
THE PERSONAL FUNCTIONING OF PASTORS: A REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL RESEARCH WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CARE OF PASTORS

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The present article surveys the available empirical research on the personal (psychological/spiritual) functioning of pastors. The literature is divided into six major areas: emotional well-being, stress and coping, marital/divorce adjustment, family adjustment, burnout, and impairment. The research in each area is critically reviewed and summarized, and directions for future research are suggested. The primary conclusion is that interpersonal/relational deficits are associated with the vast majority of psychological problems faced by pastors, and thus need to be addressed, particularly at an early stage of the pastor's career.

One of the practical ways in which researchers contribute to the integration of psychology and theology is by examining the well-being of those who serve as the primary spiritual leaders of the church: pastors. In recent years, the personal functioning of pastors has been of increasing concern for at least two reasons. The first reason is the increasing recognition of the extremely high demands of the pastorate (Henry, Chertok, Keys, & Jegerski, 1991; Morris & Blanton, 1994; Ostrander, Henry, & Fournier, 1994). Pastors are in a highly visible position and are expected to meet parishioners' spiritual and emotional needs. There is never a time when they are not on call to function in

their pastoral role. Lack of time is one of the most frequently cited difficulties among pastors along with stress, frustration, loneliness, isolation, spiritual dryness resulting from constant time demands, and diminished marital adjustment (Ellison & Mattila, 1983; Warner & Carter, 1984). Moreover, the burnout syndrome related to human service professions has increasingly been associated with the problems of the pastorate (Daniel & Rogers, 1981; Rodgeron, 1996). It is clear from research and anecdotal reports that the great demands on pastors can potentially have a negative impact on their psychological and spiritual functioning.

The second reason for examining the personal functioning of pastors is the increasing awareness of the impact of pastors' personal dysfunction on their ministries (Muse, 1992; Seat, Trent, & Kim, 1993; Thoburn & Balswick, 1994). Just as psychotherapists' unresolved issues may negatively affect their ability to facilitate healing, pastors' interpersonal deficiencies, particularly ones of which they are unaware, are likely to hinder their ability to shepherd their flocks. One of the top three needs for training improvement identified by pastors is in the area of human relations, particularly leadership relational skills (Ellison & Mattila, 1983). This suggests an awareness among pastors of the importance of relational maturity in maintaining an effective pastoral ministry. In addition, several personal adjustment factors (mistrust of others, feelings of rejection and shame) as well as narcissistic traits are associated with sexual temptation and infidelity among pastors (Francis & Turner, 1995; Thoburn & Balswick, 1994). Clearly the relative health or dysfunction of pastors' psychological and spiritual lives has a signifi-

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cant impact on their professional effectiveness. Thus, out of concern for pastors and their congregations, it is important to consider the current state of empirical knowledge regarding pastors' personal functioning in order to minimize burnout and maximize personal adjustment and professional effectiveness. Moreover, it is critical to continue investigating this area in order to address the psychological and spiritual difficulties experienced by many pastors. However, the empirical research must first be reviewed in order to provide direction for future research in this area.

The purpose of this article is to review the empirical research related to the personal functioning of pastors. Journal articles and dissertations empirically investigating the psychological and spiritual functioning of pastors were reviewed. Articles focusing exclusively on pastors' professional effectiveness were excluded from the present review. The PsychLit and Dissertation Abstracts International databases for the years 1974 through 1995 were searched. Reference sections of articles and dissertations obtained were also searched for relevant articles. The literature falls into six broad categories, overlapping to some degree, but differing in focus: emotional well-being, stress and coping, marital/divorce adjustment, family adjustment, burnout, and impairment. The research in each area is reviewed and summarized. A discussion including implications for the care of pastors and suggestions for future research follows.

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

A number of studies have focused on the psychological adjustment, self-concept, and vocational congruence of pastors. Ellison and Mattila (1983) surveyed the most significant difficulties experienced by Christian leaders and the perceived causes of those difficulties. Of the 288 respondents, 80% were senior or associate pastors from Baptist, Methodist, Church of Christ, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Assemblies of God, and several other evangelical denominations and non-denominational affiliations. One interesting finding was that senior pastors with multiple staff reported significantly less difficulties than senior pastors without associate staff members. This suggests that a pastoral staff provides a buffer against stress, possibly due to reduced expectations, resulting in fewer perceived problems for the senior pastor with a staff of pastors. The modal response for pastors was toward the major problem end of the

scale for anxiety, disappointment, feelings of inadequacy, spiritual dryness, stress, and frustration. The most frequent difficulties that affected respondents' ministries were lack of time, stress, frustration, feelings of inadequacy, spiritual dryness, fear of failure, loneliness, and isolation. The perceived causes of the difficulties reported by the respondents suggest the underlying theme of unrealistic expectations which promote constant time demands. Although these results should be interpreted cautiously due to their descriptive nature, they suggest that pastors' most frequently experienced problems stem from idealism and high expectations.

Celeste, Walsh, and Raote (1995) investigated the relationship between vocational congruence, as measured by the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) Minister Scale, and psychological adjustment, as measured by the MMPI, among male ministers. The 1,276 participants of this study most heavily represented the following denominations: Presbyterian, American Baptist, Lutheran, United Methodist, United Church of Christ, and Episcopal. Ministers were classified into three groups of vocational congruence: congruent (scores classified as similar and very similar to minister norm group), midrange (moderately similar), and incongruent (dissimilar and very dissimilar). The results indicated that incongruent ministers reported more depression, anxiety, and social introversion than the other two groups. In addition, congruent ministers tended to be more sensitive, relationship-oriented and energetic than the other groups.

Hatcher and Underwood (1990) examined the relationship between trait anxiety, self-concept, and stress among Southern Baptist ministers. The 103 participants included pastors, Baptist Student Union directors, directors of missions, chaplains, and several ministers responsible for music, education and youth ministry. They found that ministers with lower self-concepts (*P* scale of the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale – TSCS) tended to have significantly higher levels of trait anxiety (State-Trait Anxiety Inventory). Ministers with less satisfaction in their relationship with God (Moral-Ethical subscale of the TSCS) had higher trait anxiety scores. Higher levels of self-criticism among ministers were related to higher trait anxiety scores. Higher stress event scores (as measured by the Clergy Life Changes Rating Scale) were also related to higher levels of trait anxiety. A regression analysis revealed that overall self-concept and stress scores predicted 47% of the variance of trait anxiety.

Warner and Carter (1984) examined the quality of life of pastors and pastors' wives in comparison to lay persons. Participants were 189 pastors, pastors' wives, and non-pastoral males and females who were all from a division of a small Presbyterian denomination. Their sampling procedure controlled for theological and doctrinal beliefs. They found that pastors experienced significantly more loneliness than those in non-pastoral roles. Their interpretation of these results is that loneliness is caused by both burnout and diminished marital adjustment, both of which are fueled by the extent of the demands of the pastorate.

MARITAL/DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT

In the study by Warner and Carter (1984) cited above, pastors experienced significantly less marital adjustment than non-pastoral females. There do not appear to be any other studies comparing the marital adjustment of pastors to lay people. While further research is needed in this area, it would seem more useful to compare pastors to other helping professionals such as psychologists and physicians.

Noller (1984) studied marital adjustment among 75 clergy couples from the Uniting Church in Queensland. She found seven areas of concern in the marital relationship that discriminated between levels of marital adjustment (high, moderate, and low) among clergy couples: husband/wife roles and status, couple communication, expression of affection, decision-making, sex relations in marriage, resolving conflict, and separateness/togetherness. Handling negative emotions, social life and recreation were identified as concerns for all three levels of marital adjustment. The high marital adjustment group reported three advantages of clergy marriages significantly more than the other two groups: unity of purpose, wife's identification with husband's work, and satisfaction and insight from counseling role. In addition, Noller found the following disadvantages to discriminate between levels of marital adjustment: time pressure, husband must work when others are free, marriage expected to be model of perfection, husband neglects family, and confusion about wife's identity and roles. Finally, six disadvantages (financial stress, lack of family privacy, frequent moves, husband on call, husband busy serving others, and no one ministers to clergy family) were concerns for all three levels of marital adjustment. Thus, this study indicates several areas that distinguish more and less

adjusted clergy couples, and some areas that appear to be stressors for clergy couples regardless of their level of marital adjustment.

Benda and DiBlasio (1992) investigated marital adjustment among 254 clergy couples. Participants were former students of a Presbyterian seminary and their spouses. Four factors were found to predict marital adjustment (in order of predictiveness): perceived stress from work and family combined (associated with decreased marital adjustment), number of children five years old and younger (more children associated with increased marital adjustment), perceived stress from family (associated with decreased marital adjustment), and earner status (dual earners reported increased marital adjustment). The findings related to earner status are consistent with those of Noller's (1984) study. Role orientation and gender, although hypothesized to predict marital adjustment, did not significantly contribute to the variance in marital adjustment, perhaps because of limited variability.

Regarding divorce adjustment among clergy, Hutchison, Nichols, and Hutchison (1981) surveyed 176 divorced clergy from the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) and found that almost half of the clergy reported that their wives' orientation toward their own careers influenced them (wives), at least somewhat, toward divorce. Ministers perceived their wives' primary complaint to be their time commitment, with 70% of the husbands reporting this as a contributing factor in the decision to divorce. The next most frequently reported problems were, in order of importance, salary, clergy's dedication to his role, the location of the job, the amount of the wife's time commitment to his work, and the frequency of moving.

It apparently does not take clergy long to decide to divorce considering the potential negative career implications. Hutchison et al. (1981) found that approximately 50% of the couples surveyed discussed divorce for less than one year. An interesting finding regarding attribution of blame was that nine percent of clergy husbands believed they alone were responsible for the divorce, whereas slightly over 33% perceived their wives as solely responsible for the divorce. This is quite alarming in that 42% of the clergy believed that the entire responsibility of the divorce lay with only one of the partners.

The majority of clergy surveyed felt either well-adjusted or completely adjusted to their divorce (Hutchison et al., 1981). However, 13% perceived

themselves as “only somewhat” or “not at all” adjusted to their divorce. In 90% of the divorces, at least one person sought psychotherapy. In approximately 75% of the cases, both persons received therapy either individually or conjointly. Another interesting finding is that approximately 75% of those clergy who remarried did so within two years of their divorce. The authors suggested that this may reflect a strong reaction to status-ambiguity and the belief that remarriage will make the pastor more acceptable to search committees.

FAMILY ADJUSTMENT

Moy and Malony (1987) conducted a descriptive study of 52 pastors' families from two mainline Protestant denominations. Using the Circumplex Model of marital and family systems, they found more families than expected in the “Chaotic” range of the adaptability dimension, and fewer than expected in the “Structured” and “Rigid” ranges of adaptability. When compared to a normative sample, pastors perceived their families as more “Separated” on the cohesion dimension and more “Flexible” on the adaptability dimension, clearly leaning toward the “Chaotic” level. When asked to describe their “ideal” family, both parents and children expressed a desire for more emotional connection on the cohesion dimension and for more flexibility, clearly tending toward the “Chaotic” level of adaptability. An important question raised by the authors is whether the high scores on the adaptability dimension represent psychopathology or healthy adjustment to the changing demands of the pastorate. Certainly a high degree of family flexibility is needed given the nature of the pastoral ministry. However, extremely high levels of adaptability are potentially pathological in that they lead to a lack of stability in the family system. This study highlights the need for pastors to be aware of this dynamic in their families and to attempt the difficult task of balancing the need for adaptability and stability.

Ostrander et al. (1994) examined stress, coping, and adaptation in 135 pastors' families from three Protestant branches (Episcopal, Church of Christ, and Free Methodist). They found that as normative stress and stress related to the pastorate and to the interactions of the family with the church community and other community systems increased, perceived satisfaction with family functioning decreased. In addition, they found that family resources such as family hardiness (ability of family

members to see life as meaningful, to define circumstances as under the family's control, and to view life as a challenge) and family coherence (degree of family's emphasis on loyalty, trust, faith, respect, and caring when faced with hardships) were positive predictors of family adaptation.

Reducing stress appears to be important as stress was found to be associated with decreased family hardiness, although stress was not related to family coherence. Thus, although family hardiness is an important resource, it may not be sufficient under high stress levels. In contrast, family coherence appears to be a resource that remains intact under stress, and is associated with greater family adaptation. Thus, this study highlights the importance of both reducing stress in pastors' families (because resources such as hardiness become exhausted and stress is associated with less family adaptation), *and* strengthening family resources, particularly family coherence, because it may provide a buffer against the effects of stress.

SUMMARY OF EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING, MARITAL/DIVORCE ADJUSTMENT, AND FAMILY ADJUSTMENT OF PASTORS

Warner and Carter (1984) suggest that higher levels of loneliness and lower marital adjustment among pastors empirically support the hypothesis that pastors (and their wives) experience a diminished quality of life in comparison to lay persons. While another study (Ellison & Mattila, 1983) suggests that pastors are relatively well-adjusted, it does not compare pastors to the lay population. Warner and Carter's study serves as a benchmark of pastors' emotional well-being because it compares them to a non-pastoral (lay) population. However, a more appropriate and helpful benchmark would be a comparison with other human service professionals such as mental health professionals and physicians. Several other conclusions regarding pastors' emotional well-being can be drawn: (a) the most frequent difficulties experienced by pastors are anxiety, disappointment, feelings of inadequacy, spiritual dryness, stress, frustration, lack of time, fear of failure, loneliness, and isolation; (b) pastors' emotional well-being is positively related to vocational congruence; and (c) low self-concept, low degree of satisfaction in relationship with God and self-criticism are associated with higher degrees of trait anxiety.

When pastors are compared to a non-pastoral population with regard to marital adjustment, they

exhibit a lower degree of marital adjustment than at least a portion of the non-pastoral population (i.e., females). Numerous variables are associated with marital adjustment for pastors. Problems in the following areas are associated with significantly lower marital adjustment among pastoral couples: husband/wife roles and status, couple communication, expression of affection, decision-making, sex relations in marriage, resolving conflict, separateness/togetherness, perceived stress from work and family combined, and perceived stress from family. In contrast, a higher number of children five years old and younger and dual earner status appear to be positively related to marital adjustment. In addition, six stressors appear to be problematic to all clergy couples, regardless of their level of marital adjustment: financial stress, lack of family privacy, frequent moves, husband on call, husband busy serving others, and lack of ministry to clergy family. The most significant problem among divorced pastors that contributes to divorce appears to be their time commitment to work. Another noteworthy, and rather alarming, finding regarding divorce among pastors is that a large proportion (42%) of pastors (in one study) attributed the entire responsibility of the divorce to only one of the marital partners. One positive finding is that a large percentage of divorced pastoral couples seek psychotherapy.

Pastors' families appear to be more flexible, perhaps chaotic, in terms of adaptability, and more separated in terms of cohesion than non-pastoral families. This is probably necessary given the nature of the pastoral ministry; however, it may at times lead to insufficient family stability and emotional connection. While stress related to the pastorate and to the interactions of the family with the church community is associated with dissatisfaction with family functioning, family hardiness (seeing life as meaningful and as a challenge, and defining circumstances as under family's control) and family coherence (degree of emphasis on loyalty, trust, faith, respect, and caring during hardship) are positively associated with family adaptation. Family hardiness is an important resource for families; however, its usefulness is limited under high stress levels. In contrast, family coherence seems to be a resource even in highly stressful situations. In light of this, pastoral couples need to both reduce stress and strengthen their families' resources, particularly family coherence as it mediates the effects of stress on family adaptation.

STRESS AND COPING

Stress is an inherent part of pastoral ministry as evidenced by Blackmon's (1984) findings that 75% of the clergy he sampled experienced periods of major stress, and 33% had seriously considered leaving the ministry at some point. Rayburn, Richmond, and Rogers (1986) studied a group of 250 religious leaders that included equal numbers of Roman Catholic priests, brothers, nuns, ministers, and seminarians. Results indicated that ministers had the highest overall occupational environment stress and vocational strain and next to the lowest amount of personal resources. These authors concluded that, among religious leaders, ministers are a high-risk group. However, their results indicated that religious leaders experienced less occupational stress overall in comparison to the normative population.

In a study examining stress among 21 parish clergy and 11 clergy spouses from several mainstream and evangelical Protestant denominations, Gleason (1977) found the top three stressors identified by pastors to be the proliferation of activities, perfectionism, and no time for study. Eight of the 14 stressors in the top third of the mean stress rankings were held in common by pastors and their spouses: proliferation of activities, perfectionism, role conflicts, unwelcome surprise, "goldfish bowl" existence, no visible or tangible results of work, pathology of parishioners, and inferiority feelings.

Morris and Blanton (1994) examined the impact of work-related stressors on 136 clergy husbands and their wives from Lutheran, Church of God, American Baptist, Seventh-Day Adventist, Southern Baptist, and Episcopal denominations. They found two work-related stressors on the Clergy Family Life Inventory (CFLI; Blanton, Morris & Anderson, 1990), intrusions to family boundaries and lack of social support, to be associated with decreased marital, parental, and life satisfaction for both husbands and wives. Decreased life satisfaction was associated with higher levels of all five CFLI stressors: intrusiveness, time demands, financial compensation, social support, and mobility. A stepwise regression analysis revealed that intrusiveness was associated with a decrease in both husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction and husbands' parental satisfaction. Wives' parental satisfaction was associated with less intrusiveness and time demands. Social support and intrusiveness predicted (positively and inversely, respectively) husbands' life satisfaction, whereas

social support and time demands predicted (positively and inversely, respectively) wives' life satisfaction. These results indicate that intrusions to family boundaries, lack of social support, and time demands are critical work-related stressors in terms of their impact on parental, marital, and life satisfaction for clergy couples.

In an exploratory path analysis of organizational and family systems factors in stress among 41 ministers from a liberal mainline denomination, Henry et al. (1991) hypothesized and found that the density of the governing body of the church (percentage of relationships pastor has with governing body), and the history of pastor-parish conflict predicted emotional triangles (defined as "recurring patterns of interaction that allow two individuals to reduce tension by involving a third party," Henry et al., 1991, p. 934). In addition, they predicted that pastors who had cut themselves off from family members would be particularly reactive to emotional triangles, because of the poor differentiation from family of origin this reflects, thus yielding a stronger correlation between emotional triangles and stress-related symptoms. Their results largely supported this hypothesis. These results must be interpreted cautiously, however, due to difficulties measuring emotional triangles and pastor-parish conflict and the limitation of this study to a single denomination.

In a principal components analysis study, Dewe (1987) used content analysis of interviews with 38 ministers from a New Zealand Protestant Church as a basis for constructing measures of stress and coping specific to ministers. The analysis of the 38 work stressors revealed three factors which accounted for 38% of the total variance: (a) parish conflicts and church conservatism, (b) difficulties involving parish commitment and development, and (c) emotional and time difficulties surrounding crisis work. The principal components analysis of the 65 coping strategies yielded five factors, accounting for a total of 32% of the variance: (a) social support, (b) postponing action by relaxation and distracting attention, (c) developing capacity to deal with the problem, (d) rationalizing the problem, and (e) support through spiritual commitment. Mean scores indicated that emotional and time difficulties related to crisis work were experienced most frequently of the three stress factors. The three most frequently used coping mechanisms were support through spiritual commitment, developing capacity to deal with the problem, and social support.

Several studies have examined stress in relation to gender. In a study of 593 religious professionals, Rayburn, Richmond, and Rogers (1983) found that women clergy reported significantly less role ambiguity than male clergy did, indicating a better sense of what they have to do, how they should do it, and how they will be evaluated. Female clergy also reported fewer role boundary difficulties, and less stress, vocational strain and physical strain. Male clergy indicated having more recreational outlets, whereas female clergy reported greater cognitive coping capacities. Single clergy persons experienced less stress than their married counterparts. Female clergy with clergy spouses experienced less role insufficiency and psychological and vocational strain than female clergy with non-clergy spouses. Thus, among married female clergy, the best arrangement appears to be those married to clergy. In focusing on female clergy's experiences of stress, Rayburn, Richmond, and Rogers' (1988) results indicated that nuns reported less stress (perceived pressure) and strain (actual wear and tear) and better coping resources than protestant clergywomen. Protestant clergywomen indicated less role overload (job demands exceeding resources) than female rabbis.

BURNOUT

The term "burnout" was first applied by Freudenberg to public health care workers (Guy, 1987). Freudenberg and Robbins (1979) later applied the term to psychotherapists which led to a wave of investigation into the burnout phenomena in human service professionals over the last two decades. Burnout can be defined as a process and condition in which chronic stress from interpersonal contact leads to emotional and/or physical exhaustion, decreased productivity, dehumanized treatment of clients, marital conflict, loneliness, psychosomatic illness, and a substantial decrease in enjoyment of interpersonal relationships both inside and outside of work (Guy, 1987; Warner & Carter, 1984).

The majority of the research on burnout has focused on personal and situational variables. Daniel and Rogers (1981) reviewed the research on burnout in the human service professionals in general and applied these findings to pastors. They concluded that the symptoms of pastors who leave the ministry (marital stress and feelings of personal failure and inadequacy; Duncan, 1932) strongly resemble those of other helping professionals who experience burnout. Other factors that are theoretically

assumed to be related to burnout in the pastorate are time demands (Collins, 1977; Ellison & Mattila, 1983), role conflicts (Mills, 1968), and the gap between unrealistic expectations and reality (Ellison & Mattila, 1983; Faulkner, 1981).

Several empirical studies of burnout among pastors have been conducted. Browning (1981) conducted a correlational study of burnout among pastors focusing on situational factors. Participants were 230 male ministers/priests from Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal denominations. He used the three factors (Personal Burnout, Perception of Job Success, and Interpersonal Relationships with Co-workers and Supervisors) and an overall burnout (total) score of The Stress Inventory for Ministers, which he adapted from Edwards (1981). He found that the number of hours per day spent in church-related activities was positively, but weakly, related to personal burnout ($r = .15$). Taking an annual family vacation was associated with decreased personal burnout and overall burnout; in contrast, it was also associated with decreased perception of job success. However, the relationships were weak (r 's = $-.15$, $-.17$, $-.16$, respectively). Those pastors who utilize a social-professional system (e.g., amount of time spent each week sharing with other ministers) reported less burnout on all four measures of burnout. Flexibility in organizing one's weekly schedule was weakly, but significantly related to decreased levels of personal burnout. Giving and receiving family support was also associated with decreased burnout on all four measures of burnout. Contrary to expectations, Browning found no relationship between amount of time spent in counseling and burnout.

York (1982), using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach & Jackson, 1986), focused more on interpersonal variables in his sample of 193 pastors and their wives from 32 Protestant denominations. He found a significant negative relationship between burnout, particularly a lack of feeling of personal accomplishment, and assertiveness. Marital adjustment was also associated with decreased burnout for both pastors and their wives, although wives' marital adjustment scores exhibited a stronger relationship. In addition, York found a positive relationship between burnout and the variables of aggressiveness, conflict avoidance, dependency, and shyness. More specifically, passive-aggressiveness was positively related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Pastors high in conflict avoidance reported a lower sense of person-

al accomplishment. Dependent pastors reported higher levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lower sense of personal accomplishment. Shyness was associated with a decreased sense of personal accomplishment. Based on pastors' mean scores on the MBI, York concluded that burnout occurs in Protestant pastors to the same degree that it does in the human service professionals in general.

Congo (1983) noted that the few burnout studies examining interpersonal variables focus on the quantity rather than the quality of interpersonal relating. He focused on quality of interpersonal relationships using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), the Interpersonal Check List (ICL; Nugent, 1978) based on Leary's work, and the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation-Behavior (FIRO-B; Schutz, 1958). Participants were 184 ministers from 32 Protestant denominations. He found burnout to be associated with passive-aggressiveness, feeling little control in relationships, a lack of desire for and an inability to express affection, and not feeling included socially while wanting to be included by others. Congo also predicted and found that interpersonal relationship styles predicted emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment above and beyond personal data variables.

Warner and Carter (1984), (see p. 6 for description of population), compared burnout between pastors and pastors' wives, and lay persons by using several subscales of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Personal Accomplishment and Emotional Exhaustion; Maslach & Jackson, 1986). While the two groups were not significantly different in their sense of personal accomplishment, pastors' wives experienced a higher degree of emotional exhaustion than non-pastoral males and females. An interesting nonhypothesized finding was that pastors experienced higher levels of Involvement in Work (another MBI subscale) in comparison to other groups. Pastors also experienced significantly more loneliness than those in non-pastoral roles and significantly less marital adjustment than non-pastoral females.

Rodgerson (1996) used the Religious Problem-Solving Scale (Pargament et al., 1988) and the MBI to examine the role of religious problem-solving in clergy burnout. Participants were 252 full-time pastors from the American Baptist Churches of the United States of America (ABCUSA). A religious

problem-solving style that involves collaborating with God (Collaborative) was associated with decreased levels of both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization ($r = -.27$ and $-.32$, respectively). A problem-solving style involving deferment to God (Deferring) was also associated with decreased levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization ($r = .27$ and $-.18$, respectively). In contrast, a self-sufficient religious problem-solving style (Self-Directing) was positively related to emotional exhaustion ($r = .24$) and depersonalization ($r = .30$), and associated with a decreased sense of personal accomplishment ($r = -.24$). Thus, these findings indicate that pastors who involve God in the problem-solving process experience lower levels of burnout than those who attempt to solve their problems alone.

SUMMARY OF STRESS AND COPING AND BURNOUT

While religious leaders exhibited less overall stress in comparison to the general population, ministers endorsed the highest overall occupational stress and vocational strain, and next to the lowest amount of overall personal resources among religious leaders. Regarding work-related stressors, intrusions to family boundaries and lack of social support both appear to be inversely related to marital, parental, and life satisfaction for both husbands and wives. Parish conflicts, church conservatism, difficulties involving parish commitment, and particularly emotional and time difficulties related to crisis work are also significant work-related stressors for pastors.

In at least one denomination, the density of the governing body of the church (percentage of relationships the pastor has with governing body) and the history of pastor-parish conflict were positively related to emotional triangles (defined as "recurring patterns of interaction that allow two individuals to reduce tension by involving a third party," Henry et al., 1991, p. 934) in the church leadership. While further research needs to corroborate this finding, it suggests that pastors need to pay close attention to how much personal involvement they have with their governing bodies and the nature of these relationships.

Regarding situational factors associated with burnout, the number of hours per day spent in church-related activities is associated with higher levels of burnout, whereas taking an annual family vacation, utilizing a social-professional support system,

having a flexible schedule, and giving and receiving family support are all related to lower levels of burnout. The interpersonal variables of assertiveness and marital adjustment are associated with lower levels of burnout, whereas passive-aggressiveness, conflict avoidance, dependency, shyness, experiencing minimal control in relationships, lack of desire for and an inability to express affection, and not feeling included socially though wanting to be included by others are positively correlated with burnout among pastors. In comparing pastoral couples to the general population, pastors' wives reported a higher degree of emotional exhaustion. With respect to religious problem solving styles, pastors who collaborate with God or defer to God in problem solving appear to experience less burnout than those who attempt to solve their problems alone.

IMPAIRMENT

Researchers in other human service professions such as psychotherapy have noted that the primary tool in promoting growth in others in the personality of the therapist (Guy, 1987). While not typically perceived as human service professionals, pastors clearly function in this capacity to a substantial degree as they relate to their parishioners (Warner & Carter, 1984). As in other traditional human service professions, the emotional maturity and stability of pastors provide the foundation for their ministerial effectiveness. Pastors' emotional maturity must be sufficiently developed to promote rather than hinder the spiritual and psychological growth of their parishioners. When this is not the case, the potential exists for impairment which may bring harm to parishioners. Impairment is difficult to define, but it usually focuses on emotional and personality deficits of the helping professional which diminish effective professional functioning (Guy, 1987). It is also difficult to determine when impairment has occurred in a particular situation; however, it seems clear that any significant degree of psychopathology in pastors will lead to some level of impairment.

Keddy, Erdberg, and Sammon noted in 1990 that there have been few recent empirical studies of psychopathology among clergy. Their observation remains largely true today. Given the importance of the personality of the pastor in shepherding the flock (see Muse, 1992), and the potential for impairment resulting from psychopathology, it is critical to continue empirically studying the incidence and type of

psychopathology among pastors to determine the extent of the problem as well as how to remediate it. While there have been a few more recent studies which are reviewed below, the need for more research in this area is readily apparent.

Bradshaw (1977) used object relations theory as a framework in diagnosing 140 Protestant ministers who were evaluated at The Menninger Foundation. Diagnoses were based on a comprehensive evaluation including a clinical interview and psychological testing. Approximately 21% of the subjects (30) were diagnosed as having schizophrenic disorders. Sixteen percent (22 subjects) were diagnosed as having an intermediate level of character pathology. Passive-aggressive and narcissistic personalities were the first and second most frequently used descriptions, respectively. Of the 140 subjects, 33% (46 subjects) were characterized as suffering from some type of borderline personality organization. Findings for these latter two groups (intermediate and borderline) are consistent with the results of Christensen (1963a, 1963b) who found that 51% of his sample of 100 clergy suffered from intermediate and lower-level character pathology. Of the 33 subjects (24%) in Bradshaw's study who were diagnosed as neurotics, 27 were characterized as obsessive-compulsive personalities. This percentage is slightly less than in Christensen's (1963b) study, which yielded a neurotic diagnosis in 30% of the cases. The severity of these men's psychological difficulties points to the need for early assessment and intervention for pastors.

In a study of narcissistic psychopathology in clergy, Patrick (1990) used several assessment instruments (three MMPI subscales, MCMI Narcissism scale, and selected scales from the Edwards Personality Preference Schedule) to empirically examine Meloy's (1986) hypothesis that pathological narcissism is prevalent among the clergy. In her sample of 64 United Church candidates enrolled in an MDiv program, she found that ministerial candidates did not differ from the general population in competitiveness, desire to be the center of attention, or willingness to defer to others' views and praise others (which was expected to be lower for narcissistic individuals). Moreover, their needs for support, praise, and recognition from others did not exceed that of the general population. In addition, candidates scored higher than the general population in capacity for empathy, compassion, caring, and benevolence toward others.

There were, however, several indications of narcissistic traits. Ministerial candidates were less willing to accept blame and responsibility than the general population. In addition, the mean score on the Narcissistic Personality Disorder Scale (Solomon, 1982) was significantly greater than for the normal population, although it was significantly lower than the mean of patients diagnosed with narcissistic personality disorders (Solomon, 1982). Finally, female candidates scored at the low end of the range interpreted as the "presence" of narcissistic traits on the MCMI. Patrick (1990) interprets these overall findings as strongly arguing against a high prevalence of pathological narcissism among the clergy. While this may be the case, the results appear to present a less clear picture, suggesting the possibility of a higher rate of particular narcissistic traits among clergy. This, however, needs to be empirically replicated by further studies. More importantly, pastors need to be compared to other similar helping professionals rather than the general population because what is "normal" for helping professionals may differ from the general population. An important caveat in interpreting this study is that the population was seminary students, not full-time pastors. Thus, these results need to be replicated with pastors.

Keddy et al. (1990) used the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised (WAIS-R), the MMPI, and the Rorschach Inkblot Test to psychologically assess 42 Catholic clergy and religious referred for residential treatment. They found a consistent constellation of difficulties: rigidity and lack of insightfulness related to interpersonal difficulties, an overly intellectual orientation, and a lack of sophistication in dealing with emotional factors. When confronted with strong emotional material, the clergy tended to respond in an unmodulated manner. This corresponded to many of the circumstances which led to referrals such as angry outbursts and sexual acting out. The mean score on the Masculinity-Femininity subscale of the MMPI was in the clinically significant range, indicating a lack of identification with the traditional masculine role. While this is not necessarily problematic, it does suggest the need to consider sexual identity confusion. Sexual orientation distress or confusion was found in approximately 30% of the sample, and other sexual problems in 14.8%. The authors' clinical impressions were that some of the sample had developed substantial personality problems that interfered with intimate relationships, including their relationships with God. They concluded that

many of the problems assessed could have been identified earlier at the seminary or novitiate level, lessening the severity of psychopathology. The constellation of problems identified in this study may uniquely represent clergy referred for residential treatment. Thus, further research needs to compare such clergy to non-clergy residential patients.

Another area of pastors' functioning that clearly constitutes some level of impairment is sexual misconduct. Statistics on clergy affairs have been relatively scant in the past; however, some research on this topic has emerged in recent years (Muse, 1992; Seat et al., 1993). In a survey by *Christianity Today* of 300 pastors from all denominations, 23% acknowledged inappropriate sexual behavior since entering the local church ministry (cited in Muse, 1992). Similarly, Somers (1986) found that 25% of the pastors he surveyed from the Free Methodist Church admitted to having engaged in inappropriate sexual behavior. Twelve percent of those surveyed by *Christianity Today* admitted to having had sexual intercourse with someone other than their spouse and 18% acknowledged participating in other forms of sexual contact such as passionate kissing, fondling, and mutual masturbation. Consistent with the survey by *Christianity Today*, two surveys by Leadership magazine (374 and 300 ordained pastors, respectively) found 12% and 9%, respectively, of the clergy surveyed admitted to having had sexual intercourse with someone other than their wives (Goetz, 1992; Muck 1988). Sixty-nine percent of the respondents in Muck's study identified the sexual partner as someone within the church. Also generally consistent with the *Christianity Today* survey, one *Leadership* survey (Goetz, 1992) found 19%, and Seat et al. found 14% of the (277 Southern Baptist) pastors surveyed admitted to an affair or some form of inappropriate sexual contact with someone other than their spouses. Approximately 70% of the pastors surveyed by Seat et al. reported having knowledge of other pastors who have had sexual contact with someone within their congregation, and 24% indicated having counseled a woman who reported having had sexual contact with a pastor.

The above cited surveys clearly demonstrate that sexual misconduct is a significant problem among pastors. This raises the question of what factors predict which pastors are potentially susceptible to sexual misconduct. There has been much theoretical speculation regarding different types of "vulnerable pastors," and what factors predict sexual misconduct

(Francis & Turner, 1995; Muse, 1992; Rediger, 1990; Steinke, 1989), but relatively little empirical study. The most common personality type hypothesized as a potential victimizer is the narcissistic personality (Brock & Lukens, 1989; Francis & Turner, 1995; Hands, 1992; Muse, 1992; Steinke, 1989). Others, however, have been discussed: the uninformed naive pastor, the primarily healthy pastor in personal crisis, the severely neurotic, compulsive pastor who feels compelled to gain approval from parishioners, the dependent personality, the avoidant personality, the antisocial personality, the passive-aggressive personality, the sexually addicted pastor, the bipolar pastor, and those pastors who frequently engage in projective identification (Brock & Lukens, 1989; Francis & Turner, 1995; Muse, 1992).

Regarding empirical findings of factors predictive of sexual misconduct, Steinke (1989) noted that many pastors involved in affairs demonstrated higher levels of narcissism than the normal population. Thoburn (cited in Thoburn & Balswick, 1994) found feelings of mistrust for others, rejection, and shame to be positively correlated with sexual temptation. Thoburn's findings also demonstrated a relationship between pastors' consumption of pornography and infidelity. Muck (1988), Steinke (1989), and Thoburn all found marital dissatisfaction to be a leading factor contributing to extra-marital affairs. Thoburn found a positive relationship between emotional distance from the pastor's wife and dissatisfaction experienced in his sex life with his wife, both of which were positively correlated with infidelity. Steinke (1989) noted that most of the sexual affairs in his study began with emotional affairs. Consistent with this, Thoburn found a positive correlation between infidelity and being aroused by someone in desperate need of help, even though the majority of pastors are not aroused by helping others in desperate need. Thus, for the minority of pastors who are aroused by this situation, arousal is a predictor of infidelity.

Seat et al. (1993) found the following factors to discriminate pastors who had engaged in sexual misconduct: a suspicious spouse, a composite stress score (combining several related questionnaire items), a composite sexual misconduct score (combining several related questionnaire items), and stress related to marriage, family, isolation, and sexual issues. In addition, multiple regression analysis confirmed that stress and perceived adequacy of training significantly predicted sexual misconduct. In other

words, pastors less confident in their training were more likely to have engaged in sexual misconduct.

SUMMARY OF IMPAIRMENT

Significant psychopathology appears to be quite prevalent among the subgroup of pastors referred for evaluation or treatment; however, more studies are needed in this area. Diagnoses among pastors referred for residential treatment include borderline personality, neurotic disorders (primarily obsessive-compulsive personalities), psychotic disorders, and passive-aggressive and narcissistic personalities. Prevalent psychological difficulties for pastors in a clinical population are rigidity and lack of insightfulness related to interpersonal difficulties, overly intellectual orientation, difficulty dealing with emotions, and sexual orientation distress or confusion. The prevalence of narcissism among pastors remains to be determined. While pastors appear to be no different than the general population on numerous narcissistic traits, they may be less willing to accept blame and responsibility. Once again, future research needs to compare the prevalence of narcissism among pastors to that of other helping professionals.

Sexual misconduct clearly leads to some level of impairment. Unfortunately, the research indicates that it is a substantial problem among pastors. Various studies report the incidence of inappropriate sexual behavior ranging from 14 to 25%, and of adultery ranging from 9 to 12%. Regarding predictors or correlates of sexual misconduct, consumption of pornography, marital dissatisfaction, emotional distance from one's spouse, and dissatisfaction with sexual relationship with spouse are associated with infidelity. Pastors who experience more stress, particularly related to marriage, family, isolation and sexual issues, and are less confident in their training are more likely to engage in sexual misconduct.

DISCUSSION

Numerous decades of research on the personal functioning of pastors reveal much important and hopefully useful information about pastors' strengths and weaknesses, as well as the types of demands under which they work. While empirical investigation into pastors' personal lives has increased since the early-to-mid 1980s, in some ways it is still in its infancy. There is a great need for more research in this area if we are to prevent and remediate burnout, sexual misconduct, marital/family diffi-

culties, and general interpersonal difficulties and emotional distress among pastors, all of which diminish their ability to shepherd and guide their parishioners. In this discussion, a comment will first be made on several research questions that remain unresolved. Following this, several notable themes from the research and directions for future research will be discussed.

With the exception of a few areas, the research on pastors' psychological/spiritual functioning is quite scattered, with a few studies sprinkled throughout a number of different areas. A conclusive verdict is still out on several questions because of the lack of corroborating studies, or contradictory findings: (a) Do pastors experience more stress and a diminished quality of life/emotional well-being in comparison to the general population or other helping professionals?; (b) Is the incidence of narcissism and psychopathology in general higher for pastors than for other helping professionals?; (c) Does the more "flexible" and "separated" pastoral family represent a healthy adaptation to the demands of the pastorate, or pathological instability and emotional distance?; and (d) Why do pastors who are "vocationally incongruent" and exhibit poor psychological adjustment enter the ministry? These are just a sample of some of the questions that need further clarification in future research.

One of the most notable findings from this literature review is what is conspicuously absent. There are virtually no studies on pastors' spirituality. One conclusion from the clinical impressions of Keddy et al. (1990) is that the pastors who had significant interpersonal difficulties had parallel problems in their relationships with God. The parallels between the quality of an individual's relationship with others and with God has been empirically supported by a number of studies on God image and spiritual maturity (e.g., Brokaw & Edwards, 1994; Hall & Brokaw, 1995; Hall, Brokaw, Edwards, & Pike, 1996). It is critical that pastors' spiritual maturity be specifically examined since it is intricately related to their psychopathology and psychological maturity, as well as to their vocational function as spiritual leaders.

The most striking leit motif revealed in this literature is the centrality of pastors' interpersonal maturity for their personal fulfillment and professional effectiveness. Numerous findings testify to this. First, one of the top needs for training improvement identified by pastors in one study was human relations (Ellison & Mattila, 1983). It appears that pastors are

aware that this is a significant training gap in their traditional seminary education. Second, pastors who cut themselves off from their families appear to be more reactive to emotional triangles within the church leadership (Henry et al., 1991). Third, Keddy et al. (1990) concluded that pastors' significant personality problems interfered with their intimate relationships, including their relationships with God. Such difficulties in intimate relationships will make it difficult to manifest God's love in their relationships with parishioners. Moreover, these difficulties will negatively impact pastors' personal relationships with God. Fourth, numerous interpersonal factors have been related to burnout among pastors. Aggressiveness, passive-aggressiveness, conflict avoidance, dependency, and inability to express affection are all associated with higher levels of burnout. Finally, the interpersonal factors of emotional distance from one's spouse, marital dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction with sexual relationship with spouse, and stress related to marriage and family are all positively related to sexual misconduct among pastors.

A related interpersonal theme that appears to be one of the biggest difficulties pastors face is unrealistic expectations. The demands of the ministry clearly contribute to this; however, the interpersonal and emotional development of pastors play a key role in how they deal with their congregations' and their own expectations. Based on Warner and Carter's (1984) interpretation of their findings, an adapted model can be proposed for how the interpersonal theme of unrealistic expectations relates to burnout, loneliness, and marital adjustment. Unrealistic expectations of the pastor leads to over-involvement in work on the pastors' part. This causes his wife to increase her role in the ministry (or possibly to withdraw immediately), leading to emotional exhaustion on her part. Thus, both spouses become burned out which in turn causes them to withdraw from each other. This leads to loneliness and diminished marital adjustment which reciprocally exacerbates their burnout. Undoubtedly other factors contribute to this negative cycle; however, pastors who place unrealistic expectations on themselves or internalize the unrealistic expectations of their congregations may contribute to beginning and/or continuing such a negative cycle. Once again, this stems from interpersonal/relational issues, such as an excessive need to gain others' approval.

Future research on the personal functioning of pastors must address several areas. Before outlining

these areas, a general comment on methodology and theory is warranted. Many of the studies are descriptive, although some are correlational. However, overall there is very little methodologically sophisticated research in this area. Furthermore, few studies include a theoretical basis for their investigations (for exceptions, see Henry et al., 1991; Warner & Carter, 1984). Studies need to move beyond description and provide hypotheses regarding pastors' personal functioning. More sophisticated theoretical bases for understanding pastors' personal functioning are needed, and should be tested in more methodologically rigorous ways. Programmatic research would be helpful in addressing both theoretical and methodological issues.

First, given the importance for pastors of interpersonal maturity highlighted above, relational theories such as attachment theory and object relations theory would provide a helpful theoretical framework from which to develop hypotheses about pastors' personal functioning. For example, object relations theory would suggest the hypothesis that pastors who engage in less mature interpersonal relations and use immature psychological defenses will experience increased levels of psychological symptoms (e.g., depression) and burnout, and decreased levels of personal well-being/fulfillment and marital satisfaction. Second, research is needed to identify the specific ways in which various forms of psychopathology impair pastors' professional effectiveness. Third, it would be interesting to investigate the impact of any seminary programs emphasizing relational development on the well-being and effectiveness of their future pastors. Fourth, research examining the relationship of pastors' spiritual maturity to their relational functioning, burnout, and sense of personal well-being and efficacy is needed. Recent advances in the measurement of spirituality make it possible to conduct such studies (e.g., Spiritual Assessment Inventory, Hall & Edwards, 1996; Spiritual Well-Being Scale, Ellison & Smith, 1991).

Methodologically, multivariate analyses such as structural equations modeling could be employed to provide a more sophisticated understanding of the relationships between variables. Henry et al. (1991) provide one of the few examples of such methodologies in using path analysis to examine organizational and family systems factors in stress among pastors. In addition, comparing pastors to other helping professionals such as physicians and clinical psychologists may be more appropriate and useful than com-

paring them to the general population as has been done in the majority of studies.

In conclusion, the interpersonal theme throughout this research points to the importance of pastors dealing with their relational deficits. This is not traditionally a focus of seminaries. Although there is some improvement in this area, it remains a substantial gap in traditional seminary training. Pastors typically take only one to two counseling courses throughout their seminary training. Furthermore, there is a lack of emphasis on relationships in general, and especially on understanding one's self and developing in the area of relational maturity. Ironically, the very thing that is emphasized the least in seminary can be tied to almost every problem the research indicates is prevalent among pastors (e.g., burnout, sexual misconduct, unrealistic expectations, feelings of inadequacy, fear of failure, loneliness, isolation, and poor marital adjustment). As Keddy et al. (1990) noted, interpersonal issues need to be addressed early in the pastor's career to prevent the unnecessary development of psychopathology, which can become quite severe in some cases. It is hoped that this literature review will stimulate further research in needed areas, and encourage pastors and seminaries to emphasize the importance of developing emotional/relational maturity in addition to spiritual maturity and biblical knowledge. As research in this area extends our knowledge of pastors' psychological and spiritual functioning, and relational maturity is emphasized more heavily, perhaps fewer pastors will burn out and leave the ministry, and more will function effectively and find personal fulfillment in their demanding and crucial role in the church as spiritual leaders.

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