

Evaluation of a clergy stress management intervention

Stanley Arumugam
(M.A.Counselling Psychology)

**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of**

Ph.D in Community Psychology
at the
University of Zululand

Promoter:
Professor S.D. Edwards

January 2003

CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract	iv
Acknowledgments	v
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background to the study	1
1.2. Ministry as a stressful vocation	1
1.3. Spirituality, religion and coping	3
1.4. A community psychology response	5
1.5. Motivation for the study	6
1.6. Aims of the study	9
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1. Introduction	10
2.2. Definitions of stress and burnout	11
2.3. Theoretical perspectives on stress and burnout	12
2.4. Review of clergy stress and burnout empirical studies	30
2.5. Stress management as health promotion	38

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	44
3.1. Introduction	44
3.2. Phases of the research	44
3.3. Description of sample	49
3.4. Instruments	50
3.5. Description of research procedures	53
CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	57
4.1. Introduction	57
4.2. Phenomenological analysis	57
4.3. <i>Presentation of quantitative findings</i>	59
4.4. Presentation of qualitative findings	69
4.5. Clergy evaluation of the stress management programme	98
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	112
5.1. Introduction	112
5.2. Stress as a systemic phenomenon	112
5.3. Individual related stressors	117
5.4. Clergy social support	133
5.5. Experiential understanding of clergy stress and burnout	137
5.6. Evaluation of the clergy stress management programme	141

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	154
6.1. Introduction	154
6.2. Clergy stress management as health promotion	154
6.3. Community psychology as collaboration	155
6.4. Lessons learned in collaboration	157
6.5. Limitations of the study	159
6.6. Conclusions	160
6.7. Recommendations for future study	161
REFERENCES	162
APPENDICES	175

Abstract

The ministry is regarded by many as one of the most stressful vocations. Researchers highlight the need for clergy self care as a strategy in the management of stress and the prevention of burnout.

This research study documents the design, implementation and evaluation of a clergy stress management programme as a health promotion intervention. A series of one day workshops was facilitated amongst forty five ministers from various denominations selected by their membership of the ministers fraternals in Stanger, Richards Bay, Tongaat and Secunda communities.

The effectiveness of the clergy stress management programme was evaluated using a phenomenological approach. There was unanimous report of high satisfaction levels related to clergy experience of the workshops. The most common themes reported by participants were that the workshop provided them with an opportunity for personal empowerment in that it challenged some of their faulty thinking about ministry life and calling, encouraged personal insight for new behaviour, improved their knowledge of stress and gave them practical tools to manage personal stress. The stress management intervention was also described as an opportunity for renewal and restoration.

This study confirms the need for holistic health promotion interventions amongst the clergy as an important group of helping professionals.

Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to all the ministers who willingly participated in the stress management workshops. Your personal stories will serve as a source of encouragement for fellow ministers who walk on the road of stress and burnout.

I would especially like to thank ministers from the following communities:

- The Brackenham Ministers Fraternal
- The Stanger Ministers Fellowship
- The AFM Church in Tongaat
- The Black Ministers Fraternal of Secunda and surrounding areas

Thanks also to my family and friends for your encouragement and prayers.

I am also grateful to my staff for their practical support in the research process.

Finally, a special thanks to my professor and mentor, Steve Edwards for his sincere interest, guidance and support.

List of Tables

Table 1	Description of study sample	50
---------	-----------------------------	----

List of Figures

Figure 4.1	Self reported stress categories	64
Figure 4.2	Stress diagnostic survey results	66
Figure 4.3	Sources of social support	67
Figure 4.4.	Preparation for the ministry	68

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the study

It is generally acknowledged that the ministry as a vocation is inherently stressful given the intensive people helping component of the work. The majority of studies in the field of clergy stress and burnout document the high cost to clergy, families and congregational systems. There is little doubt that clergy stress and burnout can be detrimental to the mental health and wellbeing of the minister and other related social systems.

Given this situation, several researchers in the field have recommended that mental health professionals facilitate interventions to support clergy in the management of stress and the prevention of burnout. In response to this need, a clergy stress management intervention was developed in collaboration with clergy. Thereafter a series of stress management programmes was facilitated to assess the value of such an intervention to this group of helping professionals.

This thesis documents the programme evaluations of clergy subjects showing from a phenomenological perspective their experiences of the programme as a mental health promotion intervention.

1.2. Ministry as a stressful vocation

It appears from anecdotal studies and observations that the minister of the Gospel has responded to one of the most exacting and stressful vocations open to human beings (Rassieur, 1982). Other researchers in the field of clergy stress and burnout also support these findings suggesting that clergy are vulnerable to the debilitating effects of stress and burnout (Daniel & Rogers, 1981; Rediger, 1982; Sanford, 1982).

Given the helping component of the religious minister's work, the potential for burnout is expected to be high (Rassieur, 1982). The intensive helping activities of ministers of religion could be detrimental to their physical and mental health Gill (1980).

Several studies suggest that ministers experience high levels of stress that could be detrimental to both their physical and mental health. Mills and Koval (1971) note that of 4,908 ministers in 27 Protestant denominations, 75 percent reported one or more periods of major stress in their careers. In two-thirds of this group, the stress arose from the pastoral work associated with the local church.

Other studies have suggested that a large number of ministers are responding to these high levels of stress by leaving the ministry. MacDonald (1980) reported that one-third of ministers surveyed in a Gallup Poll seriously considered leaving the ministry. Several South African studies also support this conclusion that clergy are experiencing high levels of stress, which could lead to burnout (Odendal, 1984; Raath, 1987; Arumugam, 1992; Swart, 2002).

Up to now most research studies pertaining to clergy stress and burnout have focused on the negative aspects of these phenomena. This literature has been helpful in identifying challenges facing clergy, but has largely ignored the more positive aspects of clergy life and functioning. If psychologists are to work effectively with clergy, it is important to also understand something of the work challenges and rewards that clergy experience (McMinn, Ramey, Swanson, Villa, & McRay, 2002).

1.3. Spirituality, religion and coping strategies

At the same time as there are the high levels of stress in the ministry, not all ministers suffer the negative effects of this syndrome given the inherent coping resources available in the spiritual nature of this vocation. Maloney (1988) notes that generally it appears that clergy have more personal resources to handle stress than other persons do. Although ministers do feel that their responsibilities are great and that they are often overloaded, yet they feel that the rewards of ministering outweigh these difficulties.

A review of literature in the field of clergy stress and burnout suggests that the spirituality inherent in clergy life and calling has not been adequately researched resulting in studies that generally focus on the illness component to the exclusion of wellness. Given this consideration, the design and delivery of any stress management intervention among this group of helping professionals needs to adequately reflect the spiritual-religious dynamics that mediate the stress and burnout experience, if there is to be any effectiveness in such an intervention.

This study attempts to better understand these experiences using a phenomenological approach. This approach recognises that the clergy as a group of helping professions express a different experience of stress and burnout given the unique spiritual and religious dimensions which are not typically characteristic of other helping professions.

In understanding the nature of stress and burnout in the clergy, it is important to evaluate not only the harmful effects of stress based on an illness model but also to consider the positive elements that are inherent in these experiences using an integrative wellness paradigm. However it appears that this integrative task is not an easy endeavour as there is very little information regarding the variables that mediate the experience of stress in preventing burnout in the ministry.

Although some studies explore coping resources in their background questionnaires, e.g., Raath (1987) and Odendal (1984), this area appears to warrant a further investigation.

Raath's (1987) study of stress amongst Presbyterian South African clergy is useful in providing a phenomenological account of the minister's daily life and work. This approach is useful especially when one considers that the factors contributing to and mediating the minister's experience of stress is not adequately measured using only quantitative techniques.

The role of spiritual variables in mediating the experience of stress and burnout requires serious investigation amongst this group of helping professionals, many of whom claim spiritual coping strategies to be their most significant coping mechanism (Arumugam, 1992). When one considers that the spiritual element transcends the boundaries of empiricism, then a phenomenological perspective may provide more useful information with regard to the religious minister's experience of burnout.

Pargament's (1997) study of religion and coping supports the need for a holistic and appreciative enquiry into the phenomena of stress and burnout. The study revealed four general findings regarding this question. First, spiritual-religious coping was particularly important with regard to highly stressful, uncontrollable situations. Second, spiritual-religious coping methods were often predictors of coping outcomes even after non-spiritual coping methods were statistically controlled. Third, coping methods with positive impact included a) perceiving a spiritual relationship with a trustworthy and loving God, b) activities such as prayer, c) religious reappraisal promoting the sense that growth can come from stressful events, and d) receiving support from fellow members of a religious congregation

In presenting a holistic approach to stress management Adams (1980) also supports the need for a serious consideration of the spiritual dimension. In dealing with the spiritual dimension, he suggests that the individual is able to achieve integration, as opposed to alienation from the universe.

1.4. A community psychology response

Even though there are inherent coping resources available to the clergy by way of their calling and spirituality there are still many areas where wellbeing could be enhanced through self care. Several researchers in documenting the impact of stress and burnout amongst various clergy populations recommend the provision of health promotion support by mental health professionals (Daniel & Rogers, 1981; Meek, McMinn, Burnett, & Brower, 2001).

This thesis documents the implementation of a stress management intervention from the perspective of community psychology. This approach recognizes that individual level stress and wellbeing is part of a wider communal experience Carol and White (1982). It also recognizes that any meaningful intervention needs to be located within the context of the subject's unique individual and group experiences. The study of psychological stress and coping is consistent with the focus of community psychology since its inception (Dalton, Elias & Wandersman, 2000).

Recognizing the high cost of burnout, investigators in this field of study have recommended that additional research regarding burnout among ministers, and the examination of the unique stressors within the ministry, be conducted. Christian professionals in the mental health field are especially challenged to assist by helping to educate pastors as to the dangers and causes of burnout (Daniel & Rogers, 1981).

Despite this call for clergy support, there appears to be little empirical studies showing mental health promotion among clergy groups. Additionally there is no specific reference to clergy stress management interventions. Closer investigation of internet sites shows that there are a handful of clergy stress and burnout support programmes facilitated by church organisations but these do not appear to have been empirically documented as health promotion interventions.

1.5. Motivation for the present study

This thesis is an extension of an earlier study conducted by the researcher on 'Stress and Burnout amongst Indian Pentecostal Ministers' (Arumugam, 1992). The findings of the study indicated that although ministers were experiencing high levels of work stress, the incidence of burnout was low. In understanding this situation the researcher explored the mediating role of spiritually based coping strategies which are inherent in the ministry.

From personal discussions with the clergy sample using a phenomenological approach, it was found that there are significant spiritual resources and disciplines that ensure the wellbeing of clergy despite the stressful demands of the ministry, which cause them not to leave the ministry as American studies seem to suggest. The sense of calling to the ministry often provides the mental fortitude to continue with the work despite the reality of stressful experiences.

At the same time though, many pastors realised that the sacrifices they make for their calling are unnecessary and the demands made upon themselves and their families have little to do with furthering God's kingdom, which is their primary calling. There is also a recognition that the church and ministers themselves need to find ways to cope more effectively with stress so that they not only serve others with greater joy, but also find genuine personal rewards through their calling (Rassieur, 1984).

In response to a question in the earlier study which asked what strategies the church should provide in assisting the clergy in dealing with stress, a significant need was expressed by the study sample for practical, skills based interventions that would assist them [the clergy] to cope better with stress and avoid burnout (Arumugam, 1992). Many of the interventions indicated are typical stress management strategies such as time management, conflict handling, leadership and counselling skills. Other strategies related to better organisational support.

Subsequent to the researcher's initial study and ongoing interaction with clergy, the need for a stress management programme was consistently requested by several clergy groups. Swart (2002) in a recent study of clergy stress also identified the need for stress management to be a significant need arising from his research with ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church.

In response to the expressed need of clergy groups, the researcher embarked on the design and facilitation of a 'Clergy Stress Management Programme' as a health promotion intervention aimed at mediating the impact of stress and minimising the risk of burnout to the clergy. This study attempts to document the experience of clergy groups participating in a 'Clergy Stress Management' programme, using their personal narratives as a source for evaluating the efficacy of such an intervention.

This collaborative process allowed the researcher to design and deliver a health promotion intervention based on identified need for a stress management intervention as well as to allow both the clergy groups and the researcher to reflect on the dynamics of ministry as it relates to wellbeing which would inform the further enhancement of this intervention for application to a wider clergy population.

Therefore the present thesis is concerned with the design and evaluation of a 'Clergy Stress Management Programme' which was facilitated as a series of workshops with clergy groups. The efficacy of this clergy stress management programme is described and discussed in this study with recommendations made for future stress management interventions with clergy groups.

The study and intervention assumes a health promotion approach. This focus of this approach is on building and optimising identified health (salutogenesis), strengths (fortigenesis), competencies, skills, resources and supplies. This model of mental health promotion is focused on both illness prevention as well as health promotion. Edwards (2002) asserts that the integration of general health and mental health promotion strategies offers us the best prospect for reaching the goal of our collective way of life in order to achieve healthy minds in healthy bodies in healthy communities and societies.

It would appear that this is the only South African study that evaluates a clergy health promotion intervention. Most South African studies have focused on documenting the impact of stress and burnout on clergy groups, the development of situation-specific stress measurement and theological reflection on the importance of self care.

As an exploratory study in mental health promotion amongst clergy this study attempted to respond to the call for health promotion through the design and delivery of a clergy stress management programme and also attempted to evaluate the efficacy of such interventions as a holistic mental health response. This study attempts to reflect the richness of the clergy stories related to stress and burnout revealing the integrated nature of the phenomenon which is both debilitating as it is manageable.

The clergy stress management programme allowed the researcher as community psychologist to share strategies that would empower the clergy in managing stress based on extensive literature in the field of stress management. It also served a collaborative function in allowing the researcher to identify inherent strategies of wellness that clergy employ in their management of stress. Lessons learned from the clergy narrative are presented as guidelines for further research and/or interventions in the domain of clergy stress and burnout.

1.6. Aims of the study

Given the need for a contextually relevant health promotion intervention of limited scope the following aims were considered appropriate in the delivery of a community psychology response:

- 1) To document the experience of stress, burnout and coping using the phenomenological approach.
- 2) To design, implement and evaluate a 'Stress Management Programme' as a health promotion intervention for the clergy group.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

Much of the existing research on stress and burnout has focused on the physiological, psychological, or behavioural outcomes resulting from exposure to stress. Few studies explore religious and spiritual components of the stress experience, limited to clergy stress and burnout.

There also appears to be a trend amongst psychological research that focuses on the illness model of stress with limited appreciative studies of the stress and burnout in the context of wellbeing. As a result of this trend most studies tend to focus on the description of the stress phenomena, the scientific measurement of stress constructs and comparative impact studies. Relatively few studies have focused on health promotion interventions as a response to the identified stress and burnout impact on helping professions in general and among clergy specifically.

Most stress management interventions are generally directed by the available literature related to nature and dynamics of the phenomena. Given this point of departure, it was considered imperative that empirical and anecdotal literature of clergy stress and burnout be considered thoroughly as the basis for the design of the series of stress management interventions, which is the focus of this thesis. In addition to the available body of clergy stress and burnout literature, a working theory of contextual constructs not necessarily available in the generic literature reviews was developed through an action research process. An integration of both the available published literature as well as context-specific information served to inform the design, delivery and evaluation of this clergy stress management programme.

The following areas were surveyed in the literature review related to clergy stress management:

- a) Definitions of stress and burnout amongst helping professions and clergy.
- b) Overview of the clergy stress and burnout syndrome.
- c) Review of international and local clergy stress and burnout studies.
- d) Stress management intervention as a mental health promotion response to clergy stress and burnout.

2.2. Definitions of stress and burnout

Scientific enquiry into stress has been inhibited by the lack of clear, generally accepted definition of what is meant by stress (Ivancevich, Matteson, Freedman & Philips, 1990). Stress is defined as the *inability to cope with a perceived or real threat to one's mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing which results in a series of physiological responses and adaptations* (Seaward, 1997). The stress experience is subject to great individual variation.

Odendal and Van Wyk (1988) identify the following core features of burnout from their analysis of the available definitions of burnout:

- 1) It is a specific reaction that is experienced by helping professionals consisting of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, diminished sense of personal accomplishment.
- 2) It is a multidimensional syndrome involving a unique interaction between personality and situational factors which is manifested in diverse physical and psychological symptoms and not just a basic personality deficiency in the workplace.
- 3) It is a progressive process which develops over a long period and not just a single event.
- 4) It is not a discrete phenomenon that is either present or absent. Rather it is manifested at different levels of intensity and is reversible.

Most of the attempts at defining clergy burnout are generally in agreement with the definitions of burnout among secular helping professionals (Faulkner, 1981; Rediger, 1982). The only significant difference is the inclusion of the spiritual dimension in defining burnout among religious ministers. Rediger (1982) suggests a holistic definition of clergy burnout which involves the body, mind, and spirit.

2.3. Theoretical perspectives on stress and burnout

An intensive literature review was conducted which served to inform the design and delivery of the stress management programme, which was central to this thesis. The workshop participant manual reflects the key theoretical concepts covered in this literature review (Appendix D).

2.3.1. General Overview

There are essentially two approaches to understanding the burnout syndrome. The first attributes burnout to system variables which relate to the organizational or systematic aspects of one's job, e.g., work overload and role ambiguity (Maslach, 1982). The second approach emphasizes individual intrapsychic and interpersonal variables, e.g., inappropriate and negative personal motivations of the helping professional (Freudenberger, 1980).

Freudenberger (1980) warns against the tendency to conceptualize burnout within the framework of the medical model. In as much as individual variables are acknowledged as being important in understanding this phenomenon, this emphasis to the exclusion of other systematic or contextual factors limits such understanding. In understanding the causes of burnout, Maslach (1982) warns against the syndrome of blame which appears to be perpetuated by a medical model conception.

According to this conceptualisation blame is most often attached on the individual for his maladaptive functioning. In this case his experience of

burnout. Farber (1983) notes that the understanding of the individual factors underlying burnout must include an assessment of individual personality variables, mediational processes and current life stresses and supports. Freudenberger (1980) stresses the intrapsychic variables of overdedication, overcommitment, insecurity, power and control needs, and an unfulfilled personal life as the causes of burnout. Other writers also generally agree that burnout prone individuals are empathic, sensitive, humane, idealistic and people-oriented (Cherniss, 1980; Edelwich & Brodsky, 1982).

Interpersonal relationships are also seen as important to the experience of burnout. The quality of an individual's daily relationships with family and friends will influence the quality of his work performance and resultant job satisfaction. On the other hand satisfying relationships with significant people produce a supportive network that mediates the impact of work related stresses (Farber, 1983).

Harrison (1983) discusses a social competence model of burnout. His model follows from an analysis of recurrent themes in professional and clinical writings. One such theme appearing in the recent literature is the proposal that burnout is inversely related to perceived competence and effectiveness. Harrison (1983) observes that a sense of competence and a feeling of efficacy are the results of being able to develop positive feelings towards their jobs, if there is some certainty that what they do is valuable and makes a difference to the lives of their clients.

Cherniss (1982) observes that there has been a significant bias in thinking about burnout. Most of the research has focused on the worker or the immediate work environment. However, the burned out worker and the work environment are strongly influenced by broader socio-economic and political factors. Cherniss (1980) has noted in fact that there are sources of burnout at the individual (for example, training), organizational (for example, policy) and societal levels (for example, government bureaucracy).

Carrol and White (1982) support the view postulated by Cherniss (1982). They note that apart from the individual and immediate environment, other environments or ecosystems can and do play important roles in determining the individual's experience of burnout. In support of this ecological perspective, they view burnout as a form of ecological dysfunction.

2.3.2. General Symptoms of stress and burnout

Burnout has been associated with physical symptoms such as feelings of exhaustion and fatigue, recurrent headaches, gastrointestinal disturbances, weight loss, sleeplessness and depression. The behavioural symptoms include lability of mood, blunting of affect, diminished frustration tolerance, suspiciousness, rigidity, inability to relax, constriction of recreational and social outlets, feelings of isolation and increased marital discord.

Maslach (1982) proposed that burnout is a syndrome consisting of symptoms in three categories; emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion is seen as the core of the burnout syndrome which results in a pattern of emotional overload through becoming too emotionally involved. The helper overextends himself to a point of feeling overwhelmed by the emotional demands imposed by other people. This situation leads them to feel drained with no source of replenishment for their emotional needs. As a result they find ways to detach themselves from people which may even be manifested in an attitude of cold indifference. This emotional detachment in turn can become an added problem because it is in conflict with the individual's general commitment to helping people.

The consequence of detachment leads to the second aspect of the burnout syndrome, i.e., depersonalization. The manifestation of depersonalization is an active dislike for those who seek help. Helpers expect the worst from their clients and develop a poor opinion of them. This attitude on the part of the helper may be experienced by the client as a lack of courtesy or a failure to provide the appropriate help. Coupled with the loss of interest and idealism

there is a constant irritability which results in the wish that people would get out of the life of the helper and leave them alone.

This progressive feeling of negativism towards others gradually leads to a negative feeling of self. Maslach (1982) describes this third component of the burnout syndrome as a feeling of reduced personal accomplishment. There is a persistent sense of inadequacy about the helper's competence in working with people.

2.3.3. Symptoms of Burnout in the Ministry

How does burnout manifest itself in the context of the minister's work? As indicated earlier with the exception of the spiritual dimension, the physical and emotional symptoms among ministers are identical to those of other helping professionals.

Bangs (1986) describes the symptoms of ministerial burnout under several categories:

i) Avoidance behaviour, absenteeism and aloofness often accompany the burnout syndrome. Religious thus affected will evade occasions of stress, even when obligatory. Their presence at community events, input into community discussions, and/or time spent with students, clients or patients is reduced.

ii) Blunting of affect is also quite common. This emotional detachment, the lack of enthusiasm, the "going through the motions". The neutral impact of community decisions are all easily discernable in the close living of religious communities. At the same time, a rigidity, a cynicism, a lack of flexibility, erodes the personal sense of satisfaction.

iii) A poor work performance or one below the usual level of competence is rapidly recognized as indignation of burnout. Faulty, impersonal

communication with the recipients of the services and with members of the community all too often evidences a personal erosion.

iv) Intolerance, frustration and anger make the burnout casualty enormously difficult to accept since the ordinary occasions of human interaction in community living are substantially strained. Daniel and Rogers (1981) refer to a diminished tolerance for colleagues mannerisms and a concomitant suspiciousness and lack of trust.

v) Almost any of the usual somatic complaints typify burnout. These include among others gastrointestinal troubles, cardiovascular difficulties, sleep and eating disorders and a general debility that seems to sap one's energy.

vi) The negative attitudes toward self of inferiority and incompetence contribute to the sense of powerlessness and discouragement which constitute the burnout syndrome.

Rediger's (1982) identification of emotional and physical symptoms in the ministry are typical of other helping professions also. However, he also identifies other spiritual symptoms of burnout as manifested by significant changes in theological statements, development of moral judgementalism, loss of faith in God, the church and self, loss of prayer and meditational disciplines, one track preaching and teaching, listless and perfunctory performance of clergy role duties, loss of joy and celebration in spiritual endeavours and an air of cynicism.

Faulkner (1981) lists the following as physical symptoms of burnout in the minister's life:

- 1) He begins to feel tired frequently.
- 2) He begins to gain weight.
- 3) He spends fewer hours at previously favourite activities.
- 4) His sexual energies have waned.
- 5) He begins to lose weight.

- 6) He finds himself more dependant on stimulants and/or sedatives.
- 7) He exercises when the urge hits, but it hits infrequently.
- 8) He takes on fewer and fewer responsibilities.
- 9) He places high value on making it on less rest.
- 10) He begins to carry a constant comrade- exhaustion.
- 11) He begins to live with full-time unavoidable vulnerability.

Studies indicate that the symptoms of burnout extend well beyond the individual minister to that of his family. Poor marital adjustment appears to be the most common symptom of burnout in this regard. Warner and Carter (1984) found that wives of pastors experienced significantly more loneliness and diminished marital adjustment in comparison to females in non-pastoral roles. Given the emotional and physical demands of their work, ministers often do not give quality time to their family which often is manifested in increasing family conflicts (Faulkner, 1981). This is often characterized by the wife and children's complaints that they have to compete for the minister's time. McBurney (1977) also notes that there is a high incidence of marital discord among ministerial couples.

2.3.4. Causes of Burnout

This section will examine the causes of burnout among both secular helping professionals and religious ministers. The major causes examined are individual variables, situational variables and the causal relationship between stress and burnout.

As was mentioned earlier, the causes of burnout are generally divided into situational and personal variables. There seems to be a more significant amount of literature investigating situational variables as causes. This observation is emphasized by Maslach (1982) who from her research concludes that burnout is best understood in terms of the social and situational sources of job related stress.

Maslach (1982) observes that the focus of enquiry should change from who is to blame to what causes burnout. Focus is then placed on the possibility of a poor job situation instead of blaming the individual. Freudenberger (1980) views burnout not primarily as a function of individual dynamics, but stresses the importance of the psychosocial context within which burnout takes place.

This approach to understanding the phenomenon of burnout is very much a move away from blaming the victim. However, Freudenberger (1980) also cautions in this the issue of blame, when he observes that in identifying the causes of burnout there appears to be a natural reaction to look away from oneself and to fix blame on the situation or other people. This dialectic emphasizes the need to carefully examine both individual and situational variables in understanding the causes of burnout.

2.3.4.1. Intrapersonal and interpersonal factors

i) Inappropriate motivations

Maslach's (1982) analysis of the causes of the burnout phenomenon takes very well into account the issue of individual differences and motivation. She notes that inappropriate personal motivation can add to the susceptibility to situational sources of burnout. These inappropriate motives may be a strong need for approval and affection, seeking to gain a sense of self-worth and self-esteem, hoping to expiate guilt through good deeds, experiencing difficulty in close interpersonal relationships thus using the helping situation to satisfy their need for intimacy, using their job to express personal identity needs and to focus on the troubles of others to avoid their own.

Helpers with these inappropriate motives become more susceptible to the burnout syndrome when one considers the negative effects of ongoing and intensive involvement with people in need. The lack of positive feedback makes the helper more prone to developing negative feelings about their clients. This negativism in turn creates conflict in the helper, who is expected

to be kind and caring. (Maslach, 1982). Freudenberger (1980) views the cause of burnout as the excessive striving to reach some idealistic expectation imposed by oneself or by the values of society.

Like other helping professions the internal motivations in entering the ministry may be inappropriate. Raath (1987) documents the following inappropriate internal motives for entering the ministry:

The individual may be seeking approval of significant others. There may also be a personal need for recognition and acceptance. Some may enjoy the attention they will receive from those they help. Guilt over sin and fear of God's rejection may lead a person to seek atonement by serving God. The individual may try to overcome doubt about self worth by finding security in the safer environment in the church. Desire for control and authority is another inappropriate factor.

A review of the demanding nature of the ministry will show that by their very nature these inappropriate motivations will not be fulfilled, as they are contrary to the expectations placed on the minister.

The problem of motivations in entering the ministry is further complicated by the issue of being "called " to the ministry. McBurney (1977) identifies several problems related to the ministers "calling", which is essentially a divine experience. He speaks of the genuineness of one's "call", which may be distorted by significant others.

Another related issue is that of the lack of clarity concerning the exact nature of the "call". If the minister does not carefully explore the specific parameters of his ministry, he may end up in a situation of frustration when he is unable to live out the idea of the ministry he thinks he may be called to do.

Other researchers who have also examined the intra and interpersonal variables support Freudenberger's (1980) observation of high achievement as a cause of burnout.

ii) Unrealistic expectations

Rediger (1982) notes that the single most energy-draining pressure point that he finds among clergy is the gap between expectations and reality. Pastors are often idealistic, especially when they first come out of seminary.

Welch, Medeiros & Tate (1982) also note that a contributing factor to clergy burnout is the expectation that they ought to act like members of the clergy at all times. The enormous demands placed on the minister to be "all things to all people", contributes to the development of distorted ideas of the nature of the ministry. As a result of attempting to meet this multitude of demands, the minister often functions a great deal on his persona (Sanford, 1982).

The persona on the one hand serves an adaptive function in that it protects the minister from the outer world by enabling him to assume a certain outer posture but at the same time keeps other aspects of the minister's life hidden from others and in this regard.

Sanford (1982) notes that the persona is often useful and necessary. However, the excessive dependence on the persona leads to a point when the real self is not experienced any more. Welch *et al.*, (1982) notes that this role is false and is predestined for burnout.

Hart (1984) describes the one often distorted idea of the ministry that leads to unrealistic expectations. In this respect, he examines the idea that the ministry is a "sacred task" and a "high calling" and therefore demands a very unique sort of commitment. Hart (1984) observes that this idea is essentially true but that it can very easily be distorted to a point of setting up the minister for unreasonable expectations.

This exaggerated belief in the importance of the ministry can arise as a compensation for the many sacrifices ministers and their families have to make in terms of their time and their money. Second, the belief in the

ministers' superior line of work can be perpetuated by the common beliefs and stereotyping of lay people. These beliefs lead many church members as well as those outside the church to perceive the ministry as "special" and "set apart" (Hart, 1984).

So although Welch *et al.* (1982) note that congregation members have in fact denied the clergy the right to be human, this may be due in part to the distorted thinking and the projection of unrealistic expectations on the part of the minister. Hart (1984) notes the tendency to deny the minister the right to be human can be very dangerous, especially when the minister himself begins to think that way.

iii) Interpersonal conflicts

Hart (1984) observes that as a built in source of frustration, other people are a major cause of burnout, and yet people is what ministry is all about. Whenever people work together there are bound to be intense interactions, misunderstandings, miscommunications, ulterior motives and the like. But nowhere in the human services is this more likely to occur and be as damaging as in the ministry.

The many conflicting demands of the ministry give rise to a great deal of anger. Yet again many ministers feel they cannot/should not express these feelings of anger because of their distorted thinking regarding their sacred call. This problem tends to be twofold. On the one hand many congregation members find it hard to accept that the minister is human and has every right to experience and express these emotions. Yet on the other hand, ministers tend to feel that the expression of anger is sinful.

Faulkner (1981) provides an interesting perspective regarding the expression of anger. He regards the non-expression of anger and the denial as being sinful in itself in that the minister is not relating genuinely with his recipients.

The cool exterior that many ministers present hides the pain of internal conflict. The internalization of this anger is most manifested in depression, which is a symptom of the burnout syndrome. Raath (1987) notes that the unhealthy venting of anger is directed towards the family or in inappropriate public outbursts, which are often accompanied by feelings of guilt.

Clergy seldom have any more hostility than others in a general population, but they tend to fear and keep a lid on what they have. If they do not find a way to express this hostility in a controlled way, their anger or hurt can be turned upon themselves. The result is likely to be depression. On the other hand, they simply explode if the pressure builds beyond their endurance. Hostility can also be expressed in procrastination or stubbornness, usually accompanied by guilt.

Perhaps Hart's (1984) observation that one of the major causes of burnout among ministers is the lack of training in handling intra and interpersonal conflict, needs to be taken seriously in developing strategies to help ministers cope with the healthy expression of emotions.

2.3.4.2. Work Stress and Burnout

This section will explore the impact of organisational and individual work level stressors on the stress and burnout experience. French and Caplan (1980) note that some of the occupational stresses a person might be experiencing such as role ambiguity, role conflict or responsibility for others may cause the person to experience either psychological or physiological strain such as job dissatisfaction, low self actualization or high blood pressure. These physical and psychological strains have been documented as symptoms of burnout in an earlier section i.e. symptoms of burnout.

i) Organizational factors

Ratliff (1988) documents the following organizational factors found to be causing stress in human service settings: role or case overload with few structured "time-outs", a disregard for the needs of clients in favour of administrative, financial, and bureaucratic needs, inadequate leadership and supervision, lack of a sense of impact on and control over one's work situation, lack of social interaction and support among staff, caseloads consisting predominantly of extremely difficult clients, and majority of time spent on paperwork and administration tasks.

Pfifferling and Eckel (1982) have also documented a list of environmental factors which make the individual working in such an environment prone to burnout. Some of these factors are, continuously high stress levels, encouragement of hierarchical staff interaction, minimal receptivity for sharing worker grievances, expectations for extra effort with minimal rewards, lack of encouragement for professional self care, constantly shifting of ground rules for policy, and minimal emphasis on positive feedback.

ii) Individual level stressors

Stressors at the individual level are reported to be the most widely studied in comparison with other categories. There also appears to be a greater consensus as to what constitutes a stressor at this level than at any other level. It may also be true, according to Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) that individual level stressors account for more of the stress in organizations than at any other level.

This section will consider the five major individual stressors of role ambiguity, role ambiguity, work overload, responsibility for people and career development stressors. Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) note that these stressors represent the ones upon which there is the general agreement and which account for the bulk of the available research evidence.

iii) Role conflict

An individual is faced constantly with different role pressures, which is a combination of expectations and demands he places upon himself and those of other members in the organization. When a situation arises in which there are two or more role pressures, a condition of role conflict arises. Role conflict is present whenever compliance with one set of pressures makes compliance with another set difficult, objectionable or impossible (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980).

Role conflict has also been found to be associated with other physiological problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol levels and obesity (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980).

Role conflict appears to be a problem more especially among the younger members of the clergy, who are faced with adjusting their idealism with the reality of the demands that face them.

Daniel and Rogers (1981) speak of the feeling of being all things to all people. This is a typical example of role conflict in the ministry. The minister cannot possibly satisfy all persons in the church as well as fulfil his family obligations without making adjustments in certain areas. This role conflict was found to be a major source of stress among ministers (Daniel & Rogers, 1981).

iv) Role ambiguity

Role ambiguity is a lack of clarity of one's job. In order for an individual to be able to perform a job well, it is necessary for him to have a certain amount of information regarding what is expected of him, his rights and privileges and also the consequences of his actions in the work place (French & Caplan, 1980). However, almost everyone experiences some degree of role ambiguity. In other words role ambiguity is effectively a state in which a person has inadequate information to perform his job.

More recent studies have linked role ambiguity with depressed moods, lowered self esteem, lower levels of work motivation, anxiety, depression, feelings of resentment (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980).

Daniel and Rogers (1981) note that common sources of stress among ministers relating to role ambiguity are, duties that have not being clearly defined and that the criteria for knowing when they have done their duty is not clearly defined.

Hart (1984) supports these findings in his observation of a lack of boundaries making the minister's work a formidable one. No pastor can ever visit enough, pray enough, study enough, prepare sermons enough, or be involved in social issues. He may not be in an office eight hours a day, but he is always "on call" - and he never has weekends off. It is easy, therefore, for the minister to continually feel that his work is never finished, that he can barely cope with the demands on his time, let alone catch up on the backlog. It is hard for him to feel a sense of "closure" or completeness.

Hart (1984) describes the other related problem i.e. the minister lacks the criteria for measuring work accomplishment. When does a pastor feel successful? When large numbers of people come to church? When the church budget reaches a certain enormous figure? When a predetermined number of new members join in a given period of time? When an extra worship service must be added? Every experienced pastor knows how elusive and misleading such criteria can be.

v) Work overload

Like role ambiguity work overload is a state that results from a chronic overload of work over a period of time. Overload may be experienced in two different ways, i.e., quantitative or qualitative:

Quantitative overload refers to the sum total of the work that must be done irrespective its difficulty. When the work is overloading because it requires skill, abilities, and knowledge beyond what the person has, this is a state of *qualitative overload* (French and Caplan, 1980).

Quantitative overload appears to be one of the major stressors among ministers. A Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry (Boyd, 1982) reports that the sheer increase of demands on a priest's time, many of which need his immediate attention, has produced a new dimension of urgency in his work. The lives of ministers appear to be characterized by constant deadlines. Rassieur (1982) reports that dealing with over-extension is a significant problem among clergy seeking assistance at the Menninger Foundation. These ministers reported a feeling of having too many commitments that vied for their time and energy.

Daniel (1981) found that the number of hours a minister spent in contact with his members served to discriminate between high and low levels of burnout. Contrary to what one would expect, those with low burnout levels were those ministers that spent the most number of hours in contact with their members. Daniel (1981) explains this finding by suggesting that the low burnout levels could be due to the depersonalization of congregation members.

Qualitative Overload appears to be another major problem among ministers occurring when demands exceed capabilities. Boyd (1982) notes that when high aspirations are not matched by high achievement, stress is inevitable. Often the pastor takes full responsibility for failure in any of the many areas that his job may involve, even he cannot do it successfully with the resources available to him.

vi) Responsibility for people

Responsibility for people constitutes another frequent stress in organizations (French & Caplan, 1980). Responsibility for people involves a responsibility for the activities of people while responsibility for things would refer to such

concerns as budgets, equipment and the like (Ivancevich and Matteson, 1980).

French and Caplan (1980) found in their Goddard Space Centre study that responsibility for people could hardly be considered to be conducive to good health or a low risk of coronary heart disease.

Studies previously cited list the responsibility for another's well being as a *primary source of strain leading to burnout* (Daniel and Rogers, 1982). If that is indeed the case, how much greater is the strain when one "feels" responsible for the entire church. In addition, while many protestant church governments are democratic, the pastor is blamed for the non-success of the church. The pastor has the responsibility for the well being of the flock, but in practice does not have the freedom to make the often needed changes.

Other aspects relating to the minister's feeling of responsibility have already been discussed under the section of 'Unrealistic Expectations', in this chapter. It has been shown that these feelings of an almost overwhelming responsibility arise out of distorted ideas of the ministry. Hart (1984) observes that there is an awesome responsibility attached to the care of souls, but he has found that those ministers who are especially effective both vocationally and *spiritually do not dwell on their belief that the ministry is the greatest of all vocations.*

vii) Career development stress

Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) refer to career development as the individual's interaction with the organizational environment which influences his perception of the quality of his career progress. Career variables may become of concern when there is a lack of job security, or that promotional progress is inadequate, and or dissatisfaction with the match between career aspirations and the current level of attainment.

Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) point out that this category of stressors often manifests itself in the form of job dissatisfaction which in turn leads to a number of negative consequences such as; reduction in the quantity and the quality of work produced, alcoholism and drug abuse, declining interpersonal relationships in the job, unwillingness on the part of the individual to perform certain tasks, coupled with an increasing tendency to question or challenge previously accepted management decisions.

2.4. Review of clergy stress and burnout empirical studies

A literature search in the area of clergy stress and burnout suggests that very few empirical studies have been conducted among this group. Until 1981, there were no studies examining the social/psychological aspects of the minister's role and how they impact on his personality and interpersonal relationships (Daniel, 1981). Much of the available literature until recently has been anecdotal with few supporting studies. This section will review only empirical studies given that most of the anecdotal studies have been presented in the theoretical section of this chapter.

Consistent with psychologists' preoccupation with dysfunction, most of the psychology literature on clergy life has been focused on impairment. This literature has been helpful in identifying challenges facing clergy, but has largely ignored the more positive aspects of clergy life and functioning (McMinn, Ramey, Swanson, Villa, & McRay, 2002)

2.4.1. Review of American clergy stress and burnout studies

Mastin (1980) investigated the responses of 112 full-time ministry personnel associated with the Southwest Baptist Conference. The primary motivation for his study was the lack of explanation and agreement of published information regarding the excessive stress experienced among ministers of religion. Mastin's (1980) purpose in this study was to delineate and describe specific

stress factors, with a specific focus on the expectational and inherent quality of indispensability linked to the role of the minister.

The findings of this study did not give any further clarity on the issue of stress and burnout among ministers than that available in the literature prior to the study. The only significant finding reported was the correlations between stress levels and specific stress-related symptoms.

Daniel (1981) investigated stress and burnout in the ministry providing a new theoretical contribution in the examination of burnout using the self actualization theory.

This study generally supports the findings of previous research on burnout in which variables other than those related to personality defects were found to be highly correlated with burnout. Another value of this study was that it extended previous theoretical arguments to include the three additional areas of psychosomatic involvement, behavioural isolation, and self-actualization. In addition to validating the hypotheses with regard to these three areas, the study was extended at the time to a new population of helping professionals, i.e., pastors. Finally the study was useful in pointing out several warning signals that could alert the pastor to possible burnout. A valuable recommendation was the training of pastors in interpersonal relationships and self-awareness.

Taylor (1982) studied burnout among Southern Baptist, United Methodist Ministers and Professional Religious Education Workers in Dallas and Tarrant Counties, Texas. The purpose of this study was to establish the frequency and intensity of self reported burnout among active, full-time Southern Baptist, United Methodist ministers and professional and religious education workers in Dallas and Tarrant counties. These were compared to a wide range of human service occupations as reported by Maslach and Jackson (1981). The study also sought to determine if significant burnout differences existed within the demographic variables of age, sex, education, tenure, average

attendance, number of paid professionals, average total hours worked per week, and self reported stress among the populations studied.

Taylor (1982) concluded from his study that Southern Baptist ministers were more similar to professional religious education workers than to United Methodist ministers when viewed strictly on the basis of the MBI scores. However, when compared on demographic variables, Southern Baptist and United Methodist ministers reported similar score patterns in several areas: Sunday Attendance, number of paid, professional staff members supervised, average number of hours worked per week and participation in continuing professional education. Each of the three study populations reported significant relationships between burnout and stress. This finding is in agreement with the body of literature regarding the relationship of stress and burnout.

Taylor's (1982) study is significant in that it provided basic research information regarding the burnout syndrome among ministers and professional religious education workers. The findings are useful in helping ministers and religious education workers develop more effective and efficient coping skills. However specific use of information is limited to the research sample referred to in this study.

2.4.3. Review of South African clergy stress and burnout studies

Odendal (1984) studied burnout among ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church. The purpose of this analysis was twofold. Firstly, the study aimed to translate the Maslach Burnout Inventory into Afrikaans and to evaluate the metrical qualities of the translated and adjusted questionnaire. Second, the author studied the difference between ministers with high and low burnout, with respect to specific personality traits, i.e., anxiety, self actualization, and demographic and work-related variables.

The study was useful in that it provided significant data on a South African population of ministers with regard to the burnout syndrome. The Adapted-MBI was also shown to be a valid and reliable instrument for future study of burnout especially among the Dutch Reformed Church ministerial group. Another statistically significant feature of the study was the finding that the reliability coefficients of the Adapted-MBI were higher than those of the original sample as studied by Maslach and Jackson (1981).

Raath (1987), using the survey method, studied burnout among ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa. The purpose of the study was twofold. Firstly, the survey was used to add to the body of research findings on burnout, among this group of ministers. Second, the survey was used to identify unique stressors in the context of South African ministry that might lead to burnout. The interest in the socio-political environment in understanding burnout appeared to be in keeping with a holistic perspective, which attempted to provide a more comprehensive picture of the burnout phenomenon. The survey consisted of a demographic questionnaire, a burnout questionnaire, and a self-reported section on stress. The survey was mailed to a random sample of eighty nine Presbyterian ministers.

The following hypotheses were tested:

- 1) Burnout was more likely among ministers in their first five years of ministry.
- 2) Ministering in the South African social context would be a major source of stress.
- 3) The lack of pastoral skills would be a significant source of stress given the traditional academic curriculum for Presbyterian ministers in South Africa.

The results indicated that eight of the eighty nine ministers indicated the experience of burnout. The highest incidence of burnout was found to be in the group of ministers with a service period of sixteen or more years. This

finding did not support the hypothesis of burnout being more prevalent in the first five years of ministry.

Several methodological issues become apparent in this study especially related to the design of the burnout instrument which was a composite of burnout scales used in anecdotal studies. Despite this shortcoming, the study served to identify unique experiences inherent in the life of clergy as revealed in the phenomenological component of the study.

Kotze (1987) examined the life event stresses experienced by different groups of Catholic priests viz., religious and diocesan priests, and those priests ordained prior to and after the Second Vatican Council. Religious priests generally live in a community with fellow religious, e.g., a monastery or similar institution. The diocesan priest, by contrast, usually conducts his ministry within a set area of the diocese, i.e., a parish. A secondary purpose of the study was to develop a life event stress scale suitable for use with Roman Catholic priests in South Africa.

The study involved two phases, i.e., a pilot study and the main study. In the pilot study, a life event scale of 89 items was mailed to all members of the South African Council of Priests (SACP). The reason for choosing the SACP membership for the pilot study was that they constituted a representative sample of South African priests.

The main objectives of the pilot study were:

- 1) to test the comprehensiveness and feasibility of the life event scale.
- 2) to test the content validity of the items.
- 3) making suggestions for the improvement of the final life event list was encouraged; and
- 4) to test the procedure for protecting anonymity.

Following the pilot study, the amended life event questionnaire was mailed to all 980 priests in the Republic of South Africa, listed in the Catholic Directory of Southern Africa (1985-1986).

The results of the study indicated that religious priests generally tended to rate life events as more difficult to adjust to when compared to diocesan priests. Religious priests also reported a higher frequency of experience of life events. With regard to pre and post-Vatican ordained priests, the latter scored higher at a statistically significant level on seven of the 149 life event items, according to the author. With respect to the frequency of experience, the pre-Vatican ordained priests reported, at a statistically significant level, a higher frequency on two of the 149 life events, according to the author. Life event scales of the fifty most serious life events were developed and a life event scale suitable for use with White Roman Catholic priests was proposed.

The study is useful in that it provides a statistically validated life events scale which could be used in future research among the White Roman Catholic group of priests. However as with the Odendal (1984) study, the utility of the findings are limited to the respective homogenous groupings.

Strumpfer and Bands (1996) conducted an exploratory study of stress among 250 South African Anglican priests. Their study first investigated stressors experienced by Anglican priests qualitatively, then proceeded to the construction of scales to measure the most prominent stressors. Some construct validation of the scales was carried out concurrently, with emotional exhaustion as the criterion. Lastly, the question was investigated whether or not the sense of coherence moderated the relationship between the identified stressors and emotional exhaustion.

This study provided some support for the view that stressors specific to a particular occupation should be identified and measured. The Person-role Conflict and Role Insufficiency factors found for priests reflect problems familiar to other professions, yet the contents of some items are such that clergy are in a position to describe their experiences more relevantly than on generalized measures. The Quantitative Workload scale used in the study also contained items that reflected problems specific to the ministry.

The findings also showed that Anglican priests experience distress that is similar to that described in priests and ministers of other denominations and in other countries. Yet some distressing experiences may be unique to their church.

The authors of this study suggested that more research is needed to justify suggestions about prevention and reduction of distress with a consideration to be given to organisational factors as precipitators of distress. They also concluded that valid psychological research on personal characteristics appropriate to the priesthood could provide a basis for selection of students who will potentially be better at coping with the stressors. The SOC scale was specifically cited as a useful subject for investigation in this regard. Similarly, research-based information could contribute to possibly preparing students better for stressful demands in their careers. They also recommended ongoing support in the form of pastors of pastors, greater support from colleagues, both person-to-person and in small, self-help groups.

The authors of the study cite two serious limitations of the validation portion of the study. Firstly, all data were gathered through self-reports about subjective psychological factors. Secondly, all data were gathered simultaneously. Consequently, the correlational data could not be used to establish that certain relationships existed between variables.

Swart (2002) investigated the management of burnout among ministers of religion in the Dutch Reformed Church Synod of Southern Transvaal. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effective management of burnout among a specific group of ministers according to factors identified as important and feasible in the unique work context and situation of these ministers, and with reference to the unique and specific process of burnout amongst these ministers.

The study indicates that ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church are not only at risk of, but also experience burnout as the product of specific factors in their person-work environment. A variety of factors contribute to burnout among the ministers. These include aspects inherent to the social context of the

congregation; personal traits of the minister; the unique work situation in terms of quantitative and qualitative overload; time pressure; poor social support; lack of personal management and interpersonal skills; ambiguous role description and role expectations; lack of resources and administrative support; little feedback or visible results on input; no separation between work, private and family life; insufficient reward for input; little control, autonomy and participation in decisions and management of the congregation; low mobility; not enough breaks from work and demands exceeding the available resources.

The negative effects of burnout on the well-being of ministers, on the quality of work they do and the impact on the people they work with, emphasise the need for urgent attention to the effective management of burnout among ministers.

The central hypothesis of this study is that management of burnout among ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church can prevent (or at least reduce) the effect of burnout among ministers, help them cope (better) with the unique stressors in their unique workplace setting, lead to a more positive personal experience of the work situation and a more positive evaluation of personal well-being.

Several methods were utilised in the research methodology, and the study can be described as empirical, exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, and quantitative with an element of interpretation and intervention research. A survey was used to gather data from the ministers, as subjects, in a process of participatory action research.

The most important findings on the management of burnout for the ministers in this study are: The critical role of the mismatch between the minister and his work, the imbalance between effort (input) and reward, the inequity between high demands and not enough resources supplied to meet these demands, should be addressed in the management of burnout among ministers. Attention should be given to specific aspects in the work situation of

ministers, relating to: the person of the minister, the context of the congregation; colleagues; the church council as employer; training; working conditions; and the role of the church in broader perspective.

Factors identified as important and feasible for the management of burnout in the unique work context and situation of these ministers were: Skills to cope with stress; time management; interpersonal skills; regaining energy; faith and spirituality; security of the future of their work; clear description of work and roles; financial security; management skills; support by colleagues; effective (initial and in continued) training; effective administrative support; attention to their well-being; autonomy, control and participation in decisions; clearly outlined service contracts; good relations and cooperation with the church council; separation between work and private life; efficient professional and general services by the church to help ministers; and attention to the input from ministers at ground level on their work situation.

It can be concluded that there is an urgent need for the management of burnout among ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church. This study can be seen as an effort to help ministers in the alleviation of burnout through effective management, with elements identified as important and feasible, and giving attention to the unique stressors and distinctive features of burnout in their work environment.

2.4.4. Summary and conclusions

All of the studies suggest that burnout is prevalent among religious ministers with some disagreement as to the extent of the phenomena. When compared with other helping professionals, it appears that the incidence of burnout among religious ministers is not as high despite the similarly high levels of stress. There is still limited empirical information regarding those variables that mediate the experience of stress and prevent or minimise burnout. Most of the studies allude to spiritual coping resources but this has not been studied specifically in the stress and burnout experience.

Even though most studies provide a contextual documentation of the stress and burnout experience, there still appears to be a lack of systematic studies related to the prevention and management of stress and burnout among clergy.

Most of the South Africa studies document the experience of burnout amongst clergy with a view to measuring the stress and burnout syndrome (Odendal, 1984; Kotze, 1987; Strumpfer & Bands, 1996). All of these researchers acknowledge that the stress and burnout phenomenon is contextually specific. Although there are similarities in the stress and burnout experience with other helping professionals there are notable unique differences among the clergy which need to be taken into account in studying clergy stress.

Only two of the South African studies specifically explore stress management among the clergy (Raath, 1987; Swart, 2002). Raath's (1997) study of Presbyterian ministers makes a case for clergy self care based on the phenomenological accounts of the minister's life. Swart (2002) in his study of Dutch Reformed ministers highlights the need for stress management as a health promotion intervention amongst this group.

It would appear from the limited studies that stress management interventions as health promotion among clergy is an area of further research. This need is consistently expressed by the researchers whose primary aims were to *document the impact of stress and burnout in the respective denominational and country contexts.*

2.5. Stress management as mental health promotion

2.5.1. Need for an integrative paradigm

This section will explore the value of stress management as a health promotion intervention citing both theoretical issues as well as stress management intervention studies.

Given the complex nature of the stress and burnout phenomenon, it is necessary to select an appropriate mental health model that best captures this complexity. Until recently many stress management programmes were based on the mechanistic medical model focusing solely on physical wellbeing. Many of these programmes designed interventions addressing only the physical symptomatic level such as relaxation techniques without considering the mental, emotional and spiritual components of the stress experience. As a result, people often experienced a recurrence of stress given that root causes were not addressed. On the other hand psychologists emphasizing coping skills introduced techniques such as cognitive restructuring, time management and journal writing into the public awareness of stress management (Seaward, 1997).

Most psychological research on clergy life has focused on the identification of stress as *dysfunction and impairment*. However, there have been recent trends towards a more positive psychology suggesting that clergy health is an important area for future research.

The wellness paradigm seeks to unite physical strategies with coping skills in an effort to present a holistic approach to stress management. The primary focus of this paradigm is the prevention of disease and the enhancement of health. Edwards (2002) proposes a holistic, integrative, community psychologically oriented model of mental health promotion as an appropriate model in guiding South African - specific community psychology responses.

Consistent with the philosophy of the wellness paradigm, responsibility for wellbeing is placed in the hands of the individual. Strumpfer (1985) supports this position arguing that in the final instance personal stress management is essentially self management. The motivation for participation in any stress should therefore be voluntary.

Successful stress management programmes have also adopted a systemic approach helping individuals not only reduce stress but also to manage it more efficiently. As an intervention modality the wellness paradigm does not preclude medical treatment but rather it encourages a collaborative integration of several therapeutic techniques to produce the most effective healing process.

2.5.2. Components of effective stress management programmes

Seaward (1997) describes the following components as part of an effective stress management programme:

1. Sound knowledge of the body's reaction to perceived stress.
2. Sound knowledge of mental, physical, emotional and spiritual factors associated with stress.
3. Utilisation of several coping techniques to work toward a resolution of the causes of stress.
4. Regular practice of relaxation techniques to maintain homeostatic balance of the body.
5. Periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of coping skills and relaxation techniques.

In determining which programmes are ultimately effective it is necessary to identify the goals and objectives of an intended stress management intervention. Matteson and Ivancevich (1982) describe three primary objectives that a generic stress management programme could work towards. These objectives are; knowledge acquisition, skill acquisition and feedback.

Knowledge acquisition refers to the presentation of information that will be useful to participants in increasing their awareness of stress, its role in their lives and how it works for and against them. The second objective of skill acquisition is described as the usable skills that can be applied in a variety of circumstances that teach participants greater control over physiological and psychological systems which are reactive to distress. The third objective was that of feedback. The stress management intervention can be used in providing participants with specific information about their current levels of stress and behaviour patterns and personal orientations that could serve as a basis for more effective stress management.

2.5.3. Research on stress management interventions

As indicated previously very little research has been conducted in the area of clergy stress management. Most of the evaluation reports are based on professional opinions and related research. A similar situation appears to be the case amongst other professions in that almost all studies reviewed focused exclusively on the individual (Ivancevich *et.al.* 1990). Despite this there appears to be empirical support for the usefulness of stress management interventions.

Kushnir and Millbauer (1994) describe the positive outcomes of a cognitive group intervention programme for directors of day care centres. A psycho educational intervention based on the cognitive behavioural model was used in a ten week programme of four hours each. The programme focused on topics such as assertiveness, anger control, time management, power and influence. Group exercises were aimed at problem solving, cognitive restructuring and goal achievement.

The short term impact of the intervention was studied by using a series of ANOVAS with the control group reporting significantly higher levels of perceived control, assertiveness and inward-directed anger. In response to open-ended questioning, the main long term impact of the workshop turned out to be improved management skills and reduced tension at work.

Forman (1980) in reviewing literature related to stress management amongst teachers found that cognitive-mediational factors, including teacher attitudes towards potential stressors in the work environment and coping skills, play a major role in the determination of teacher stress reactions. Irrational beliefs have also been found to be significantly related to teacher stress levels. *The most effective teacher stress management interventions were found to employ cognitive restructuring components based on rational-emotive therapy procedures. These programs used a stress inoculation training framework, and provide behavioral and cognitive-behavioral coping skills, which can be used to alter psychological and physiological responses to potential stressors and negative stress reactions.*

Brown (1999) also describes the positive outcomes of a large scale stress management intervention conducted as part of a city-wide health promotion campaign on reducing stress. To increase access, workshops were run in a leisure centre at weekends over either one whole day or two half-days. Care was taken to design the workshop structure so as to not exhaust or bore people while teaching a range of skills to help participants manage stress. A large number of enquiries was received in response to the promotion of the workshops. The characteristics of those who self-referred are described, as are the workshop programme and its acceptability. Client satisfaction with the workshops was high and the drop-out rate was relatively low. It is concluded that the 'day' format has the potential to provide help where large numbers of people, whether with mental health or physical health problems, need to be reached.

The programme emphasised the normality of stress and was based largely on a cognitive-behavioural model. The programme was broad and covered the physical, cognitive and behavioural aspects of anxiety and stress. It sought both to offer information about stress as well as different methods to cope with the problem. The programme focused on knowledge, attitudes and behavioural skills change. Techniques to help participants cope were described and/or practised. Behavioural methods included problem-solving, time management and target-setting. The final session of the day involved

participants making plans for handling their stress in the ensuing three month period. In all, seventeen options for managing stress were offered.

Consumer satisfaction with the workshops was described by Brown (1999) as high, both in terms of formal satisfaction ratings as well as informal comments. All but one of the participants thought the workshops useful and enjoyable and found the information given clear and practical. The most common informal comment related to how good it was to meet other people 'in the same boat', which is regarded as a major curative factor in group work. Sharing also occurred during a session called the 'symptom shootout' when participants were invited to call out symptoms of stress they had experienced; experiences of stress and anxiety were also shared during a number of small group exercises. The drop-out rate from the workshops was low. Only 8.7% dropped out once they had embarked on a workshop, which was reported as a much lower rate than those in other group interventions.

An evaluation of life style changes following a five-day organisational stress management programme showed positive outcomes (Kantor, Schomer & Louw, 1997). The study included 61 participants selected by their companies drawn from upper- and middle-management levels. A pre- and post-programme lifestyle questionnaire was developed to investigate changes in areas covered by the programme: nutrition, fitness, health beliefs and behaviour, relationships, work, and coping resources. Participants were requested to complete questionnaires before the programme, three weeks, and six months after the programme. Three weeks after the programme, significant changes in the self-reported lifestyle measures of nutrition, health beliefs and behaviour, and fitness were found (n = 42). From the pre-test to the six-month follow-up, significant changes in nutrition, health beliefs and behaviour, and relationships were found (n = 33).

The researchers report that respondents' lifestyle changed for the better at both three weeks and six months since attending the programme. Despite the fact that the results of this study indicate positive changes in lifestyle as a result of attending the programme, the authors acknowledge that one limitation of the programme was that it lacked a definite programme theory,

which could have given a better insight into the outcomes of the different programme elements. In terms of methodology, the researchers highlight a number of aspects that limit their study. One has been mentioned previously: the possible bias introduced as a result of subject attrition. This bias would have skewed the results in a positive direction; participants not responding to the follow-up questionnaires may well have been the ones who complied less with the directives of the programme, or whose stress levels were still high. Furthermore, the study utilized self-report measures, and participants who responded to the follow-up questionnaires might have wanted to put their compliance with the programme in as positive a light as possible. The delivery of the programme was not monitored, as indicated earlier. Clearly, evaluation could be made more precise by reporting on the implementation of the various elements of the programme. Finally, evaluation of such programmes might well have to be extended to beyond six months, to ascertain the permanence of reported changes in lifestyle.

2.5.4. Summary and conclusions

Most of the studies cited suggest the benefits of stress management as a health promotion intervention. An important factor in programme efficacy appears to be the need to take into consideration the subjects context specific issues when designing and implementing a stress management intervention.

A popular and valuable stress management model appears to be an integration of cognitive-behavioural strategies with physical relaxation techniques. Although positive self reports are indicated by the researchers in these studies, there is acknowledgement that there is no direct correlation between the stress management interventions and reduction in burnout rates. Nevertheless, participants consistently describe the interventions to be personally meaningful in helping them cope with their experiences of negative stress.

The next chapter describes the research methodology employed in the design, delivery and evaluation of a clergy stress management programme.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology and the procedures used in *designing and evaluating the effectiveness of a stress management programme* for clergy. Contextual details of the clergy groups are also described in attempting to show the need for such consideration as it impacts the relevance and design of a community based intervention.

3.2. Phases of the research

The research study consisted of three phases, the first phase being the design of a stress management programme for clergy. The second phase involved a pilot implementation of the programme in order to assess its relevance to the clergy and make any required modifications arising out of the pilot implementation. The third phase involved the implementation of a series of stress management workshops for clergy, taking into account lessons learned in the pilot implementation. These workshops were concluded with a programme evaluation using a phenomenological approach.

3.2.1. Development of the stress management programme

The researcher completed an earlier master's research dissertation in the area of 'Stress and Burnout amongst Indian Pentecostal Ministers' (Arumugam, 1992). The objectives of the research were threefold. First to identify the prevalence of stress and burnout in this clergy group. Second to identify specific areas of stress. Third, to identify resources for coping.

In identifying coping strategies, the need for a short intervention that would assist clergy in managing stress and avoiding burnout was expressed significantly by the study group at the time of study. Subsequent feedback sessions were held with the research sample at which time the findings of the study were shared with subjects. The need for a stress management intervention was confirmed during these feedback sessions, prompting the researcher to develop a community based response.

In response to growing need a 'Clergy Stress Management Programme' was designed, which was informed both by an extensive literature review in the area of clergy stress and burnout as well as in the contextually specific findings of the masters research study of the researcher.

The objectives in designing the 'Clergy Stress Management Programme' were as follows:

1. To create an awareness of the reality of stress and burnout amongst the clergy as a group of helping professionals.
2. To educate the clergy on the nature of stress and burnout and how it is manifested in identifiable signs and symptoms.
3. To empower clergy to assess their personal levels of stress and burnout which would inform the development of a 'personal stress management plan'
4. To identify personal coping strategies and explore through group interaction and sharing other strategies that could be incorporated into the 'personal stress management plan'.
5. To create an opportunity for clergy to share their experiences and build a mutual support network through the facilitated group process.
6. To identify new needs that could be addressed through the design of additional psychosocial intervention in future programmes

The research design involved the identification of key constructs frequently discussed in stress management literature and also those raised by the clergy in the earlier master's study. There are an abundance of stress management programmes but none are specific to the context of clergy stress and burnout or specific to the South African context.

Having isolated key constructs to be communicated as part of the stress management programme, the researcher applied didactic principles to ensure that the material was meaningfully packaged so as to ensure maximum learning benefit. Principles of adult learning were taken into consideration in the programme design.

The programme was based on a one-day design comprising eight modules as described below:

- Module One : The reality of stress and burnout.
- Module Two : Understanding the nature of stress.
- Module Three : The nature of burnout in the ministry.
- Module Four : Identifying symptoms of stress and burnout.
- Module Five : Understanding causes of stress and burnout.
- Module Six : Stress and burnout management strategies.
- Module Seven : Personal stress management plan.
- Module Eight : Personal review and journal.

The workshop manual used in this phase is fully described in Appendix D.

3.2.2. Pilot clergy stress management programme

The 'Clergy Stress Management Programme' was piloted with a group of 10 Indian ministers from the Brackhenham Ministers Fraternal in Richards Bay in 2001. The intent of the pilot study was to assess the relevance and value of the programme to this group of clergy and also to understand the extent to which the programme could be extended to other clergy groups.

Before the pilot workshop was conducted, the researcher made a proposal to the Brackhenham Ministers Fraternal motivating for the need for such an intervention based on previous research. It was also important for the researcher to assess any specific issues that might not have been covered in the design of the workshop which could add value to this group of clergy.

Perhaps more importantly, this was an opportunity for collaborative partnership between the researcher and the clergy group. The researcher found through his masters research that despite the need for some level of intervention, clergy were still generally uncomfortable with seeking help from a 'secular professional' such as a psychologist.

They believed that the needs of the clergy should only be attended to by other ministers. The researcher also being of the same faith, sought opportunities to actively and sensitively engage this group of helping professionals through further individual discussions with members of the clergy.

The outcome of this collaborative process was the commitment by the clergy that they would attend the planned workshop. In the spirit of partnership, the clergy group agreed to make the necessary logistical arrangements in respect of the workshop. They also undertook to extend the invitation to members of the clergy who were not active members of their fraternal.

The pilot programme was facilitated as a one day session. Feedback from the group was documented for consideration in the further development of the programme.

All delegates attending the workshop found it to be of high personal value. Delegates expressed their appreciation for such an intervention and requested follow-up sessions be held to reinforce and further explore principles raised in the workshop.

No significant comments were made with respect to the programme design. Delegates were very comfortable with the content and facilitation approach. The only issue they recommended be reviewed was the duration of the programme, indicating that one day was too short to adequately work through the entire programme.

The delegates highly recommended the programme and felt that it was serving to meet an important need in this community of caregivers.

3.2.3. Main study: clergy stress management workshops

A series of one day clergy stress management workshops were conducted with four groups of clergy with the aim of evaluating programme impact and effectiveness.

In engaging the participation of the clergy in the workshops, the researcher presented a written motivation to the chairman of the respective ministers *fraternals of Secunda, Richards Bay, Stanger and Tongaat*. Where required, a further face to face presentation was made by the researcher describing the aims and objectives of the research and also the background and credentials of the researcher.

A generally positive response was received from the fraternalists that were approached with the workshops being organised by the respective fraternal committees.

At the end of the day long session, delegates were invited to share their experience of the workshop in response to the statement, 'Describe your personal experience of today's workshop'

The results obtained from the programme post evaluation as well as other data gathered from the biographical questionnaires are submitted for further discussion later in the next chapter.

3.3. Description of sample

The study sample comprised full time clergy from four communities, viz., Secunda, Richards Bay, Stanger and Tongaat. The researcher invited participation from the respective Ministers fraternalists. The ministers fraternalists are inter-denominational networking groups which represent the interests of the clergy in the respective towns.

Ministers and spouses in ministry were invited to participate in the stress management programme, recognising that stress and burnout affects the entire family system. No pre-selection of delegates took place. The only criteria was that all clergy attending the workshops were involved in active pastoral ministry at the time of the study. The demographics of the clergy sample attending the respective workshops are described in Table 3.1.

TABLE 3.1.
DEMOGRAPHICS OF CLERGY SAMPLE (N=45)

Total number of clergy	45		
Gender of clergy	Male 84%		
	Female 16%		
Average age	39		
Average years in ministry	11 years		
Community of participation	location	n	%
	Secunda	16	36
	Richards Bay	9	20
	Tongaat	10	22
	Stanger	10	22
	N	45	100%

3.4. Apparatus

In evaluating the efficacy of the stress management programme both quantitative and qualitative measures were employed. This integrated approach allows for the richness of personal reflection to be captured which would otherwise be lost in a purely quantitative analysis. The research instruments comprised the following: A Biographical Questionnaire; the Stress Diagnostic Survey (SDS) and a Stress Management Programme Evaluation (Questionnaire).

3.4.1. The Biographical Questionnaire

The questionnaire comprised two parts. The first part elicited biographical information pertaining to the subject's age, marital status, school education, tertiary education and tenure. The second part of the questionnaire comprised a series of open-ended self report questions which yielded information on personal experience of stress and burnout, identified symptoms of stress, perceived stressors, coping mechanisms, efficacy of support networks, reflection on the nature of calling to the ministry, adequacy of theological training and strategies needed to assist the minister in the area of stress and burnout.

3.4.2. The Stress Diagnostic Survey (SDS)

The Stress Diagnostic Survey (SDS) developed by Stress Research Systems and is described by Ivancevich and Matteson (1980). The questionnaire comprising 30 items is a self-report measure indicating the extent to which various individual level stressors are sources of stress for the subjects. The SDS measures the following dimensions; role conflict, role ambiguity, work overload, responsibility for people, career development.

The five individual level stressor categories measured by the SDS were the following:

- 1) Role conflict. Described as a condition present whenever compliance with one set of demands makes compliance to another set of demands difficult, objectionable, or impossible.
- 2) Role ambiguity. Referring to a lack of clarity about one's role, job objectives, and the scope of responsibilities of one's job.

- 3) Work overload. This category is divided into two sections viz., Quantitative and Qualitative Overload. Quantitative overload occurs when there is too much to do in a limited time period. Qualitative overload refers to a state in which demands exceed capability.
- 4) Responsibility for people, as opposed to things.
- 5) Career development stress. Referring to those aspects which influence the individual's interaction with the organizational environment which influences that person's perception of the quality of his or her career progress.

No extensive reliability and validity studies were available regarding the use of the SDS. However a study conducted by Boyd (1982) using the SDS indicated a 0.82 coefficient of internal reliability in his sample. He examined the relationship between stress levels on the SDS and Type A/B behaviour on the Jenkins Activity Survey (JAS).

3.4.3. Stress Management Programme Evaluation

The evaluation comprised two parts in the form of a questionnaire. The first part was a quantitative evaluation of the relevance of the programme content, *facilitation style, and overall impact*. The second part comprised of an open-ended phenomenological question inviting delegates to describe their personal experience of the stress management programme.

The results of both the quantitative and qualitative evaluations are described in Chapter 4, Findings of Study.

3.5. Description of research procedures

This study involved a combination of several research procedures each relevant to the research process. The procedures used included survey questionnaires, qualitative interviewing, focus group sessions and the narrative technique.

3.5.1. Phase One: Programme design procedures

In the first phase of the study which involved the programme design, the researcher having captured key constructs from his previous masters research tested the relevance of these constructs with a small sample of ministers, who were participants in the original study through a process of qualitative interviewing (Arumugam, 1992).

Participants in this exploratory process were asked through the interview process to verify the relevance and value of focusing on the identified issues as part of a clergy stress management programme. Through this process the researcher was able to gauge the potential usefulness of the intended programme to be designed.

The feedback from the qualitative interviews was significantly positive. Participants made minor adjustments to the content and on the whole were hopeful of the value of such a programme.

Qualitative interviewing was chosen as it allowed flexible exploration of the phenomenon of interest and discovery of aspects not anticipated by the researcher. It afforded a strong relationship between the researcher and research participants and served to build credibility with the research group. It also served to provide contextual understanding of the life of a community of clergy.

Qualitative interviewing has several advantages over participant observation (Dalton, Elias & Wandersman, 2001). First, the conditions of data collection can be more standardised, limiting biases of selective perception, memory and interpretation. Second, that analysis can also be standardised and performed by multiple, independent raters, not just the interviewer, which increases reliability and validity. Third, the interviewer can develop a relationship with the setting and participants that is mutual and trusting, yet with fewer of the stresses of being a participant and insider.

In summary qualitative interviews provide deep descriptions attending to the voices and perceptions of participants. This appreciative enquiry suited the aim of the study i.e., to describe fully the stories of clergy experience related to stress and burnout and the management thereof.

3.5.2. Phase Two: Pilot phase research procedures

During the pilot phase implementation of the clergy stress management programme, the researcher used the focus group procedure in eliciting qualitative feedback on key constructs presented in the programme.

The design of the clergy stress management programme allowed for the effective and non-intrusive use of the focus group technique as part of the overall facilitation process. Through the discussion of key concepts and issues the researcher was able to elicit common themes and issues that could impact the delivery of future programmes.

As a result of the programme, the need for a more practical skills based focus was determined. Specific themes that were identified through the focus group discussions were clustered in the following themes; time management, conflict management, relaxation, stress and the-clergy family.

Focus groups have several advantages over other qualitative methods. They allow greater access to shared knowledge and language among participants, because this is often cured by mutual discussion more than in individual interviews. They also allow researchers to observe social interaction among group participants, perhaps revealing behavioural patterns unavailable in individual interviews. Researchers can structure discussion and learn about topics of interest and personal experiences of others more easily than with participant observation. Thus, focus may improve researchers' understanding of a culture or community, illuminate social processes difficult to study in other ways, provide early exploration of a topic prior to quantitative studies, or test interview questions or questionnaires to be used later with a larger sample (Hughes & DuMont, 1993).

3.5.3. Phase Three: Main study research procedures

The final phase of the study which involved the implementation of the clergy stress management programmes combined the abovementioned procedures, viz., qualitative interviewing and focus groups together with survey questionnaires.

The programme delivery phase comprised three parts. The first part required participants to complete a detailed survey questionnaire which was made up of two sections. The first section identified biographical details of the participants and self report stress assessments. In the second section participants were required to complete a qualitative questionnaire describing their personal experiences related to stress and burnout, using the narrative technique. The third section required delegates to complete the Stress Diagnostic Survey (SDS), which has been previously described.

The second part of the programme delivery involved the facilitation of the 'Clergy Stress Management Programme' which comprised the researcher presenting short lectures on key concepts, use of case studies, self assessments and the use of focus groups in exploring key concepts raised as part of the programme.

The third part of the programme delivery required participants to complete a Programme Evaluation comprising two sections. The first section used a quantitative technique in assessing the extent to which participants experienced the programme as valuable to their management of stress and prevention of burnout. The second section used the narrative technique, which required participants to respond to an open-ended statement, 'Describe your personal experience of today's programme.' No prescription as to the content or length was given to the delegates.

Qualitative methods often tap the stories that participants tell. They also reflect psychological themes about everyday life and thus offer insights into behaviours, personal experiences and social relationships. The next chapter describes the method of analysis chosen for the study and an interpretation of the findings.

CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter both the quantitative and qualitative results of the study will be presented. Section 4.3. of the findings will document the most significant quantitative findings. Section 4.4., will document the phenomenological findings *of the clergy stress and burnout experience.*

4.2. Phenomenological analysis

Important for qualitative understanding is that the narrative is told in a form determined by the participant, not necessarily by the interviewer's questions (Dalton. *et.al.* 2001) Qualitative research findings will be analysed and interpreted using the phenomenological method. As indicated in the introduction to this study the focus of research on clergy stress and burnout has been largely dominated by the illness model with little attention being given to the lived experience of the clergy expressing both negative and positive experiences related to stress and burnout.

Stones (1988) describes the fundamental point of departure of the *phenomenological method from that of traditional natural scientific research* is that priority is given to the phenomena under investigation rather than this being secondary to an already established methodological framework.

Based on previous research experience of clergy stress and burnout (Arumugam, 1992), it was identified that quantitative methodologies do not fully capture the complexity of the phenomena of stress and burnout. There is a deeper richness of understanding in the personal narratives of the clergy which often have to qualify the quantitative data gathered through the research process.

This is especially so when dealing with issues of religion and spirituality which have an impact on coping and well-being (Pergament, 1997). The research process needs to create an opportunity for participants to meaningfully tell their stories. The study of clergy stress and burnout is inherently tied up in a parallel theological analysis. Van Huyssteen (1989) is of the opinion that theology is fundamentally descriptive. The narrative is considered a valuable way to present religious experience and to communicate its fullness.

Qualitative understanding is concerned with the meaning that participants make of the narrative for their lives. Narratives of clergy as elicited through the survey questionnaire have been analysed for descriptive statements and abstract themes (Hughes & DuMont, 1993). These will be presented as an attempt at understanding the experiences of clergy both in response to stress and burnout as well as in evaluating the impact of the clergy stress management programme as a community psychology response to the management of stress and burnout.

4.3. Presentation of quantitative findings

In this section significant findings will be described related to the following areas elicited through the survey questionnaire:

4.3.1. Self reported stress intensity ratings.

4.3.2. Results of the Stress Diagnostic Survey (SDS).

4.3.3. Assessment of social support.

4.3.1. Self report stress intensity

Lazarus (1990) suggests that stress measurement needs to take into consideration the subjective account of the individual as it is a personal experience which cannot be easily reduced to a set of defined variables without losing the contextual factors that impact the stress experience.

As a point of departure it was important for the researcher to engage the participants in their self assessment of stress as this is critical for the implementation of any stress management programme at a later stage. This approach also recognises that personal empowerment of delegate's starts with self awareness which in turn could lead to constructive action.

Recognising that stress is not an individual experience, it was important for the researcher to prompt participants in also being aware of the stress at a systems level. This required participants making an evaluation of stress at three levels namely; self, family and leadership. In appreciating the intensity of stress, the final self report question asked if participants 'experienced stress severe enough to cause them considering leaving the ministry.' Responses to these questions are presented in the next section.

Question 9: 'How would you rate your current experience of stress?' on a scale of (high-moderate-low).

Low levels of stress were reported by sixteen percent (16%) of the respondents at the time of the study, whilst seventy three percent (73%) indicated moderate levels of stress and eleven percent (11%) indicated high levels of personal stress. These findings appear to be consistent with the studies on clergy stress and burnout which suggests that the ministry as a vocation is stressful as reflected by the seventy three percent of clergy who reported moderate levels of stress. Moderate stress is described as stress that was of concern but was manageable at the time of the study. Eleven percent (11%) of the sample reported high levels of stress, which they considered to be of concern severe enough to warrant some type of mediation.

Question 10: 'How would you rate the current experience of stress in your family?' on a scale of (high-moderate-low).

This question was used to elicit an understanding of the awareness and impact of stress on the clergy family. Twenty two percent of the sample indicated *low* levels of stress in their families, whilst sixty seven percent reported *moderate* levels of stress and eleven percent reported *high* levels of stress.

As in the case of personal stress, the results suggested that the clergy family was also under stress as was the minister (sixty seven percent reported moderate stress). This finding is collaborated by several studies of the impact of stress and burnout on clergy families.

At face analysis, it appears that the personal stress of clergy was mirrored in their families. This can be understood in the context of systems thinking which suggests the interdependence of the different agents.

Question 11: 'How would you rate the current experience of stress in your leadership?' on a scale of (high-moderate-low).

The purpose of this question was to elicit the awareness of the minister as to the stress being experienced by the leadership. From a systems perspective the stress of the leadership who the minister works with intimately could be the cause or the result of as part of an interdependent system.

Eleven percent of clergy reported that their leadership stress levels were *low*, while seventy one percent reported *moderate* levels of stress. Eighteen percent reported *high* levels of stress, which indicate concern among this group.

It appears that clergy perceive leadership stress levels in a similar pattern to that of stress at the personal and family systems level. The significant proportion of leaders reported to be experiencing moderate levels of stress is confirmed by anecdotal studies that the ministry is a stressful experience not just for the primary worker (being the clergy) but also to those working closely with him.

Question 12: 'Have you experienced stress severe enough to cause you to consider leaving the ministry?'

Several studies suggest that despite the high levels of stress in the ministry, clergy don't leave in significantly high numbers. This question was presented to assess the trend in this group of clergy. *

Seventy percent reported that they did not experience stress severe enough to cause them to consider leaving the ministry. This result is confirmed by the previous reports of moderate self, family and leadership stress. The finding also suggests that ministers despite the stress of the ministry employ coping strategies that mediate their experience of stress. These coping strategies will be discussed in a later section of the study.

Fifteen percent reported that at some stage they considered the alternative of leaving the ministry due to the severity of their stress experience but did not act on this. Most of these ministers through personal interviews indicated that they found help to go through their stressful experiences and burnout which allowed them to continue with renewed strength in the ministry. Their sense of call also served to contextualise their difficulty and this enabled them to 'press on.

Fifteen percent reported that they seriously considering leaving the ministry. Most of the reasons given related to high levels of stress which were unmanageable at the time. Despite the reality of these highly stressful experiences, these fifteen percent of ministers still continue in their ministry with their primary drive being their calling to the ministry. Some of the qualifiers related to considering leaving the ministry are described to establish the context of these considerations.

No, I have not considered leaving the ministry because:

- "I have a call from the Lord. The road is a tough one but with the help and the grace of God I pray over doubt and evil thoughts."
- "I know God's calling for me is for me to be in ministry."
- "In my calling I fear and obey God."
- "The calling means everything to me"

Yes, I have considered leaving the ministry because:

- “At times in the past when I was under pressure I thought of leaving. Now I have overcome that and decided to remain in the ministry as long as God wants me to.”
- “People don’t appreciate you as a person; don’t understand the dynamics of church work and demands, many confrontations which I cannot accept.”
- “I have feelings of frustration, being misunderstood, and feelings of betrayal, people being inconsiderate and not understanding the pastor’s work.”
- “The calling is the sole reason why I do not quit even though I considered at times!

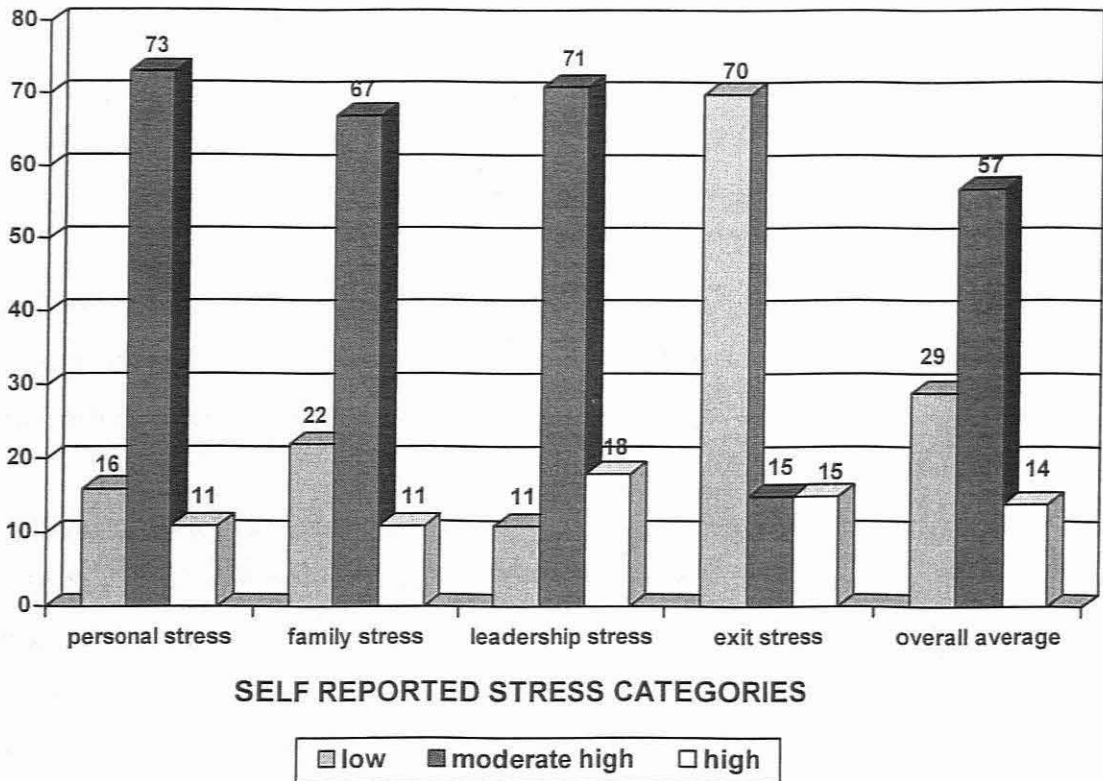
It would appear that the call to the ministry appears to be a significant feature in the coping of the clergy and this will be explored in more detail in a later section which focuses on the sense of calling as a coping strategy.

4.3.2. Comparative analysis of clergy self report stress ratings

Figure 4.1. describes a comparative analysis of all the clergy self reported stress responses as they perceived stress levels amongst various categories of people they relate to. The overall trends showed a strong similarity in the distribution of the scores related to personal, family and leadership stress. This finding is understandable given the integrated nature and experience of stress from a systems perspective.

Moderate levels of stress was predominantly reported by this sample of clergy as reflected in the fifty seven percent (57%) rating for *moderate* stress, followed by *low* stress of twenty nine percent (29%) and *high* stress of fourteen percent (14%). The average indication for *high* stress levels among this group of clergy ranges between eleven and eighteen percent. The consolidated *high* stress average for this group is fourteen percent (14%).

FIGURE 4.1.
COMPARATIVE STRESS INTENSITY % RATINGS



4.3.2. Results of the Stress Diagnostic Survey (SDS)

The clergy group was categorised into low, moderate and high stress groups according to their responses on the SDS subscales (Figure 4.2). Scores below ten (< 10) were classified as *low* stress scores, while those between ten and twenty four (10-24) were classified as *moderate* stress scores. Finally scores higher than twenty four (>24) were recorded as *high* stress scores.

'Responsibility for people' was indicated as the most significant individual level stressor. Sixty two percent reported this as a *high* stressor category, while thirty eight percent indicated this to be a *moderate* stressor. Additionally this stressor

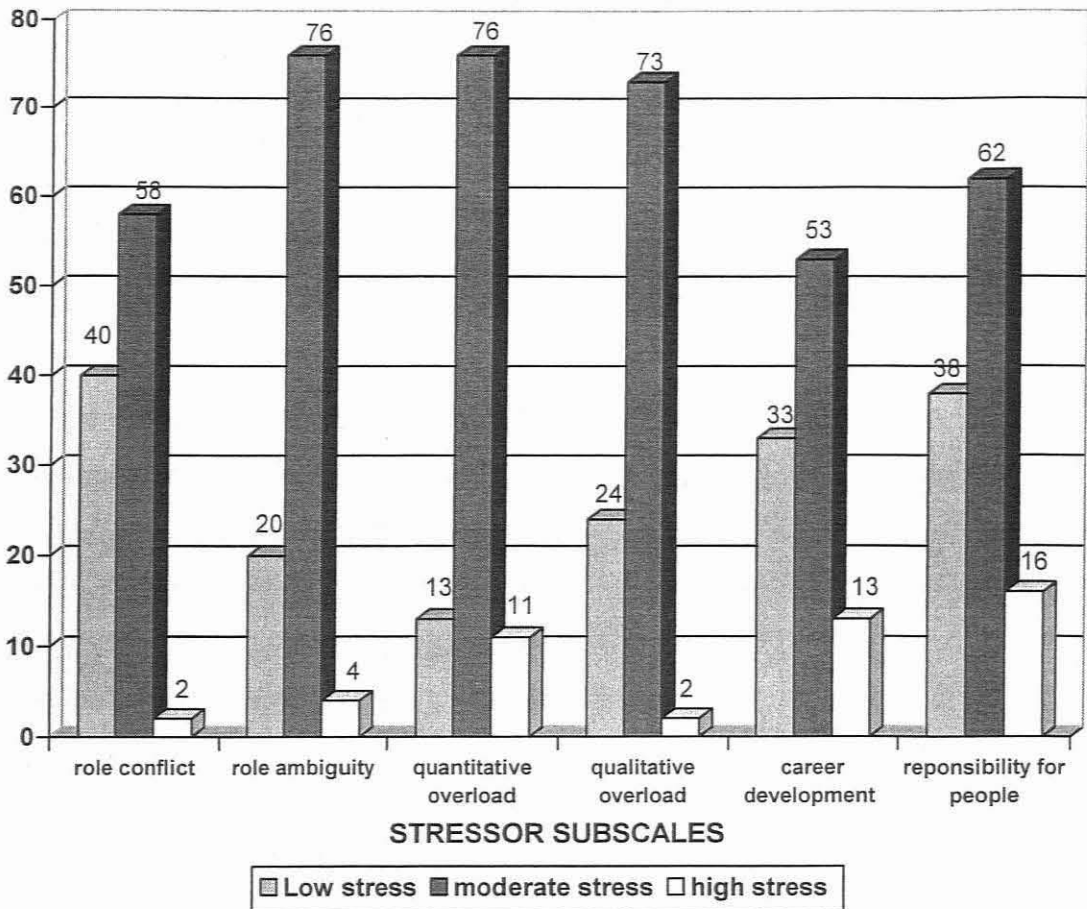
was the only one not rated at all by the sample as a low stressor category (0% low stress) compared to the other SDS subscales. This suggests that this dimension is a stressor of high concern/impact to the clergy sample.

This finding is similar to the finding of Arumugam (1992) who found that 'responsibility for people' was reported as a high level stressor by 87.5 % of the sample of Indian Pentecostal Ministers whilst 12.5 % indicated moderate levels while no one in the sample indicated that this was a *low* level stressor.

Role ambiguity, quantitative overload and qualitative overload also reflect significant moderate levels of stress in the range of 73 -76 %. Again this appears to be consistent with the previous finding of Arumugam (1992).

Career development was generally considered to be of the lesser concerns in relation to the other SDS subscales. Again this is consistent with the finding of Arumugam (1992). In understanding these relatively lower stressor ratings the issue of calling to the ministry was once again cited as an important mediating variable.

FIGURE 4.2
% SDS RATINGS



4.3.3. Assessment of clergy social support

The extent and sources of social support was assessed in responses to Question 17 in the survey questionnaire: *'Using the following scale, rate the extent to which you receive the most support from the following sources'*

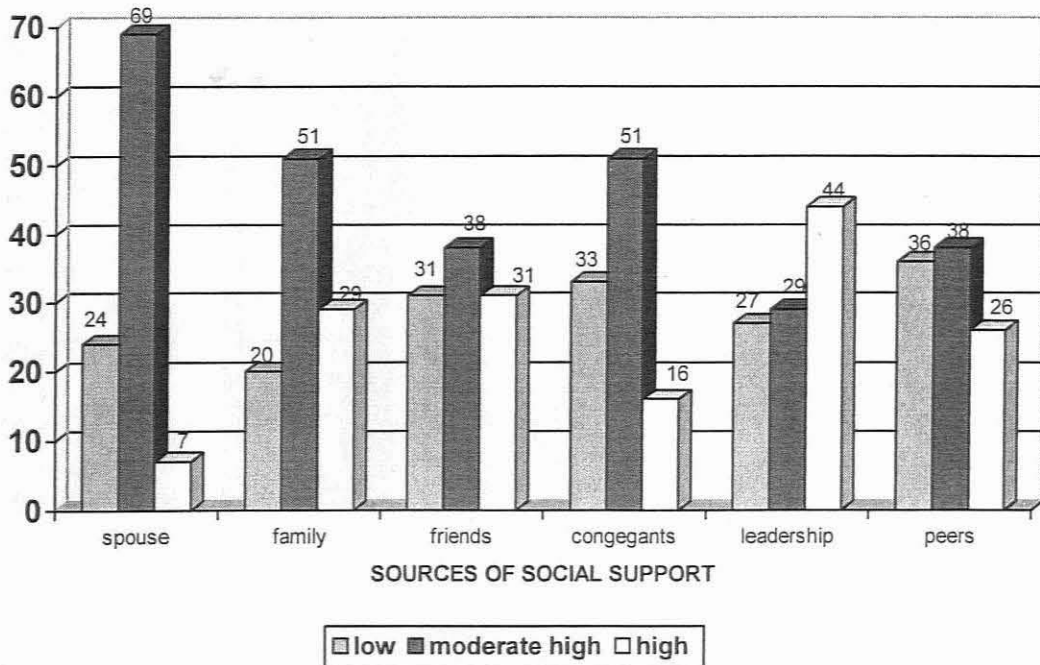
The minister's *spouse* was reported as the highest source of social support (69% of the sample). This response reflects the support received by both male and female clergy from their spouses. Of interest was the relatively high number of clergy (24%) who reported that they *did not* receive the highest level of support

from their spouses. This was contrary to their expectations and was expressed as a concern by these respective ministers. This finding is confirmed by other studies in the field of clergy stress and burnout (Arumugam, 1992).

The second highest level of support came from the *leadership* of the respective churches as reported by forty four percent (44%) of ministers in the study. The support of friends, family and peers ranked third in the minister's social support system.

The least support was reported to come from the *congregants* themselves with only sixteen percent (16%) of clergy reporting this to be a 'high' support group. Again this finding is consistent with the study of Arumugam (1992). The relatively low support received from congregants could be related to congregational role paradigm that suggested that congregants were not in a position to support clergy and that in turn were not free to seek their help.

FIGURE 4.3.
% SOURCES OF SOCIAL SUPPORT

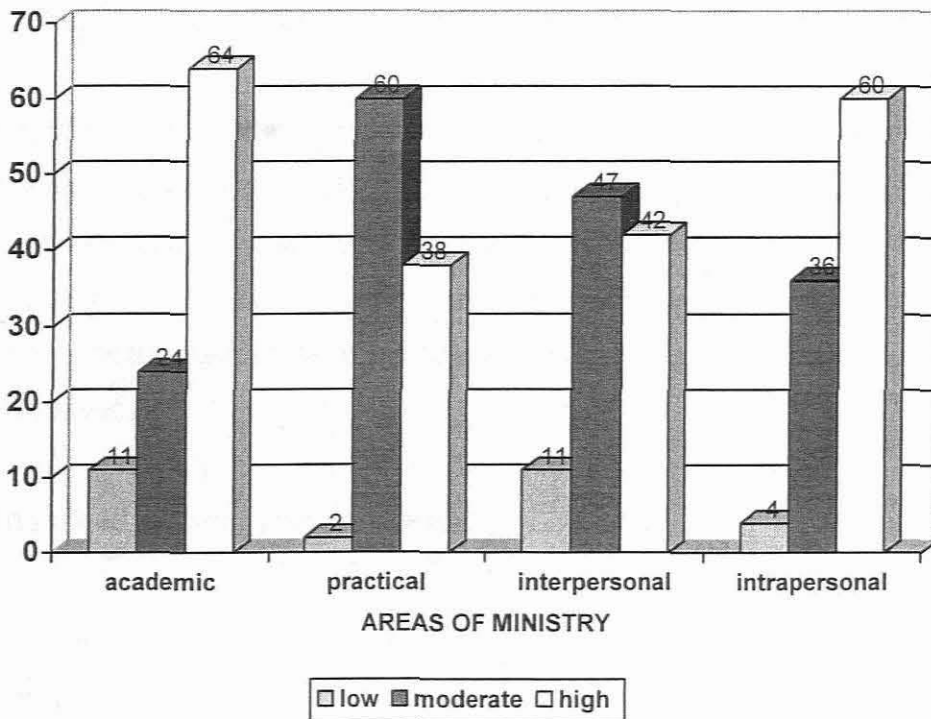


4.3.4. Evaluation of professional clergy preparation for ministry

A significant percentage of clergy in this sample reported inadequate preparation for the ministry in non-academic areas (Figure 4.4.). In response to the extent to which they were prepared for practical ministry (involving pastoral work such as counselling), 60percent reported moderate preparation.

Fort seven percent reported moderate preparation in the area of interpersonal skills. This area involves such competencies as conflict management, communication and leadership influence. Preparation in the intrapersonal area was rated highly acceptable by sixty percent of the sample. This area referred to issues of self management.

FIGURE 4.4.
% PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY



4.4. PRESENTATION OF QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

This section comprises two parts. In the first part (section 4.4.1), the narratives of the clergy in response to their personal experience of stress and burnout are presented. This is described as responses to the open-ended questions posed in the survey questionnaire which was completed as the pre-assignment of the clergy stress management programme.

The second part of this section (4.4.2.) documents the clergy evaluations of the stress management programme as described in their personal narratives. Thematic analyses arising out of these narratives are presented with key issues highlighted for further discussion.

4.4.1. Clergy experience of stress and burnout

4.4.1.1. What do you understand by the terms stress & burnout?

The purpose of this question was to assess clergy's level of experiential understanding of the nature of stress and burnout. In the following sections a sample of the actual responses of the clergy population are presented in response to their understanding of the nature of stress and burnout. The second part of each section attempts to identify the natural meaning units suggested by these narratives.

1a) Transcripts of clergy understanding of 'stress'

- "It is a negative high level of emotion. It also involves mental fatigue thereby effecting emotional stability."
- "A tension caused by pace and complexity of life as centuries and times."

- “Is something or circumstances which is very much difficult in your life. A problem or challenge which sometimes can disturb your mind.”
- “Tiredness or when one is emotionally down.”
- “It's like when I experience mental block, because of some problems.”
- “It is the high time of difficult in my ministry.”
- “Is to be in a difficult situation where you can feel tired, down hearted and the mind is if not functioning.”
- “It is a feeling of being emotionally overloaded.”
- “Stress to me means the state you end up in when you are trying to do more than one thing at a time; I end up irritable & angry at times.”
- “When one reaches a point and fails to go beyond it, in trying to attain or achieve something. It is that unsolved burden that results.”
- “That which exerts undue pressure on the day to day normal activities of a person.”
- “To be over pressured-when I need to deal with much in a limited time.”
- “Being under a lot of pressure but can still function relatively well.”
- “Is like an adrenalin rush - meant to help us cope a little better in situations.”
- “When you bite more than you can chew.”
- “An over - programmed day.”
- “It is the pressure of the work you are doing that you can't handle.”
- ‘Affects the body and mind - unable to cope with job, etc.’
- “It is when you tend to overload your mind, body with over work and seeing things not being done.”
- “Your body and mind cannot contain the work that's being done, the work load is more.”
- “When the pressure gets to you and you are unable to see your way clear.”
- “Mental fatigue and strain that causes you to be unable to function effectively.”

- “Physical, mental and emotional overload due to 'Type A' like lifestyles, neglect of sufficient rest, sleep and leisure.”
- “Stress would be the necessary pressure on an individual physical, emotional and mental.”
- “Being highly tensed not able to cope or handle situation in a reasonable way.”
- “Emotional helplessness. The pressure caused by day to day responsibilities.”
- “Tendency to allow circumstances to control your life.”
- “Be any form of pressure that builds up that would affect an individual.”
- “When you are mentally and physically drained more than what the body can take due to the pressures placed on you by your ministry.”

1b) Common themes of clergy understanding of 'stress'

- It is a multidimensional experience affecting mental, physical, emotional functioning
- It is generally experienced as a negative condition with a minority recognizing that at the same time it can be a positive and challenging experience
- It is described as a condition in which the person's capability is exceeded by the demands of the situation.
- The resulting imbalance is expressed as being under pressure and being overloaded.
- A significant impact on the individual is a feeling of exhaustion at the mental, emotional and physical levels.
- Other generalized symptoms include; tension, tiredness, mental and emotional instability.

The natural meaning units (themes) elicited through this analysis suggest that clergy experiences are congruent with theoretical conceptualizations of stress.

This is significant given that apart from any theoretical exposure, clergy are inherently able through their personal experience to identify with the nature and dynamics of the stress response. This is encouraging as it suggests that clergy are aware of stress signs and symptoms to which they can respond.

2a) Transcripts of clergy understanding of 'burnout'

- "Collapse, dead-lock, thoroughly exhausted, includes mental, body, emotional & spiritual deep tiredness."
- "It happens, when you respond to the circumstances that cause you to become emotional."
- "Feeling physically tired exhausted or exhaustion."
- "When one is over worked, without taking rest and continue to work even when the body feels tired."
- "Where you feel like crying and screaming above your voice and sometimes destroy things."
- "It may be a feeling of disinterestedness resulting from overextended feeling of being overloaded."
- "It may be accompanied by fatigue, both mental and physical and a lowered level of performance."
- "It's when you reach the stage where you feel you can't carry on any longer with the stressful conditions you find yourself in."

- "I think it's when one has reached an angle of discouragement or even feel like it's not happening at all."
- "Reach a point/place of instability to operate under normal conditions."
- "When I have no more energy to do anything."
- "Probably a stage where one simply gives up and does not have the will power to continue."
- "This would be the negative side of too much adrenalin / stress."
- "When I choke with the result of the vast amount of chewing due to the normal day to day activities required. Unable to function normally."
- "An extended period of stress when you cannot maintain or structure your day adequate that allows you time to rest."
- "If the stress has reached the point that you can't take it anymore, you prefer to throw in the towels or walk away from the situation."
- "Body and mind just can't function as normal human being."
- "When your body cannot take the work load. Then you feel that your body breaks down."
- "The body and mind is over worked and no rest or recovery period was taken to get back to a place of restoration for the mind and body."

2b) Natural meaning units related to understanding of 'burnout'

- An end state or condition reached after a prolonged period of stress suggested by statements such as 'when you reach the stage you can't carry on any more', 'when one has reached a point of discouragement', 'reach a point/place of instability', 'a stage when one gives up'.
- A condition that generally affects optimum functioning as suggested by statements such as, 'unable to operate under normal conditions', 'unable to function normally', 'cannot maintain or structure your day', 'can't function as a normal human being', 'when you feel your body breaks down'.
- A place where the individual does not have the resources to continue his work as effectively as desired suggested by statements such as, 'collapse and a dead-lock', 'you can't carry on any longer', 'no more energy to do anything', 'no will power to continue', 'can't take it any more', 'throw in the towels'.
- A condition characterized by a depletion of energy at the mental, emotional physical and spiritual levels suggested by statements such as, 'thoroughly exhausted including mental, body, emotional and spiritual tiredness', 'feeling physically tired and exhaustion', 'accompanied by fatigue and lowered energy level', 'no more energy to do anything'.
- A condition in which negative emotions are increasingly experienced suggested by statements such as, 'become emotional', 'feel like crying and screaming', 'sometimes destroy things', 'feeling of disinterestedness', 'point of discouragement'
- A condition that indicates the need for restoration and revitalization as a remedy and prevention suggested by statements such as, 'without taking rest and continue to work even when the body feels tired', 'when you cannot

structure your day adequately that allows you time to rest', 'no rest or recovery period was taken to get back to a place of restoration'

As in their understanding of stress, the clergy sample show a similarity of understanding of the burnout experience – even though only an insignificant proportion of the sample actually experienced this condition personally.

The themes suggested by the narratives generally support the definitions as proposed by Maslach (1982), showing similar understanding of the negative nature of burnout, that it is accompanied by a state of severe emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment.

Two issues that are notably absent is the reflection on the concept of depersonalization as suggested by Maslach (1982). It appears that even though clergy experience high levels of stress their burnout experience as compared to other helping professionals does not significantly include the experience of depersonalization.

The second dimension which the researcher anticipated to have been expressed more frequently is the spiritual dimension on the stress and burnout experience, given that these are religious workers. This absence could suggest that as a religious group, clergy's personal spirituality is subordinate to or transcends their experience of stress and burnout in other dimensions (mental, physical and emotional levels).

4.4.1.2. Incidence of burnout and coping strategies

Question 13: *"Have you ever experienced burnout in your ministry career?"*

The purpose of the question was to assess the prevalence of burnout in this group through self report. Further to this, the question attempted to capture clergy understanding of the signs of burnout, its unique impact on individuals and personal strategies either used to cope with or prevent the onset of burnout.

a) *"If YES, please describe your experience and how you handled the experience. If NO, please describe how you manage your stress and prevent personal burnout."*

- "Yes. There were times, when we had real stressful financial needs. We would come to a place where we would go to sleep not knowing where we would get money for the booking of the hall we use for church services. Sometimes we would have church outside the hall. Those were very stressful moments. Another experience that I think caused stress and some level of burnout is the long hour of counselling - sometimes we would start counselling a couple from 19:00 until 2:00. Meanwhile we have to wake early in the morning and attend other issues like family obligations and try and be faithful to early morning sessions. We found that we are tired most of the time, get easily irritated & emotional. We feel like we can go to sleep all day most days - and be away from people."
- "Yes. When I was six year in ministry I didn't have money, my child didn't go to school. I felt I had to go back to work to be able to support me and my family. This led to burnout and to handle it I took some days off to a place where I would think about the ministry, but due to financial restrains, it was only possible for two days so it could not really help."

- “Yes. As a leader taking problems of the people, I lead and make their problems mine and I am not able to deliver results. Counseling and working for the whole year and not being able to take rest. When people I lead do not want to take instructions and not having enough time to sleep. When the members of the church don't obey the will of God, when members are splitting in my church, and when my children don't believe in my God.”
- “Yes. I was ministering in a certain church for more than two years at which time my superiors expected me to go without pay. At that time I was also saving for my home bond. I tried to handle the experience by starting a new ministry and currently I am in that ministry.”
- “Not yet. I could have come close to the level of burnout had I not realised what it was I was doing wrong. Just to give an overview starting a new ministry for me was a stressful process. At the time of my call I had to deal with what my family would live on- seeing we (my wife and I) were persuaded that the Lord was completely separating me from secular my job. That was stressful just to think about: to deal with that period, I began searching the scriptures prayerfully and I began community with others in the ministry who had gone before me. The promises of God brought new assurance and my colleagues in the ministry not only understood my concerns but also supported me and gave testimonies in evidence of God's faithfulness never to neglect his own.
- “Yes. My wife takes the ministry too seriously, she is better than the Lord. Doing the things that I see as important & also trying to keep up with her priorities becomes quite stressful to me. I still have to find a way to handle this experience. Because of my age I feel that visitation is the most stressful aspect of my job. I we travel to S to do visitation there, my wife wants to visit every family from S that attend our church. She also majors on the negative

side of people. In other words she is always speaking of the bad things that people do which does not create a pleasant atmosphere.”

- “Yes. There was a time when I really felt it was enough, more especially when seeing saints not leading the way expected or thought. As a fulltime minister, seeing the finance department not active as supposed, no income at all, dependant waiting on you, your wife needs groceries, clothes and have other needs, but thanks to God who is able to meet my needs.”
- “No. I usually take a day off- weekly - away from the normal day to day activities of ministry. Spend time with colleagues to discuss issues pertaining to ministry. Seasonal times of getting away - after every three months and regular vacations away from area of ministry.”
- “Yes. I was at a Mission training school as a student leader and had the responsibility of mothering nine students. It was very demanding. My days started at 5am and ended at 11pm. There were days that I had no energy to accomplish anything. I guess I never actually handled it. It was just something that I went through sometime ago.”
- “No – not yet. Just take things one day at a time but even this is difficult to maintain - planning in advance.”
- “No. I relax and take time out and think. Make arrangements in order of priority and restart with a smile.”
- “No. Prayer time is important for me. I also take the time to speak about work related issues with my wife. I also find ways of getting my family and co-workers involved.”

- “Yes. Recently with the building of the church having experienced lack of sleep and appetite loss. I began to pray and learned to relax, as our Lord carries all our burdens.”
- “No. I tend to do thing one day at a time. I have some recreational settings - relax on the beach - take a break.”
- “Yes. I take a time of leave to recover or usually go for a conference for restoration to take place in the mind and spirit.”
- “No. An important aspect of managing stress for me would be to find refuge in God. Prayer is an excellent form of release and also sharing my concerns with my spouse, with whom I work, in the ministry.
- No – but I came close. By training to practice what I preach I have been able to stay above my stress.”
- “Yes. I have firstly organized a year planning for important events and then record a method of planning for the same. I am a team player and therefore find it necessary to allow others to form in, so that necessary tasks can be delegated.”
- “Yes. Being a missionary on the mission especially in rural areas in Africa was not easy. Your lifestyle has to change, your environment is different. There are culture and language barriers. In this situation I tried to make adjustments so that I could function well. It did me more harm because I overworked.”
- “Yes. Internal instability and conflict within the church (i.e. council and members) that resulted in the church's rejection of me and I had to move my

ministry elsewhere. This was the result of a lack of responsiveness and co-operation of church members to the vision of the church.”

- “No. When I am caught in my subjective mood I really suffer emotionally, but I have learnt to develop my coping strategies such as; I separate the problem from me as a person and I look at it objectively and review my priorities and mandates in the diversity of my roles. Many times I awake to renewed understanding and this leads to emotional resolve and restoration. But the best way is when I can talk about it with my wife.”

b) Understanding the personal experience of clergy burnout

This section describes the natural meaning units derived from transcripts of clergy who have experienced burnout. In this section the causes, impact and recovery from burnout will be presented based on the analysis of the clergy transcripts.

c) Causes leading to burnout

- Financial stress and strain
- Intensive counselling activities
- Make peoples problems mine
- Responsibility for people’s lives
- Inability to meet expectations
- Lack of control over other people
- Dealing with peoples problems
- Poor peer role models
- Dealing with interpersonal conflict

d) Impact of the burnout experience

- a state of uncertainty
- *easily irritated and emotional*
- *depression*
- no time for self and to rest
- separation from people
- extreme exhaustion

e) Strategies used for recovery and prevention

- need for rest, relaxation and recreation
- meditation on scripture
- prayer and spiritual reaffirmation
- become involved in peer community
- encouragement of peers
- take personal time out on a weekly basis
- take one day at a time
- take regular vacations
- personal priority management
- handing over problems to God
- sharing in intimate relationships
- Optimistic outlook on life
- Team ministry and delegation
- Cognitive re-appraisal of the situation

4.4.1.3. Identification of stressors unique to the clergy group

Question 14: "What do you find to be the most stressful aspects of your job?"

The aim of this question was to identify stressors unique to this clergy sample through an open-ended self report.

a) Narratives of clergy related identified stressors in ministry

- Care and concern for needs of membership dealing with family strife.
- Handling of situations arising from alcohol and drug abuse.
- Conflict management.
- *Having to deal with different attitudes of people.*
- Dealing with people especially their attitudes which differ from mine.
- When working with people, poor levels of communication from leaders.
- Subordinates not meeting deadlines - things are still to be done.
- Emergency cases with no appointments.
- To try and monitor children coming from broken homes.
- When you advise people to do the right thing, and they don't listen.
- Management of time.
- Coping with budget that you based in faith in God.
- People not listening.
- You have to do everything.
- Finance – not enough support.
- When people do not listen to counseling and you have to repeat.
- Financial crisis: The church is not able to take care of you financially.
- The expectation of others that the pastor must see to everything, knows everything and has a solution for every problem.
- The load of responsibility sometimes weighs me down.
- Dealing with people with difficult situations.

- Dealing with people who have attitude problems.
- Administration – record keeping.
- Care and concern for needs of membership.
- Time Management - unexpected things crop up.
- *Being a minister without financial support.*
- Expectations that are not met in terms of the God's promises.
- Carry the burden of church work all on your own.
- No one to assist you when addressing problems of your members.
- I make their problems mine and not being able to deliver results.
- Counseling and working for the whole year and not being able to take rest.
- When people I lead do not want to take instructions.
- Not having enough time to sleep.
- When the members of the church don't obey the will of God.
- When members are splitting in my church.
- It's when I preach and people don't respond.
- Intervening in family conflicts and disputes.

b) Common sources of stress amongst this clergy group

- Inadequate financial support was a very significant source of stress.
- Conflict management related to interpersonal issues in the church.
- Quantitative overload – too much to do and not enough time.
- Qualitative overload – especially in the area of counselling.
- Dealing with the unrealistic expectations of congregants.
- Perceived lack of influence and/or control over the desired behaviour of congregants as a result of ministry.
- Feeling personally responsible for the lives of people.

4.4.1.4. Stress impact on the clergy group

Question 15: "In what ways do these stressful aspects affect you?"

This question attempted to understand the impact of stress as experienced by this group of clergy through the identification of unique issues related to the ministry life.

a) Narratives of clergy related stress impact (symptoms)

- They drain me emotionally. Sometimes I experience mental and physical fatigue.
- At home we experience emotional constraints children get neglected. Sometimes we find ourselves not having time for the family and for us as a couple.
- Sometimes I develop attitude toward others, which I later have to pray and ask God to help me, especially when a person does not really take lead to advice, then comes back again and again for counseling with the same problem.
- I remember one case were this lady was really being mean, verbally abused my husband. I ended up developing an attitude towards her. When they encountered problems she would come to us again whereas she does not really take our advice.
- It affects me psychologically. I experience personal frustration and inner conflict.
- They effect you mentally and physically, you feel very much discouraged and down but the burden is still there, not that you want to quit but you want to relax and take a break at some stage you become affected even with your family. You must understand your family and your family must understand you.

- At times I sleep for a long time, especially when I feel that my body could not handle then burnout level. At times I go outside the township where there are no people, just to be alone and inspire myself.
- A lot of headache, ulcers in my body, and worry.
- As if I am not called by God and sometimes I feel like I want to leave the ministry.
- It affects me emotionally because it makes me angry.
- I think that it would seem that my whole lot of years spend on teaching and preaching became a waste.
- My wife says I don't want to be rejected after I've preached so much; this is what I'm also concerned about. This really affects me.
- The burden of caring for and carrying the needs of people. Tend to be in conflict management mode until situations are resolved.
- Tend to respond to their attitude with an attitude of my own.
- Pressure levels in the body changes. Less time with the family. No private life in the ministry, 24 hours and seven days on duty. No one takes time to ask about your stress level.
- It off sets your appointments for the day. Serious cases don't allow you time to relax or take breaks. You really fell irritable, angry, frustrated, you feel like running away of the situation. You actually don't know what to do, in an actual fact you want to quit or give up.
- Keep quiet. Sometimes tend to lash out especially on my wife.
- Try to take the perfect route. Repeat the thing over and over.
- Instead of waiting on God and studying the word one has to worry about his financial needs.
- I question my call at times.
- I react negatively by losing it at the wrong time, with the wrong people.
- Dealing with people and trying to make them see their situations from God's perspective. Trying to get past all their own belief systems and personal background and environment to make them understand their life from a Biblical perspective.

- I become irritable and impatient with them.
- I tend to become frustrated with people with attitudes.
- By transference, I experience anxiety.
- I become irritable and impatient with them.
- I feel rejected by my members.
- I have hardly any time for relaxation and sport, or exercise which affects my health.
- I feel unfulfilled as a minister of God that I am unable to do God's will.
- I have very little time for myself and my family, which eventually takes a toll on my relationship with them.

b) Signs and symptoms of stress identified through clergy narratives

- Emotional exhaustion
- Mental and physical fatigue
- Passive aggressiveness
- Personal frustration
- Inner conflict
- Discouragement
- Depression
- Isolation
- Headaches
- Ulcers
- *Uncertainty of calling*
- Wanting to quit
- Irritability and impatience
- Anger and frustration
- Feelings of despondency
- Feelings of rejection
- *Not fulfilled in my work*

4.4.1.5. Clergy calling

The calling to ministry is often described as a coping strategy by the clergy. This question attempted to understand the role of clergy calling as a mediator of the stress and burnout experience.

Question 19: "What does your calling to the ministry mean for you and how does your sense of calling enable you to cope with the demands of the ministry?"

a) Clergy narratives of sense of calling as a coping resource

- "My calling is that which keeps me focused in ministry. It is the driving force that gets me through each day. My calling is protected by the intimacy that is nurtured and shared with God on a continuing basis, which is developing and growing all the time."
- "I am actually aware that the calling is divine and specific, and that the end I will stand accountable to give an account of my ministry. Because the calling is lofty and high, we also have a built-in stress mechanism to cope with people realistically. I am not stating we don't have problems but situations can be handled rationally. Due to the external scope of things. I see things and view them with that perspective in mind."
- "My calling in the ministry is all that keeps me going this far. If it was not for God's call upon my life I would have given up long ago. At the moment I am in coping mode, certainly not where I would love to be. I have lost my sense of fulfillment to the ministry."
- "This is a high calling of God. It means being a servant of God and doing the best for God. This calling enables one to continue in ministry."

- "Always something that is held in high priority. It is my point of focus – I come back to this "calling" when things around seem out of control."
- "This is my strength in God. There are two reasons I'm in ministry which keep me motivated to continue my work. I love God and the people."
- "A calling to the ministry means that God has a plan and a purpose in my life - he wants me to accomplish something while I'm alive, be it great or small, with challenges or no challenges. My understanding of God's calling upon my life enables me not to quit, and to press on, and know that I am not alone. He is with me."
- "This is the most important aspect of my life; the calling keeps me going forward in the 29yrs I have been in ministry. I always remember my calling. If I were to start again, it would be the ministry."
- "My calling is not based upon my academic or social skills and abilities and these do not verify my calling. I believe that I have been chosen by God to do this and this is my purpose and destiny in life. I am confident of what God desires of me and what He's placed upon my heart and mind to do. Therefore when pressures arise and ministry burdens become heavy, I am reminded that I am graced to do this and that God has given me the resources to accomplish what He's set before me. This carries me through those stressing times."
- "It is the most important thing - next to God. It's high priority keeps me going in the work I have to do."
- "My calling to the ministry means 'press on.' As the scripture does teach us, praise God!! And my sense of calling enables me to cope with the demands

of the ministry particularly when I lean upon the Lord's promises and cast my troubles upon him."

- "I love Christ first, who called me to this ministry, and this makes me love my work. I have goals to achieve so I am able to cope with the demands of my ministry."
- "To me [the calling] means my life because without me been involved in the ministry, life would be miserable because I will lose focus."
- "My calling in the ministry means all my life, God is always there to help you, his word is invincible. He said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you" Your calling must be the vision that motivates you."
- "It means my life and everything to me. I am a born minister; this is God's purpose about my life. I am able to cope because I know that where he leads me He will provide for me."
- "My calling is my daily work that God has given me and by God I can cope by obeying Gods' commandment and pray and sharing."
- "My calling to the ministry means a lot to me because I am servicing the most Highest God through Jesus Christ. Prayer and studying the word of God enable me to cope with the demands of my work."
- "I have come to understand that the essence of my life and thus my fulfillment lies within the parameters of my calling. I have come to understand that the word of God is true in that I shall not be overcome with a word beyond my capacity to bear. But I have also seen that the acquisition of intra/interpersonal, academic, and emotional and spiritual competencies has helped me drastically."

- “There is a price to pay for your calling. Part of that price is stress and the demand of the ministry.”
- “When God calls you he equips you for the work of the ministry. Just knowing that he has called me to the ministry enables me to cope.”

b) Common themes of ‘sense of calling’ as a clergy coping resource

- The calling to ministry for many clergy is a point of life focus. It is a ‘true north’ that acts as a lighthouse in the storms and strains of ministry life pointing to a higher mission
- It is the mission of the minister – his purpose for living – apart from which his life will be meaningless. This is destiny and life purpose.
- It is an energizing and driving force that gives the minister the ability to conduct his work and to persevere despite hardships
- The calling is an enabling mindset in itself calling the minister to recognize his resources are in God (the caller). It reaffirms his confidence in the provision of God for daily life and work
- The calling is an instrument of empowerment which mandates and equips the minister to take up his role as a servant of God
- The calling allows the minister to transcend the demands of daily life allowing him to realize a higher purpose in the experiences of ministry

4.4.1.6. Stress management strategies

This question attempted to understand stress management strategies currently used by this group of clergy. It serves two purposes. First to tailor any stress management programme and secondly to reinforce strategies perceived to be valuable to this clergy group.

Question 20: "What have you found to be the most helpful strategies to help you cope with the stress you experience as a minister?"

a) Self reported clergy coping strategies

- Making time for rest and relaxation (days off - vacations - family time).
- Attending retreats and conferences.
- Interaction with fellow ministers.
- Developing a consistent relationship with a minister colleague.
- A time of relaxation - away from any church activities.
- Sort issues out immediately - always confront an issue - not keeping 'things' inside - talk with people.
- Meditate on God - get his direction and peace in the situation before making any decisions.
- Teamwork - to work as a team with your colleagues not to take everything upon yourself. Share the work with the team.
- Be open to others: tell your colleagues exactly how do you feel or what you are going through.
- Sometimes just don't do anything that pertains to the ministry.
- Take a break.
- Visit people – friends and family.
- We need to take a day's rest.
- Take leave.

- Speak to ministers who are experienced in ministry.
- Go to a conference to get encouraged.
- Focus on the positives of the ministry.
- Take a complete break from ministry for a week or two (certainly not sufficient).
- Evaluate your spiritual walk as well as your re-evaluate your goals.
- Ultimately it's going back to God and getting from Him a sense of peace and serenity and assurance that comes from His word, that He's always there and will work it all out.
- Having an understanding, godly, supportive, encouraging spouse who is able to give me a biblical perspective of the situation.
- Letting go of things
- Asking God for his inner peace.
- Talking to a friend in the same ministry.
- Taking time out.
- Talk about problems.

b) Common clergy coping strategies

- Regular periods of rest and relaxation.
- Open and honest communication.
- Seeking and receiving support from peers.
- Continuing professional development.
- Applying the practice of teamwork and delegation.
- Practicing spiritual disciplines such as prayer and meditation.

4.4.1.7. Church support strategies

Given that stress is a systemic phenomenon, this question attempted to understand the expectations clergy had of their churches in supporting them to avoid unnecessary stressful experiences.

Question 21: "What strategies do you feel the church should provide in meeting the needs of the minister?"

a) Desired clergy support strategies that the church could provide

- Financial - appropriate levels of support.
- Team ministers -sharing more in "pastoral care" for membership.
- Sharing the "burden" of ministry.
- What we are experiencing / witnessing today is a start - teach people about the stress of ministry.
- We need to be effective, efficient and even at times stress free in order to express this statement in reality.
- A good financial plan.
- A good administrative support system.
- *Ninety percent of pastors don't have a medical aid which should be provided.*
- Allow pastors to go on a holiday, to recuperate.
- Have more professional seminars.
- Special sessions should be held for counselling and prayer.
- Pastor's financial needs should be met.
- Pastor's family should be taken care of.
- Visit church families, and close relatives I have not seen for a while.
- Spiritual retreats and revitalization maybe twice a year for the pastor.

- Firstly the church needs to become a backbone to the minister. There should also be distribution of tasks to other leaders and members of the church. There needs to be a level of relating and knowing the vision and heart of the minister so that they could help fulfill, it and support in every way possible, both practically and in every other way especially spiritually.
- Ministers in-service training and ongoing refresher workshops.
- Time to be away from the church.
- The church should provide high support, love and care for their ministers. Counseling where necessary can improve their ministers in their ministry.
- The church must know all the needs of the minister because if they don't know they will not fulfill them all.
- Finances must be adequate enough to support my family. The church must also support me physically and materially.
- There is nothing much the church can provide because as the leader you must teach the church to do things.
- Love me and listening to what I tell them, sharing with me.
- They should take care of him and provide him with the resources for the work of the ministry.
- My church should encourage me to go away on my holiday periodically.

b) Recommended support strategies that the church could provide

- The need for financial support is the most significant need expressed by the clergy many of whom are paid poorly if consistently or not at all, at times. This is also a major source of stress as identified in earlier analysis amongst this group of clergy.
- On-going training and development is also indicated to assist the minister learn new strategies of dealing with the changing demands of ministry both at a practical ministry level as well as at a personal management level.

- Structured opportunity for rest and relaxation that is encouraged by the leadership of the church. These periods of restoration should become an integral part of the renewal ministry of the church not only for congregants but also for the clergy.
- Team ministry and empowerment of the laity in the work of the ministry. This action in many cases needs to be initiated by the clergy themselves and be supported by the ministry model of the respective congregations. The sharing of ministry responsibility would require on-going training of congregants in the work of the ministry.
- Care and support of clergy. There is a concern amongst clergy that there is no one who ministers to the needs of the clergy – a typical case of the caregiver not receiving care. Churches should through their institutional structures consider support in the areas of mentorship, peer counselling, psychological and medical care.

4.4.1.8 Strategies for clergy health promotion

This question attempted to understand what clergy considered to be valuable in helping them manage stress. The question was posed in a manner that sought to understand also how clergy could be of support to peers in the management of stress and prevention of burnout.

Question 23: "How can other ministers and congregations be helped to manage stress and avoid burnout?"

a) Clergy support strategies in managing stress and avoiding burnout

- Provide counselling.
- Be accessible.
- Present solutions to manage stress and avoid burnout.
- Encourage times of rest and relaxation.
- By teaching them about stress and burnout.
- I can tell them that they need to share with their close friends, what they are going through. They need to ask for support.
- Find time and rest.
- See what the situation is; help them with a particular crisis.
- Pastors should re-think their strategy on church governance.
- Teaching the word of God and implementing God's word in the church.
- The congregation needs to be taught the expectations of God's word and not what they expect.
- Pastors need to re-think their work.
- By providing a support structure based on counselling and sharing their concerns and problems, by giving godly advice and, if possible, by practically assisting to alleviate the source of stress.
- Provide a holiday - away from everything.
- Provide seminars that deal with stress in ministry and how to cope with it well.
- Share my experience on how I dealt with these issues.
- By providing counseling and advice where there's need.
- Counselling, praying, creating jobs and workshops.
- I give them counselling - give the change to talk about what happened time and again. Encourage them according to the word of God! Involving the trinity of Heaven in our discussions.

- That's a difficult question because I'm not equipped enough to do that "skillfully" however the least I can do is to pray for them, with them and talk to them in a relaxed manner.
- You can help them by discussing the needs of ministers outside the church environment.
- Encourage them to attend seminars, workshops and also encourage them never to hide their problems, but always find someone whom they can talk to about their problems, due to that first step to solve a problem is to realize that you have a problem.
- We need to encourage people that as soon as they realize they have problems, they must get people to help them and to provide them with people who can help them.
- By sharing with them problems that you have experience in your ministry and also that how have overcome them For me to help others, manage stress & burnout, I need to know how to manage it myself.

b) Recommended strategies for helping clergy manage stress

- Provision of counselling and personal support.
- Creating opportunities for rest and relaxation.
- Teaching churches about congregational health.
- Continuous professional training and development.
- Structures for peer support and role modeling.
- Facilitation of stress management programmes.

4.4.2. Clergy evaluation of the stress management programme

In this section the transcripts of the clergy narratives are presented verbatim allowing participants to describe their personal experiences of the clergy stress management programme.

The following section analyses the transcripts into natural meaning units and themes consistent with a phenomenological approach. Significant issues will be explicated through this process as it relates to the experience and management of clergy stress and burnout.

Clergy participants at the end of the 1 day workshop were asked to describe their personal experience of the programme. No prescription was given about the length of the response or the issues to be covered. This section presents the responses of all delegates who completed the evaluation. The responses of sixty eight percent of the forty five delegates are presented. Not all delegates were able to complete or return the evaluation due to logistical reasons. The current response rate is considered a fair reflection of this group's response.

Delegate 1

"I benefited from the day. The atmosphere was constructively educational and yet relaxed enough to be friendly. I feel this new information I already had was revised with a lot of freshness and insight. Unlike many seminars and courses I usually attend, there was no overcrowding of information. This should only be the beginning of a continuing programme. I personally appreciate this endeavor and want to thank all who came up with this vision and see to it that it succeeds."

Delegate 2

"The facilitator was very soft, is good for counselling it was a very challenging course. I was helped. As pastors and pastors' wives we need counselling. We have learned more about thinking and the power of our perception. The course was so useful and important. We need to be empowered on these courses. We thank God who has opened eyes of Christians to conduct these courses. We need continuing in these courses."

Delegate 3

"The course was very good for me. Please don't forget that we need a lot of your skills and training. Because I think if you can do it again the pastors will gain a lot. Also I noticed this is the problem of all pastors. I also thank God about your effort."

Delegate 4

"The workshop has been very informative and very eye opening, I really enjoyed it. The first part was somewhat stressful [the biographical and self report section].

The presentation and the way Stanley facilitated the whole workshop was lively, realistic and relevant to our situation. The way he handled the whole subject of stress in the ministry was so vast in such a way I felt a day (1 day) for this workshop was not enough, seems like it was just a scrapping on the surface.

We still need more time to deal and be helped with this subject. It is a very serious need amongst us as ministers. Maybe we could meet even if it is once quarterly - a meeting of this kind. Lastly thanks to Stanley, we really appreciate what you did."

Delegate 5

“This workshop helped me to understand what stress is and how dangerous it can be and how to manage it successfully. My concerns are that pastors need to be given a counselling workshop extensively in order to help others adequately.”

Delegate 6

“This workshop was so much successful in my life, and it has really challenged my life and my thinking. I have gained a lot out of this. I wish such workshops to be continued next time. It has challenged me as a new minister in the ministry. We really appreciate this and may God bless you.”

Delegate 7

“This workshop was so challenging and encouraging. I’ve learnt a lot about how I should be able to deal with stresses in my daily work.

Our facilitator was so knowledgeable. I am a changed minister who is so well informed of how I should deal with my stressing situations. One should believe me when I say my family will enjoy the results of this workshop. I’m working forward for more to this even in the future. God richly bless our brother Stanley.”

Delegate 8

“This workshop was timely because I find myself going through a stressful time and I have got something to work on especially in the area of thinking. I am just sorry that I could not have brought two of my church members with so that they could have taught this to some of the church members going through stress.”

Delegate 9

“Almost all ministers experience stress and burnout. We need such an open discussion [as in the stress management programme]. This programme has been of tremendous personal help to me in dealing with difficult issues.

One of the important issues I learned is the need to say ‘no’ and that this is not wrong. “

Delegate 10

“I appreciated this time of being educated on the issues of stress. I accept it’s a reality and not something to feel guilty about, if for some reason I did want to deal with it. Up to now I have never found a positive way of dealing with stress. The information has been very useful!”

Delegate 11

“I found this session to be very useful and informative. I have decided as a result of this session that I must not allow other people to stress me out. I also realized the importance of setting time apart for myself.

I gave off myself in the ministry until I had nothing to give. My time spent with God became limited because of doing and giving off myself. I realized that I have to take a break from all responsibilities and duties and spend time with God and myself. I have to feel good about myself before I can give of myself.”

Delegate 12

“I found the workshop to be very interesting and very informative. The session has helped me put a lot of things in perspective. It has also helped my understanding of the personality traits of other people and how to deal with different people.”

Delegate 13

"I found the workshop to be very informative. As a result of the workshop, I see the need – the very vital need to re-evaluate/prioritise what is important to me in my personal and work life. This programme has been a paradigm shift for me. Thanks for your input."

Delegate 14

"I've appreciated the day and the seminar because:

1. It allowed me to deeply introspect; to put away the frills from my life and really come to terms with the issues that I face daily in ministry.
2. It has made the issues of stress and burnout a reality for me and has given me the tools to handle, cope and eradicate this problem in my life.
3. It taught me to relax and take time to rejuvenate our spirit.

Thank you very, very much for investing in my life and ministry, Stanley. We appreciate you."

Delegate 15

"The seminar has been extremely helpful. Being the first seminar on stress and going through the current church situation [church on the brink of a split with the senior pastor being asked to resign]; I have learned many things on the issue of stress and burnout. As a subject not usually addressed, the things that we considered unimportant proved to be imperative."

Delegate 16

"The session for me as a pastor was of great benefit. I learnt of the reality of burnout and the ways of preventing performance driven task with unrealistic expectations. I also learned that stress is a reality.

Transformational thinking is the major issue, and if Jesus used this to change people of his day, why should I not do also. Christ challenged the belief system of the people and so must I also would use much of this for my church."

Delegate 17

"Stanley's whole approach was inviting and humble. He was open about himself and did not 'talk down'. He was most knowledgeable and very well informed in regard to the Christian ministry and scripture. It most certainly can be implemented by any interested pastor who is open to further help. This was excellent!"

Delegate 18

"The seminar today was extremely beneficial and helped me understand the dynamics of stress and how it relates to the ministry. What was most useful for me was learning about coming to a place of interdependence between myself and the congregation.

The session also helped me develop personal goals and vision for my ministry and how to develop coping skills that will enhance my call and destiny."

Delegate 19

"I have been enlightened in a way that was refreshing and also eye opening. Without realising it, I have experienced burnout.

I have also been made aware of the fact that delegation is essential and that the church's success does not depend on me alone. Empowering others empowers us as clergy.

Thanks Stanley. I know that this will be the start of many more seminars like this."

Delegate 20

"This has been a good experience. I have learnt a lot, especially the causes of stress and how to handle stress. This was an urgent need for us as pastors. Wish we could have more of this type of teachings."

Delegate 21

"This was a very interesting and true learning experience. The idea of sharing thoughts and ideas and making contributions is truly what lacks in the clergy today-hence there is so much of separation. We are bringing quite a bit of stress upon ourselves. I am sure that this seminar will make a true significant change in our lives and our ministries.

May the Good Lord bless you and strengthen you to continue this excellent ministry."

Delegate 22

"I found the workshop to be very useful. I wish we had more time with you! This has been an excellent exposition from you which leaves me with a better understanding in my mind. Hope to effectively manage my stress levels as a result of this workshop."

Delegate 23

"Very good presentation. I found the workshop to be very necessary in dealing with stress in my personal life. I have gained much from the session –especially in dealing with people's expectations of me as a minister. "

Delegate 24

"The session was very useful to me. I learned that I am not a 'super' being but a human being. If I don't take decisions, or I don't take care of myself no one else will do!"

Delegate 25

"This seminar has been God-ordained. I am bordering on stress. I need to take your advice seriously. I realize that pastors are lonely people and they need friends – someone to talk to. God bless you in your doctoral studies."

Delegate 26

“The course was generally good. It was very informative. It allows one to see oneself in total perspective.

The coping skills that were presented were highly valuable for me. I realized as a result of the programme, the importance of finding friends/support apart from our spouses who we can open up to real problems. Our spouses are also burdened and the idea of mentorship is one that I will consider. Although, I realize that this will take in finding a trusted person to confide in.

I found the programme to be of great value however I felt that the time was short and we were not able to spend much time on all aspects.”

Delegate 27

“The programme served to reaffirm important things for me, especially some of the points of growth in my life. I also realized the importance of self care and that it is not in conflict with the Christian gospel. I must take care of myself in order to be a whole person who can meet the needs of others.

I also learned the value of focusing my energies on what is ‘not urgent but important’ Often I spend my time doing the urgent things but I realize that to build a strong foundation for my future ministry, I must invest in things like self care and personal development.”

Delegate 28

“This was a great and refreshing course which again brought to light areas of my life that I need to manage. I was able to identify specific areas of stress that I need top pay attention to. It brought into perspective not only the things that cause stress but also the principles needed to deal with it effectively. One of the most important lessons learned was that if I don’t take control over stress – it will control me. To manage stress I need to take care of myself.”

Delegate 29

"The workshop was valuable for me. Personally I have learned how to cope with stress by taking care of self. Part of taking care of myself means that I need to value myself.

Through the workshop I also learned about the dangers of unrealistic expectations and how they can lead to guilt. I can now understand how to deal with guilt which will involve me having a different perspective on my role and abilities. The programme was a bit short."

Delegate 30

"It was very relaxing to know how we can change the way we live and the same normal patterns that we had can change. I have learned that I can make a difference in my life and I am not struck with the same things. The course helped me change my thinking about things that really affected me before – the expectations of people on me."

Delegate 31

"I enjoyed the various stress management techniques especially the ones on relaxation and also how to implement this in my daily life. I hope also to start a personal exercise programme in 2003. I realize the importance of taking care of myself and the effect this has on my stress."

Delegate 32

"I found the programme excellent with very stimulating exercises. Stanley dealt with real 'on the spot' issues in a practical way. Through the programme I realized that help is truly within yourself. This is the best relaxation therapy I have ever had. The presentation was excellent. I would have preferred a greater time doing relaxation exercises."

Delegate 33

“The workshop was very informative and very relevant to the life of a minister – both his personal and public life. More than the quality of the information, the content was presented in an impactful manner, as it brought home some invisible struggles often ignored and denied in ministry life. The programme has made me wiser now in how to deal with stress by identifying my personal areas of stress, the sources of stress and how I need to deal with it.”

4.4.2.2. Common clergy experiences of the programme

The experiences of the clergy in response to the ‘Clergy Stress Management Programme’ are clustered into five themes, viz., learning environment, facilitation style, perceived programme impact, personal insights and recommendations.

a) Learning atmosphere

- Relaxed and friendly
- Constructively educational
- Presentation with freshness and insight
- Lively, realistic and relevant
- Open discussions
- Surfacing unspoken issues
- True learning experience
- Dealing with real on-the-spot issues

b) Facilitation style

- Insightful and knowledgeable
- Inviting and humble
- Vulnerable – shared own experiences
- Understands the context of ministry
- Impactful presentations

c) Programme impact

- Challenging – changed my thinking
- Useful – learned a lot
- Gained a lot – beneficial
- Enlightened – ‘opened my eyes’
- Highly informative - educational
- Personally encouraging
- Life changing impact
- Very necessary and relevant
- Tools to manage stress
- Tremendous personal help
- Personal appreciation for effort

d) New insights

- Reality of stress and burnout
- How stress and burnout happens
- Danger of unmanaged stress
- Importance of assertiveness

- Dealing with shame and guilt
- Internal locus of control
- Importance of being proactive
- Time for rest and relaxation
- Creating interdependence in relationships
- The power of transformational thinking
- Preventing performance driven ministry
- Need to re-evaluate priorities
- Value of team ministry
- Challenging belief systems
- The pastor is not superman
- Empowering people for ministry

e) Recommendations

- Increase time of programme
- Include more case studies
- Allow time for personal ministry
- Continue the programme
- Focus in-depth in future sessions

4.4.2.3. Common themes expressed by clergy in describing their experience of the 'Clergy Stress Management Programme'

In this section, a cluster of perceptions surrounding clergy experiences related to the learning context, group dynamic and new insights stimulated through participation in the workshop are described.

a) Learning environment and facilitation style

- Constructively educational and well presented material
- Relaxed and friendly atmosphere which allowed for safe, open and honest sharing
- The material and the facilitators knowledge was experienced as contextually relevant
- The facilitators style of openness and invitation encouraged a collaborative learning climate
- The length of the programme (one day, being too short) was expressed as a concern by most delegates.

b) Programme impact on participants

- Opportunity for personal empowerment
- Challenging transformational thinking
- Encourage insight for new behaviour
- Improved knowledge and skills acquisition
- Space for introspection and re-evaluation
- Time for renewal and restoration

c) New Insights for changed behaviour

- 1) The impact of stress and burnout in the ministry
 - The reality of stress and burnout in the ministry
 - The dynamics of stress and burnout

- 2) Challenging personal and congregational belief systems through transformational thinking
 - Rediscovering the call to ministry
 - Moving away from a performance driven ministry
 - Dealing with unrealistic expectations
 - Managing guilt and belief systems
 - Creating healthy congregational relationships
 - Being assertive in ministry life

- 3) The importance of self care
 - Proactive life management
 - Social support as a mediator of stress
 - Importance of priority management
 - The value of rest and relaxation strategies

- 4) Creating capacity for ministry
 - Empowering others for ministry
 - The power of team ministry and delegation

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

This study documents the evaluation of a clergy stress management intervention. In order to reach this goal a series of stress management programmes were designed, implemented and evaluated. This chapter is an integrated discussion of the two study aims as described below, using both qualitative and quantitative interpretations.

Aim One: To document the experience of clergy stress, burnout and coping using a phenomenological approach.

Aim Two: To design, deliver and evaluate a clergy stress management programme as a mental health promotion intervention

5.2. Stress as a systemic phenomenon

5.2.1. Stress experienced at an individual level

This sample of ministers reported overall moderate levels of stress. Moderate levels of stress indicate a concern to the individual but still appear to be within manageable limits.

That the ministry as a vocation is stressful has been sufficiently documented and is consistent with other studies. Most delegates acknowledged through the stress management programme that the ministry is stressful by nature. An ex-policeman now a minister, on one of the programmes stated that he thought police work was stressful until he joined the ministry.

An interesting pattern seems to emerge when one triangulates the self reported stress intensity for the various groups of self, family and leadership. The triangulation suggests that stress in the different groups, i.e., clergy, family and leadership are mirrored in intensity levels. It is clear from a systems perspective that the stress of an individual is influenced by the relationships of which he is a part. Clearly with this sample of ministers, as confirmed in qualitative interviews, the stress of the ministers is often a result of or the cause of stress amongst other close affiliates, i.e., family and church leadership. It would be interesting to identify the extent to which stress at the different systems levels do impact one another and what the dynamics of these relationships are.

Perhaps the implication of this acknowledgement is that stress cannot be considered as an individual-centred phenomenon. Any attempts at stress management or intervention need therefore to take cognisance of the systemic nature of the phenomenon for any effectiveness to be achieved. This approach is supported by Lazarus's theory that stress, coping, and their adaptational outcomes should be studied in the life setting where they occur. Like traditional life-event research, Lazarus's approach therefore focuses on real-life situations (Thomae, 1987).

5.2.2. Stress and clergy families

Clergy families are also vulnerable to the effects of ministry stress by virtue of their intimate involvement in ministry life. Often the family and more specifically the spouse are expected to be the source of highest social support to the minister. This places an enormous demand on the clergy spouse who often feels that their personal needs are not being met in the relationship. Daniel and Rogers (1981) indicates that there is a high rate of marital discord amongst clergy couples, with in the United States ranking third in the number of divorces granted each year (Blackmon, 1984).

The allegiance of the minister to the church (in many cases the husband) leads to a situation with the spouse (the wife) feeling uncertain of the commitment of her husband to her and the family. In the pilot stress management workshop, clergy wives described this situation as the pastor being married to the church first and to them second. Clergy husbands likewise consider that their first calling is to the church and then to their wives.

Children of ministers are also subjected to the 'fishbowl syndrome' where they are under the constant watch of demanding congregants and parents who expect them to live to a higher set of standards. This also places additional strain on the lifestyles of the children who tend to cope with the situation often by passive-aggressive behaviour or outright rebellion and rejection of the faith and all that their parents are expected to stand for. This in turn raises the critical eye of the congregants who feel that the clergy family is not setting the appropriate role example.

5.2.3. Stress and leadership

The stress of the minister is similar to that of church leadership who are tasked with the work of the ministry but not in full time positions. It is interesting to note that in this sample the overall rating of stress levels by the clergy is higher in their leadership teams than in their own group.

Again, as in the case of clergy families, these secondary role players appear to be carrying similar stresses that have not been adequately researched. Many leaders are called into eldership or other church-specific roles, which require a high level of commitment from them – in many cases not dissimilar to that of the full time ordained minister. Usually these people are holding a full time position in a 'secular' role and involved in Christian ministry on a part time basis. Given the

intensively demanding nature of the ministry, they are like ministers and their families subjected to similar experiences of stress.

In other cases the relationship between the minister and the leadership are a source of stress. Many churches that are governed by a board or council tend to place undue pressure on the minister who often does not appear to have the freedom to live out his calling in the context of the local church. Tensions between ministers and their leadership teams have been cited as a major stressor often resulting in church splits which impacts negatively on all parties involved, viz., the minister, leadership team and congregants.

At the same time as the leadership team is a potential for stress, they are also perceived by the minister as a source of high social support. This is especially the case in churches that have a team based governance and ministry structure. Ministers expect their leadership to be supportive but don't always enjoy high levels of support often due to differences in management and leadership styles and approaches. Also the lack of interpersonal effectiveness and unresolved tensions could result in the relationship between leaders and the minister being stressful.

By its voluntary nature, the church also places a great demand on the clergy and laity in terms of their committed involvement and participation in church life. Clergy depend on the commitment of their leadership based conviction to the values and vision of the church in a healthy system. However, in other systems there are also signs of an authoritative structure which demands blind dependence. These relationships border on abusiveness and are characteristic of unhealthy congregations, many of which are more vulnerable to church splits as a reaction to unhealthy dependency.

5.2.4. Overall stress level trends of the clergy group

Overall stress levels indicate moderate levels of stress as reported by fifty seven percent of the sample. This in-the-middle range of stress experience is consistent with the nature of the ministry and appears to be the consistent experience of ministers throughout their ministry lives with extreme shifts to high levels of stress which is typically associated with burnout. There is generally a smaller percentage of ministers who experience low stress levels. This could be due to the limited demands of their context or that they have acquired more effective coping resources. In this sample ministers reporting low levels of stress tend to fall into the latter category.

When compared to other helping professionals clergy experience similar levels of stress. However, the incidence of burnout tends to be lower than in other groups of helping professionals (Arumugam, 1992; Maloney, 1988, Taylor, 1982, Rassieur, 1982). This non-linear relationship could be explained by the inherent coping resources available in the ministry life that other helping professionals do not benefit from or access.

Despite acknowledging the reality of stress as inherent in their work, clergy are able to find meaning in this experience that allows them to better cope. Clergy accept that stress is a given in their work and is part of their commitment to ministry. Whereas other professionals might view stress as anomalous with their roles, for the clergy this is part of their calling. This issue of calling as a mediating variable is discussed at length later in this chapter.

Another factor that could account for the lower incidence of burnout especially as it pertains to depersonalisation is that ministers relate to people from a predominant spiritual frame of reference. Daniel (1981) states that ministers attribute problems among their clients to dispositional rather than situational variables, which appear to be the converse among other helping professionals.

He argues that the ministry paradigm emphasises the sinful nature of man making provision for the anticipated negative behaviour from congregants. It is likely that this dispositional paradigm creates space for more tolerance on the part of the minister than cynicism which is the predominant characteristic of depersonalisation in burnout.

5.3. Individual Related Stressors

The results of the Stress Diagnostic Survey (SDS) gave an indication as to the stressors that have the highest impact on ministers. It is important in designing any stress management intervention to understand specific components of the stress experience which can then be targeted in terms of an effective health response. This understanding acknowledges that stress is a multidimensional phenomenon which requires a multifaceted response that is context specific.

5.3.1. Responsibility for people

As is consistent with other studies, the highest individual level stressor in this group was that of 'responsibility for people' (Maloney, 1988). In a previous study Arumugam (1992) also found this to be the highest stressor in a sample of Indian Pentecostal ministers. This finding is confirmed by Daniel and Rogers (1981), who stated that previous studies cited responsibility for another's wellbeing as a primary source of strain leading to burnout.

Although the minister by virtue of his calling is responsible for people, the extent of that responsibility appears to be somewhat distorted with the resulting stress and strain. Kesler (1990) highlights the positive aspect of this feeling of people responsibility in his observation that the work of the ministry revolves around the most important matters of life. The ministry deals with ultimate questions, eternal

destinies and the souls of men, women and children. This feeling of people responsibility is profound and it appears to also be rewarding.

Yet, it is this same responsibility for people that causes so many ministers feelings of distress. Hart (1984) notes that the work of the minister, when it is undertaken with great sincerity and earnestness, is bound to contribute to feelings of despondency. The weight of feeling responsible for people's souls and of longing to see others experience the fullness of God; the disappointment of seeing believers turn cold and detached; the heartbreak of a failed relationship - all take their toll on sensitive and dedicated ministers.

This problem appears to be particularly exacerbated among black congregants (the predominant race groups represented by this clergy sample were Indian, African and Coloured), where the pastor is entrusted with a great deal of responsibility by his congregation. In many churches the composition of the membership appears to have a significant proportion of uneducated people coming from predominantly lower socioeconomic groups, as elicited from discussions with ministers in the sample. In this context the minister's feeling of responsibility extend beyond the meeting of purely spiritual needs to addressing the social needs of his members. This will involve assisting with practical issues such as housing, provision of food, clothing, seeking medical assistance and taking care of educational needs of member's children.

Often the minister is seen as the only available resource that is empowered by virtue of his office both in the community and at a social institutional level to offer them (the congregants) not only spiritual but also material support. In focus group discussions with the clergy, the issue of culture and impact on stress was raised with both the Indian and African groups. In the Indian groups, the predominant communal culture lends itself to both sharing and demanding. The Indian community are generally very hospitable and open to other members of the community. In this respect the minister often enjoys an easier access to people

and is also 'taken care of' when needed. At the same time though, the minister is not privileged to maintain a clear sense of personal space. Being part of a communal culture, the demands placed on him and his family are not considered inappropriate and often lead to tension should the minister assert himself in terms of his personal and family space.

In the African culture the situation is not dissimilar. Being a communal culture also ministers reported enjoying the sharing that is characteristic of 'ubuntu'. However, like the Indian ministers, they do not enjoy a sense of personal space. Instead of a sense of interdependence there is a relationship of dependence of the congregation on the ministers. The sense of personal space is considered inappropriate in this cultural context placing enormous stress on the sample of African ministers.

In both cases, i.e., Indian and African, ministers suggested that the influence of white missionaries could also be attributed in the dependency relationships that were modelled with the respective communities. This implicit expectation of the minister should behave has been transferred through the generations and the minister of today inherits this expectation which compounds the already stressful nature of ministry. Discussions of the researcher and experience of White congregations suggest that White ministers are not specifically plagued by this cultural burden. White congregations generally respect their ministers personal space.

Responsibility for people is also reflected in the minister's feeling that he ought to set an example for his congregation worthy of emulation. Hart (1984) describes the unrealistic expectations placed upon a minister as being a sure hazard in the ministry. The pastor being human is bound to fail occasionally and not live up to expectations. However, being in such a visible and vulnerable position, the minister could easily suffer the loss of self-respect and the respect of others. In his denial of his humaneness and his seeking to preserve the idealized role, the

minister's feeling of responsibility becomes distorted and unhealthy, resulting in his feeling of stress.

Feeling responsible for the positive outcome of counselling and preaching were also commonly reported by this sample of ministers. The clergy sample expressed a deep frustration due to the fact that congregants did not heed their advice or act in desirable manner as a result of their preaching. The unchanged behaviour of congregants despite their advice and teaching was perceived as a reflection on their competency and effectiveness as ministers. In this frustration there is almost a sense of defeat because of a lack of control over congregant's behaviour. This state of mind suggests a sense of omnipotence gone wrong which frustrates ministers.

Wright (1980) warns ministers to constantly reflect on the reasons for wanting to take over the running of someone else's life. Why do ministers constantly feel responsible for others, causing people to become dependant on them? Is it because of the power ministers have, or are they using others as an effective way of hiding from their deep personal needs?

There is no doubt that the task of ministering to the whole person carries an enormous responsibility. However, it is dependence on divine resources that appear to make it possible for the minister to be effective in his work. If personal ambition and idealism or unrealistic expectations of members cloud this feeling of responsibility, it is bound to be a great source of stress for the minister. Dittes (1988) empathically explores this question of responsibility from both the minister and the congregation's viewpoint in two excellent pieces of prose:

"I never wanted to be your saviour, only your minister. I wanted to join with you, the congregation, in a covenant of search and trust in which we might together come closer to finding the sure roots and the clear directions for our lives. I needed that, and so did you. I had some gifts to bring to that covenant and that

search and so did you. I wanted to be your minister, not your God. I wanted to join with you in the search to find and trust and obey our God.

But you seemed to think that I was on God's side. You seemed to treat me as someone who had already found God, securely and fully, as someone who lived the holy life, could answer all the hard questions, could guarantee God's presence and will, if I would, could guarantee your salvation, if I would, and someone who pronounced the judgement of God on your life. When I came close to join you in your search, you backed away and measured a distance between us, with your formality and deference and awkwardness, just as though I wore a dazzling halo or a damning scowl. I wanted to be your partner and you made me your parent.

We, in the congregation never wanted to be the ones to make good your vocation as minister and your spiritual pilgrimage. We never wanted to be the ones whose conduct and belief would be the means of vaulting you into heaven or dropping you into hell. We never wanted that power over you. We never wanted to be the ones you would look to so anxiously, constantly taking our temperature to see if our faith and biblical sensitivity and social responsibility and ecclesiastical loyalty was hot enough to fuel yours, rich enough to nurture yours. We never wanted you so dependent on us that our slightest stumbling out of step with you became interpreted as abandonment of the faith, and of you. We never wanted you to need us. We needed you, but we didn't want you to need us to need you."

5.3.2. Role conflict and role ambiguity

The second highest cluster of individual level stressors in this sample were that of; role ambiguity, quantitative overload and qualitative overload. Role conflict was close after as a source of stress. Role ambiguity and role conflict appear to be characteristic of the boundary-less ness of the ministry role. Findings of other studies do suggest that role ambiguity together with role conflict is the major stressors in the ministry (Boyd, 1982; Maloney, 1988). Through the focus group sessions and the survey questionnaire this sample of ministers reported a sense of uncertainty as to what was expected of them. These feelings of role uncertainty appear to be reflected in the ratings of role ambiguity and role conflict.

The discrepancy between pastors' perception of what constitutes an effective ministry and the assignments they actually have to do to be effective poses a significant dilemma. Ministers cannot simply focus energies on their personal expectations for the role of ministry. Instead, they must take into consideration the expectations forced upon them by their congregations and sometimes even by other clergy which compounds this role uncertainty as is captured by Welsch (1996) in a typical pastors plea:

"Lord, we've got a problem. I thought you called me into ministry to reach the hurting, to care for the spiritual and physical needs of the people you would lead my way. You never mentioned budgets, committees, carpets, or banquets. Lord, I spend more time making decisions about who gets the van, who should repair the boiler, and where we should buy Sunday school literature than I do preparing my sermon. I thought my gift was exhortation. Why are you asking me to do administration? "

This finding is consistent with the study of Daniel and Rogers (1981) who confirm that role conflict is a major source of stress among ministers. It appears that this source of stress is a consequence of the diverse responsibilities expected of the

minister. Boyd (1982) also suggests that given the diversity of clerical duties, *contradictory demands may sometimes require simultaneous responses.*

The role conflict items as measured by the Stress Diagnostic Survey (SDS) covered areas related to the minister's work with respect to unnecessary tasks and projects, being caught in the middle between the board and members, congregation members non-adherence to the formal structures of the church, doing things that are accepted by one person and not the other and finally receiving conflicting requests from two or more people.

It appears that the minister's position makes him vulnerable to the stress of role conflict, given the absorptiveness of his role. Kieren and Munro (1988) described the clergy role as one which is highly salient and absorptive. In absorptive occupations, work role demands a high level of investment in terms of the individual's resources. The high level of commitment and the strong feeling of being called to the ministry bear testimony to this position. Kieren and Munro (1988) also note that absorptive work roles are not only demanding with respect to the individual in the role, but also often demand investments from other family members as well.

Ministers appear to experience role conflict both in terms of their roles within the church and the tension that is created when work roles become enmeshed with those of the family. Given the multifaceted expectations placed on the minister, he is bound to "fail" in one of the roles assigned to him. Kesler (1990) observes that a source of potential resentment that the minister has to deal with is that of being considered a "spiritual" person. He notes that board members assume that the minister has no business sense. In this case the "spiritual" role appears to be in conflict with the "business" role. Although here the minister's role competence is questioned, *in other situations the minister is expected to comply with roles that he does not feel comfortable or competent to handle.*

Gerig (1986) speaks of the omnicompetent minister who takes on a variety of roles because his members expect it of him. Most churches assume ministerial competence in three primary areas (Quick, 1990). Firstly, a pastor is supposed to be competent in dealing with all people, from the board to every member. Second, pastors are supposed to be competent in proclamation. Pastors who are strong in people skills are not good enough; they should also be first-class communicators. Third, pastors are expected to be competent in production. They must be able to get things done and be able to make things happen. These varied expectations demand that the minister take on a number of roles which are bound to conflict. The reason for this appears to lie in the observation that although the minister could have great strengths in one of the areas, few are strong enough performing effectively in all three areas. It is easy to understand then the high experiences of this sample in terms of the stress of both quantitative and qualitative role overload.

Taking on responsibilities for which he is not competent, makes the minister vulnerable to the experience of failure and accusations of "hogging" the ministry. Heuer (1981) describes the potential for role conflict, in his observation that for too long the ministry has been vested in an over-worked and often poorly equipped minority who have sacrificed themselves for the sake of Christ to what sometimes degenerates into stamp-licking for things that have nothing to do with their call to the ministry.

It appears then on the one hand that the minister is expected to be omnicompetent, yet on the other hand his spiritual role distinctiveness is not to be compromised. Is the minister an administrator, a pastor, a preacher, or a professional? Wright (1980) notes that true professionalism is to be found in the pastoral ministry rather than in the smooth running of the administrative machine. He goes further to state that an insidious debasement of ministry creeps in when administrative goals become confused with pastoral goals. Patterson (1990) also warns against the notion of professionalism which conflicts with the servant role

of the minister. He notes that it is terrifying to realize that professional clergy can apply the skills and sophistication of their trade to build large, exciting, growing churches - and to do it all without believing anything!

Often the minister's work extends into the boundaries of his family life, creating considerable role conflict; (Kieren & Munro, 1988; Kesler, 1990). In many cases it appears that the minister's role as husband and father are compromised because of the absorptive nature of the ministry (Faulkner, 1981).

5.3.3. Quantitative work overload

The demands of ministry are clearly expressed in the experience of quantitative overload. Minister's report being available twenty four hours/seven days a week, and never ever free of their work. From the qualitative interviews, it appears that ministers 'take on more than they can chew'. A major reason for this is the lack of support from their congregants in carrying out the work of the ministry. Given a small team of usually overworked leaders, the minister being the full-time and ordained member of staff is expected to fill in the gaps. The multiple roles of the minister as discussed in the previous section compound the problem of time availability for a multitude of tasks.

Another reason for this quantitative overload appears to be related to the minister's sense of omnicompetence. As a result of this he tends not to delegate adequately or effectively to congregants who may be capable and willing to participate in the work of the ministry. This solo mindset is often described as 'being set apart.' Kieren and Munro (1988) argue that being set apart from other members of the congregation members may in effect make that source of social support less available. Additionally many churches do not live out the plurality of ministry as described by the 'priesthood of believers' concept in the bible. As a

result of the 'solo ministry' many potential resources are disqualified from being of social and ministry support to the clergy.

At a third level, quantitative overload is due to poor priority management. Very few ministers proactively plan their work schedules, claiming that ministry life does not allow them to do this. As a result they operate in the mode of a typical emergency service worker waiting for the next callout. This mindset is obviously not conducive to an effective management of time.

Related to poor time management, many ministers in this and other studies report a difficulty in saying 'no'. The lack of assertiveness amongst ministers puts them into a negative spiral of uncontrolled pressure. Not saying 'no' sets them up for taking on multiple demands, which by their silence communicates willingness to congregants of their ability to carry out the task. The choice to say 'yes' to all and sundry appears to be embedded in the guilt complex that many ministers suffer. It appears to be a vicious cycle, if the minister says no, he is considered as not caring enough and therefore unacceptable and so the minister accedes to assuaging his guilt and then feels the frustrated victim of his own doing. Many ministers appear to be trapped in this cycle of pleasing which is intimately woven with their sense of responsibility for people, as discussed earlier.

5.3.4. Qualitative work overload

Qualitative overload refers to a state in which demands exceed capacity. The ministry by its nature is very intensive and is exceedingly demanding. The minister entering the vocation does so in many ways recognising that his individual capabilities are far outweighed by the demands of the vocation.

Rassieur (1982) suggests that there is little doubt that most persons who enter the professional ministry do so with high motivations and the basic understanding

that they are submitting themselves to a ministry that is beyond their own personal strength and resources to perform.

Besides high personal ambition, it appears that a lack of adequate preparation for the ministry role is a chief culprit in the qualitative overload of ministers. In response to a question in the survey that enquired about the extent to which ministers felt adequately prepared for the work of the ministry, only a few reported being well prepared. It appears that theological training institutions are generally effective in developing the academic and doctrinal base of the minister but very little competency development happens in the area of practical ministry.

This finding is consistent with Arumugam's (1992) study of Indian Pentecostal ministers which found that ministers reported being most adequately prepared in the academic area. Academic issues were related to doctrine, church history, study of the old and new testaments and the biblical languages. This is contrasted strongly with the inadequate preparation reported in areas of practical ministry (60%), intrapersonal skills (65%) and interpersonal relationships (75%).

This imbalance in training has been identified as a major factor in the qualitative overload of ministers. Rassieur (1982, p. 141) notes that the "fundamental irony of seminary education is that the candidate is prepared in an academic environment for a profession that is practised essentially in a non-academic setting." Although training ministers do serve a year of probation at a local church, this does not appear to be adequate, as the foundation for practical ministry has not been set at the training institution.

Three main areas appear to be sources of qualitative overload amongst ministers, viz., counselling, conflict management and church leadership. All three areas require effective interpersonal competencies which are not adequately taught in theological institutions (Daniel, 1981; Hart, 1984). Hart (1984) has

argued that ministers in comparison with other helping professionals are not adequately prepared to deal with the stress of interpersonal relationships.

The lack of adequate training in counselling has been expressed as a major stressor as it relates to issues of confidentiality, boundaries, responsibility for the outcome of counselling and interpersonal conflicts arising from counselling situations. As discussed earlier, ministers appear to be frustrated when congregants do not comply with their counsel which is more akin to giving advice than the way counselling is understood in psychology practice.

The minister's feeling of responsibility for his people may account for this faulty counselling attitude. This feeling of responsibility for people was also manifested in ministers reporting emotional involvement in the problem of their members. As Collins (1988) notes there is a fine line between caring and becoming too involved. Such emotional involvement often causes the counsellor to lose objectivity and this in turn reduces counselling effectiveness. Other ministers in the study reported situations of interpersonal conflict arising out of counselling. This often arose because of the ministers "advice giving". The problem was commonly reported to be experienced within the context of marriage counselling, where one of the parties would feel that the minister was siding with the other.

Other ministers in the study reported situations of interpersonal conflict arising out of counselling. This often arose because of the ministers "advice giving". There appears to be a difficulty for ministers in understanding that the counselling process is not controlled by the benevolence or the will of the counsellor (minister) but that the client (congregant) takes ultimate responsibility for the outcome. Again this issue of responsibility is tied in with earlier discussions of the minister's sense of ultimate accountability for the lives of his congregants thus negating individual personal accountability.

The second most frequently reported stressor category was that of conflict management. Here ministers reported difficulty managing interpersonal conflict *between members and themselves and also the stress associated with inter-member conflict*. Conflict appears to be an inherent part of the ministry. Hart (1984) notes that dealing with people is a potential ground for conflict and this is especially a problem for ministers. He outlines two problems that make the minister more vulnerable than other helping professionals:

Firstly, when ministers begin their careers they are often not as well trained in handling conflict situations, difficult personalities, and communication problems as compared to the other helping professions. Hart notes that training for the other helping professions places a high priority on human relationships, and skills in these areas are deliberately developed. This is not usually the case in seminaries, which tend to place more emphasis on theological studies and preaching.

The second potential source of conflict that Hart (1984) describes is related to the nature of the churches voluntary structure. Church congregations are made of people who choose to be there, and could just as easily choose not to be there. Hart notes that many members participate actively when the going is good. *However when problems develop, there is a tendency to withdraw support.*

Many ministers reported the lack of membership support as a source of stress. This often arose when the minister's vision for the local church was in conflict with that of the established members of the church. Often workers in the church were not supportive of the minister's vision causing dissension amongst the congregation.

Ministers also experienced conflict related to their expression of negative feelings. *Anger was often experienced by ministers but was not openly expressed*. Perhaps this response is related to the minister's distorted view of his

image as well as his misunderstanding of the nature of biblical anger. This denial of anger in many cases only aggravated the intrapsychic conflict for the minister. Rassieur (1982) notes that pastors cannot avoid feeling angry at times with their parishioners and with their councils or boards. Anger is a part of the ministry and an inevitable fact of life in any congregation. Rassieur (1982) expresses further the seriousness of this issue saying that the crisis of deciding how to deal with anger is perhaps the single most common professional crisis. Once again it appears that the major reason for the minister's difficulty in this area is associated with a lack of training in conflict management skills.

The third highest stressor category reported by ministers in this sample was related to the demands of leadership. The problem of leadership in the church is especially related to its voluntary structure. Hart (1984) notes that as leaders of a mostly voluntary organisation, they must relate to many people they would normally not have any affinity for. This can lead to growth but can also lead to personality conflicts as found to be the case among the Indian Pentecostal churches. Pillay's (1983) review of the history of Indian Pentecostal churches showed that interpersonal problems between the pastor and church leaders often accounted for most of the major splits in the established Pentecostal churches. Often these conflicts were related to personality differences.

There is no doubt as to the enormity of the minister's leadership tasks, ranging from setting up committees, motivating workers, mobilising resources to resolving conflicts. The problem of leadership in most churches studied seem to be associated with the either the minister's authoritative stance or his personal involvement in all church activities.

Although most protestant churches espouse the model of the shared ministry of all believers, very few congregations live this out in a meaningful way. Perhaps the problem is due to the minister not having a clear perspective as to his leadership role. Carr (1985) suggests that the minister's leadership role involves

three positions in the church. Firstly, the church's leader is one who clarifies mutual relationships (a pastor); secondly, one who can use the authority of his convictions (prophet) and thirdly, one who can communicate his experience (a witness or preacher). These three positions are mutually integrated. Leadership is an embodiment of the primary tasks of the church and as such requires both skills and knowledge different from that of management. The manager is one who has to utilise the available resources most efficiently. A leader will also have to do this, but will also have to be able to persuade his followers toward a certain direction (Car, 1985).

It would appear that most ministers experience themselves as lacking in their ability to persuade their followers. As a result of this they tend to depend on their ascribed authority of leadership in the church. Ministry could rather be viewed as an activity of the whole church which facilitates the various parts of the body to work together. This could be realised through leadership training and modelling as well as through the minister's dependence on the Holy Spirit as the harmonizer, healer and helper in this task.

5.3.5. Career development

As a subscale of the SDS, career development refers to those aspects which influence the individual's interaction with the organisational environment in such a way that it impacts that person's perception of the quality of his or her career progress. Career development was not considered to be a high stressor as compared to other groups of helping professions.

Many of the ministers in the sample did not appear overly anxious about career development believing that their faithfulness to God, in whatever situation they were called to minister in was more important than perceived career mobility. However some ministers did express feelings of being stifled in their career

development due to a lack of supporting leadership often opposed to or showing little alignment to the vision of the minister. Daniel and Rogers (1981) and Hart (1984) observe that although the minister is held responsible for many areas in the church, he is seldom afforded the freedom to realise his vision for the church.

One of the major stressors related to organisational support and perceived opportunity for progress was in the area of financial support. The problem of poor financial reimbursement could be understood in the context of the church's membership coming from predominantly poor socio-economic backgrounds. Some ministers accept the context within which they work and manage their lifestyle consistent with their congregants. Others feel that they are not adequately rewarded for the high responsibility they carry compared to other helping professionals.

In other helping professions, the provision of an equitable financial reward is often a key factor in employee satisfaction and retention. In the church context many ministers do not address this need directly for fear of reprisal from congregations. At another level it is probably reinforced by the unrealistic belief pattern that the minister is not at liberty to articulate his needs.

This sentiment is captured in the narratives of one of the clergy participating in the study when he reports "...we had real financial needs. We would come to a place where we would go to sleep not knowing where we would get money for the booking of the hall we use for church services." Lack of organisational support was considered a key factor in the perceived progress and growth of the minister.

Despite these practical realities, most ministers were able to rationalise their lack in the paradigm of the calling to the ministry. The notion of career is almost contradictory to the nature of the 'calling' to the ministry as Patterson (1990) asserts, 'a call is not a career'. Careers, he says, lend themselves to formulae

and blueprints, a call only to a relationship. This issue of calling as it relates to clergy coping and meaning is discussed more extensively later in this chapter.

5.4. Clergy social support

Social support can be defined as "a set of exchanges which provide the individual with material and physical assistance, social contact and emotional sharing, as well as the sense that one is the continuing object of concern by others" Pilisuk and Parks (1983, p.138). The centrality of social support has been emphasized by some philosophers who argue that the essence of human existence is expressed in people's relations with others. This notion is also captured in the African concept of 'ubuntu' which describes communal and existential inter-relatedness.

Researchers in the field of stress and burnout also argue strongly for the positive effects of social support on stress and strain (Jayaratne, Himle & Chess, 1988). Etzion (1984) also notes that a potential effect of social support is its moderating impact on stress and burnout. Social support in these cases helps to modify the relationship between stress and burnout so has to help people with high stress to cope more effectively with situation (Etzion, 1984).

5.4.1. The clergy family

Ministers in this sample reported receiving the greatest source of social support from their wives, or partners if not married. This finding is supported by Kieren and Munro (1988) who suggest that the primary source of social support is the family itself, including both immediate family and the extended kin.

Most often the wives of ministers perceive themselves as partners in the ministry, thus sharing many of the stresses and strains experienced by the minister. It is

not common to find the wife of a minister pursuing her personal career. This may be accounted for by the increasing incidence of marriage amongst seminary students. Kieren and Munro (1988) observe that it is not surprising given the increased number of men and women in seminaries and clergy roles that there has been a concomitant increase in dual clergy marriages. Very often wives share the responsibility of ministry although the wife is not ordained as a minister of the church. This was very evident in the number of dual clergy couples attending the stress management interventions.

5.4.2. Congregational leadership

The church leadership was rated as the second highest source of social support. Often these co-workers can be effective sources of social support, especially if they have a shared vision of ministry in the local church. The work of the ministry cannot be done without the effective utilisation of human resources, and often the wise minister will be able to draw extensive support from his co-workers towards the completion of tasks in the church.

Everyone needs support during times of crisis and also appreciation during times of success and is most valuable coming from those who understand the nature of the responsibility associated with the work. Furthermore, the availability of co-worker support was negatively correlated with burnout (Pines, Aranson & Kafry, 1981). Perhaps this is an area that more ministers need to focus on, i.e., the training and involvement of more lay workers in the church. This is not without its price, because the minister will have to become more involved with a larger part of his congregation, but at the same time this appears to be an excellent way of extending his network of social support.

5.4.3. Peer support

The support of peers (other ministers) was reported to be a low source of social support. This appears to be in contradiction to (Pines, Aranson & Kafry, 1981) observation that the worker will get the most valuable support from peers who share an understanding of the task demands. It would appear that this observation holds true for the minister only within the context of his local church.

Rassieur (1982, p.134) identifies professional competition as one of the reasons for this situation. He reports the comment of a minister who indicated that the "...denominational structure is an isolating system because every pastor is basically in competition with every other pastor. I find little trust among our pastors. There is little sharing about their hurts, or about their needs, or about their failures." It would appear that misunderstanding and mistrust keep many pastors from finding in each other mutual support. Despite this, there is evidence that many pastors are finding supportive relationships with selected individuals and groups Rassieur (1982).

5.4.4. Congregational support

One of the groups perceived to be offering the poorest social support is the local congregation. This is intimately woven into other issue previously discussed in terms of clergy omnicompetence, gap between the clergy and the laity and the dependency relationships fostered by clergy amongst congregants.

Many ministers do not see it fit nor have the freedom to seek the support of congregants. In maintain the façade of omnicompetence; the minister builds a wall that separates his congregants from sharing his personal vulnerabilities. This is a major area of concern to ministers who both recognise that this behaviour is not healthy but also appear to be afraid of the betrayal of trust in their congregants.

As a result of this impermeable boundary ministers find themselves very isolated and unable to access support from the multitude of congregants. This is also exacerbated by the notion of the unrealistic expectations that clergy set for themselves which congregants perpetuate and reinforce. Congregants likewise are disempowered to minister to the clergy because of unhealthy theology and/or the modelling of clergy themselves which prevents this level of interaction. Perhaps the notion of the shepherd asking for support from the flock is in itself a perplexing dynamic to make sense of.

A responsible appropriation of 'the priesthood of all believers' as a core biblical principle could be an adequate remedy to this congregational malaise. Many congregants are not taught of their role as fellow priests in partnership with the clergy. This could be the result of the clergy's insecurity with a shared space for ministry in which space only exists for the ordained minister. Dawn and Peterson (2000, p. 26) assert that all believers in the community of the church need to find their place as priests. "Whatever your employment might be – whether you serve the congregation professionally or labour in some other occupation as a vehicle for your true vocation of carrying the kingdom of God wherever you go – you are an honoured member of the 'priesthood of all believers.'"

5.4.5. Other helping professionals

Finally, other helping professionals were rated providing the least source of social support. Medical practitioners, psychologists and social workers were included in this group. This low ranking may be explained by the minister's frame of reference, which makes it difficult for him to seek support from a traditionally "non-spiritual" person. Ministers did not report any problem with consulting a medical practitioner about their stress-related symptoms. However, acknowledging this as a psychosocial problem appears to be difficult for the minister.

Perhaps the minister's reluctance at disclosing his stress to a psychologist stems from his discomfort of the role of the psychologist or that he does not subscribe to the humanist thinking that is generally perceived to undergird psychology. Pruyser (1976) feels that pluralism in the helping professions has been so zestfully promoted and established that the time has come for some consideration of each profession's distinctiveness. Perhaps there is need for a greater liaison between helping professions in building up a network of mutual social support. This issue will be explored in more detail in a later section in this chapter.

5.5. Experiential understanding of clergy stress and burnout

5.5.1. Meaning of stress

The understanding of stress among this sample of clergy, based on their self-report statements is consistent with the body of stress literature. The dominant themes that were described from this clergy group reflect an implicit understanding of the nature of stress and how it is manifested.

This clergy sample recognised stress as a multidimensional experience that affected mental, physical and emotional functioning. There was an absence of reference to the spiritual dimension of stress suggesting that this clergy sample perceived their spirituality as transcending the reach of the stress phenomenon.

In their discussion of burnout, limited reference is again made to the spiritual aspects of burnout. It would appear that the clergy do not see stress and burnout any differently from other helping professionals. Although spiritual stress and burnout symptoms are referred to this is not seen as peculiarly outstanding from the other dimensions, i.e., mental, emotional and physical.

The general sense of awareness of the nature and dynamic of stress is encouraging in that clergy can choose to act on the signs and symptoms that they experience. Whether they do or not and the reasons for this are discussed later.

5.5.2. Meaning of burnout

The experiential clergy understanding of the burnout experience is consistent with the general body of literature. When using the multidimensional definition of Maslach and Jackson (1981), clergy understanding of burnout is described in similar terms, with the exception of the depersonalisation construct.

Burnout was described as an end state reached after a prolonged period of stress. This is confirmed by other researchers in their description of burnout as a progressive process which develops over a long period of time and is not just a single discrete event (Farber, 1983).

Burnout was also described as a condition that generally affects optimum functioning where the body in its various systems is said to have broken down and become malfunctioning. This observation is confirmed by Maslach's (1982) recognition of a general consensus in the different definitions of burnout; that it is a negative experience for the individual in that it relates to problems, discomforts, dysfunction and negative consequences. This malfunctioning reduces the sense of personal effectiveness as identified by this clergy group.

Maslach and Jackson (1981) state that lowered personal accomplishment among general helping professionals is manifested by a tendency to evaluate oneself negatively, particularly with regard to one's work with people. They report that workers may feel unhappy about themselves and dissatisfied with their

accomplishments on the job. Ratliff (1988) notes that the lack of criteria for measuring personal accomplishment is reported to be a source of stress for human service workers. Chernis and Egnatios (1978) also found that a sense of accomplishment in one's work was the single most important contributor to job satisfaction in their survey of community mental health workers.

At another level clergy described the burnout phenomenon in terms of demand exceeding capacity. Freudenberger (1980) also describes burnout in a similar manner stating that it is a state of failure, wearing out and becoming exhausted because of the excessive demands on energy, strength and resources. This 'wearing out' was most consistently expressed in examples of exhaustion at both an emotional and physical level. In most definitions of burnout, exhaustion is a characteristic feature and is more specifically identified as one of the three core manifestations of burnout in Maslach and Jackson's MBI (Maslach Burnout Inventory). Maslach and Jackson (1981) consider emotional exhaustion to be a key aspect of the burnout syndrome. As emotional resources are depleted, workers feel that they are no longer able to give off themselves at a psychological level to their recipients.

Burnout was also expressed in terms of its negative emotional components which are illustrated by examples of anger, frustration, irritation and mood disorders. Again these descriptors are consistent with literature which point to emotional issues related to loss of enthusiasm, frustration and apathy as described by Edelwich and Brodsky (1982).

It appears that the notion of depersonalisation was the only dimension not directly described by this clergy sample. Examples of irritation and isolation from congregants could suggest support for the depersonalisation phenomenon. However, based on qualitative interview data, clergy in this sample could not identify with the notion of depersonalisation as advanced in the burnout literature. There is at the same time an acknowledgement that by its very nature the

ministry does have the potential for the development of negative and cynical attitudes among ministers. Peterson (1990) warns that much in pastoral work is *glorious, but the congregation as such, is not glorious*. Hart (1984) also notes that dealing with people is potential ground for conflict, especially when one has to constantly work with the same people for long periods of time.

Despite working in this context ministers primarily relate to the spiritual condition of congregants and, as a result, are less likely to view them in a depersonalized way (Taylor, 1982). Daniel (1981) states that ministers attribute problems among their clients to dispositional rather than situational variables, which appears to be the converse among other helping professionals. He notes that in the ministry, *the view of man often emphasized is man's sinful nature*. The ministry also, by calling, is drawn to look, at the heart of man. Perhaps it is this perception of human nature that allows for a greater tolerance on the part of the minister to view his recipients with empathy rather than with cynicism. Peterson (1990) aptly describes the paradox of ministry when he says that people in the pew are frustrating to work with, yet they are also the people who suffer deeply and find God in their suffering. For him these two realities are impossible to separate.

It would also appear quite inconceivable for the minister to regard his members as *"impersonal objects" and people that he doesn't "really care" about*, considering his high sense of people responsibility. Responsibility for people, which will be discussed later in more detail, was reported as the single highest stressor category by ministers in this sample. It appears that the responsibility for people lowers feelings of depersonalization on the one hand, and increases feelings of stress on the other. Perhaps the stress associated with feeling responsible for people is more *"commendable"* than feelings of negativity and cynicism as is characteristic of depersonalization.

5.6. Evaluation of the clergy stress management programme

5.6.1. Introduction

The psycho-educational approach, which was used in the design and presentation of this series of clergy stress management workshops allowed for the presentation and teaching of therapeutic principles. More specifically, the cognitive behavioural model was chosen as being appropriate as it focuses on teaching skills and giving information, and has been shown to be effective when used individually (Butler, Cullington, Klimes & Gelder, 1987) and with groups (Eayrs, Rowan & Harvey, 1984). The psycho-educational approach has also been seen as particularly applicable to health promotion and prevention (Bennett & Carroll, 1990).

Kilpatrick's (1996) four level training evaluation was used in evaluating the effectiveness of the clergy stress management programme. The four levels in the evaluation are that of; reaction, learning, behaviour and results.

In level one, participant reaction is evaluated. Reaction may best be defined as how well trainees like a particular training program. Evaluating in terms of reaction is the same as measuring trainees' feelings. It doesn't measure any learning that takes place.

At level two, the evaluation focuses on learning. It is important to determine objectively the amount of learning that takes place. Learning refers to the extent to which principles, facts, and techniques were understood and absorbed by trainees.

Level three programme evaluation focuses on the behavioural level. At this level the change in behaviour based on anticipated pre-training outcomes is evaluated. This is an obviously more difficult level of training evaluation.

Finally, at a fourth level, the focus is on results. The objectives of most training programs can be stated in terms of the desired results, such as reduced costs, higher quality, increased production, and lower rates of employee turnover and absenteeism. It's best to evaluate training programs directly in terms of desired results. But complicating factors can make it difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate certain kinds of programs in terms of results.

The evaluation process in this study focuses only on Kilpatrick's levels one and two, i.e., reaction and learning. This is a limitation of the study but is appropriate given the design of the one day workshop format. The following sections will discuss clergy reactions and learning as a result of the clergy stress management programme.

5.6.2. Evaluation of the learning process

In this section, delegate evaluations of the stress management programme will be described in terms of the programme format and the learning environment.

5.6.2.1. Programme format

Overall, the workshops were rated highly by delegates. All but three of the delegates rated the workshops as having high value. The other three reported moderate value from the workshops.

All workshop expectations were consistently met, except for the issue of time. Many delegates felt that the one day format was not adequate in extensively attending to all the issues. Brown (1999) concludes that a day format whether over one full day or over two half-days, is acceptable to a number of people who identify themselves as having stress problems, provided the programme is relevant and care is taken to reduce the potential for fatigue and boredom.

Formal and informal feedback from clients was very positive. Most delegates expressed their appreciation for the time of the researcher in conducting the workshops. *In many ways this sentiment confirmed for the researcher the great need amongst clergy for formal opportunities for information sharing and networking.*

This sense is captured in one of the clergy narratives: "This course was very good for me. Please don't forget that we need a lot of your skills and training because I think if you can do it again the pastors will gain a lot..."

Another valuable take away for the clergy was an opportunity to hear honestly the pain and difficulties of their peers. Many of the clergy were initially reluctant to attend for fear of forced disclosure. Through the experience of the workshops, many clergy left with a sense that they were not alone in this and that there is a need for mutual support. *Yalom (1975) suggests that this common experience is a major curative factor in group work. Other researchers have also commented on the value of this 'non-specific factor' in groups (Eayrs, Rowan & Harvey, 1984). As a follow-up strategy, one of the Secunda clergy group recommended that this be the beginning of an ongoing professional development programme.*

5.6.2.2. Learning environment

The quality of adult learning is dependent on the creation and facilitation of a conducive learning environment. Adult learners appreciate opportunities for exploration and self discovery in a non-threatening atmosphere. Adult education is the process of assisting adults understand the meaning of their experience by participating more fully and freely in rational discourse to validate expressed ideas and take action upon the resulting insights (Albertyn, 2000)

Delegates felt the workshop was 'constructively educational' with a great deal of appreciation for the way in which key concepts and issues were communicated through the workshop. The structure of the workshop allowed for a balance

between periods of self reflection, dyadic discussions and focus group interactions. This format created a highly intensive yet challenging atmosphere which prevented boredom in the process. As a result of the workshop most delegates reported leaving with an increased knowledge and skill set, which they felt, would enable them to be more effective in their management of stress.

Delegates described the learning environment as 'relaxed and friendly.' Perhaps one of the main issues was the opportunity for safe disclosure. Delegates reported that they were able to 'surface unspoken issues' and 'deal with real on-the spot issues'. Given the sensitivity amongst ministers surfaced in the pilot workshop and through individual interviews, the researcher was particularly careful about creating a safe and constructively caring environment. Part of this process required that the researcher also become vulnerable through sharing personal information openly and honestly with the delegates. This is captured explicitly in one of the delegates programme evaluation transcripts:

"Stanley's whole approach was inviting and humble. He was open about himself and did not 'talk down'. At the same time he was very knowledgeable and well informed in regard to Christian ministry and scripture..."

Appreciation of the context of intervention is essential for effectiveness. As a community psychologist it is important that the psychologist receives a 'licence to operate'. This licence comes through a process of credibility building over a period of time in which trust is built through a genuine appreciation of the context of the client community. Appreciating context requires the psychologist to extend his knowledge base to reasonably understand the world of the client, not necessarily as an expert but rather as an empathic learner.

Effective learning happens in an environment where the process is challenging and allows for new growth experiences. Delegates attending the workshops consistently reported that they were challenged in their thinking about ministry

models and their response to the call of ministry. References to new insight were aptly described in statements such as 'the programme changed my thinking', 'it opened my eyes', 'saw things differently'.

Transformative learning is defined by Cranton (1994) as being a process of becoming free of the constraints of distorted meaning perspectives. It is the process of examining, questioning, validating and revising perceptions that have occurred.

In psychotherapy *new insight* is often the impetus for new behaviour. From the programme evaluation most delegates reported having fresh insights. Through the process of developing a "personal stress management plan" delegates were given an opportunity to capture their new insights into a practical action strategy which hopefully they will live out. The workbook and action plan was included as a tool to reinforce sustained commitment to a set of desirable behaviours.

5.6.3. Programme impact and lessons learned

Three predominant lessons will be discussed as having the most impact on the *clergy sample attending the workshops*. The first relates to the notion of transformational thinking specifically expressed in a re-discovery of the nature of the call to ministry. The second lesson relates to the recognition of the need for self care as a practice that is congruent with Christian life and practice. Third, is the recognition of the power of an empowering team ministry mindset which allows the minister to access latent potential in his church community.

5.6.3.1. Rediscovering the call to ministry

Despite the inherent stress in the nature of ministry, it would appear that the minister nevertheless is coping adequately to the extent of not experiencing emotional exhaustion as severely as that experienced by other helping professionals. Given this situation, it would appear that the minister perceives that he has more substantial emotional resources available to him as compared to other helping professionals (Maloney, 1988).

The minister's dependence on spiritual resources has been identified by other researchers in the field as a significant area warranting further study, in explaining the lowered experiences of burnout in this group of helping professionals (Taylor, 1982; Rassieur, 1982). The following clergy transcripts in this study capture the connection between clergy calling and coping:

"I am actually aware that the calling is divine and specific, and that the end I will stand accountable to give an account of my ministry. Because the calling is lofty and a high calling, we also have a built-in stress mechanism to cope with people realistically. I am not stating we don't have problems but situations can be handled rationally. Due to the external scope of things, I see things and view them with that perspective in mind."

"My calling in the Ministry is all that keeps me going this far. If it was not for God's call upon my life I would have given up long ago. At the moment I am in coping mode certainly not where I would love to be. I have lost my sense of fulfillment to the ministry."

"This is a high calling of God. It means being a servant of God and doing the best for God. This calling enables one to continue in ministry."

"God has called us - a he will take care of us. God will help you in every situation. My calling keeps me focused in ministry. It is the driving force that gets me through each day. My calling is protected by an intimacy that is nurtured and shared with God on a continuing basis which is developing and growing all the time."

It appears that this is the paradox of Christian ministry. The greater the demands on the individual, the more spiritual resources are afforded him. This confidence in spiritual resources is also conveyed in the minister's "calling" to the ministry. In explaining the nature of the ministry Patterson (1990) points out that the ministry is not a career. A career lends itself to formulae and blueprints, a call only to a relationship with God. This unconditional dependence on God to provide the resources necessary for ministry is powerfully conveyed in Patterson's (1990) observation that careerism would give confidence in personal ability where one ought to tremble and cry for mercy, in responding to the divine calling and demand placed on one's life. This deep sense of calling was confirmed by ninety five percent of the ministers in this study who reported a dependence on God based on their conviction of being called to the ministry.

A psychological approach to the issue of calling as a mediating variable in the stress coping experience is best understood in Ellis (1978) rational-emotive therapy (RET) perspective of stress. He states that stressful conditions vary significantly in relation to the perceptions and cognitions of those who react to these conditions. Although some situations may be intrinsically stressful, in most situations people create their own negative feelings by having certain beliefs about the situation. Their disturbed *stress* reactions follow directly from their beliefs. Although the activating situation significantly contributes to what an individual may think and believe, it does not cause it (Ellis, 1978). Bernard, Joyce, and Rosewarne (1983) similarly contend that "most psychosocial *stress*

derives from the manner in which the individual thinks about and appraises a situation" (p. 418).

Despite the inherent strength afforded by the notion of calling in the ministers life there is also a reminder to the minister that calling does not excuse him from common sense self care strategies.

5.6.3.2. The need for self care

One of the dominant themes highlighted in the workshops by the clergy was the need to take care of self. This sense of self care (which was consistent with all the groups participating in the stress management workshops) is well captured in the following sample transcript:

"The workshop brought into perspective not only the things that cause stress but also the principles needed to deal with it effectively. One of the most important lessons learned was that if I don't take control over stress – it will control me. To manage stress, I need to take care of myself."

Most clergy in the sample made constant references to the need for rest and relaxation. This need was largely recognition of the value of restoration understood to be a significant component of effective stress management. *Despite the acknowledgement of the need for rest and relaxation, very few ministers accessed this strategy. They blamed the lack of time, which in itself is a self defeating cognitive pattern. Through the workshop this and other belief systems that resulted in behaviours that reinforced neglect surfaced. Delegates were able to find practical strategies for self care.*

At the heart of the neglect of self appears to be the conflict of among clergy that somehow taking care of self is unchristian or at least unnecessary. This concern calls for a reasonable balance between the two unhealthy extremes of self

neglect and destructive self-indulgence. Self care is seen as a responsible response to the calling to ministry as described by Oswald (1991, p.6), "I take care of myself, not only for my sake, or in gratitude for the life given me by God, but also for the sake of others. If I don't take care of myself, I not only hurt myself, but I let others down as well.'

Oswald (1991, p.x-xi) argues that the rationale for self care is based on the following basic assumptions:

1. Clergy are in the health and wholeness business. The healthier they become, the more effective they are in ministry to others.
2. Who and what clergy are as persons is their most effective tool in pastoral ministry.
3. Optimal health will be different for each individual and the journey of self care will also be person-specific.
4. Clergy work with congregations needs to be systemic and holistic recognising the interdependent nature of health and healing both as part of the congregation and wider community.
5. Clergy need to reclaim their role in the healing arts.

How can ministers present a message of wholeness if they themselves are not experiencing the wholeness of Christ? The concept of self-care is not self-serving in that it does not seek to place personal comfort above the obligations of service, as was a common notion expressed by the clergy in the workshops. They reported conflict in that what they considered necessary for themselves appeared to be contrary to the expectations and demands of the church. Self care to the contrary seeks to retain and restore the resources of ministers that they may remain effective servants of Christ (Raath, 1987)

At the heart of self-care is the need to maintain physical, emotional and spiritual well-being by constant utilization of preventative action. The experience of stress causes a significant drain on physiological resources and ministers need to

maintain an effective rest, relaxation, physical fitness programme and good nutritional habits. Most ministers in the workshops reported not having a basic physical care programme. Several ministers as a result of the workshop series included an exercise programme as part of their personal stress management plans.

Raath (1987) points out that in terms of emotional health, the greatest need is for ministers to simply be themselves. "One of the most stress producing factors identified in ministry is the inability to be the person God intended. Rather, ministers are plagued by a debilitating 'ought' complex as they try to live up to real or imagined false expectations imposed by self or 'others'. Often these expectations are created by misinterpretation of theological presuppositions or by the false expectations of social tradition (e.g. 'ministers are not supposed to become angry'). To overcome this, ministers need to recognize and accept the limitations of their humanity. In other words, they are not expected to be perfect (because sanctification is a continual process of growth) and they have the right to express their God-given emotions in a healthy and non-abusive way."

Through the workshop many delegates recognise their unhealthy thinking patterns in these areas. The researcher used the rational emotive therapy (RET) model to explore the impact of distorted belief patterns and their impact on negative behavioural outcomes. This proved to be a powerful exercise which many delegates reported as an impetus for a paradigm in their understanding of the nature and calling of ministry.

Emotional well-being is also maintained by outside interests and friendships which enable the minister to 'walk away' from the demands of ministry in order to return refreshed in body, mind and spirit (Raath, 1987). Peer 'support groups' could play an essential role in creating a supportive mutual ministry system. Many ministers in the workshops recognised the need for mentoring relationships outside of their immediate church structures. However, as discussed earlier this

strategy requires a mature appropriation of the shared nature of ministry which would free ministers from positions of competition which prevent mutual support.

In conclusion, Rassieur's (1982) assertion is a key principle in realizing the centrality of self care in ministry when he says that "pastors who consciously and without apology take good care of themselves have by far the best chance to be servants of Christ for all the years of their calling."

5.6.3.3. Empowerment for ministry

The theme of empowerment was expressed often amongst this sample of ministers. In describing their expectations for the workshop, delegates often indicated that they hoped to be empowered in the workshop. Others indicated that they wanted to learn new skills so that they in turn could be agents of empowerment in their respective church communities.

Empowerment was also expressed as central theme in evaluating the outcomes of the workshop. Most of the delegates as indicated earlier expressed that they acquired new understanding and skills which would help them manage stress and burnout more effectively. The notion of personal empowerment was probably the major benefit to delegates attending the workshop.

Inglis (1997) defines empowerment as the way in which individuals learn to be more powerful, where people learn to be more self aware, self-confident, assertive, effective and dynamic so that they can do better within the existing system rather than change it. As a result of the workshop delegates in their programme evaluation expressed increased self awareness. This was achieved through a series of personal exercises that encouraged introspection and increased awareness of personal impact of stress and burnout on the individual and other systems that he interfaces with.

One of the delegates described his experience as “allowing me to deeply introspect, to put away the frills from my life and really come to terms with the issues I daily face in ministry. It has made the issues of stress and burnout a reality for me and has given me the tools to handle, cope and eradicate this problem in my life. It taught me to relax and to rejuvenate my spirit”

Rappaport (1981) states that empowerment is a sense of control over one's life in personality, cognition and motivation. The real issue is not so much having power but feeling powerful. Many of the ministers in the study reported in focus groups and through qualitative interviews a feeling of powerlessness. They often described this as being at the mercy of the expectations of their congregants. When asked why they were not being assertive about their situations, they reported that the situation was a given and this was the reality of ministry life. As a result of the transformational thinking process experienced in the workshop one delegate reported that the workshop was ‘very relaxing to know how we can change the way we live and how we can change the same normal patterns that we always had. I have learned that I can make a difference in my life and I am not stuck with the same things. The course helped me change my thinking about things that really affected me before – the expectations of people on me.’

At another level, delegates also reported empowerment in terms of a new understanding of dealing with their congregations. Through the workshop delegates were challenged about the dominant dependency patterns created between them and their congregants. This was identified as unhealthy and a pattern that perpetuates immaturity in their congregants. The Transactional Analysis (TA) model of parent – adult –child relationships was described and delegates identified that the predominant clergy –congregant relation was basically that of parent to child.

Delegates had opportunity to explore a healthier relational style which in TA theory is adult to adult, which would facilitate a movement from dependence to interdependence. This adult to adult relationship is best expressed in a team ministry context, in which congregants are encouraged to live out their participation as co-priests in the life of the church. Other delegates that enjoyed the benefit of team ministry expressed the empowerment of congregants as critical to the effectiveness of the team ministry model.

Empowering congregants for ministry is a systemic enterprise as Stevens and Collins (1993, p.xv) describe, "to release individuals I do not concentrate on liberating individual saints. I concentrate on the whole. Then I let the church equip the saints! When the congregation is a healthy system, individual members thrive because of the empowering influence of the life of the body. When the congregation is unhealthy, our efforts to equip a few motivated individuals are usually doomed."

It would appear that personal empowerment could be the impetus for congregational empowerment which lays the foundation for healthy systems necessary for the effective management of clergy stress and burnout.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

This study aimed to develop and implement a mental health promotion intervention to assist clergy in the management of stress and burnout. Community psychologists have been encouraged to intervene in non-traditional settings, religious environments being one such context. The series of ‘Clergy Stress Management Programmes’ attempted to address the expressed need of clergy in the South African context.

In conducting the intervention, the researcher had an opportunity to reflect through the process on the challenges for community psychology as a collaborative endeavour. This chapter describes some of this learning, evaluates the research process and makes recommendations for future study in the field of clergy stress management.

6.2. Clergy stress management as health promotion

As part of the study, delegates were asked how other clergy could be supported in the management of stress and burnout. A consistent need was that of continuing professional education with a specific focus on stress management.

The value of open sharing amongst peers was acknowledged as a valuable way of helping ministers learn how to handle the stress and burnout phenomenon. The health promotion approach was adopted in this study which focused on both an awareness raising of the dangers of stress and burnout while at the same time exploring coping strategies that transform the stress and burnout phenomenon into a positive experience. In doing this the research process adopted the phenomenological approach which essentially created space for the

clergy to tell their own stories. These stories were multidimensional – both positive and negative. They were of pain and celebration, of perplexity and resolve. Above all they were real stories told by real people.

Kloos and Moore (2000) argue that one of the most productive areas of research on the role of religion has been in the promotion of stress reduction and enhanced coping abilities. They cite several studies showing the healing power of religious communities in the management of stress. Paradoxically, this thesis highlighted that these very communities are at the same time the source of stress and healing for the clergy that serve them. Through this workshop series, clergy were given an opportunity to address issues at a personal level that prevented them from fully accessing these inherent resources. Many of these barriers related to unhealthy thinking about their roles and relationships as part of the congregational system.

6.3. Community psychology as collaboration

Kloos and Moore (2000) reflect that although the importance of working with people within their natural settings has been advocated since the 1965 conference at Swampscott, community psychologists have had relatively little discourse about religious settings when compared to the vast number of studies undertaken in other settings. They state that only in recent years have some community psychologists begun to explore the potential benefits of working within religious and spiritual settings.

Their primary concern is that collaborations with religious settings are underutilized in the research and interventions of community psychology. Sarason (1993) has offered a challenge to the field of psychology to integrate religious perspectives in its conceptualization of human functioning. He views the lack of such consideration an error of omission that has had consequences for

religious and nonreligious people; that is, such an omission may limit the scope of our theories and the effectiveness of our interventions.

Clearly, collaboration between community psychologists and religious organizations will depend on determination of shared values and the possibility for mutually beneficial outcomes (Kloos, Horneffer, & Moore, 1995). Although less research has been conducted on the importance of religious factors for empowerment efforts, the evidence suggests religious settings can make contributions in collective empowerment as well as personal empowerment.

The role of being able to help others provided in many religious settings is an important empowering experience for people, especially when they are accustomed to only receiving assistance. Similarly, many religious leaders have holistic views of their members and the talents they can offer and engage persons from a strengths' perspective (Maton, 1987).

Gerald Caplan, a founder of community psychiatry, has argued that next to families, religious institutions are the most universal of all groups that provide social support (Caplan, 1972). Indeed, religious institutions appear to be the first source of support that many people in the U.S. seek for a variety of problems and stressful life situations (Veroff, Kulka, & Douvan, 1981).

Kloos and Moore (2000) argue that a consideration of religion and spirituality can foster the development of community psychology in four distinct ways: (a) advance theory beyond current boundaries, (b) improve research, (c) reach people not served by current interventions, and (d) improve interventions.

6.4. Lessons learned in collaboration

The quality and usefulness of research depends on the context in which it is collected and especially on the relationship between researcher and research participants. Robinson (1990) uses the metaphor of guest and host in describing the relationship between the researcher and the community. That the researcher was a guest was very evident through the process. But even before being afforded the privilege of guest, the researcher had to build a lengthy relationship of trust with this community of helping professionals.

This credibility building happened at different levels. The researcher's previous research interaction with clergy created a platform for access to the clergy group. In making introductory contact with the respective clergy fraternals the researcher made reference to his previous master's study in the area of clergy stress and burnout. This assisted the researcher in gaining the initial entry of as a concerned specialist.

This was not enough in the invitation of delegates for the various clergy stress management workshops. The researcher had to make individual contact with the leader of each of the respective minister's fraternals. This was the most appropriate way of gaining access to the represented clergy. Often the fraternities serve as a clearinghouse for any interaction with the clergy or Christian community in a particular town.

Four communities were part of the final study, viz., Richards Bay, Stanger, Tongaat and Secunda. Despite several attempts the researcher was not successful in engaging the participation of the White clergy fraternal of Secunda. By their constitution, all four of the clergy fraternals in the sample were Black.

The effect of race could have been a variable in gaining access as the researcher was Black also. This experience could suggest that similar researcher-community factors could play a role in community psychology research.

Another metaphor that Robinson (1990) uses in describing researcher-community relationship is that of partnership. In a partnership each partner brings unique resources to the shared work. In an attempt to achieve the aims of this study, the researcher engaged in a partnership process. Delegates understood that as much as the researcher intended to share his professional knowledge and experience in the area of clergy stress management, that they too brought into the adult learning context a wealth of real – life wisdom from which the researcher wanted to learn.

This partnership process was expressed in several ways. In the workshop format, the researcher adopted a collaborative facilitation style. In this way the researcher was able to successfully engage the participants of delegates in sharing their personal experiences and learning. This process was also expressed through the shared responsibility for the workshops. Once the leader of the respective fraternal committed to the idea of the workshop, he would take the researchers proposal for discussion with his respective fraternal. He would then take on the role of influencing his clergy peers to participate and also to take responsibility for the logistical arrangements of the workshops. In this way the researcher and respective communities took joint ownership for the intervention.

The third metaphor that describes the researcher's interaction with the community is that of ally, in which the researcher partners with the community in its struggle against more powerful forces. This metaphor is reflected in participatory action research. In this case the high cost of clergy stress and burnout was a concern for both the researcher and the community. In an earlier master's study on the incidence of clergy stress, the researcher was faced with a

plea for a professional intervention by the clergy community. This thesis was in many ways a follow up community psychology response to the felt need of clergy.

Arising out the workshops was a need for continuing education and support. The challenge for the community psychologist is to create capacity for organisation of ongoing development opportunities and not necessarily take on the saviour role. In maintaining a credible relationship with the respective clergy communities, the researcher served as referral agent to other available resources and where appropriate will continue with follow-up interventions.

6.5. Limitations of the Study

The quasi-experimental nature of the study whilst being appropriate for the aims of this study, does lend itself to certain difficulties.

From a methodology perspective, the sample selection could not have been controlled given the manner in which participation was invited. A more rigorous selection of the study sample could have allowed for a more intensive assessment of stress and burnout variables and would possibly have created more controlled conditions for the programme evaluation.

The qualitative study methodology by its nature allows for the research process to elicit unique and rich experiential data. Such data and subsequent analysis is not easily generalized, which limits the scope of application of research findings. Insufficient opportunity existed for the researcher to empirically validate the phenomenological analyses directly with the respective research groups. As an alternative the themes elicited from the clergy was collaborated with the body of empirical and anecdotal literature.

In terms of the stress management programme, the day format appears to be generally acceptable for group-based interventions. However, in this study, this was the *only negative response expressed by delegates on the respective programmes*. Despite this criticism, all workshops were received favourably and experienced as highly valuable.

6.6. Conclusions

This study served to confirm the anecdotal and empirical studies showing that clergy stress and burnout is a reality which carries a high cost to not only the individual minister but also to all those involved within the congregational system as expressed in local churches.

There is a desperate need for professional intervention in the area of clergy stress and management. Very little, if any support is provided at an institutional level by the church structures that clergy belong to. As churches become increasingly autonomous as a reaction to institutional religion, the need for outside support becomes increasingly necessary with the associated isolation that usually accompanies such movement.

Psychologists need to take the initiative in responding to the phenomenon of clergy stress and burnout in the absence of appropriate institutional responses. This initiative comes with its attendant challenges, given that psychologists as a profession are not easily invited into Christian communities based on the perceived secular leaning of psychology.

Despite the intense demands of ministry there are inherent spiritual coping resources that mediate the experience of stress which results in the minimal impact on the majority of clergy. The nature of spiritual coping resources as expressed in the *nature of clergy calling is a particularly powerful mediator which transcends the limits of empirical study.*

6.7. Recommendations for future study

There is a great need for further research in the area of clergy stress management. This was in many ways an exploratory study which recognizes the value of stress management as a health promotion intervention.

Future studies could explore the efficacy of stress management programmes across a more representative clergy population taking into consideration multicultural variables such as race, gender, ethnic, language and denominational affiliations. The outcome of such studies could suggest more generalizable strategies accessible to a wider group of clergy.

At an institutional level, denominational leadership could be engaged in a collaborative partnership in exploring the value of stress management programmes and continuing research as part of their professional development planning. The implementation of clergy stress and burnout programmes as a core component of clergy training is also recommended. This was a consistent wish expressed by clergy delegates participating in the workshops.

REFERENCES

- Adams, J.D. (Ed.) (1980). *Understanding and managing stress*. San Diego: University Associates.
- Albertyn, R.M. (2000). *Conceptualisation and measurement of the empowerment of workers: an educational perspective*. Unpublished D.Phil. dissertation. University of Stellenbosch.
- Aker, J.B. (1986). Juggling: The Ministerial Art. *Leadership*, 8(3), 26-31.
- Arumugam, S. (1992). *Stress and burnout amongst Indian Pentecostal ministers*. Unpublished M.A. dissertation. University of Durban-Westville.
- Bangs, A.J. (1986). The Application of the Cognitive Therapy Model to the Treatment of Burnout Among Members of Active Religious Communities. *The Journal of Pastoral Counselling*, 21, 9-21.
- Barad, C.B. (1979). *Study of burnout among social security administration field public contact employees*. Social Security Administration.
- Bennett, P. & Carroll, D. (1990). Stress management approaches to the prevention of coronary heart disease. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 29, 1-12.
- Berkley, J.D. (1990). Holy Ambition or Wholly Ambitious? *Leadership*, 11(3), 28-35.
- Bernard, M. E., Joyce, M. R., & Rosewarne, P. M. (1983). Helping teachers cope with stress: A rational-emotive approach. In A. Ellis & M. E. Bernard (Eds.), *Rational-emotive approaches to the problems of childhood* (pp. 415-455). New York: Plenum.

Blackmon, R.A. (1984). *The hazards of ministry*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. Graduate School of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California.

Boyd, D.P. (1982). Stress Diagnosis and Clerical Careers. *The Journal of Pastoral Counselling*, 17, 61-68.

Brown, A. (1990). When You Feel Empty. *Leadership*, 11(3), 118-122.

Brown, S.J.L. (1999). Large-scale health promotion stress workshops: promotion, programme content and client response. *Journal of Mental Health*, 8(4).

Burchette, B.W. (1983). The extent of professional burnout and related factors affecting public school counsellors. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 43(8), 2554.

Butler, G., Cullington, G.H., Klimes, I. & Gelder, M. (1987). Anxiety management for persistent generalised anxiety. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 151, 535-542.

Caplan, G. (1972). *Support systems and community mental health: Lectures on the concept of development*. New York: Behavioral Publications.

Carr, W. (1985). *The Priestlike Task*. London: SPCK.

Carrol, J.F.X. & White, W.L. (1982). Theory Building: Integrating Individual and Environmental Factors within an Ecological Framework. In W.S. Paine (Ed.). *Job Stress and Burnout: Research, Theory and Intervention Perspectives*. Beverley Hills: Sage Publications.

Cherniss, C. (1980). *Professional Burnout in Human Service Organisations*. New York: Praeger.

Cherniss, C. (1982). Cultural trends: Political, economic, and historical roots of the problem. In W.S. Paine (Ed.). *Job Stress and Burnout: Research, Theory and Intervention Perspectives*. Beverley Hills: Sage Publications.

Cherniss, C & Egnatios, E.S. (1978). Is There Job Satisfaction in Community Mental Health? *Community Mental Health Journal*, 14 (4) , 309-318.

Chiarmonte, A.J. (1983). Psychological Correlates of Burnout in Clergymen. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 44(2), 433A.

Coate, M.A. (1989). *Clergy Stress. The Hidden Conflicts in Ministry*. London: SPCK.

Collins, G. (1988). *Can You Trust Counselling?*. England: Inter-Varsity Press.

Collins, P and Stevens, R.P. (1993). *The Equipping pastor: a systems approach to congregational leadership*. New York: The Alban Institute.

Congo, D.G. (1983) . The role of interpersonal relationship style, life change events and personal data variables in ministerial burnout. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 44(2), 434A.

Cranton, P. (1994). *Understanding and promoting transformative learning*. San Francisco, CA: Josey Bass.

Dalton, J.H., Elias, M.J., & Wandersman, A. (2001). *Community Psychology. Linking Individuals and Communities*. California: Wadsworth Thomas Learning.

Daniel, S.P. (1981). *Burnout and the Pastor: A Study on Stress in the ministry*. Rosemead: Rosemead Graduate School of Professional Psychology.

Daniel, S.P., & Rogers, M.L. (1981). Burnout and the Pastorate: Critical Review of Implications for Pastors. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 9(3), 232-249.

Dawn, M. & Peterson, E. (2000). *The Unnecessary Pastor. Rediscovering the Call*. Michigan: Eerdmans.

Dittes, J.E. (1988) . Confessions of the Golden Bull: The Minister as Idol and Idol Maker. *Pastoral Psychology*, 36(4).

Eayrs, C.B., Rowan, D. & Harvey, P.G. (1984). Behavioural group training for anxiety management. *Behavioural Psychotherapy*, 12, 117-129.

Edelwich, J. & Brodsky, A. (1982) . Training Guidelines: Linking the Workshop Experience to Needs on and off the Job. In W.S. Paine (Ed.). *Job Stress and Burnout: Research, Theory and Intervention Perspectives*. Beverley Hills: Sage Publications.

Edwards, S.E. (2002). *Health Promotion: Community Psychology and Indigenous Healing*. Kwa Dlangezwa: University of Zululand.

Ellis, A. (1978). What people can do for themselves to cope with stress. In C. Cooper and R. Payne (Eds.), *Stress at work*. New York: Wiley.

Etzione, E. (1984). Moderating Effect of Social Support on the Stress-Burnout Relationship. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 69(4), 615-622

Farber, B.A. (1983). *Stress and Burnout in the Human Service Professions*. New York: Pergamon.

Faulkner, B.R. (1981). *Burnout in the Ministry*. Nashville: Broadman.

Firth, H. & Britton, P. (1989) . "Burnout", absence and turnover among British nursing staff. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 62, 55-59.

Forman, S. G., & Forman, B. D. (1980). Rational-emotive staff development. *Psychology in the Schools*, 17, 90-96.

French, J.R.P. & Caplan, R.D. (1980). Organisational stress and individual strain. In J.D. Adams. *Understanding and managing-stress*. San Diego: University Associates.

Freudenberger, H.J. (1980). *Burnout: The High Cost of High Achievement*. New York: Anchor.

Gerig, D. (1986). Are we overworked? *Leadership*, 8(3), 22-25.

Gill, J. (1980). Burnout: A growing threat in the ministry. *Human Development*, 1(2), 21-27.

Glouberman, D. (2002). *The Joy of Burnout*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Harbaugh, G.L. & Rogers, E. (1984). Pastoral Burnout: A View from the Seminary. *The Journal of Pastoral Psychology*, 38 (2) , 99-106.

Harrison, W.D. (1983) . A Social Competence Model of Burnout. In B.A. Farber (Ed.). *Stress and Burnout in the Human Service Professions*. New York: Pergamon.

Hart, A.D. (1984). *Coping with Depression in the Ministry and other Helping Professions*. Texas: World Books.

Hawkins, D.G. (1984). As the wine runs out. *The Christian Ministry*, 15(1), 11-12.

Heuer, N.A.C. (1981). *Let My People Go*. Durban: The La Mancha Press.

Hughes, D., & DuMont, K. (1993). Using focus groups to facilitate culturally anchored research. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 21, 775-806.

Hughes, K & Hughes, B. (1987) . *Feelings of Failure*. *Leadership*, 8(2), 22-29.

Hulme, W.E. (1984). Coming to Terms with Clergy Burnout. *The Christian Ministry*, 15(1), 5-7.

Inglis, T. (1997). Empowerment and emancipation. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 48 (1), 33-17.

Ivancevich, J.M., & Matteson, M.T. (1980). *Stress and Work: Aerial Perspective*. Illinois: Scott, Foresman & Company.

Ivancevich, J.M., Matteson, M.T., Freedman, S.M., & Phillips, J.S. (1990). Worksite stress management interventions. *American Psychologist*, 45 (2), 252-261.

Jayarante, S; Himle., D & Chess, W.A. (1988). Dealing with Work Stress and Strain: Is the Perception of Support More Important than Its Use? *The Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*, 24 (2), 191-202.

Jones., S.L. (1989). Rational-Emotive Therapy in Christian Perspective. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 17(2), 110-120.

Kantor, L., Schomer, H., & Louw, J.(1997). Lifestyle changes following a stress management programme: an evaluation. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 27 (1), p16.

Kehl, D.G. (1981). Burnout: The risk of reaching too high. *Christian Ministry*, 25(20), 26-28.

Kesler, J. (1990) . Why We Love and Hate the Ministry. *Leadership*, 11(2), 84-89.

Kieren. D.K. & Munro, B. (1988). Handling Greedy Clergy Roles: A Dual Clergy Example. *Pastoral Psychology*, 36(4).

Kilpatrick, P. (1996). Techniques for evaluating training programmes. *Training & Development*. American Society for Training & Development (ASTD)

Kloos, B., Horneffer, K., & Moore, T. (1995). Before the beginning: Religious leaders' perceptions of the possibility for mutually beneficial collaboration with psychologists. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 23, 275–291.

Kloos, B and Moore. T. (2000). The prospect and purpose of locating community research and action in religious settings. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 28 (2), 119–137.

Kotze, V.T. (1987) . *Stress among Catholic Clergy*. University of Witwatersrand.

Kushnir, T. & Milbauer, V. (1994). Managing stress and burnout a work. A cognitive group intervention program for directors of day-care centers. *Pediatrics*, 94(6).

Lazarus, R.S. (1990). Theory-based stress measurement. *Psychological Inquiry*, Vol 1.1.

MacDonald, G. (1980) . Dear Church I Quit. *Christianity Today*, 27, 17-21.

Maloney, H.N. (1988). Men and Women in the Clergy: stresses, strains, and resources. *Pastoral Psychology*, 36(3).

Maslach, C. (1978) . The Client Role in Staff Burnout. *Journal of Social Issues*, 34(4), 111-124.

Maslach, C. (1982). *The Cost of Caring*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Maslach, C. (1982). Understanding Burnout: Definitional Issues in Analyzing a Complex Phenomenon. In W.S. Paine (Ed.). *Job Stress and Burnout: Research, Theory and Intervention Perspectives*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Maslach, C. & Jackson, S.E. (1979). Burned-out cops and their families. *Psychology Today*, 12(12), 59-62.

Maslach, C. & Jackson, S.E. (1981). *Maslach Burnout Inventory*. Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists.

Maslach, C. & Pines, A.M. (1977). The Burn-out syndrome in the day-care setting. *Child Care Quarterly*, 6, 100-113.

Mastin, R.E. (1980). Responses of Baptist Ministers to Occupational Stress Factors. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 41(2), 674B.

Maton, K.I. (1987). Patterns and psychological correlates of material support within a religious setting: The bidirectional support hypothesis. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 15, 185–208.

McBurney, L. (1977). *Every Pastor Needs a Pastor*. Texas: World Books.

McMinn, M.R., Ramey, M.L., Swanson, D.W., Villa, D.D. & McRay, B.W. (2002). *Mental Health and Ministry: Lessons Learned from Exemplar Protestant Clergy*. Paper presented at the annual meetings of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies. Arlington Heights, IL.

Mills, E.W. & Koval, J.P. (1971). *Stress in the Ministry*. New York: Ministry Studies Board.

Needham, A. (1996). *The Stress Management Book*. London: Eddison Sadd.

Odendal, F. J. (1984). *Die Predikant en Uitbranding: n Sielkundige Ondersoek*. Rand Afrikanse Universiteit.

Odendal, F.J., & van Wyk, J.D. (1988). Die Taksering van die Sindroom Uitbranding. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 18(2), 41-49.

Oswald, R.M. (1991). *Clergy self care: finding a balance for effective ministry*. New York: The Alban Institute.

Paine, W.S. (Ed.). (1982). *Job Stress and Burnout: Research, Theory and Intervention Perspectives*. Beverly Hills. Sage Publications.

Patterson, B. (1990). Is Ministry a Career? *Leadership*, 11(3), 52-61.

Raath, E. (1987). *Burnout in the Ministry: A Theory of Self Care Supported by Research Among Ministers of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa*. University of South Africa.

Rappaport, J. (1981). In praise of paradox. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23(5), 795-807.

Rassieur, C.L. (1982). *Stress Management for Ministers*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

Rassieur, C.L. (1984). Ministry without Shame. *The Christian Ministry*, 15(1), 7-10.

Ratliff, N. (1988). Stress and Burnout in the Helping Professions. Social Casework, *The Journal of Contemporary Social Work*, March, 147-154.

Rediger, G.L. (1982). *Coping with Clergy Burnout*. Valley Forge: Judson Press.

Robinson, W.L. (1990). Data feedback and communication to the host setting. In J.H. Dalton, M.J. Elias & A. Wandersman (2001). *Community Psychology. Linking Individuals and Communities*. California: Wadsworth Thomas Learning,

Sanford, A. (1982). *Ministry Burnout*. London: Arthur James Ltd.

Sarason, S.B. (1993). American psychology and the needs for transcendence and community. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 21, 185–202.

Schlebusch, L. (2000). *Mind Shift. Stress Management and Your Health*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

- Seaward, B.L. (1997). *Managing stress. Principles and strategies for health and wellbeing*. Boston: Jones and Bartlett.
- Stevens, G. & O'Neill, P. (1984) . Expectations and burnout in the developmental disabilities field. *American Journal of Community Psychology*. 11, 615-627.
- Stevens, R.P. & Collins, P. (1993). *The Equipping Pastor. A systems approach to congregational leadership*. New York: The Alban Institute.
- Stones, C.R. (1988). Research towards a phenomenological praxis. In D. Kruger, *An Introduction to Phenomenological Psychology*. Johannesburg: Juta.
- Strumpfer, D.J.W. (1985). Stress management in South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 16, 61-70.
- Strumpfer, D.J.W., & Bands, J. (1996). *Stress among clergy: an exploratory study on south african anglican priests*. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 26(2), p67.
- Swart, T. (2002). *Die bestuur van uitbranding by predikante van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk*. Unpublished D.Phil thesis. Rand Afrikaans University.
- Taylor, D. A. (1982) . *Burnout Among Southern Baptist and United Methodist Ministers and Professional Religious Workers in Dallas and Tarrant Counties*. Texas. East Texas State University.
- Thomae, H. (1987). "Conceptualizations of responses to stress". *European Journal of Personality*, 1, 171-192.
- Van Huyssteen, W. (1989). Narrative theology: An adequate paradigm for theological reflection? *HTS* 45(4). 767-777.

Veroff, J., Kulka, R.A., & Douvan, E. (1981). *Mental health in America: Patterns of help-seeking from 1957–1976*. New York: Basic Books.

Warner, J., & Carter, J.D. (1984). Loneliness, Marital Adjustment and Burnout in Pastoral and Lay Persons. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 12(2), 125-131.

Welch, R.H. (1996). Called to Preach; Forced to Administer. *Your Church*, 42(4).

Welch, I.D.; Medeiros, D.C., & Tate, G.A. (1982). *Beyond Burnout: How To Enjoy Your Job Again When You've Just About-Had Enough*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Wicks, R.J. (1985) . Countertransference and Burnout in Pastoral Counselling. In R.J. Wicks; R.D. Parsons & D.E. Capps (Eds.). *Clinical Handbook of Pastoral Counselling*. New York: Paulist Press.

Wilson, F.R. (1987). Professional Satisfaction in Evangelical Education Agencies. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 15 (2) , 148-160.

Wright, F. (1980) . *The Pastoral Nature of the Ministry*. London: SCM Press.

Yalom, I.D. (1975). *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*. New York: Basic Books.

APPENDICES

A. Biographical Questionnaire

B. Stress Diagnostic Survey

C. Clergy Workshop Invitation

D. Clergy Workshop Manual

APPENDIX A: BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Marital status:
4. Highest school qualifications:
5. Other educational qualifications:
6. Total year's theological training:
7. Total years in the ministry:
8. Name of Church:

9. How would you rate your current experience of stress?
High () Moderate () Low ()

10. How would you rate the current experience of stress in your family?
High () Moderate () Low ()

11. How would you rate the current experience of stress in your leadership?
High () Moderate () Low ()

12. What do you understand by the terms 'stress' & "burnout"

13. Have you ever experienced burnout in your ministry career?
If yes, please describe your experience and how you handled the experience:
If no, please describe how you manage your stress and prevent personal burnout:

14. What do you find to be the most stressful aspects of your job?

15. In what ways do these stressful aspects affect you?

16. Using the following scale, rate the extent to which you receive the most support from the following sources: Describe the type of support received or you would like to receive from these people:

HIGH SUPPORT 3	MODERATE SUPPORT 2	LOW SUPPORT 1
----------------	--------------------	---------------

- a) Wife/partner
- b) Family
- c) Friends
- d) Congregation
- e) Local Church Leadership
- f) Other Ministers
- g) Doctors
- h) Psychologists

17. How prepared are you to handle the demands of ministry in the following areas based on your training and experience?

WELL PREPARED	MODERATELY PREPARED	NOT WELL PREPARED
2	1	0

TRAINING AREA	
Academically (doctrine, theological theories, exegesis, biblical languages)	
Practically (caring for people, preaching, counselling, leadership etc.)	
Interpersonally (handling conflict, effective communication, motivating people etc.)	
Intrapersonally (managing your emotions, self-care, being comfortable with yourself)	

18. Have you experienced stress severe enough to cause you considering leaving the ministry?

Yes No Almost

19. What does your calling to the ministry mean for you and how does your sense of calling enable you to cope with the demands of the ministry?
20. What have you found to be the most helpful strategies to help you cope with the stress you experience as a minister?
21. What strategies do you feel the church should provide in meeting the needs of the minister?
22. "The Church is a Healing Community" What does this statement mean for you, in helping you to be an effective minister?
23. How can you help fellow ministers and your congregations manage stress and burnout?
24. Your personal comments and observations in the area of ministry stress and burnout:

APPENDIX B: STRESS DIAGNOSTIC SURVEY

Next to each of the following items, write the appropriate number (1 - 7) which best describes how frequently the condition described is a source of stress.

(1) Never	(2) Rarely	(3) Occasionally	(4) Sometimes	(5) Often	(6) Usually	(7) Always
-----------	------------	------------------	---------------	-----------	-------------	------------

1. My job and work duties are unclear to me.
2. I work on unnecessary tasks and projects.
3. I have to work in the evenings, over weekends and holidays.
4. The demands for work quality made on me are unreasonable.
5. I lack the proper opportunities to advance within this church.
6. I am held accountable for the development of my members.
7. I am unclear about whom I am accountable to and who is accountable to me.
8. I get caught in the middle between my board church council and my members.
9. I spend too much time in unimportant meetings that take me away from my work.
10. My assigned tasks are sometimes too difficult and/or complex.
11. If I want to progress in my career then I have to look for a job with another church.
12. I am responsible for counselling my church members and/or helping them solve their problems.
13. I lack the authority to carry out my responsibilities.
14. The formal structure of authority is not adhered to.
15. I am responsible for almost an unmanageable number of projects at the same time.
16. Tasks seem to be getting more and more complex.
17. I am hurting my career progress by staying in this church.
18. I take action or make decisions that affect the well-being of others.
19. I do not fully understand what is expected of me.
20. I do things in my job that are accepted by one person and not by others.
21. I simply have more work to do than can be done in an ordinary day.
22. The church expects more of me than my skills and/or abilities provide.
23. I have few opportunities to grow and learn new knowledge and skills in my job.
24. My responsibilities in this organization are more for people than for things.
25. I do not understand the part my job plays in meeting overall church objectives.
26. I receive conflicting requests from two or more people.
27. I feel that I just don't have time to take an occasional break.
28. I have insufficient training and/or experience to carry out my duties properly.
29. I feel that I am at a standstill in my career.
30. I have responsibility for the future of others.

APPENDIX C: **CLERGY WORKSHOP INVITATIONS**

11th November 2002

Dear Minister

Thank you for considering being a part of the planned workshop for ministers. I am completing my doctoral studies in community psychology and I am researching the value of a stress management programme for the clergy.

I completed my master's research project in the area of Stress and Burnout amongst Indian Pentecostal Ministers in 1990. I have since been involved in running workshops in this area for both corporate and educational institutions.

Through the course of my research, I have sensed the great need amongst ministers for support in this area. As a Christian psychologist, I want to respond to this need.

I would be glad if you can attend this 1 day workshop to **evaluate the effectiveness of stress management training**. During this workshop I would also want to learn how you cope with stress and how we can support one another in the ministry family.

In my earlier research the need for a stress management programme was highlighted as beneficial to ministers. You can help me tailor this programme to add value to your ministry as you experience ministry first hand.

- **Proposed date** for the workshop: **5th December 2002**
- **Venue** to be confirmed
- **Time** 08h30-16h00
- **Cost** : no charge for the material (except for lunches)
- **Open to both ministers and spouses**

Your earliest response will help me towards the planning of these workshops. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours in Christ service

Stanley Arumugam

Workshop Proposal Pastoral Stress and Burnout

Introduction

Recent studies indicate that in excess of 75% of ministers reported one or more periods of major stress in their careers. In a 1990 Gallup Poll, one-third of ministers experiencing stress considered leaving the ministry.

Stress affects all of us. Despite the fact most ministers ignore the reality of stress in their personal lives. Over a period of time this persistent stress leads to the condition of burnout. Some of the costly symptoms of burnout include intense emotional exhaustion, active dislike for recipient of ministry and a feeling of reduced personal accomplishment.

The tragedy of stress and burnout is that it affects everyone within the circle of the minister's life. Often the minister's family, congregation, colleagues and the community also struggle to cope with the minister's stress.

This workshop will enable ministers to reflect on their personal experience of stress as well as give them an opportunity to explore strategies for ministry effectiveness.

Workshop Contents:

- Understanding The Nature of Stress
- Ministry And The Burnout Syndrome
- Stress Signs And Symptoms
- Sources Of Ministerial Stress
- Understanding Career And Life Changes
- Conducting A Personal Stress Analysis
- Exploring Coping Strategies
- Compiling A Personal Stress Plan
- Experience Relaxation Techniques
- Evaluating the effectiveness of stress management
- Recommendations for future support of ministers

Workshop Leader Background: Stanley Arumugam

I want to take this opportunity of introducing myself to those who might not know me personally:

I have Masters Degree in psychology, am registered with the Health Professions Council and have been n professional for the past 10years. I am currently working toward a doctorate in Community Psychology.

Having grown up in a Pentecostal church, I had a specific interest in the understanding the stress of ministers in my church context. For my masters thesis research I explored the area of "Stress and Burnout amongst Indian Pentecostal Ministers"

As an organisation development specialist and management consultant, I also have a specific interest in corporate stress and burnout amongst management and staff. To this end, I have regularly presented Stress Management Workshops and conducted team building and wellness programmes to both the public and private sectors. Programmes have been presented to management of SAFCOL, VISTA UNIVERSITY, BMW, and UDW, Spoornt, Durban City Council amongst others and now at Sasol Mining

From my research and counselling of ministers in my private practice, I feel the need to minister to the minister. I believe that God is seeking to restore the ministry role to full effectiveness. Too many ministers are affected by stress and are unable to cope with their work. I believe that ministers who take time to focus on core biblical principles, personal management and organisational leadership development will be most effective in their ministry calling.

Other Certificates and Memberships.

- Certified Walk thru the Bible World Teacher
- University Higher Diploma in Education
- Diploma in Management
- Certificate in Public Relations Management
- Member of the Association of Christian Counsellors
- Member of the International Organisation Development Institute

Appendix D

Stress and Burnout Workshop

for

*Clergy and other
Christian Workers*



Stanley Arumugam
M.A. Psychology



Module One

Reality of Ministry Burnout

Is Stress and Burnout a Passing Fad?

The burden of the high achiever

Concept coined in the 60's by Herbert Freudenberger working with drug addicts
20th Century described as "The Century of Stress"

What is Burnout?

- **A state of stress resulting in emotional fatigue, frustration and exhaustion that occurs over a prolonged period of time**

People in burnout often say:

- *Just can't go on any more*
 - *I'm tired of trying*
 - *I cannot handle the situation any more*
 - *I don't have energy for another day*
 - *What's the point of my ministry any way*
 - *I just want to be left alone*
 - *I feel like I'm in a dead end situation*
- People in the helping professions are prone to burnout
 - Many studies have focused on burnout amongst social workers, psychologists, teachers, police, doctors and nurses
 - Researchers are now also focusing on the ministry as a stressful helping profession

What about Pastors?

- McDill " Minister of the Gospel has responded to one of the most exacting and stressful vocations"
- Mills and Koval surveyed 4,908 ministers in 27 Protestant denominations. Findings: 75% reported one or more major periods of stress in their careers
- Jerden found that 3 out of 4 ministers were experiencing stress severe enough to cause depression, alienation, fear and anger
- High levels of stress causing ministers to want to leave the ministry



Module Two

Understanding the Nature of Stress

What is Stress?

Stress :

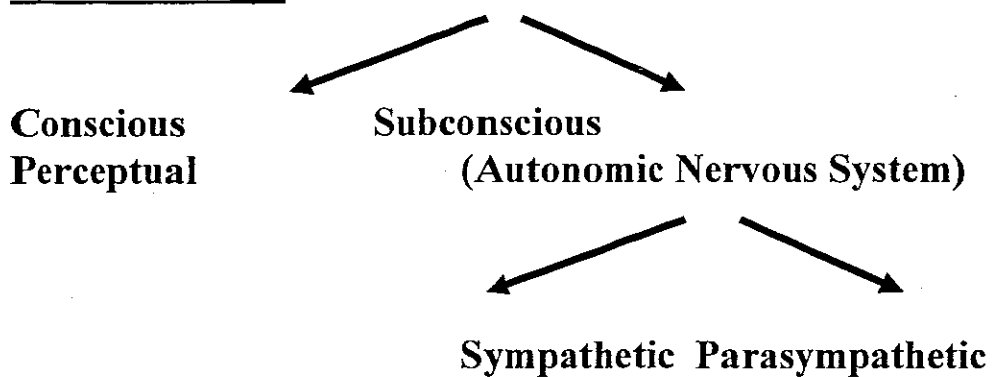
Stressor :

General Adaptation Syndrome (Hans Seyle)

1. **Alarm** Fight or Flight
2. **Resistance**
3. **Exhaustion**

The Process of Stress

The 2 Pathways



Biochemistry of Stress

- Emotional Response [Amygdala]
 ↓
- Neuronal Response [Hypothalamus]
 ↓
- Hormonal Response [Adrenal Gland]

The Stress Curve

Positive Stress Eustress

Negative Stress Distress

Importance of knowing your personal stress curve

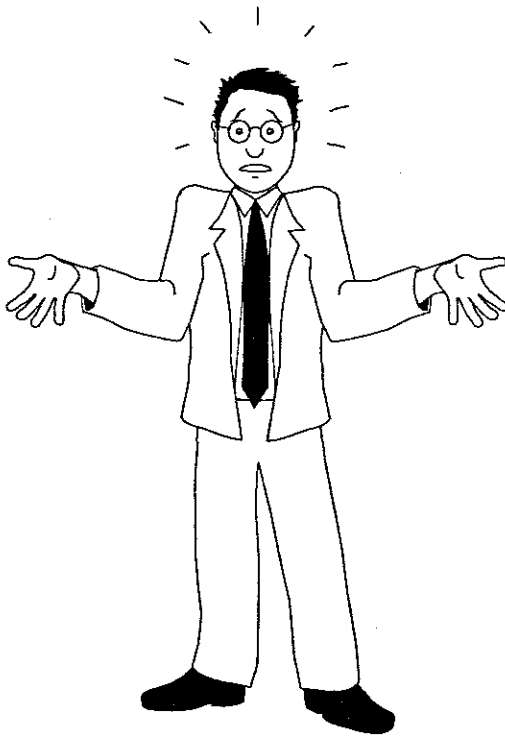
Stress and Perception

"Things are rarely good or bad, but our thinking that makes them so"
Shakespeare

- Brain does not discriminate imaginary and real
- ***Understanding paradigms***
- ***Perspective determines experience***
- ***Difference between success and failure***

Module Three

Identifying Symptoms of Stress and Burnout



Stress and Burnout

Identifying Symptoms

Physical

- Gastrointestinal Disorders**
- Indigestion
- Nausea
- Stomach and Duodenal Ulcers
- Ulcerative Colitis
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Diarrhoea
- Constipation
- Flatulence

- Cardiovascular System**
- Coronary Heart Disease
- Hypertension
- Strokes
- Migraine

- Muscles and Joints**
- Headaches
- Cramps
- Muscle Spasm
- Back Pain
- Neck Pain

- Other**
- Weight loss
- Exhaustion and fatigue
- Sleeplessness
- Skin Disorders
- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Allergies
- Asthma
- Common Cold and Flu
- Sexual Disorders

Behavioural

- Mood swings
- Blunting of affect
- Diminished frustration tolerance
- Suspiciousness
- Anxiety
- Rigidity
- Apathy
- Negativism
- Inability to relax
- Restricted recreational/social outlets
- Feelings of isolation
- Increased marital discord

Maslach's Burnout Syndrome

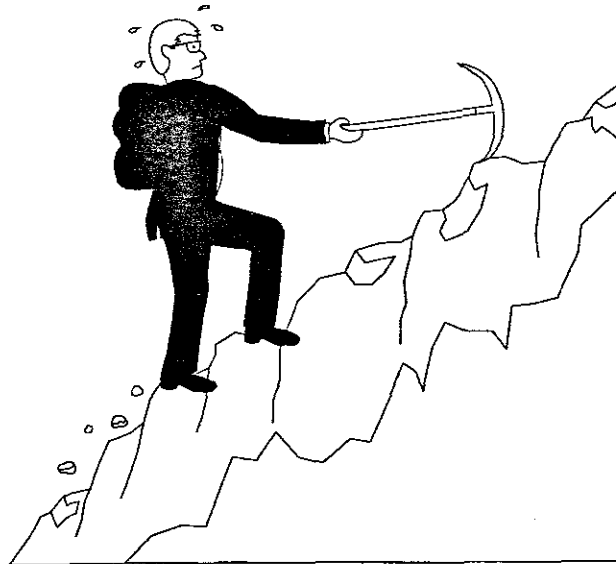
- emotional exhaustion
- *depersonalization*
- *reduced personal accomplishment.*

Spiritual Symptoms of Burnout (Rediger 1982)

- Significant changes in theological statements
- Development of moral judgementalism
- Loss of faith in God, the church and self,
- Loss of prayer and meditational disciplines
- One track preaching and teaching
- Perfunctory performance of clergy role duties
- Loss of joy and celebration in spirituality
- An air of cynicism.

Module Four

The Process of Burnout



Understanding the Nature of Burnout
Biblical Case Study: Moses

- 1. People helpers are prone to burnout (Ex 2:11-14)**
- 2. High achievers risk burning out (Ex 18: 13-18)**
- 3. Many people suffer from one person's burnout (Ex 18:18)**
- 4. When burnout occurs, its victims can no longer handle people or daily problems (Num 11:14-15)**
- 5. During burnout the person's relationship with God usually suffers (Num 11:11)**
- 6. People experiencing burnout frequently give up on life (Num 11:15)**

Stress and Burnout

Understanding Characteristics and Manifestations

Core Features of Burnout

- *is a multidimensional syndrome*
- *is a progressive process*
- *is not a discrete phenomenon*
- *relationship between stress and burnout*

The Path towards Burnout: **5** Stages of Disillusionment Case Study: Pastor Wayne

1. *Enthusiasm*
2. *Stagnation*
3. *Frustration*
4. *Apathy*
5. *Intervention*

Module Five

Understanding **Sources of Stress and Burnout**

*"It's better to burn out than to rust out"
is a heroic statement, but in any event,
you're out!*

George Voeks
Leadership/86

Human Developmental Issues

- **The Developmental Cycle**
- Getting married
- Becoming parents
- Children starting school
- Teenage phase
- Empty nest stage
- Retirement
- **Changes in Family Life**
- Dual career families
- Divorce
- Single parenthood
- Re-marriage
- Unemployment
- **Ministry Demographic Factors**
- Age younger more susceptible/starting up family
- Marital Status positive correlation
- Tenure idealism of earlier years/The 10 year Sprint
- Education university vs. seminary/ongoing

Individual Level Stressors

Role Conflict "being all things to all people"

- competing role pressures
- job dissatisfaction
- associated with physiological problems

Role Ambiguity "not sure about what is expected"

- lack of role clarity
- job dissatisfaction
- associated with physiological problems

Quantitative Overload "too much to do"

- too many commitments
- contact hours with work
- poor job performance

Qualitative Overload "too hard to do"

- task demands exceed capability
- high aspirations not matched by high achievement
- poor job performance-Peter principle

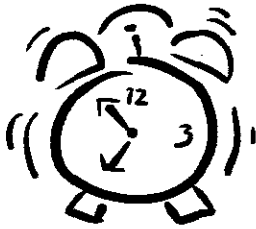
Responsibility for People "my flock"

- the biggest stressor in the ministry
- higher incidence of heart disease
- understanding of ministry calling

Career Development "I'm going nowhere"

- sense of progress in working environment
- high job dissatisfaction

Personality and Burnout



Does your personality influence your experience of stress and burnout?

- *Psychosomatic disorders*
- *Type A/Type B Personalities*
- *Are you a workaholic?*

Understanding your Style

Every personality style or temperament is stress prone. Understand yourself so that you can avoid unnecessary stress

- *Dominance*
- *Influence*
- *Steadiness*
- *Control*

Interpersonal Conflict

- Ministry is about people. Relationships are stressful.
- Clergy are "crisis" persons
- Dealing with conflict and hostility
- Anger turning into depression

Leadership Demands

Top 4 Church Priorities -Barna Research Group (1992)

- | | | |
|--|-----|-----|
| • <i>Motivate people to pursue spiritual growth</i> | | 83% |
| • <i>Motivate the laity to engage in ministry</i> | 76% | |
| • <i>Increase laity involvement in evangelism</i> | 69% | |
| • <i>Improve the training/equipping of the laity</i> | | 59% |

Survey indicated that the greatest frustration felt by pastors was that they, alone, carried the burden of ministry accomplishment.

- The church as a voluntary organisation
- No training in bible colleges/seminaries
- Building commitment to the vision

Motivations for Entering the Ministry

"One of the causes of burnout in pastors is that they see themselves primarily as pastors and not as persons and Christians." Leith Anderson-Leadership 86

- Seeking approval of significant others.*
- Personal need for recognition, acceptance and attention*
- Guilt over sin and fear of God's rejection*
- Overcoming doubt about self worth*
- Desire for control and authority*

The Ministry Calling

- *Ministry is a "sacred task" and a "higher calling"*
- *Sacrifices ministers and their families have to make*
- *Superior line of work*
- *Stereotyping of lay people-need to release the laity*
- *The priesthood of all believers*

Is Ministry a Career?

By Ben Patterson in Leadership 1990

"Career" = road or highway

"A call on the other hand, has no maps, no itinerary to follow, no destination to envision. Rather a call depends on hearing a Voice. The organ of faith is the ear not the eye."

"Careers lend themselves to formulae and blueprints, a call only to a relationship."

"If we view our calling as a career, we reduce the servant of Christ to a vapid creature called the 'professional'"

"Sensible and realistic, professionals expect the church to treat them like professionals and negotiate salary and benefits to match."

"It is terrifying to realise that professional clergy can apply the skills and sophistication of their trade to build large, exciting growing churches-and to do it all without believing anything."

"Worst of all, careerism drives the wedge between the God who calls and the person who answers. It leads us to belief that our performance is more important than our person."

"Careerism would give us confidence in ourselves where we ought to tremble and cry out for mercy."

"Ministry is not an occupation but a vocation. It primarily demands not professional credentials but the ability to hear and heed the call of God."

"Our vocation is our calling to serve Christ; our occupations are the jobs we do to earn our way in the world. While it is our calling to press our occupations into the service of our vocation, it is idolatrous to equate the two. Happy is the man or woman whose vocation and occupations come close. But it is no disaster if they do not."

"At times we try to tame the call by clericalizing it."

Unrealistic Expectations

- Gap between expectations and reality. "Many clergy find it difficult to live out their own image-or conviction-of ministry"
- The Persona



- *ought to act like members of the clergy at all times*
- *functions a great deal on his persona*
- *excessive dependence leads to a falseness*
- *the ambiguity of success and failure*
- myth of the omnicompetent pastor
- comparisons with previous/other ministers

The Pedestal Syndrome

Being on a pedestal *requires a certain type of image*

Which is not always easy to maintain and when the pastor seems to fail **He is not treated graciously by his members**

He feels guilty He tries to keep up with the demands placed on him
He knows the expectations are unrealistic **but** he is afraid to admit he is only **human**
What will the people say *What if he is thrown off his pedestal his pedestal of glory and pain* **What if ...**

Organisational Issues

Issues	Options

Burnout and the Minister's Family

Research Findings:

- *High correlation: Marital problems and burnout*
- *more loneliness in pastors wives*
- *increasing family conflicts*
- *Poor support from pastors wives*
- *Spouses wanting their own independence*

Stress and Burnout is a Family Issue

The Duality of Ministry Calling

Conflict of Priority: Family or Church

Emotional Issues for the Wives

Children and the Fishbowl Syndrome

Demanding unreasonable standards on the family

Module Six

Stress and Burnout Management Strategies

"One cause of burnout in pastors is that they see themselves primarily as pastors and not as persons and Christians."

Leith Anderson
Leadership/86

Taking Care of the Self

• **Conflict of self denial and self care**

• **Law of Entropy**

• **Dealing with issues of shame and guilt**

• **Lessons in Jesus Lifestyle**

Developing a Realistic Work Pattern

1. No individual pastor can satisfy every person's/congregations needs
2. Giving love to others requires loving and caring for oneself.
3. The human body and soul need care if one is to minister effectively
4. Life is covenantal in relationships, which take time for nurturing

Determining Life Mission and Priorities

- *Establish your life mission and vision*

 - **Determine the values that will govern your life**

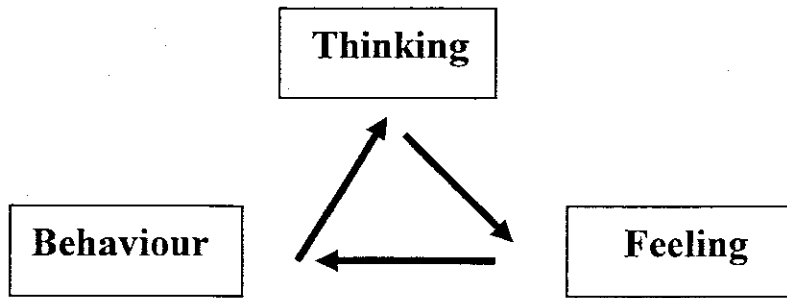
 - *Make your relationship with God your top priority*

 - *Re-evaluate goals and priorities regularly*
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

Physical -Recreational Strategies

- *Take time to experience life*
- *Cultivate meaningful leisure time*
- **Develop a consistent exercise programme**
- **Develop a healthy eating pattern**
- **Practice Relaxation techniques**

Cognitive Strategies



Call to Rationality

Come let us reason together (Isa 1:18)
Have the mind of Christ (1Cor 2:16)
As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he (Prov 23:7)

Exploring Characteristic Schemas

"I must strive to be perfect or I can make myself perfect if I try hard enough"
(Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect)

"The religious vocation is a calling from God"
(You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you)

"The pastor speaks in the name of the Lord"
(He who hears you, hears me)

"I can never work too hard"
(Christ emptied himself)

"I cannot be challenged as a minister of God"
(Touch not the anointed)

"I must be humble and not too ambitious"
(Learn of me because I am meek and humble of heart)

Spiritual Aspects of Burnout

- *Satan wants you to blame God*
- *Spiritual numbness*
- *Guilt trips associated with spiritual burnout*
- *God's Waiting Room*

The Road to Healing

- *Healing as a Journey*
- *Seeking help and becoming accountable*
- **Pitfalls to avoid**
- *Love yourself again*

Completing the Recovery Process

- Separate yourself from the source of the problem
- *Have a time of rest and relaxation*
- *Develop a consistent exercise programme*
- *Begin rebuilding your self confidence*
- *Develop a new purpose and vision for your life*

Blessings of Burnout

- The importance of thanking God**
- Accomplishing God's purposes**
- Stopping to evaluate life**
- A fresh start**
- Greater productivity**
- A new basis for a healthy self image**
- Appreciating God's love**

Helping Others in Burnout

- communicate your faith in the person
- love even when they're unlovable
- show interest in their work
- let them know it's OK to make a mistake
- don't pressure them to succeed
- don't preach to them

Module Seven: Personal Stress and Burnout Management Plan

"I do experience highs and lows, but I've found I can't swing way up and down and be of much help to people. I've got to keep a balance."

Leadership/86

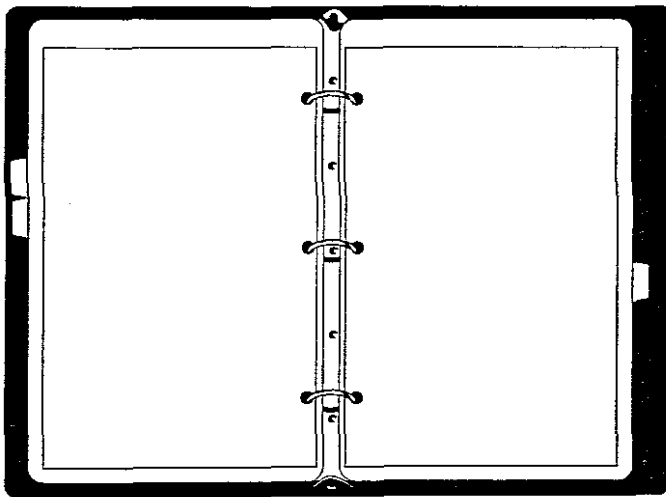
Personal Stress and Burnout Management Plan

Key Issues/Current Situation/Desired Future Action Plan

• <i>Symptoms of Stress</i>	
• <i>Sources of Stress</i>	
• <i>Burnout Levels</i>	
• <i>Family Issues</i>	
• <i>Motivation and Calling</i>	
• <i>Unrealistic Expectations</i>	
• <i>Personality Adaptability</i>	
• <i>Psychosomatic Issues</i>	

<i>•Interpersonal Issues</i>	
<i>•Demographic Variables</i>	
<i>•Role Conflict</i>	
<i>•Role Ambiguity</i>	
<i>•Work Overload</i>	
<i>•Responsibility for People</i>	
<i>•Career Development</i>	
<i>•Other Personal issues</i>	

Module Eight: Personal Review Worksheets and Journal



Personal Review: Individual Issues

Inappropriate Motivations

Why did you get into the ministry?

- 1. Who influenced you to get into the ministry?**
- 2. What attracted you to the work of a minister?**
- 3. What did you hope to achieve by becoming a minister?**
- 4. What was your vision of ministry life when you started off?**

Ministry Calling

How do you understand your calling?

- 1. How did you experience your call to ministry?**
- 2. Do you believe the call of ministry is higher than other callings?**
Why?
- 3. Does your belief of ministry calling exclude others from the work of the ministry?**
- 4. Do you believe there is a distinct difference in calling between the priesthood and laity?**

Unrealistic Expectations

Who do you believe you should be?

- 1. What expectations do others have of you as a minister?**
- 2. What expectations do you set for yourself in your ministry role?**
- 3. How do your family/close friends experience the expectations you have of them?**
- 4. What is your attitude to success and failure in the ministry?**

Personality

How does your style affect your ministry?

- 1. What is your basic personality style and how does it influence your ministry role?**
- 2. Describe your strengths and weaknesses and how they impact your ministry effectiveness?**
- 3. Describe your sense of security in your role as minister and how you deal with potential threats to your identity and role?**
- 4. Identify the types of people who tend to "stress" you in your ministry relationships and describe how you deal with them?**

Psychosomatic Illness

What is your body's response to stress?

- 1. Identify psychosomatic symptoms that you have experienced and attempt to describe their causes?**
- 2. To what extent do you feel comfortable accepting stress and getting medical help in this regard?**
- 3. Describe the physical and mental fitness activities you conduct on a regular basis?**

Interpersonal Conflicts

- Hart (1984) observes that as a built in source of frustration, other people are a major cause of burnout, and yet people is what ministry is all about.*

How do you handle difficult people issues?

- 1. What is your belief about expressing conflict in your role as a minister?**
- 2. Describe your style of conflict handling?**
- 3. How do you deal with conflict issues between yourself and members of your congregation?**
- 4. What is your biblical understanding of conflict in the life of a believer?**

Demographic Variables

How do I deal with where I am in my life?

a) Which variables have the greatest impact on your life at this time in your ministry?

b) How are you currently dealing with these issues?

c) How can you move forward in managing these issues?

Personal Review: Organisational Issues

Role Conflict

1. Identify conflicting role demands in your ministry environment?
2. How are you dealing with these demands?
3. Do you feel you can influence the situation?
4. How do you move forward in this area?

Role Ambiguity

1. Which areas of ambiguity do you experience in your ministry?
2. How are you dealing with these uncertainties?
3. Do you feel you can influence the situation?
4. How do you move forward in this area?

Work Overload

- 1. To what extent and in which areas in which you feel overloaded?**
- 2. How are you dealing with these overload demands?**
- 3. Do you feel you can influence the situation?**
- 4. How do you move forward in this area?**

Responsibility for People

- 1. What issues cause you to feel responsible for people?**
- 2. How are you dealing with these demands?**
- 3. Do you feel you can influence the situation?**
- 4. How do you move forward in this area?**

Career Development

- 1. How satisfied are you with your ministry success and future?**
- 2. How are you dealing with these career issues?**
- 3. Do you feel you can influence the situation?**
- 4. How do you move forward in this area?**