

Validating a Practitioner's Instrument Measuring the Level of Pastors' Risk of Termination/Exit from the Church: Discovering Vision Conflict and Compassion Fatigue as Key Factors

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This study conducts an exploratory factor analysis on the Pastors at Risk Inventory developed by Wickman (2004) that measures the likelihood that members of the clergy may be at risk of forced or unforced resignation from their ministries. An online survey was administered to 285 evangelical pastors containing 42 Likert-type items that address issues developed from 20 years of qualitative practitioner ministry among clergy. The two factors that were identified—vision conflict and compassion fatigue—are discussed in terms of their discriminant value among extant literature and in their unique function with clergy. This study indicates that varying levels of disparity typically exist between perceived ministry outcomes and actual ministry experiences. This study also shows that numerous stressors connected with the roles served by clergy contribute to feelings of vision conflict and compassion fatigue as well as that clergy who experience vision conflict and compassion fatigue are more likely to lack a support team and/or serve in a church that has plateaued or declined in attendance recently. Further qualitative study among clergy will be needed to advance the development of the instrument that is presented and validated here.

Clergy are leaving the ministry in greater numbers than ever before (Beebe, 2007; Hoge & Wenger, 2005; Lehr, 2006; Palser, 2005) as a significant and increasing cross-section of evangelical clergy express a growing sense of spiritual, physical, emotional, and social bombardment (London & Wiseman, 2003; Wells, 2002). Collateral contributors to clergy fall-out include such issues as interpersonal disagreements with parishioners, role overload, lack of personal and professional boundaries, loss of hope for positive change, and financial pressure (Beebe, 2007; Wickman, 2004). Unfortunately, these conditions present themselves as typical liabilities within pastoral ministry (Kisslinger, 2007; London & Wiseman, 2003).

This study validates a new instrument developed by a practitioner that measures unique factors that contribute to clergy's experience of being at risk of either forced or unforced resignation. By identifying these factors, the purposeful development of prevention and remediation strategies may arise to address the phenomena associated with pastors at risk.

A Practitioner's Observation and Analysis of At-Risk Phenomena

The genesis of the present quantitative research began with a qualitative study of pastors of the Evangelical Free Church of America by Chuck Wickman (1984) that examined the reasons for career change from church to secular work. Wickman's initial investigation was extended

through the use of the technique described by Silverman (2005) as immersion, where the practitioner's field study allowed him to work closely among evangelical clergy who were at risk of being forced to resign from their places of ministry and/or reported symptoms resembling burnout (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000; Maslach, 2003; Maslach & Jackson, 1981a, 1981b; Schaufeli, Taris & van Rhenen, 2008). According to Wickman (Anonymous, 1997), some clergy leave the ministry "for ethical or moral reasons, but most just [have] conflicts at their churches" (p. 67). His grounded theory approach, based on established qualitative tradition (Creswell, 1998, 2003) resulted in the collection of a wide breadth of data from clergy serving in numerous venues circumstances over approximately a 20-year period and resulted in the gradual development of a quantitative instrument based on the interrelationship of the categories that emerged from the data (Patton, 2002). According to Wickman (personal communication, July 23, 2008), the subjective nature of pastoral exits represents the integration of varying issues of causality involving the clergy member's personality, personal history, physical location of the church along with its local culture, sensitivity to local culture norms, and acceptability of the pastor by the church. Wickman reported numerous phenomena that result in clergy at risk of forced or unforced resignation, including: physical, spiritual, emotional loss of energy; growing cynicism about personal value in the ministry; increasing apathy regarding ministry, feeling like they do not care; feeling more and more like a robot, doing what they must only by going through the motions of ministry; a rising sense of bother about ministry; an increased desire to procrastinate; perception that trust is turning to suspicion; tendency to withdraw from situations involving stressors; more distance between self and ministry, more impatience with congregation; loss of sense of humor; increased callousness toward people; life seems increasingly stressful; feelings of helpless to change or break free from being overwhelmed; difficulty in saying "no"; and, desire to be "liked."

The development of a survey inclusive of the breadth of antecedents of forced or unforced clergy resignation was one of the outcomes of the years of working among clergy as a practitioner (Chuck Wickman, personal communication, July 23, 2008). The 42-item Likert-type survey assembled by Wickman (2004) represents the summative product of the previous qualitative work and, prior to the present research, has been used for over four years and among 500 clergy respondents. The Appendix shows the 42-item survey instrument, Pastor in Residence: At-Risk Pastor Profile (Wickman, 2004), along with several demographic "yes/no" and "fill-in" questions.

Factor Analysis of Wickman's Pastors at Risk Instrument (PaRI)

The purpose of the present research is to extend the work initiated by Wickman (2004) by validating the 42-item instrument that identifies antecedents of clergy at risk of exiting the ministry. The primary research question is straightforward: "What are the factors of clergy at risk of forced or unforced resignation, if any, that are the result of correlations among the items in the survey developed by Wickman?" The second research question is dependent on the outcome of the first: "Do any of the dimensions identified by Wickman's survey appear discriminant as issues that uniquely face clergy when compared with the extant literature?" The goal is to determine what factors may inform future research and remediation among clergy at risk of exiting the ministry.

Data Collection

Participants for this study were evangelical clergy (N=285) who responded to an online version of the Pastors at Risk Instrument (PaRI) over a three-week period in early 2008. Of these, 117 (41%) were clergy associated with The Foursquare Church, 69 (24%) from the Assemblies of God, 19 (7%) from various evangelical churches, and 80 (28%) who chose not to indicate their affiliation. In addition, this cross-section of clergy indicated that 34% were in their first church, and that a majority (53%) were in their second or third church. Just over a quarter of the clergy (28%) were only two or three years into ministry at their present church. The survey indicated that 36% were between 35 and 49 years of age—these are the years Wickman (2004) found were most difficult for clergy. Only 28% serve at a church that forced a pastor to resign in the past. The majority of the sample (55%) served in churches where the attendance had plateaued or declined recently. 30% reported having no support team with which to meet regularly. 18% indicated that their church had constructed a new building within the past two years.

Results of Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was conducted on the 42-item PaRI using SPSS 15 (2006). No reverse scoring was necessary. The analyses produced a principle component matrix using Varimax rotation with a loading of .40 and above (Field, 2005). Combined with reliability statistics run with every individual factor so that each α could be assessed, credence is given to results that confirmed two factors (Girden, 2001). Although four factors were identified through the analysis, Cronbach's α readings of $>.70$ occurred in only factor one (0.90) and factor two (0.85). Factor three (0.68) and factor four (0.55) are considered unreliable (Vogt, 2005), although in further research factor three (0.68) could be reconsidered because "values of 0.60 to 0.70 [are] deemed the lower limit of acceptability" (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006, p. 102), especially since the number of responses is high (Field, 2005). A scree plot also supported a two factor result (Kaiser, 1960; Pallant, 2006).

Thematic Considerations

Table 1 reveals that items 2, 6, 13, 19, 26, 28, 30, 32, 33, and 41 loaded on Factor 1 (α is 0.90). The items that correlated reflect an inner confusion or conflict about what was expected in the ministry and resulted in dissatisfaction, futility, and disillusionment. The most highly correlated items involve negative responses with regard to such concepts as satisfaction, joy, purpose, calling, and resigning. Thus, we labeled Factor 1 as vision conflict. Vision conflict can entail a sense of personal failure based on unrealistic expectations about what comprises ministry effectiveness.

Table 2 shows the items that correlated as Factor 2: 12, 18, 22, 23, 27, and 40 (α is 0.85). Together these items reflect an overwhelming physical and emotional stress, as though the person were falling short in spite of trying to minister as effectively as possible. The most highly correlated items involve such concepts as excessive ministry demands, feeling overworked, and feeling extreme stress. Thus, we labeled Factor 2 as compassion fatigue, similar to what will be mentioned later in the literature review in conjunction with general burnout research.

Table 1

Factor 1: summary of principal components factor analyses using varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization

(N = 285)

Item	Load
02: I am confused about my major role in the church	0.57
06: I have lost the sense of meaning in my work	0.78
13: I feel my work is futile	0.64
19: I wonder about my calling as a pastor	0.78
26: Ministry doesn't bring me satisfaction	0.81
28: I find little joy in my work	0.79
30: I feel I would like to leave the church I now serve	0.67
32: I seriously consider leaving the ministry entirely	0.76
33: I feel my hope for success has not developed	0.67
41: I feel my personal relationship with Christ is a real problem	0.44

Table 2

Factor 2: summary of principal components factor analyses using varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization

(N = 285)

Item	Load
12: I feel overworked	0.81
18: I feel that there are more expectations on me than I can fulfill	0.70
22: I feel my work is too demanding	0.81
23: I feel my life is far too stressful	0.79
27: Generally, I feel exhausted	0.68
40: It is very difficult for me to say "no"	0.54

Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation

Composite variables were built using items from each of the two factors, vision conflict and compassion fatigue, so that additional analyses could be performed. A Pearson's product-moment correlation (0.49; $p < .01$) showed a medium strength correlation between vision conflict and compassion fatigue pairwise. This confirms that vision conflict and compassion fatigue

correlate together—as one is higher or lower, the other one generally reflects the same higher or lower score.

T-Tests

T-tests were run using the composite variables—vision conflict and compassion fatigue—with the yes/no questions, items 43-50, at the end of the survey (appendix). Table 3 reports the t-tests and significance using the composite variables with each yes/no question. The results of the analysis showed significance only with questions 47, 48 and 49 ($p < .05$).

Table 3

T-Test Using Composite Variables with Yes/No Questions 43-50 ($N = 285$)

Question	Vision Conflict		Compassion Fatigue	
	t-test	significance	t-test	significance
Q43	0.81	0.42	0.38	0.70
Q44	-0.72	0.48	-0.57	0.57
Q45	1.42	0.16	0.53	0.60
Q46	-0.74	0.46	0.23	0.82
Q47	-2.16	0.03	-2.14	0.03
Q48	-4.86	0.00	-4.86	0.00
Q49	-6.71	0.00	-3.44	0.00
Q50	1.65	0.10	-1.73	0.09

T-Test for Q47—Church-forced resignation. An independent-samples t-test (Pallant, 2006) was conducted to compare the vision conflict scores for clergy not serving in church that have in the past forced a pastor to resign (0) and clergy serving in church that have in the past forced a pastor to resign (4). There was a significant difference in scores for clergy not serving in church that have in the past forced a pastor to resign ($M=0.81$, $SD=0.67$) and clergy serving in church that have in the past forced a pastor to resign ($M=1.01$, $SD=0.77$); [$t(285)=-2.16$, $p=.03 < .05$]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was fairly small: 2% (η squared=0.02).

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the compassion fatigue scores for clergy not serving in church that have in the past forced a pastor to resign (0) and clergy serving in church that have in the past forced a pastor to resign (4). There was a significant difference in scores for clergy not serving in church that have in the past forced a pastor to resign ($M=1.46$, $SD=0.79$) and clergy serving in church that have in the past forced a pastor to resign ($M=1.68$, $SD=0.77$); [$t(285)=-2.14$, $p=.03 < .05$]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was fairly small: 2% (η squared=0.02).

T-Test for Question 48—Support team. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the vision conflict scores for clergy with no support team they meet with regularly (0) and clergy

who have a support team with which they met regularly (4). There was a significant difference in scores for clergy with no support team with which they meet regularly ($M=0.74$, $SD=0.65$) and clergy with a support team with which they meet regularly ($M=1.17$, $SD=0.74$); [$t(285)=-4.86$, $p=.00 <.05$]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate: 8% (η squared=0.08).

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the compassion fatigue scores for clergy with no support team they meet with regularly (0) and clergy who have a support team with which they met regularly (4). There was a significant difference in scores for clergy with no support team with which they meet regularly ($M=1.38$, $SD=0.76$) and clergy with a support team with which they meet regularly ($M=1.86$, $SD=0.74$); [$t(285)=-4.86$, $p=.00 <.05$]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate: 8% (η squared=0.08).

T-Test for Q49—Attendance problems. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the vision conflict scores for clergy not serving in churches that have plateaued or declined in attendance recently (0) and clergy serving in churches that have plateaued or declined in attendance recently (4). There was a significant difference in scores for clergy not serving in churches that have plateaued or declined in attendance recently ($M=0.59$, $SD=0.52$) and clergy serving in churches that have plateaued or declined in attendance recently ($M=1.10$, $SD=0.75$); [$t(285)=-6.71$, $p=.00 <.05$]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was large: 14% (η squared=0.14).

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the compassion fatigue scores for clergy not serving in churches that have plateaued or declined in attendance recently (0) and clergy serving in churches that have plateaued or declined in attendance recently (4). There was a significant difference in scores for clergy not serving in churches that have plateaued or declined in attendance recently ($M=1.35$, $SD=0.82$) and clergy serving in churches that have plateaued or declined in attendance recently ($M=1.66$, $SD=0.73$); [$t(285)=-3.44$, $p=.00 <.05$]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was small to moderate: 4% (η squared=0.04).

Effects of Church-forced Resignation, Support Team, and Attendance Problems

Analyses of the effects of yes/no questions involving church-forced resignation (Q47), support team (Q48), and attendance problems (Q49) on each of the composite variables are displayed on Table 4 and Table 5 respectively. As shown in Table 4, only support team and attendance problems have significant main effects on vision conflict. The main effect of church-forced resignation was not significant. Additionally, no interactions effects were found to be significant.

Table 4

ANOVA to Determine Effects of Questions 47-49 on Vision Conflict

Effects	<i>F</i> Statistics
Main effect of Q47 (church-forced resignation)	$F(1, 277) = 1.39$
Main effect of Q48 (support team)	$F(1, 277) = 11.49^{**}$
Main effect of Q49 (attendance problems)	$F(1, 277) = 21.46^{***}$
Interaction effect church-forced resignation*support team	$F(1, 277) = 0.04$
Interaction effect church-forced resignation*attendance problems	$F(1, 277) = 0.07$
Interaction effect support team*attendance problems	$F(1, 277) = 0.09$
Interaction effect church-forced resignation*support team*attendance problems	$F(1, 277) = 0.60$

(* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$)

Table 5 indicates that, of the three independent variables, only support team has a significant main effect on compassion fatigue. The interaction effect of support team and attendance problems on compassion fatigue was also found significant. Church-forced resignation was not significant in any level of effect.

Table 5

ANOVA to Determine Effects of Questions 47-49 on Compassion Fatigue

Effects	<i>F</i> Statistics
Main effect of Q47 (church-forced resignation)	$F(1, 277) = 1.79$
Main effect of Q48 (support team)	$F(1, 277) = 20.40^{***}$
Main effect of Q49 (attendance problems)	$F(1, 277) = 1.27$
Interaction effect church-forced resignation*support team	$F(1, 277) = 0.00$
Interaction effect church-forced resignation*attendance problems	$F(1, 277) = 0.19$
Interaction effect support team*attendance problems	$F(1, 277) = 6.49^*$
Interaction effect church-forced resignation*support team*attendance problems	$F(1, 277) = 0.00$

(* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$)

Discussion

This present study finds that vision conflict and compassion fatigue are the two most significant areas of concern for clergy in terms of sustaining a sense of positive ministry continuance. An individual look into each of these dimensions reveals a unique contribution in understanding the breadth of circumstances that converge in the roles served by the clergy.

Vision Conflict

The term vision conflict does not exist as a named dimension in any of the literature associated with research involving clergy. However, numerous scholarly and popular press sources discuss clergy's feelings of disparity between what they expected to happen by answering the call to ministry and the events that actually take place that create a sense of conflict about what they think should be the results of their ministry. From the outset of Wickman's (1984) practitioner work that informed the development of PaRI, one of the frequent areas of discussion with clergy revolved around their sense for why they were called into the ministry and the irregularity between what clergy expected the call to entail and what actually occurred: "Once in the ministry there are problems and pastors can begin to question whether they were called" (C. Wickman, personal communication, July 23, 2008). The negative satisfaction, limited sense of joy, loss of meaning and calling—as depicted in items 6, 19, 26, and 28 (Table 1)—these are indicators that ministry expectations have fallen short of actual experiences and that vision conflict exists.

The connection between a sense of unrealistic expectations in ministry and vision conflict are unquestioned. Lehr's (2006) research examining clergy concluded that ministry lives tend to be constructed around great demands, high stress, unrealistic expectations, amid environments of conflict, and are thus vulnerable to lapse into codependent practices that bring further endangerment. According to Clinton (1988), there is an inner expectation for ongoing ministry development in the life of clergy even though trials and frustration are natural experiences for clergy. Weber and Goetz (1996) support the notion that vision conflict may be a result of not understanding the difficulty of the clergy role when they write, "the pastor who is most Christlike is not the one who is fulfilled in every moment of his ministry but the one whose ministry has in it unbelievable elements of crucifixion" (p. 30). Hoge and Wenger (2005) interviewed clergy who left the ministry and noted that ministers had a much different expectation about how their time would be allotted than what actually took place. Those who left the ministry "did not attribute the problem to specific conflicts within the congregation or with denominational officers; their complaints were more general, more colored by self-doubt, and more typical of individuals who are depressed" (Hoge & Wenger, 2005, p. 115). The foregoing perspectives suggest that clergy may not adequately be prepared for what they will experience in the ministry and that what this research labels as vision conflict is a natural part of what the ministry holds (White, 2007; Wickman, 1984).

The degree of disparity in the ministry expectations on the part of both parishioners and clergy exemplifies another crucial example of vision conflict in the literature (Kisslinger, 2007). Hands and Fehr (1994) observed of clergy that they were "people who had to live behind a professional façade which would impose considerable demands on their mental and emotional health" (p. xii). According to McIntosh and Rima (1997), the unrealistic expectation by clergy to achieve success becomes coupled with personal dysfunctional realities that are a carry-over from needs from an earlier time of life. The majority of tragically fallen Christian leaders feel "driven to achieve and succeed in an increasingly competitive and demanding church environment" (McIntosh & Rima, 1997, p. 14).

The connection between the clergy's sense of call and their motive for entering the ministry is also seen in the literature as informing an understanding of vision conflict (Jinkins, 2002). A healthy view of motive begins with values and yields beliefs, which lead to intentions, which result in behaviors (Winston, 2002). However, for some clergy, examining the motives connected with entering the ministry are covered over with false motivation or are not considered at all. Willimon (1989) posits a common tendency on the part of clergy to fail to properly evaluate the initial reasons for entering the ministry. Wood (2001) identifies motive as being a contributor to lower numbers of young people choosing pastoral ministry when he states, "why in the world would a talented young person commit to a life of low salary, low prestige, long hours, no weekends and little room for advancement" (p.19). For many clergy members, financial realities multiply the cost of their decision to minister by requiring bivocational roles in order to afford the pursuit of their calling (Bickers, 2000, 2004).

Maloney and Hunt (1991) emphasize the importance to differentiate between circumstance and personality—outside-the-person traits and individual motives. Such a differentiation allows for a clearer picture in defining the impact of individual traits such as a sense of calling that lie "somewhere between interest and feelings" (Maloney & Hunt, 1991, p. 19). The connection between motive and vision conflict can also be seen through the willingness or ability of the clergy to adjust to changing social conditions and work circumstances. Beebe (2007) posits that little attention is paid to the internal psychological dynamics surrounding social expectations of the clergy role, and that those circumstances have greatly changed in the last three decades. Snyder (1979) posits that some clergy have great difficulty in managing change but that the technological age portends inevitable and ongoing social change. Lack of sufficient motivation to navigate uncertain social change is related to increased vision conflict.

Compassion Fatigue

The literature describes compassion fatigue more clearly than vision conflict since the term is already referenced numerous times using similar attributes as have been uncovered in this present research (Joinson, 1992; Marchand, 2007; Musick, 1997; Pfifferling & Gilley, 2000; Wells, 2004). Compassion fatigue has also been an occasional topic for the popular press (Focus on the Family, 2008; John, 2006). The physical and emotional stresses that are outlined by items 12, 22, and 23—the items with the highest loadings (Table 2)—are similar to the dimensions associated with the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Chandler, 2006; Foss, 2002; Maslach & Jackson, 1981a, 1981b, 1986; Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996; Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Understanding exhaustion, both physical and emotional, is a critical topic in the study of classical burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001; Schaufeli, Taris & van Rhenen, 2008). Pfifferling and Gilley (2000) add spiritual fatigue to the list of attributes describing compassion fatigue. Some researchers have used comparable terms such as emotional labor or compassion stress when referring to compassion fatigue (Boyle & Healy, 2003; de Jonge, Le Blanc, Peeters & Noordam, 2008; Figley, 1992; Pienaar & Willemsse, 2008). However, tracing compassion fatigue among literature directed specifically to the clergy uncovers a unique extension of emphases that carries the definition of the term beyond the specifications of classical burnout due to the typical breadth of circumstances associated with normal ministry functions (Flannelly, Roberts & Weaver, 2005; Marchand, 2007; Pfifferling & Gilley, 2000).

One of the first to employ the term compassion fatigue in association with ministry settings was Hart (1984). He used the term compassion fatigue when counseling members of the clergy who were dealing with depression that resulted from the effects of ministry upon personal life.

Numerous researchers and practitioners since have described the antidotes for ministry stress that parallel Wickman's (2004) items associated with compassion fatigue (Grosch & Olsen, 2000; Heinen, 2007; Husted, 1996; London & Wiseman, 1993; Sanford, 1992). Helping a parishioner deal with a spectrum of issues can deplete a minister of his or her own emotional reserves and contribute to their vulnerability toward a range of maladies (Hart, 1984). Compounding a sense of depression among clergy is the realization that effective ministry to a congregant does not mean that the congregant's circumstances will always improve. Hauerwas and Willimon (1990) describe compassion fatigue in the following way: "It strikes people who take on too heavy a load of other people's burdens, leaving little time or energy for themselves. Victims become disillusioned and depressed, and often start to show cracks in their professional veneer" (p. 247).

Flannelly, Roberts, and Weaver (2005) give special emphasis to compassion fatigue while differentiating the use of the term from burnout in research associated with chaplains and clergy who ministered in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks in New York City. They noted the value of clinical pastoral education as a way to decrease compassion fatigue and burnout while increasing compassion satisfaction in responders and non-responders alike. Pector (2005) distinguishes compassion fatigue from burnout by positing that ministry caregivers who suffer from compassion fatigue continue to fully give of themselves to their work in spite of physical, mental and spiritual depletion.

The occurrence of compassion fatigue among the clergy is inevitable, especially since many of the duties performed by ministers are either similar to various secular jobs where high stress is common, or place the clergy member in a circumstance where extreme trauma is being experienced (Holaday, Lackey, Boucher & Glidewell, 2001; Taylor, Weaver, Flannelly & Zucker, 2006). Boyle and Healy (2003) contend that balancing responses between the sacred and the profane in a heavily emotion-laden organization can be difficult, citing the rush of excitement experienced by emergency personnel when a life is saved. Members of the clergy experience a similar set of extremes. Emotional highs and lows are exacerbated by stress, demand, and exhaustion that characterize compassion fatigue among clergy according to the physical and social proximity of the minister to the congregants where he or she serves. Although Marcuson (2004) does not employ the term compassion fatigue, a theme of balance undergirds her exhortation for clergy to find a functional equilibrium when trying to realize when enough help is truly enough. As White (2007) posits, "people who work in ministry are often working in the very communities they rely upon for social and spiritual support, and the dual relationships that result can pose complications for their work and personal lives" (p. 7). Brown (2007) illustrates the high-low liability associated with the minister's dedication to serve among people who may accuse or slander their minister if their needs are not addressed to their satisfaction. Indeed, compassion fatigue introduces an important dimension of understanding how people and relationships affect the physical, emotional and spiritual health of the clergy.

Future Research—Stemming Future Fallout

The initial work associated with validating the PaRI is complete and the two research questions have been satisfied. Two factors—vision conflict and compassion fatigue—have emerged as dimensions worthy of further research and as discriminant dimensions that uniquely affect clergy when compared to extant literature that examines the exiting of clergy from the ministry. A third factor mentioned in this study should also be investigated as a potential ingredient affecting clergy at-risk occurrences. Further research could address that additional factor.

Focusing on the issues related to vision conflict and compassion fatigue among clergy can cultivate an interest in pursuing remediation for those affected as well as increase better methods of understanding and promoting prevention. As we discovered in this present research (Tables 4 and 5), whether clergy have a support team and/or serve in a congregation where the attendance is declining are significant main effects respectively upon vision conflict that result in greater likelihood for clergy to exit the ministry. The same two effects also contribute to clergy exits in terms of compassion fatigue. However, with compassion fatigue the lack of a support team is the only main effect and attendance problems are seen here as an amplifying effect through an interaction with the lack of team support. Future research may pursue these topics in order to develop a plan to increase remediation effectiveness. Another extension of this research could involve qualitative interviews with pastors, revising the PaRI if necessary, and/or conducting additional studies with various groups of clergy, including a confirmatory factor analysis.

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Appendix

Pastor in Residence: At-Risk Pastor Profile (Wickman, 2004)

Section I

- 1 I experience conflict with my Board as to the vision of the church
- 2 I am confused about my major role in the church
- 3 I feel isolated and alone
- 4 My ability to trust church leadership is weak
- 5 My relationship with staff is unhealthy
- 6 I have lost the sense of meaning in my work
- 7 My spouse and family are unhappy
- 8 Music and worship style are big conflict issues in my church
- 9 Church finances are inadequate
- 10 My personal finances are suffering
- 11 I feel I don't have enough close friends with whom I can talk about my needs
- 12 I feel overworked
- 13 I feel my work is futile
- 14 I feel my sense of confidence has diminished
- 15 I feel I must prove myself a hard worker
- 16 I wonder whether or not I am working in the area of my giftedness
- 17 I feel that the church's expectations of me are unclear
- 18 I feel that there are more expectations on me than I can fulfill
- 19 I wonder about my calling as a pastor
- 20 I have diminished energy for my work

- 21 I feel emotionally empty
- 22 I feel my work is too demanding
- 23 I feel my life is far too stressful
- 24 I really don't care much about what happens to my parishioners
- 25 I feel I am not as sensitive as I once was
- 26 Ministry doesn't bring me satisfaction
- 27 Generally, I feel exhausted
- 28 I find little joy in my work
- 29 I feel afraid that I will be forced out of the church I now serve
- 30 I feel I would like to leave the church I now serve
- 31 I feel I can't meet all the needs of my people
- 32 I seriously consider leaving the ministry entirely
- 33 I feel my hope for success has not developed
- 34 I don't feel that my denominational leaders would be helpful, should I go to them with my problems
- 35 My leadership and I have different theological positions
- 36 I am having personality conflicts with people not on the board
- 37 I feel my spouse would not really support me should I leave ministry
- 38 Charges of moral failure are being made against me
- 39 I feel insecure in my present position
- 40 It is very difficult for me to say "no"
- 41 I feel my personal relationship with Christ is a real problem
- 42 Weeks go by without a scheduled "date" with my spouse

Section II

- 43 I am in my first church
- 44 I am now serving my second or third church
- 45 I have been serving this church for just 2 or 3 years
- 46 I am between 35 and 49 years of age
- 47 The church I serve has in the past forced a pastor to resign
- 48 I have no support team with which I meet regularly
- 49 The church I serve has plateaued or declined in attendance recently
- 50 We have built a new building in the past 2 years

Optional data should you wish to provide it:

- 51 Your name:
- 52 Phone:
- 53 Denominational Affiliation

Endnotes