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Analysis of the Ministerial Emphasis Survey Quantifying the Call of the Church

Ray Doyel

Western Kentucky University

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ANALYSIS OF THE MINISTERIAL EMPHASIS SURVEY:
QUANTIFYING THE CALL OF THE CHURCH

A thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Psychology

Western Kentucky University

Bowling Green, Kentucky

In partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Ray Scott Doyel

December 1997

ANALYSIS OF THE MINISTERIAL EMPHASIS SURVEY:
QUANTIFYING THE CALL OF THE CHURCH

Date Recommended 8/18/97

Sally Kuhlenschmidt

Director of Thesis

Antony Sherman
[Signature]

Edmund Gray 10/16/97
Dean, Graduate Studies and Research Date

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Ray Scott Doyel

December 1997

45 pages

Directed by: Sally Kuhlenschmidt, John Bruni, and Antony Norman

Department of Psychology

Western Kentucky University

The expectations of a church for its minister are broad and difficult to define. These expectations are perhaps most intently examined when the church is seeking to replace a minister. It is during this time that the church may attempt to measure in some way the expectations of the congregation. These expectations may be studied from different perspectives, ranging from the effectiveness of the minister to the leadership style of the minister. This research examined the Ministerial Emphasis Survey which was used by a mainline, Protestant denomination during an actual minister search. The study included participants from the congregation, the applicants, and the persons who were used as references by the applicants. The survey was examined for internal consistency as measured by coefficient alpha and factor arrangement by a principle components exploratory factor analysis. Although the instrument did not yield satisfactory consistency or factor structure, similarities and differences across the three groups of participants provide information helpful to churches involved in a ministerial search. Items were also examined with suggestions for future modifications to the instrument.

Introduction

When a church must call (or hire, in secular terms) a new pastor, often it is the duty of a committee made up of individuals within the local church to initiate a search to find the proper candidate. The committee members must search for a person whom they believe will best meet the needs of the local congregation. These needs are difficult to define, and the search committee has few available resources that help qualify or quantify the expectations of the church body.

Attempts have been made to quantify the congregation's expectations of the minister. Unfortunately, the methods used to measure or define the congregation's expectations of a minister are often psychometrically inadequate. Committees may at best resort to locally designed surveys in an attempt to determine what the congregational preferences are concerning the expectations of the minister. These locally designed surveys may include items such as the preferred age or educational background of the minister as well as other qualities such as amount of time spent preparing sermons, visiting church members, counseling, advising individuals, attending church meetings, and visiting prospective church members. Other items often included in the survey may be amount of time spent in office work, administration, personal evangelism, personal prayer life, and Bible study (Leeper, 1993). Such instruments which have been developed at the local

level appear to either lack a firm base of validity or are of limited scope in assessing the congregational expectations of the minister.

When congregations seek stronger instruments to assist in defining the needs of the church, assessments from other fields are sometimes used. Such assessments as leadership surveys, which are developed for use in the business world, may also be used by some churches. The use of secular instruments, however, gives the congregation no measure of those concepts that are particularly important to the life of the church. For example, members of the church may have expectations of their pastor in areas such as personal Bible study, prayer life, evangelism, and visitation of parishioners. Such church-life items are not found on secular leadership instruments, nor would a strong leader, as defined by a secular instrument, necessarily exhibit any church-specific behaviors.

Research on Ministerial Dimensions

The function of a minister has evolved from the biblical definition of "shepherd of the flock" (1 Peter 5:1-2) to today's image of the minister as being involved in "evangelistic work, equipping the members, administering an office or directing a staff, and becoming active in community affairs, all of which can be shown to have some basis in Scripture" (Nauss, 1995, p. 115). On a fundamental level, the expectations of the minister and the congregation regarding the functions of the minister depend on their perception of the ministry. That perception to a degree stems from the manner in which they interpret the biblical definition of the minister.

Mickey, Wilson, and Ashmore (1991) investigated the various expectancies of the minister with focus on the minister's underlying approach to the ministry. Dividing the

denominations sampled into two separate categories defined as theologically conservative or *call-oriented* and theologically liberal or *profession-oriented*, they looked at distinguishing factors of members of the clergy and their families. The *call-oriented* denominations included the American Baptist, Assemblies of God, Church of the Nazarene, Presbyterian Church in America, and Church of God Anderson, Indiana. The *profession-oriented* denominations included the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Episcopal Church, Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church in the USA, United Church of Christ, and United Methodist. The sample consisted of 748 clergy representing the eleven denominations across the nation.

The authors concluded that the theologically conservative, or *call-oriented*, ministers may have an advantage in their approach stating, "where the clergy are not explicitly theologically anchored in ministry, the ambivalence, stress, role confusion and higher level of familial conflict associated with the demands of ministry spread into all areas of life" (Mickey, Wilson, & Ashmore, 1991, p. 291). Ministers in *call-oriented* denominations apparently have more clarity with regard to the role they are to play, the expectancies, and the rewards.

Mickey, Wilson, and Ashmore (1991) further stated that *profession-oriented* clergy, seeing the ministry from a more humanistic perspective, are more likely to experience conflict concerning their role and the role of their family. Profession-oriented denominations allow more flexibility of roles, which actually creates more ambiguity for the minister, according to the study. This study concluded "what ministers believe to be

the purpose of their efforts does in fact determine how they perform and the personal satisfactions which they receive" (Mickey, Wilson, & Ashmore, 1991, p. 294).

Beyond the basic differences between the call-oriented and profession-oriented denominations lies the need to measure the individual congregation's expectations of their minister. Churches for which the local congregation has the responsibility to seek and hire their own minister must at some level evaluate the congregational expectations. This information may include such areas as the effectiveness of the minister and the leadership style of the minister.

Ministerial Effectiveness

When examining the effectiveness of the minister, information from sources other than the candidate and the congregation may be beneficial. Nauss asserted that the central issue in assessing ministerial effectiveness was really a criterion problem. He stated that the minister "should be identified as effective by laity, clergy, and church officials, together with theologians" (Nauss, 1972, p. 149). By expanding the sources of the information about ministerial effectiveness, a more complete view of the minister is attained.

One study of ministerial effectiveness that used more than one source of information began in 1956 at the Educational Testing Service. This study was a result of a 1955 meeting of the Consultive Conference of the Department of the Ministry which mandated the "Study of Testing as Related to the Ministry" (Kling, 1958). This study focused on the ability of psychological tests to aid candidates pursuing vocations in Christian ministry. It was a cross-denominational study using information from 13 Protestant denominations, with responses from 17 schools of theology, 545 ministers, and

520 laypersons. The data were sorted into categories which included "the goals, the personal traits, and the activities of ministers" (Kling, 1958, p. 245).

The goals defined in the study included both the inner goals of the congregation, such as spiritual enrichment of the membership, and the outer congregational goals, such as evangelism. The personal traits identified in the study included the minister's personal faith, upstanding life, and proper attitude concerning his/her work. The activities identified in the study were broken down into four components. These components represented the following: (a) the minister's work with individuals on a personal level, (b) the minister's work with groups, (c) the minister's organizational and administrative work, and (d) the minister's solitary activities such as prayer and Bible study (Kling, 1958).

The instrument designed as a result of this study was the Ministerial Activity Scale (MAS). It contained 30 activities common to the descriptions of the minister's functions as reported by the respondents. The MAS was designed to aid in the training of ministerial candidates by distinguishing areas of personal strength and weakness. It was to be used as an aid by the seminary in appropriately training students to serve in the ministry. No published use of the instrument as a ministerial selection tool was found, but since its creation the MAS has continued to be used to measure ministerial effectiveness.

In one such study, when the MAS was used to measure the effectiveness of the minister, three significant factors appeared (Nauss, 1995). The first factor was termed *traditional* functions which included items as follows: priest/preacher, teacher, personal model, and visitor/counselor. The second factor was labeled *neo-traditional* functions which included youth/children's minister and the community-minded minister. The third

factor, termed *contemporary* functions, was made up of personal enabler, administrator, equipper, and evangelist.

With this information as a guide to the effectiveness of the minister, the congregation, when searching for a minister, could examine the functions of the minister as they relate to (a) the approach of the minister as based on call or profession-oriented; (b) the goals of ministry as based on congregational aims of inward or outward growth; (c) the personal traits of the minister as related to individual aspects of their spiritual life; (d) the activities the minister has been involved in relating to the individuals and groups within the church; and (e) the effectiveness of the minister as evaluated on the dimensions of traditional, neo-traditional, and contemporary functions of the minister.

Leadership Style of the Minister

Another aspect that has been studied when examining the dimensions of the minister's role is the leadership style of the minister. Leadership theories center around three basic concepts: the power, the traits, and the skills of the leader (Nauss 1995). The first of these concepts examines leadership by looking at the way in which the power is determined, either by the person or by the position. A second approach is the trait theory which examines the personality features of the leader as they relate to the leader's effectiveness. The third perspective considers the skills and activities the leader needs which differentiate between an authoritarian or top-down leadership and a democratic or team oriented style of leadership. Because these leadership theories were not specific to the leadership of the minister, research was conducted to study the leadership styles of minister.

To investigate the effectiveness of minister's leadership styles in various sizes of congregations, Nauss (1995) researched the method of leadership used by ministers. The study used data gathered from 421 Lutheran Church-Mission Synod congregations in which at least three lay persons responded with demographic information about the church and activities of the minister. The lay persons completed the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) which was developed at Ohio State University. The LBDQ yields a measure of overall leadership style. Eleven of the LBDQ subscales were used in this study. The two most significant factors onto which the LBDQ data loaded were what Nauss referred to as intentional ministry and relations-oriented. The intentional ministry factor consisted of the following items: persuasive, task-oriented, assertive in leading, goal-oriented, accurate in predicting, cool under pressure, and integrative. The relations oriented factor was comprised of the following items: tolerant of uncertainty, tolerant of freedom, and relations-oriented.

It was the conclusion of the study that no current theory of leadership adequately explained the leadership skills needed by the minister. The research also indicated that the skills needed by the minister to be effective in one size congregation were different from those needed in another (Nauss, 1995). This dissimilarity of the needs of the minister in varying sizes of congregations further confirms the need to individually assess the congregation and minister to arrive at an appropriate match when conducting a minister search.

Current Needs

The studies mentioned thus far examined the minister's style by assessing the effectiveness and/or the leadership of the minister. Research is lacking, however, on an instrument that could be used specifically to aid a congregation in the selection of a minister. The instrument would need to assess views of the minister's functions as understood by the congregation as well as by the ministerial candidate. Additionally, the search effort would benefit from information about the minister from outside sources such as denominational and theological leaders. With this information, a more successful match of congregation to minister would be likely.

Therefore, a need exists for an instrument which (a) would be sensitive to the approach of the ministry as defined by the members of the church; (b) assesses the effectiveness of the minister as evaluated by more than one source; (c) identifies the minister's personal strengths as a guide for a better match between the ministerial candidate and the congregation; (d) contains items which attempt to qualify the leadership style of the minister; and (e) meets minimal psychometric standards to assure reliability and validity of measurement.

One instrument that has been used to aid in the search for a senior minister is the Ministerial Emphases Survey (MES). This instrument consists of 20 items which relate specifically to the role of the minister in the life of the church. The instrument is currently being used to assist churches of at least one profession-oriented denomination in assimilating congregational information during their search for a minister.

According to the current denominational leaders, the Ministerial Emphases Survey resulted from a committee of church leaders working through the church's central office. Neither the exact date of origin nor the author(s) of the instrument were available from the denominational office. The current denominational leaders indicated that the instrument was not designed with scientific properties in mind, but rather resulted from the committee's attempt to assist the churches in ministerial selection. Their concern about the lack of an appropriate assessment survey for congregations to use during a ministerial selection prompted the creation of the Ministerial Emphases Survey. A profession-oriented assessment, the MES was designed as a general aid in ministerial selection, but use of the survey would be enhanced by having more clarity in the measure.

In this paper, the investigator presents the psychometric analysis of the Ministerial Emphases Survey as used by a Protestant, mainline congregation. This data was obtained during an actual ministerial search. The responses were from members of the congregation, ministerial candidates, and their personal references. The information represents the natural emotions, concerns, and thoughts of the groups of individuals who were involved in the minister selection process. Using data obtained during an actual ministerial search allows for greater generalization of results to other church populations involved in a ministerial search. Subjects in a controlled experiment may be less likely to show the same intensity and thought content as individuals experiencing firsthand the situation of being without a pastor. Naturalistic participants must also bear the consequence of their decision-making which provides additional personal investment in the process.

It is hypothesized that the items on the Ministerial Emphases Survey will (a) demonstrate foundational psychometric properties such as internal consistency, as measured by coefficient alpha, and (b) reduce to multiple spiritual leadership factors, rather than one global factor. It is further believed that there will be greater interrater reliability, as measured from the reference writer group, of the ministerial candidates who were in the top half of the selection pool as determined by the ministerial selection committee as compared to those in the bottom half. Greater interrater reliability would support the use of reference writers in the ministerial search process.

Method

Participants.

Data from three separate groups of participants was used in the analysis. The three groups were the congregational, the ministerial, and the reference writer groups.

The congregational group consisted of participants from a church that was involved in the search for a senior minister. The participants in this group were members of a Protestant, mainline denomination classified as profession-oriented. The total church population at the time of the survey was 678 of which an estimated 459 were considered participating members. From the participating members to whom the survey was mailed, 121 surveys were returned (26.4% return rate). Respondents ranged in age from 13 to 85 years old, with a mean age of 57 years old, standard deviation of 19.1. The mean years of affiliation with the denomination was 32 years, standard deviation of 19.4. The level of education and occupational data of the respondents appears in Table 1.

The second group of participants consisted of ministers who were a part of the pool of applicants for the position of senior minister. The denomination's central office maintains information on ministers who are interested in relocating and forwards this information to the prospective church upon their request. The ministerial group was comprised of these individuals as well as a few ministers who were asked directly by the church to apply for the position. The search committee received a total of 38 application

surveys which included 35 males and three females whose ages ranged from 32 to 59 years old. All of the applicants had earned a masters degree; eleven had completed a doctoral degree.

Table 1

Demographics of participants from congregational set (N = 121)

Education	n	percent	Occupation	n	percent
< High School ¹	2	1.6	Business	11	8.9
High School	19	15.4	Clerical	3	2.4
College	57	46.3	Homemaker	18	14.6
Grad School	42	34.1	Laborer	1	0.8
Tech School	1	0.8	Retired	50	40.7
			Professional	29	23.6
			Student	10	8.1

¹ Less than high school

The third group consisted of individuals who wrote reference letters for the applicants. Included as a part of the reference package was the Reference Form Ministerial Emphases Survey (which differs only in the instructions preceding the survey) to be completed as an indication of how the reference rated the applicant. Each applicant was allowed to have four references completing the Reference Form Ministerial Emphases Survey. A total of 140 letters of reference were included in the reference writer group. The reference writer group included persons such as clergy colleagues, lay members of present or past congregations served, and denominational regional staff. For a detailed description of this group, see Table 2.

Table 2
Reference writer group description (N = 140)

Descriptor	n	Percent
Clergy/colleague	28	20.0
Family friend	17	12.1
General staff	4	2.9
Lay person in present congregation	42	30.0
Lay person in previous congregation	15	10.7
Other	29	20.7
Regional staff	39	27.9
Clergy (overall total from all categories)	66	47.1
Female	35	25.0
Male	95	67.9

Note: Reference writers were allowed to select more than one category from which they knew the minister, which resulted in the category totals not equaling the total N.

Measure

The survey used was obtained from the church's central denominational office and is titled Ministerial Emphases Survey (see Appendix A). The survey consisted of 20 statements describing areas of ministry central to the life of the church with application to the duties of the minister. The items on the survey included areas of ministerial service such as *Corporate Worship, Proclamation of the Word, Teaching, and Administrative Leadership*. The heading of each statement on the survey was further clarified by descriptor statements. For example the item *Corporate Worship* was further clarified as "Planning and leading worship; working with the congregation to develop a rich worship life."

The instructions for the congregational survey stated, "Following are 20 areas of possible ministerial emphasis. As you perceive our congregation, which of these areas do we most need? Please prioritize by circling #1 for the six areas on which you place the highest priority. Do not circle more than six #1's. Circle the remaining activities 2,3,4,5, in order of decreasing priority. Circle only one number for each area." The participants were then to circle their response to each of the 20 items listed on the survey. The questions on the survey were the same and in the same order on all forms of the survey.

The instructions were slightly different for the other groups. For the ministerial group, the instructions stated, "My ministry would be most satisfying in a congregation or position in which ministerial emphases are prioritized as follows: (Circle #1 for an activity on which you place the highest priority; do not circle more than six #1's. Circle the remaining activities 2,3,4,5.)"

The reference writer group was given the instructions, "As you have observed this person, what do you consider to be the person's major strengths in ministerial emphases? Prioritize by circling #1 for activities you place as major strengths. Do not circle more than six #1's. Circle the remaining activities 2, 3, 4, 5."

Because the origin and construction of the instrument were not well documented, questions of content validity were addressed through the use of a pool of ministers in the community. The ministers were asked to examine the MES and to make suggestions regarding the content of the items. These ministers were either currently serving or had previously served as an associate or senior minister in a church. Each of the ministers had earned a Masters degree from a seminary; seven had attained a doctoral degree. Eleven of

the ministers were from call-oriented denominations; nine were from profession-oriented denominations.

Procedure

For the congregational group, each family in the congregation was mailed two copies of the Ministerial Emphases Survey along with instructions for its completion. The accompanying letter informed the participant that information was being gathered to assist in the search for a senior pastor (see Appendix B). The participants were asked to complete the survey on their own and return the survey to the church on the following Sunday. The surveys were collected at the church by having participants place the completed survey in a designated place in the church office.

The ministerial group was obtained from individuals who had completed application packets and forwarded the packet to the church's central office. A few other applicants were solicited by the search committee as well as members of the congregation. Included in the application packet was a copy of the Ministerial Emphases Survey to be completed by the minister personally.

The reference writer group was obtained from the personal references of each applicant. These references were secured by the applicant with the central office coordinating the receipt of the materials. The reference group consisted of friends, colleagues, or lay persons in current or previous congregations served by the ministerial applicant who rated the applicant as they perceived the minister to perform his/her duties.

The participants who served as content subject matter experts were solicited from ministers in the community. The ministers were given a copy of the MES to read and

were asked to make suggestions about items which they would delete, add or change.

Surveys were distributed in person and were later picked up from the church office. No subject identification was used to maintain confidentiality of reporting.

Results

The analysis of data included calculation of reliability as measured by an estimate coefficient alpha. Coefficient alpha was chosen as a measure of reliability because of its ability to estimate the internal consistency of the scale (Cortina, 1993). Validity was evaluated through an exploratory principle components factor analysis. Exploratory factor analysis was chosen because the instrument had not previously been examined by factor analysis, and item arrangements from other instruments such as the MAS did not readily address the items contained on the MES.

For the purposes of determining the number of factors which would be the most appropriate for the instrument, a parallel analysis was conducted using a random data set consisting of the same number of items, responses, and subjects as the actual data set. The random data set was factor analyzed by the same principle component analysis used on the actual data sets. The eigenvalues of the random set were then compared to the eigenvalues of the actual data set from the three groups, congregational, ministerial, and reference writer. The random data set allowed for a further decision rule to be used rather than arbitrarily using all factors with eigenvalues greater than one. Using the factor eigenvalues from the random set, factors were retained if the eigenvalues of the actual data set were greater than the random data set (Thompson & Daniel, 1996).

Congregational Group

Using the method above for selecting the number of factors, from the congregational group seven factors were selected. These factors and their respective coefficient alpha levels are presented in Table 3.

As noted from the table, the coefficient alpha estimates were not high enough to conclude stable results. Because the factor structure was not supported, an analysis of coefficient alpha estimate was computed for the entire scale. The estimated coefficient alpha for the scale was .51, which indicated limited internal consistency. The scale as determined by the congregational group failed to confirm the hypothesis that the MES would display reliability as determined by coefficient alpha. While the item arrangement of the factors appears to make intuitive sense, with the coefficient alpha estimate of reliability low, the factor arrangement would likely not be replicated.

Table 3
Factor loadings & alpha levels from the congregational group

Item	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7
Relationship/responsibilities with denomination	.81						
Mission beyond the local community	.79						
Ecumenical & interfaith activities	.56	-.42					
Stewardship & commitment		.70					
Evangelism		.62					
Administrative leadership		.61					
Congregational home visitation			.70				
Hospital & emergency visitation			.53				
Evaluation of program & staff	.40		.50				
Corporate worship			.48	.41			
Mission in the local community				-.69			
Teaching				.69			
Proclamation of the Word					.82		
Counseling		-.43	.42		.49		
Spiritual development of the members						-.71	
Minister's creativity and resourcefulness						.65	
Congregational communication						.51	
Planning congregational life							.69
Educational program							-.64
Congregational fellowship							.59
Eigenvalue	2.33	1.99	1.81	1.61	1.56	1.44	1.31
Percent of variance	11.66	9.95	9.06	8.07	7.81	7.20	6.55
Coefficient alpha	.65	.51	.47	.37	.34	.38	.41

Note: Eigenvalues and Percent of variance = unrotated, initial solution

Ministerial Group

For the factor loadings from the ministerial group, a five factor solution was selected using the same method as with the congregational group. The resulting factors and their corresponding alpha levels are presented in Table 4.

Although the coefficient alpha estimates for the factors from the minister group were higher than those of the other two groups, the levels were not sufficient to suggest internal consistency. The estimated coefficient alpha level for the entire scale was .65. Although the ministerial group coefficient alpha estimate was higher than the congregation or reference writer group, the level was inadequate to support the hypothesis of internal consistency. The factor arrangement appeared to support logical loadings, but it does not have adequate item correlations to support validity of the factor arrangement.

Table 4
Factor loadings & alpha levels from the minister group

Items	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
Congregational fellowship	-.71				
Responsibilities & relationships with the denomination	.71				
Ecumenical & interfaith activities	.71				
Mission in the local community	.57				
Hospital & emergency visitation	-.52				
Spiritual development of members	45			41	
Evaluation of program & staff		.77			
Stewardship & commitment program		.73			
Mission beyond the local community	40	.65			
Counseling		44			
Minister's personal creativity & resourcefulness			.84		
Educational program			.78		
Proclamation of the Word			-.63		
Administrative leadership				-.81	
Congregational home visitation				.77	
Planning congregational life			47	-.57	
Evangelism				45	
Teaching					.76
Corporate worship					-.64
Congregational communication					-.53
Eigenvalue	3.09	2.46	2.20	2.08	1.60
Percent of variance	15.4	12.3	11.0	10.4	8.0
Coefficient alpha	.69	.64	.70	.61	.56

Note: Eigenvalues and Percent of variance = unrotated, initial solution

Reference Writer Group

Using the same method for factor determination as was described previously, a four factor solution was determined to be the most appropriate for the reference writer group. The item loadings and estimates of coefficient alpha are presented in Table 5.

From the reference writer group the estimated coefficient alpha levels were too low to suggest stability of the factor structure. An analysis of coefficient alpha estimate was computed for the entire scale, which yielded an alpha of .62 for the reference writer group. The MES as used on the reference writer group failed to display internal consistency as measured by coefficient alpha. Further, the item correlations were not strong enough to support the hypothesis of having a valid measure of the underlying construct being examined.

Table 5
Factor loadings & alpha levels from reference writer group

Items	F1	F2	F3	F4
Congregational fellowship	.63			
Evangelism	.56			40
Spiritual development of members	.55			
Congregational home visitation	47			
Counseling	45			
Congregational communication	.38			
Evaluation of program & staff	.33			
Mission beyond the local community		.68		
Responsibilities/relationships with denomination		.60		
Stewardship & commitment		.56		
Ecumenical & interfaith activities		.53		
Teaching		- 40		
Minister's personal creativity & resourcefulness			.66	
Hospital & emergency visitation			- .61	
Mission in the local community			.58	
Educational program			.53	
Planning congregational life				.67
Proclamation of the Word				.60
Administrative leadership				.58
Corporate worship				42
Eigenvalue	2.50	1.93	1.80	1.71
Percent of variance	12.5	9.6	9.0	8.6
Coefficient alpha	.58	.53	.53	46

Note: Eigenvalues and Percent of variance = unrotated, initial solution

Further Item Exploration

Because the exploratory factor analysis did not yield satisfactory results for the MES on these groups, the means of the items were examined. Although the instructions were different for each of the three groups (congregation, minister, and reference writer), if the assumption is made that the mean of the item indicated the emphasis placed on the item, a comparison across the three groups could be made. From the congregational group, the six items having the lowest means, indicating the greatest emphases, were proclamation of the word, corporate worship, spiritual development of the members, hospital and emergency visitation, evangelism, and congregational fellowship. From the ministerial group, the six items with the lowest means were corporate worship, proclamation of the word, hospital and emergency visitation, spiritual development of the members, teaching, and administrative leadership. The six items, from the reference writer group, with the lowest means were corporate worship, proclamation of the word, hospital and emergency visitation, administrative leadership, minister's personal creativity and resourcefulness, and spiritual development of the members. The complete listing of items with respective mean and standard deviation for each group is found in Table 6.

Table 6
Item means and standard deviations by group

MES Item	Cong		Min		Ref	
	\bar{x}	δ	\bar{x}	δ	\bar{x}	δ
Corporate Worship	1.48	.75	1.26	.50	1.40	.57
Proclamation of the Word	1.43	.65	1.21	.58	1.41	.57
Minister's Personal Creativity and Resourcefulness	2.36	.98	2.03	.68	1.68	.59
Spiritual Development of Members	1.59	.81	1.45	.50	1.69	.60
Congregational Home Visitation	2.96	1.18	2.40	.79	2.13	.67
Hospital and Emergency Visitation	1.71	.85	1.40	.54	1.50	.56
Congregational Fellowship	1.83	.86	2.05	.57	1.91	.63
Counseling	2.15	1.11	2.11	.69	1.78	.62
Evangelism	1.83	.95	1.79	.70	2.04	.73
Planning Congregational Life	2.26	.95	1.95	.66	1.73	.60
Involvement in Mission beyond the Local Community	3.00	1.17	2.29	.65	1.95	.57
Educational Program	2.35	1.09	2.13	.67	1.85	.51
Teaching	2.08	.92	1.50	.60	1.70	.64
Mission in the Local Community	2.36	1.09	2.24	.75	2.00	.70
Ecumenical and Interfaith Activities	2.71	1.03	2.53	.73	2.08	.57
Congregational Communication	2.21	.91	2.11	.45	1.99	.51
Administrative Leadership	2.07	.86	1.55	.56	1.64	.68
Stewardship and Commitment Program	2.26	.92	2.00	.74	1.98	.62
Evaluation of Program and Staff	3.15	1.08	2.61	.76	2.24	.71
Responsibilities/Relationships with Denominational Leadership	2.79	1.16	2.00	.66	1.84	.54

Cong = Congregational group Min = Ministerial group Ref = Reference writer group

A Spearman rank-order correlation was done on the means and standard deviations of the items in each of the three groups. The result showed that the two groups having the most similar ranking of item means were the congregational and ministerial groups with a correlation coefficient of .85. The two most dissimilar groups based on correlation of rank order of the means were the congregational and reference writer groups with a correlation of .68. The same relationship was true of the standard deviations with the congregational and ministerial group being most alike with a Spearman correlation coefficient of .72. The correlation of the standard deviations was lowest between the congregational and the reference writer groups with a Spearman correlation coefficient of .11.

Table 7

Spearman correlation coefficients of means and standard deviations

	Cong SD	Min SD	Ref SD	Cong Mean	Min Mean
Min SD	.72				
Ref SD	.11	.50			
Cong Mean	.89	.68	.07		
Min Mean	.80	.66	.15	.85	
Ref Mean	.65	.69	.36	.68	.82

Cong = Congregational group

Min = Ministerial group

Ref = Reference writer group

Interrater Reliability

When examining the information from the reference group, interrater reliability (IRR) was used. Interrater reliability was chosen to examine how well the references agreed on their evaluation of the applicant (James, Demaree, & Wolf. .984). The IRR

calculation was then compared to the rankings of the applicants by the minister search committee. It was believed that individuals who were rated consistently by their references would also be individuals who were stronger candidates for the position. Therefore, it was hypothesized that applicants whose references displayed more agreement among the raters would appear in the top portion of the candidates as ranked by the search committee.

Interrater reliability uses the mean variance of the evaluation of the raters corrected by a function of the number of alternatives available to the rater on each item. Because the items of the MES loaded to a four factor solution for the reference set, each of the factors was used separately for the IRR calculation. The interrater reliability equation for multiple item estimation was used (James, Demaree & Wolf, 1984).

Each of the candidates could have up to four reference writers, as indicated earlier. Of the 38 applicants, four candidates' reference data were not used due to incomplete surveys. The distribution of IRR scores of the remaining 34 candidates was compared to the rankings of the search committee (see Table 8). The results of the comparison of the IRR calculation to the minister search committee rankings showed no support for the hypothesis. Applicants with higher IRR scores were no more likely to be in the top rankings of the ministerial search committee. The conclusion of the data was failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 8
Results of Interrater Reliability by factor of MES

SID	Committee Ranking	F1 IRR	F2 IRR	F3 IRR	F4 IRR
210	B	.99029	.98650	.99434	.99340
220	B	.99522	.99340	.99527	.99434
230	T	.98879	.98716	.97845	.99328
240	B	.98097	.97990	.98631	.99010
250	B	.99664	.99643	.99221	.99575
260	B	.99050	.98930	.99036	.99080
270	T	.98211	.97381	.94974	.99080
310	B	.98983	.98837	.98383	.99221
320	T	.99378	.99233	.99150	.97125
330	T	.98939	.98578	.97413	.97055
340	T	.99016	.99781	.99150	.99036
350	B	.97393	.99206	.99150	.99398
360	B	.98812	.97303	.98044	.99104
370	B	.91474	.98784	.59992	.98083
380	B	.98462	.99524	.97504	.99221
390	T	.98791	.98332	.99645	.99291
410	B	.97749	.98032	.97504	.98022
420	B	.99209	.99125	.99104	.99197
430	T	.99602	1.0000	.99150	.99575
440	B	.97534	.98393	.99104	.96497
450	T	.98215	.98332	.98453	.97475
460	T	.98675	.99454	.98714	.98560
470	B	.98142	.98619	.98243	.99221
480	T	.98307	.99632	.99010	.99150
490	B	.99464	.97916	.99104	.99104

SID	Committee Ranking	F1 IRR	F2 IRR	F3 IRR	F4 IRR
510	B	.99522	.98395	.97951	.98313
520	T	.99032	.99452	.98858	.99291
530	T	.98751	.99344	.98788	.99080
540	B	.99029	.99162	.99104	.99197
610	T	.98626	.99206	.99221	.99505
630	B	.95069	.96437	.98788	.98631
640	T	.99185	.98942	.99197	.99291
660	B	.99432	.99206	.98453	.98143
670	B	.99093	.98656	.99229	.98566

SID= Subject identification

B = Bottom half of committee ranking

T = Top half of committee ranking

Content Recommendations

Suggestions about the content of the MES were solicited from current ministers in the community. A typical response to the MES from the ministers was the addition of items to the MES. More than one suggested that crisis management needed to be added. Marriage and family counseling was also suggested as an addition to the MES. Visionary leadership of the pastor was another item suggested, with the further distinction of visionary leadership versus consensus leadership. One minister suggested the addition of a group of items termed *minister's spiritual health*, which would be comprised of qualities such as minister's personal prayer time, personal Bible study time, and attending personal enrichment seminars and conferences. The addition of a *priestly functions* item was also suggested which would include such responsibilities as presiding at weddings, baptisms, and funerals.

Discussion

The call of the church is a challenging subject to define. The Ministerial Emphases Survey appeared to have many of the items which a congregation would need to examine in attempting to quantify their call. It was hypothesized that the instrument would display reliable results; however, given the analysis of coefficient alpha levels, such results could not be empirically substantiated. Likewise, the factor analysis of the instrument for measuring underlying constructs was not supported as noted from the results of the exploratory factor analysis.

The interrater reliability measurement was expected to provide support for the use of references in the minister search. The results of the interrater reliability analysis failed to provide evidence that the references displayed more agreement on applicants whom the minister search committee ranked as stronger candidates. The random distribution of rankings would seem to indicate that the individuals on the search committee had expectations of the minister other than those brought out by the references.

The results of the Spearman Brown correlation suggested that the reference writers appear to be defining the tasks of the minister in a manner different from that of the congregation members and the ministers. Those correlations also appear to be indicating that the congregation's emphases most closely resemble the minister's rather than those of the reference writers. As previously noted the instructions for the three

groups differed slightly, which may partially account for the differences in the means and standard deviations. The congregation's instructions focused on the need of the church, the minister's instructions focused on satisfaction from serving where the emphases were a particular way, and the references instructions focused on rating the applicant's strengths.

Limitations of the Study

When generalizing this information to other congregations, note should be taken of the age of the congregational population. The mean age of the congregational sample was 57 years old, which may influence the emphases placed on the minister's responsibilities. The educational level of the congregation is also noteworthy, with 81.4% of the congregation reporting a college degree or more. This level of education may present constraints on generalizability to other congregations.

Although for the purposes of this research it was believed that the benefits outweighed the disadvantages of the lack of experimental control, extraneous variables such as age and education could be controlled for in an experimental situation. The benefits of such control would allow for broader generalization from the research.

Content Recommendations

Recommendations about MES item changes were obtained from the subject matter experts and would include a consolidation of some items. *Teaching and Educational Program* could be consolidated into one item. *Congregational Fellowship* and *Congregational Communication* appear to have overlap of duties and would be combined into one item. *Ecumenical and Interfaith Activities* and *Mission in the Local Community* are quite similar in their explanations and would be consolidated into one item.

Evaluation of Program and Staff could be a component of *Administrative Leadership* rather than a separate item. The consolidation of these items would eliminate some of the redundancy and also allow for the addition of four new items without lengthening the survey.

The survey would benefit from the addition of the following items: *Spiritual Leadership* which would include communicating the vision of the church as the minister believes God is leading, *Minister's Personal Spiritual Walk* which would include the minister's personal prayer life and Bible study, *Crisis Management* which would include dealing with crisis situations both in the individual member's lives as well as the life of the church, and *Priestly Functions* which would include presiding at events such as funerals and weddings. These items also appear to be in agreement with Kling's (1958) research which concluded the activities of the minister could be placed into the goals, the personal traits and the activities of the minister.

Statements About the Use of the Instrument

Although the MES appeared to make intuitive sense, based on this research its reliability is inadequate. The instrument may be best used as a general discussion tool to assist ministerial selection in the local church, but relying on the instrument would be ill-advised. Information obtained from the MES is likely to vary dramatically from assessment to assessment.

The items on which there was similar emphases across the groups would likely benefit the persons continuing to use the MES in their minister search. If a church insists on using the MES despite its poor reliability and validity, then at least more weight should

be given to these items: *Corporate worship, Proclamation of the Word, Spiritual enrichment of the members, Hospital and emergency visitation, and Evaluation of program and staff* on which the different samples coincided as being of similar importance. The other items appeared to have less consensus across individuals in the groups. These differences may be due to individuals having varying view points on the qualities most important for a minister.

Another issue affecting the use of the instrument is the size of the congregation. As was indicated in previous research by Nauss (1995), the skills needed by a minister differ as a function of the size of the congregation. Although the reference writers were rating the applicants in general ministerial strengths, the addition of a component categorizing the minister's strengths within a particular size congregation would enhance the accuracy of the information. The reference writers would then be rating strengths of the minister as those strengths would relate to the specific size congregation to which the minister was applying.

Considerations for Future Research

From the analysis of the data presented, the empirical reliability of the MES as currently designed is inadequate. Future research into the area of ministerial search would benefit from the creation of a new survey to assess ministerial emphases and the expectation of the congregation. The instrument might be based on some of the stronger items of the MES, but it is recommended that the design of the survey be changed. The survey is currently 20 items with a five point scale, with instructions limiting the respondent to replying "1" to no more than six items. A recommendation is to list the 20

items on the page, and ask the respondent to place all of the items along a single continuum. As part of the survey sheet, a horizontal line would be provided on which the respondents would place the letter of the items as they believe their importance to be. All twenty responses would then be placed along the line at the bottom of the page, their order and placement indicative of the respondent's attitudes of the items importance. It is believed that this method would yield a more accurate representation of the respondent's expectations of the minister.

The modified instrument should have a pilot study run with the new items and the new format to establish what the estimated reliability and factor structure would be. Those items not contributing to the reliability of the scale could then be eliminated. The pilot study would assess the new design of the instrument to determine if it were understandable or presented confusion for the respondents.

The new format should also use a randomly selected order of items on the survey to eliminate any order effect which might have been influencing the results. From the current analysis of the MES, the first two items on the survey were consistently two of the items with the lowest means. By changing the order of the items as they are presented on the survey, an order effect would potentially be eliminated.

Concluding Statements

The MES failed to adequately display empirical reliability or validity. The instrument appeared to provide a summary of the expectations of the congregation; however, based on the findings of this research the instrument failed to reliably assess the expectations of the congregation. These expectations are but a small part of the many

considerations the church has for selecting the person to be the spiritual leader of the congregation. The results of the data presented suggest the need for additional research in the area of ministerial selection. Persons using the MES can now be aware of the limitations of the survey and their need to use multiple methods in ministerial selection.

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Appendix A

MES

A. Corporate Worship	1 2 3 4 5
Planning and leading worship; working with the congregation to develop a rich worship life.	
B. Proclamation of the Word	1 2 3 4 5
Effective preaching; articulating personal faith.	
C. Minister's Personal Creativity and Resourcefulness	1 2 3 4 5
Planning and leading program activities.	
D. Spiritual Development of Members	1 2 3 4 5
Helping persons develop their spiritual life; encouraging persons to relate their faith to their daily lives.	
E. Congregational Home Visitation	1 2 3 4 5
Making pastoral calls on people in their homes.	
F. Hospital and Emergency Visitation	1 2 3 4 5
Making pastoral calls on persons in hospitals and nursing homes; ministering to persons in crisis situations.	
G. Congregational Fellowship	1 2 3 4 5
Building a sense of fellowship and community; reaching out to inactive members; accepting persons with divergent backgrounds and traditions.	
H. Counseling	1 2 3 4 5
Maintaining confidentiality; being compassionate and sensitive to other's needs; helping persons develop emotional maturity and security.	
I. Evangelism	1 2 3 4 5
Bringing new members into the congregation regularly; developing commitment to evangelism in other people.	
J. Planning Congregational Life	1 2 3 4 5
Long range planning and goal setting; helping leaders work together in solving problems, working with committees and officers; working effectively on a team.	
K. Involvement in Mission Beyond the Local Community	1 2 3 4 5
Understanding and interpreting the mission of the church from a global perspective; encouraging support of Christian Church outreach.	
L. Educational Program	1 2 3 4 5
Identifying with educational needs of persons; developing programs to meet those needs; helping to set educational goals for the congregation; working with youth, children and adults.	
M. Teaching	1 2 3 4 5
Strong commitment to teaching ministry; interpreting and teaching the Scriptures, theological concepts, church history, etc., providing instruction for church leaders, members, etc.	
N. Mission in the Local Community	1 2 3 4 5
Helping persons understand and act upon social and justice issues; become informed and involved in the community; organizing persons for community action.	
O. Ecumenical and Interfaith Activities	1 2 3 4 5
Active personal participation in ecumenical relationships; encouraging the congregation to participate in ecumenical relationships; encouraging united Christian witness in the community.	
P. Congregational Communication	1 2 3 4 5
Encouraging two-way communication in the congregation; sharing information; encouraging shared problem solving in the congregation.	
Q. Administrative Leadership	1 2 3 4 5
Accepting responsibility for leadership; encouraging shared leadership; helping persons develop their leadership abilities; encouraging others to assume and carry out leadership.	
R. Stewardship and Commitment Program	1 2 3 4 5
Developing stewardship education programs; encouraging regular stewardship growth; challenging the congregation to commitment to the church's work.	
S. Evaluation of Program and Staff	1 2 3 4 5
Planning and carrying out programs to evaluate programs; establishing procedures to evaluate staff performance in accord with goals and objectives.	
T. Responsibilities and Relationships with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), both Regional and General	1 2 3 4 5
Being involved in the life of the church beyond the congregation; strong personal commitment to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); helping the congregation know and be involved in the work of the Christian Church (DOC).	

Appendix B

Copy of letter sent to church membership

Dear Member

As part of the search for a senior minister, the church submits a congregational profile form to the main office. Prospective ministers can then look at this form to determine if our congregation matches the ministers' skills. We receive similar forms completed by prospective ministers. The Search Committee needs your assistance in completing some portions of the form. Enclosed is a copy of the relevant questions on the profile and we would like **every member of the congregation, age 12 or older, to complete a form on their own.** Please consider the questions prayerfully.

Because mail regulations require letters of equal weight, we have enclosed two copies of the survey for each family. If you need more for your family (anyone 12 and older who is a member), copies are available in the church office and will be handed out on the next two Sundays. Please return unused copies.

Please turn in your survey by the end of second service on **August 13.** A box will be placed in the office for them. The results will be collated that afternoon and forwarded with our profile. They will also be posted for everyone to see.

In addition, members of the Search Committee wish to meet with church members to hear their wishes and concerns. Meeting times have been announced in the columns and in services.

Thank you for your help and input to the search process.

Sincerely,