easily alongside other relevant studies in the literature. In these tables the psychological type profiles of the pastors are compared with the population norms for Singapore. The statistical significance of differences between the present sample and the population norms are tested by means of the Selection Ratio Index (I), an extension of the classic chi-square test. This ratio is given on the right hand side of the tables presented below and significant results are indicated.

Results

The alpha coefficients for the four scales of the FPTS reached a satisfactory level: extraversion and introversion, .77; sensing and intuition, .61; thinking and feeling, .68; judging and perceiving, .72.

Table 1 presents the type distribution for the Singaporean Pentecostal pastors compared to the Singapore population norms (Hemisphere Consulting, 2010). The data demonstrate that the Pentecostal pastors have a preference for introversion (63%) rather than extraversion (37%); for sensing (75%) rather than intuition (25%); for feeling (57%) rather than thinking (43%); for judging (83%) rather than perceiving (17%). The two most common types are ISTJ (24%) and ISFJ (23%).

Table 1 demonstrates that the Pentecostal pastors are significantly different from the population norms with respect to all four dichotomous pairs. The Singaporean Pentecostal pastors are significantly more likely to be introverts (63%) than the population norms (47%); significantly more likely to be sensing (75%) than the population norms (62%); significantly more likely to be feeling (57%) than the population norms (29%); and significantly more likely to be judging (83%) than the population norms (67%). With the exception of sensing and intuition all the differences are at $p < .001$; sensing and intuition are at $p < .01$.

Discussion and Conclusion

This paper set out to explore the psychological type profile of Pentecostal pastors in a different cultural context to previous research and to compare the Singaporean pastors to wider population norms. Five main findings emerge from this study.

First, the Singaporean pastors share many characteristics with their counterparts in the UK. Both groups have the SJ temperament in common. Type theory describes the SJ temperament as the 'guardian' and summarizes this in the following way:

Guardians need to know they are doing the responsible thing. They value stability, security, and a sense of community. They trust hierarchy and authority and may be surprised when others go against these. Guardians prefer cooperative actions with a focus on standards and norms. Their orientation is to their past experiences, and they like things sequenced and structured.

TABLE 1 *Type distribution for Singapore Pentecostal pastors, compared with the Singaporean population norms $N = 117$ (NB + = 1% of N)*

The sixteen complete types						Dichotomous preferences						
ISTJ <i>n</i> = 28 (23.9%) <i>I</i> = 1.29 +++++ +++++ +++++ +++++ +++++		ISFJ <i>n</i> = 27 (23.1%) <i>I</i> = 4.13*** +++++ +++++ +++++ +++++ +++		INFJ <i>n</i> = 5 (4.3%) <i>I</i> = 1.75 ++++		INTJ <i>n</i> = 7 (6.0%) <i>I</i> = 0.86 +++++ +		E <i>n</i> = 43 (36.8%) *** <i>I</i> = 0.70 I <i>n</i> = 74 (63.2%) *** <i>I</i> = 1.34 S <i>n</i> = 88 (75.2%) ** <i>I</i> = 1.21 N <i>n</i> = 29 (24.8%) ** <i>I</i> = 0.65 T <i>n</i> = 50 (42.7%) *** <i>I</i> = 0.60 F <i>n</i> = 67 (57.3%) *** <i>I</i> = 1.95 J <i>n</i> = 97 (82.9%) *** <i>I</i> = 1.24 P <i>n</i> = 20 (17.1%) *** <i>I</i> = 0.51				
ISTP <i>n</i> = 1 (0.9%) <i>I</i> = 0.18 +		ISFP <i>n</i> = 1 (0.9%) <i>I</i> = 0.35 +		INFP <i>n</i> = 2 (1.7%) <i>I</i> = 0.52 ++		INTP <i>n</i> = 3 (2.6%) <i>I</i> = 0.57 +++		Pairs and temperaments IJ <i>n</i> = 67 (57.3%) *** <i>I</i> = 1.77 IP <i>n</i> = 7 (6.0%) ** <i>I</i> = 0.40 EP <i>n</i> = 13 (11.1%) * <i>I</i> = 0.60 EJ <i>n</i> = 30 (25.6%) * <i>I</i> = 0.75 ST <i>n</i> = 33 (28.2%) *** <i>I</i> = 0.60 SF <i>n</i> = 55 (47.0%) *** <i>I</i> = 3.11 NF <i>n</i> = 12 (10.3%) <i>I</i> = 0.72 NT <i>n</i> = 17 (14.5%) * <i>I</i> = 0.61				
ESTP <i>n</i> = 1 (0.2%) <i>I</i> = 0.18* +		ESFP <i>n</i> = 6 (5.1%) <i>I</i> = 2.04 +++++		ENFP <i>n</i> = 3 (2.6%) <i>I</i> = 0.49 +++		ENTP <i>n</i> = 3 (2.6%) <i>I</i> = 0.42 +++		SJ <i>n</i> = 79 (67.5%) *** <i>I</i> = 1.42 SP <i>n</i> = 9 (7.7%) * <i>I</i> = 0.54 NP <i>n</i> = 11 (9.4%) ** <i>I</i> = 0.49 NJ <i>n</i> = 18 (15.4%) <i>I</i> = 0.81 TJ <i>n</i> = 42 (35.9%) *** <i>I</i> = 0.71 TP <i>n</i> = 8 (6.8%) *** <i>I</i> = 0.34 FP <i>n</i> = 12 (10.3%) <i>I</i> = 0.76 FJ <i>n</i> = 55 (47.0%) *** <i>I</i> = 2.95				
ESTJ <i>n</i> = 3 (2.6%) <i>I</i> = 0.14*** +++		ESFJ <i>n</i> = 21 (17.9%) <i>I</i> = 3.91*** +++++ +++++ +++++ +++++		ENFJ <i>n</i> = 2 (1.7%) <i>I</i> = 0.52 ++		ENTJ <i>n</i> = 4 (3.4%) <i>I</i> = 0.44 +++		IN <i>n</i> = 17 (14.5%) <i>I</i> = 0.92 EN <i>n</i> = 12 (10.3%) ** <i>I</i> = 0.46 IS <i>n</i> = 57 (48.7%) *** <i>I</i> = 1.56 ES <i>n</i> = 31 (26.5%) <i>I</i> = 0.87 ET <i>n</i> = 11 (9.4%) *** <i>I</i> = 0.25 EF <i>n</i> = 32 (27.4%) ** <i>I</i> = 1.75 IF <i>n</i> = 35 (29.9%) *** <i>I</i> = 2.18 IT <i>n</i> = 39 (33.3%) <i>I</i> = 1.00				
Jungian types (E)				Jungian types (I)				Dominant types				
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>I</i>		<i>n</i>	%	<i>I</i>		<i>n</i>	%	<i>I</i>	
E-TJ	7	6.0	0.23***	I-TP	4	3.4	0.37*	Dt. T	11	9.4	0.26***	
E-FJ	23	19.7	2.49***	I-FP	3	2.6	0.45	Dt. F	26	22.2	1.63**	
ES-P	7	6.0	0.83	IS-J	55	47.0	1.94***	Dt. S	62	53.0	1.68***	
EN-P	6	5.1	0.46*	IN-J	12	10.3	1.27	Dt. N	18	15.4	0.80	

These are pastors who value the tradition of their church and may work hard to maintain it. On the downside, they may find it difficult to initiate and manage institutional or organisational change.

Second, the Singaporean pastors are distinct, in part, from their UK counterparts. The Singaporean pastors prefer to function as introverts rather than extraverts, and to make decisions drawing on feeling rather than thinking. In these respects they differ from UK neo-Pentecostals who are both more extraverted and more analytical and logical in their decision-making. Type theory describes introverted feelers as 'reflective harmonizers' and summarize this in the following way.

They have a concern for deep and enduring values, as well as for people and the way people feel. These types feel things quite intensely and in a manner that can sometimes be puzzling to others. The depth of feeling about individual values can make them appear overly serious and excessively sensitive to their own and others' emotional state.

MYERS ET AL., 2003, p. 59

These pastors prize harmony and may find it difficult to confront difficult people or polarized situations. Having said this, it is clear that within an Asian culture the quest for consensus is valued, probably more valued than the individualism to be routinely found in the UK. In this respect these pastors are going with the grain of their culture rather than standing against it.

Third, the Singaporean pastors are significantly different to the general population of Singapore. People outside of the Pentecostal church may find Pentecostal pastors difficult to understand. Type theory suggests that others may see ISFJs as "quiet, serious, and conscientious" (Myers et al., 2003, p. 68); whereas others may see the ENTJ as "direct, challenging and decisive" (Myers et al., 2003, p. 91). It is clear from these brief descriptions how easy it is for misunderstanding to occur between these two different types. The pastors and those who are outside the church may find it difficult to find 'common ground'. Having said this, it is clear that there will be differences between small and large churches in the sense that the ordinary member of a congregation is unlikely to have much personal contact with the pastor if the congregation exceeds about 250 people.

Fourth, the differences between the type profiles of the Singaporean pastors and the population norms demonstrate that it might be difficult for pastors to relate to the wider population and this might well be an obstacle to mission and ministry. An awareness of type theory may help the ministers to relate to those whose personality profiles differ from their own. Unfortunately, there is

little attention given to personality differences in the typical training of Pentecostal pastors because the emphasis is upon theology and doctrine. The only exception to this generalisation is likely to occur in the case of pastors who have been trained for counselling.

Fifth, further research is necessary in order to establish if those who attend the Pentecostal churches in Singapore present a similar type profile to their pastors. Research within the UK context would suggest that congregations and pastors tend to present similar psychological type profiles. Again, however, one needs to note that there are significant variations in size between congregations in Singapore. Megachurches attract congregations of more than 5,000 people each Sunday but break up their congregations into subgroups for mid-week cell or home meetings. This may create the possibility of distributing ministers and people into situations where they are psychologically comfortable. Indeed one could argue that this is one of the reasons for the growth of Pentecostal churches in Singapore. The difference between large congregational meetings and more intimate cell groups may allow church environments to be tailored to personality differences.

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“Rev. Doctor” or “Rev. Mister”? Examining the Role of Education on the Religiosity, Spirituality, and Secular Lives of Permanent Catholic Deacons

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Abstract

Catholic deacons ($n = 1,990$; M age = 55.8 years, $SD = 7.1$) reported their level of education, religious commitment attitudes, spiritual transcendence beliefs, and behaviour in relation to a set of secular and sacred acts. Deacons with a doctorate degree ($n = 234$) reported a higher sense of religious commitment grounded in interpersonal activities and a higher sense of spiritual transcendence through a connectedness with others, compared to deacons with a masters ($n = 690$), bachelor ($n = 528$), or high school/associate degree ($n = 538$) qualification. In contrast, deacons with a high school/associate degree experienced the transcendent more through prayer than did the three other deacon groups. Reflecting on the last six months, doctoral deacons thought more often of a secular job change, while high school/associate degree deacons reported an increase in enthusiasm for church work and spent more time in spiritual reflection. Results suggest that the education level of permanent deacons may yield different outcomes for both secular and sacred beliefs.

Keywords

Catholic deacons – ministry burnout – religious commitment – spiritual transcendence

In the 1960s, after nearly a 1,000 year absence, the Roman Catholic Church renewed and reinstated ordained male clergy identified as ‘permanent deacons’ (Ditewig, 2004, 2007; Keating, 2006). Traditionally, deacons at the Catholic

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Mass read the Gospels (Holy Scripture) and assist the priest during the service, as well as affirming the teaching and study of Scripture. They preside at sacraments such as baptizing members into the Church, witnessing over weddings, wake-services and funerals, blessings of people, objects, and places, and the distribution of Holy Eucharist (Shugrue, 1988; U.S. Catholic Conference, 1993, 2005). Above all, the deacon is an unpaid cleric focusing on social justice, charity, and the communal need. He stands between the Church and the world, with his feet solidly rooted in the liturgical and his hands squarely in the service of others (Ferrari, 2013; in press, a). In short, deacons today are deeply embedded in the world, but not of the world: that is, they act as a bridge between the liturgical Church and the needs of the world (Ditewig & Tkacik, 2010).

Only a few small studies have so far examined the characteristics of Catholic permanent deacons. Kobal (2005), in an unpublished dissertation study, interviewed five Pennsylvania deacons on their ministry experiences, reporting that these men felt they were understood as clergy by the laity. Gamino, Sewell, Mason, and Crostley (2007) examined archival records on psychiatric adjustment measures for 139 men in Texas who had applied to enter the first year of diaconal studies. Results found that candidates who were eventually selected were mature men, successful in careers and marriage, free of disabling neurosis, addictions, anger, interpersonal problems, and possessing solid ego strength. In contrast, Ashworth and Dilks (2012) reported that 17 men residing in Oklahoma who were entering the diaconate were generally rigid and moralistic, with a desire to appear perfectionistic. These studies provide limited information because they focused mostly on men *applying* to be deacons, who lived in particular geographic regions of the United States. None of these earlier studies examined a national sample of Catholic deacons nor reported their religious attitudes, spiritual beliefs, or secular/sacred behaviours in relation to their levels of education.

Ferrari and colleagues recently conducted a wider, national assessment with a larger sample size of already ordained permanent deacons ($n = 1,997$) living in one of 172 dioceses across the U.S. and Canada. Ferrari and Vaclavik (in press) categorized these participants by ordination year and geographic region, and found no significant differences in self-reported servant leadership (a style oriented toward leading by example of service) or transformational leadership (a style focused on moving others to greater personal potential) preferences, even when controlling for age or time spent in the parish. Ferrari and Dosen (in press) assessed the deacons' perception of the sense of parish community in relation to the presence or absence of a local Catholic elementary school. There were no significant differences in the parish sense of community between parishes with or without a Catholic school, and in parishes with a

school the sense of parish community was the same whether the principal was a woman or man, religious or lay person.

Ferrari (2015, a) also examined the leadership styles and the perceived sense of parish community among 156 Hispanic deacons assigned to Hispanic or non-Hispanic parishes. Results showed the leadership styles, as servant leader and transformational leader, to be similar regardless of the parish assignment. However, the more deacons (but not priests) working within a parish, specifically a Hispanic parish, the lower was the sense of community perceived by the Hispanic deacon. Ferrari (2015, b) then assessed the self-reported ratings of religious commitment, spiritual transcendence beliefs, and personality traits of 127 Hispanic deacons, compared to a larger sample of European-American deacons. Together, these studies posed the question whether there was something in the religiosity, personality, and leadership styles of Hispanic deacons (compared to non-Hispanic deacons) that might elicit potential conflict. That is, might there be some level of 'machismo' still present among these spiritual men who overall showed more 'caballerismo' tendencies of compassion and tenderness. Results showed that Hispanic deacons reported more fear of trying new religious ministries and lower tendencies toward boastfulness compared to non-Hispanic deacons.

In addition, Ferrari (in press, b) examined differences in religious commitment, spiritual transcendence (through prayer life and connectedness with others), and recent secular and sacred behaviours of permanent deacons based on years since ordination and residence in different regions of the U.S. Results found no significant effects of time since ordination or geographical location on religiosity or spirituality for this large sample of deacons. However, older deacons reported a stronger desire to spend less time on parish administrative duties and more time with family, compared to younger groups of deacons.

The present study extends this area of interest in the diaconate by comparing these men across their levels of education on the set of religious, spiritual, and behavioural variables collected by Ferrari (in press, b). No published study has yet examined the relationship between educational attainment and faith commitment or sacred/secular practices among Catholic deacons (or, in fact, any other Catholic clergy in the U.S.). The Center for Applied Research on the Apostolate, CARA, reported that over 60% of U.S. deacons hold some level of higher-education degree (i.e. a bachelors or higher), but that organization did not compare levels of self-reported attitudes and beliefs in relation to variations in education level (CARA, 2014). This leaves unanswered the question of how the faith beliefs and practices of a clergy person with a doctorate degree compare to one with either a high school or associate degree. No *a priori* hypotheses were proposed because this study is the only systematic, large-scale

empirical assessment found in the psychological literature. To the extent that common social beliefs suggest that education may reduce formal traditional religious practices, it is interesting to explore this line of study.

Method

Participants

The participants for this study were drawn from a nationwide sample of 1,997 deacons who responded to a survey regarding the characteristics of U.S. deacons (see Ferrari, 2015, a; 2015, b; Ferrari & Dosen, in press; Ferrari & Vaclavik, in press for project details). The sample of 1,990 used here consisted of the participants who self-reported their level of education and completed a set of psychometric scales. Deacons are assigned to their parish community by their Bishop. A recent demographic profile study through CARA (2014) reported 177 U.S. dioceses with diaconate programs that included nearly 18,000 ordained deacons in total. Catholic dioceses are clustered into 13 different geographic regions across the U.S. and Canada, and participants for this study came from both countries as these regions are all classed as 'U.S.' by the Catholic bishop's conference.

A number of recruitment methods were employed in order to try and recruit a national sample that was representative of the North American dioceses. The main method was to send emails and a reminder telephone call directly to each diocesan diaconate program director. A total of 172 of 177 directors representing dioceses from across the 13 regions were contacted and informed about the study. Although only direct contact information (email address and telephone number) for seven regions was provided to the author, they represented the largest dioceses across the east, west, north, and south regions of the country. Response rates for these seven regions ranged from 9.7% to 21.0% ($Md = 13.8\%$). An eighth 'region' was included based on summing together individuals from all other regions. Preliminary assessment (one-way ANOVA) indicated no significant differences by geographic region, so data from all regions were treated together.

Directors were asked to send their deacons an email statement about the purpose of the study (approved by the national deacon director) and respondents were instructed to log onto a secure website to complete the survey. In addition, an advertisement was posted for two continuous months in the *Deacon Digest*, a national magazine available to U.S. Deacons, explaining the study and providing the website link to the survey. Also, about three months after the start of data collection, a short story on the study was published in the

National Catholic Reporter, a high circulation, faith-based U.S. newspaper, which included a link to the online survey study. Recruitment spanned between four and five months.

Data Collection

Prior to agreeing to complete the online questionnaire, respondents were informed on the website that their participation was voluntary. To protect their anonymity there was no link to individual responses. Consent to participate was signalled by completing the questionnaire. The online survey took an average of 30 minutes to complete all measures. To encourage participation, a draw for 100 \$5 coffee gift cards was used. Upon completion of the study, participants were prompted to link to a different website (accessible only after all survey items were completed) where they voluntarily entered their email address for the gift card draw. Therefore, this contact information was separate from the main survey to protecting anonymity.

Demographic Information

The mean age was 55.8 ($SD = 7.1$). Nearly all participants self-identified as European-American (92%) and that they were married (93%), with an average of 3 children. In terms of paid employment outside of a parish, 45% worked either full- or part-time. On average, these deacons were ordained for 13.3 years ($SD = 10.2$) and reported that they had lived an average of 16.3 years in their current parish ($SD = 10.4$). On average, these deacons reported that they assist at Sunday mass at least on a monthly basis (83%) and usually preach once a month (55%), and engaged in sacraments such as baptism (88%), marriage prep (66%), and bereavement ministries (52%).

In terms of self-reported education level among the present respondents, there were 538 (27.0%) deacons with a high school or associate degree, 528 (26.5%) deacons with a bachelor's degree (e.g. B.A., B.Sc.), 690 (34.7%) deacons with a master's degree (e.g., M.A., M.Sc., M.B.A., M.Div.), and 234 (11.8%) deacons with a doctorate degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D.). Unfortunately, respondents were not asked for their major area of study, or whether they obtained their degree before or after ordination.

Psychometric Scales

Religious Commitment

Participants completed a 10-item brief measure of religious commitment (Worthington et al., 2003), which assesses the degree to which a person follows and practices their religious values, beliefs, and customs. Items are rated on a 5-point scale (1 = 'not at all' to 5 = 'totally'), and this inventory contains

two reliable sub-scales, namely: Intrapersonal Religious Commitment (6 items: author-reported alpha reliability = .92; $M = 14.7$, $SD = 7.1$) assessing cognitive beliefs about religious faith (sample item: 'My religious beliefs lie behind my whole approach to life.'), and Interpersonal Religious Commitment (4 items: author-reported alpha reliability = .87; $M = 9.0$, $SD = 4.5$) assessing behavioural actions reflecting religious faith (sample item: 'I enjoy working in the activities of my religious organization'). The authors reported a total scale mean score of 23.6 ($SD = 10.8$), with a coefficient alpha of .93. With the present sample, coefficient alpha was .70 on the Interpersonal subscale, .76 on the Intrapersonal subscale, and .80 on the total Religious Commitment scale.

Spiritual Transcendence

Participants also completed two parts of the multi-dimensional Spiritual Transcendence inventory (Piedmont, 1999), where each item was rated on a 5-point scale (1 = 'strongly disagree' to 5 = 'strongly agree'). The two parts were the 9-item Prayer Fulfilment subscale, assessing feelings of joy and contentment from prayer life (author-reported alpha reliability = .85; no mean score reported), and the 6-item Connectedness subscale, examining a sense of personal responsibility to others both across generations and in community (author-reported alpha reliability = .65; no mean score reported). These scales were found to be independent of the five factor model of personality (Piedmont, 1999). Piedmont reported that self-reported and peer-observed ratings were significantly related, suggesting that self-perceptions on these variables seem to accurately reflect a respondent's true tendencies. In a later study, Piedmont (2001) found that scores on this scale correlated with prosocial behaviour, purpose in life, and being self-actualized. With the present sample, the coefficient alpha for the Prayer Fulfilment subscale was .77, and for the Connectedness subscale .70.

Situational Shift

In addition, all participants completed the expanded 12-item version of Rodgeron and Piedmont's (1998) original inventory, measuring recent behaviours and attitude changes (in the past six months) in clergy life along a 9-point scale (1 = 'greatly decreased' to 9 = 'greatly increased'). Golden, Piedmont, Ciarrocchi, and Rodgeron (2004) added five additional items to better capture the role of spirituality and burnout among clergy (sample item: 'In the past six months, my prayer and devotional life has...' and 'In the past six months, my enthusiasm for church work has...') and reported a coefficient alpha of .78

across all 12 items. The present study with Catholic permanent deacons used the expanded 12 items, but treats each item independently in order to assess more closely recent behavioural and attitudinal changes in religious life (7 items) and religious-related work (5 items). The coefficient alpha for 12 items in the present study was .71.

Results

A MANOVA across the four education level groups was performed on the Religious Commitment scale and the two subscale scores, as well as both Spiritual Transcendence subscale scores. Table 1 presents the mean sum scores on each of these self-reported scaled variables. There was a significant overall effect for education, $F(12, 1667) = 4.06, p = .001$; Wilks's $\Lambda = 0.97$, partial $\eta^2 = .12$. Univariate tests showed significant difference on the Religious Commitment complete scale, $F(3, 1673) = 3.21, p = .02$, the Religious Commitment Interpersonal subscale, $F(3, 1673) = 5.89, p = .001$, the Prayer Fulfilment subscale, $F(3, 1673) = 3.78, p = .01$, and the Connectedness subscale, $F(3, 1673) = 2.79, p = .04$. Post hoc comparisons (Scheffe, $p < .05$) were then performed and deacons with doctoral degrees reported stronger religious commitment from interpersonal actions with others, as well as overall religious commitment, compared to deacons with masters, bachelors, or high school/associate degrees (Table 1).

Next, a MANOVA across the four education level groups was performed on each of the 12 situational shift behaviours. There was a significant effect for education level, $F(12, 1656) = 1.57, p = .02$; Wilks's $\Lambda = 0.97$, partial $\eta^2 = .11$. Univariate tests showed significant difference on enthusiasm for worship, $F(3, 1667) = 3.67, p = .01$, spiritual reflection, $F(3, 1667) = 4.19, p = .006$, enthusiasm for church work, $F(3, 1667) = 3.67, p = .01$, and thoughts of a job change, $F(3, 1667) = 3.77, p = .01$. Subsequent post hoc comparisons (Scheffe, $p < .05$) indicated that deacons with a high school qualification or associate degree claimed most enthusiasm for worship in the last six months, followed by those with a bachelor degree, and finally both master's and doctoral degree deacons. High school/associate degree deacons also reported the most spiritual reflection and enthusiasm for church work compared to deacons in the other three education groups (Table 1). In contrast, deacons with a doctoral degree claimed they were more likely to be thinking of a job change, compared to deacons with other qualifications. All other situational behaviours were not significantly different across education levels.

TABLE 1 *Mean (SD) sum scores on self-reported religiosity, spirituality, and clergy behaviours across education levels for Catholic deacons*

	High School or Associate Degree	Bachelor Degree	Master's Degree	Doctoral Degree
<i>N</i> =	538	528	690	234
<i>Religious commitment</i>				
Interpersonal	15.73 (2.60) ^b	16.02 (2.55) ^b	16.18 (2.59) ^b	17.64 (2.14) ^a
Intrapersonal	25.01 (3.18)	24.91 (3.37)	24.87 (3.51)	25.54 (3.07)
Total scale	40.76 (4.34) ^b	40.93 (5.43) ^b	41.08 (5.64) ^b	43.19 (4.77) ^a
<i>Spiritual transcendence</i>				
Prayer Fulfilment	33.61 (4.35) ^a	32.66 (4.78) ^c	32.82 (4.85) ^b	33.33 (5.31) ^b
Connectedness	23.50 (3.17) ^b	23.77 (3.34) ^b	24.00 (3.39) ^b	24.98 (3.40) ^a
<i>Situational shifts</i>				
Prayer/devotional life	5.04 (1.14)	5.02 (1.34)	4.96 (1.14)	4.93 (1.14)
Feelings of close to God	5.28 (1.67)	5.28 (1.03)	5.18 (1.08)	5.15 (0.97)
Enthusiasm for worship	5.50 (1.09) ^a	5.33 (0.98) ^b	5.12 (1.11) ^c	5.14 (1.18) ^c
Study of Scripture	4.97 (1.16)	4.98 (1.08)	4.86 (1.18)	5.01 (1.12)
Spiritual reflection	5.11 (1.04) ^a	4.78 (1.15) ^b	4.72 (1.22) ^b	4.74 (1.06) ^b
Enthusiasm for church work	5.20 (1.26) ^a	4.88 (1.18) ^b	4.79 (1.27) ^b	4.79 (1.28) ^b
Commitment to ministry	5.27 (1.20)	5.24 (1.16)	5.14 (1.18)	5.11 (1.29)
Number of hours worked	4.70 (1.49)	4.55 (1.45)	4.59 (1.46)	4.51 (1.44)
Job responsibilities	4.65 (1.49)	4.52 (1.47)	4.61 (1.49)	4.56 (1.52)
Thoughts of a job change	3.59 (1.65) ^c	3.87 (1.72) ^b	3.89 (1.69) ^b	4.32 (1.72) ^a
Weekly days off	3.37 (1.23)	3.78 (1.30)	3.69 (1.29)	3.84 (1.35)
Time with family/friends	4.52 (1.23)	4.48 (1.31)	4.33 (1.29)	4.45 (1.23)

Note. Variables with different superscripts on the same row are significantly different (post hoc: Scheffe, $p < .05$).

Discussion

The results reported here suggest that education matters in the beliefs and actions of Catholic clergy known as permanent deacons. Deacons who earned a doctoral degree reported that they found greater faith fulfilment through interpersonal activities, and reported a stronger level of religious commitment,

compared to deacons with other graduate or undergraduate degrees. Perhaps, with increased education, extending into graduate school provides clergy a sense of a broad education beyond simple religious rituals.

Furthermore, it is interesting to compare the mean sum scores of the present sample (Table 1) with those reported for community samples and practicing lay Christians in other studies. In the present study, deacons with doctorates reported an overall mean sum score of 43, with the range across education levels from 40 to 43. Worthington et al. (2012) stated that the mean score for their general U.S. adult samples was 26 ($SD = 12$), and a score of 38 or higher would justify considering a person to be 'highly religious'. Their research indicated mean sum scores of 39 for Christians from a variety of churches, 37 for clients in explicitly Christian agencies, 39 for students at Christian private universities, and 46 for therapists at explicitly Christian agencies. Unfortunately, their standards manual does not break down religious commitment scores by gender or education. The result of the present study suggests that these deacons were men who adhered to their religious beliefs, values, and practices and utilized them in everyday living. Such results confirm that deacons, regardless of their education, report they practice what they believe.

Piedmont (1999, 2001, 2004) stated that spiritual transcendence refers to a perceived experience of the sacred that affects a person's self-perception, feelings, goals, and ability to transcend difficulties. It represents an ability to move outside oneself in space and time and view life objectively as something larger. People who score high on the Spiritual Transcendence scale see a larger plan and meaning to life, beyond mortal existence. Despite life's ups and downs, there is something more permanent and constant that gives direction, meaning, and value to life. Based on his model, Piedmont states that some people reach transcendence through '*prayer fulfilment*', a feeling of joy and contentment that results from personal encounters with the god of their understanding. People who are strong in prayer fulfilment may create a space in life that is devoted to meditation and prayer on a regular basis, finding a personal sense of emotional satisfaction, strength, and support in their efforts to connect with some larger reality. Time spent in this positive solitude provides fortification and feelings of emotional renewal during times of crisis and stress. Piedmont also argued that people may engage with the transcendent through a sense of '*connectedness*', a belief that one is part of a larger human reality that cuts across generations and groups. People with a strong sense of connectedness experience a special sense of responsibility (and gratitude) for the many gifts received from those individuals who came before them, they recognize a need to share their gifts or skills with others, and they feel an obligation to ensure that the wisdom and wealth of this generation is

transmitted to the next generation (see also Slater, Hall, & Edwards, 2001, for further details).

Piedmont (1999, 2001) measured Prayer Fulfilment and Connectedness among undergraduate students and did not report mean sum scores specifically for older adults. Piedmont (1999) reported on a sample of 102 men (98% Catholic) with age ranges from 17 to 40 years, but the mean age across the sample was 18.5 years which is much younger than the present clerical sample of middle-aged men. Piedmont (2004) did report mean sum scores on a sample of 57 men (21% Catholic) with a mean age of 41, who were recovering from drug abuse. Here, Piedmont reported baseline mean sum scores of 29 to 30 on Prayer Fulfilment and 21 to 22 on Connectedness. After treatment, the sample reported mean sum scores of 32.4 and 22.6, for Prayer Fulfilment and Connectedness respectively. Furthermore, Golden, Piedmont, Ciarrocchi, and Rodgers (2004) reported similar mean sum scores among a sample of 260 male United Methodist pastors, with a mean age of 51 years, who had served an average of 21 years in ministry. In the present sample of middle-aged, male deacons, participants reported mean sum scores for Prayer Fulfilment between 32.7 and 33.6 and Connectedness between 23.5 and 25.0 across educational levels. Catholic deacons reported similar levels of spiritual transcendence as other Christian clergy and a community sample of men who completed a substance abuse recovery program. Moreover, the present results extend the studies by Piedmont and colleagues, by finding that education levels predicted the ways in which clergy experience religious belief in the transcendent. Deacons with a high school or associate degree experienced spiritual transcendence mainly through a prayer life, while deacons with a doctorate experienced spiritual transcendence mainly through connectedness. Future studies could assess levels of spiritual transcendence in other community adult samples in order to help to compile a profile of such beliefs among adults of varied religious and demographic profiles.

The results of the 12 situational behaviour items, covering clerical and cultural life, also indicated some effects of education. Deacons with a high school or associate degree seemed to report more pleasure from worship or spiritual reflection, and more enthusiasm for church work, compared to deacons with more advanced degrees. Deacons with a doctorate, in fact, more often reported they have been thinking of switching jobs than did those with less education. Unfortunately, Golden et al. (2004) did not report the education levels or the mean sum scores on any of these 12 behaviours with their sample of middle-aged male Methodist pastors, so it was not possible to ascertain how the current sample of Catholic deacons compared in education or item responses. Slater et al. (2001) noted that many people with strong religious convictions

seem bigoted and conservative in views. The current sample suggests that education among clergy may impact on a variety of beliefs. Future studies might explore these possibilities.

The current study is limited by not knowing the different graduate and undergraduate degrees that deacons earned, making it impossible to assess whether some programs of study impact on religious attitudes and opinions more or less than others. Unfortunately, published studies that did report their mean scale sum scores did not always report by gender or education levels. Also, recruitment focused on only six of 13 U.S. regions for deacons, with a response rate of about 14%. Future studies need to target the additional regions where U.S. deacons exist. Nevertheless, the present study suggested that education makes a difference to clergy. Future studies of deacons (Catholic and other Christian denominations) may benefit from delving deeper into the profile of clergy personality, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours.

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Prayers from the Inner City: Listening to the Prayer Board in Southwark Cathedral

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Abstract

Although there are numerous empirical studies of the practice of prayer among ordinary people, there have been far fewer empirical studies exploring the content of personal prayer and the influence of location and situation on what people pray. The ap Siôn Analytic Framework for Intercessory Prayer (apSAFIP) model was developed to enable multiple studies to be conducted within different church-related contexts with a view to addressing this issue. This study presents an analysis of 958 prayer requests posted on the prayer board of Southwark Cathedral in London, UK, using the apSAFIP model which distinguishes among prayer intention, prayer reference and prayer objective. The results are compared with other cathedral prayer studies that have employed the same analytic tool, using 'ordinary theology' as an interpretative lens.

Keywords

ApSAFIP model – cathedrals – intercessory prayer – ordinary theology – prayer content – prayer requests

There have been numerous, largely quantitative, empirical studies concerned with mapping the practice of prayer in ordinary people's lives, which have made a significant contribution to knowledge of the practice of prayer in four important areas (ap Siôn & Francis, 2009). The first area explores who prays, drawing on data from social surveys (Francis, 1982; Halman, 2001), studies on behaviour, attitudes and values of religious people (Kaldor, Dixon & Powell, 1999; Woolever & Bruce, 2002), and surveys that quantify and contextualize prayer in people's lives (Poloma & Gallup, 1991; Krause & Chatters, 2005). The second area explores when people pray, looking at a range of contexts such as personal health and physical illness (McCaffrey, Eisenberg, Legedza, Davis, & Phillips, 2004), parents with ill children (De Vellis, De Vellis & Spilsburg, 1988),

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marital conflict (Butler, Gardner & Bird, 1998), general coping (Ellison & Taylor, 1996), finance and work-related problems (Francis, 1984), and those working in care contexts (Schneider & Kastenbaum, 1993). The third area explores the objective effects of prayer on people (Byrd, 1988; Krucoff et al., 2005) or on living organisms (Loehr, 1959). The fourth area explores the subjective effects of prayer on behaviour and attitudes (Lambert, Fincham, Braithwaite, Graham, & Beach, 2009), positive self-perception (Krause, 2004), anxiety and related states (Harris, Schoneman & Carrera, 2005), resilience and coping (Brown & Nicassio, 1987), and spiritual health (Francis & Robbins, 2005). There has been less research on the content of personal prayer and the relationship between personal prayer, location and situation. Although quantifying aspects of prayer is both useful and predictive, a more detailed knowledge and understanding of prayer content can provide a better indication of which aspects of prayer are significant in particular contexts.

Studying Prayer Content

Studies examining prayer content fall into two main categories: studies accessing the content of prayers through surveys of people's reported experience (Janssen, de Hart & den Draak, 1990; Ladd & Spilka, 2002; Bade & Cook, 2008) and studies that access the content of prayers directly, for which there is a growing body of research literature. For example, there are analyses of the content of personal intercessory prayer requests left in church or chapel-related settings in England or Wales (Brown & Burton, 2007; Burton, 2009, 2010; ap Siôn, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012; ap Siôn & Edwards, 2012, 2013; ap Siôn & Nash, 2013; Hancocks & Lardner, 2007), the USA (Cadage & Daglian, 2008; Grossoehme, 1996; Grossoehme et al., 2011; Grossoehme et al., 2010), and Germany (Lee, 2009; Schmied, 2002). Qualitative data of this type has enabled relatively large, broadly-based groups to be surveyed within the contexts of church, hospital, shrine and website, where both churchgoers and non-churchgoers used open-access intercessory prayer facilities outside the contexts of formal church-related worship. Recently, this literature has been extended to include analyses of prayer requests left in cathedrals in England and Wales (ap Siôn, 2013; ap Siôn, 2015a, in press; ap Siôn, 2015b, in press).

An Analytic Model for Personal Intercessory Prayer: The ApSAFIP

A weakness in exploring the content of personal intercessory prayer requests is that they mainly comprise single studies, which are not replicated in multiple

and diverse contexts using the same analytic tools. The one exception to this is the group of studies conducted by ap Siôn, which developed and tested an analytic framework for intercessory prayer and applied it to a range of different church-related contexts. The ap Siôn Analytic Framework for Intercessory Prayer (apSAFIP) model differentiates between three elements intrinsic to all examples of prayer of this type: prayer intention, prayer reference and prayer objective. *Prayer intention* examines the concerns of the individual prayer authors, which are categorized within eleven areas: health and illness, death, growth (affective), work, relationships, disaster and conflict, sport, travel, housing, open intention, and general. *Prayer reference* examines the objects of prayer, and identifies four foci: the prayer authors themselves; other people personally known to the prayer author (friends and family); animals known to the prayer author (companion animals); and the world or global context. *Prayer objective* distinguishes between the effects of prayer anticipated by the prayer authors, described as primary control and secondary control. Prayer authors employing primary control are explicit about the desired outcome of the prayer request, while prayer authors employing secondary control do not suggest a desired outcome. The primary control component of prayer objective is further delineated between prayer authors who request material changes to the physical world and those who request affective changes.

The apSAFIP model was employed in its original form in six studies of prayer requests (ap Siôn, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012; ap Siôn and Edwards, 2012, 2013) and in modified forms in four studies of prayer requests, where the apSAFIP was adapted to focus on particular aspects of intercessory prayer, styled as 'health and wellbeing' (ap Siôn, 2008; ap Siôn & Nash, 2013) and 'activity of God' (ap Siôn, 2011, 2013). Through conducting multiple studies in a variety of church-related contexts, it was shown that, although the prayer samples shared common characteristics, location and situation had an effect on the frequency with which some characteristics were expressed.

This effect was also evident when the apSAFIP model was subsequently applied to two cathedral contexts, Bangor Cathedral and Lichfield Cathedral (ap Siôn, 2015a in press; ap Siôn, 2015b, in press). For example, when the prayer intention categories of the Bangor study were compared with the Lichfield study, frequencies were similar for health and illness, sport, travel, housing, work, and conflict and disaster. However, differences emerged in the death category (Bangor 13% versus Lichfield 27%), affective growth category (Bangor 14% versus Lichfield 5%), open intention (Bangor 6% versus Lichfield 19%), relationships (Bangor 8% versus Lichfield 4%), and the general category (Bangor 17% versus Lichfield 9%). When the prayer objective categories were compared there was a more equal distribution of prayers falling into the primary control and secondary control categories in Lichfield (51% and 49%

respectively) than in Bangor (75% and 25% respectively). For the prayer reference categories, 86% of Lichfield prayer requests were made for other people and 5% for the prayer authors themselves, compared with 73% and 14% respectively at Bangor. There was also a slightly lower proportion of requests for the world or global category in Lichfield (8%) compared with Bangor (13%). These results suggested that Lichfield Cathedral was more associated with 'shrine' activity, with the focus on prayers for the sick and memorials for remembering for the dead, while Bangor cathedral, which is much smaller and less visited, may have more in common with a large city parish church in a rural area, displaying a broader range of concerns emerging from the lives and concerns of the local community (ap Siôn, 2015a, in press). Given this difference between cathedrals, it would be useful to increase the range of cathedrals studied in this way.

An Interpretative Tool for Personal Intercessory Prayer: Ordinary Theology

Analytic models constructed directly from prayer content, such as the apSAFIP, need a context-relevant interpretative tool to make sense of the results and to apply them to professional and personal contexts in meaningful ways. The apSAFIP model has been devised for use in church-related contexts, which makes theology one appropriate lens through which to interpret the findings. However, the prayer samples will have been authored by lay people, many of whom would not be church attenders in any traditional sense, and the theology of the Academy and the Church is unlikely to connect closely enough with the authors and their prayer content to provide an effective interpretative tool. The construct of 'ordinary theology' may be a more appropriate lens through which to interpret the findings.

The concept of ordinary theology was developed by Astley (2002) because he recognized the difference and the distance between the theology of the Academy and Church and the theology of ordinary people. 'Ordinary' in this sense refers to people who are untrained in academic or ecclesial theology. Astley argued that people's ordinary theology must be taken seriously if the Church is to engage properly with its various ministry activities. He described this ordinary theology as a deeply personal, 'lived' theology which may be hesitant or inarticulate because it has not been formed by the same objective, analytical and often systematic process characteristic of academic theology. A person's ordinary theology is developed in 'experiential learning contexts' that are located outside the person (for example, their experiences of religious

community) and inside the person (for example, their individual life experiences), and these two contexts for learning exist in a dialogical relationship. Therefore, in a real sense, people have their own theology, informed by their reflections on their individual experiences, and this theology is in a continual state of change and adaptation as they react to new information arising from experiential learning contexts.

Research Agenda

The current study is linked to the *Signs of Growth* research project, a large-scale quantitative survey of the clergy and church congregations in the Anglican diocese of Southwark in south London. It examines prayers left in an inner city cathedral, mapping prayer content and exploring similarities and differences between prayer requests left in different locations and their implications for church and cathedral-related ministry using the interpretative tool of ordinary theology.

Method

Southwark Cathedral sits on the south bank of the River Thames at the end of London Bridge. As well as being the mother church of the Diocese of Southwark it is also a church with pastoral responsibilities for the 5,000 people who live in the parish. The population of the parish is mainly young and multi-racial, defined by its links to hotels, hospitals, schools, colleges, galleries, theatres, hostels for the homeless, businesses, offices and homes. People from all these sorts of places would have access to the cathedral, alongside tourists and other visitors. Within the cathedral, the cork prayer board was situated in the Harvard Chapel, giving people the opportunity to write prayer requests and light votive-candles. Adhesive post-it notes of varying sizes were provided and the present study is based on 1,000 such notes that were posted over a ten-week period in 2013.

Analysis

The content of the prayer notes were analyzed using the apSAFIP model, and the results compared with two previous studies from Lichfield Cathedral and Bangor Cathedral. Analysis was restricted to 916 prayer notes that were written in the English language and focused, either wholly or in part, on petitionary prayer. Excluded from the analyses were 70 other-language prayers, nine prayers

for thanksgiving alone, and five prayers that were illegible. The 916 prayer notes contained 958 individual prayer requests (identified as prayers that could have been written on different post-it notes), which were categorized according to prayer intention, prayer reference, and prayer objective. Prayer intention sub-categories were: health and illness, death, growth, work, relationships, conflict or disaster, sport or recreation, travel, housing, open intention, and general. Prayer reference categories were: self (the prayer author), other people (friends and family known to the prayer author), animals (companion animals known to the prayer author), and the world or global context. Prayer objective categories were: primary control (PC, where desired outcomes of the request were stated) and secondary control (SC, where no desired outcomes were stated). The primary control component of prayer objective was further delineated between prayer authors who requested material changes to the physical world (PC1) and those who requested affective changes (PC2).

Results

Application of the ApSAFIP

Prayer intention was most often open (46%), with 'health and illness' and 'death' being the next most frequent categories (15% each), followed by 'general' (7%) and 'relationships' (6%), with the remaining categories appearing on less than 5% of notes (Table 1). Prayer reference was overwhelmingly for other people (82%), and much less often for self (9%), world/global (7%) or for animals known to the prayer author (2%). Prayer requests mostly employed SC (65%) rather than PC objectives (35%), indicating a reluctance to request specific outcomes. Of the primary control requests, 92% were PC2 and only 8% PC1, indicating a strong preference for affective rather than material objectives.

When prayer intention was cross-tabulated with prayer reference, the majority of the 787 prayers for other people were open intention requests (52%), followed by requests related to death (17%), health and illness (16%) and general (6%). In contrast, the 82 prayers for self were mainly requests about relationships (41%), growth (18%), or work (10%). The 71 prayers classed as 'world or global' were related to disasters and conflicts (27%), to health and illness (25%), to growth (11%) or were general (11%). Prayers for animals all focused on open intention.

Differences in emphases were also apparent when the prayer intention was cross-tabulated with prayer objective. For example, around three quarters of the prayer requests relating to illness, general, relationships, growth, work, disaster or conflict, travel, and housing were PC rather than SC requests, while

TABLE 1 *Content of intercessory and supplicatory prayer by intention, reference, and objective (Southwark Cathedral)*

Intention:	Reference:			Other people			Global			Self			Animals			Total		
	Objective:			PC1			PC1			PC1			PC1			PC1		
				PC2	SC		PC2	SC		PC2	SC		PC2	SC		PC2	SC	
Open intention	438	0	0	412	0	0	4	4	0	0	4	0	0	18	0	0	438	
Health/illness	148	21	71	31	0	8	10	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	25	82	41	
Death	139	0	50	87	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	89	
General	69	1	41	9	1	7	0	0	0	9	1	0	0	0	2	57	10	
Relationships	54	0	11	5	0	1	3	10	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	36	18	
Growth	42	0	14	5	0	6	2	3	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	32	10	
Work	32	0	15	5	0	1	3	1	0	7	1	0	0	0	0	23	9	
Disaster/conflict	20	0	1	0	0	13	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	6	
Housing	4	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	
Sport	4	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	
Travel	8	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	2	
Total	958	22	208	557	2	37	32	19	4	59	19	0	0	18	28	304	626	

Note. PC1 = Primary Control 1; PC2 = Primary Control 2; SC = Secondary Control.

the majority of requests relating to death (62%) and all of the open intention requests (comprising almost half of the total number of requests) were SC rather than PC requests. In addition, almost all the PC1 requests (89%) related to the 'health and illness' intention category.

Detailed Analysis of the Content of Prayer Intention

Open Intention

Prayers left as open intention were found in 438 (46%) requests, accounting for almost half of all requests posted on the prayer board during this period. None of these prayer requests included a specific intention but explicitly identified individuals or groups who were the subjects of prayer. Due to the open, non-specific nature of these requests, they were all classed as secondary control. Multiple requests for the same people or animals were also found in this category.

Almost all of the requests were categorized as prayers for other people known to the prayer author (although some may have been for the prayer authors themselves, using the third person). The requests for other people were presented in various ways, with some requests identifying a named person or persons (sometimes the relationship to the prayer author was also given) and other requests grouping people together as 'family', 'friends', and 'enemies'. A number of the prayer requests made a short statement, sometimes addressed to an individual directly, and there were many examples of requests containing an affective element, such as 'with love'.

All the prayers for animals were located in the open intention category. The majority of the 18 requests were for named companion animals included at the end of a list of named people (these were multiple requests made by the same prayer author/s). The remaining requests usually referred to the animal by its personal name and type as well as including an affective or qualitative element such as 'beloved' or 'best'.

The four requests that had a world or global focus asked for prayer "For everyone" and more broadly "For the world" or "For all and everything beneath the sky". One request touched on a recurrent theme in the prayers collected over this period, which was related to Spain and presented as "Spanish lost generation".

Health and Illness

Prayers concerned with health and illness were found in 148 (15%) requests, and around 80% of these were for people known to the prayer author. These were mainly PC1 or SC requests, although almost all of the PC1 requests were found within 'health and illness' (25 requests).

Prayers for people known to the prayer author included a wide range of requests for relatives or friends with named or general physical health issues such as cancer, arthritis, diabetes, allergies, HIV, problems resulting from childbirth, ill babies and children, conceiving a child and operations. A number asked for healing in relation to these or for healing more generally. Some of the requests included petitions for affective qualities and gifts such as peace, strength and happiness. There were also some examples of multiple requests by the same prayer author, some of which contained extensive lists of various conditions.

A small group of requests was concerned with health issues such as depression, 'mental troubles', Obsessive Compulsive Disorders, stress, drug addiction, and autism. Another group of requests were more general and linked together requests for health with other attributes like wealth and happiness, for example. A few requests were directed to the ill person themselves, including wishes to "Get well soon".

Prayers for world or global concerns covered a wide range of areas including multiple prayer requests left by the same prayer authors for cancer, HIV / AIDS, and all suffering in "mind, body and spirit". Along with liturgical references to 'mind, body and spirit', one other prayer request used explicitly Christian language and religious concepts for a husband to be sober "if it be thy will".

Other groups identified by the prayer authors were "all blind people" and staff at a local hospital for their safekeeping. The remaining prayers were more generic, embracing all who were ill or for better lives for "the poor and sick".

Prayers for the prayer authors themselves were almost all for specific health conditions as well as one for conceiving a child. Only one prayer request employed religious language, asking for the success of a particular treatment "in Jesus' name". The remaining request was for personal health and family health because the prayer author did not "want to be alone".

Death

Prayers concerned with death were found in 139 (15%) requests. Almost all of these prayers apart from two (in the world or global category) were prayers for people known to the prayer author. Around 64% of the petitions were SC requests and the remaining petitions were PC2 requests.

Many of the prayers included names (or the nature of the relationship) of family and friends of prayer authors who were the deceased recipients of prayer. Sometimes dates were also recorded, either specifically or more generally, ranging from the very recent to many decades. Some requests marked anniversaries of death or another special date. Occasionally information was

provided about the circumstances of death such as a car accident or HIV or more generally “too soon”.

Prayer requests often demonstrated that their authors believed previous earthly relationships were maintained among the dead and between the living and the dead. Therefore, there was a widespread belief that death was in some sense continuous with life, and the separation between the living and the dead was in some sense a permeable reality. The latter is perhaps most clearly exemplified through the many instances of direct communication with the dead, which were often accompanied by a message letting the deceased know that they were still remembered and thought about, loved, and missed. On occasions they were also thanked and wished a happy birthday or happy Easter. In addition, there was the belief that those who had died could either make contact with, or were watching, those still living. Occasionally, prayer authors asked God to pass on a communication to dead loved ones on their behalf.

Other interesting features included: the idea that one's earthly life was concerned with doing a ‘job’ until the point of death, which would then be followed by ‘peace’; what appears to be the reason given for praying for a person's deceased mother, who was not religious but was born nearby on a specified date; and the rare allusion to liturgical text such as “May her dead soul rest in peace and rise in glory”.

The two requests that were global in reference were marked by the expansive range of their prayers for the dead; for one, this was for all who have “passed over” everywhere, and for the other, this was for all who had suffered especially among those who had “passed away”. The all-encompassing nature of the prayers placed no restriction on the beneficiaries of prayer, which may point to an underpinning belief that all who have died (regardless of their actions or beliefs during life) could and should benefit from prayer after their deaths.

General

Prayers concerned with general areas were found in 69 (7%) requests. Most of these were for people known to the prayer authors and were PC2 requests. Within general petitions for others, there was a focus on affective qualities and gifts, requests for help or for problems to be resolved (neither specified nor expressed in concrete ways), and occasionally statements directed to specific people. The affective qualities and gifts included references to safe keeping, taking care of, looking after, strength, peace, love, happiness, grace, God's presence, good life, good things, and blessing among others. “Bless” or “blessing” was a frequently used term in many requests.

There were a few prayers asking for success or making wish statements, which were too imprecise to place in any other intention category, such as “For

all success that she deserves NAME x” and “I hope that NAME has the best life ever because he is the best in the world”, respectively.

A few prayers for other people used explicit religious appellations and imagery, for example, “Lord happy to be in this sacred place. Thank u Father for all the [?] and always keep the family under your mantel. NAME”. The single PC1 request made reference to unspecified miracles and wonders: “For his divine mercy and blessing, miracles and wonders upon my household. For divine thanksgiving in my house this year. NAME. [PC1]”

The prayers for the prayer authors themselves were written mainly by one author and asked for all the author’s problems to be resolved. These prayers were placed in the self category because a collection of prayers in the death category revealed the same author’s identity. The remaining couple of prayers for self moved from prayer author to global in the request, “Please make my and everybody’s life happy and contended and help those less fortunate people Amen” and the enigmatic, “Lord, give me a gift, you know what I want”.

The general requests classed as ‘world or global’ were concerned with all-encompassing affective gifts as reflected in the prayers, “for all Humanity and may you bless them all with true love”, “happiness to all”, “Peace be with you”, and “Love light blessings xx”. Another request was not specific enough to place in the ‘conflict/disaster’ category, asking for God’s blessing on all those in need or distress, and there was also a more specific but also enigmatic request for a “Happy St Patrick’s Day” with the words “Breath – Fear not”. The single PC1 request was for good weather, “Please pray for a good warm day”.

Relationships

Prayers concerned with relationships were found in 54 (6%) requests. Over half of these requests were offered for the prayer authors themselves, making this the most popular theme for this group. Approximately half as many requests were for people known to the prayer author and only four requests reflected a world or global interest. Around two-thirds of the petitions were PC2 requests and the rest were SC requests.

Of the 34 prayers for self, 21 were written by a couple asking for prayers for themselves and either ‘love’ or ‘love and health’. Other prayers were concerned with establishing a relationship, maintaining or deepening a relationship, or restoring or reconciling a relationship. One prayer was offered for a forthcoming wedding. A small group of prayers focused on parents, such as petitions relating to an adoption and help being ‘good’ parents. One prayer introduced the theme of relationships in the wider context of neighbours: “I’m facing violent resistance from neighbours. Please plead with the Lord for HIS intervention. NAME.” [PC2]

Prayers for other people were largely concerned with maintaining relationships or improving relationships. Some of these prayers were also used to communicate directly with named people, which may be viewed as a way of maintaining certain relationships. One prayer was offered for a forthcoming wedding: “bring NAME and NAME happily back together at home so they can live happily and Get married like they wish to.” [PC2] Restoring or reconciling relationships appeared again as a characteristic of this group of requests as well as issues surrounding parents and foster care.

The few requests for world or global relationships were for very different concerns. A particularly interesting feature of one request was the allusion to ‘earthly and spiritual’ families, which intimates a belief in the continuation (in some form) of the family relationship structure after death: “Pray for all families everywhere – both earthly and spiritual, especially troubled ones.” [SC]

Growth

Prayers concerned with growth were found in 42 (4%) requests. Around three-quarters of these were PC2 requests, with the remaining being SC requests. There were slightly more requests for growth for other people than for the prayer authors themselves, but proportionally within the self category, prayers for growth were considerably more numerous. There was also a smaller collection of eight prayers related to growth in the world or global category.

Requests for other people focused on family and friends, and were mainly related explicitly to religious or spiritual growth. A particular feature recurring in a number of these requests was an underlying awareness of God’s will or ‘plan’, which required discernment and a decision about whether to accept this or not. There was also one prayer about the reconciliation of a family member with God before death, which was placed within the growth category rather than the death category because of the clear spiritual growth element.

Another group of requests was not clearly linked to an underlying awareness of God’s will or plan because they simply asked for ‘guidance’ and ‘help finding their way’ in unspecified ways or asked for help in right decision-making. There was also awareness in a number of prayers of the existence of polarities relating to light versus darkness and good versus evil, which were seen in prayers asking for guidance “in the light” and also for protection from “evil and darkness”. One of these prayers appeared in proclamation form: “NAME in PLACE. there is no dark corner in the house of god. your way will be guided by friends + family NAME.” [SC]

Other prayers related to the care of a church or a church community and for someone being confirmed on a specified date. A few prayers focused on the

development of a particular character attribute such as the requests for specified people “needing to know that they are loved” or for God to show someone the way to love so that they are “not scared of loving and receiving” and the request for a named person “to be brave”.

The requests for the prayer authors themselves were mainly related explicitly to religious or spiritual growth. Some prayers were concerned with spiritual discernment, while others affirmed the author’s commitment to their lifelong service to Christ or prayed for the need for a renewal of their faith. A number of prayer requests written by the same prayer author were concerned with vocation within the Roman Catholic Church, displaying a commitment to service and wish to become a Cardinal. Other prayers focused on character development issues, displaying recognition of the complexity of these. One prayer request was of particular interest because it made connections between a person’s civil life and worthiness to God within the contexts of both their home country as well as the United Kingdom: “O lord, forgive all my sins Give me a peaceful life that is worthy of you. Establish me O Lord both in my Country and United Kingdom. Father Lord give us fruits of the womb. Father Lord grant NAME a peaceful and fulfilled life.” [PC2]

Around half the requests for world or global issues had an ecumenical dimension relating to the Roman Catholic Church or the Orthodox Church. (This dimension was also present in prayers for self and the request to become a Cardinal.) In addition to a prayer for a list of priests, sisters and brothers, examples included: “Lord, please make Anglicans come back to the Holy Mother Church.” [PC2]; “Please pray for the Pope, give his wealth to unfortunate people.” [PC2]; “NAME and all Orthodox Christians on this Easter Day.” [SC]

Work

Prayers concerned with work were found in 32 (3%) requests. Two-thirds of the requests were concerned with work-related issues to do with other people. These included school and college activities, both in terms of passing specific exams as well as more general success at school and college. Employment matters were also prominent such as: finding a job; being successful, financially independent or wealthy; having a new contract or good book sales (repeated connected prayers were posted in relation to this); and returning to work. In one of these cases finding employment was also linked to making an important decision in a court case and “following Christ”. Three-quarters of the requests for other people and work were PC2 requests, while the rest were SC.

The prayer requests focusing on the prayer authors themselves concentrated on similar areas but were all PC2 requests apart from one. Therefore, we

find references to “less stress and exam success”, “finding a job”, “to get successful in my work”, “finding a job where I can serve him best”, and “help...with the situation at work”. As found in the prayers relating to other people, repeated prayers were offered by a prayer author over this period for a specific issue, in this case the successful completion of a MA project. In addition, ‘blessing’ (which appeared prominently in other prayer intention categories) appeared here in connection with success in the work context.

The remaining four requests concerned with work were for world or global issues, and were all SC requests apart from one. The former related to “the formation of the Centre of Silence” in London, the staff at the “Southwark Pensioners’ Centre”, and “the Spanish unemployed people”, while the latter linked together health, happiness, wealth, and a good job.

Disaster or Conflict

Prayers concerned with disaster or conflict were found in 20 (2%) requests. All of the requests, apart from one, were related to world or global concerns. These were directed towards specific current events or disasters (such as the Boston shootings, financial crises in Cyprus, war and unrest in South Korea, Syria, and Afghanistan) or towards more general world issues (such as poverty, injustice, greed and selfishness, the young and vulnerable) and the need for new ways of living (such as peace, mercy and understanding). The primary control requests were all affective in nature (PC2) while the secondary control requests stated the area of concern but did not indicate a desired outcome. The only request not located in the world or global category was for a named person who had experienced a house fire to have as much help as possible.

Comparison of Cathedrals Studies

The most striking difference in the Southwark Cathedral results compared with Lichfield or Bangor was the very high percentage of prayer requests that fell into the ‘open intention’ category. In Southwark, 46% of requests were open intention, compared to only 6% in Bangor and 19% in Lichfield. This meant that Southwark Cathedral also had a higher number of SC prayers category because by their nature, all open intention prayers are also SC prayers. Thus in Southwark, 65% of requests were SC, compared to only 25% in Bangor Cathedral and 49% in Lichfield.

While the effect of the large open intention category influenced the percentages of prayers in the other prayer intention categories, some comment may be made about the overall prevalence of particular intention categories in relation to the other two cathedral studies. Prayers related to health and illness or death were the most frequent after the open intention prayers in Southwark

Cathedral, and this prevalence was also true in Bangor. Likewise, prayers for sport or recreation, travel, housing and work appeared least frequently among the intention categories for all three cathedral studies.

In relation to prayer objective most of the PC prayers were PC2 (92%), which was similar to Lichfield (96%). Type of primary control was not differentiated in the Bangor Cathedral study. In relation to prayer reference Southwark and Lichfield were similar and different from Bangor.

Distinctive Features of Southwark Prayers

Distinctive features present in the prayer requests from the current study, when compared with the prayer requests from Bangor Cathedral and Lichfield Cathedral, were related to authorship of prayer requests, prayer content, and language.

Prayers by the Same Prayer Author

On prayer boards it is not uncommon to have the same prayer author writing multiple or repeated prayer requests. This has been found in particular locations such as a children's hospital chapel (ap Siôn & Nash, 2013), which given the nature of the location may be expected, and this characteristic was also present to a lesser extent on other prayer request boards in churches and cathedrals. However, the current study is distinctive in this respect because individual prayer authors offered repeated prayers that were identical or almost identical to one another. For example, "For NAME and NAME and love" accounted for 15 prayer requests, with minor variations on the theme in a further six prayer requests. There were 17 prayer requests for the same people and a named animal that followed exactly the same format. Twelve prayer requests asked for "all problems to be solved" for a named person or for all the friends and relatives of that named person who had died. There were five very similar prayers in terms of content and structure relating to a MA-level film project. Therefore, it may be seen that during this period there were a clearly discernible group of regular 'returners' to Southwark Cathedral, posting repeated prayers on the prayer board.

Prayer Communicating Directly with the Dead

A number of prayer request studies employing the apSAFIP model have identified the prevalence of prayers communicating directly with people who have died. For example, in Lichfield Cathedral (ap Siôn, 2015b, in press) 34% of prayers in the 'death' prayer intention category communicated directly with the dead, and in Bangor Cathedral this figure was 31% (ap Siôn, 2015a, in press). In Southwark Cathedral, 41% of such prayers communicated directly with the dead.

Prayer and Material Wealth

In Lichfield and Bangor there were numerous prayers requesting happiness, success, long life and health, but only one asking explicitly for material wealth and prosperity (a Lichfield prayer asking to win the lottery). In Southwark, however, there were four examples of such requests for material wealth with only one case where there was an attempt to 'spiritualize' the request: "Please say a prayer to NAME who wants to win the lottery. He will do good with it". Other examples cite names of a Far Eastern origin and relate to whole families: "NAME + family – wealth + prosperity" and "For Health, wealth & Happiness ADDRESS NAMES & Families".

Other Language Prayers

A distinctive feature of the prayer requests in the current study was the relatively high proportion of prayers written in a language other than English (7%) compared with 1% for the Lichfield Cathedral study and 2% for the Bangor Cathedral study, recognizing Welsh and English as first languages in the latter.

Conclusion

A number of conclusions may be drawn when viewed through the interpretative lens of ordinary theology. First, observing the style and language used in the prayer requests posted in Southwark Cathedral, it may be concluded that although some prayers were articulated through explicitly religious language and imagery, this was not the case for the vast majority of prayers, which were presented in ordinary, everyday language. This characteristic was also evident in the analyses from the Bangor Cathedral study and the Lichfield Cathedral study. Those who access the personal intercessory prayer facilities in cathedrals seem largely to be drawn from those who do not regularly attend worship, indicating that the prayer boards are responding to a desire among the local area population to offer prayer, but to have a Christian community doing this on their behalf. This is consistent with Grace Davie's (2008) notion of vicarious religion. Therefore, the provision of intercessory prayer facilities in cathedrals is a small but very significant part of a cathedral's ministry to those living and working within its vicinity as well as others who are just passing through, many of whom would not attend formal Christian religious services and events.

Second, all the cathedrals had many requests for health and illness and death but fewer requests for sport or recreation, housing, travel and work. All the cathedrals also appeared to have significantly more requests for other people rather than those related to self, the world or global or animals.

In addition, where PC was employed in Southwark and Lichfield, this was almost always PC2, requesting affective changes rather than material changes to the physical world. The high proportion of 'open intention' requests present in Southwark Cathedral may have been a purely practical issue as the materials provided for the writing of the prayer requests (small post-it notes) did not encourage or allow space for long requests, which made it easier to write brief prayers with an open intention. Other prayer request studies have noted that there is some evidence to show interaction among the prayer authors through the material posted on the prayer board, and this may mean in the Southwark case that many prayer authors were following a similar pattern of presentation. From an ordinary theology perspective (what may be gleaned from the prayers) and also from a prayer author perspective (what opportunity is given for people to formulate and express their prayers), it would be helpful to provide larger pieces of paper for the composition of prayer requests. Of the three cathedral studies, Bangor Cathedral prayer board provided the most space for the writing of prayer requests and was the least directive in terms of directions for writing prayers. It would be interesting to explore if and how changing the materials and directions provided on cathedral prayer boards changes the nature of the prayers offered.

Third, it has already been suggested that prayers from Bangor and Lichfield reflect the differing socio-religious contexts of each cathedral. It was more difficult, however, to interpret the results of the Southwark Cathedral prayers because of the large proportion of open intention requests. Nonetheless, there was evidence of many different populations accessing the prayer boards reflecting greater linguistic, cultural and ecumenical diversity than at the other two cathedrals.

Fourth, the Southwark prayer requests displayed clearly the practice of prayer authors returning repeatedly to offer the same prayers, or very similar prayers, concerned with the same theme within a short space of time. This kind of activity raises important questions about the significance of such sacred space and devotional practice for the prayer authors. It is argued that many of those visiting the cathedral prayer boards are not part of the church-going population, but rather they comprise the 'hidden congregation' who have a real sense of belonging to the cathedral in terms of location or place. As such, the hidden congregation of individuals who visit the cathedral to use the prayer board may be a distinctive example of belonging through 'place' within Walker's (2006, 2009, 2010) categories of different forms of church/Christian belonging.

Fifth, two particular areas within the Southwark Cathedral prayer requests would benefit from further exploration from an ordinary theology perspective.

First, although many of the prayer requests did not use explicitly religious language, the activity of ‘blessing’ (either requesting blessing or offering blessing) was used frequently in many prayers otherwise employing very ordinary, everyday language. Blessing would appear to be a religious practice that still resonates with many people today and is something that ordinary people may seek from the Church, although exactly how this is understood requires further investigation. Second, as with Bangor Cathedral and Lichfield Cathedral prayer studies (although with greater frequency in the Southwark prayers) beliefs about life after death would also benefit from further investigation. Analyses have consistently pointed to underlying presuppositions in this area, and a small but significant number of prayers are used solely to communicate with the dead. It would be useful to employ other research methods to probe these beliefs and expectations in more depth.

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SPECIAL SECTION

***Clergy Work-Related Psychological Health, Stress,
Burnout and Coping Strategies***



The Science of Clergy Work-Related Psychological Health, Stress, Burnout and Coping Strategies: Introduction to the Special Section

*Leslie J. Francis**

Abstract

The purpose of this special section of *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion* is to provide a forum for examples of current scientific research examining work-related psychological health, stress, burnout and coping strategies among clergy. The collection, comprising three qualitative studies and seven quantitative studies, draws on the work of four established research groups which are making a scientific impact in that area (two in the USA, one in the UK, and one in Australia). It is international networking and collaboration of this nature that stands to advance scientific knowledge in the Academy and provide better understanding and practice in the Church.

Keywords

Burnout – clergy – coping – psychology – stress

This special section of *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion* on the science of clergy work-related psychological health, stress, burnout and coping strategies draws together work from four research groups currently working in the field. The dispersed research group in England and Wales, co-ordinated by Leslie J. Francis in the Centre for Education Studies at the University of Warwick, has been publishing in the field since 2000 and currently includes initiatives in empirical theology (led by Andrew Village) in York St John University, York, and initiatives in the psychology of religion (led by Christopher

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Alan Lewis) and pastoral sciences (led by Tania ap Siôn) at Glyndŵr University, Wrexham. The Duke Clergy Health Initiative was founded in 2007 by The Duke Endowment to understand and improve the health of United Methodist Church (UMC) clergy in North Carolina. David Toole serves as Principal Investigator, Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell as both Co-Principal Investigator and Research Director, and Carl Weisner as Senior Director. NCLS Research has been working in Australia since 1991, under the leadership (in turn) of Peter Kaldor, Keith Castle, and Ruth Powell. The concern of NCLS Research with empirical studies of church congregations and church leaders has offered an important context in which to locate research on clergy work-related psychological health. From the Yale University School of Medicine, Benjamin R. Doolittle has been publishing on clergy burnout since 2007.

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In the 1990s, Francis' research group began by critiquing the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986) and by developing (with permission) a revised form of this instrument specifically for use among clergy (Rutledge & Francis, 2004; Hills, Francis, & Rutledge, 2004). This revised instrument took into account the language and experience of clergy to shape items, and at the same time took the opportunity to balance the number of items within each of the three scales (so that there were ten items to reflect each of the three constructs of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment) and to change the response categories against which these items were rated. A series of studies reported on the application of this instrument in the UK among Anglican clergy (Francis & Rutledge, 2000; Francis & Turton, 2004a, 2004b; Randall, 2004, 2007, 2013; Rutledge, 2006; Turton & Francis, 2007; Francis, Robbins, Rolph, Turton, & Rolph, 2010), among Catholic priests (Francis, Loudon, & Rutledge, 2004; Francis, Turton, & Loudon, 2007; Francis et al., 2010), and among Pentecostal pastors (Kay, 2000).

Discontent with both the theoretical model underpinning the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the psychometric properties of the instrument led to a reconceptualization of burnout in terms of the two dimensions proposed by the balanced affect model of psychological wellbeing (Bradburn, 1969) and operationalized in the Francis Burnout Inventory: positive affect measured by the Satisfaction in Ministry Scale and negative affect measured by the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (Francis, Kaldor, Shevlin, & Lewis, 2004; Francis, Kaldor, Robbins, & Castle, 2005; Francis, Village, Robbins, & Wulff, 2011). A series of studies reported on the application of the Francis Burnout Inventory

in the UK (Robbins & Francis, 2010; Brewster, Francis, & Robbins, 2011; Francis, Gubb, & Robbins, 2012; Randall, 2013; Francis, Payne, & Robbins, 2013). The Francis Burnout Inventory has also been used in studies conducted in the USA (Francis, Wulff, & Robbins, 2008; Barnard & Curry, 2012; Francis, Robbins, & Wulff, 2013a, 2013b), in Australia and New Zealand (Francis, Robbins, Kaldor, & Castle, 2009; Robbins, Francis, & Powell, 2012) and in Italy (Francis & Crea, 2015).

A particular feature of the series of studies collected by this dispersed research group in England and Wales has been the scientific concern to identify the relative predictive power of personal factors, contextual factors, theological factors and psychological factors in accounting for individual differences in levels of clergy work-related psychological health. Two psychological models of personality have played a particularly important part in this programme of research, the three dimensional model of personality as proposed and measured by the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975) and the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1991), and the model of psychological type as proposed and measured by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1985), the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (Keirsey & Bates, 1978) and the Francis Psychological Type Scales (Francis, 2005). Examples of studies using the Eysenckian model of personality are provided, for example, by Francis and Rutledge (2000), Rutledge and Francis (2004), Francis, Loudon, and Rutledge (2004), Francis, Turton, and Loudon (2007), Turton and Francis (2007), Francis et al. (2010), and Francis et al. (2013a, 2013b). Examples of studies using psychological type theory are provided by Francis et al. (2008), Francis et al. (2009), Robbins and Francis (2010), Brewster et al. (2011), Francis et al. (2012), Robbins, Francis, and Powell (2012), Francis, Payne, and Robbins (2013) and Francis and Crea (2015).

Within this research group in England and Wales, a distinctive place has been occupied by Christine Brewster's specific concern with identifying sources of stress and coping strategies. Examples of this contribution are provided by Brewster et al. (2011), Francis and Brewster (2012) and Brewster (2012a, 2012b). Another distinctive place has been occupied by Jenny and Paul Rolph working with qualitative data (Charlton, Rolph, Francis, Rolph, & Robbins, 2009; Rolph, Francis, Charlton, Robbins, & Rolph, 2011; Rolph, Rolph, Charlton, & Francis, 2011; Berry, Francis, Rolph, & Rolph, 2012; Rolph, ap Siôn, Francis, & Rolph, 2014).

The Duke Clergy Health Initiative

The Duke Clergy Health Initiative (CHI) was tasked in 2007 to study the holistic health of clergy and to develop and test interventions to improve clergy

health. Their work has focused on United Methodist Church (UMC) clergy in North Carolina, USA, but has implications for clergy more generally. The CHI began by conducting focus groups with 88 pastors and their clergy supervisors to describe pastors' perceptions of the barriers to, and facilitators of, their health. Using a popular public health model, the Socioecological Framework, they reported on: individual-level barriers to health, including pastors' belief that their call to ministry requires putting others first nearly all the time; interpersonal-level facilitators of health, including support from other clergy; congregational-level barriers to health, including congregants expecting clergy to be available around the clock; and denomination institutional-level barriers to health, including lack of support when charged with an unhealthy church (Proeschold-Bell et al., 2011). They also found different health-related barriers and facilitators for clergy subgroups, including pastors of large churches sharing more ministry tasks and feeling more comfortable negotiating time off and young clergy expressing more interest in physical health (LeGrand, Proeschold-Bell, James, & Wallace, 2013).

The CHI conducted a survey in 2008 of all UMC clergy in North Carolina, and received a response rate of 95%, indicating strong interest on the part of clergy in being asked about their health, particularly in the context of a health intervention being designed for them. This hour-long survey incorporated items included in national surveys, thereby allowing for direct comparison of clergy to other populations in North Carolina and the United States. In a key finding, the obesity prevalence for clergy was 40%, compared to 29% of North Carolinians (Proeschold-Bell & LeGrand, 2010). Not surprisingly, then, the prevalence of chronic disease was also significantly higher for clergy compared to North Carolinians, and these diseases included diabetes, hypertension, asthma, and arthritis. In the CHI's initial focus groups, clergy expressed concern for the physical health issues that they faced, and acknowledged a perception that clergy suffered from high rates of overweight and obesity. It was an interesting finding that, when on a widely-used measure of physical health functioning (the SF-12), clergy endorsed the items to indicate *better* physical health functioning than the average person in the United States, in which physical health functioning was defined as fewer limitations in moderate activities such as climbing stairs, moving a table, and doing housework (Proeschold-Bell & LeGrand, 2012). Based on their actual rates of chronic disease, clergy should experience worse physical health functioning. The authors speculated that the sedentary nature of clergy work may make it less likely for clergy to experience physical health limitations than people in other occupations, or that clergy may be more attuned to their spiritual well-being than their physical health. Alternatively, the authors suggested that clergy may be so

motivated by their call to ministry that they push through their physical needs in order to meet their mission to care for others.

The CHI team also examined clergy depression and anxiety rates. In the 2008 survey, they interviewed one-third of the clergy participants by phone, in order to account for mode effects when comparing clergy data with those from other studies that used telephone or in-person data collection. They found that 8.7% of clergy interviewed by telephone qualified for moderate or higher depression based on a depression screener (the PHQ-9), compared to only 5.5% of a representative sample of people from the United States, who were interviewed in-person using the same depression screener (Proeschold-Bell, Miles, et al., 2013). The CHI also found that 11.1% of clergy who took the survey items in a self-administered web or paper format qualified for depression, and that 13.5% qualified for anxiety using the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (unfortunately, there was not a good national comparison study that used the same anxiety measure). These findings point to above-average rates of depression in clergy and, given that the measures were for symptoms in the past two weeks only, they indicate a substantial mental health burden born by clergy over the course of their vocational career. To better understand what may be contributing to these high rates of mental illness symptoms, Proeschold-Bell and her colleagues examined the predictors of depression and anxiety, choosing constructs based on the popular occupational health theory of Effort-Reward Imbalance Theory. As expected, rewards of ministry such as ministry satisfaction and lower financial stress related to less depression and anxiety, whereas work efforts such as greater job stress and life unpredictability related to more depression and anxiety (Proeschold-Bell, Miles, et al., 2013).

The CHI examined positive mental health, conceptualized as feelings of personal accomplishment, satisfaction in ministry, and quality of life including satisfaction with one's family, community, creativity, and contributions. They simultaneously examined negative mental health, conceptualized as depression, anxiety, and the burnout factors of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. In theory, positive mental health and negative mental health exist on two separate but correlated continua, such that someone can experience both satisfaction with life and emotional exhaustion at the same time. Proeschold-Bell and colleagues found that certain ministry conditions, such as serving in a church open to new ideas, newcomers and congregational support, related only to positive mental health and not to negative mental health (Proeschold-Bell et al., in press). They found that other ministry conditions, including critical congregants, financial stress, and social isolation related to both lower positive mental health and higher negative mental health. The implication of these findings is that mental health interventions

for clergy are needed, and that different interventions may be needed to boost positive mental health, as opposed to ameliorating negative mental health.

The CHI developed the Clergy Spiritual Well-being Scale because many spiritual well-being measures use religious attendance and behaviors such as prayer as proxies for spiritual well-being, and these behaviors are required in clergy work and are therefore unable to indicate spiritual well-being in clergy. Instead, the Clergy Spiritual Well-being Scale asks about the frequency of experiencing “the presence and power of God” in a series of common daily life and ministry-related functions (Proeschold-Bell, Yang, Toth, Rivers & Carder, 2014).

The CHI conducted a systematic search in 2009 for health interventions designed for Protestant clergy in the United States and identified 56 such programs (Wallace et al., 2012). The majority of programs targeted clergy individuals or institutions, with few targeting congregations. Outcomes evaluations were lacking. The CHI team further asked clergy directly what they desired in health programming and discerned nine themes, including wanting institutional support for the time needed to care for one’s health and wanting to work on health in connection with others (Proeschold-Bell et al., 2012). The CHI went on to develop a two-year, multi-component holistic health program for clergy that blended theological reasons for tending to one’s health with workshops, health coaching, and weight loss programs. They conducted the first-known randomized controlled trial of a behavioral health intervention for clergy, testing this program, called *Spirited Life*, with 1,114 clergy (Proeschold-Bell, Swift, et al., 2013).

The CHI has continued to conduct this statewide survey every two years, including 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, and plans for 2016 administrations. Response rates have remained high, and over 1,000 clergy have taken all four survey waves, allowing for the examination of health across time. In one study, Miles and Proeschold-Bell (2013) found that clergy who participate in clergy peer support groups for at least two years report fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression. The positive relationship with peer support groups was especially strong for clergy serving low-morale churches; however, clergy who reported serving high-conflict churches and attending peer support groups reported more symptoms of anxiety and depression. The CHI will have more longitudinal findings of clergy health forthcoming.

NCLS Research

NCLS Research in Australia has been undertaking systematic and quality research in around 20 denominations through the National Church Life Survey,

both among congregations and among church leaders, at five-year intervals since 1991. The findings of the National Church Life Survey have been widely disseminated and fruitfully employed to influence the ministry and mission of the Churches in Australia (Kaldor, Bellamy, Correy, & Powell, 1992; Kaldor et al., 1995; Kaldor, Bellamy, Powell, Hughes, & Castle, 1997; Kaldor, Bellamy, Powell, Castle, & Hughes, 1999; Kaldor, Dixon, et al., 1999; Bellamy et al, 2006; Kaldor & McLean, 2009; Powell et al., 2012). Data from the 1996 National Church Life Survey among ministers, pastors and priests across Anglican and Protestant denominations, augmented by results from a similar survey conducted by the Catholic Church, were employed by Kaldor and Bullpitt (2001) in a study specifically on *Burnout in church leaders*. A unique aspect of this study was that it included detailed data about the congregations in which leaders were working. The analyses, therefore, were able to explore the connection between burnout and three interrelated factors: the nature of the individual leaders, the nature of the congregations, and the style of leadership employed by the ministers, pastors and priests. A second major study on leadership strengths reported by Kaldor and McLean (2009) also identified personal factors that were important in mitigating burnout. These were spiritual foundations, clarity of purpose, sense of self, integrity, supportive relationships, balance and boundaries.

The National Church Life Survey research group has also made significant contributions to the academic literature on the assessment and the correlates of psychological work-related health and burnout among clergy, including studies developing the Francis Burnout Inventory (Francis, Kaldor, Shevlin, & Lewis, 2004; Francis et al., 2005) and studies critiquing and modifying this instrument (Miner, Dowson, & Sterland, 2010). Studies by Miner, Sterland and Dowson (2006, 2009) have developed, validated and tested a multidimensional measure designed to explore the structure of an internal orientation to the demands of church ministry in the context of a secularized society. This instrument is known as the Orientation to the Demands of Ministry Survey (ODM-S). Studies by Francis et al. (2009) and Robbins et al. (2012) have explored the connection between psychological type and work-related psychological health among Australian clergy.

Yale University School of Medicine

Benjamin R. Doolittle's initiative within the Yale University School of Medicine has opened up an additional stream of research and publications within the field of clergy work-related psychological health. In his first paper, Doolittle

(2007) investigated the correlation between burnout, coping strategies, and spiritual attitudes among parish-based United Methodist clergy. The analyses revealed a positive correlation between spirituality scores and personal accomplishment, but also positive correlations between spirituality scores and both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Venting, disengagement, and self-blame coping strategies were associated with greater emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Acceptance, active coping, planning and positive reframing coping strategies were associated with greater personal accomplishment. In a second paper, Doolittle (2010) focused on the demographic risk factors and protective behaviours correlated within individual differences in levels of clergy burnout. Higher levels of burnout were associated with being younger, being depressed, being unsatisfied with their spiritual life, and having endured a traumatic church placement. Lower levels of burnout were associated with seeking mentors, attending retreats, regular exercise and scholarly reading. A strength with this developing body of research among clergy is the way in which it is situated alongside studies concerned with burnout, coping and spirituality among other professional groups (see Doolittle, Windish, & Seelig, 2013).

Breaking New Ground

Each of the ten new studies offered to this special section of *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion* by one of the four research groups working in the broad field of clergy work-related psychological health, stress, burnout and coping strategies makes an original contribution to knowledge by building on the secure foundations of existing research in a fresh direction. The first three studies employed qualitative methods, the fourth study offered a thorough review of a relatively uncharted field, and the other six studies employed quantitative methods.

The first of the qualitative studies by Blouin and Proeschold-Bell (2015) raised an important question about the way in which the items of the ten-item Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983) are perceived by clergy. In order to address this issue they conducted cognitive interview testing with a sample of 12 pastors enrolled in Spirited Life, a wellness intervention founded by The Duke Endowment for United Methodist clergy in North Carolina, USA. Participants reacted negatively to some of the language used in the items. They reported fears of being poorly regarded as religious leaders if they endorsed items expressing lack of ability to handle personal problems. At points their theological beliefs conflicted with the assumptions underpinning some items. Blouin and Proeschold-Bell (2015) concluded that the majority of

items in the Perceived Stress Scale may be subject to under-reporting and response bias when answered by Christian clergy. Cognitive interview testing of this nature offers an important note of caution against employing standard stress measures uncritically to studies among clergy.

The second of the qualitative studies by Smith (2015) employed qualitative methods to explore behind quantitative research findings. A series of quantitative studies had already drawn attention to poorer levels of work-related psychological health among introverted clergy compared with extraverted clergy (see Francis, Gubb, & Robbins, 2012), in terms of introverts reporting both higher levels of emotional exhaustion (negative affect) and lower levels of satisfaction in ministry (positive affect). Smith set out to examine whether these differences may result from introverts and extraverts finding different aspects of ministry stressful or from introverts finding the same aspects of ministry as stressful as extraverts but with more intensity. Smith employed type-alike workshops among 24 Anglican clergy that separated introverts and extraverts into different groups so that he could explore the differences in the accounts offered by introverts and by extraverts regarding the aspects of life and ministry that they found stressful (generating negative affect) and that they found energizing (generating positive affect). The data demonstrated that introverts and extraverts experienced different aspects of ministry as stressful. Smith (2015) concluded that this finding has implications for the ways in which introverts and extraverts may benefit from being prepared for ministry in different ways and from being supported in ministry in different ways.

The third of the qualitative studies by Rolph, ap Siôn, Rolph, Wulff, and Francis (2015) explored the additional information provided by the participants on the back page of a detailed questionnaire survey (see Francis et al., 2008) concerned with work-related psychological health and professional burnout among clergy serving in The Presbyterian Church (USA). The open-ended question on the back page simply invited participants as follows: "Please use the space below for any other comments". Of the 748 clergy who participated in the survey, 224 accepted the invitation, some offering multiple comments across a range of issues. The 345 identified comments were analyzed to reflect 16 themes, 13 concerned with aspects of ministry and three concerned with aspects of the survey itself. The ministry-related themes included reflections on stress and burnout, tensions with congregations, support from congregations, time off and study leave, and marriage-related issues. Rolph et al. (2015) concluded that reading the back page generates useful information in three areas: giving additional insight into the theme explored by the quantitative survey, drawing attention to weaknesses in the survey instrument, and shaping future research.

The review article by Doolittle (2015) drew attention to the comparative dearth of research concerning burnout, compassion fatigue, and job satisfaction among hospital chaplains. By drawing on comprehensive databases concerned with research in the fields of medicine, psychology, religion, nursing, and sociology, this review provided a thorough account of the current state of knowledge concerning work-related psychological health among hospital chaplains and so provided a helpful platform from which to take forward new research in that area. Doolittle (2015) concluded from this review that there are particular stressors unique to hospital chaplaincy that merit special consideration.

The first of the quantitative studies by Brewster, Francis, Robbins, and Penny (2015) brought together for the first time two themes pursued by their research group's concern with clergy work-related psychological health (personality and ways of coping) to test the thesis that preferred ways of coping assessed by the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist developed by Folkman and Lazarus (1985) are themselves related to two of the three dimensions of personality (extraversion and neuroticism) assessed by the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (short form) developed by Eysenck, Eysenck, and Barrett (1985). Drawing on data provided by 613 Anglican clergy in England they found that only one of the eight ways of coping assessed by the Checklist was independent of both neuroticism and extraversion. These findings suggested that it may be misleading to study ways of coping among clergy without at the same time taking individual differences in personality into account.

The second of the quantitative studies by Francis, Laycock, and Brewster (2015) focused on a new area of research designed to clarify and to distinguish between the main sources of stress experienced by rural Anglican clergy serving in multi-parish benefices in England. Data provided by 613 clergy who rated 84 potential sources of stress generated five distinct factors best characterized as the burden of administration, the burden of presence, the burden of isolation, the burden of distance, and the burden of visibility. Personality and age were stronger predictors of levels of stress caused by these burdens than were sex, contextual factors or theological factors. Of these five burdens, the most damaging to the overall work-related psychological health of rural clergy was the burden of isolation and the least damaging was the burden of distance. Francis, Laycock, and Brewster (2015) concluded that clearer knowledge about the differential effects of different sources of stress on the work-related psychological health of clergy may lead to more targeted and more effective intervention.

The third of the quantitative studies by Francis, Village, Bruce, and Woolever (2015) set out to test the balanced affect model of work-related psychological health proposed by the Francis Burnout Inventory (Francis, Kaldor, Robbins, & Castle, 2005) by developing an independent set of measures. In other words,

their contribution to knowledge is testing the robustness of theory independently of the instruments on which theory was originally validated. Drawing on data provided by 622 clergy who completed the Leader Survey within the U.S. Congregational Life Survey, they generated a six-item measure of positive affect (Satisfaction in Ministerial Life Index), a six-item measure of negative affect (Emotional Exhaustion in Ministerial Life Index), and an independent indicator of burnout (Likelihood of Leaving Ministry Index). Crucially for supporting the construct validity of the notion of balanced affect, the data demonstrated a significant interaction effect between scores of positive affect and scores of negative affect on the independent measure of burnout, showing that the mitigating effects of positive affect on burnout increased with increasing levels of negative affect. Francis, Village et al. (2015) concluded that the balanced affect model of clergy work-related psychological health offers a valid approach to understanding individual differences in susceptibility to burnout.

The fourth of the quantitative studies by Sterland (2015) introduced to clergy-related empirical research the notion of workaholism. This study drew on data provided by 461 senior church leaders who participated in the 2011 National Church Life Survey held in Australia who completed the short version of the Dutch Work Addiction Scale proposed by del Líbano, Llorens, Salanova, and Shaufeli (2010). This instrument distinguishes between two components of workaholism styled 'work excessively' and 'work compulsively'. Employed alongside a re-calibrated form of the Francis Burnout Inventory (Francis, Kaldor, Robbins, & Castle, 2005), these data demonstrated that working compulsively was associated with higher emotional exhaustion, higher depersonalization, lower personal achievement, and lower satisfaction with ministry. The other component of workaholism, working excessively, did not function in the same way, leading Sterland (2015) to conclude that the items included in this scale may not be adequate to access this aspect of workaholism among clergy. Here is further evidence to caution against using standard instruments in clergy-related research without giving close scrutiny to the way in which the scale items may be interpreted by clergy.

The fifth of the quantitative studies by Crea and Francis (2015) introduced to the literature on burnout among Catholic religious sisters a measure designed to assess quality of community life, in order to test the thesis that the quality of community life predicts individual differences in levels of burnout among religious sisters. This thesis was tested among 194 Catholic religious sisters from different parts of Italy who were engaged in a range of altruistic and charitable activities, mainly outside their community. The sisters completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986), the Big Five Factor measure of personality (Costa & McCrae, 1996) and the Index of Community Satisfaction

(Crea, 2002). The analyses demonstrated that the two key personality predictors of higher burnout scores among these sisters were high neuroticism scores and low agreeableness scores. After taking individual differences in age and personality into account, higher levels of community satisfaction were associated with lower levels of emotional exhaustion and lower levels of depersonalization, but were unrelated to levels of depersonalization. Crea and Francis (2015) concluded that a good quality of community life among religious sisters may enhance resilience against burnout, while a poor quality of community life among religious sisters may exacerbate burnout.

The sixth of the quantitative studies by Randall (2015) introduced to the literature on burnout among clergy a measure designed to assess emotional intelligence, in order to test the thesis that emotional intelligence predicts individual differences in levels of burnout among clergy. This thesis was tested among 156 Anglican clergy in England and Wales who completed the Assessing Emotions Scale (Schutte et al., 1998) alongside the Francis Burnout Inventory (Francis, Kaldor, Robbins, & Castle, 2005). The analyses demonstrated that higher levels of emotional intelligence, as assessed by the Assessing Emotions Scale, were associated both with higher levels of satisfaction in ministry and lower levels of emotional exhaustion. Randall (2015) concluded that these findings may offer a useful clue regarding a way in which better psychological health can be promoted among clergy. He argued that there may be real value in providing training in social and emotional competence as part of initial ministerial training and continuing ministerial development.

Taken together these three qualitative studies, the six quantitative studies and the review article have demonstrated the new lines of enquiry within the broad field of clergy work-related psychological health, stress, burnout and coping strategies currently promoted by the four active research groups focused on the Centre for Education Studies at the University of Warwick in England, The Duke Clergy Health Initiative in the USA, NCLS Research in Australia, and the Yale University School of Medicine in the USA. Growing collaboration and cross-fertilization among these four groups could lead to further fruitful international comparisons and an enhanced appreciation of the correlates, consequences and causes of poor work-related psychological health among clergy, church leaders and members of religious orders.

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Measuring Stress in a Clergy Population: Lessons Learned from Cognitive Interview Testing of the Perceived Stress Scale with Clergy

*Rachel Blouin and Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell**

Abstract

The most commonly used self-report stress measure is the ten-item Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), first published by Cohen in 1983. The PSS seeks to measure one's appraisal of stress, helplessness and self-efficacy. We determined how Christian clergy might respond to the PSS by conducting cognitive interview testing with a sample of twelve United Methodist pastors. Interviews were audiotaped and summarized, with content analysis conducted on the summaries. Data saturation was achieved. Participants reported strong negative reactions to PSS language like 'upset' and 'angered'. Although the PSS considers higher perceived control to be indicative of less stress, participants reported that they consider accepting lack of control as a sign of faith. Participants reported fears of being poorly regarded as religious leaders upon endorsing items like lack of ability to 'handle personal problems'. Participants indicated that their theological beliefs of seeking God's way and being faithful conflicted with items such as 'things are going your way' and 'you could not overcome'. When answered by Christian pastors, the majority of PSS items may be subject to under-reporting and response bias. Future research should identify valid stress measures for Christian clergy and assess the validity of the PSS in non-clergy Christian populations.

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Keywords

Christianity – clergy – measurement – Perceived Stress Scale – religion/spirituality – stress

Despite notable spiritual coping strategies, clergy experience many work-related stressors, including responding to parishioners' crises, church conflict, performance pressure, and boundary ambiguity (Darling, Hill, & McWey, 2004; Lee & Iverson-Gilbert, 2003; Proeschold-Bell et al., 2011; Wang, Berglund, & Kessler, 2003). Additionally, clergy report that their stressors outstrip their coping resources (Ellison & Mattila, 1983; Proeschold-Bell et al., 2011). To understand better the impact of stress on clergy, we sought to identify a valid, reliable, and culturally appropriate measurement tool, a task that proved more challenging than anticipated.

Although ubiquitous in popular dialogue, stress is difficult to define. In the past several decades, stress models have evolved from the simple stimulus–response model to the current dynamic, psychobiological model with multiple inter-related variables (Monroe, 2008). Even though researchers' theoretical understanding of stress has improved, their ability to measure stress has made little concurrent progress. Indeed, the most commonly used measure of stress, the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), was first published in 1983 and has been modified only slightly since. Over the past 30 years, the PSS has been translated into 25 languages and used in hundreds of published articles (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983; Cohen & Williamson, 1988).

The popularity of the PSS is not without reason. When developed, it represented a significant improvement over Life Events checklists, which were limited by their inability to assess a particular event's impact on a given individual (Cohen et al., 1983; Cohen, 1986). The PSS was the first instrument that measured outcomes of cognitive appraisal, a construct first described by Lazarus in the 1960s (Lazarus, 1966). Appraisal is a cognitive process by which individuals weigh the risk stressors pose against available coping resources, resulting in a person-specific assessment of threat (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986). The PSS items operationalize felt threat as the extent to which respondents feel their lives to be unpredictable, uncontrollable, or overwhelming, the sum of which is 'perceived stress' (Cohen & Williamson, 1988). Exploratory factor analysis of the ten-item PSS-10 found a two-factor structure of the six-item Perceived Helplessness Subscale ($\alpha = .85$) and the four-item Perceived Self-efficacy Subscale ($\alpha = .89$) (Roberti, Harrington, & Storch, 2006). When tested across twelve studies, the PSS-10 demonstrated strong internal consistency ($\alpha = .74$ to $.91$) (Lee, 2012).

When choosing a stress measure for our clergy population, we identified the PSS for its brevity and sound validation history. However, we recognized that the PSS might be limited by its reliance on a potentially outdated definition of stress that only includes appraisal theory; other factors affecting the stress response, such as physical and emotional resilience, are not included. Additionally, the PSS utilizes only two indicators – perceived helplessness and perceived self-efficacy – of the appraisal construct, when there are likely many. Variables such as positive emotions (interest, pride, humor, love), meaning (religion, spirituality), physical resources (exercise, nutrition), and acceptance also impact the stress response, yet these constructs are untapped by the PSS. In addition to these concerns, we wondered whether PSS terminology could be interpreted differently across culturally diverse populations (Southwick, Vythilingam, & Charney, 2005). The purpose of this study was to use cognitive interviewing to: (1) assess the PSS-10's content validity in a clergy population with deeply-held Christian values and (2) identify the PSS-10 items with the greatest likelihood of causing response error.

Methods

Content Validity, Response Error, and Cognitive Interviewing

Content validity is the extent to which the items that compose a questionnaire sufficiently reflect the construct being measured (Crocker & Algina, 1986). There are many causes of weak content validity, including failure to represent all dimensions of a construct, ambiguous terminology in item design, and inadvertent use of strongly connotative terms (Brod, Tesler, & Christensen, 2009; Beatty & Willis, 2007). The presence of any one of these content validity issues can result in survey responses that do not accurately reflect the true value of what is being measured, a problem called response error (Hansen, Hurwitz, Marks, & Mauldin, 1951). We chose to investigate the content validity and resultant response error of the PSS-10 using cognitive interviewing.

Cognitive interviewing is a qualitative data collection method that focuses on understanding how respondents interpret and respond to survey questions (Drennan, 2003). Based on Tourangeau's model of the thought process, the method explores item comprehension, processes used to calculate and select response options, and contextually-specific interpretations of survey items (Desimone & Le Floch, 2004). The technique uses open-ended prompts that ask the respondent to 'think aloud' about what influenced their answer (Brod et al., 2009; Willis, 1994). For example, the PSS asks, "In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?"

After the respondent answers the survey item, a cognitive interviewer might ask: "What were you thinking as you answered the question? What does the term 'upset' mean to you? What came to mind when you thought about 'things happening unexpectedly'?" Once sources of response error are identified, error can be minimized by revising the survey administration process or the survey questions themselves. In practice, seven to ten interviews are required in order to reach consensus on the content validity of survey items (Brod et al., 2009).

Sample and Recruitment

Eligible participants were United Methodist clergy who (1) lived within 50 miles of our university, (2) had served as active clergy in the past three years, and (3) were enrolled in Spirited Life, a wellness intervention funded by The Duke Endowment for United Methodist clergy in North Carolina. We invited eligible clergy via email to participate in the study and scheduled interviews with all respondents. Participants were offered \$50 compensation for participation.

Data Collection

Cognitive interviews, lasting between 45 and 90 minutes, took place in a private room in the respondent's home or church. Two researchers attended each interview, one conducting the interview and one taking notes. We asked participants general follow-up probes (i.e., "Were there any words or phrases that were confusing to you?") and item-specific probes (i.e., "In your own words, what does it look and feel like to be angry."). We documented responses through audio recording and handwritten notes. We stopped conducting interviews after we were certain data saturation, i.e., when no further new or relevant information emerges, was achieved (Saumure & Given, 2008).

Analysis

An interviewer and note-taker independently completed summaries for each interview, highlighting direct quotes from the recordings. We then cross-checked the summaries for accuracy and completeness. When needed, the interviewer supplemented summaries with direct quotes after reviewing the audio files. Because of the targeted nature of cognitive interviewing, word-for-word transcripts were not required for data analysis. The interviewer performed content analysis of the interview summaries, systematically coding and categorizing the data by topic (Brod et al., 2009). Topically grouped responses were carefully examined to identify patterns and themes in the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The study was approved by the Duke University Institutional Review Board and all participants provided informed consent.

Results

Twelve pastors completed interviews. The sample was composed of 8 men and 4 women, with an average age of 53 and average ministerial experience of 24 years. Item-by-item results are summarized below.

pss Item 1. *In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?*

The majority of pastors (9/12) defined 'upset' using highly emotional language: "feeling blown away", "emotionally distraught", "angry to the point of losing control", "needing to cry", "like drowning", or "lacking hope or peace". One pastor said the word has a "negative, angry flavor" and feels "a little bit judgmental".

After defining 'upset' as a relatively intense emotional experience, several pastors (4/12) reported that they did not experience the emotion, or if they did, it was in a much diminished form. One pastor attributed this to his "hope, deep abiding peace, and spiritual maturity". Two pastors discussed the lack of feeling upset as a vocational skill a person must possess or develop over time to have a healthy ministry. To prevent feeling upset, one pastor stated his goal to be "invested yet withdrawn" from the stressors in his ministry. Another pastor saw being upset as a breach of professional boundaries.

When thinking about the things that 'happen unexpectedly', more pastors thought exclusively of work (6/12) than of both work and home (3/12). Additionally, several pastors (4/12) noted that they had learned to expect the unexpected and therefore were not often upset by unexpected happenings. One pastor said he starts each day acknowledging that things will happen that he cannot plan for.

Overall, stress might be under-reported in this item because of the strong, negative emotional interpretation of the word 'upset', the beliefs of some pastors that being in control of emotions is an aspect of spiritual and vocational maturity, and the pervasiveness of unexpected happenings in the daily life of a minister. Additionally, the pastors' focus on work rather than the entirety of their lives when answering the question could omit a number of stressors that would otherwise be incorporated into a pastor's response.

pss Item 2. *In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?*

Pastors (6/12) described lack of personal control as normal, both in and outside of their work. Examples included lack of control over church leadership decisions, appointments to new churches, retirement issues, parishioners'

problems, and their own health issues. One pastor stated that even when things seemed under control, they usually were not.

Though two pastors remarked that being unable to control important things caused some stress, the majority of pastors (8/12) described a deep acceptance of their lack of control that was rooted in Christian faith. One pastor described how she had "given up" control of her life to God. When she felt out of control, she asked, "How can I best manage this to allow God to do what He does?" Another pastor described "coming to terms" with his lack of control. Another said his "need to control" was diminished because he trusted God. He believed it healthy to relinquish control and experienced inner peace when he did so.

Two pastors pointed out that giving up control was not always simple. One said, "Clergy want and like control. You are supposed to feel peace because God is in control. Pastors are well-trained from a theological perspective to say that they have no control. Still, people want pastors to be in control". Another pastor said she struggled with wanting to control things that she should not. Accepting her lack of control caused emotional relief. She attributed the acceptance to strong faith and greater maturity.

The Christian emphasis on relinquishing control makes answering this item confusing for pastors and undercuts its validity. Additionally, pastors might be prone to under-report stress caused by lack of control because doing so might cast doubt on their faith.

pss Item 3. *In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and 'stressed'?*

Pastors answered this question more easily than other pss items. They defined 'nervous' differently from 'stressed'. All pastors (8/12) who offered a definition for 'nervous' used language associated with lower levels of anxiety: "jittery", "a little scared", "anxiety", "on edge", and "butterflies". 'Stressed', alternatively, was defined as more emotionally intense: "getting wound up", "losing sleep at night", "it takes over", "you cannot handle it", "fear", "tears", and "being unable to cope". Several pastors (5/12) used depression and anger language in their stress definitions: "melancholy", "depressed", "sad", "frustrated", "feelings of inadequacy", "anger", and "shouting". One pastor called the term 'stressed' a "heavy word". Another pastor said he did not often feel stressed, but when he did it was a "system shutdown".

The differing definitions of 'nervous' and 'stressed' did not always trouble respondents. Five pastors said they felt the terms, though different, were harmonious. Three pastors ignored the word 'nervous' and focused on the word 'stressed' when answering. Defining stress as relatively emotionally intense might make it less likely that pastors would endorse the item. One pastor said answering this question felt like he was "confessing to stress".

PSS Item 4. *In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?*

Of the nine pastors who offered a definition for ‘personal problems’, one-third thought primarily of problems at home, one-third thought primarily of work, and one-third thought of problems in both their home and work lives.

The majority of pastors (7/12) included both individual strengths and support network strengths in their definitions of ‘ability to handle’. Two pastors commented that, if they had only considered their own resources, they would have rated their ability to handle problems as lower.

The concepts of control and faith were revisited when answering this question. Two pastors remarked on the impossibility of changing many things and defined ‘handling things’ as doing what you can. A third pastor said, “Handling does not necessarily mean resolving the problem. If it isn’t debilitating, you can weather it”. Several pastors (4/12) stressed the importance of trusting that things will work out. Faith in God was mentioned as a resource during times when pastors were unsure if they could handle a problem. One pastor said faith was a source of strength such that even if a problem were unresolved, everything would be okay. Another pastor called his faith “a safety net”. Remembering God’s presence replaced his stress with a sense of peace.

Two pastors commented that it might be difficult for their peers to admit to feeling unable to handle their problems. One thought pastors might be less likely to endorse higher responses because of the question’s emphasis on the individual handling the problem rather than the problem being in God’s hands. Another pastor shared that when he had not handled a situation well, he felt like a failure.

The inclusion of external resources, especially the power of God, in a pastor’s assessment of ability to handle things makes answering this question confusing. Additionally, pastors might be reluctant to report being unable to handle a situation because it might reflect poorly on themselves and/or their faith. Finally, not all pastors thought about all aspects of their lives when they answered, perhaps leading to the omission of important sources of stress. These three factors make it likely that this question would under-estimate levels of perceived stress.

PSS Item 5. *In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?*

The phrase ‘going your way’ was defined similarly across all 12 pastors: “things are going well”, “feeling positive”, “feeling happy”, “ease of life”, “contentment”, “peaceful feeling”, “good things are happening”, and “reaching goals”. Several pastors (5/12) said the question asked about optimism versus pessimism. One

said she answered positively because even when things did not go her way, she had faith. Another said he actively tried to focus only on things that were going his way by praying at the end of each day, "It's been a good day. It's been enough". Another pastor said he believed optimism to be a personality trait that pastors were not more likely to possess than people in other vocations. However, he noted that pastors feel more pressure to appear optimistic.

Despite the generally positive definitions of the term 'going your way', several pastors (5/12) were troubled by the phrase. Two described the idea as 'selfish', saying things should be going God's way according to His will. Another said humility was an important virtue, meaning that 'God's way' should always supersede 'my way'. Another pastor said her goal was not for things to go her way but for her to do "what was best for Christ and His ministry in the world". As such, things could be stressful and still be going her way because they were going God's way.

This question highlights culturally specific connotations in the phrase 'going your way'. For many Christians, setting aside selfish needs is an important aspect of serving God. Pastors' hesitations in answering this question make it an unpredictable indicator of perceived stress.

pss Item 6. *In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?*

Most pastors' (7/12) descriptions of what it means to 'not cope' tended toward extreme manifestations of stress: "crying", "panic attacks", "falling apart", "responding to an extreme situation or trauma", "going within myself", "like hitting a brick wall", "anger", and "having a breakdown". One pastor said she did not want to answer because it hurt her pride and was "humbling".

Some pastors (5/12) could not imagine a situation in which they could not cope. Their responses were grounded in language of faith, saying, "There are always ways to cope". One pastor attributed his enduring ability to cope to having a "laidback" personality.

Pastors' relatively extreme definitions of what it would feel like to 'not cope' might lead them to endorse this item at lower levels. As with Item #4, pastors might also hesitate to report difficulties with coping because it might reflect poorly on themselves and/or their faith.

pss Item 7. *In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations in your life?*

There was near universal confusion among pastors (10/12) as to whether the question asked about controlling the irritations themselves or controlling their response to the irritations. Six pastors commented that if the question asks

about controlling the irritations, they would answer 'never' because irritations are unavoidable. However, if the question is asking about controlling their irritability, they would answer 'very often'.

This item is unique in that, depending on one's interpretation, the item could lead to an over- or under-estimate of perceived stress.

pss Item 8. *In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?*

Pastors expressed very little confusion or sensitivity when answering this item. When thinking about the things they might be 'on top of', some thought mostly of tasks (5/12) but others thought of both tasks and emotions (5/12). One pastor stated that, unlike the term 'going your way' from Item #5, the phrase 'on top of things' seems to leave space for "how God wants things to be". This item appeared to be one of the better functioning items on the survey for clergy.

pss Item 9. *In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control?*

This item revisits the concept of control first introduced in Item #2. Five pastors gave examples of things outside of their control: "other people's behavior", "decisions made without the pastor's participation", "issues with denominational policies", "spouse's health", and "spouse's actions".

Pastors struggled with the term 'angered'. Though nearly half (5/12) readily admitted to experiencing anger, half (6/12) talked about their discomfort with anger. One said that experiencing anger was tantamount to lack of faith. Another stated that anger itself was not a sin, but displaced anger was. A third said, "Clergy are not comfortable with anger and don't know what to do with it. The church doesn't allow people to be angry". The exception to this seems to be what several pastors (3/12) called "righteous anger". They stated that righteous anger is "holy anger" at injustices and this very specific type of anger is "constructive and rallying". Pastors said that other types of anger come with "baggage" and suggested that words such as "frustrated", "perturbed", or even "mad" would be easier for them to endorse. Pastors' aversion to the idea of anger along with the Christian theology of control make it very likely that pastors will under-endorse this item.

pss Item 10. *In the past month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?*

The phrase 'could not overcome' had deep faith-based meaning for pastors. The majority of pastors (9/12) expressed that, through God, all could be overcome.

One pastor noted, "This is despair language, suicide language", while another said, "being unable to overcome means giving up". According to one pastor, "The possibility that you cannot overcome something could be read as anti-theetical to grace". Another pastor stated that answering positively to Item #10 would be akin to a crisis of faith. There was great agreement among their responses:

"No matter what, God will see you through."

"No difficulty is insurmountable."

"Even death has been overcome."

"The God we believe in specializes in life over death."

Because the word 'overcome' is so theologically laden, it is likely that pastors will be unable to endorse this item.

Discussion

Our findings call into question the PSS-10's validity to measure perceived stress with Christian clergy and potentially with other Christians of strong faith. We identified multiple sources of response error that might result in the under-report of stress if the PSS-10 is used with these respondents.

The first major source of error occurs because of the conflict between psychological and theological meanings of PSS-10 terminology. The psychological construct of locus of control, defined as 'the beliefs that individuals hold regarding relationships between actions and outcomes', has a long history of study dating back to Rotter's social learning theory (Lefcourt, 1991; Rotter, 1966). Numerous studies have linked 'internal locus of control', in which an individual perceives himself to be in control of life's outcomes, to better mental health (Krause & Stryker, 1984; Seeman, 2008). These studies have led researchers to assume that high levels of perceived control relate to less stress and more positive mental health, whereas low levels of perceived control relate to more stress and worse mental health. However, research on locus of control has failed to incorporate the perspectives of Christians, who are encouraged to relinquish their worries to God (Welton, Adkins, Ingle, & Dixon, 1996). Along similar lines, Pargament (1997) has delineated the concept of positive religious coping, which includes believing that there is God-given meaning in difficult situations. The conflict between psychological and theological perspectives on control emerged as pastors answered four of the PSS items. Consequently, the PSS-10's language might inadvertently challenge pastors' deeply held faith beliefs.

The second major source of error occurs because PSS-10 terminology might threaten the image of moral perfection that pastors often feel pressure to uphold (Blackbird & Wright, 1985). Endorsing an item that asks about the ability to handle problems might feel like an admission of imperfections that diminishes the worth of the pastor's ministry. Similarly, admitting to being unable to 'cope' or 'overcome' portrays a lack of faith.

In summary, the major threats to the content validity of the PSS-10 when used with clergy are the faith-driven conviction that God is in control and the vocational imperative to hide experiences of struggle. As one pastor described, she would feel as if she were "letting God down" if she endorsed some of the questions on the PSS-10. "The calling to ministry means that you have to give it your best. Admitting that you're struggling is much more complex in ministry than in other types of work."

We recommend that researchers studying clergy find alternative measures of stress that use less theologically loaded terms with weaker connections to concepts of success or failure. Such an instrument need not be based in appraisal theory like the PSS-10. For example, the Calgary Symptoms of Stress Inventory is a recently developed questionnaire that measures eight dimensions of stress symptoms (Carlson & Thomas, 2007). It has been successfully used to measure changes in stress symptoms following stress reduction interventions (Carlson & Garland, 2005; Carlson et al., 2013; Garland, Tamagawa, Todd, Specia, & Carlson, 2012; MacKenzie, Carlson, Ekkekakis, Paskevich, & Culos-Reed, 2013; Zernicke et al., 2012). However, if a measure based on appraisal theory is desired, the measure might need to expand on the operationalization of the appraisal process beyond the two dimensions (perceived helplessness and perceived self-efficacy) used by the PSS-10. Other possible dimensions might be positive emotions, meaning, physical resources, and acceptance.

The primary strength of this study is our use of the widely accepted technique of cognitive interview testing (Drennan, 2003), which offers a rare glimpse into the interaction between the respondent and questionnaire as reported directly by members of our study population. We performed systematic, in-depth, item-by-item analysis to describe the performance of the PSS-10. Although the faith beliefs held by our population of United Methodist clergy may be similar to devout Christians who are not clergy, it is important to note that our findings may not be generalizable to other populations. Future research is needed to assess the potential limitations of the PSS-10 in other Christian populations and to determine valid stress measures for Christian clergy. Measuring stress symptoms and coping in clergy is critically important to understand how clergy can optimally create conditions for their positive mental health, thereby allowing them to perform well and live life to the fullest, even while engaging in a demanding profession.

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The Work-Related Psychological Health of Introverts and Extraverts in Ministry: Exploring the Balanced Affect Model

*Greg Smith**

Abstract

A series of quantitative studies has drawn attention to poorer levels of work-related psychological health among introverted clergy compared with extraverted clergy, in terms of introverts reporting both higher emotional exhaustion (negative affect) and lower satisfaction in ministry (positive affect). The present study employs a qualitative approach among 24 Anglican clergy to explore the differences in the accounts offered by introverts and by extraverts regarding the aspects of life and ministry that they found stressful (generating negative affect) and that they found energizing (generating positive affect). The data demonstrated important differences between the accounts given by the two groups.

Keywords

Burnout – clergy – emotional exhaustion – psychological type – satisfaction in ministry

Poor work-related psychological health, or burnout, is a matter of concern within the caring professions in general, and the clerical profession is no exception. Within the Church of England over the past two decades two models of work-related psychological health have informed a series of empirical enquiries. The first model, proposed by Christina Maslach and operationalized in the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986) offers a sequential model of poor work-related psychological health. Burnout begins with emotional exhaustion and emotional exhaustion leads to depersonalization (treating people with decreasing care and sensitivity), and depersonalization leads to lack of personal accomplishment (people no longer affirm the ministry that is offered with decreasing care and sensitivity). The second model,

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proposed by Leslie J. Francis and operationalized by the Francis Burnout Inventory (Francis, Kaldor, Robbins, & Castle, 2005) offers a balanced affect model of poor work-related psychological health. Burnout is the consequence of the simultaneous presence of negative affect (emotional exhaustion) and the absence of positive affect (satisfaction in ministry). The two attractions of the balanced affect model are that it can be empirically tested and that it proposes a strategy for rehabilitation. When positive affect can be enhanced, it acts as a counter balance to the effects of negative affect.

Maslach's model of burnout has been employed in recent studies among Church of England clergy by Francis and Rutledge (2000), Francis and Turton (2004a, 2004b), Randall (2004, 2007), Rutledge (2006) and Turton and Francis (2007). Francis' model of burnout has been employed in recent studies using Church of England clergy by Robbins and Francis (2010), Brewster, Francis, and Robbins (2011) and Randall (2013a, 2013b). These empirical enquiries concerned with the work-related psychological health of Church of England clergy have been particularly concerned with identifying the factors than can predict vulnerability to burnout. The factors considered have included personal factors (like age and sex), contextual factors (like rurality and multi-church benefices), theological factors (like evangelical, catholic and charismatic orientations), and psychological factors (like personality).

One of the most secure findings to emerge from this body of research concerns the importance of personality in predicting vulnerability to burnout. In particular, introverted clergy are more vulnerable to burnout than extraverted clergy. This finding has emerged consistently across studies employing two different models of personality. Some studies have employed Eysenck's three dimensional model of personality as operationalized by the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975) or the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (Eysenck, Eysenck, & Barrett, 1985). Other studies have employed the model of psychological type, inspired by Jung (1971) and modified as operationalized by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1985) and the Francis Psychological Type Scales (Francis, 2005). Although introversion and extraversion are conceptualized somewhat differently by these two models of personality, studies that have used the two models side-by-side have reported high correlations between the two measures (Francis & Jones, 2000).

Understanding Introversion and Extraversion

It is the definition of introversion and extraversion established within the context of psychological type theory that is the better known within the context of empirical theology and pastoral psychology (see, Francis, 2005). In

psychological type theory, introversion and extraversion describe the two preferred orientations of the inner world and the outer world. Introverts prefer to focus their attention on the inner world of ideas and draw their energy from that inner world. When introverts are tired and need energizing they look to the inner world. Extraverts prefer to focus their attention on the outer world of people and things and draw their energy from that outer world. When extraverts are tired and need energizing they look to the outer world.

Introverts like quiet for concentration. They want to be able to shut off the distractions of the outer world and turn inwards. They often experience trouble in remembering names and faces. They can work at one solitary project for a long time without interruption. When they are engaged in a task in the outer world they may become absorbed in the ideas behind that task. Introverts work best alone and may resent distractions and interruptions from other people. They dislike being interrupted by the telephone, tend to think things through before acting, and may spend so long in thought that they miss the opportunity to act. Introverts prefer to learn by reading rather than by talking with others. They may also prefer to communicate with others in writing, rather than face-to-face or over the telephone; this is particularly the case if they have something unpleasant to communicate. Introverts are oriented to the inner world. They focus on ideas, concepts and inner understanding. They are reflective, may consider deeply before acting, and they probe inwardly for stimulation.

Extraverts like variety and action. They want to be able to shut off the distractions of the inner world and turn outward. They are good at remembering faces and names and enjoy meeting people and introducing people. They can become impatient with long, slow jobs. When they are working in the company of other people they may become more interested in how others are doing the job than in the job itself. Extraverts like to have other people around them in the working environment, and enjoy the stimulus of sudden interruptions and telephone calls. Extraverts like to act quickly and decisively, even when it is not totally appropriate to do so. Extraverts prefer to learn a task by talking it through with other people. They prefer to communicate with other people face-to-face or over the telephone, rather than in writing. They often find that their own ideas become clarified through communicating them to others. Extraverts are oriented to the outer world. They focus on people and things. They prefer to learn by trial and error and they do so with confidence. They are active people, and they scan the outer environment for stimulation.

In order to illustrate why introverted clergy are more vulnerable to burnout than the extraverted clergy, we conducted a piece of qualitative research listening to introverted and extraverted clergy talk about their experiences of what drains them in ministry (negative affect) and what energizes them in ministry (positive affect).

Procedure

Clergy serving in one Anglican diocese within the Province of York were invited to attend a day programme on personality and self-care in ministry. Participation was optional and voluntary. A total of 27 clergy signed up for the programme and 24 attended on the day. The theme for the day was set by a theologically-informed meditation on the stress-related experiences of the disciples as portrayed in Mark's Gospel and by a psychologically-informed presentation on the balanced affect model of work-related psychological health that distinguishes between the experiences that generate positive affect (satisfaction in ministry) and the experiences that generate negative affect (emotional exhaustion in ministry).

Since the participants were generally well-informed about psychological type theory no formal assessment was offered. The theory underpinning differentiation between introversion and extraversion was introduced through a PowerPoint presentation offering a dozen cartoon characterizations of each preference. Following the presentation, participants were invited to discuss their self-perceptions and to grade themselves in a horseshoe formation from high scoring extraversion, through middle territory, to high scoring introversion. The six individuals at each end of the horseshoe were identified as the extravert group and the introvert group respectively. The other 12 individuals comprised two further groups of six participants each.

Each of the four groups was assigned to occupy a separate break-out room. The members of the four groups were invited to discuss the aspects of life and ministry that they found stressful (generating negative affect) and those aspects of ministry that they found energizing (generating positive affect). Each group was also invited to identify an individual to report back to the plenary session. One observer joined the introvert group and the author joined the extravert group. The data from the other two groups are not included in the analysis. The findings for this study are based on the notes taken by the author and the observer during the discussions.

Listening to Introverts

The group of introverts assembled and approached the question thoughtfully, giving one another time both to reflect and to speak. In the course of the conversation eight main themes emerged regarding sources of stress.

The first theme concerned the introverts' need for personal space in which to think through things and to prepare for things. The Sunday service in church

provided an example of these needs. One introvert identified the stress caused by the people who wanted to talk to her the minute she got through the church door. Another introvert identified the stress caused by the server who chats continually while setting up the altar for the Sunday service, invading her space when her mind was fully engaged elsewhere.

The second theme concerned the introverts' preference for engaging with some individuals at depth. The pastoral visiting in hospital provided an example of this preference. One introvert spoke of superficial engagement with others in the context of hospital visiting as both unsatisfactory and stressful.

The third theme concerned the introverts' danger of not being known and recognized for who they really are when engaged in public ministry. One woman pointed to the way in which in her public ministry she managed a range of extravert tasks quite well, with the consequence that people expected her to maintain this approach to life. She found meeting such expectations, for which she had been responsible, a source of stress.

The fourth theme concerned the introverts' struggle to feel established and to make a mark on events managed by extraverts. Engagement in meetings provides an example of this struggle. One introvert spoke of his frustration at trying to get his voice heard in public meetings. By the time he had formulated what he wanted to say and how he wanted to say it, the conversation had already been captured by another extravert. Such frustration led another introvert to feel that her voice and her opinion were not valued. Such frustration is a real source of stress.

The fifth theme concerned ways in which introverts can be misunderstood and misread in some social situations. Introversion can be variously misread as shyness, social inadequacy, or low self-esteem. Such misreading can be another source of frustration and stress.

The sixth theme concerned ways in which introverts and extraverts process information and communicate their conclusions in different ways. Working with extraverts can be stressful for introverts. One introvert said that her preferred way of formulating a conclusion internally and expressing it succinctly could be misconstrued as being superficial and inadequately thought through. Another introvert said that he disliked having to listen to extraverts speak out their thinking process and waiting for them to come to their conclusion. Such things are stressful.

The seventh theme focused on issues of social engagement. Several introverts spoke positively of the experience of conducting services in large churches and preaching to large numbers of people, but what they found stressful was the small talk afterwards. Finding themselves sometimes as members of a congregation, what some introverted clergy dreaded most was the

invitation to turn to the person next to them and to engage with a point of discussion.

The eighth theme concerned the distraction caused by noise and by external stimuli that demand attention. For one introvert the radio playing in the next door room detracts from paying proper attention to the conversation in which she is engaged. For a second introvert the television left switched on during a pastoral visit makes concentration difficult. For another introvert, however, noise that does not require attention can provide an excellent screen against other distractions. One introvert goes out to the café to concentrate on writing sermons and another does so best on train journeys.

Consideration of the causes of stress so animated the group of introverts that there was an initial reluctance to turn attention to the matters that energize and may serve as an antidote to stress and exhaustion. Once the conversation started, however, insightful themes emerged.

The major theme concerned the benefits that accrue from introverts recognizing and accepting their need for solitude as a time for re-energizing. One introvert spoke of prayer as a solitary activity. One introvert spoke of taking time to read a really well-written novel, while another spoke with equal enthusiasm of the benefits of reading rubbish literature and trashy novels. For some introverts, solitude was experienced while taking exercise, walking, cycling, or swimming. All such activities were seen not simply as ends in themselves, but as time to facilitate inward processing of the matters of life. For one introvert an hour's walk was helpful, but to go walking for a whole day (or better still for five days) was so much more beneficial.

Next to solitude came the beneficial experience of creativity. For some introverts settling down to practical tasks like cooking or knitting proved to be energizing. For other introverts their path to creativity involved intellectual activity. New ideas, new ways of seeing things, and new discoveries proved to be energizing. For some introverts preparing sermons comes into this category of creativity that energizes.

While introverts value solitude and creativity, they also value deep and meaningful relationships. One-to-one conversations can be energizing, involving real dialogue in which there is time to hear and to be heard in depth.

Listening to Extraverts

The group of extraverts required little time to ponder before a cascade of ideas and insights poured forth. Energized by each other and warming to the

opportunity for discussion with colleagues, they testified to enjoying the exercise thoroughly. The discussion ranged backwards and forwards between the aspects of life and ministry that were found stressful and those that were energizing, but with greater emphasis on and enthusiasm for the latter.

One member of the group immediately proclaimed that people both drained and energized him, identifying those who acted (did things) as those who energized him; and those who were negative (that is those who failed to respond to an idea with sufficient enthusiasm and vigour) as those who drained him.

One woman said that she was energized by the coming together of people, expressing the wish that she possessed a shepherd's crook to aid the process of dragging them together. Other group members evinced similar enthusiasm for new people appearing in church, while lamenting the failure of existing members to greet them with adequate warmth.

Other experiences that these extraverts found energizing included the question and answer session that followed the delivery of a talk; having a 'left-field' idea thrown into a discussion to have the opportunity to explore; being called upon to think on their feet; and all-age services with their abundance of interaction and running around.

The conversation continued with a celebration of the variety to be found in parish ministry. Common Worship was feted as a useful tool for enhancing variety in worship, especially appreciated for its clear marking of the seasons. In the same spirit, another voice confessed to finding having to do the same thing repeatedly as draining, unfulfilled by the 'bog-standard' worship that she avoided offering wherever possible.

Prayer was a key theme of the conversation. Quiet days were not generally regarded as something to be welcomed. These extraverts preferred prayer activities that were kinetic, perhaps with rosary beads or utilizing labyrinths. One woman said that, when she organized prayer stations, her signature was that each station provided something to do.

An additional theme was the organization of time-off. Because of their need to be doing something and to be with people, some found it challenging to identify discrete time off from ministry, happily attending the church fayre to greet people on a day off. An extravert who lived alone testified to the value of social media, like Facebook and texting, to enable multiple connections to be made in order to re-energize.

Participants acknowledged some of the drawbacks of their extraversion: forgetting things that failed to capture their interest and taking on so many new things that other less new things were neglected. These failings however did not appear to provide significant stress. The final comment belongs to the

voice towards the very end of the conversation which observed how much the group had been focusing on 'doing' rather than simply 'being' in ministry.

Discussion

The sources of stress and energy in the lives of ordained ministers cannot entirely be ascribed to their extraversion and introversion. Other voices can clearly be discerned: the voice of the intuitive person being exposed to new ideas; the voice of the feeling person lamenting the lack of affirmation she received; the voice of the judging person railing against chaos and rejoicing in order.

However, what extraverts and introverts described as being the stresses of life and ministry sound very different. Extraverts found the following stressful: isolation and quiet; the failure of others to respond with enthusiasm to their projects and ideas; the failure of some (possibly introverts) in the congregation to be outgoing and warmly welcoming to newcomers; and the challenge of having to engage in repetitive liturgy. In contrast, they derived energy from other people, most especially if these are new people, themselves full of energy and new ideas. They were energized by kinetic rather than cerebral activities. Above all, they were energized by the sheer variety of the life of an ordained minister in which no two days are alike.

Introverts, by contrast, were stressed by having to deal with too many people, exacerbated by the failure of others to recognize how draining they find being exposed to large gatherings. There was a particular challenge when introverts felt obliged to engage in small talk, while speaking to large groups felt perfectly acceptable, safe in the knowledge that the microphone would not be taken from them. Introverts were energized by time alone; on retreat, in silent prayer and meditation; and by engaging in creative activities. One-to-one encounters were also a source of spiritual and emotional renewal.

The tenor of the contrasted conversations was different in a way that illuminates the extra challenge faced by introverts in ordained ministry. Their conversation lacked the enthusiasm and energy of their extraverted counterparts. The introverted group was readier to identify those aspects of ministry that drained them than those that energized them, while for extraverts the emphasis was the reverse.

The two conversations identify how the perceptions of others (members of the worshipping congregation and the wider parish) impinged on the opportunities clergy have to re-energize. While there is a plethora of on-the-job tasks that introverts might undertake to recharge their energy levels (prayer, reading,

sermon preparation, administration), the fruit of this is less evident to others when compared with the efforts of extraverts to recharge their energy levels by attending social events in the parish, speaking at committee meetings and leading worship. In an environment where clergy are expected to work six days a week (at best), both introverts and extraverts need positive affect activities within their ministries if they are to avoid burnout. When the group of introverts described being re-energized they listed off-duty activities such as reading trashy novels, swimming and cycling; by contrast, the extraverts spoke almost exclusively of being energized by on-the-job activities.

Conclusions

The first conclusion is that the life of the ordained minister is equally attractive to both extraverts and introverts. On the one hand, there are myriad opportunities for social encounters and engaging with large numbers of new people, accompanied by a dizzying variety of tasks and challenges. On the other hand, time spent alone in quiet contemplation is an expectation, even requirement of the job, while opportunities for deep personal encounters abound.

The second conclusion is that extraverts and introverts find different aspects of ministry stressful and enjoy different means of re-energizing once drained. It is important that this conclusion is noted carefully by the church, which appears to be run by introverts who insist on clergy taking regular retreats in confident conviction that this must be refreshing for all. The evidence of these workshops runs contrary to this conviction. Careful note must also be taken of the introverts' apparent tendency to wait for time-off to re-energize. Those charged with the pastoral care of clergy, may wish to conduct an audit with their introverted clergy to ensure that explicit permission is given and received to take time within ministry for undertaking activities that enhance positive affect.

The third conclusion is that extraverts and introverts, although needing each other in many settings, benefit from being able to process important ministry matters in type-alike groups. Introverts, in such settings, are granted sufficient space to think. Extraverts are energized by the enthusiasm of being in the company of others who experience the world in a similar way to themselves.

The fourth conclusion is that clergy need to be helped in their initial training to identify potential causes of stress and be equipped with strategies for dealing with it. Tilley (2006) found that only 52% of curates reported having been helped by their training incumbents to cope with stress, while Smith

(2015) found that curates valued such help above anything else offered by their training incumbents. Workshops of the type described above might usefully be offered to all curates during their initial formation.

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Reading the Back Page: Listening to Clergy Serving in the Presbyterian Church (USA) Reflecting on Professional Burnout

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Abstract

Quantitative surveys routinely dedicate the back page for participants to offer their own narrative comments, but often these comments are neither analyzed nor reported. The aim of the present study is to analyze the responses to the back page from a study concerned with work-related psychological health and professional burnout completed by clergy serving in The Presbyterian Church (USA). Of the 748 clergy who took part in the survey, 224 wrote (sometimes multiple) comments on the back page (30% participation rate). The 345 identified comments have been analyzed to reflect 16 themes, 13 concerned with aspects of ministry and 3 concerned with aspects of the survey itself. The ministry-related themes included reflections on stress and burnout, tensions with congregations, support from congregations, time off and study leave, and marriage-related issues. The conclusion is drawn that reading the back page generates useful information in three areas: giving additional insight into the theme explored by the quantitative survey, drawing attention to weaknesses in the survey instrument, and shaping future research.

Keywords

Clergy studies – Burnout – Personality – quantitative surveys – qualitative data

Quantitative surveys routinely dedicate the back page for participants to offer their own narrative comments on the theme explored by the survey or on the

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way in which the theme was explored in the survey. Rarely are these comments analyzed by the research team and included as a proper outcome of the study. The aim of the present study is to analyze the narrative responses added to the end of a survey conducted among clergy serving in The Presbyterian Church (USA). The survey included sections on: work-related psychological health, using the Satisfaction in Ministry Scale and the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry proposed by the Francis Burnout Inventory (Francis, Kaldor, Robbins, & Castle, 2005); psychological type, using the scales of introversion, extraversion, sensing, intuition, thinking, feeling, judging, and perceiving proposed by the Francis Psychological Type Scales (Francis, 2005); personality, using the scales of extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism proposed by the abbreviated form of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (Francis, Brown, & Philipchalk, 1992); and a range of questions concerned with a variety of aspects of ministry. The survey was completed by a sample of 748 clergy serving in a parish within The Presbyterian Church (USA). The analyses of these data reported by Francis, Wulff, and Robbins (2008) offer the following profile of these clergy.

In terms of psychological type, these clergy as a group preferred introversion (55%) over extraversion (45%), preferred intuition (56%) over sensing (44%), preferred feeling (70%) over thinking (30%), and preferred judging (73%) over perceiving (27%). According to psychological type theory, as discussed by Myers and McCaulley (1985), these preferences for introversion, intuition, feeling and judging help to build up a composite picture of the kind of clergy serving in The Presbyterian Church (USA).

Clergy who prefer introversion are oriented toward their inner world; they are energized by their inner ideas and concepts. They may feel drained by events and people around them. They prefer to reflect on a situation rather than act on it. They enjoy solitude, silence and contemplation, as they tend to focus their attention on what is happening in their inner lives. They may appear reserved and detached as they are difficult to get to know, and they may prefer to have a small circle of intimate friends rather than many acquaintances.

Clergy who prefer intuition focus on the possibilities of a situation, perceiving meanings and relationships. They may feel that perception by the senses is not as valuable as information gained from indirect associations. They focus on the overall picture, rather than specific facts and data. They tend to follow their inspirations enthusiastically, but not always realistically. They can appear to be up in the air and may be seen as idealistic and impracticable. They may aspire to bring innovative change to established conventions.

Clergy who prefer feeling make judgments based on subjective values. They prize compassion and mercy. They are known for their tactfulness and for their desire for peace. They may be more concerned to promote harmony than to adhere to abstract principles. They may be thought of as 'people persons', as they are able to take into account other people's feelings and values in decision-making and problem-solving, ensuring they try to reach a solution satisfactory to everyone. They may be thought of as 'warm hearted'. They may find it difficult to take tough decisions or to criticize others, even when it is necessary. They find it easy to empathize with other people and tend to be trusting and encouraging of others.

Clergy who prefer judging seek to order, to rationalize, and to structure their outer world, as they actively judge external stimuli. They have a planned orderly approach to life. They enjoy routine and established patterns. They prefer to follow schedules to reach an established goal and may make use of lists, rotas or diaries. They tend to be punctual, organized and tidy. They may find it difficult to deal with unexpected disruptions of their plans.

In terms of positive affect, these clergy as a group displayed high levels of satisfaction in ministry. More than four out of every five clergy said that: they feel that their pastoral ministry has a positive influence on people's lives (91%); they have accomplished many worthwhile things in their current ministry (86%); they gain a lot of personal satisfaction from working with people in their current ministry (84%); they are really glad that they entered ministry (84%); they gain a lot of personal satisfaction from fulfilling their ministry functions (83%); they feel that their teaching ministry has a positive influence on people's faith (83%); and they feel that their ministry is really appreciated by people (81%). Although the other items in the Satisfaction in Ministry Scale recorded somewhat lower levels of endorsement, the levels remain quite high. Thus, 78% said that their ministry gives real sense and purpose to their lives; 74% said that they can easily understand how people feel about things; 72% said that they feel very positive about their ministry; and 68% said that they deal very effectively with the problems of the people in their current ministry.

In terms of negative affect, these clergy as a group displayed quite high levels of emotional exhaustion in ministry. Two-fifths of the clergy reported that they feel drained by fulfilling their ministry roles (39%), or that they find themselves frustrated in their attempts to accomplish tasks that are important to them (39%). One-third of the clergy reported that fatigue and irritation are part of their daily experience (33%). One-fifth of the clergy reported that they find themselves spending less and less time with those among whom they minister (21%), or that they have been discouraged by the lack of

personal support for them (21%), or that they are less patient with those among whom they minister than they used to be (20%). Well over one in ten reported that they are feeling negative or cynical about the people with whom they work (17%), or that their humour has a cynical or biting tone (14%), or that they are becoming less flexible in their dealings with those among whom they minister (13%), or that they are invaded by sadness they cannot explain (13%).

Research Question

It is against this context that it becomes interesting and instructive to review the comments added to the end of the questionnaire. Here is an exercise in taking seriously the issues and themes recorded by the clergy on the back page after they had been stimulated by and reflected on the questions posed earlier in the survey.

Method

Procedure

This sample of 748 clergy serving within a parish in The Presbyterian Church (USA) was approached in 2006 for a study of clergy serving multipoint parishes or congregations. The sample includes solo pastors, heads of staff, associate pastors, co-pastors, and designated pastors.

Participants

Of the 748 clergy who participated in the project, 72% were male and 28% were female; 12% were under the age of forty, 24% were in their forties, 40% were in their fifties, 20% were in their sixties, 3% were aged seventy or over, and the remaining 2% failed to reveal their age; 83% were married, 16% were not married, and the remaining 1% failed to reveal their marital status.

Instrument

The back page of the questionnaire simply invited participants as follows: "Please use the space below for any other comments".

Analysis

Of the 748 clergy who participated in the survey, 224 accepted the invitation to add comments on the back page, some offering multiple comments across a

range of issues. A grounded theory approach was used to analyze these comments. The term grounded theory refers to theorizing inductively from a body of data. This form of analysis is long-established and frequently selected when working with a textual database. The basic idea is to examine carefully a textual database and to discover themes and their interrelationships (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Gibbs, 2009).

The clergy responses were transcribed and then read and re-read several times. Key ideas were highlighted and coded in order to identify recurrent themes. Each theme was given a descriptive term and ranked according to frequency. Close scrutiny of these themes revealed two broad categories. The larger category comprising 13 themes, focused on ministry. The smaller category comprising 3 themes focused on the nature of the questionnaire. These two categories and 16 themes are displayed in Table 1, together with the number of comments identified with each theme.

TABLE 1 *Themes identified from the back page*

	<i>N</i>
<i>Comments on ministry</i>	
Stress and burnout	55
Tensions with congregations	33
Support from congregations	22
Time off and study leave	30
Feeling blessed	24
Formal support	24
Marriage issues	22
Loneliness and isolation	16
Working conditions	16
Informal support	15
Illness	9
Future uncertainties	7
Healthy living	4
<i>Comments on questionnaire</i>	
Negative comments	44
Positive comments	17
Personality-related comments	7

Results

Stress and Burnout

The largest number of comments (52) concerned experiences of stress and burnout, which further illuminate the main topic of the survey. What these comments add to the study is both a sense of the honesty with which some clergy were willing to speak of their personal experience of stress and burnout and a sense of the pain and hurt that such experiences entail. One cleric spoke of past experience, writing, "I suffered from pretty severe burnout about five years ago"; a second spoke of current experience, writing "I am under psychiatric care and counselling care for depression"; another in a similar situation wrote, "I recently entered therapy to help me better balance stress/anxiety with work"; while another was facing up to a growing realization of current experiences, writing, "To be honest, lately I have felt a sense of burnout". Other clergy did not speak directly of burnout or stress, but spoke very directly of experiencing some of the symptoms. One wrote, "Sometimes things can be overwhelming with family and church demands", and another wrote, "Sometimes I feel extremely anxious or full of dread and defeated like I may be developing dementia". Some clergy referred to hurt, pain and isolation that accompanied burnout: one put it like this, "I feel not only burnt out, but forgotten and even betrayed by colleagues too busy to care".

Tensions within Congregations

The second largest number of comments (33) concerned tensions with congregations, since congregations were often seen to be a real source of stress. One cleric wrote that in his church "there has been a long history of clergy bashing and dysfunction by a powerful few". Another cleric felt that he had been forced out of office when "a small group in the congregation used the divorce to harass me to the point that I resigned as a minister recently". One cleric drew attention to the competing and conflicting expectations within the congregation, writing that "there are too many different expectations by people and everyone wants it their way with no thought for the whole community". Three other comments add depth and poignancy to the power of congregations to hurt their clergy: one wrote of the congregation that "a few are difficult and far too many are apathetic"; one wrote, "I feel more hassled than supported by local members"; and another wrote with some feeling that "there are a few members that treat me like a dog".

Support from Congregations

While 33 of the clergy wrote about tensions with the congregation, another 22 wrote about the support that they receive from the congregation. Some

of the clergy wanted to record their appreciation in inclusive ways for their church members in general, writing things like: "I am blessed with a loving and forgiving congregation"; "My congregation has been tremendously supportive"; and "My congregations have been great". Others pointed to specific characteristics, people or activities that stood out in their minds. For one cleric what stood out was that his "congregation is liberated, open-hearted and peace-oriented". One cleric wanted to "Thank God for Elders and members of various churches in this city. They are loving, supportive and caring". Another cleric wanted to point to one specific family, writing, "for the past year one family in one church has included my family in their Sunday lunch plans".

Time Off and Study Leave

Time off and study leave were referred to by 30 clergy, some in a positive way and some in a negative way. Some clergy spoke of how time off has been a positive benefit for their ministry. One had taken a three month sabbatical and found that it "really helped a great deal". One takes "a monthly Sabbath day (spent at a local retreat centre)" and this "has really helped my ministry". Another wrote that "I split time of vacation period every six months and try to take study leave annually; this helps me a lot more with tensions". Other clergy have found it more difficult to take time off. One writes that "as a solo pastor it is very hard to get away for vacations". One regrets not having been able to take a sabbatical year because that "would have improved my call dramatically". Another struggles to "guard my day off".

Feeling Blessed

A number (24) of the clergy took the opportunity of the back page to express their joy in ministry. These expressions took a variety of forms. They wrote things like: "I am very happy in my current call"; "I am having a great time"; "I am blessed to be doing exactly what I wanted to do". Other clergy wrote a little more fully about their current situation and experience: "I have found an incredibly wonderful church and am ever so grateful"; "I am very happy in this ministry and thankful that I can still carry on"; "I have served the same church for 25 years, in several different roles and with several different heads of staff. I am blessed".

Formal Support

A number of clergy (24) spoke about their experience of support within the formal structures of the Church: 14 of these comments were positive and 10 were negative. In terms of positive comments, one cleric wrote "I have received

care and concern from the chaplain at our hospital". One wrote, "I have been through some extremely difficult times and the COM was very helpful to me". Another wrote that "most of my support comes from the presbytery and other pastors". A much fuller account of the positive experience of formal support was given by the cleric who wrote as follows: "I have been part of a covenant group of pastors for 25 years and have met weekly with a spiritual director. I am clinically depressed, admitted it, sought help and am on medication that helps wonderfully".

In terms of negative comments, some clergy voiced disappointment with the presbytery and others with the denominational structures. Regarding the presbytery, one cleric wrote, "I struggle with the lack of support from the presbytery", while another wrote, "I have had lack of support and sometimes outright hostility from those in the presbytery". Regarding the denomination, one cleric wrote, "What saddens me is that I have had to go outside the denomination to get support", while another wrote, "The PCUSA does not know how to take care of their pastors and their pastors' families".

Marriage Issues

Marriage issues received comments from 22 of the clergy: 11 positive and 11 negative. In terms of positive comments, several clergy pointed to their marriage as a real source of strength in their ministry. One applauded "a very supportive wife" and another wrote, "I am in a very happy marriage". One clergyman found his marriage a source of support and explained that "at the beginning of my ministry I decided to make marriage and family life a priority". Also finding her marriage a source of support, one clergywoman explained that "it helps that my husband is the co-pastor and we are in ministry together". Another clergyman explained that marriage has not always been easy, but it has been worth working at: "My wife and I have had a number of difficulties, but have worked through them and enjoyed our children and grandchildren".

In terms of negative comments, several clergy drew attention to the ongoing current difficulties in their marriages. One wrote that he was "married but beginning divorce procedure". Another wrote that she was "currently going through marital separation". Several clergy wrote about the role of ministry in leading to the breakdown of their marriage. One put it like this: "The stress of ministry was a large factor that contributed to the ending of my last marriage". Several clergy wrote about the consequences of divorces on their lives and ministry. One clergyman linked his "traumatic divorce" to a period of debilitating "depression". One clergywoman wrote about the strains of caring for her children: "I am a single mom with two children in college or about to go to college with no help from their father".

Loneliness and Isolation

Loneliness and isolation were issues raised by 16 of the clergy. These voices echoed in different ways the one common theme that the very office of minister and the very task of ministry can lead into a path of isolation. One cleric made this point starkly by writing, "The ministry is hard, lonely, and relentless". Another cleric wrote, "I was surprised and overwhelmed by the isolation of the position". Others wrote: "There are many times I feel isolated in my ministry"; "I experience a high level of loneliness"; "I was very alone".

Working Conditions

Aspects of their working conditions were mentioned by 16 of the clergy, usually with reference to difficulties generated by relationships with other members of staff, by overwork, or by lack of resources. The kinds of problems caused by relationships with other members of staff are illustrated by the following comments. One cleric wrote that "my biggest stress comes from another pastor on staff who is very critical and tries to sabotage my work", while another wrote that, "a change in the top senior minister has created the most stress of all". Changes in the staff team also caused problems for the cleric who wrote, "I am struggling with the transitions we have with staff turnover". Matters were brought to a head for another cleric when "the head of staff was asked to leave after a year of difficulties for church and staff". The problems caused by overwork were voiced by the clergy who said, "The job demands are impossible all day everyday", and "My job should be done by a few people not one person". Different aspects of the problems caused by lack of resources are illustrated by the following comments. One cleric complained about the lack of communication infrastructure, writing that it "would be useful to have an up-to-date computer and internet connection". Another cleric complained about the level of remuneration from his church, writing that "I have part-time jobs to make ends meet".

Informal Support

The support received from colleagues, friends, family and congregation was mentioned by 15 of the clergy. Some of the clergy drew attention to the collegial support drawn from clergy groups. One wrote that "it is becoming more and more important for clergy to have peer groups"; while another of the clergy observed that "you need to be intentional about maintaining relationships with peers". Some of the clergy valued highly the support drawn from outside the peer group. One wrote that "I do have a small group of non-ordained friends who meet two times a month"; while another wrote, "I have a prayer partner with whom I have been meeting for twenty years". Other informal

sources of support were voiced by the clergy who wrote: "I am in a very supportive congregation"; "I have great support from family and friends"; "I have two close friends".

Illness

Illness and health were matters of concern raised by nine of the clergy. A particularly poignant comment was made by the clergywoman who wrote, "I have coronary artery disease, am diabetic and am a cancer survivor. My husband is also a cardiac patient". Another clergywoman wrote, "In the past twelve months I was diagnosed with breast cancer; I had 2 surgeries, chemo and radiation". A clergyman wrote to say that "I have just returned from a three-month medical leave". Such comments draw attention to the personal struggles being dealt with by those whose ministry is shaped to accompany the struggles of others.

Future Uncertainties

Some of the clergy were struggling with what they saw to be the uncertain future for the local church or for the denomination that they serve. Comments in this area were made by seven of the clergy. Concern for the local church was voiced by two clerics in the following ways: "I am sometimes almost overwhelmed by anxiety about my particular church", and "My congregation is an aging one and my community faces decline". Concern for the denomination was voiced in general terms by the cleric who wrote, "I am anxious about the denomination as a whole". A more specific point was made by the cleric who wrote as follows:

The most depressing aspects of my ministry are the idiotic social and political stands taken by the national level at GA and OGA. They totally undermine my efforts to identify Presbyterianism with the Gospel among my members and prospective members.

Healthy Living

Attention was drawn to strategies for healthy living by four of the clergy. These clergy wrote the following kind of things. One wrote, "I exercise at a gym three times a week", while another wrote, "I have always tried to take care of my physical, emotional, and spiritual needs".

Positive Comments on the Questionnaire

Some clergy took the trouble to affirm the survey and to offer positive comments about the questionnaire. Of the 17 clerics who offered positive comments,

some simply wrote “thank you”, or “thanks for asking”, or “thanks for including me in your survey”. Other clerics offered more thoughtful or more reflective comments on the experience of participating in the project. One wrote, “Thank you for these few moments to reflect”; one wrote, “This questionnaire has been helpful”; and another wrote, “This was a good survey. I enjoyed completing it”.

Negative Comments on the Questionnaire

Not all participants, however, felt positive about the questionnaire. All told, 44 negative comments were made. The criticism included the topic (burnout), the range of issues explored, the way in which the questions were phrased, the personal nature of the enquiry, the length of the survey, and the very purpose of gathering data on such topics. Criticism of researching the very topic of burnout was voiced by the cleric who wrote, “If I were burned out I would not respond to a survey like this one”. Criticism of the range of contextual and personal factors explored was voiced by the cleric who wrote, “Some of these questions seem to have little to do with burnout. Could it be there is another notion behind the questionnaire?” Criticism of the way in which some of the questions were asked was voiced by the cleric who wrote, “Words like ever, never and always are much harder to answer because it may have been five years ago and it isn’t now. They don’t allow for exceptions”. Criticism of the personal nature of the enquiry was voiced by the cleric who wrote, “This inventory is too personal. I am tempted to not return it”. Criticism of the length of the survey was voiced by the cleric who wrote, “A six-page survey is unrealistic. You are being presumptuous to think it will be completed in timely fashion”. Finally, criticism of the very purpose of gathering data on such topics was made by the cleric who said that asking “questions without practical support is meaningless”.

Personality-related Comments

The inclusion of the two personality measures in the survey attracted no negative comments about the Church’s use of personality theory, but it did attract some positive comments from clergy who were familiar with personality theory and had applied some of the concepts in their ministry. Drawing on the language of psychological type theory, one cleric wrote, “I am by nature a Lone Ranger type (INTJ)”, while another wrote, “I am an INFP”. One cleric described himself as “an introverted poet pastor”, while another wrote, “I am an introvert by nature who enjoys others in ministry”. One cleric reflected in greater length on his self-awareness and understanding of his personality: “My personality tends not to get too excited nor too depressed; this has helped me to deal with

difficulties and conflicts as well as with disappointments and lack of success in terms of growth”.

Conclusion

Quantitative surveys routinely dedicate the back page for participants to offer their own narrative comments on the theme explored by the survey or on the way in which the theme was explored in the survey. The aim of the present study was to examine and to analyze the comments registered on the back page of a survey designed for clergy serving in The Presbyterian Church (USA) on the theme of burnout. The quantitative survey was completed by 748 clergy, of whom 224 offered comments on the back page, which represents nearly one in three of the participants (30%). These 224 clergy offered 345 identified comments that have been analyzed to reflect 16 distinct themes. In turn these 16 themes have been organized within two categories. The first and larger category concerned comments on ministry and embraced the following 13 themes: stress and burnout, tensions with congregations, support from congregations, time off and study leave, feeling blessed, formal support, marriage issues, loneliness and isolation, working conditions, informal support, illness, future uncertainties, and healthy living. The second and smaller category concerned comments on the questionnaire study itself and embraced the following three themes: negative comments on the questionnaire, positive comments on the questionnaire, and personality-related comments. Four conclusions emerge from these analyses and data.

The first conclusion is that the clergy themselves took seriously the invitation and the opportunity offered by the back page of the quantitative survey. Nearly a third of the clergy (30%) who participated in the survey took additional time to respond to the back page invitation. Moreover, a number of those who responded to the invitation recorded more than one main point: 224 clergy generated 345 distinct comments taken into account in the analyses. Such investment in the survey by the participants needs to be taken seriously by the researchers.

The second conclusion is that the comments afforded rich additional insights into the theme of the survey. Moreover, the systematic analysis of these comments provided an organizational framework within which the burnout-related concerns and insights of the clergy could be located and interpreted. The 13 themes identified by this analysis suggest that for the clergy themselves the following issues are salient for informed reflection on the causes and on the amelioration of burnout. The congregations are core to discourse

about burnout: some congregations take on an oppressive character and push their clergy over the edge into burnout, while other congregations take on a benevolent character and offer their pastors life-long support. Clergy identify the core factors of formal support and informal support both to safeguard against burnout and offer rehabilitation. Formal support comes from the denomination, from the presbytery and from external professional agencies. Informal support rests in the hands of friends, peers, and family. In their discussion of burnout clergy recognize the need to look at the work context (the tasks to be done, the resources available and the working relationships), at the dangers of loneliness and isolation, at the impact of uncertainty about the future of the local church and about the policy of the denomination, and at the specific opportunities and challenges posed by the intersection of the demands of the job and the responsibilities of family life. Clergy are sensitive to the impact of physical illness and to the advantages of healthy living on the exercise of ministry.

The third conclusion is that the comments afforded important insights into how the clergy perceived the survey. They gave attention to the content, wording and length of the survey. The comments make it clear that some clergy see surveys as a burden, but others see surveys as an opportunity for reflection and are pleased that their Church is interested in listening to them. Moreover, comments on this particular survey affirmed the interest of some clergy in applying psychological type theory to their own self-awareness and to their practice of ministry.

The fourth conclusion is that systematic attention given to the comments on the back page may be of proper benefit in shaping future quantitative studies both in terms of identifying content and in terms of shaping and structuring survey items.

The present study has set out to take the back page seriously from one quantitative survey, specifically concerned with researching burnout among clergy serving in The Presbyterian Church (USA). It is now worth replicating this enquiry in respect of quantitative surveys designed to explore different topics or employed among different groups of clergy.

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Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, and Job Satisfaction among Hospital Chaplains: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

The author systematically reviews the literature on hospital chaplain burnout, compassion fatigue, and job satisfaction using comprehensive databases from Medicine (MEDLINE), psychology (PsychINFO), religion (ATLA), nursing (CINAHL), and sociology (Sociological Abstracts) between 1980 and 2015. While there are several studies that pertain to job satisfaction among church-based clergy, there are few studies that focus upon the particular challenges faced by hospital chaplains. Hospital chaplain job satisfaction is generally high. However, there are particular stressors unique to the chaplaincy that merit special consideration. Several recommendations around hospital chaplain coping and future directions are discussed.

Keywords

Burnout – compassion fatigue – hospital chaplain – job satisfaction

Hospital chaplains have the unique role on the healthcare team to address the spiritual needs of patients at moments of great suffering, doubt, and uncertainty. Most often, the chaplain and the patient share no prior personal connection and may not share the same religious background. The patient may be deeply religious or simply be in need of spiritual care during their acute hospitalization. Often, patients have a variety of faith backgrounds or are questioning the role spirituality plays in their life (Jacobs, 2008). This presents a unique set of stressors that impact job satisfaction and burnout.

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This systematic review synthesizes the peer-reviewed literature that addresses burnout, compassion fatigue, wellbeing, and job satisfaction among hospital chaplains. Further, this review examines the salient factors that mitigate burnout and job stress, and makes recommendations for redefining the job duties to ameliorate burnout. Finally, I posit recommendations for further research and areas of unknown variables.

Studying the effectiveness of hospital chaplains in general, and job satisfaction in particular, is a relatively young, under-studied field. Gartner, Larson, and Vachar-Mayberry (1990) reviewed all the articles published in the pastoral counselling journals from 1980 to 1989 and found that only 5% of them were quantitative studies. From 1990 to 1999, the proportion increased to 12% (Weaver, Flannelly, & Liu, 2008). While there are many studies that evaluate job satisfaction among church-based clergy, there are very few that address hospital-based chaplains. There are several possible reasons for this. McCurdy (2002) notes that studying the spiritual care of patients may be too 'reductionist' given the complexity and nuance of spiritual care and might 'distort the very nature' of pastoral care. Weaver et al. (2008) argue that there is some ambivalence about research by and about hospital chaplains, but affirm the importance of chaplaincy-led research to maintain their unique perspective among healthcare providers. They note that, in addition to nurses and psychiatrists, even neurologists and internists have begun evaluating the effects of spirituality. As the hospital chaplains are the 'experts' on the spiritual journey of patients, they need to inform the dialogue in the multi-disciplinary, evidence-driven culture of modern medicine.

Research on hospital chaplains may also be more difficult than research on church-based clergy. First, there are simply more church-based clergy to study. There are 353,000 ministers in the United States (Gallup & Lindsay, 1999) and only 10,000 hospital-based chaplains (VandeCreek & Burton, 2001). Second, research among church-based clergy is often performed through denominational structures, such as the study by Francis, Loudon, and Rutledge (2004) study among Roman Catholic priests, and Randall's (2004) study among Anglican priests. Chaplains often work in hospitals with smaller staff and are thus isolated from larger clergy judicatories (Weaver et al., 2008).

Hospital chaplain roles are different from those of church-based clergy in several important ways. Chaplains work collaboratively with a wide range of professionals such as nurses, physicians, social workers, care coordinators, and administrators. As such, they are less often seen as the lead care-provider for a patient's welfare; whereas church-based clergy are the leaders of their faith communities. In addition, church-based clergy have a variety of other duties that include a significant amount of one-on-one counselling, administration, budget obligations, meeting facilitation, community-based work, and fund-raising

(Weaver, 1995). These competing demands afford a variety of activities that can be both stressful and life-enhancing (Jacobs, 2008). Chaplains increasingly have specialized training to equip them in the care of hospitalized patients. In addition to a Master's level degree, hospital chaplains are required to complete an additional 1,600 hours of clinical training and demonstrate competency in a diversity of fields, including a working knowledge of psychology, family dynamics, and diversity issues (Jacobs, 2008).

The work of both hospital chaplains and clergy is important. Americans grieving over the death of someone close are almost five times more likely to seek the aid of a clergyperson than all other mental health sources combined (54% versus 11%) (Veroff, Kulka, & Douvan, 1981; Hohmann & Larson, 1993). Chaplains, in particular, have a positive impact on the healthcare team. Overall patient satisfaction correlates very tightly with how patients' spiritual and emotional needs were met (Clark, Drain, & Malone, 2003).

Definitions

The term 'burnout' has been coined in the literature since the work of Christina Maslach and her co-workers in the 1970s (Maslach, 1982; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Maslach's work grew out of the observation that people, especially in the human services and caring professions, often developed a heterogeneous syndrome of malaise, fatigue, and ennui that seemed to be precipitated by the intense human interaction of their jobs. Burnout, in her definition, includes three domains: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Emotional exhaustion is characterized by feeling 'emotionally spent' where the subject lacks the energy and focus to contend with daily work demands. Rather than mere physical exhaustion, emotional exhaustion refers to being spiritually weary and empty. Depersonalization is the quality of objectifying the other. In hospital chaplaincy, this is the quality of no longer regarding the patient as a suffering human being. Rather, the bed-bound entity becomes 'one more agnostic with pneumonia' or 'the last charge of the day'. While hospital chaplains must maintain professional distance, depersonalization takes that distance to a pathological extreme. Lack of personal accomplishment is the sense that one's work no longer makes a difference in the world. For a chaplain, lack of personal accomplishment includes the 'grind' of patient visits and feeling that one plays an insignificant role in the larger healthcare team.

Burnout has several similarities with depression, but differs from depression in several ways (Brenninkmeyer, Van Yperen, & Buunk, 2001). First, burnout is

job-related. When someone leaves their job, their symptoms cease. Thus, weekends and holidays are bright moments for those who suffer job burnout but not for the depressed whose symptoms persist. Second, patients with burnout do not suffer the anhedonia of the depressed. Hospital chaplains with burnout still take pleasure in outside activities, hobbies, friendships and family, mindful that job burnout often impacts one's enjoyment of such activities. Finally, burnout differs from depression in the psychomotor retardation and blunting of expressiveness that often characterizes depression.

While burnout is a highly-developed construct that has been measured across professions with well-validated instruments, other constructs have been used to characterize the emotional health and job satisfaction of those in the helping professions. In recent decades, 'compassion fatigue' has been developed with validated instruments to describe certain qualities of job satisfaction. Compassion fatigue, also termed 'vicarious traumatization' or 'secondary traumatization', is the depletion of empathy and residue of emotional strain that persists after working with patients who have suffered trauma (Figley, 1995). Compassion fatigue resonates with Maslach's domains of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, where the constant exposure to hurting patients results in a depletion of the emotional resources needed to respond empathically. However, burnout is not related to exposure to trauma, but occurs wherever there are constant stressful interpersonal interactions. Furthermore, compassion fatigue has a shorter onset and a quicker recovery than burnout. Figley (1995) characterizes compassion fatigue well when he writes: "We have not been directly exposed to the trauma scene, but we hear the story told with such intensity, or we hear similar stories so often, or we have the gift and curse of extreme empathy and we suffer. We feel the feelings of our clients. We experience their fears. We dream their dreams. Eventually, we lose a certain spark of optimism, humor, and hope. We tire. We aren't sick, but we aren't ourselves" (p. 13).

Important to this field of research is practical knowledge of what factors can combat burnout. What is the opposite of burnout and compassion fatigue? Researchers have responded by defining 'compassion satisfaction', which now has validated scales in the literature. The concept of compassion satisfaction is defined as fulfilment from helping others and from positive collegial relationships (Stamm, 2002). Similarly, 'job satisfaction' is a widely used construct of broad definition. While job satisfaction may lack some of the granular feel of burnout and compassion fatigue, it is a generalizable and widely-understood idea that applies to all professions and is measured with a several validated instruments (van Saane, Sluiter, Verbeek, & Frings-Dresen, 2003). In the context of this review we might ask what promotes or prevents hospital chaplains

being satisfied in their role. Job satisfaction seeks to understand those questions, but without necessarily exploring the more emotional and spiritual challenges.

Burnout among Clergy

Burnout and job satisfaction among parochial clergy can inform the hospital chaplaincy services. Francis et al. (2004) demonstrated that the emotional landscape of burnout is varied. In a survey of 1,468 Roman Catholic parish ministers, 36% felt 'used up' at the end of the day, 26% felt they were working too hard, 20% felt frustrated, 19% felt emotionally drained, and 14% felt 'burned out'. Yet, 90% felt 'a lot of personal satisfaction from working with people', 81% said they would go into the parish ministry again, 76% felt exhilarated from working closely with parishioners, and 75% felt they had accomplished many worthwhile things.

However, Weaver, Flannelly, Larson, Stapleton, and Koenig (2002) found that Protestant clergy reported higher levels of occupational stress than did Catholic priests, which had a negative impact on family-related stress and sexual misconduct. Doolittle (2007, 2010) studied 358 United Methodist Clergy and found 19% showed high emotional exhaustion, 10% high depersonalization, and 11% low personal accomplishment. Randall (2004) showed in a study of 340 Anglican priests that greater emotional exhaustion and depersonalization correlated with lower levels of personal accomplishment and the consideration to leave the ministry.

Method

Five databases were searched for relevant studies from 1980 to 2015 where hospital chaplains were the main profession sampled. The databases pertained to all relevant fields: medicine (MEDLINE), psychology (PSYCHinfo), nursing (Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature), religion (American Theological Library Association Religion Database), and sociology (Sociological Abstracts). The databases were then cross-searched for peer-reviewed quantitative studies pertaining to burnout and job-related stress, including compassion fatigue, compassion satisfaction, and depression. To elucidate coping strategies and other positive attributes of job satisfaction, relevant quantitative articles pertaining to church-based clergy were included for discussion.

Results

There were nine studies that pertained directly to hospital chaplaincy, burnout, compassion fatigue, and job stress (Table 1). Three of the nine studies addressed global job satisfaction and burnout. Crossley (2002) surveyed 1,099 healthcare chaplains who indicated that, overall, they enjoyed their vocations; 79% indicated they would 'definitely' or 'very definitely' choose to be a chaplain again, while 83% indicated they were satisfied with their work 'more than average' or 'much more than average'. Lloyd-Williams, Wright, Cobb, & Shiels (2004) evaluated the role of 115 hospice chaplains and found that 23% scored above the threshold for identifiable psychological morbidity on the General Health Questionnaire 12 (GHQ12). The study also revealed that 71% had parish-commitments in addition to their role with hospice.

A study among 217 veterans' administration chaplains reported high levels of compassion satisfaction, and low levels of compassion fatigue and burnout (Yan & Beder, 2013). Younger chaplains and those who perceive low levels of collaboration with mental health professions had higher levels of burnout and compassion fatigue. Also, those chaplains who self-identified poorer support also suffered greater burnout.

Trauma, Stress, and Coping

The remaining six papers addressed unique aspects of burnout and stress. An important paper by Galek, Flannelly, Greene, and Kudler (2011) evaluated burnout and secondary trauma among 331 professional chaplains and found that burnout was associated with the length of employment in the same position, while secondary stress was not. In contrast, secondary trauma was positively associated with the number of hours spent counselling patients who had experienced trauma. Greater social support helped to mitigate secondary trauma and burnout, but only where this was support from family and friends rather than from co-workers or supervisors. This study highlights the importance of a chaplain's emotional health and home life to alleviate the challenge of burnout and secondary stress. Interestingly, the study also revealed that support from co-workers and supervisors did not mitigate burnout and secondary stress. The researchers were unable to tell why this was so, and suggested this dimension of chaplaincy work environment is an important area for further study.

Galek and her co-workers (2011) hypothesized that the length of time in the same role was associated with burnout because "institutional policies and practices can strain personal resources, such as self-esteem, over time, because they impinge on personal autonomy" (p. 664). While the finding was statistically

TABLE 1 *Studies evaluating hospital chaplain burnout, compassion fatigue, and job satisfaction*

Study, year	Type	Subjects	Results
Carter et al. (2013)	Questionnaire on stress among chaplains performing funerals	31 chaplains	Performing funerals is more stressful if deceased was a suicide, personal friend, family member, or a teenager.
Crossley et al. (2002)	Questionnaire about job satisfaction	1 099 chaplains	79% would 'definitely' or 'very definitely' choose to be a chaplain again.
Ekedahl & Wengström (2008)	Semi-structured interviews addressing coping between chaplains and nurses	15 nurses, 9 chaplains	Nurses employ 'caritas oblivion' and chaplains 'evangelic oblivion': forgetting the dead to treat the living.
Flannelly et al. (2005)	Questionnaire about compassion fatigue	343 clergy, including 97 chaplains who ministered to victims of trauma at World Trade Center, New York City	Compassion fatigue associated with number of days worked at Ground Zero and hours worked with trauma victims. Those trained in CPE had less compassion fatigue, burnout, and greater compassion satisfaction.
Galek et al. (2011)	Questionnaire about burnout and secondary trauma	331 chaplains	Burnout associated with length of employment, work hours, and inversely associated with support from family and friends.
Lloyd-Williams et al. (2004)	Questionnaire about psychological morbidity	115 chaplains	23% scored on the threshold for identifiable psychological morbidity on the GHQ 12.
Spidell et al. (2011)	Online questionnaire about disenfranchised grief	577 chaplains	Respondents identified sadness, acceptance, and relief around death of patients. Prayer, colleagues, and reading were main coping strategies.

Study, year	Type	Subjects	Results
Taylor et al. (2006)	Questionnaire about burnout and compassion fatigue	66 rabbis who worked as chaplains	Burnout increased with hours worked with trauma victims. Older rabbis had greater compassion and lower burnout. Women more burned out than men. Divorced more burned out than married.
Yan & Beder (2013)	Questionnaire about compassion satisfaction, compassion fatigue, and burnout	217 chaplains in the US veterans' administration	Chaplains reported high levels of compassion satisfaction and low levels of compassion fatigue and burnout.

significant, it differs from most quantitative studies in the literature. Duration in the same job usually assumes a certain amount of seniority, and thus, increased autonomy. Interestingly, in many other professions, including church-based clergy, burnout decreases with length of time in the role because workers incorporate adaptive behaviours to the specific job stressors to facilitate longevity in the role. Those who do not adapt tend to leave for another role, so it is usually younger, less experienced professionals who are burned out (Taylor, Flannelly, Weaver, & Zucker, 2006; Yan & Beder 2013).

Flannelly, Roberts, and Weaver (2005) surveyed 343 clergy, including 97 chaplains who ministered to victims of trauma and injury after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City. Compassion fatigue was positively related to the number of days that clergy worked at ground zero ($r = .14, p < .05$) and the number of hours worked with trauma victims ($r = .19, p < .05$) while relief work with the American Red Cross reduced compassion fatigue and burnout. Those who were trained in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) experienced less compassion fatigue and burnout, and more compassion satisfaction, than those who were not trained. Like most studies, older clergy experienced less burnout than younger. In comparison to clergy, chaplains had slightly more significant burnout, compassion fatigue, and more compassion. The authors hypothesize that the work of the chaplain is both emotionally demanding but also rewarding work. Overall, the authors note that the clergy experienced relatively low levels of burnout and compassion fatigue and relatively high levels of compassion satisfaction.

In a focused study, Carter, Trungale, and Barnes (2013) evaluated stress among 31 hospital-based chaplains when they extended their ministry to performing funerals. The factor that led to the greatest likelihood of stress was the relationship to the deceased. Stress was heightened for 62% of respondents if the deceased was a personal friend, or a family member (for 55% of respondents), and if the deceased was a child or a teenager (for 55%). Also, 61% of chaplains experienced heightened stress if the deceased died by suicide. In this study, given the small sample size, many demographic variables such as gender and experience did not show significance. The study does shed light on a unique aspect of a chaplain's role: the ministry of funerals when the chaplain, for whatever reason, was the most logical choice of officiant.

Ekedahl and Wengström (2008) evaluated differences between nurses and hospital chaplains in the coping processes used when confronting existential issues. The study was both quantitative and qualitative, based on transcribed interviews, and drew upon common themes among nurses and chaplains. The authors note that nurses practiced 'caritas oblivion' (that is, forgetting the dead to treat the living) and boundary demarcation (for example, focusing on everyday tasks) to cope with the stress of treating patients with cancer. In particular, nurses invested themselves in time outside of the hospital with physical activities and exercise as a means to cope. Similarly, hospital chaplains employed an 'evangelic oblivion', when they forgot their deceased patients in order to focus on the living. Also, chaplains tended to employ a broader spectrum of coping strategies, including 'reconstruction', where the patient and the event are understood within the context of the sacred. The authors noted that the chaplain's religious coping had both a professional and private orientation.

Taylor et al. (2006) studied 66 male and female Rabbis who worked as chaplains. They found that although compassion fatigue and burnout were low overall they were higher among women than among men. Burnout increased with the numbers of hours rabbis worked with trauma victims ($r = .25, p < .05$). As found in many burnout studies, age predicted greater compassion satisfaction ($r = .31, p < .05$) and lower burnout ($r = -.28, p < .05$). Compassion fatigue was also higher among chaplains who were divorced, echoing the importance of family support found in other studies (Galek et al., 2011). Although the sample size was small, the researchers performed sophisticated hierarchical modelling and found four professional variables which accounted for 20% of the variance: years as a Rabbi, years as a chaplain, hours per week with trauma victims, and hours per week performing pastoral counselling. They found three personal characteristics that accounted for 20% of the variation of compassion fatigue: being a woman, divorced, and lower educational level. Age and years

as a Rabbi were the only significant variables that accounted for burnout, explaining 18% of the variance. Interestingly, age was the only variable to show significance for compassion satisfaction. Its effect was positive: the older the chaplain, the greater their compassion satisfaction.

Spidell et al. (2011) addressed disenfranchised grief, an important issue for chaplains, in study of 3,131 members of the Association of Professional Chaplains, 577 of whom participated in an online survey. Disenfranchised grief can occur when the relationship is not recognized, the loss is not acknowledged, the griever is excluded, and/or the circumstances around family members' deaths are deemed socially unacceptable. The researchers cite several examples: children with a father on death row, the death of family member from AIDS, the loss of an adolescent romantic relationship or caring for children with schizophrenia. Respondents stated that they would have low energy (78%), feel sad or moody (63%), feel like they have no time for themselves (44%), go through the motions (41%), and distance themselves from others (31%). The researchers also noted that 21% felt that their grief was not supported or affirmed in the workplace, and 63% listed circumstances of death about which they felt very uncomfortable hearing or talking about, such as death of a child (36%), death by murder (9%), or suicide (10%). The main responses to the death of a patient were sadness (79%), acceptance (76%), and relief (24%). One respondent wrote: "for a long time I felt a kind of heaviness in my body. I felt that the grief was lodged in my body but I did not know what to do about it. Now that I do more intentional movement, it is better" (p. 80). Another chaplain wrote: "I am the palliative care chaplain on our service... My anger comes from the ravages I see, life's arbitrary nature and the pain and sorrow of not only the patient but their loved ones, caregivers and medical center staff. My sadness comes from giving my heart in love" (p. 80).

To revitalize themselves, these chaplains employed prayer (61%), talking with colleagues (57%), and reading (42%). Of note, 85% felt appreciated for their ministry 'always' or 'most of the time'; 16% felt appreciated 'some of the time' or 'never'; and 79% felt that their grief was supported in the workplace, while 21% did not. One chaplain wrote: "as a whole the health care environment and setting does not always lend itself to a healthy support of grief. As a chaplain, I often find myself supporting other staff in their grief. It's easy to just keep going on and not take time for myself" (p. 81).

The authors also evaluated how chaplains coped when 'grief starts to pile up'. Negative coping included decreased sensitivity, cynicism, jadedness, and difficulty in maintaining hope. They found that 21% experienced three negative coping behaviours, 18% experienced four, and 31% experienced five or more. If chaplains felt affirmed in the workplace, they experienced one less

negative coping behaviour. The authors concluded that even chaplains have their limits, especially in the context of disenfranchised grief, and that supportive environments lead to healthier coping.

Factors that Mitigate Burnout

There have been no specific studies that have addressed burnout mitigating factors among hospital chaplains. While the roles are different, some studies among church-based clergy can inform this important issue. Most of the quantitative studies show correlative data with demographic variables. For example, older clergy tend to be less emotionally exhausted (Taylor et al., 2006; Yan & Beder, 2013). However, important to this field is discovering those factors besides demographics that chaplains may employ to relieve burnout.

Positive psychology is a movement to explore adaptive approaches that result in balanced, healthy functioning and positive wellbeing even in face of difficulty (Seligman, 2002). The most comprehensive study of positive psychology among clergy was a questionnaire sent to 398 senior evangelical Protestant ministers, 26 of whom took part in follow-up interviews (Meek et al., 2003). The results suggested that successful ministers were able to maintain a healthy work-home balance and had satisfying relationships outside of church. Also, they had an active, healthy spiritual life that sustained their work. Another qualitative study explored those key traits that allowed senior ministers to grow and learn (McKenna, Boyd, & Yost, 2007). Successful ministers identified taking time apart, reliance upon God and others, pushing beyond their comfort zone, and acceptance of change.

Doolittle (2007, 2010) evaluated traits correlated with low burnout among 358 United Methodist clergy. Several behaviours correlated with low burnout domains: exercise three times a week, identifying a mentor, regular Bible study, retreat twice a year, regular time for self, and satisfaction with one's spiritual life (Doolittle, 2010). On the other hand, having been in a traumatic church in the past, as well as being in a traumatic church in the present, had a very strong likelihood of being burned out. This study suggests that while ongoing behaviours may mitigate burnout, the past residue of a traumatic pastorate can also impact present burnout.

Doolittle (2007) also evaluated several emotional coping strategies among this same cohort of clergy, using instruments developed by Carver, Scheier, and Weintraub (1989). Acceptance (e.g., "I accept the reality of what has happened"), active coping (e.g., "I concentrate my efforts on doing something about it"), and strategy planning (e.g., "I try to come up with a strategy about what to do"), and positive reframing (e.g., "I try to grow as a person as a result of an experience") were all associated with greater personal accomplishment.

In contrast, several coping strategies were correlated with greater emotional exhaustion and depersonalization: self-blame (e.g., "I criticize myself"), venting (e.g., "I get upset and let my emotions out"), distraction (e.g., "I turn to work or other activities to take my mind off things"), denial (e.g., "I say to myself, 'this isn't real'"), substance use (e.g., "I use drugs or alcohol to make myself feel better"), and humour (e.g., "I laugh about the situation"). Humour, in particular, may represent a form of venting or distraction, rather than a pro-active plan or grit to persevere, and thus correlates with greater burnout. Similarly, venting seemed to be another form of denial and distraction, strategies that correlate with worse burnout, rather than a positive form of catharsis (Doolittle, 2007).

These studies share many common themes. All maintain the importance of healthy relationships, including an active, healthy spiritual life to mitigate burnout (Doolittle, 2010; Weaver et al., 2002; McKenna et al., 2007). It is interesting that this theme has emerged through different modalities that include validated survey instruments as well as qualitative interviews. Similarly, all three studies, using different techniques suggest that there are positive, healthful adaptive coping strategies such as acceptance of change and growing beyond comfort zones. The study of Roman Catholic clergy (Francis et al., 2004) also correlated personality traits with the burnout syndrome. Higher scores in neuroticism and lower scores in extroversion correlate with greater emotional exhaustion and depersonalization.

An important factor for maintaining a positive work-related mental health is confidence in prayer. Turton and Francis (2007) surveyed 1,278 Anglican clergy and found that those who had a greater positive attitude towards prayer had lower levels of emotional exhaustion, lower levels of depersonalization, and higher levels of personal accomplishment. This finding was also reflected in the study by Spidell et al. (2011) of chaplains with disenfranchised grief.

While these studies are important and give great insight into adaptive and healthful strategies to mitigate burnout, they explore church-based clergy exclusively. Given the differences in job demands, we cannot infer that these findings among church-based clergy hold true for hospital-based chaplains.

Further Considerations

Research that focuses on the chaplaincy reveals several themes. First, the number of studies that directly address chaplaincy burnout is relatively few. Only nine studies met the search criteria. Three of the nine studies had very few

subjects: Ekedahl and Wengström (2008) with 9 chaplains and 15 nurses, Taylor et al. (2006) with 66 rabbis, and Carter et al. (2013) with 31 chaplains. The nine studies were heterogeneous in scope and often addressed specific and particular questions: for example, Ekedahl and Wengström (2008) compared coping between nurses and chaplains; Spidell et al. (2011) studied disenfranchised grief among those working in a palliative care unit; Carter et al. (2013) addressed the unique challenges of performing funerals; Taylor et al. (2006) studied Rabbis who also worked as chaplains. While each of these studies makes important contributions, it is impossible to perform formal meta-analysis and challenging to draw broad-sweeping conclusions.

Second, the overall job satisfaction of chaplains appears to be quite healthy. Crossley (2002) noted that 79% would 'definitely' or 'very definitely' choose the chaplaincy again. Spidell et al. (2011) noted that 86% felt appreciated in their ministry 'always' or 'most of the time'. Yan and Beder (2013) noted high levels of compassion satisfaction and low levels of burnout and compassion fatigue among veterans' administration chaplains. Taylor et al. (2006) also shared this finding of low levels of burnout and compassion satisfaction.

However, chaplains also contend with significant stress. Secondary trauma, compassion fatigue, and disenfranchised grief have an important impact in the overall wellbeing of chaplaincy work-health (Galek et al., 2011; Spidell et al., 2011; Ekedahl & Wengström, 2008). This appears to be especially true among chaplains who treat those with intense emotion, as in those who cared for trauma victims from the 9/11 terrorist attack (Flannelly et al., 2005) and those who cared for patients on a palliative care unit (Spidell et al., 2011).

Third, integration and support has a common echo in the literature (Yan & Beder, 2013). Those chaplains who perceive that they are well-integrated into the healthcare team suffer less burnout and compassion fatigue. This is important for both chaplaincy and hospital leadership. Chaplains offer value to the patient care experience, even affecting hard outcomes such as hospital stay, mortality, as well as the increasingly important outcomes of patient satisfaction (Proserpio, Piccinelli, & Clerici, 2011). Integrating the chaplaincy into the ebb and flow of the wider hospital team shows promise to reduce chaplaincy burnout.

As chaplaincy evolves further, the area is ripe for qualitative and quantitative research (Shields & Emanuel, 2014). More research needs to be done among clergy in general (Shields & Emanuel, 2014). In a systematic review among the three most prominent palliative care journals – *American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Care*, *Journal of Palliative Care*, and *Hospice Journal* (now, *Journal of Pain and Palliative Care Pharmacotherapy*) – only 47 (6%) of the 838 scholarly articles mentioned clergy or chaplains in some way (Flannelly,

Weaver, Smith, & Oppenheimer, 2003). Spiritual care is an indispensable component of hospice care, yet there remains scant research in this field.

The role of chaplains in the outcome of patients is often under-recognized. Several important considerations need to be made. First, the gap between the chaplain and the medical team needs to be crossed. More integration is necessary for the improvement of patient care. This is most easily accomplished by inviting, insisting perhaps, that the chaplain be present at discharge conferences, care coordination meetings, or on medical rounds. Opposition for this plan, in this author's opinion, is from both the chaplains and the physicians. From the chaplains, there are simply not enough of them to go around to all the teams. From the physicians, the chaplains' opinion may not be regarded as immediately relevant to patient management. The presence of the chaplain would be one more voice that would slow down the already arduous task of patient care.

Yet, the 'congregation' for a thoughtful chaplain includes the staff as well as the patients. If one compares a hospital to a church, the steady 'members' are the regular staff and the 'visitors' are the patients. A chaplain presence integrated into the medical team serves the patient as well as providing support and care for the staff. While the one-on-one bedside interactions are the bed-rock of the chaplaincy, as the healthcare system becomes more team-oriented, the chaplain must play a proper part in the healthcare team.

Burnout, job stress, compassion fatigue are pejorative terms. However, the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction is complex. In Doolittle's (2007) study of 358 United Methodist clergy spirituality was positively correlated with greater emotional exhaustion ($r = .40, p < .001$) and greater depersonalization ($r = .50, p < .001$). This study echoes Turton and Francis's (2007) study revealing that an active prayer life has a mitigating effect on burnout. This association is not shared among physicians. For example, a study of burnout among hospital-based physicians showed that burnout correlated with lower professional esteem, intellectual stimulation, and poorer relationships with staff, patients, and family (Ramirez, Graham, Richards, Cull, & Gregory, 1996). A study among other healthcare staff, of whom most (56%) were nurses, also showed a correlation between greater emotional exhaustion and lower personal accomplishment (Piko, 2006). Exploring differences between clergy and healthcare providers may shed light on the distinctive features of issues surrounding chaplaincy work-related health. For example, do clergy have a particular sense that pouring themselves into their vocation in a way that increases their emotional exhaustion correlates with greater personal accomplishment?

In a systematic review, Weaver et al. (2002, p. 401–403) make several recommendations to address job stress among chaplains.

1. Theological students need to gain self-awareness and understanding of the issues that arise in ministry, particularly in terms of interpersonal dynamics. All persons seeking ordination would benefit from Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).
2. Experts in psychological assessment should be used by religious bodies to screen persons who are seeking ordination for potential problems.
3. Once a clergyperson is serving in ordained ministry, arrangements should be made to provide professional consultations or supervision for all those who do pastoral counselling.
4. Research indicates that there is great need for clergy to have continuing education in pastoral counselling.
5. Researchers emphasize the importance of adequate self-care, including making a priority of their own spiritual health.
6. Clergy families may be affected by the pressures placed upon them, and many need pastoral counselling and other forms of interpersonal support.
7. Leadership can be provided at the denominational and/or regional levels to address the problem of clergy sexual misconduct.
8. It is vital that pastors know the limits of their expertise and then be able and willing to refer to other professionals.
9. Quality research must continue to be conducted on pastors, their families, and clergy morale.

Similarly, in an important review about overall pastoral care in hospitals, Proserpio et al. (2011) made several recommendations to improve the role of chaplains. They suggest improved relationships and collaboration between chaplains and the hospital organization, a greater focus on a scientific approach and patient care outcomes, the design of protocols for important ethical issues, respect for different faiths and cultures, greater involvement in multidisciplinary patient care teams, stronger integration with public health operators and cooperation with the psychosocial professions, specific training on pastoral care and professional certification of chaplains, and the development of shared ethical codes for the profession. The further integration of the chaplain in the healthcare team shows promise to provide the mutual support needed to ameliorate job stress.

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Dimensions of Personality and Preferred Ways of Coping: An Empirical Enquiry among Rural Anglican Clergy

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Abstract

The present study was designed to test the thesis that preferred ways of coping assessed by the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist are related to two major dimensions of personality proposed by Eysenck, extraversion and neuroticism. Data provided by 613 Anglican clergy serving in rural ministry in England demonstrated that: two ways of coping were significantly correlated with both extraversion and neuroticism (escape-avoidance, and self-controlling); two ways of coping were significantly correlated with neuroticism (accepting responsibility, and confronting); three ways of coping were significantly correlated with extraversion (planful problem solving, seeking social support, and positive reappraisal); and one way of coping was independent of both neuroticism and extraversion (distancing). The implications of these findings are discussed for three fields: the connection between personality and ways of coping; the construct validity of the measures proposed by the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist; and the role of personality in predicting and interpreting individual differences in clergy behaviours and work-related psychological health.

Keywords

clergy – coping – personality – Psychology – rural

A series of recent studies has drawn attention to the strains and stresses of clergy serving in rural ministry and managing multiple churches in areas of

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low population density (see Brewster, 2007), leading to poor work-related psychological health (see Francis & Rutledge, 2000). In particular two strands of research have begun to document the connections between poor work-related psychological health and individual differences in personality (see Francis, Gubb, & Robbins, 2012) and the range of coping strategies employed by clergy in this context (Brewster, 2012). As yet attention has not been given to the equally interesting and important question concerning the potential link between individual differences in personality and preferred coping strategies. The present paper sets out to explore this research question drawing specifically on the eight coping strategies proposed by the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985), the three dimensions of personality proposed by the short-form of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (Eysenck, Eysenck, & Barrett, 1985), and the hypotheses advanced by Rim (1986) specifically connecting the eight ways of coping with two of the Eysenckian dimensions of personality, neuroticism and extraversion.

Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist

The Ways of Coping Checklist (WOC), a theoretically-derived instrument published by Folkman and Lazarus (1980), was developed by members of the Berkeley Stress and Coping Project during 1976 and 1977, to provide researchers with a tool whereby the role of coping in the relationship between stress and adaptational outcomes could be examined. It is an instrument which measures the coping processes that influence people's psychological wellbeing, social functioning and somatic health. The Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist (WOC, Revised), published by Folkman and Lazarus (1985), built on this earlier instrument to measure the thoughts and actions that people use to cope with stressful encounters in their day-to-day lives, and it was designed to measure coping processes, rather than coping dispositions or styles.

Coping has traditionally been defined as relatively stable traits, or as some form of enduring behaviour style or characteristic shown by an individual, which disposes him or her to react to stress in certain ways (Stone, Greenberg, Kennedy-Moore, & Newman, 1991). Lazarus (1991), however, suggests that this dispositional approach to coping is inadequate because it is static, and it underestimates both the complexity and the variability of the ways in which people actually cope. It also tends to ignore the environmental context in which coping behaviour takes place, and it does not take into account the dynamic, process-orientated nature which Lazarus (1991) believes is central to the concept of coping.

The concept of 'management' is of importance in the coping process because it indicates that coping efforts can be very varied and that they do not necessarily lead to a solution of the problem. Coping efforts are indeed often aimed at 'mastering' or 'correcting' a problem, but in practice they frequently cause an individual to alter his or her perception of a discrepancy, to tolerate or accept the harm or threat, or to avoid the situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Moos & Schaefer, 1986).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) distinguished between two kinds of coping: emotion-focused coping and problem-focused coping. Emotion-focused coping is aimed at controlling and regulating a person's emotional response to a stressful situation by means of behavioural and cognitive approaches. Examples of behavioural approaches are the use of alcohol or drugs, the seeking of emotional support from family or friends, and the distraction of one's attention away from a problem by engaging in activities such as music, sport or watching films. Cognitive approaches to the regulation of emotional responses involve people's thoughts concerning stressful situations. People tend to use emotion-focused approaches to coping when they realize that there is nothing they can do to change the stressful conditions (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Examples of problem-focused coping, which is aimed at reducing the demands of a stressful situation, include resigning from a stressful job, arranging a new deadline for the payment of a bill, seeking medical advice, and acquiring new skills in order to deal with taxing situations. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) maintain that people tend to use problem-focused approaches to coping whenever they perceive that their resources or the demands of a situation are changeable. Moskowitz, Folkman, Collette, & Vittinghoff (1996) point out that carers of terminally ill patients are likely to use more problem-focused coping in the months before death than during the bereavement period, and Billings and Moos (1981) found that people with higher incomes and educational levels reported a greater use of problem-focused coping than did those whose income and education levels were lower.

The eight empirically-designed scales presented in the WOC (Revised) are described by Folkman and Lazarus (1988b, p. 11) as:

1. 'confronting coping' (problem-focused), which describes 'aggressive efforts to alter the situation and suggests some degree of hostility and risk-taking';
2. 'planful problem solving' (problem-focused), which describes 'deliberate problem-focused efforts to alter the situation, coupled with an analytic approach to solving the problem';
3. 'distancing' (emotion-focused), which describes 'cognitive efforts to detach oneself and to minimize the significance of the situation';

4. 'self-controlling' (emotion-focused), which describes 'efforts to regulate one's feelings and actions';
5. 'accepting responsibility' (emotion-focused), which 'acknowledges one's own role in the problem with a concomitant theme of trying to put things right';
6. 'escape-avoidance' (emotion-focused), which 'describes wishful thinking and behavioural efforts to escape or avoid the problem. Items on this scale contrast with those on the Distancing scale, which suggest detachment';
7. 'positive reappraisal' (emotion-focused), which 'describes efforts to create positive meaning by focusing on personal growth. It also has a religious dimension';
8. 'seeking social support' (either problem-focused or emotion-focused), which 'describes efforts to seek informational support, tangible support, and emotional support'.

The Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist has been employed by a number of clinical studies conducted among adults in a variety of cultural contexts, including: *Australia* among 232 females with gambling addictions (Scannell, Quirk, Smith, Maddern, & Dickerson, 2000); *Canada* among 95 self-defined trauma survivors (Goldenberg & Matheson, 2005); *China* among 388 adults experiencing stress following the SARS crisis (Wang, Xie, Sun, Chen, & Chen, 2004); *England* among 66 women with a diagnosed eating disorder (Troop, Holbrey, Trowler, & Treasure, 1994) and among 74 brain-injured patients (Malia, Powell, & Torode, 1995); *France* among 642 cancer patients (Cousson-Gélie, Cosneyfroy, Christophe, Segrestan-Crouzet & Merckaert, 2010); *Korea* among 30 adults with diagnosed gastrointestinal illnesses (Lee et al., 2000); *New Zealand* among 158 care-givers of dementia patients (Dulin & Dominy, 2008); *Taiwan* among patients recovering from major heart surgery (Tung, Hunter, & Wei, 2008); and *the USA* among 119 twins with chronic fatigue disorder (Afari, Schmalig, Herrell, Hartman, & Goldberg, 2000), 41 wife and daughter care-givers (Wilcox, O'Sullivan, & King, 2001), 44 adults with Parkinson's disease (Sanders-Dewey, Mullins, & Chaney, 2001), 63 young adults with acute stress exposure condition (Germain, Buysse, Ombao, Kupfer, & Hall, 2003), 24 adults with diagnosed panic disorders (Nazemi & Dager, 2003), 92 patients with confirmed diagnosis of systematic sclerosis (Hansdottir, Malcarne, Furst, Weisman, & Clements, 2004), 82 pregnant women following perinatal loss (Côté-Arsenault, 2007), and 100 female victims of domestic violence (Lee, Pomeroy, & Bohman, 2007).

Several studies have also employed the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist in non-clinical contexts conducted among: *school children* in Israel (Hallis &

Slone, 1999), and in the US (Kelly & Myers, 1996; Duongtran, 2011; Cumming, Smith, Grossbard, Smoll, & Malina, 2012): *undergraduate students* in China (Fang, Fang, Li, & Lin, 2009) and the USA (Stevens, Pfof, & Wessels, 1987; Mitchell & Kampfe, 1993; Kampfe, Mitchell, Boyless, & Sauers, 1995; Whatley, Foreman, & Richards, 1998; Shorey, Febres, Brasfield, & Stuart, 2012); and *adults* in Australia (Evans, Coman, Stanley, & Burrows, 1993), Canada (McDonald & Korabik, 1991), Japan (Nakano, 1991), and the USA (Barreto & Frazier, 2012).

The WOC (Revised) has been selected for use in the present study because it has been widely used in the work-situation, and it serves the important purpose of distinguishing between those rural clergy whose coping is action-centred in the sense that attempts are made to change a troubled person-environment relationship (problem-solving) and those whose coping includes mainly cognitive strategies which “do not directly change the actual situation, but rather help to assign a new meaning to it” (Schwarzer & Schwarzer, 1996).

Ways of Coping among Clergy

As far as we are aware, only two published studies have reported on the Ways of Coping instrument employed among clergy. In the first of these two studies, Dudley and Dudley (1994) explored the relationships between sources of stress, methods of coping with stress, spiritual wellbeing and commitment to the ministry and the mission of the church among U.S. seminary students and their spouses. They found that the coping methods of positive reappraisal, problem-solving and seeking social support are significantly related (for either students or spouses, or for both) to all five of the measures of wellbeing and commitment which were used in the survey (religious wellbeing, existential wellbeing, commitment to ministry, stronger commitment to ministry than before entering seminary and stronger commitment to mission of the church today than before entering seminary), except for problem-solving with stronger commitment to mission of church today than before entering seminary. Dudley and Dudley note that the “evidence for positive reappraisal is especially strong with significant relationships with each of the five variables for both students and spouses” (p. 51).

In addition, they found that the escape-avoidance coping strategy was negatively associated with all five measures of wellbeing and commitment. Distancing was also found to be negatively related to ministry for the students, and confronting coping was shown to be positively correlated with religious wellbeing and students’ commitment to ministry. Positive reappraisal was found to be the best predictor of religious wellbeing, and the second most

powerful strategy for the existential wellbeing of the students. Escape-avoidance was found to be a negative factor for the existential wellbeing of the students, and problem-solving and the seeking of social support were shown to be predictors of neither religious nor existential wellbeing. The most powerful predictor for all three commitment variables was found to be positive reappraisal for the students.

Dudley and Dudley conclude that effective methods of coping with stressful situations "make the difference between those who are spiritually strong and committed and those who are less so" (p. 54), and they suggest that an important key to the survival of the stresses of seminary life might well be learning how to carry out effective coping strategies, especially those of positive reappraisal and problem-solving.

In the second of these two studies, Brewster (2012) used the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985) in a study among rural Anglican clergy serving at least three churches in England. The purpose of the Brewster (2012) study was to report how frequently each of the coping strategies in the checklist was used by rural clergy. The most frequently used coping strategies were found to be 'self-controlling', 'seeking social support', 'planful problem solving', and 'positive reappraisal'; and the strategies of 'confronting coping', 'accepting responsibility' and 'escape-avoidance' were found to be used less frequently, an outcome which supports the findings of Dudley and Dudley (1994).

The data provided by Dudley and Dudley (1994) and by Brewster (2012) clearly demonstrate that there are considerable variations among the preferred ways of coping implemented by clergy. The question thus arises regarding the extent to which these variations may be attributed to internal factors related to personality differences; and Eysenck's dimensional model of personality (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1991) provides a suitable conceptual framework within which this question can be refined and explored.

Dimensions of Personality

Eysenck's classic dimensional model of personality has its roots in two main principles, one theoretical and one empirical. The theoretical principle is committed to the view that psychological disorders are continuous with normal personality rather than categorically distinct from normal personality. For this reason it makes sense to employ language borrowed from abnormal psychology to define aspects of normal psychology. This view argues that individual differences in personality can be located on defined continua. One individual

differs from another in respect of their locations on these defined continua. The empirical principle is committed to the view that the structure of human personality (in terms of the number and definition of the major personality constructs) can be determined by mathematical modelling of the wide range of individual differences in human behaviour. Higher order factor analysis is employed to identify a small number of orthogonal personality dimensions, in which each dimension may embrace a number of lower order personality traits (see Eysenck & Eysenck, 1985).

Following the early developments of the Maudsley Medical Questionnaire (Eysenck, 1952) and the Maudsley Personality Inventory (Eysenck, 1959), Eysenck's theory became consolidated in the Eysenck Personality Inventory (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1964), settling on the two major dimensions of extraversion and neuroticism. Subsequent detailed exploration, as documented by Eysenck and Eysenck (1976), resulted in the introduction of another dimension of personality in the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975), settling on the three major dimensions of extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism. The psychoticism scale was developed further in the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (Eysenck et al., 1985) and in the Eysenck Personality Scales (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1991). From the time of the Eysenck Personality Inventory onwards, the Eysenckian family of instruments has also included a lie scale. The definitions below of these four scales (extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism, and the lie scale) will be drawn from the *Manual of Eysenck Personality Scales* (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1991).

The extraversion scale assesses the continuum from introversion (low scores), through ambiversion, to extraversion (high scores). Eysenck and Eysenck (1991, p. 4) describe typical *introverts* as quiet, retiring, introspective, reserved and distant except to close friends. Introverts prefer books rather than people. They tend to plan ahead, to distrust impulse, and to be cautious. Introverts do not like excitement, prefer a well-ordered way of life, and approach matters of everyday life with proper seriousness. They tend to keep their feelings under control, avoid aggressive behaviour, and do not lose their temper easily. Introverts are reliable, somewhat pessimistic, and place great value on ethical standards. By way of contrast, typical *extraverts* are described as sociable and talkative, people who like parties, have many friends, and dislike reading or studying by themselves. Extraverts crave excitement, take chances, and are generally impulsive. They are fond of practical jokes, welcome change, and tend to be carefree and easy-going. Extraverts prefer to keep active, on the move and doing things. They tend not to keep their feelings under control, to be aggressive and to lose their temper easily. Extraverts tend to be optimistic, but may not always prove to be reliable.

The neuroticism scale assesses the continuum from emotional stability (low scores), through emotional instability, to incipient neurotic disorders (high scores). Eysenck and Eysenck (1991, pp. 4–5) describe higher scorers on the neuroticism scale as anxious, worrying, moody, and frequently depressed. They are likely to sleep badly and to suffer from various psychosomatic disorders. They are overly emotional, react strongly to things, and find it difficult to restore equilibrium after emotionally arousing experiences. Such strong emotional reactions interfere with their proper adjustment, making them react in irrational and sometimes rigid ways. There is a constant preoccupation with things that may go wrong, and a strong emotional reaction of anxiety to those thoughts. Low scorers on the neuroticism scale, by way of contrast, are usually calm, even-tempered, controlled and unworried. They tend to respond emotionally only slowly and generally weakly, and to regain equilibrium quickly.

The psychoticism scale assessed the continuum from tendermindedness (low scores), through toughmindedness, to incipient psychotic disorders (high scores). Eysenck and Eysenck (1991, pp. 5–6) describe high scorers on the psychoticism scale as being solitary, not caring for people, often troublesome, and not fitting in anywhere. They may be cruel and inhumane, lacking in feeling and empathy, and altogether insensitive. They may be hostile to others, and aggressive. They have a liking for odd and unusual things, and a disregard for danger. They like to make fools of other people, and to upset them. Low scorers on the psychoticism scale, by way of contrast reflect the opposite of these characteristics.

The lie scale was originally incorporated into the Eysenckian family of personality measures to assess a tendency on the part of some people to 'fake good' their responses. Eysenck and Eysenck (1991, pp. 13–14) affirm the continuing usefulness of the lie scale in this regard, but also acknowledge that the lie scale also measures some "stable personality factors which may possibly denote some degree of social naivety or conformity" (p. 13).

Personality and Ways of Coping

In a study published in the mid 1980s, Rim (1986) hypothesized a clear linkage between preferred ways of coping and two of the Eysenckian three major dimensions of personality: neuroticism and extraversion.

Due to the emotional context we would expect those who are emotionally stable to use different coping styles than those emotionally unstable. Similarly we would expect extraverts to prefer coping styles different from those preferred by introverts. (p. 113)

Employing the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975) alongside the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist (Folkman and Lazarus, 1985), Rim (1986) tested these hypotheses among samples of 80 women and 94 men (described as students, as parents and relatives of students, and as friends of students' families). The data were analyzed for women and for men separately and provided some support for the hypotheses. The question has not, however, been given much attention subsequently (Seiffer, Clare, & Harvey, 2005).

Rim's (1986) hypotheses remain, however, worthy of further investigation and may be of particular relevance in understanding individual differences in coping strategies employed by clergy. Such investigation fits well within a wider programme of research concerned with exploring the role of personality in predicting stress, burnout and poor work-related psychological health within the clerical profession (see Francis et al., 2012). The aim of the present study, therefore, is to re-visit the data collected by Brewster (2007) among Church of England clergy in order to examine the connection between two dimensions of personality (extraversion and neuroticism) and the eight ways of coping assessed by the Ways of Coping (Revised) checklist (confronting, distancing, self-controlling, accepting responsibility, seeking social support, escape-avoidance, playful problem solving, and positive reappraisal).

Method

Procedure

The present study draws on data collected by Brewster (2007) from Church of England clergy responsible for serving rural churches. The response rate of 47% generated 722 completed questionnaires. The present analyses are based on a subset of 613 respondents to the survey who were responsible for a least three rural churches.

Participants

Three quarters (75%) of the clergy were male while one quarter (25%) was female. A small number (4%) were in their thirties, 22% were in their forties, 41% were in their fifties, 31% were in their sixties, and 1% was aged seventy or over. Over half of the clergy (54%) had been in their present positions for at least five years, while 7% had been in their current roles for 15 years or more. The majority of the clergy (85%) were married, while 7% were single, 3% were widowed and 4% were separated or divorced. Over one third of the clergy (37%) served three churches, while those caring for four or five churches totalled 42%, and one fifth (20%) of the sample cared for six or more churches.

Measures

The Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist developed by Folkman and Lazarus (1985) proposes eight scales to assess different ways of coping, styled: confronting (six items), distancing (six items), self-controlling (seven items), accepting responsibility (four items), seeking social support (six items), escape-avoidance (eight items), planful problem solving (six items), and positive reappraisal (seven items). Each item is rated on a four-point scale designed to indicate whether a coping method is used: a great deal, quite a bit, somewhat, or does not apply. Higher scores indicate greater use of coping methods. The participants were invited to make their assessment of the individual items in light of the following instruction: "Please read each item below and indicate by circling 0, 1, 2 or 3 to what extent you used it in the most stressful situation you have experienced in the past week".

The Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (short form) developed by Eysenck et al. (1985) proposes three 12-item scales to assess extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism, together with a 12-item lie scale. Each item is rated on a two-point scale: yes and no. Higher scores indicate greater tendencies toward extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism and faking good.

Analysis

The data were analyzed by SPSS, drawing on the frequencies, reliability, correlation and partial correlation routines.

Results

The first step in data analysis explored the scale properties of the eight indices proposed by the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist and the four indices proposed by the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (short-form). Table 1 presents the alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951), mean scale score and standard deviation for each scale, together with the number of items used to construct the scale. These data show that for three of the ways of coping scales (confronting, distancing, and planful problem solving) the alpha coefficient falls slightly below the threshold of .65 recommended by DeVellis (2003). This is consistent with the assertion made by Folkman and Lazarus (1988b, p. 16) that the internal consistency reliability of coping measures usually falls at the lower end of the accepted range. These data also show that the alpha coefficient falls below this threshold for the psychoticism scale. This is consistent with the known difficulties in operationalizing the third dimension of personality (Francis, Brown & Philipchalk, 1992).

TABLE 1 *Personality and ways of coping: scale properties*

Scales	Alpha	N items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Confronting	.59	6	4.67	3.02
Distancing	.59	6	4.18	2.88
Self-controlling	.65	7	9.31	3.94
Seeking social support	.76	6	7.98	4.24
Accepting responsibility	.65	4	2.98	2.64
Escape-avoidance	.66	8	4.09	3.82
Planful problem solving	.63	6	8.19	3.50
Positive reappraisal	.80	7	7.77	4.45
Extraversion	.87	12	6.54	3.64
Neuroticism	.83	12	4.85	3.28
Psychoticism	.62	12	2.27	1.86
Lie Scale	.72	12	4.19	2.62

The second step in data analysis explored the correlations and partial correlations (controlling for sex differences) between the eight indices proposed by the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist and the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (short form). In view of the number of correlations being tested simultaneously, only those correlations reaching the one percent level of probability will be interpreted as statistically significant. These data (Table 2) show that controlling for sex differences makes no real impact on the findings, that neither psychoticism scores nor lie scale scores are significantly correlated with preferred ways of coping, and that both extraversion scores and neuroticism scores are correlated (at a level of statistical significance) with preferred ways of coping.

Discussion

The present study set out to examine the extent to which the preferred ways of coping implemented by clergy were shaped by fundamental aspects of personality. Employing Eysenck's three dimensional model of personality, it was hypothesized that the two dimensions of extraversion and neuroticism would be significantly related to individual differences in preferred ways of coping. These hypotheses were supported by data provided by 613 Anglican clergy. The role of neuroticism and the role of extraversion in shaping preferred ways of coping will be discussed in turn.

TABLE 2 *Ways of coping and the EPQR-S: correlations and partial correlations*

Ways of coping	Correlations				Partial correlations			
	E	N	P	L	E	N	P	L
Confronting	.04	.13***	.09*	-.01	.03	.14***	.09*	.00
Distancing	-.05	.07	.02	.08	-.05	.07	.02	-.08
Self-controlling	-.10**	.11**	.00	.06	-.10**	.12**	.02	-.04
Seeking social support	.13***	.01	.04	.01	.12**	.03	.05	-.01
Accepting responsibility	-.03	.21***	-.02	.00	-.04	.22***	-.01	.01
Escape-avoidance	-.11**	.32***	.03	.02	-.12**	.32***	.05	.03
Planful problem solving	.15***	-.10*	.04	.02	.15***	-.09*	.04	.01
Positive reappraisal	.11**	.09*	.04	.03	.10*	-.08	.07	.01

Note: E = Extraversion Scale; N = Neuroticism Scale; P = Psychoticism Scale; L = Lie Scale.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

According to Eysenck's theory, neuroticism involves anxiety and emotional arousal (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1991). The data from the present study demonstrate that clergy recording high scores on the neuroticism scale are more inclined than clergy recording low scores on the neuroticism scale to implement four of the eight identified ways of coping, namely (in the order of the magnitude of the correlation coefficients): escape-avoidance ($r = .32$), accepting responsibility ($r = .21$), confronting ($r = .13$), and self-controlling ($r = .11$). Each of these four ways of coping will be reviewed in turn in connection with neuroticism.

Escape-avoidance is an emotion-focused coping strategy which involves wishful thinking about the situation, or taking action to escape or avoid it, (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988b). The eight items in this scale, together with the proportion of clergy endorsing these items reported by Brewster (2012), are as follows: wished that the situation would go away or somehow be over with (36%); hoped a miracle would happen (23%); realized I brought the problem on myself (17%); avoided being with people in general (11%); tried to make myself feel better by eating, drinking, smoking, using drugs or medication, etc. (10%); slept more than usual (8%); took it out on other people (6%); and refused to believe that it had happened (2%). It is actions like these that are associated with higher levels of neuroticism, anxiety and emotional arousal.

Accepting responsibility is an emotion-focused coping strategy which involves acknowledging one's own role in the problem while also trying to put things right (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988b). The four items of the scale, together with the proportion of clergy endorsing these items reported by Brewster (2012), are as follows: criticized or lectured myself (29%); apologized or did something to make up (25%); realized I brought the problem on myself (17%); and made a promise to myself that things would be different next time (16%). The correlation between actions like these and neuroticism, anxiety, and emotional arousal suggest that the coping strategy being accessed by this scale may be less concerned with a positive acceptance of responsibility and more concerned with a negative self-recrimination.

Confronting is problem-focused coping strategy which involves taking assertive action which may involve risk-taking or anger in an attempt to change the situation (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988b). The six items of this scale, together with the proportion of clergy endorsing these items reported by Brewster (2012), are as follows: tried to get the person responsible to change his or her mind (39%); let my feelings out somehow (37%); stood my ground and fought for what I wanted (31%); expressed anger to the person(s) who caused the problem (12%); did something which I didn't think would work, but at least I was doing something (12%); and took a big chance or did something very risky (9%). It is actions like these that are associated with higher levels of neuroticism, anxiety, and emotional arousal.

Self-controlling is an emotion-focused coping strategy which involves attempts to moderate one's own feelings and actions in relation to the problem (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988b). The seven items of this scale, together with the proportion of clergy endorsing these items reported by Brewster (2012), are as follows: went over in my mind what I would say or do (66%); tried to keep my feelings from interfering with other things too much (60%); tried not to burn my bridges, but leave things open somewhat (59%); tried not to act too hastily or follow my first hunches (46%); tried to keep my feelings to myself (40%); kept others from knowing how bad things were (27%); and thought about how a person I admire would handle this situation and used that as a model (19%). It is actions like these that are associated with higher levels of anxiety and with distrust of self.

According to Eysenck's theory, extraversion involves sociability and impulsivity (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1991). The data from the present study demonstrate that clergy recording high scores on the extraversion scale are more inclined than clergy recording low scores on the extraversion scale to implement three of the eight identified ways of coping (in the order of the magnitude of the correlation coefficients): planful problem solving ($r = .15$), seeking social

support ($r = .13$), and positive reappraisal ($r = .11$). At the same time clergy recording high scores on the extraversion scale are less likely to implement two of the eight identified ways of coping, namely: escape-avoidance ($r = -.11$), and self-controlling ($r = -.10$). Each of these five ways of coping will be reviewed in turn in connection with extraversion.

Planful problem solving is a problem-focused coping strategy which involves attempts to analyze the situation in order to arrive at solutions before taking direct action to correct the problem (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988b). The six items of this scale, together with the proportion of clergy endorsing these items reported by Brewster (2012), are as follows: just concentrated on what I had to do next – the next steps (73%); made a plan of action and followed it (54%); drew on my past experiences – I was in a similar situation before (49%); knew what had to be done so I doubled my efforts to make things work (46%); came up with a couple of different solutions to the problem (32%); and changed something so that things would turn out all right (28%). An aspect of extraversion concerns comfortable engagement with the outer world rather than contemplative engagement with the inner world. These actions are consistent with the extravert's intentions to get on with things in the outer world.

Seeking social support can be either problem-focused (which involves efforts to acquire information), or emotion-focused, which involves efforts to acquire emotional support from friends or family (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988b). The six items of this scale, together with the proportion of clergy endorsing these items reported by Brewster (2012), are as follows: talked to someone to find out more about the situation (68%); talked to someone about how I was feeling (52%); asked a relative or friend I respected for advice (48%); accepted sympathy or understanding from someone (45%); talked to someone who could do something concrete about the problem (42%), and got professional help (21%). The social aspect of extraversion equips individuals for many forms of social engagement. These actions are consistent with the extravert's willingness to talk with others at times when introverts prefer to remain reticent.

Positive reappraisal is an emotion-focused coping strategy which involves trying to create a positive meaning from a problematic situation in terms of personal growth, sometimes with a religious tone (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988b). The seven items of this scale, together with the proportion of clergy endorsing these items reported by Brewster (2012) are as follows: I prayed (71%); I was inspired to do something creative (46%); I came out of the experience better than I went in (38%); I changed or grew as a person in a good way (33%); I rediscovered what is important in life (28%); I changed something about myself (17%); I found new faith (15%). An aspect of extraversion concerns hopeful optimism and a positive view of and engagement with life. These

actions are consistent with the extravert's intention to look on the bright side and to strive for the better outcome.

The two coping strategies associated negatively with extraversion (*escape-avoidance* and *self-controlling*) were also associated positively with neuroticism, and have consequently already been introduced in this section. In terms of escape-avoidance, two aspects of this construct in particular may have captured the attention of introverts: under pressure introverts may avoid being with people in general; under pressure introverts may prefer to escape from the challenges of the outer world and to retreat into the comparative safety of the inner world. In terms of self-controlling, three aspects of this construct in particular may have captured the attention of introverts: introverts are cautious and prefer to avoid impulsive action; introverts prefer to keep things to themselves; and introverts rehearse things in their mind before testing them in the outer world.

Conclusion

The findings from the present study have implications for three areas of enquiry, concerning: the connection between personality and preferred ways of coping; the construct validity of the constructs advanced by the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist; and the centrality of individual differences in personality in shaping the preferences and practices of clergy. Each of these three areas will be discussed in turn.

The connection between personality and preferred ways of coping was raised in the pioneering study by Dudley and Dudley (1994). The present study confirms that seven of the eight indices of ways of coping proposed by the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist are significantly correlated with at least one of two of the major dimensions of personality proposed by Eysenck: extraversion and neuroticism. Three ways of coping are significantly correlated with just extraversion: planful problem solving, seeking social support, and positive reappraisal. Two ways of coping are significantly correlated with both extraversion and neuroticism: escape-avoidance, and self-controlling. Two ways of coping are significantly correlated with just neuroticism: accepting responsibility, and confronting. The only way of coping independent of both extraversion and neuroticism is distancing. Such findings are sufficient to make a sound case for taking individual differences in personality into account in predicting and explaining preferences for coping strategies.

The theoretical constructs advanced to give an account of the different ways of coping accessed by the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist are anchored

empirically within small sets of items concerned with a variety of coping behaviours. The extent to which these theoretical constructs map onto the empirical behaviour of the indices is the concern of construct validity. By attempting to locate the eight measures proposed by the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist within the psychological space proposed by Eysenck's dimensional model of personality, the present study offers insight into the behaviour of these eight constructs. While most of the eight constructs behave in ways that make good sense in relationship to the model of personality, one of the theoretical constructs regarding the ways of coping may require some adjustment. The significant positive correlation between neuroticism scores and the construct termed *accepting responsibility* suggests that this construct may be better styled *self-recrimination*.

Specifically within the field of clergy studies, these data add to a growing body of evidence suggesting that personality differences play a significant role in shaping the preferences and practices of clergy. Within that context a series of studies has demonstrated the connection between personality and clergy work-related psychological health, stress, burnout and satisfaction in ministry (for a recent review see Francis et al., 2012). The present study adds to this growing body of evidence by suggesting that personality differences not only shape the overall way in which clergy experience the challenges and opportunities of their ministry but also shape their preferred ways of coping with the challenges and problems encountered in ministry.

The present study has broken new ground by examining the connection between personality and preferred ways of coping among clergy using the Ways of Coping (Revised) Checklist, rather than drawing on theories and measures concerned specifically with religious ways of coping (see Pargament, 1997). A strength of the study is that it has built on a strong database of a well-defined group of over 600 clergy serving in rural ministry in the Church of England. A consequent weakness of the study is that it remains properly restricted to this one group of clergy. Replication studies are now needed to extend this research among other groups of clergy.

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The Burdens of Rural Ministry: Identifying and Exploring the Correlates of Five Causes of Stress among Rural Anglican Clergy Serving in Multi-Parish Benefices

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Abstract

The aim of the present study was to employ factor analysis to clarify and to distinguish between the main sources of stress experienced by rural Anglican clergy serving in multi-parish benefices. Data that were provided by 613 clergy (151 women and 462 men) who rated 84 potential sources of stress generated five distinct factors best characterized as the burden of administration, the burden of presence, the burden of isolation, the burden of distance, and the burden of visibility. Personality and age were stronger predictors of the levels of stress caused by these burdens than were sex, contextual factors or theological factors. Of these five burdens, the most damaging to the overall work-related psychological health of rural clergy was the burden of isolation and the least damaging was the burden of distance. It is argued that clearer knowledge about the differential effects of different sources of stress on the work-related psychological health of rural clergy may lead to more targeted and more effective intervention.

Keywords

Burnout – clergy – England – rural – stress

Rural ministry in the Church of England has undergone considerable change from the 1950s onwards. The general process of secularization, the decline in

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vocations to full-time ordained ministry, and financial constraints have all led to the need to amalgamate rural parishes into multi-church benefices. The effects of these changes were chronicled in the mid-1980s by Francis (1985) in *Rural Anglicanism* in terms of the implications for rural churches, rural congregations, rural communities, and rural clergy. The effects have become even more profound three decades on.

From the mid-1980s onwards, commentators on rural ministry in the Church of England have speculated about the additional pressures that may impact the experiences of clergy working in rural environments. For example, the Archbishops' Commission on Rural Areas (1990) described how life in a country parish may restrict employment opportunities for clergy spouses, may generate demands from growing children to be transported to school and leisure activities, and may incur the need to finance a second car. In their respective studies of rural ministry, Russell (1993) and Bowden (1994) pointed to the additional pressures that come from responsibilities for multi-parish benefices. Work in a country benefice may involve a weight of administration relating to each parish. Each community supports a church building and faces recurrent financial pressures. The Sunday pattern of services involves moving from church to church, often for small congregations. Each rural community has its own expectations of the parish priest, often supported by a recent history of being a sole cure. Work with children, youth and young families is often accompanied by a sense of failure. Many rural clergy feel that those who run the diocese do not appreciate how different and demanding the rural job really is.

Little systematic research, however, has been undertaken to explore the experiences of rural clergy themselves and test the extent to which such perceived pressures are impacting their work-related psychological health. Drawing on data collected during the second half of the 1990s and employing the model of work-related psychological health prepared by the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986), Francis and Rutledge (2000) set out to test the hypothesis that clergy serving in rural ministry were more susceptible to professional burnout than clergy serving in other geographical areas. The Church Commissioners kindly generated a 15 percent random sample from their database of full-time stipendiary male parochial clergy. From this database 1,476 questionnaires were mailed, and a total of 1,071 thoroughly completed questionnaires were returned, making a response rate of 73%. The questionnaire included, alongside the Maslach Burnout Inventory, information about age, marital status, years in present parish, number of churches in the benefice, the rurality of the benefice, and the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975) to assess extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism. Multiple regression was employed to control for personal factors,

for contextual factors and for psychological factors before assessing the impact of rurality on the three measures of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. The statistical analyses demonstrated that rural clergy have a lower sense of personal accomplishment than comparable clergy working in other geographical areas, but that they experience neither higher levels of emotional exhaustion nor higher levels of depersonalization.

The study by Francis and Rutledge (2000), conducted in England during the 1990s posed the research question, 'Are rural clergy in the Church of England under greater stress?' A similar question was posed by Miles and Proeschold-Bell (2012) among United Methodist clergy in the USA, asking, 'Are rural clergy worse off?' Their initial analyses, prior to taking control variables into account, found two somewhat contradictory trends. On the one hand, rural clergy reported higher levels of a number of stressors, including more frequent participation in multi-church ministry, less frequently taking a day off each week, and lower salaries. On the other hand, rural clergy reported lower rates of congregational conflict, lower rates of negative interaction with church members, higher levels of social support, lower levels of loneliness, and lower levels of stress from organizational challenges. Miles and Proeschold-Bell concluded from these findings that "while rural clergy experience higher levels of some stressors, overall they have *better* experiences than non-rural clergy" (p. 39).

In the second stage of their analyses, Miles and Proeschold-Bell (2012) controlled for demographic characteristics, bi-vocational status, and congregation size and found then that the difference between rural clergy and non-rural clergy almost entirely disappeared. On this basis they concluded that "observed differences are predominantly *not* due to features unique to rural ministry" (p. 39) and that "rural ministry *per se* is neither particularly harmful nor beneficial when compared with ministry in other settings" (p. 23).

A series of recent studies led by Christine Brewster has set out to document and to analyze in greater detail and depth the work-related psychological health and work-related stress of rural clergy. In a first study, Brewster, Francis, and Robbins (2011) employed the model of work-related psychological health proposed by Francis, Kaldor, Robbins, and Castle (2005) and operationalized through the Francis Burnout Inventory. This model draws on the classic notion of balanced affect rehearsed by Bradburn (1969) and argues that professional burnout is the consequence of high levels of negative affect in the absence of high levels of positive affect. The Francis Burnout Inventory measures negative affect through the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry and positive affect through the Satisfaction in Ministry Scale.

Drawing on data provided by 521 Anglican clergy serving in rural benefices of at least three churches, Brewster et al. (2011) found that rural clergy reported

both high levels of emotional exhaustion in ministry and high levels of satisfaction in ministry. For example, item endorsements for the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry revealed that exactly half (50%) of the rural clergy in the survey felt drained by fulfilling their ministry roles, and just under half of these clergy (48%) found themselves frustrated in their attempts to accomplish tasks which are important to them. Item endorsements for the Satisfaction in Ministry Scale reported that almost four out of every five rural clergy in the survey (79%) gained a great deal of personal satisfaction from working with people in their current ministry, and that the same proportion (79%) felt that their pastoral ministry was exercising a positive influence on people's lives.

In a second study, Brewster (2012) conducted in-depth interviews with ten rural clergy in order to identify the aspects of ministry that they regarded as generating work-related stress. From these ten interviews 84 distinctive statements emerged after removing duplicates. Brewster organized these 84 statements into 11 themes conceptually defined as: role conflict, logistics, administration, multi-tasking, anxiety, isolation, irritation, frustration, developmental issues, issues of commitment, and parish conflicts. These 84 statements were then incorporated into a questionnaire survey that was completed by 722 rural clergy. On the basis of the replies received to the questionnaire, Brewster was able to quantify the frequencies with which each of these 84 sources of work-related stress were experienced.

In a third study, Francis and Brewster (2012) returned to the data provided by the questionnaire survey to test the specific thesis that the notion of time-related over-extension could draw together a number of the key sources of work-related stress endorsed by the clergy. The notion of time-related over-extension has its roots in a number of the broader studies examining clergy stress that consistently cite the difficulties generated by a profession that lacks clearly defined boundaries, that embraces multiple and often conflicting expectations, and that often blurs the distinction between work and family life (see, for example, Sanford 1982; Coate, 1989; Fletcher, 1990; Kirk & Leary, 1994; Davey, 1995; Warren, 2002; Burton & Burton, 2009). In short, there is too much to do and not enough time in which to do it. Francis and Brewster (2012) selected from the 84 sources of work-related stress included in the questionnaire survey those items that mapped conceptually into the notion of time-related over-extension. From this set of the items identified on conceptual grounds, factor analyses and correlational analyses selected the 16 items that best cohered to produce a homogeneous unidimensional scale to produce the Brewster Index of Stress from Time-Related Over-Extension (BISTROX). The BISTROX generated an alpha coefficient of .90, a highly satisfactory indicator of internal consistency reliability.

Francis and Brewster (2012) then explored the extent to which individual differences in the experience of work-related stress from time-related over-extension were related to personal factors (sex and age), environmental factors (number of churches), psychological factors (extraversion and neuroticism), and theological factors (liberal or conservative, catholic or evangelical, and charismatic or non-charismatic). The data demonstrated that personal and psychological factors were much more important than theological and environmental factors.

Research Question

Against this background, the present study has three main aims. The first aim is to revisit the responses recorded by Brewster (2012) to the 84 work-related stressors associated with rural ministry and to employ factor analysis to clarify the main patterns and themes emerging from these items. If a coherent pattern emerges through factor analysis capable of identifying the major burdens of rural ministry, these burdens will be utilized to explore two further aims. The second aim is to establish the personal, contextual, theological and psychological factors predicting individual differences in the intensity with which these burdens are experienced by rural clergy. Building on Francis and Brewster (2012), personal factors will comprise sex and age, contextual factors will comprise the number of churches, theological factors will comprise Village and Francis' (2009) three dimensions defined as the continuum between catholic and evangelical, the continuum between liberal and conservative, and the continuum between charismatic and non-charismatic, and psychological factors will comprise Eysenck, Eysenck, and Barrett's (1985) three dimensions defined as extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. At this stage the burdens of rural ministry are conceptualized as dependent variables predicted by other factors. The third aim is to reconceptualize the burdens of rural ministry as independent variables (alongside personal factors, contextual factors, theological factors, and psychological factors) capable of predicting individual differences in the work-related psychological health of clergy. Building on a sequence of recent studies, work-related psychological health will be assessed by the two scales of the Francis Burnout Inventory, as originally proposed by Francis et al. (2005). This third aim is intended to examine the extent to which the proposed conceptualization and measurement of the burdens of rural ministry add to our understanding of variations within the work-related psychological health of rural clergy.

Method

Procedure

As part of a larger study concerned with assessing stress among Anglican clergy (Brewster, 2012), a detailed questionnaire was sent to clergy serving in rural ministry in England, excluding those who were working in team ministries. A response rate of 47% generated 722 completed questionnaires. The present analyses are based on a subset of 613 respondents to the survey who were responsible for at least three rural churches.

Measures

Work-related stress was assessed by means of the 84-item stressor inventory developed by Brewster (2012). Participants were invited to indicate how stressful they found each of these 84 aspects of rural ministry on a five-point scale anchored by: 1 = very little, 3 = not sure, and 5 = very much.

Work-related psychological health was assessed by the two 11-item scales reported by Francis et al. (2005): the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM) and the Satisfaction in Ministry Scale (SIMS). Participants were invited to rate each of the 22 items on a five-point scale: agree strongly (5), agree (4), not certain (3), disagree (2), and disagree strongly (1). Example items from SEEM include: 'I feel drained in fulfilling my functions here', and 'I am less patient with people here than I used to be'. Example items from SIMS include: 'I feel very positive about my ministry here', and 'I am really glad that I entered the ministry'. The 11 items from the SEEM and the 11 items from the SIMS were presented alternately and prefaced by the single description: 'The following questions are about how you feel working in your present congregation'. Scale properties have been reported elsewhere in a study of over 6,000 clergy drawn from a range of denominations in Australia, New Zealand and England (Francis et al., 2005), in which both scales showed high internal consistency reliability.

Psychological factors were assessed by the short form of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised developed by Eysenck et al. (1985). This instrument proposes three 12-item measures of extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism, together with a 12-item lie scale. Participants were invited to rate each of the 48 items on a two-point scale: no (0) and yes (1). Example items from the extraversion scale include: 'Are you a talkative person?' and 'Can you easily get some life into a rather dull party?' Example items from the neuroticism scale include: 'Does your mood often go up and down?' and 'Are you a worrier?' Example items from the psychoticism scale include: 'Do you prefer to go your own way rather than act by the rules?' and 'Do you enjoy co-operating

with others?' Example items from the lie scale include: 'Have you ever blamed someone for doing something you knew was really your fault?' and 'Have you ever taken advantage of someone?'

Theological factors were assessed by the three seven-point semantic differential grids refined by Village and Francis (2009). The first grid was anchored by the two poles: 1 = catholic, 7 = evangelical. The second grid was anchored by the two poles: 1 = liberal, 7 = conservative. The third grid was anchored by the two poles: 1 = charismatic, 7 = non-charismatic.

Personal factors were assessed by questions concerning sex and age.

Contextual factors were assessed by questions concerning the number of churches for which the participants held responsibility.

Participants

The sample of 613 Anglican clergy comprised 151 clergywomen and 462 clergymen; 24 were in their thirties, 133 were in their forties, 259 were in their fifties, 192 were in their sixties, and 5 were in their seventies; 219 held responsibility for three churches, 164 for four churches, 97 for five churches, 124 for six or more churches, and 9 failed to answer this question. In the terms of the three indicators of theological position, the following picture emerged. First, on the grid between liberal and conservative, 27% of the clergy marked the two categories closest to the liberal pole and 17% marked the two categories closest to the conservative pole, leaving 56% occupying the three categories of the middle territory. Second, on the grid between catholic and evangelical, 25% of the clergy marked the two categories closest to the catholic pole and 17% marked the two categories closest to the evangelical pole, leaving 56% occupying the three categories of the middle territory. Third, on the grid between charismatic and non-charismatic, 12% marked the two categories closest to charismatic pole and 34% marked the two categories closest to the non-charismatic pole, leaving 54% occupying the three categories of the middle territory.

Results and Discussion

The first step in data analysis involved a close examination of the 84 stressors included in the list generated by Brewster (2012) in order to identify and clarify the factor structure within these items. Appendix 1 presents the final rotated solution that identified five distinct factors, each including seven items with loadings in excess of .33. Loadings below this threshold of .33 have been suppressed in Appendix 1 to highlight the clarity of the factor solution. These five factors can be interpreted as expressing burden of visibility, burden of presence,

burden of distance, burden of isolation, and burden of administration. Appendix 1 also presents the item endorsement in terms of the sum of the agree and agree strongly responses.

Factor one, the scale concerned with the *burden of visibility*, reported an alpha coefficient of .87. The burden of visibility caused stress for 49% of clergy by not having enough time to give to their family, for 46% of clergy by lacking time for personal reflection, for 45% of clergy by experiencing overlap of professional and personal life, for 39% of clergy by experiencing too little privacy for their family, for 35% of clergy by experiencing too little privacy for themselves, for 31% of clergy by expectations of family involvement by several church communities, and for 20% of clergy by using the vicarage for church meetings.

Factor two, the scale concerned with the *burden of presence*, reported an alpha coefficient of .84. The burden of presence caused stress for 59% of clergy by being unable to respond to the needs of everyone, for 50% of clergy by being expected to be involved in several communities, for 46% of clergy by managing multiple roles in several communities, for 44% of clergy by being expected to give pastoral care in several communities, for 37% of clergy by allocating their personal and professional experience in several churches, for 31% of clergy by getting to know people in several churches, and for 25% of clergy by preparing and delivering sermons in several churches.

Factor three, the scale concerned with the *burden of distance*, reported an alpha coefficient of .83. The burden of distance caused stress for 41% of clergy by distance and time spent travelling to hospitals and crematoria, for 28% of clergy by being dependent on vehicle reliability in remote rural areas, for 27% of clergy by following slow-moving vehicles down country lanes, for 23% of clergy by distance and time spent travelling between several churches, for 22% of clergy by experiencing hazards of driving in winter, for 9% of clergy by fearing church vandalism and theft, and for 6% of clergy by fearing for personal safety in isolated areas.

Factor four, the scale concerned with the *burden of isolation*, reported an alpha coefficient of .81. The burden of isolation caused stress for 36% of clergy by lacking opportunities for mental stimulation, for 31% of clergy by lacking colleagues for daily prayers and sharing of ideas, for 25% of clergy by lacking enthusiasm because of small numbers, for 21% of clergy by experiencing social isolation, for 20% of clergy by having too few rewards, for 18% of clergy by having too little supervision for their work, and for 8% of clergy by having too few challenges.

Factor five, the scale concerned with the *burden of administration*, reported an alpha coefficient of .79. The burden of administration caused stress for 56% of clergy by doing separate paperwork for several churches, for 38% of clergy

by having responsibility for several churchyards, for 27% of clergy by having oversight of financial issues in several churches, for 26% of clergy by having oversight of rota setting for several churches, for 26% of clergy by supporting fund-raising for several churches, for 23% of clergy by completing expenses forms for several church treasurers, and for 13% of clergy by balancing representation from different churches in parish magazines.

Table 1 examines the bivariate correlations between the four categories of predictor variables (personal factors, contextual factors, theological factors, and psychological factors) and the five burdens of rural ministry identified by factor analysis. In view of the number of correlations tested simultaneously, those achieving the five per cent level of probability will not be interpreted as statistically significant.

In terms of personal factors, only the burden of distance shows a sex difference, but this did not reach statistical significance beyond the five percent

TABLE 1 *Correlations with the five burdens of ministry*

	admin	pres	isol	dist	vis
<i>Personal factors</i>					
Sex	-.00	.08*	.04	.17***	.01
Age	-.12**	-.19***	-.15***	.02	-.24***
<i>Contextual factors</i>					
N Churches	.03	.02	.01	.06	-.02
<i>Theological factors</i>					
Catholic/ evangelical	-.07	-.01	-.04	-.14***	-.05
Liberal/ conservative	.01	.01	-.00	.05	-.02
Charismatic/ non-charismatic	-.01	.01	-.02	-.02	-.04
<i>Psychological factors</i>					
Extraversion	-.05	-.19***	-.15***	.00	-.09*
Neuroticism	.28***	.39***	.40***	.19***	.34***
Psychoticism	-.02	-.07	-.01	-.09*	-.03
Lie scale	-.01	-.03	.02	.04	-.01

Note. admin = burden of administration; pres = burden of presence; isol = burden of isolation; dist = burden of distance; vis = burden of visibility. $N = 613$. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

level of probabilities. Older clergy are less susceptible than their younger colleagues to experiencing stress from the burden of administration, the burden of presence, the burden of isolation, and the burden of visibility. This can be explained either as an age effect (older clergy learn how to manage these issues) or as a cohort effect (younger clergy who have been stressed in these ways have already dropped out of ministry). The burden of distance does not, however, work in the same way. If older clergy learn how to cope better with the burdens of administration, presence, isolation and visibility, this learning does not extend to embrace the burden of distance.

In terms of contextual factors, the number of churches in the benefice does not add to the levels of stress generated by these five burdens of ministry. This finding needs to be clearly interpreted in the light of the specific nature of the present sample of clergy. All clergy in the sample held responsibility for at least three churches. Whatever stresses are caused by multi-parish benefices, these stresses seem already to be in evidence within benefices of three churches and are not exacerbated significantly further by the adding of additional churches.

In terms of theological factors, only one of the fifteen correlations recorded statistical significance. Location on the continuum between liberal and conservative was not related to any of the five burdens. Similarly, location on the continuum between charismatic and non-charismatic was not related to any of the five burdens. Location on the continuum between catholic and evangelical was not related to the burden of administration, the burden of presence, the burden of isolation, or the burden of visibility. Catholic clergy were, however, more likely to feel stressed by the burden of distance.

In terms of psychological factors, neuroticism scores were a strong predictor of the levels of stress experienced from all five burdens. Neuroticism scores were most strongly related to the levels of stress caused by the burden of presence and the burden of isolation, and least strongly related to the levels of stress caused by the burden of distance. Extraversion scores were a significant predictor of levels of stress (beyond the five percent level of probability) caused by two of the five burdens of ministry. Introverts recorded higher levels of stress caused by the burden of presence, and the burden of isolation. Neither psychoticism scores nor lie scale scores were related to any of the five burdens.

Table 2 examines the bivariate correlations between the two measures of work-related psychological health (emotional exhaustion in ministry and satisfaction in ministry) and five categories of predictor variables (personal factors, contextual factors, theological factors, psychological factors, and the five burdens of ministry). Once again, in view of the numbers of correlations tested simultaneously, those achieving the five percent level of probability will not be interpreted as statistically significant.

TABLE 2 *Correlations with Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry and Satisfaction in Ministry Scale*

	SEEM	SIMS
<i>Personal factors</i>		
Sex	-.08*	.08*
Age	-.20**	.12**
<i>Contextual factors</i>		
N churches	.00	.00
<i>Theological factors</i>		
Evangelical	-.07	.03
Conservative	.06	-.05
Charismatic	-.09*	.08*
<i>Psychological factors</i>		
Extraversion	-.29***	.28***
Neuroticism	.55***	-.33***
Psychoticism	.12**	-.29***
Lie scale	-.05	-.00
<i>Burdens of ministry</i>		
Administration	.36***	-.16***
Presence	.48***	-.26***
Isolation	.55***	-.38***
Distance	.16***	.01
Visibility	.39***	-.17***

Note. $N = 613$. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Neither contextual factors nor theological factors were significantly related to either positive affect (satisfaction) or negative affect (emotional exhaustion). While sex was not a significant predictor of work-related psychological health, age was a significant predictor. Older clergy recorded higher levels of positive affect and lower levels of negative affect. Personality factors served as a significant predictor of both positive affect and negative affect. Clergy who recorded high scores on extraversion, low scores on neuroticism, and low scores on psychoticism (stable, tenderminded extraverts) recorded higher levels of positive affect and lower levels of negative affect. The point of key interest, however, from Table 4 is that four of the five burdens of ministry were significantly and strongly related both to increased negative affect and decreased positive

affect. The exception here concerned the burden of distance, which was strongly related only to an increase of negative affect.

Tables 3 and 4 now complete the story by examining the cumulative impact on the two measures of work-related psychological health of personal factors, psychological factors, theological factors, contextual factors, and the burdens of ministry, entered into the regression equation in that fixed order. The following conclusions emerge from these two regression models. The first conclusion is that the three personality variables of extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism are key predictors of the levels of work-related psychological health experienced by clergy in terms of both positive affect and negative affect. The second conclusion is that personal factors (sex and age), theological

TABLE 3 *Regression model for SEEM*

	Increase						
	r^2	r^2	F	$p <$	Beta	t	$p <$
<i>Personal factors</i>							
Sex	.003	.003	1.9	NS	-.034	-1.1	NS
Age	.042	.039	24.0	.001	-.044	-1.4	NS
<i>Psychological factors</i>							
Extraversion	.121	.079	52.9	.001	-.131	-4.3	.001
Neuroticism	.341	.219	195.3	.001	.313	9.3	.001
Psychoticism	.366	.025	23.4	.001	.155	5.2	.001
Lie scale	.367	.001	0.9	NS	-.048	-1.6	NS
<i>Theological factors</i>							
Evangelical	.367	.000	0.3	NS	-.043	-1.2	NS
Conservative	.370	.003	2.8	NS	.085	2.5	.01
Charismatic	.374	.003	3.1	NS	-.065	-1.9	NS
<i>Contextual factors</i>							
N churches	.374	.001	0.6	NS	.018	0.6	NS
<i>Burdens of ministry</i>							
Administration	.417	.043	42.6	.001	.092	2.4	.05
Presence	.451	.034	35.8	.001	.147	3.6	.001
Isolation	.506	.055	64.6	.001	.323	8.5	.001
Distance	.518	.012	14.1	.001	-.135	-3.8	.001
Visibility	.518	.000	0.2	NS	.018	0.5	NS

Note. $N = 613$.

TABLE 4 *Regression model for SIMS*

	Increase						
	r^2	r^2	F	$p <$	Beta	t	$p <$
<i>Personal factors</i>							
Sex	.004	.004	2.1	NS	.011	0.3	NS
Age	.017	.013	8.0	.01	.012	0.3	NS
<i>Psychological factors</i>							
Extraversion	.088	.071	45.9	.001	.169	4.7	.001
Neuroticism	.147	.059	40.4	.001	-.183	-4.6	.001
Psychoticism	.253	.106	83.0	.001	-.319	-9.2	.001
Lie scale	.253	.000	0.3	NS	.029	0.8	NS
<i>Theological factors</i>							
Evangelical	.253	.000	0.0	NS	.018	0.4	NS
Conservative	.254	.001	1.0	NS	-.062	-1.6	NS
Charismatic	.260	.006	4.5	.05	.075	1.9	NS
<i>Contextual factors</i>							
N churches	.260	.000	0.2	NS	-.015	-0.4	NS
<i>Burdens of ministry</i>							
Administration	.264	.004	3.1	NS	-.024	-0.5	NS
Presence	.275	.011	8.6	.01	-.087	-1.8	NS
Isolation	.315	.040	34.1	.001	-.317	-7.1	.001
Distance	.337	.021	18.4	.001	.167	4.0	.001
Visibility	.340	.004	3.2	NS	.081	1.8	NS

Note. $N = 613$.

factors, and contextual factors are largely irrelevant after taking personality into account. The third conclusion is that the burdens of ministry are important predictors after personality has been taken into account.

The regression model develops the story considerably further than what was revealed by the correlation matrix in three ways. First, although the correlation matrix suggested that four of the burdens were associated with higher levels of negative affect and lower levels of positive affect, the regression model is able to identify the burden of isolation as the key predictor of poor work-related psychological health. Second, after the burden of isolation has been taken into account, neither the burden of administration nor the burden of

visibility is implicated in detracting further from good work-related psychological health. Also, after the burden of isolation has been taken into account, the burden of presence adds further to the levels of emotional exhaustion, but does not erode further levels of satisfaction in ministry. Third, although the correlation matrix suggested that the burden of distance was unrelated to positive affect and only mildly related to negative affect, the regression model identifies something rather different at work within the total regression model. After taking the burden of administration into account, the burden of distance serves as an ameliorator of work-related psychological health, and in that sense counteracts some of the effects caused from the burden of isolation.

Conclusion

This study was designed to build on existing knowledge about the experience of stress among rural clergy by addressing three specific research questions. The first research question set out to clarify the main patterns and themes emerging from Brewster's (2012) earlier identification of 84 stressors associated with rural ministry. The solution proposed by factor analysis isolated five distinct factors characterized as the burden of administration, the burden of presence, the burden of isolation, the burden of distance, and the burden of visibility. This empirically derived solution provides a framework within which to distinguish between the main kinds of factors that cause stress to rural clergy, and a framework within which to understand and address the different sources of stress identified by rural clergy.

The second research question set out to establish the personal, contextual, theological and psychological factors predicting individual differences in the intensity with which these five burdens of rural ministry are experienced by rural clergy. The solution proposed by correlational analysis indicated that contextual factors (numbers of churches) and theological factors (catholic or evangelical, liberal or conservative, charismatic or non-charismatic) were trivial in comparison with personal factors (especially age) and psychological factors (especially neuroticism).

In terms of age, older clergy were less susceptible than their younger colleagues to experiencing stress from the burden of administration, burden of presence, burden of isolation, and the burden of visibility. This correlation with age can be explained either as an age effect or as a cohort effect. An age effect proposes that older clergy have learned how to deal with these burdens of ministry more effectively as a consequence of maturity and experience. A cohort effect proposes that younger clergy who have been stressed in these ways have

already dropped out of ministry and therefore do not appear within the older cohort. Irrespective of the underlying causation, the correlation suggests that older clergy fare better in multi-church rural benefices than their younger colleagues. The practical implication of this finding is that bishops may be advised either to appoint their older clergy to this form of ministry or to offer additional support to younger clergy appointed to this form of ministry.

In terms of psychological factors, clergy who recorded higher scores on the neuroticism scale were more susceptible to reporting stress from the burden of administration, from the burden of presence, from the burden of isolation, from the burden of distance, and from the burden of visibility. This finding is consistent with Eysenck's broader understanding of the function of this dimension of personality within human psychology (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975). The fact that this dimension of personality emerges as such a consistent high predictor of experienced stresses in ministry carries practical implications for the ways in which clergy are appointed to specific ministries and for the ways in which they are supported in such ministries. Routine psychological assessment of clergy would enable bishops to know which individuals are likely to be most stressed by appointment to serving in multi-church rural benefices. Then they would find themselves in a stronger position to fulfil their duty of care by targeting support where it may be most needed.

The third research question sets out to examine the extent to which these five burdens of rural ministry (as experienced by rural clergy) add to our understanding of variations within the work-related psychological health of rural clergy. The solution proposed by multiple regression analysis, after taking into account the effect of personal factors (sex and age), psychological factors (extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism, and lie scale), theological factors (catholic or evangelical, conservative or liberal, and charismatic or non-charismatic), and contextual factors (number of churches), provided three main insights into the sources of stress experienced by rural clergy.

The first insight is that of the five burdens of ministry identified by the study, it is the burden of isolation that is most important both in exacerbating emotional exhaustion and in undermining satisfaction in ministry. In other words, the burden of isolation is the most important predictor of poor work-related psychological health among rural clergy serving in multi-church benefices. This finding suggests that those who may be charged with responsibility to tackle problems of poor work-related psychological health among rural clergy may be wise to start by tackling the problems caused by the burden of isolation. The component parts of the burden of isolation identified by the present study include: the sense of having too few rewards; the sense of having too few challenges; experiencing the lack of opportunity for mental stimulation; the dispiriting consequences of working with small numbers; experiencing

social isolation; lacking colleagues for daily prayers and sharing ideas; and having too little supervision for their work. These may be structural issues that could be addressed, at least to some extent.

The second insight is that, after the burden of isolation has been taken into account, neither the burden of administration nor the burden of visibility is implicated in detracting from good work-related psychological health. Also, after the burden of isolation has been taken into account, the burden of presence adds further to exacerbating the levels of emotional exhaustion, but does not erode further levels of satisfaction in ministry. This finding suggests that those who may be charged with responsibility to tackle problems of poor work-related psychological health among rural clergy may be wise to tackle the problems caused by the burden of presence. The burden of presence may strike at the theological heart of Anglican commitment to rural ministry. The parochial structure may assume the presence of a priest living in a local community, living among local people (Francis, 1985). The development of multi-church rural benefices may assume the continuity of presence but with the parish priest no longer being able to deliver on that assumption. The development of multi-church rural benefices may need a different theological underpinning of ministry.

The third insight is that, after the burden of isolation has been taken into account, the burden of distance serves as an ameliorator of work-related psychological health, and in that sense counteracts some of the deleterious effects caused from the burden of isolation. While the burden of distance causes its own problems (and when considered on its own is correlated with poorer work-related psychological health), when considered as part of a dynamic system of stressors, the burden of distance may provide some respite from the other pressures. The long drive in the car to the hospital may provide a space for quiet reflection (for the introvert) or a time to listen to conversation (for the extravert). Here the priest is both fulfilling a justified demand of ministry (making a journey required by pastoral care) and away from the call of new demands (at least if the mobile phone is switched off).

The major limitation with the present study is that it focused exclusively on rural clergy serving at least three churches and so excluded the comparison with clergy serving just one or two rural churches. Future research may wish to ensure that this comparison can be included.

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APPENDIX 1 *Rotated factor matrix*

	Yes %	factor				
		1	2	3	4	5
<i>Burden of visibility</i>						
Experiencing too little privacy for my family	39	.82				
Not having enough time to give to my family	49	.76				
Experiencing too little privacy for me	35	.72				
Overlap of professional and personal life	45	.65				
Expectations of family involvement by several church communities	31	.49				
Lacking time for personal reflection	46	.43				
Using vicarage for church meetings	20	.42				
<i>Burden of presence</i>						
Being expected to be involved in several communities	50		.74			
Being expected to give pastoral care in several communities	44		.70			
Managing multiple roles in several communities	46		.59			
Allocating my personal/professional experience in several churches	37		.58			
Getting to know people in several churches	31		.51			
Being unable to respond to the needs of everyone	59		.51			
Preparing and delivering sermons in several churches	25		.34			
<i>Burden of distance</i>						
Being dependent on vehicle reliability in remote rural areas	28			.75		
Fearing for personal safety in isolated areas	6			.68		
Experiencing hazards of driving in winter	22			.66		
Following slow moving vehicles down country lanes	27			.66		
Fearing church vandalism and theft	9			.50		
Distance and time spent travelling between several churches	23			.47		
Distance and time spent travelling to hospitals and crematoria	41			.43		
<i>Burden of isolation</i>						
Having too few rewards	20					.59

APPENDIX 1 *Rotated factor matrix (cont.)*

	Yes %	factor				
		1	2	3	4	5
Lacking colleagues for daily prayers and sharing of ideas	31				.59	
Having too little supervision for my work	18				.55	
Having too few challenges	8				.53	
Lacking enthusiasm because of small numbers	25				.52	
Experiencing social isolation	21				.52	
Lacking opportunity for mental stimulation	36				.50	
<i>Burden of administration</i>						
Doing separate paperwork for several churches	56					.57
Having oversight of financial issues in several churches	27					.57
Having oversight of rota setting for several churches	26					.57
Completing expenses forms for several church treasurers	23					.51
Having responsibility for several churchyards	38					.48
Balancing representation from different churches in Parish Magazines	13					.44
Supporting fundraising for several churches	26					.41
Eigenvalue		10.2	2.6	2.1	1.9	1.5
% variance		29.2	7.5	5.9	5.3	4.3

Testing the Balanced Affect Model of Clergy Work-Related Psychological Health: Drawing on the U.S. Congregational Life Survey

*Leslie J. Francis, Andrew Village, Deborah Bruce and Cynthia Woolever**

Abstract

This study draws on data provided by 622 clergy (who completed the Leader Survey within the U.S. Congregational Life Survey) to examine the balanced affect model of work-related psychological health. These data generated a six-item measure of positive affect (Satisfaction in Ministerial Life Index, or SIMLI), generated a six-item measure of negative affect (Emotional Exhaustion in Ministerial Life Index, or EEMLI), and identified an independent indicator of burnout (the Likelihood of Leaving Ministry Index, or LOLMI). Crucially for supporting the construct validity of the notion of balanced affect, the data demonstrated a significant interaction effect between SIMLI and EEMLI scores on the independent measure of burnout LOLMI, showing that the mitigating effects of positive affect on burnout increased with increasing levels of negative affect.

Keywords

balanced affect – burnout – clergy – emotional exhaustion – satisfaction in ministry

Poor work-related psychological health or professional burnout is a matter of theoretical and practical concern across many of the caring professions, including the clergy. One established model for assessing both the levels and correlates of poor work-related psychological health among the caring professions has been operationalized through the Maslach Burnout Inventory

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(Maslach & Jackson, 1996). This model conceptualizes and assesses professional burnout as comprising three components, styled emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (in its original or modified form) has been employed in a series of studies among clergy, including work reported by Warner and Carter (1984), Strümpfer and Bands (1996), Rodgeron and Piedmont (1998), Stanton-Rich and Iso-Ahola (1998), Virginia (1998), Francis and Rutledge (2000), Evers and Tomic (2003), Golden, Piedmont, Ciarocchi, and Rodgeron (2004), Francis, Loudon, and Rutledge (2004), Rutledge and Francis (2004), Francis and Turton (2004a, 2004b), Randall (2004, 2007), Hills, Francis, and Rutledge (2004), Raj and Dean (2005), Rutledge (2006), Miner (2007a, 2007b), Doolittle (2007), Francis, Turton, and Loudon (2007), Turton and Francis (2007), Chandler (2008), Joseph, Corveleyn, Luyten, and de Witte (2010), Buys and Rothmann (2010), Parker and Martin (2011), and Joseph, Luyten, Corveleyn, and de Witte (2011).

An alternative model of clergy burnout, proposed by Francis, Kaldor, Robbins, and Castle (2005) challenged Maslach's three component sequential model of burnout in favour of a two component balanced affect model, drawing on Bradburn's (1969) classic notion of 'balanced affect', according to which positive affect and negative affect are not opposite ends of a single continuum, but two separate continua. According to this model it is totally reasonable for individual clergy to experience at one and the same time high levels of positive affect and high levels of negative affect. According to this model of balanced affect, warning signs of poor work-related psychological health occur when *high* levels of negative affect coincide with *low* levels of positive affect. In terms of the work-related experiences of clergy, Francis et al. (2005) translated negative affect into emotional exhaustion and positive affect into ministry satisfaction. These two work-related constructs were then operationalized by separate 11-item scales: Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM), first reported by Francis, Kaldor, Shevlin, and Lewis (2004), and Satisfaction in Ministry Scale (SIMS). Together these two scales comprise the Francis Burnout Inventory (FBI). Recent studies employing the Francis Burnout Inventory have been reported by Francis, Wulff and Robbins (2008), Francis, Robbins, Kaldor, and Castle (2009), Robbins and Francis (2010), Brewster, Francis, and Robbins (2011), Francis, Gubb, and Robbins (2012), Robbins, Francis, and Powell (2012), Barnard and Curry (2012), and Randall (2013a, 2013b).

In a study conducted among clergy serving in The Presbyterian Church (USA), Francis, Village, Robbins, and Wulff (2011), set out to test the balanced affect model of clergy work-related psychological health. The strategy adopted by this study examined the incremental impact on independent measures of burnout of the interaction term created by the product of the two measures of negative affect and positive affect after taking into account the impact of

these two factors considered separately. The two independent measures of burnout employed in this study were self-perceived physical health and self-perceived burnout. Self-perceived physical health was assessed by the question: 'How would you rate your overall health at the present time?' with the following four response options: excellent, good, fair, and poor. Self-perceived burnout was assessed by the question: 'To what extent do you think you are suffering from burnout in your current call?' with the following four response options: to a great extent, to some extent, to a small extent, and not at all. Consistent with the theory of balanced affect, the data demonstrated that the mitigating effects of positive affect on burnout increased with increasing levels of negative affect. The study reported by Francis et al. (2011) tested the theory of balanced affect by employing the two instruments proposed by Francis et al. (2005): the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM) as the measure of negative affect and the Satisfaction in Ministry Scale (SIMS) as the measure of positive affect. The way in which the model of balanced affect has been tested, therefore, can be construed as either testing the general model or as testing the performance of the specific instruments employed. Against this background, the primary aim of the present study is to test the general model of balanced affect by designing alternative measures of positive affect and negative affect and to test these measures against an independent index of burnout. The opportunity to do this is provided by the Leader Survey included within a second wave of the U.S. Congregational Life Survey conducted in 2008. This primary aim leads to the specification of the following research objectives:

1. to identify items within the Leader Survey to create a scale of positive affect, forming a Satisfaction in Ministerial Life Index (SIMLI)
2. to identify items within the Leader Survey to create a scale of negative affect, forming an Emotional Exhaustion in Ministerial Life Index (EEMLI)
3. to identify an independent indicator of burnout within the Leader Survey
4. to employ these independent measures to test the validity of the balanced affect model of clergy work-related psychological health.

Method

Procedure

In 2008, a second wave of the U.S. Congregational Life Survey, based on a national random sample of all American congregations, was conducted to replicate the 2001 study. The second national random sample (Wave 2) of congregations was identified and recruited by Harris Interactive (a market research

company). Of the 1,741 congregations nominated and contacted in Wave 2, a total of 692 Leader Surveys were completed (39%).

An eight-page Leader Survey to be completed by the principal leader was included in the package sent out to churches participating in Wave 2. The package also included a separate business-reply envelope for leaders to mail back the survey to maintain their confidentiality. Principal leaders could also complete the survey online. In addition, Harris Interactive made several attempts by mail and by telephone to contact the principal leader in each nominated congregation.

Instrument

The Leader Survey within the U.S. Congregational Life Survey comprised 100 questions, many of which contained multiple items. The themes explored by these questions included the pastors' demographic profile, current ministry positions and tasks, job satisfaction, sources of support and stress, compensation, theological education and beliefs, and career history since ordination or graduation.

Participants

The current analyses are based on the responses of 622 participants who had complete data for the variables used in this analysis. Of these, 28% were Roman Catholic, 43% belonged to mainline Protestant denominations, and 27% belonged to conservative Protestant denominations. The majority (90%) were men and 73% were aged fifty or more. Around 9% had been in ministry less than 10 years, 21% between 10 and 19 years, 32% between 20 and 29 years, and 37% for 30 years or more.

Variables

Positive affect was assessed by six items that cohered to form the Satisfaction in Ministerial Life Index (SIMLI). The first three items invited participants to rate their current level of satisfaction with relationships with lay leaders in this church, with their work in ministry, and with their overall effectiveness as a pastoral leader in this particular congregation, on a four-point scale: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, and very dissatisfied. Item four, 'I have accomplished many worthwhile things in my ministry here', was rated on a five-point scale: strongly agree, somewhat agree, neutral or unsure, somewhat disagree, and strongly disagree. Item five, 'How much of the time during the past four weeks have you been happy?' was rated on a five-point scale: all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, a little of the time, and none of the time. Item six, 'How satisfied are you with your life as a whole?' was rated on a

seven-point scale, from extremely delighted, through mixed feelings, to extremely terrible. High scores on this index indicated a high level of positive affect.

Negative affect was assessed by six items that cohered to form the Emotional Exhaustion in Ministerial Life Index (EEMLI). The first five items were all rated on a five-point scale (strongly agree, somewhat agree, neutral or unsure, somewhat disagree, and strongly disagree): 'I feel drained in fulfilling my functions in this congregation'; 'I am less patient with people in this congregation than I used to be'; 'I feel negative or cynical about the people whom I work'; 'I find myself frustrated in my attempts to accomplish tasks that are important to me'; and 'I have enthusiasm for my work' (reverse coded). Item six, 'How much of the time during the past few weeks have you felt downhearted or depressed?' was rated on a five-point scale: all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, a little of the time, and none of the time. High scores on this index indicated a high level of negative affect.

Burnout was assessed by three items that cohered to form the Likelihood of Leaving Ministry Index (LOLM). These items invited participants to rate the following three questions on a four-point scale (very often, fairly often, once in a while, and never): 'During the past year how often have you seriously thought of leaving...': 'your current position to become a pastor elsewhere'; 'pastoral ministry in a congregation to enter another type of ministry position'; 'pastoral ministry to enter a secular occupation'. High scores on this index indicated a high level of burnout.

Analysis

The burnout measure (LOLM) was regressed against mean-centered scores for SIMLI and EEMLI, with an interaction term included in the model to test for possibility of balanced affect.

Results and Discussion

Research Objective 1

The first research objective was to identify items within the Leader Survey to create a scale of positive affect, forming a Satisfaction in Ministerial Life Index (SIMLI). Table 1 presents the end result of a series of correlational analyses that identified six items, leading to an internal consistency reliability (alpha) coefficient of .78, well in excess of the threshold of acceptability of .65 proposed by DeVellis (2003). The correlations between each individual item and the sum of the other five items ranged between .42 and .64, indicating that each item contributed well to the overall performance of the instrument.

TABLE 1 *Satisfaction in Ministerial Life Index (SIMLI)*

	<i>r</i>
I have accomplished many worthwhile things in my ministry here	.42
Satisfaction with relationships with lay leaders in this congregation	.50
Satisfaction with work in ministry	.64
Satisfaction with overall effectiveness as a pastoral leader	.62
Happiness during the past few weeks	.54
Satisfied with life as a whole	.56
alpha	.78

Note. *r* = item rest-of-scale correlation.

The possible responses categories offered in the questionnaire varied according to the nature of the item, but the overall results demonstrated a high level of positive affect among U.S. clergy. Thus, 90% strongly agree or somewhat agree that they have accomplished many worthwhile things in their ministry in their current church; 95% are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with relationships with lay leaders in their congregation; 94% are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their work in ministry; 93% are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with their overall effectiveness as a pastoral leader in their particular congregation; 77% are extremely delighted or somewhat delighted with their life as a whole; 81% have been happy all of the time or most of the time during the past four weeks.

Research Objective 2

The second research objective was to identify items within the Leader Survey to create a scale of negative affect, forming an Emotional Exhaustion in Ministerial Life Index (EEMLI). Table 2 presents the end result of a series of correlational analyses that identified six items, leading to an acceptable internal consistency reliability (alpha) coefficient of .77. The correlation between each individual item and the sum of the other five items ranged between .47 and .60, indicating that each item contributed well to the overall performance of the instrument.

Again, the possible response categories in the questionnaire varied slightly between items, but the data demonstrate some significant indicators of negative

TABLE 2 *Emotional Exhaustion in Ministerial Life Index (EEMLI)*

	<i>r</i>
I do not have enthusiasm for my work	.47
I feel drained in fulfilling my functions in this congregation	.60
I am less patient with people in this congregation than I used to be	.55
I feel negative or cynical about the people with whom I work	.51
I find myself frustrated in my attempts to accomplish tasks that are important to me	.54
Felt downhearted and depressed	.51
alpha	.77

Note. *r* = item rest-of-scale correlation.

affect. Thus, 34% strongly agree or somewhat agree that they find themselves frustrated in their attempts to accomplish tasks that are important to them; 32% strongly agree or somewhat agree that they feel drained in fulfilling their functions in their congregation; 17% strongly agree or somewhat agree that they are less patient with people in their congregation than they used to be, and 24% have felt downhearted or depressed at least some of the time during the past four weeks. On the other hand only 7% strongly agree or somewhat agree that they feel negative or cynical about the people with whom they work; and only 5% do not agree that they have enthusiasm for their work.

Research Objective 3

The third research objective was to identify within the Leader Survey an independent measure of burnout against which the balanced affect model of work-related psychological health could be tested. Table 3 presents the three items identified to suggest burnout and create the Likelihood of Leaving Ministry Index (LOLMI), which had an acceptable internal consistency reliability (alpha) coefficient of .70. These three items reflect different levels of discontent with the current experience of pastoral ministry by seeking an exit strategy into a new form of work. The three levels of discontent are expressed in terms of leaving the current position: to become a pastor elsewhere; to enter another type of ministry position; and to enter a secular occupation. The data

TABLE 3 *Likelihood of Leaving Ministry Index (LOLMI)*

	<i>r</i>	Never %	Once in a while %	Fairly often %	Often %
How often have you seriously thought of leaving for:					
Another pastoral job	.48	52	39	6	3
Another ministry job	.60	65	28	5	2
A secular job	.47	74	23	2	1
alpha	.70				

Note. *r* = item rest-of-scale correlation.

demonstrate that during the past year 26% had seriously thought at least once in a while of entering a secular occupation; 35% had seriously thought at least once in a while of seeking another type of ministry position outside pastoral ministry; and 48% had seriously thought at least once in a while of becoming a pastor elsewhere.

Research Objective 4

The fourth research objective was to employ the independent measure of burnout to assess the incremental impact of the interaction term between SIMLI and EEMLI as an indicator of the construct validity of the balanced affect model of clergy work-related psychological health. As predicted from previous studies of burnout, the LOLMI was positively correlated with the satisfaction in ministry scale (SIMLI) ($r = .51, p < .001$) and negatively correlated with emotional exhaustion scale (EEMLI) ($r = -.50, p < .001$), while the SIMLI and EEMLI were themselves negatively correlated ($r = -.63, p < .001$). Burnout increased with emotional exhaustion and decreased with satisfaction, and those who were dissatisfied with their ministry were also more likely to be emotionally exhausted. The crucial test for balanced affect was to see if the effect of exhaustion on burnout was less among those who were satisfied with their ministry than among those who were not. The interaction of SIMLI and EEMLI was highly statistically significant when included in a multiple linear regression (Table 4), and this indicated that the effect of exhaustion on burnout was mitigated among those with higher ministry satisfaction, as demonstrated in Figure 1.

TABLE 4 *Multiple linear regression of burnout (LOLMI) against satisfaction (SIMLI) and emotional exhaustion (EEMLI)*

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>P</i> <
Constant	4.19	0.006		.001
SIMLI	-0.117	0.024	-.218	.001
EEMLI	0.117	0.016	.307	.001
SIMLI*EEMLI	-0.021	0.004	-.210	.001
<i>R</i> ²			.346	

Note. Independent variables were mean centred.

Conclusion

This study employed data provided by 622 clergy who completed the Leader Survey within the U.S. Congregational Life Survey in order to explore the work-related psychological health of these clergy through the model of balanced affect proposed by Bradburn (1969) and applied to the field of clergy burnout by Francis et al. (2005). Five main conclusions emerged from these analyses.

First, the notion of positive affect was recovered from the data within the survey and expressed through the development of the six-item Satisfaction in Ministerial Life Index (SIMLI). Overall the responses to these six items profile these clergy as a group of professionals who enjoy a high level of positive affect in connection with their ministry.

Second, the notion of negative affect was also recovered from the data within the survey and expressed through the development of the six-item Emotional Exhaustion in Ministerial Life Index (EEMLI). Overall the responses to these six items profile these clergy as a group of professionals who experience a significant level of negative affect that is held alongside and in tension with the high level of positive affect.

Third, the fact that these clergy were able to display at one and the same time a high level of positive affect and a significant level of negative affect affirms the first principle of balanced affect theory. This principle maintains that positive affect and negative affect are not opposite poles of single continuum but relatively independent psychological constructs whereby the same individual is able to display aspects of both negative affect and positive affect.

Fourth, a regression model that explored the predictive power of SIMLI, EEMLI and the interaction term (SIMLI \times EEMLI) for an independent indicator

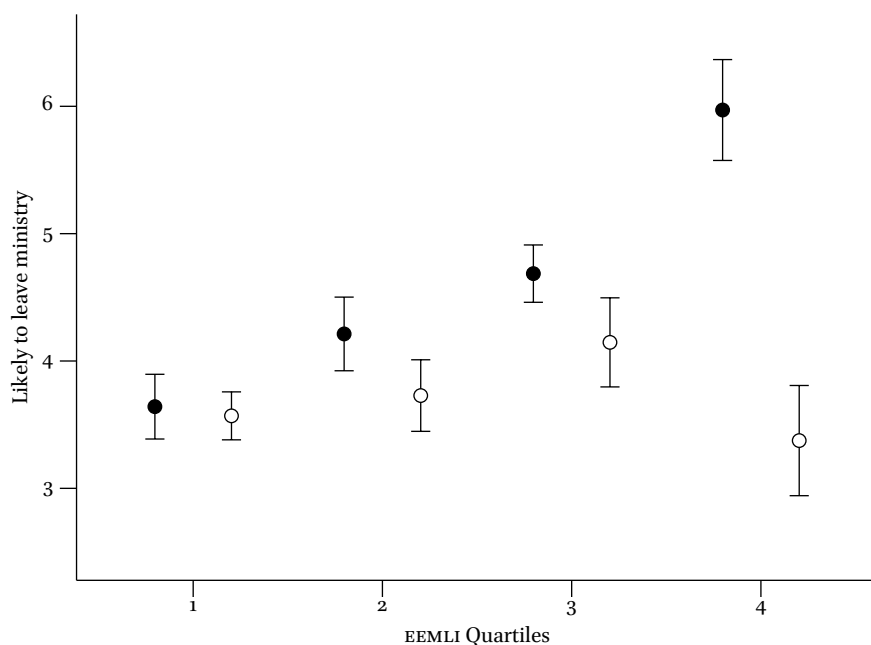


FIGURE 1 *Interaction of SIMLI and EEMLI scores on self-assessed burnout (LOLMI).*

Note. For illustration, EEMLI scores are displayed as quartiles and SIMLI scores were categorized around the median score (20): Solid circles = low satisfaction, open circles = high satisfaction. Error bars are 95% confidence limits.

of burnout (likelihood of leaving the current ministry role) affirmed the second principle of balanced affect theory. This principle maintains that positive affect mitigates the effects of negative affect on work-related psychological health and professional burnout.

Fifth, the earlier study reported by Francis, Village, Robbins and Wulff (2011) confirmed the construct validity of the balanced affect model of work-related psychological health among a sample of 744 clergy serving in The Presbyterian Church (USA), employing the two measures of positive affect and negative affect proposed by Francis et al. (2005): the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM) and the Satisfaction in Ministry Scale (SIMS). The fact that the present study has come to the same conclusion using two very different measures of positive affect (SIMLI) and negative affect (EEMLI) adds further confirmation of the basic theory of the balanced affect approach to clergy work-related psychological health and suggests that the theory is sufficiently robust to be operationalized through a variety of instruments.

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Workaholism and Burnout in Australian Church Workers

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Abstract

Workaholism considered as work addiction and its relationship to burnout is examined in a sample of 461 ministers and other workers in Australian churches, who completed the Dutch Work Addiction Scale alongside the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry and the Satisfaction in Ministry Scale. This group has received little attention in workaholism studies though their work context contains factors which could cause them to have greater risks and not to place limits on their work. Results showed that overwork and poor boundaries are the norm, but suggested an incidence of workaholism towards the lower end of the spectrum with professions in the health, social work and education sectors. Current questions on working excessively may not be adequate to assess these sectors. Working excessively was not related to the negative aspects of burnout (emotional exhaustion and depersonalization) and was positively related to the positive aspects (personal achievement and satisfaction with ministry), suggesting that, for church workers, working excessively is not in itself a threat to their wellbeing. Working compulsively, the other component of workaholism, was associated with higher emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, and lower personal achievement and satisfaction with ministry. Therefore it is the working compulsively component of workaholism that appears to lead to outcomes of lower wellbeing in church workers. Feeling guilty when not working and pushing oneself to work hard even when it is not enjoyable are compulsive work dynamics that could risk burnout by ignoring the warning signs of fatigue when they appear.

Keywords

clergy – burnout – psychology – workaholism

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Since Wayne Oates used the terms 'workaholic' and 'workaholism' in a 1968 essay and 1971 book, comparing his work patterns with alcoholism (Oates, 1968, 1971) the terminology has passed into popular usage, indicating that for many people this is a useful concept that intuitively makes sense. Perhaps the widespread popular use has contributed to the lack of agreement on a clear definition. While many popular definitions would frame workaholism as little more than working excessive hours (a purely behavioural framework), psychology and business researchers have included cognitive elements such as work attitudes and unconscious drives, focusing on having a compulsive tendency towards work (e.g., Garson, 2005; Schaufeli, Shimazu, & Taris, 2009) and emotional elements related to enjoyment of work (largely following Spence & Robbins, 1992). There has been a divergence of views, particularly as to whether the work enjoyment aspect should be included in the definition. Spence and Robbins (1992) represent one view, with their 'workaholic triad' covering behaviour, cognition and emotion with the Workaholism Battery test (WorkBat). The Work Addiction Risk Test (WART; Robinson, 1998, 1999) was another measure developed early and used in many studies, and as its name suggests, was developed in a framework of workaholism being a form of addiction, which involves a degree of obsessional thinking and dysfunctional behaviour determined by the addiction. However, both scales have also been found wanting, with a variety of different factor structures, and inconsistency of results between different samples (see Aziz, Uhrich, Wuensch, & Swords, 2013 for a review).

The language of addiction and the exclusion of the enjoyment element both bring greater clarity to this concept. Workaholics can pursue work activities to the detriment of family and other life concerns with a destructive abandon reminiscent of other addictions (Aziz et al., 2013; Griffiths, 2005) and may be more common in certain personality types (Aziz & Tronzo, 2011; Burke, Matthiesen, & Pallesen, 2006). The cycle of addiction can mean a 'rush' at some times where it seems the behaviour is being rewarded and a low at other times where the urge remains but there is no reward in sight. Therefore the level of enjoyment being experienced depends on the stage of the cycle, and to speak of both 'enthusiastic workaholics' and 'non-enthusiastic workaholics' (e.g., Bonebright, Clay, & Ankenmann, 2000) highlights that the level of enjoyment itself does not sit comfortably among the definable criteria (Mudrack, 2006).

Building on the best features of the first two tests, researchers mainly in The Netherlands developed the Dutch Work Addiction Scale (DUWAS) by bringing together selected items from Robinson's (1999) WART and Spence and Robbins' (1992) WorkBat. Studies that have made use of the DUWAS items, and in particular a shortened version of 10 items, have had promising and consistent

results, such as clear factor structure, reasonable reliability, predictive power, and some degree of cross-cultural validity (del Libano, Llorens, Salanova, & Schaufeli, 2010; Schaufeli et al., 2009; Schaufeli, Taris, & Bakker, 2006). The short questionnaire has 'Working Excessively', and 'Working Compulsively' subscales of 5 questions each, as well as other indicators of overwork, such as the number of hours worked and hours contracted to work. Workaholism has been linked to poorer health, anxiety and lower satisfaction using earlier scales (Bonebright et al., 2000; Burke, 2000; Burke, Oberklaid, & Burgess, 2004; Robinson, 1999; Spence & Robbins, 1992) and with greater clarity with the more recent DUWAS scales (Schaufeli et al., 2006; Schaufeli, Taris, & Van Rhenen, 2008; Shimazu & Schaufeli, 2009; Shimazu, Schaufeli, Kubota, & Kawakami, 2012), including convincing associations between workaholism and burnout (Schaufeli et al., 2009; van Beek, Hu, Schaufeli, Taris, & Schreurs, 2012; van Beek, Taris, & Schaufeli, 2011).

A large Dutch study (Taris, van Beek, & Schaufeli, 2012) showed significant differences in both Working Excessively and Working Compulsively between different professions and sectors of work, with agriculture, construction, communication, consultancy, trade, and banking among the sectors scoring highest and the lower scoring sectors mostly involving work with more human interaction (e.g. education, law enforcement, public administration, services). Professions scoring the highest were managers, higher professionals, sales people, and some in teaching, while paramedics, social workers and nurses scored lowest.

Studies using the original or shortened DUWAS have been conducted for many professions, but so far there appear no studies examining ministers of religion or church workers. As those with a role that mixes teaching and pastoral care for people, and with a relatively high level of autonomy to set their work agenda, it would be valuable to know whether church workers score relatively high or low on workaholism. It would also be valuable to know whether workaholism contributes to burnout in this profession. Ministers and church workers in full-time roles¹ may have special challenges in terms of the risks of workaholism for several reasons. More than most professions they have less separation between work and home life, often living in fairly close community with those whom they lead and to whom they minister. Their working days and hours commonly involve weekends and nights, putting them at variance

1 The term for one involved in church leadership and ministry varies across different denominations and traditions: minister, pastor, priest, etc. This paper will use the terms 'minister' and 'church worker' to denote these and other terms for leaders who minister in church, both paid and unpaid, ordained and lay.

with others (both parishioners and family members) who are not working. This could be conducive to working longer hours than a more structured job would entail, as well as encouraging an 'on duty' mentality that blurs the lines between working and not working. There may also be cognitive aspects that encourage ministers to become obsessed with work and foster a compulsive attitude. As the only staff member (or one of few), in an otherwise volunteer organization, and as the designated 'spiritual leader', there is potential to feel responsible for the wellbeing of many people, and even their eternal destiny. Therefore there are several factors which could cause church workers not to place limits on their work, have difficulty assessing when 'enough is enough' and feel ideologically driven always to give more.

Burnout in church workers has been assessed as a factor in leaving church ministry (Croucher & Allgate, 1994; Randall, 2004), increased depression and anxiety (Miner, Sterland, & Dowson, 2009) and importantly, as moderated by an overall balanced affect (Francis, Village, Robbins, & Wulff, 2011). This last point emerges from Bradburn's (1969) contention that positive and negative affect are not opposite ends of the same continuum, but rather two separate continua. The Francis Burnout Inventory (Francis, Kaldor, Robbins, & Castle, 2005) was developed with this in mind and with more ministry-appropriate terminology than earlier burnout instruments. It consists of two subscales: the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM) and the Satisfaction in Ministry Scale (SIMS). While these are intended as single scales and have exhibited good reliability as such (Francis et al., 2005), another study of Australian church workers (Miner, Dowson, & Sterland, 2010) using these items found best model fit by dividing these scales into 2 concepts each: SEEM into Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization, and SIMS into Personal Achievement and Satisfaction in Ministry. Certainly the wording of the items supports division into these four subscales, which allows the roles of these components to be scrutinized separately.

This study will examine the workaholism levels of Australian church workers and the indications of overwork. It will model the potential effect of workaholism on positive and negative indicators of burnout, and will test the factor structure of measures for workaholism and burnout.

Method

Participants

Participants for analysis were drawn from the Leader Survey of the 2011 National Church Life Survey, held in Australia during the last three months of 2011.

All churches taking part in the National Church Life Survey received leader surveys as part of the surveying of the whole church. Of the 2,492 individual churches and parishes which took part, 1,876 responses were received from senior leaders, giving a response rate for the leader survey of 75%. The leader survey existed in four variations to allow a greater number of questions in total without the individual surveys being inordinately long. For the present analyses 461 respondents were selected who completed the variant containing the Dutch Work Addiction Scale, and also indicated their position was 30 hours per week or more in the church being surveyed. This sample was 86% males, mean age 48.2 years ($SD = 11.9$), and drawn from the following: Anglican churches (34%), Baptist (19%), Uniting Church (12%), Catholic (7%), Pentecostal (6%), Salvation Army (6%), Churches of Christ (5%), Lutheran (5%), and smaller groups from other denominations and independent churches. Participants cited an average of 5.4 years working with their current church.

Measures

Workaholism and Overwork

Workaholism was measured using the 10 items of the short version of the Dutch Work Addiction Scale (DUWAS) (del Libano et al., 2010; Schaufeli et al., 2009) taken from the original Dutch Work Addiction Scale (Schaufeli & Taris, 2004). This has two subscales of 5 questions each: Work Excessively (WkExc) with items such as, 'I seem to be in a hurry and racing against the clock', 'I find myself continuing to work after my co-workers have called it quits'; and Work Compulsively (WkCmp) with items such as, 'I feel that there's something inside me that drives me to work hard', 'I feel guilty when I take time off work'. Response options range from (1) 'Never or almost never' to (4) 'Always or almost always'.

Overwork measures included questions about the number of hours one actually worked ('Approximately how many hours in a typical week do you spend in congregational/parish ministry?'), hours one was expected to work ('How many hours a week are you expected to/employed to spend in congregational/parish ministry?'), as well as the overwork questions from the original DUWAS (e.g., 'I go to work while feeling ill', 'I take work home') and several others (e.g., 'I do not take days off as regularly as I should').

Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization

The Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM: Francis, Kaldor, Shevlin, & Lewis, 2004) provided items for the negative indicators related to burnout. Following previous analysis of these items in an earlier dataset of Australian

ministers (Miner et al., 2010) the eleven items are separated into six for emotional exhaustion (e.g., 'I feel drained in fulfilling my functions here', 'I have been discouraged by the lack of personal support for me here') and five for depersonalization (e.g., 'I am feeling negative or cynical about the people with whom I work', 'I find myself spending less and less time with attenders'). Response options range from (1) 'Strongly agree' to (5) 'Strongly disagree'.

Personal Achievement and Satisfaction with Work

The Satisfaction in Ministry Scale (SIMS) was used for items related to positive outcomes that are low when burnout is present (Francis et al., 2005; Francis, Robbins, Kaldor, & Castle, 2009). Following the contention that having a sense of achievement/personal efficacy with one's ministry is distinct from feeling satisfaction with ministry, demonstrated in an earlier dataset of Australian ministers (Miner et al., 2010), items from the SIMS were divided into five for Personal Accomplishment (e.g., 'I deal very effectively with the problems of the people here', 'I feel that my pastoral ministry has a positive influence on people's lives') and six for Satisfaction with Ministry (e.g., 'I gain a lot of personal satisfaction from working with people here', 'I am really glad that I entered the ministry'). Response options range from (1) 'Strongly agree' to (5) 'Strongly disagree'.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Indication of working overtime was the norm in subjects. The average number of hours subjects were contracted to work was 43.3 hours per week, while the average number actually worked was 51.6 hours. Calculating each individual overtime rate (hours worked/hours contracted) showed that the median score for overwork was 20% (working 20% more hours than they are expected/employed to). Almost no respondents (<4%) indicated working less than their contracted hours, while 30% overtime was at the 76th percentile, and 50% was at the 90th percentile.

Almost all subjects (93%) indicated that they take work home ('Sometimes' = 44%, 'Often' = 33%, 'Always or almost always' = 16%). Over two-thirds (69%) indicated they work on their days off ('Sometimes' = 53%, 'Often' = 13%, 'Always or almost always' = 3%). In another question regarding days off, about one third (32%) agreed with the statement 'I don't take days off as regularly as I should'.

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, intercorrelations and internal reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) between all items and scales used in the analysis. The lowest reliabilities were .68 for the five-item Depersonalization subscale and .69 for the five-item Working Excessively subscale.

All outcome scale correlations were in the expected directions: positive outcomes (SIMS and the two subscales, Personal Accomplishment and Satisfaction with Ministry) were negatively correlated with negative outcomes (SEEM and the two subscales Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization), highly significant ($p < 0.01$), and ranged from $-.37$ to $-.63$ in strength.

Working Excessively and Working Compulsively both correlated positively with Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization, with high levels of significance, ranging from weak (.17) to moderate (.38) in strength. Working Excessively correlated weak and positively (.11) with Personal Accomplishment, and not at all with Satisfaction with Ministry, while Working Compulsively correlated weak and negatively ($-.17$) with Satisfaction with Ministry and not at all with Personal Accomplishment.

Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling were carried out using the statistical software package for Linear Structural Relations,

TABLE 1 *Descriptive statistics for items in scales*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Inter-correlations (Reliabilities)							
			WkExc	WkCmp	SEEM	EE	DP	SIMS	PA	SM
WkExc	2.3	0.53	(.69)							
WkCmp	1.9	0.53	.54***	(.71)						
SEEM	2.3	0.58	.25***	.35***	(.84)					
Scale										
EE	2.4	0.70	.26***	.38***	.94***	(.80)				
DP	2.2	0.58	.17***	.21***	.86***	.62***	(.68)			
SIMS Scale	4.0	0.44	.04	-.14**	-.62***	-.60***	-.50***	(.85)		
PA	3.9	0.43	.11*	-.06	-.42***	-.38***	-.37***	.82***	(.70)	
SM	4.1	0.55	.00	-.17***	-.64***	-.63***	-.49***	.93***	.55***	(.84)

Note. WkExc, Work Excessively; WkCmp, Work Compulsively; EE, Emotional Exhaustion; DP, Depersonalization; PA, Personal Accomplishment; SM, Satisfaction with ministry. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

LISREL (v8.72) and parameters were estimated using the maximum likelihood procedure.

Negative and Positive Outcome Measures

Analysis of the SEEM and SIMS items showed the division into four distinct subscales was justified. An initial confirmatory factor analysis of each showed that no single factor solution was justified for either unless 11 items were reduced to around 7, effectively giving sufficient weight to one of two potential latent factors by reducing the influence of the other. Table 2 shows the comparison of two competing models (two or four factors) for all 22 of the SEEM and SIMS items. An RMSEA value of less than .08 indicates acceptable fit of the data to the model specified, while less than .05 indicates a good fit (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). The model with 2 latent factors, M1 (measured by the SEEM and SIMS items grouped) with RMSEA > .08, does not meet criteria for an acceptable fit of the data. The model with 4 latent factors, M2 (SEEM divided into 6 Emotional Exhaustion items and 5 Depersonalization items, and SIMS divided into 5 Personal Accomplishment items and 6 Satisfaction with Ministry items) can accommodate all items with acceptable fit. Moreover, the reduction in chi-square value (223) for 5 degrees of freedom represents a significant improvement in model fit between M1 and M2 ($p < .001$).

Measurement Model

A confirmatory factor analysis of all scale items showed good factor loadings onto latent constructs, the weakest being .36 and all others over .40. Table 3 shows the factor loadings of the full measurement model.

Structural Model

The model solution converged properly, with the parameters for the model shown in Figure 1, and an RMSEA of .06 indicating adequate fit (Hair et al., 2010). Working Excessively did not have significant relationship with either of the negative outcomes (Emotional Exhaustion or Depersonalization), and had

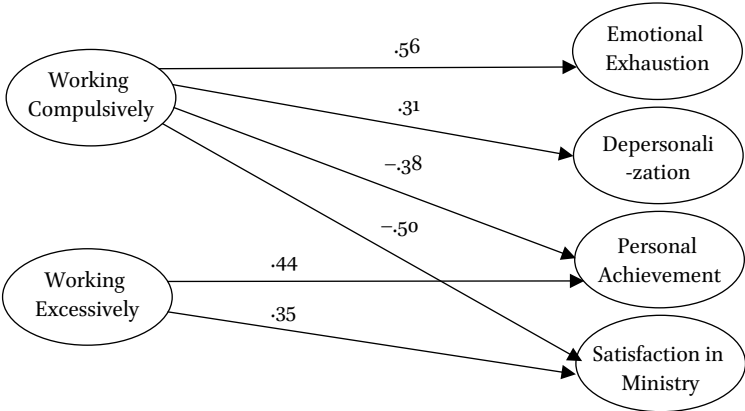
TABLE 2 *Model fit statistics for confirmatory factor analyses of negative and positive measures*

Model	χ^2	<i>df</i>	χ^2/df	RMSEA	Model Description
M1	890.61	208	4.28	.084	Two factors
M2	667.44	203	3.29	.071	Four Factors

TABLE 3 *Measurement model factor loadings, means and standard deviations*

	WkExc	WkCmp	EE	DP	PA	SM	M	SD
WkExc-1	.56						2.08	0.79
WkExc-2	.53						2.16	0.68
WkExc-3	.64						2.13	0.81
WkExc-4	.54						2.53	0.78
WkExc-5	.54						2.72	0.88
WkCmp-1		.72					2.04	0.80
WkCmp-2		.54					2.26	0.83
WkCmp-3		.58					1.71	0.69
WkCmp-4		.53					1.59	0.75
WkCmp-5		.54					2.11	0.84
EE-1			.72				2.80	1.08
EE-2			.67				2.78	1.08
EE-3			.59				1.76	0.88
EE-4			.64				2.36	0.85
EE-5			.59				2.17	0.99
EE-6			.58				2.82	1.03
DP-1				.71			2.03	0.90
DP-2				.48			2.06	0.85
DP-3				.36			2.38	0.87
DP-4				.58			2.25	0.89
DP-5				.57			2.17	0.84
PA-1					.56		4.15	0.68
PA-2					.48		3.63	0.69
PA-3					.40		3.77	0.65
PA-4					.74		4.18	0.56
PA-5					.64		4.16	0.62
SM-1						.67	4.13	0.68
SM-2						.77	3.96	0.78
SM-3						.59	4.05	0.71
SM-4						.54	4.34	0.74
SM-5						.70	3.93	0.79
SM-6						.78	4.01	0.72

Note. WkExc, Work Excessively; WkCmp, Work Compulsively; EE, Emotional Exhaustion; DP, Depersonalization; PA, Personal Accomplishment; SM, Satisfaction with ministry.



Model fit: $\chi^2 = 1188.85$, $df = 449$, RMSEA = 0.060

FIGURE 1 Structural model

a positive relationship with Personal Accomplishment and Satisfaction in Ministry. Working Compulsively had a positive relationship with Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization, and a negative relationship with Personal Accomplishment and Satisfaction in Ministry.

Discussion

It is clear from the results that working extra hours is the norm for Australian church workers, with most working more than 20% extra, and one in ten working 50% extra. Answers to the questions about overwork reinforced that this culture exists, with almost all ministers taking work home and a large majority working on their days off. Such a culture may be reinforced by the unusual nature of church work, particular those features which can create boundary issues on which these overwork questions touch. Living in close proximity to the workplace, often on the same site, breaks down the natural separation between work life and home life. So too does being heavily engaged with work on the weekend and having allocated days off during the days when most other people (including family and those to whom they minister) are working. In addition, working in an organization that is almost entirely peopled by volunteers (in many cases the minister is the sole staff member) is to be functioning in a culture that for most people ignores work boundaries. Given this, the response to the overwork questions indicate a work culture where work-life

boundaries are easily blurred. In such a work culture it would be easy to work excessively, and for this to seem normal.

It is interesting, and perhaps a feature of such a work culture, that while the degree of overwork appears to be relatively high, Australian church workers do not seem to rate themselves as working excessively. Few figures are available for comparison, but those from a large Dutch study using the same measures (Taris et al., 2012) would place these church workers towards the lower end of the spectrum with professions in the health, social work and education sectors. Along with these professions, church workers have a primarily people-focused job with emphasis on personal care, education of others or both, and the structure of the work can mean a higher level of autonomy in terms of working extra hours. It is possible that such professions, often with a looser structure of hours set for work, as well as freedom to take work home, do not as easily affirm statements from the Working Excessively subscale, such as 'I seem to be in a hurry and racing against the clock' and 'I find myself doing two or three things at one time such as eating lunch and writing a memo, while talking on the telephone', compared to professionals in agriculture, construction and consultancy, who score highly in this area (Taris et al., 2012). Moreover, as many church workers work as a sole staff member, the item 'I find myself continuing to work after my co-workers have called it quits' cannot function as a reliable indicator of overwork, which was indeed the lowest scoring item of the scale in this study. For church workers in particular, but perhaps also for those in caring and education professions more generally, the Working Excessively subscale may be inadequate and need adapting. This may also help explain the slightly lower than desirable reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .69).

The results for the other component of Workaholism, working compulsively, suggest ministers do not as commonly identify with the inner dynamic of feeling compulsively driven to work hard. The sample in this study would be placed in the lowest group of the parallel Dutch study (Taris et al., 2012) along with social workers and paramedics. This suggests that working compulsively is not as common in professions that involve working closely with people in a caring capacity. The nature of the work itself, dealing with human need (and sometimes crisis), is possibly more drawing to workers than guilt-inducing or obligation-laden (the dynamics of working compulsively). It is worth considering then whether the positive dynamics in such professions can be transferred to others as a way of mitigating against the development of workaholism.

That is not to say that workaholism is non-existent in church workers. There was a full range of scores on both subscales, but the results of the structural equation model suggest it is the Working Compulsively component that is related to problematic outcomes. The Working Compulsively latent factor,

modelled from the five items in the subscale, was associated with all four well-being measures in the expected ways. Its strongest relationship was with Emotional Exhaustion, and was positive, i.e., those more driven to working compulsively were more likely to be emotionally exhausted. Similarly they were more likely to identify with the statements describing depersonalization.

Working compulsively could represent one of the factors in a downward spiral into burnout. Not being able to stop working without feeling guilty, and pushing oneself to work hard even when it is not enjoyable means that the signs of burnout might be ignored. Emotional exhaustion should be recognized as one indication that the efforts at work are not sustainable, that emotional reserves needed to care effectively for people's needs and meet other work demands are being depleted and not replenished. Depersonalization, the distancing that takes place in order to continue to function in this depleted state, should also be recognized as an indicator that all is not well. However, workers with a tendency to over-ride warning signs and push on regardless (i.e., working compulsively) will put themselves in greater danger as time goes on if the work situation does not change.

Working compulsively was also associated with being less likely to experience satisfaction in ministry and a sense of achievement in work. One might expect that a drive to work hard regardless, and a level of obsessiveness and inability to relax, could mean greater likelihood to achieve and be satisfied with their work. These results do not support that as an outcome; they would be more likely to feel they are not achieving enough, and less likely to feel satisfied. Here we see another potential cycle of working compulsively, in the same vein as a downward spiral that affects the negative outcomes. If they are aware of lower personal achievement and lower satisfaction, this might lead to a determination to work even harder, reinforcing the compulsive attitude to work.

The dynamics of how working excessively relates to wellbeing outcomes is more intriguing. Although the Working Excessively scale had a moderate positive correlation with the Working Compulsively scale, the structural equation model showed that working excessively was only related to the positive wellbeing outcomes, and in a positive sense. Those who describe themselves as busy, in a hurry, and multi-tasking are likely to have a higher sense of personal achievement and a higher satisfaction in their ministry. This suggests that, for church workers, working excessively is not in itself a threat to their wellbeing, in fact it may somewhat enhance it, at least in relation to work issues.

Although working excessively on its own is not harmful and can be a feature of work engagement, regarded as a positive phenomenon, the correlation with working compulsively in this study signals the dangerous side: the syndrome

of workaholism. That both work engagement and workaholism exhibit a tendency to be strongly committed to one's work highlights the need to understand better the difference in how these two phenomena function. This study has highlighted the importance of better understanding working compulsively in particular. It was only this component that was linked to negative outcomes for church workers. The presence of working excessively cannot be ignored, for it represents the compulsion to work being acted upon if nothing else, and it could be that the two work in combination reinforcing each other. However, as the compulsion component was associated with all negative outcomes, and working excessively with positive outcomes, it may be less useful to focus on workaholism and instead to give greater attention specifically to the dynamics of working compulsively. Further studies investigating this phenomenon are recommended.

A limitation of this study is the cross-sectional nature of the data. Longitudinal investigation of working compulsively could in particular be helpful to further our knowledge. So too would examinations of compulsive attitudes to work in church workers of other countries, and more comparative Australian data from other professions and sectors, to put these initial results in a greater context.

Conclusion

This study has highlighted several important issues for workaholism and its relationship to burnout in Australian church workers, which may well signal similar issues in church workers of other countries and warrant further investigation. The items typically used to measure workaholism may not be adequate for church workers, or indeed for others in professions focused on human interaction, so improvements could lead to more conclusive results. It is plausible that mutually reinforcing dynamics between working compulsively and working excessively can create entrenched workaholism. However working compulsively appears to be the primary area of workaholism that leads to lower wellbeing in church workers. Working compulsively was associated both with negative outcomes (such as emotional exhaustion) and reduced positive outcomes (such as personal accomplishment). Feeling guilty when not working and pushing oneself to work hard, even when it's not enjoyable, are compulsive work dynamics that could risk burnout by ignoring the warning signs of fatigue when they appear. These are important concepts to investigate and to understand better, for the sake both of workers who can be better helped, and those to whom they minister.

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Professional Burnout among Catholic Religious Sisters in Italy: An Empirical Enquiry Exploring the Protective Role of Quality of Community Life

*Giuseppe Crea and Leslie J. Francis**

Abstract

This study set out to examine three questions regarding the prevalence and correlates of burnout among a sample of 194 Catholic religious sisters in Italy who completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory alongside the Big Five Factor model of personality and the Index of Community Satisfaction. Regarding the prevalence of burnout, the data demonstrated that the mean scale scores of these sisters on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment all came within the normal range proposed by the test manual. Regarding the personality correlates of burnout, the data demonstrated that the two key personality predictors of higher burnout scores among these sisters were high neuroticism scores and low agreeableness scores. High openness scores also predicted higher personal accomplishment, but were unrelated to differences in emotional exhaustion or in depersonalization. Regarding predictors of community life, after taking individual differences in age and personality into account, higher levels of community satisfaction were associated with lower levels of emotional exhaustion and lower levels of depersonalization, but unrelated to levels of personal accomplishment. This finding suggests that a good quality of community life among religious sisters may enhance resilience against burnout, while a poor quality of community life among religious sisters may exacerbate burnout.

Keywords

catholic Church – nuns – psychological wellbeing – psychology

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The notion of professional burnout has both stimulated research and suggested therapeutic strategies among a range of caring or helping professions. This syndrome, considered a possible outcome of stress in certain specific conditions (Del Rio, 1990), indicates

a particular type of reaction to stress which is typical of the so-called helping professions (doctors, nurses, teachers, policemen, lawyers, etc.); i.e. professions where the relationship with the patient, client, or pupil, etc., plays a leading role together with the work in itself.

SANTINELLO, 1990, p. 47

Cherniss (1983) defines burnout "as a process during which a previously engaged professional disengages himself from his work in reply to the stress and tension from his work" (p. 3). Maslach (1992), instead, focuses her attention on the situation (over-involvement, heavy workloads, loss of control) and on the relationship (emotional effort of empathy, emotions and tensions, negative focusing on problems), while also underlining the importance of personal characteristics (demographic, personality) as features of burnout. She warns that "there is a complex interaction between individual interpersonal and institutional factors and that all these must be taken into account" even though it is not always clear what the importance of each dimension is (p. 270).

Despite the differences displayed by the various authors, there is a general awareness of it being a multidimensional phenomenon that involves personal factors, factors which are relative to work organization and socio-cultural factors. Burnout may affect not only those involved in the caring or helping professions, but also all those who, to various degrees, encounter ongoing interpersonal relationships characterized by intensity and emotional involvement (Francescato, Leone, & Traversi, 1993). Research has focused on a range of professional occupations (Maslach & Jackson, 1986; Ronco, Fizzotti, & Crea, 1993) and included lawyers (Maslach & Jackson, 1978), policemen (Burke & Deszca, 1986), educators (Cherniss, 1988; Savicki, 1993), pastors (Daniel & Rogers, 1981), and missionaries (Crea, 1994), as well as housewives (Ronco, Leo, & Fizzotti, 1996). Maslach (1992) noted that many situations of life contain elements that can lead to burnout, as can happen for teachers with their students, or mothers dealing with family relationships, or clergy who have to be a source of refuge and support for whoever seeks it at any time and who, in turn, may have no one to turn to when they are faced with personal problems (pp. 27–28).

Against this background, the present study concentrates on a specific context of 'dedication to others', the dedication of women who have consecrated their lives in religious commitment, who are continuously in contact with

people's requests and who dedicate themselves either through their specific professions (medical, teaching, etc.) or outside a structured work organization, as in the case of those involved in community work or pastoral activities (Blanton & Morris, 1999).

Burnout among Religious Sisters

Some commentators argue that there is a reluctance to talk of stress and burnout among those who have dedicated their lives to religion; it is lay people who get stressed by the number of things that have to be done (Coate, 1989). Those who have dedicated their life to ministry and pastoral activity may be so committed to religious ideals that they are not aware of the risk of getting exhausted. Their dedication is based on very strong religious motivation, and in particular on the theological belief of bearing witness to Christian love in any situation and at all times. On this account, the primary duty of religious men and women in their activities and charitable works is that of dedicating themselves altruistically to people, be it when they exercise their profession by specifically helping others, or when they dedicate themselves patiently to others in the many functions that make up community life or varied pastoral activities (visiting the sick, helping young people in difficulty), catechesis (the teaching of spiritual subjects), etc. (Crea, 2003; Wispé, 1978). This role is not given them by society, but rather by the intrinsic motivation underlying their vocation of being everything to everyone; therefore, through their dedication, they feel strengthened by their self-description of an altruistic role (Pinkus, 1991). Other commentators recognize that, although their faith is certainly the foundation of their vocation, this does not exempt them from getting tired, feeling exhausted or stressed (Gill, 1980; Kammer, 1978; U.S. Episcopal Conference, 1982; Grosch & Olson, 1991, 2000; Francis, Loudon, & Rutledge, 2004).

Based on the assumption that, in all apostolic activity by religious sisters, there is an element of commitment which is profoundly linked to their ideal of religious consecration (Crea, 2001), the present study includes both religious sisters who carry out a professionally-qualified activity outside their religious community, especially in the areas of health (nurses), social assistance (social workers), and education (teachers), and those who work in ecclesiastical contexts equally definable as dedicated, in the more apostolic sense of the word, such as pastors in parishes, chaplains, community formators/animators, and wherever there is emotional and motivational involvement for the good of others (Gill, 1980; Grosch & Olson, 1991).

John Paul II (1996, n. 46) claims that "consecrated persons are asked to be true experts of communion and to practice the spirituality of communion".

This claim refers not only to the activities of their institutions (schools, hospitals, therapeutic communities) but also and above all to the altruistic spirit to which they are called by virtue of their vocation. This becomes a full-time dedication that comprises a variety of duties. On the one hand, these duties require a personal commitment to respond to others' needs; while on the other hand, the duties conform individuals to meet socio-institutional expectations. This brings them to live their commitment (be it professionally qualified or informal) as if in a 'second job' situation, whether in or out of the community. Therefore an apostolic-pastoral dimension is added to their professional job.

These conditions may create an unhelpful set of dynamics. Thus, an excessive work-load, in the sense that there are too many requests for the religious sisters to answer, may cause a sense of extreme inadequacy. Responding to too many requests may generate the feeling that there is no correspondence between the amount of energy involved and the visible results obtained. Then there may be the added difficulty of having to serve in unsatisfactory structural conditions, in which neither the necessary instrumental means nor the autonomy granted correspond to the responsibility that individual religious sisters are theoretically given. Moreover, the vocational commitment typical of religious life may generate additional problems. For example, exhaustion due to stressful work conditions (where it is sometimes difficult to reconcile the requests of professional and non-professional work with the satisfaction of the religious community life) may become even more stressful when there is the added perception of not being able to receive adequate support from the community. At the same time, the structure of the interpersonal network within religious communities may not always be perceived as a source of emotional resource and support from which religious sisters can draw strength in order to deal with the strains arising from the helping activities which the religious carry out.

Assessing Burnout among Catholic Religious

A small number of empirical studies have begun to chart the level of burnout experienced by Catholic priests, employing Maslach's three component model of burnout as operationalized through the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Maslach's three component model conceptualizes burnout as beginning with emotional exhaustion. Then, in turn, emotional exhaustion leads to depersonalization and depersonalization leads to lack of personal accomplishment (see Maslach, 2003). According to this account, emotional exhaustion begins to debilitate the individual. As emotional resources are depleted, members of the caring professions feel that they are no longer

able to give of themselves at a psychological level. With the depletion of emotional resources, members of the caring profession begin to adopt negative and cynical attitudes toward and feelings about their clients. As a consequence, the tendency toward depersonalization grows and members of the caring professions increasingly view their clients as somehow deserving their troubles. As a consequence of distancing their clients in this way and feeling diminished competence to help them, members of the caring professions increasingly lose their sense of achieving worthwhile things in their work. This leads to dissatisfaction with themselves and to dissatisfaction with their professional role.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory proposes three scales to assess these three distinct components of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of personal accomplishment. In the original form of the Maslach Burnout Inventory, emotional exhaustion is assessed by a nine-item scale. The items describe feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work. An example item on this dimension is 'I feel burned out from my work'. Depersonalization is assessed by a five-item scale. The items describe an unfeeling and impersonal response towards the individuals in one's care. An example item on this dimension is 'I feel I treat some recipients as if they were impersonal objects'. Personal accomplishment is assessed by an eight-item scale. The items describe feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work with people. An example item on this dimension is 'I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work'. In contrast to the other two subscales, lower mean scores on the subscale of personal accomplishment correspond to higher degrees of experienced burnout. Maslach and Jackson (1986) score the Maslach Burnout Inventory by inviting respondents to evaluate each of the 22 items on a seven-point scale of frequency, from 'never', through 'a few times a year or less', 'once a month or less', 'a few times a month', 'once a week', and 'a few times a week', to 'every day'.

The scale properties of the Maslach Burnout Inventory were subjected to close and thorough scrutiny by a number of studies conducted during the 1980s and early 1990s. Reliability and validity have been supported by studies like Abu-Hilal and Salameh (1992), Corcoran (1985), Iwancki and Schwab (1981), Pierce and Molloy (1989), Powers and Gose (1986), and Schaufeli and van Dierendonck (1993). The factor structure has been tested and generally supported by studies like Belcastro, Gold, and Hays (1983), Byrne (1991, 1993), Gold (1984), Gold, Bachelor, and Michael (1989), Gold, Roth, Wright, Michael, and Chen (1992), Green and Walkey (1988), Green, Walkey, and Taylor (1991), and Walkey and Green (1992).

The original form of the Maslach Burnout Inventory has been employed in several studies among Catholic clergy, including Crea (1994), Virginia (1998),

Raj and Dean (2005), Joseph, Luyten, Corveleyn, and de Witte (2011), and Rossetti (2011). Other studies among Catholic clergy have used a modified form of the Maslach Burnout Inventory especially adapted to reflect the experiences of those engaged in pastoral ministry (that also increased the number of items to thirty and scored each item on a five-point Likert scale from agree strongly through uncertain to disagree strongly), including Francis et al. (2004), and Francis et al. (2007).

Using the modified form of the Maslach Burnout Inventory, Francis, Loudon, and Rutledge (2004) reported on findings from 1468 Catholic parochial clergy in England and Wales. Three main conclusions emerged from this study. The first conclusion drew on the level of endorsement (agree strongly or agree) given to each of the thirty items of the modified instrument. This level of endorsement profiled a group of men who recorded quite high levels of emotional exhaustion, quite high levels of depersonalization, and very high levels of personal accomplishment.

With regard to emotional exhaustion, over a third of the Catholic priests said that they felt used up at the end of the day in parish ministry (36%). Over a quarter of the Catholic priests found working with people all day was a real strain for them (27%) and felt that they were working too hard in their parish ministry (26%). Around one in five of the Catholic clergy felt frustrated by their parish ministry (22%) and felt emotionally drained from their parish ministry (19%). Around one in six of the Catholic clergy felt fatigued when they got up in the morning and had to face another day in the parish (16%) and said that they felt burned out from their parish ministry (14%). Around one in ten of the Catholic clergy said that they felt like they were at the end of their tether (10%), that working with people directly put too much strain on them (9%), and that they would feel a lot better if they could get out of parish ministry (8%).

With regard to depersonalization, nearly a third of the Catholic clergy felt parishioners blamed them for some of their problems (31%). Over a quarter of the Catholic clergy recognized that they were less patient with parishioners than they used to be (27%), and that they found it difficult to listen to what some parishioners are really saying to them (26%). One in every six Catholic clergy worried that parish ministry was hardening them emotionally (17%) and almost as many felt they treated some parishioners as if they were impersonal objects (14%). One in every ten Catholic clergy recognized that they did not really care what happened to some parishioners (11%), that they had come to the conclusion that most people cannot be really helped with their problems (11%), and that they had become more callous toward people since working in parish ministry (9%). A minority of Catholic priests said that they cannot

be bothered to understand how some people feel about things (7%) and that they wished parishioners would leave them alone (7%).

With regard to personal accomplishment, nine out of every ten Catholic priests said that they gained a lot of personal satisfaction from working with people (90%). At least three-quarters of Catholic priests affirmed that, if they could have their time all over again, they would still go into parish ministry (81%), that they felt exhilarated after working closely with parishioners (76%), that they could easily create a relaxed atmosphere with their parishioners (75%), and that they had accomplished many worthwhile things in their parish ministry (75%). At least two-thirds of Catholic clergy felt that they were positively influencing other people's lives through their parish ministry (70%) and that they dealt with emotional problems very calmly in their parish ministry (69%). Three-fifths of Catholic clergy said that they could easily understand how their parishioners felt about things (59%). The proportions dropped, however, to less than one-third of Catholic clergy who felt that they dealt very effectively with the problems of their parishioners (32%) and who claimed to feel very energetic (31%).

The second conclusion compared the mean scales scores of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment recorded by these 1468 Catholic priests with the mean scale scores recorded by a comparable sample of Anglican clergymen reported by Rutledge and Francis (2004). According to these data, Catholic priests experienced a higher level of emotional exhaustion and a higher level of depersonalization than was the case among Anglican priests. At the same time, Catholic priests experienced a higher level of personal accomplishment than was the case among Anglican priests.

The third conclusion nested individual differences recorded on the three components of Burnout proposed by the Maslach Burnout Inventory within the three dimensional model of personality proposed by Eysenck and Eysenck (1991). These data demonstrated that higher levels of both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were associated with low extraversion scores (i.e., introversion), high neuroticism scores (i.e., emotional lability) and high psychoticism scores (i.e., toughmindedness). Higher levels of personal accomplishment were associated with high extraversion scores and low neuroticism scores (i.e., emotional stability), but unrelated to psychoticism scores. The magnitude of the correlations confirmed that personality is indeed a key in explaining individual differences in the experience of burnout among Catholic priests.

In a second paper drawing on these same data, Francis et al. (2007) tested the thesis that companion animals (specifically cats and dogs) may contribute to the work-related psychological health of Catholic parochial clergy and

reduce levels of burnout. This thesis was grounded in the considerable literature that has identified social benefits, medical benefits and psychological benefits associated with companion animals across diverse populations. Using multiple regression models to control for individual differences in age and personality, the data indicated that, contrary to expectation, no psychological benefit accrued from owning a cat, while ownership of a dog was associated with statistically significant (but very small) increases in two aspects of professional burnout (emotional exhaustion and depersonalization). These findings were interpreted to suggest that current pressures among Catholic parochial clergy in England and Wales are so great that having a dog within the presbytery adds to the burden rather than providing recreational relief.

While there are some clear advantages in employing the modified version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory designed specifically to take into account the experiences of those engaged in religious professional activities, there are also important disadvantages in so doing. The major disadvantage is that scores recorded on the modified instrument cannot be utilized in relationship to normative data generated by the parent instrument. It is for this reason that the present study proposes to employ the original form of the Maslach Burnout Inventory within a new study of religious sisters engaged in altruistic and charitable activities.

Taking Personality into Account

The finding reported by Francis, Loudon, and Rutledge (2004) that personality scores provide a major key to predicting individual differences in burnout among Catholic priests is consistent with a much broader stream of research. This broader stream of research has employed three different models of personality to explore individual differences in professional burnout among religious professionals.

The first model is the three dimensional model proposed by Eysenck and Eysenck (1991) that suggests that individual differences in personality can be most economically and most efficiently expressed in terms of three higher order orthogonal factors. Eysenck and Eysenck style these factors as follows: the continuum from introversion through ambiversion to extraversion; the continuum from emotional stability through emotional lability to neurotic disorder; and the continuum from tendermindedness through toughmindedness to psychotic disorder. This model of personality has been employed among clergy by Francis and Rutledge (2000), Francis et al. (2004), Rutledge and Francis (2004), Francis et al. (2007), Turton and Francis (2007), and Francis, Hills, and Rutledge

(2008). These studies agree that the clergy most vulnerable to burnout are introverts who also score high on the neuroticism scale, while the clergy most resilient to burnout are extraverts who score low on the neuroticism scale.

The second model is the four component model proposed originally by Jung (1971) and developed by a series of indicators concerned with psychological type, including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1985), the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (Keirsey & Bates, 1978), and the Francis Psychological Type Scales (Francis, 2005). This model distinguishes between 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). This model of personality has been employed among clergy by Francis, Wulff, and Robbins (2008), Francis, Robbins, Kaldor, and Castle (2009), Robbins and Francis (2010), Francis, Gubb, and Robbins (2012), and Robbins, Francis, and Powell (2012). These studies agree that the clergy most vulnerable to burnout are introverts and that the clergy most resilient to burnout are extraverts.

The third model is the Big Five Factor model proposed by Costa and McCrae (1996). This model proposes five factors generally styled neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. This model of personality has been employed among clergy by Rodgeron and Piedmont (1998) who found higher levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization associated high neuroticism scores, low extraversion scores, low agreeableness scores, and low conscientiousness scores. These findings are broadly confirmed by later studies, including Golden, Piedmont, Ciarrocchi, and Rodgeron (2004), Miner (2007), Galea (2010), and Joseph et al. (2011).

While there are some clear advantages in building on the growing body of research linking professional burnout with the Eysenckian three dimensional model of personality or with the Jungian model of psychological type, there are also two additional advantages in building on the less well used model offered by the Big Five Factor model, namely the novelty of helping develop literature in that area and the opportunity for linking this research with a dominant paradigm within the broader field of the psychology of religion. It is for these reasons that the present study proposes to employ the Big Five model of personality within a new study of religious sisters engaged in altruistic and charitable activities.

Community Life

The study of professional burnout among Catholic religious sisters may need to take into account one key issue not relevant for similar research conducted

among other professional groups. Religious sisters live within the context of religious communities in which there are clear models and expectations of community life. Such models and expectations may hold positive or negative implications for work-related psychological health. Two bodies of literature lead to these considerations.

First, general research on burnout (as conceptualized by the Maslach Burnout Inventory) draws attention to the ways in which various forms of social support have distinct relationships with the three components of burnout. For example, early research by Leiter and Maslach (1988) found pleasant contact with supervisors was negatively related to depersonalization, while unpleasant supervisor contact was positively related to emotional exhaustion, and pleasant co-worker contact was positively related to personal accomplishment. Other early research drew attention to two conflicting implications of family life. On the one hand, social support from family members may serve as an important resource building capacity to manage the emotional demands of the caring professions. On the other hand, difficulties in managing boundaries between work and family life may serve as a contribution to emotional exhaustion and to depersonalization (Leiter, 1990; Leiter & Durup, 1994).

Second, research specifically on burnout and stress among clergy and other religious professionals draws attention to the potential benefits of religious community life. For example, in their study of 250 religious leaders, Rayburn, Richmond, and Rogers (1986) draw attention to the finding that religious sisters have the lowest level of stress from occupational environment and also the highest score on total personal resources. They attribute such differences to the beneficial nature of community life.

In order to conceptualize and to measure perceptions of community life within religious communities, Crea (2002) and Baiocco, Crea, Laghi, and Provenzano (2004) developed the Index of Community Satisfaction (ICS). In the first study, Crea (2002) created a questionnaire of 65 items to assess how individuals deal with community conflict and how they view community life as a place for mutual understanding and mutual support. In so doing the questionnaire measured four dimensions of conflict, namely lack of empathy, interpersonal misunderstanding, communication difficulties, and lack of community ideals. This study demonstrated that good community ideals and a positive view of community life helped to face conflicts. In the second study, Baiocco et al. (2004) examined the factor structure of these 65 items and selected 11 items that generated a coherent unidimension measure of community satisfaction. Subsequent further refinement of this 11-item index removed one item that demonstrated low item rest-of-test correlations in order to produce the 10-item Index of Community Satisfaction (ICS) that will be employed in the present study.

Research Questions

Against this background, the present study has been designed to address three research questions among a sample of Catholic religious sisters in Italy who are themselves engaged in altruistic and charitable activities. The first research question concerns employing the original form of the Maslach Burnout Inventory to assess the overall level of burnout experienced by religious sisters engaged in altruistic and charitable activities. The second research question concerns assessing the connection between personality and individual differences in levels of burnout experienced by sisters engaged in altruistic and charitable activities. The third research question concerns assessing the extent to which overall levels of satisfaction and community life impact individual difference in levels of burnout experienced by religious sisters engaged in altruistic and charitable activities, after taking age and personality differences into account.

Method

Procedure

The data were collected in an ongoing formation workshop conducted with the 'Claretianum' Institute of Theology of Consecrated Life in Rome. The participants completed a 10-page structured questionnaire addressing work characteristics, outcome variables of burnout, interpersonal variable of community satisfaction, personality variables, and background variables. All surveys were completed anonymously.

Measures

The background questions concerned demographic information such as age, gender, and race, and it included items to assess primary work setting, position held, and number of years spent in direct service. Other items included percentage of time in specific types of work activities such as individual or group activity.

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)

The MBI (Maslach & Jackson, 1986) consists of 22 statements of job-related feelings that concern emotional exhaustion (EE), depersonalization (DP), and lack of a sense of personal accomplishment (PA). The frequency with which each statement occurs is measured on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 'never' (0) to 'everyday' (6). The emotional exhaustion subscale, consisting of 9

items, is used to assess feelings of emotional over-extension and inability to meet the interpersonal demands of one's work. The depersonalization subscale, consisting of 5 items, is used to measure an unfeeling, impersonal, or even negative response toward the recipients of one's services. The personal accomplishment subscale, consisting of 8 items, is used to assess feelings of incompetence and lack of achievement.

The reliability of the MBI, as reported by Maslach and Jackson (1986), is as follows: test-retest reliability, measured at 2- to 4-week intervals, was .82 for EE, .60 for DP, and .80 for PA; internal consistency, as measured with Cronbach's coefficient alpha, was .90 for EE, .79 for DP, and .71 for PA. The convergent and discriminant validity of the MBI has been demonstrated in numerous studies (i.e., Maslach & Jackson 1986; Rafferty, Lemkau, Purdy, & Rudisill, 1986). Subscale scores were computed as the sum of the responses made to each item in a given subscale. Burnout is defined by high scores on the EE and DP subscales and low scores on the PA subscale. A relative absence of burnout is characterized by the opposite pattern.

The norms for health care workers reported by Maslach and Jackson (1986) indicate that EE scores less than 19 are classified as 'low', scores from 19 to 26 as 'average', and scores greater than 26 as 'high'. For DP, scores less than 6 are classified as 'low', scores from 6 to 9 as 'average', and scores greater than 9 as 'high'. Lower PA scores reflect greater burnout. Therefore, PA scores less than 34 are treated as 'high', scores from 34 to 39 as 'average', and scores greater than 39 as 'low'.

Personality

Personality dimensions were measured with the Big Five Factor Questionnaire, a self-report measure for assessing the basic personality dimensions of energy/extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and intellect/openness, developed by Costa and McCrae (1996) and adapted in Italy by Caprara, Barbaranelli, and Borgogni (1993). The instrument contains 132 items. The subjects used a 5-point scale ranging from 1 ('strongly disagree') to 5 ('strongly agree') to indicate the degree to which the item described them. Higher scores indicate a greater degree of each dimension.

Index of Community Satisfaction

The ten-item instrument adapted from previous research (Crea, 2002; Baiocco et al., 2004) was used to measure social satisfaction and relationships in community. Using a four-point scale, from 1 ('never or rarely'), through 2 ('sometimes') and 3 ('often'), to 4 ('always'), respondents indicate how often they engage in positive relationships of different content with the other members

of the community. Exploratory factor analysis using eigenvalues greater than one and an orthogonal rotation yielded one factor. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the factor was .85.

Participants

The participants comprised 194 Catholic religious sisters from different parts of Italy who were engaged in a range of altruistic and charitable activities, mainly outside their community, as teachers (18%), nurses (42%), or as social workers (20%). Others were engaged in pastoral ministry or in religious teaching (21%). In terms of highest educational level, 8% had completed primary education, 29% had completed secondary school, and 63% had completed university.

Results

The first stage of data analysis checked the factor structure of the Maslach Burnout Inventory in order to examine its appropriateness for use among Catholic religious sisters. Principal-component analysis (PCA) with varimax rotations identified roughly the same three factor structure as proposed by Maslach and Jackson (1986). The three factors accounted for 42.9% of the total variance. Factors were defined by a criterion of item loadings equal to or greater than .40. The first factor corresponded to EE, with loadings exceeding criterion for all nine of the original subscale items. Similarly, factor 2 identified seven of the eight PA items, and factor 3 included four of the five DP items.

The second stage of data analysis examined the scale properties of all nine measures employed in the study (the three components of burnout, the five factors of personality, and the measure of community satisfaction) in terms of the alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951) and the means and standard deviations. These data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 confirms that the scale of community satisfaction functions with a good level of internal consistency reliability (.84). Three of the Big Five Factors of personality meet the threshold of acceptability of .65 proposed by DeVellis (2003), while conscientiousness almost reaches this threshold (.64) and extraversion fails to do so (.54). In terms of the Maslach Burnout Inventory, the scale of emotional exhaustion achieves a good level of internal consistency reliability (.81) and so does the scale of personal accomplishment (.74). The short scale of depersonalization, however, is somewhat less satisfactory (.61).

TABLE 1 *Scale properties*

	<i>N</i> items	α	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Emotional exhaustion	9	.81	21.8	10.4
Depersonalization	5	.57	7.1	5.9
Personal accomplishment	8	.74	35.9	8.1
Community satisfaction	10	.86	26.3	4.1
Extraversion	24	.54	70.9	8.2
Neuroticism	24	.81	70.6	11.7
Agreeableness	24	.65	82.2	8.9
Conscientiousness	24	.64	79.0	8.8
Openness	24	.71	78.8	10.3

Note. α = Cronbach's alpha.

The scores recorded on the emotional exhaustion scale by the Catholic religious sisters ($M = 21.8$) fall within the average range (19 to 26) proposed by Maslach and Jackson (1986). In terms of the individual items, over a quarter of the sisters report that they feel used up at the end of the workday (37%), and that they feel fatigued when they get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job (27%). Between one in five and one in four of the sisters feel that they are working too hard on their job (22%) and that they feel emotionally drained from their work (21%). More than one in ten of the sisters say that working with people all day is a real strain for them (18%), that they feel burned out from their work (18%), that working with people directly puts too much stress on them (16%), that they feel like they are at the end of their rope (12%), and that they feel frustrated in their job (11%).

The scores recorded on the depersonalization scale by the Catholic religious sisters ($M = 7.1$) fall within the average range (6 to 9) proposed by Maslach and Jackson (1986). In terms of the individual items, nearly a quarter of the sisters report that they have become more callous toward people since taking up their job (24%). Over one in ten of the sisters feel that recipients blame them for some of their problems (18%), that they do not really care what happens to some recipients (14%), and that they worry that their job is hardening them emotionally (11%). Almost one in ten feel that they treat some recipients as if they were impersonal objects (8%).

The scores recorded on the personal accomplishment scale by the Catholic religious sisters ($M = 35.9$) fall within the average range (34 to 39) proposed by Maslach and Jackson (1986). In terms of the individual items, over half of the sisters feel exhilarated after working closely with their recipients (67%), feel very energetic (61%), can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with their recipients (60%), feel that they are positively influencing other people's lives through their work (58%), deal very effectively with the problems of their recipients (55%), and feel that they have accomplished many worthwhile things in their job (53%). Lower proportions of the sisters say that they can easily understand how their recipients feel about things (48%), or say that in their work they deal with emotional problems very calmly (30%).

Since the Index of Community Satisfaction is a relatively new instrument the third stage of data analysis examines this measure in greater detail. Table 2 presents the properties of this instrument in terms of the correlations between each individual item and the sum of the other items, and in terms of the proportion of sisters who endorsed the responses 'always' or 'often' on the four-point frequency. The item rest-of-test correlations show that the eight positively worded items all record correlations above .5, while the two negatively worded items record somewhat lower correlations. In terms of the item endorsement the

TABLE 2 *Scale properties for the Index of Community Satisfaction*

	<i>r</i>	Often %
I believe that our community is reasonably happy	.66	66%
I have received from my community more than I expected	.59	65%
There is dissent in my community*	.49	22%
My sisters and I understand each other very well	.54	48%
I have experienced moments of great joy in our community	.59	50%
There is harmony in my community	.69	63%
Our community succeeds better than most others	.62	39%
The positive aspects of my community far exceed the negative ones	.68	67%
Life in my community is positive	.57	78%
There are differences of opinion among the members of my community*	.27	62%

Note. *These items were reverse coded to calculate the item-rest-of-test correlations. r = item-rest-of-test correlations; Often % = the sum of those who responded always or often on the four-point scale of frequency.

positive items reveal that the majority of the sisters feel positively toward their community. Thus 78% say that life in their community is positive; 67% agree that the positive aspects of their community far exceed the negative ones; 66% believe that their community is reasonably happy; 65% have received from their community more than they expected; 63% feel that there is harmony in their community; 50% have experienced moments of joy in their community; 48% agree that their sisters understand each other very well; and 39% feel that their community succeeds better than most others. The two negatively phrased items show that nearly two thirds of the sisters recognize that there are differences of opinion among the members of their community (62%), but that fewer than a quarter would go so far as to say that there is dissent in their community (22%).

The fourth stage in data analysis examines the bivariate correlations between the five personality factors (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness), the three components of burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment), community satisfaction, and age. Four features of these data (presented in Table 3) merit commentary. First, age functions as a significant predictor of one of the three components of burnout (personal accomplishment) and of two of the five factors of personality. Older sisters record lower scores of personal accomplishment, lower scores of agreeableness, and lower scores of openness.

Second, one of the five factors of personality functions as a significant predictor of community satisfaction. Sisters who record higher scores on the scale of neuroticism also record lower scores on the Index of Community Satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the view that individuals who display high levels of anxiety tend to be less content with life in general.

Third, two of the five factors of personality function as significant predictors of all three components of burnout. Sisters who record higher scores on the scale of neuroticism also record higher scores on the scale of emotional exhaustion, higher scores on the scale of depersonalization, and lower scores on the scale of personal accomplishment. Sisters who record higher scores on the scale of agreeableness also record lower scores on the scale of emotional exhaustion, lower scores on the scale of depersonalization, and higher scores on the scale of personal accomplishment. In addition to these consistent patterns across all three components of burnout, openness functions as a significant predictor of personal accomplishment. Sisters who record higher scores on the scale of openness also record higher scores on the scale of personal accomplishment.

Fourth, community satisfaction functions as a significant predictor of two of the three components of burnout. Sisters who record higher scores on the scale of community satisfaction also recorded lower scores on the scale of emotional exhaustion and lower scores on the scale of depersonalization.

TABLE 3 *Correlation matrix*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	—									
2. Community satisfaction	.02									
3. Emotional exhaustion	-.01	-.31***								
4. Depersonalization	.12	-.24**	.50***							
5. Personal achievement	-.16*	.13	.16*	.03						
6. Extraversion	.02	.01	.02	.11	.06					
7. Agreeableness	-.20**	.13	-.23**	-.33***	.21**	.11				
8. Conscientiousness	-.11	.07	.04	-.05	.13	.21**	.27***			
9. Neuroticism	.07	-.40***	.36***	.30***	-.16*	.05	-.29***	-.03		
10. Openness	-.23**	.02	.02	-.12	.21**	.32***	.36***	.35***	-.07	—

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

TABLE 4 *Regression model*

		increase					
	<i>r</i> ²	<i>r</i> ²	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i> <	<i>beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
<i>Emotional exhaustion</i>							
Age	.00	.01	0.01	NS	−.03	−0.48	NS
Extraversion	.00	.01	0.13	NS	.00	−0.04	NS
Neuroticism	.06	.05	11.93	.001	.19	2.57	.01
Agreeableness	.07	.05	1.98	NS	.08	1.10	NS
Conscientiousness	.16	.14	20.06	.001	−.24	−3.21	.001
Openness	.16	.14	1.12	NS	.08	1.00	NS
Community satisfaction	.19	.16	6.63	.01	−.19	−2.58	.01
<i>Depersonalization</i>							
Age	.02	.01	2.96	NS	.05	0.72	NS
Extraversion	.02	.01	2.39	NS	.13	1.88	NS
Neuroticism	.13	.12	9.51	.001	.26	3.46	.001
Agreeableness	.13	.11	7.13	.001	.04	0.53	NS
Conscientiousness	.17	.15	7.78	.001	−.15	−2.03	.05
Openness	.18	.15	6.55	.001	−.06	−0.76	NS
Community satisfaction	.19	.16	6.33	.001	−.15	−2.08	.05
<i>Personal accomplishment</i>							
Age	.03	.02	5.26	.05	−.11	−1.49	NS
Extraversion	.03	.02	3.15	.05	.02	0.22	NS
Neuroticism	.06	.05	4.04	.01	−.09	−1.13	NS
Agreeableness	.06	.04	3.19	.01	.03	0.42	NS
Conscientiousness	.08	.05	3.08	.01	.08	1.02	NS
Openness	.09	.06	2.97	.01	.13	1.57	NS
Community satisfaction	.10	.06	2.76	.01	.09	1.21	NS

The fifth stage of data analysis recognizes the complex patterns of interrelationships between age, personality, community satisfaction and burnout and employs fixed-order entry linear multiple regression models, with emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment as the dependent variables, to test whether community satisfaction provides further prediction of burnout, after taking into account individual differences in age and personality. In each of the three separate models presented in Table 4, predictor variables were entered in the fixed order of age, extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and community satisfaction. The key finding from these regression models is that higher levels of community satisfaction are significantly associated with lower levels of emotional exhaustion and of depersonalization, after taking into account individual differences in age and personality. At the same time, after taking age and personality into account, levels of community satisfaction are unrelated to levels of personal accomplishment.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study set out to explore three research questions regarding the prevalence and correlates of burnout among a sample of 194 Catholic religious sisters in Italy who completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory alongside the Big Five Factors of personality and the Index of Community Satisfaction. The new data provided by the study illuminates each of the three research questions.

The first research question concerned employing the original form of the Maslach Burnout Inventory to assess the overall level of burnout experienced by religious sisters engaged in altruistic and charitable activities. One recognized way of interpreting scores recorded by the Maslach Burnout Inventory is to locate new studies within the framework proposed by the test manual that defines for each of the three components of burnout a middle range of 'normal' scores, either side of which are defined 'high' scores and 'low' scores. In terms of all three components (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment) the mean scores of this group of sisters were located within the normal range. This finding can be interpreted to indicate that religious sisters engaged in altruistic and charitable activities are not in any sense unusually vulnerable to burnout. Nonetheless, using the range of scores provided in the test manual to identify the proportion of sisters who fell within the category of high scorers identified 22% of the group as recording high scores on emotional exhaustion, 27% as recording high scores on depersonalization, and 35% as recording low scores on personal accomplishment. Data of this nature

demonstrate that there are no grounds for complacency among those with pastoral oversight of religious communities. In a sense, giving attention only to the mean scale scores takes attention away from those who are far from the mean. The individual sisters who are recording high scores may themselves benefit from pastoral care.

The second research question concerned assessing the connection between personality and individual differences in levels of burnout experienced by religious sisters engaged in altruistic and charitable activities. The data demonstrate that there are two personality factors that are strong and consistent predictors of high levels of burnout among these sisters, namely high neuroticism scores and low agreeableness scores. Moreover these two factors have also emerged as predictors of higher levels of burnout among clergy (see Joseph et al., 2011). This finding suggests that routine personality profiling of religious sisters may be able to identify individuals most vulnerable to burnout. Appropriately applied profiling could be associated with self-awareness enhancement programmes and other intervention strategies. Studies of clergy employing either the Big Five Factor model of personality (Joseph et al., 2011) or the Eysenckian three dimensional model of personality (Francis et al., 2004) have routinely reported higher levels of burnout among introverts than among extraverts. The fact that this association has not been found by the present study among Catholic religious sisters requires further investigation in order to determine whether this is an aberration unique to the present study or a characteristic more generally associated with those living within religious communities.

The third research question concerned assessing the extent to which overall levels of satisfaction with community life impact individual differences in levels of burnout experienced by religious sisters engaged in altruistic and charitable activities, after taking age and personality differences into account. The data demonstrated that higher levels of community satisfaction are significantly associated with lower levels of emotional exhaustion and with lower levels of depersonalization. This finding suggests that, while a good quality of community life among religious sisters may enhance resilience against burnout, a poor quality of community life among religious sisters may exacerbate burnout.

A significant limitation with the present study concerns the limited number of Catholic religious sisters in Italy among whom the survey was conducted ($N = 194$). As a consequence no attempt was made to explore differentiation among the range of altruistic and charitable activities in which they were engaged. Given that the experiences of those engaged in teaching, nursing, social work and pastoral ministry may well vary, there would be real value in building on the present study among a larger number of participants.

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Emotional Intelligence and Clergy Work-Related Psychological Health among Anglican Clergy in England and Wales

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Abstract

The association between emotional intelligence and work-related psychological health is explored among a sample of 156 Anglican clergy in England and Wales who completed the Assessing Emotions Scale alongside the Francis Burnout Inventory. The data revealed that there was a negative correlation between emotional exhaustion and satisfaction in ministry; that higher levels of emotional intelligence were associated with higher levels of satisfaction in ministry; and that higher levels of emotional intelligence were associated with lower levels of emotional exhaustion.

Keywords

anglican – assessing Emotions Scale – clergy – emotional exhaustion – emotional intelligence – satisfaction in ministry

There has been a growing body of research into emotional intelligence (EI) since the term came into prominence with the work of Salovey and Mayer (1990). They described EI as a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and action. Monitoring one's own and others' feelings and emotions involves recognizing emotional cues. Discriminating among emotions involves applying knowledge

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of the complexities and subtleties of emotional experience. Managing and harnessing emotions involves being able to regulate emotions effectively and appropriately.

The early years of research into EI were not helped by a range of conceptualizations of the content of EI which created ambiguity about the appropriateness of the concept. Nevertheless, because of awareness of the important role which emotions may play internally in thought-processes and externally in social relationships, scholars persevered. Salovey and Mayer (1990) in particular were keen to ground their concept of EI in the realm of intelligence. Based on Salovey and Mayer's conceptualization of emotional intelligence, Schutte et al. (1998) developed the Assessing Emotions Scale, a 33-item self-report measure of EI. In some literature this scale is called the Emotional Intelligence Scale, the Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test, or the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale, but the authors prefer the name the *Assessing Emotions Scale* (Schutte, Malouff, & Bhullar, 2009). Using Salovey and Mayer's study they developed a list of 62 self-report items. Factor analysis of those 62 items resulted in the single-factor 33-item scale which they said measured "a homogeneous construct of emotional intelligence" (Schutte et al., 1998, p. 175).

Use of the Assessing Emotions Scale among Clergy

There have been three published studies reporting on the emotional intelligence of clergy in the United Kingdom and all three used the Assessing Emotions Scale. Francis, Ryland, and Robbins (2011) sampled 154 church leaders with the Newfrontiers network. Both male and female church leaders recorded significantly lower EI scores than the sample in Schutte et al.'s (1998) study. Randall (2014) sampled 156 Anglican clergy in England and Wales. Both male and female clergy recorded significantly lower EI scores than Schutte et al.'s (1998) sample, and also lower than Francis et al.'s (2011) Newfrontiers sample. Hendron, Irving, and Taylor (2014) sampled 226 Irish clergy serving within one of the four main denominations in Ireland. Both male and female clergy scores were low compared to Schutte et al.'s: "in fact clergy EI scores appear to be more on a par with those reported [by Schutte] by the participants in substance abuse programmes" (Hendron et al., 2014, p. 475).

In the UK and Ireland, then, it seems that Christian church leaders do not display particularly high levels of emotional intelligence, even though, by the nature of their roles as pastors, their ability to perceive and manage emotions in themselves and in others might be expected to be strong. If clergy have

difficulty in recognizing, understanding and using emotional information, this may lead to disappointment or, indeed, conflict with those to whom they are ministering. As such it may engender stress and possibly burnout.

Connection between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Health

Using the Assessing Emotions Scale higher levels of EI have been found to be associated with measures of psychological health, including positive affect and life satisfaction (Schutte et al., 2002; Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Brackett, Mayer, & Warner, 2004; Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004; Austin, Saklofske, & Egan, 2005; Schutte, Malouff, & Bhullar, 2009; Schutte & Malouff, 2011). There have been two meta-analyses of the relationship between the Assessing Emotions Scale and health (Schutte, Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Bhullar, & Rooke, 2007; Martins, Ramalho, & Morin, 2010). According to Schutte et al. (2007) "A meta-analysis of 44 effect sizes based on the responses of 7,898 participants found that higher emotional intelligence was significantly associated with better health" (p. 928). In addition they found that psychological and psychosomatic health showed a stronger association with EI than physical health. Martins et al. (2010), in a study based on 105 effect sizes and 19,815 participants, confirmed both of those findings.

Those who research work-related psychological health have returned to Bradburn's (1969) notion of balanced affect, that happiness is the sum of pleasures minus pains. Watson, Clark and Tellegen (1988) operationalized this in the Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). Schutte, Malouff, Simunek, Hollander, and McKenley (2002) used PANAS alongside the Assessing Emotions Scale and found that higher emotional intelligence was significantly associated with greater characteristic positive mood. This was confirmed by Gallagher and Vella-Brodrick (2008), Kirk, Schutte and Hine (2008) and Schutte et al. (2010). In their 2011 study, using the Assessing Emotions Scale and PANAS, Schutte and Malouff (2011) found that "higher levels of emotional intelligence were associated with higher levels of positive affect, lower levels of negative affect, and greater life satisfaction" (p. 1118).

Measurement of Burnout

In assessing psychological health a number of studies have employed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) created by Maslach and Jackson (1986).

Burnout is defined as a psychological syndrome developed in response to chronic interpersonal stress and is marked by overwhelming exhaustion, feelings of cynicism and detachment, and feeling a sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment. The MBI remains the most widely used measure of burnout in human service professionals. However it is not suitable for all professions and so derivative scales have been produced for certain professional groups, for example, computing staff (Evans & Fischer, 1993) and aircraft maintenance technicians (Leiter & Robichaud, 1997). Rutledge and Francis (2004) were given permission by Consulting Psychologists Press to adapt the MBI for use among clergy, and this has been used satisfactorily in a growing number of studies assessing clergy burnout.

However, other researchers have returned to Bradburn's (1969) notion of balanced affect with its two separate continua as explaining why it is entirely reasonable for individual clergy to experience at the same time high levels of positive affect and high levels of negative affect. Francis, Kaldor, Robbins, and Castle (2005), relating this insight to clergy experience, named negative affect as 'emotional exhaustion' and positive affect as 'satisfaction in ministry'. These two work-related constructs were then operationalized by two 11-item scales: the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM) and the Satisfaction In Ministry Scale (SIMS). The two scales together comprise the Francis Burnout Inventory (FBI). Research using the FBI has been reported by Francis, Kaldor, Shevlin, and Lewis (2004), Francis, Wulff, and Robbins (2008), Francis, Robbins, Kaldor, and Castle (2009), Robbins and Francis (2010), Brewster, Francis, and Robbins (2011), Francis, Village, Robbins, and Wulff (2011), and Barnard and Curry (2012). Randall (2013) used the form of the MBI modified for clergy (Rutledge & Francis, 2004) alongside the two scales of the Francis Burnout Inventory and showed that both instruments mapped on to the same personality constructs as measured by the Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck, Eysenck, & Barrett, 1985).

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Burnout

It might be expected that the ability to withstand stress without losing control or going under would be an element in emotional intelligence. To that end a number of studies has looked at the association between emotional intelligence and work-related psychological health as measured by the MBI (Duran, Extremera, & Rey, 2004; Mikolajczak, Menil, & Luminet, 2007; Saiiari, Moslehi, & Valizadeh, 2011). However, so far only one published article has used the Assessing

Emotions Scale as its measure of emotional intelligence (Iqbal & Abbari, 2013) alongside a measure of psychological health: in that study a significant negative association between emotional intelligence and job burnout as measured by the MBI was established.

There have been no studies so far reported using the FBI alongside a measure of Emotional Intelligence and so in this study the Francis Burnout Inventory is to be used alongside the Assessing Emotions Scale.

Method

Participants

As part of a longitudinal study, the cohort of clergy ordained to stipendiary ministry in one year in the Church of England and the Church in Wales answered postal questionnaires in their first, second, third, seventh and fourteenth years of ministry. They originally numbered 340 and of these 77% were male and 23% female. The data for this research were taken from the fourteenth year questionnaires where 156 clergy provided sufficient responses for an analysis of the two measures.

Measures

Emotional intelligence was assessed by the Assessing Emotions Scale (AES) introduced by Schutte et al. (1998), a 33-item self-report inventory. Respondents rate themselves on items such as 'By looking at their facial expressions I recognize the emotions people are experiencing', using a 5-point Likert scale: agree strongly (5), agree (4), not certain (3), disagree (2), and disagree strongly (1). Three items are reverse coded. Scale scores are calculated by totalling all 33 items. Scores can range from 33 to 165, with higher scores indicating higher levels of emotional intelligence.

Work-related psychological health was assessed by two scales introduced by Francis et al. (2005): the Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM) and the Satisfaction In Ministry Scale (SIMS). Each scale comprises 11 items assessed on a 5-point scale: agree strongly (5), agree (4), not certain (3), disagree (2), and disagree strongly (1). Example items from SEEM include, 'I feel drained in fulfilling my functions here', and 'I am less patient with people here than I used to be'. Example items from SIMS include, 'I feel very positive about my ministry here', and 'I am really glad that I entered the ministry'. For each scale scores are calculated by totalling all 11 items. Scores can range from 11 to 55.

Results

All three scales demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency reliability (Table 1): SEEM generated an alpha coefficient of .83; SIMS an alpha coefficient of .88; and AES an alpha coefficient of .76, comfortably above the .65 threshold of acceptability proposed by DeVellis (2012).

Table 1 also displays the mean scores with their standard deviations for each of the three scales. There are no significant differences between the male and female scores on any of the three scales.

Table 2 displays the correlations between the three scales, SEEM, SIMS and AES. The table indicates that for both male and female clergy there is a negative correlation between SEEM and SIMS scores. Clergy who are emotionally exhausted also tend to have less satisfaction in ministry. The table shows too

TABLE 1 *Scale properties*

	α	Male		Female		<i>t</i>	
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM)	.83	28.9	6.3	28.7	6.2	0.2	NS
Satisfaction in Ministry Scale (SIMS)	.88	43.0	4.4	42.9	5.7	0.1	NS
Assessing Emotions Scale (AES)	.76	112.1	7.7	113.8	8.9	-1.1	NS

Note. α = Cronbach's alpha.

TABLE 2 *Correlation matrix*

	AES	SEEM
<i>Male</i>		
Satisfaction in Ministry Scale (SIMS)	.30**	-.50***
Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM)	.04	
<i>Female</i>		
Satisfaction in Ministry Scale (SIMS)	.68***	-.75***
Scale of Emotional Exhaustion in Ministry (SEEM)	-.47*	

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; NS Not Significant.

that both male and female clergy who reported high levels of emotional intelligence also tended to report high levels of satisfaction in ministry. The table also shows that for female clergy but not for male clergy high levels of emotional exhaustion are significantly negatively correlated with emotional intelligence.

Discussion and Conclusions

This study set out to build on and to extend previous research by exploring the connection between emotional intelligence and work-related psychological health among a sample of 156 Anglican clergy serving in England and Wales. Four main conclusions emerge from these data, read alongside the evidence already published in the three earlier papers by Francis, Ryland, and Robbins (2011), Randall (2014) and Hendron, Irving, and Taylor (2014). All four analyses operationalize emotional intelligence by means of the Assessing Emotional Scale (Schutte et al., 1998).

First, there is consensus among these studies that clergy in England, Wales and Northern Ireland record low scores of emotional intelligence in comparison with the scores reported by Schutte and others in more general populations (see Schutte, Malouff, & Bhullar, 2009). Male and female clergy both exhibit similar low levels of emotional intelligence. Although this conclusion is based on three separate samples of different clergy, further replication using this same measure among other groups of clergy is advisable in order to extend the research within other countries and among other denominations. Further research is also needed to understand whether ordained ministry attracts those who are by nature low in emotional intelligence, or whether there is something about the ministerial profession that saps emotional intelligence.

Second, the positive correlation between higher emotional intelligence and higher satisfaction in ministry for clergy, both male and female, is consistent with results by, for example, Schutte et al. (2002) showing a correlation between emotional intelligence and positive well-being. This specific finding is consistent with the hypothesis that high emotional intelligence facilitates a positive experience of working in church-related ministry.

Third, the negative correlation between higher emotional intelligence and lower emotional exhaustion among female clergy is consistent with the more general finding reported by Iqbal and Abbari (2013). On the other hand, no such association was found among male clergy. This finding raises important questions about the potential differences in personality, practices and experiences of ministry among clergywomen and clergymen (as discussed, for example

by Robbins, Francis, & Rutledge, 1997). Further research is needed to establish whether this difference between clergymen and clergywomen is replicated in other samples.

Fourth, the balanced affect model of work-related psychological health on which the Francis Burnout Inventory is based suggests that positive affect (as evidenced in satisfaction in ministry) counterbalances negative affect (as evidenced in emotional exhaustion). The finding that emotional intelligence is positively associated with satisfaction in ministry among both clergymen and clergywomen may offer an important clue regarding a way in which better psychological health can be promoted among clergy. There may be real value in developing training in social and emotional competence as part of initial ministerial training and continuing ministerial development.

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